

John Link

Whirligig  
for marimba

## PROGRAM NOTE

A whirligig is a spinning gadget—a top, a dreidel, a carousel. This *Whirligig* is a virtuoso showpiece for solo marimba. Its music changes constantly—from quasi-mechanical to quiet and expressive, from frenetic to dance-like and funky—as various kinds of rhythmic patterns overlap and intermingle. These patterns occasionally coalesce to suggest a steady pulse, sometimes fast, sometimes slow, but like the patterns on a spinning top, they are quickly caught up in the rapidly changing whirl of motion that characterizes the piece as a whole. I also wanted to explore the timbral contrast among the different registers of the marimba. At the very beginning, for example, two lines careen towards each other from the extreme high and low ends of the instrument, collide in the middle, and bounce back again. Other passages explore a single register, or scamper from one extreme to the other. As with most whirligigs, this one celebrates, with gaudy motion, the spirit of playfulness. It runs down eventually, but near the end manages to find a brief second wind. The piece is dedicated to the wonderful percussionist Thomas Kolor, whose astonishing performances were a great inspiration.

—J. L.

Duration: ca. 7 minutes.

for Tom Kolor  
**Whirligig**  
for marimba

- John Link (1998)

**Marimba**

$\text{♩} = 69$

**ff**

**ff**

**f**

7

*mp pp*

*p*

*mf*

*mp*

*mf*

*mp*

*ff*

5 5 3 5

11

5

*f*

*ff f*

6

6

13

*ff*

*pp*

*f*

*mf*

*6*

*f*

*mf*

3 5 3 3 3 3

15

*f*

*sub. p*

3

*mp*

6

*mf*

3 *mp*

17

*mp*

3

5

3

6

*mf*

3

20

< *mf*   *p*

*f* > *mf*   *mp*

*f*

23

*quasi accelerando* - - -

*p*

*f*

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*mp*

*ff*

*p*

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

32

*mf* 5

*f* 3 3

*mp* 5 *mf* *p*

35

*mf* *mp*

*mf* <*p*> *mf*

*p* *f*

38

*ff* *mp* <*p*>

*mp* <*mf*> *mp* *pp* *f*

5 3 5 3

42

> *mp*

*f*

44

*p*

*mp*

5

3

46

*mf*

*p*

*pp*

*mf*

5

3

3

5

*scherzando*

49

*f*

*mf*      *ff*

*mp*

*mp*

*mf*

52

*mf*

*p*

*mp*

*mf*

*mp*

*mf*

55

*mp*

*mf*

*mp*    *mf*    *mp*

*mf*

58

*f*

*mf* *f* *mf*

*f* *ff* *mf* *mp*

60

*mf*

*mp* *mf* *mp*

5

63

*<mf*

*mp* *mf* *mp*

*mf* *p* *mf* *mp*

3

Musical score for two staves (treble and bass) across three systems.

**System 1 (Measures 66-67):**

- Measure 66: Treble staff has eighth-note pairs (mf). Bass staff has eighth-note pairs (mf).
- Measure 67: Treble staff has eighth-note pairs (mp). Bass staff has eighth-note pairs (mp).

**System 2 (Measures 68-69):**

- Measure 68: Treble staff has eighth-note pairs (mf). Bass staff has eighth-note pairs (mf).
- Measure 69: Treble staff has eighth-note pairs (mp). Bass staff has eighth-note pairs (mp).

**System 3 (Measures 70-71):**

- Measure 70: Treble staff has eighth-note pairs (mf). Bass staff has eighth-note pairs (mf).
- Measure 71: Treble staff has eighth-note pairs (f). Bass staff has eighth-note pairs (f).
- Measure 72: Treble staff has eighth-note pairs (mp). Bass staff has eighth-note pairs (mp).

Musical score for piano, page 10, measures 81-85. The score consists of two staves. The top staff uses treble clef and has dynamics *mf*, *p*, and *p*. It features a melodic line with grace notes and slurs. Measure 81 ends with a fermata. Measure 82 contains sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 83 includes a grace note and a dynamic *f*. Measure 84 shows eighth-note chords. Measure 85 concludes with a dynamic *p*. The bottom staff uses treble clef and has dynamics *p* and *f*. It features sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 82 contains a dynamic *f*. Measure 83 includes a grace note and a dynamic *5*. Measure 84 shows eighth-note chords.

84

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*mp*

*mf*

*mp*

*p*

*f*

87

*mf*

*mp*

*p*

*f*

89

*f*

*mf*

*mp*

*mf*

91

*mp*

3 3 3 3 3 3

*mf*

3 3

3 3 3 3 3 3

6

*mp*

93

< *mf*

3

3

*p* — *mp* *p*

3

3

3

*f*

95

*mf*

3

3

3

3

*p*

3

3

3

*f* < *ff* > *f*

3

3

3

*mp* — *mf*

3

3

*p*

98

*mf* 5  
*p* *mf* 5  
*p* *mf* *p*

103

*p* *p* *mp* 3 5  
*p* *mf* *p*

107

5  
*pp* *mf* > *mp*  
*ff* 5 *mp* < *mf* > *mp*

110      3      3      3  
Φ (dead stroke)  
*mf* > *mp*  
*f*  
*mf*  
*mp*  
*mf*  
*p*  
*ff*  
*p* *sempre*

118

3

122

3

126

5

3

5

3

5

3

**p** poco crescendo poco a poco

129

3

5 3 3 5 3 5

131

5

*mp poco crescendo poco a poco*

5 5 5 5 5 5

133

3

5 5 5 5 5 5

3 3 3

5

5 5 5

5 5 5

Musical score for piano, page 135, measures 3-10. The score consists of two staves. The top staff uses a treble clef and the bottom staff uses a bass clef. Measure 3 starts with a forte dynamic (f) and a 3/8 time signature. The melody is primarily in the right hand, with the left hand providing harmonic support. Measures 4-5 continue this pattern. Measure 6 begins with a dynamic marking *mf*. Measures 7-8 show a continuation of the melodic line. Measure 9 starts with a dynamic marking *ff*. Measures 10 concludes the section.

137

Musical score for piano, page 139, showing two staves of music. The top staff uses a treble clef and the bottom staff uses a bass clef. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, *p*, *pp*, and *mp*. Performance instructions include slurs, grace notes, and fingerings like '3' and '5'. The score consists of two staves of music with various dynamics and performance instructions.