

MERKABAH

for soprano and piano

David Jason Snow

Firey wheel without beginning,
Firey wheel without end.
The revolving sword of flame
In dance the wings of cherubim
About an eye dark and flickering
About a heart dark and dumb.

- Tuvia Rivner
(translated from the Hebrew)

When I ascended to the first palace I was
devout;
in the second palace I was pure;
in the third sincere;
in the fourth I was wholly with God;
in the fifth I displayed holiness before God;
in the sixth I spoke the kedushah before Him
who spoke and created,
in order that the guardian angels might not
harm me;
in the seventh palace I held myself erect with
all my might, trembling in all limbs, and
spoke the following prayer: Praise be to thee
who art exalted, praise be to the Sublime in
the chambers of grandeur.

To ascend on high,
to descend below,
to explore the world,
to walk on dry ground
to drive on wheels (of the Merkabah),
to contemplate the splendor,
to dwell with the crown,
to praise the glory,
to say praise,
to combine letters,
to say names,
to behold what is on high,
and to behold what is below,
to know the meaning of the living,
and to see the vision of the dead,
to know the lightning,
to walk in rivers of fire.

I beheld and saw the whole Universe
and preceived it as it is;
I ascended in a carriage of fire
and I contemplated the Palaces of Hail.
And I found geruska, geruska (?)
and three torch-like stones.

This is the spell and the seal
by which the Earth is bound,
and by which the Heavens are bound.
And the Earth flees before it,
and the Universe trembles before it.

It opens the mouth of the sea,
and closes the waters of the firmament.
It opens the Heavens and waters the
Universe.
It uproots the Earth and confuses the
Universe . . .

- attributed to R. Akiva ben Joseph
(translated from the Aramaic)

MERKABAH

for soprano and piano

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I

$\text{♩} = 84$ *feroce*

The musical score for the piano part of 'MERKABAH I' is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 84 and a character of 'feroce'. The score is divided into four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system begins with a fortissimo (fff) dynamic and features a complex piano introduction with a five-fingered chord in the right hand and a bass line with an octave sign. The second system continues with fff dynamics, including a triplet in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand. The third system shows a dynamic shift to mezzo-forte (mf) and then fortissimo (ff), with a section marked 'S.P.' (Soprano Part) indicated by a bracket. The fourth system concludes with dynamics ranging from piano (p) to fortissimo (fff), featuring a triplet in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and fingering numbers (1-5).

Musical score for the first system, featuring piano and bass staves. The piano part includes dynamics such as *ff* and *mp subito*, along with articulations like accents and slurs. The bass part features a triplet and a *S.P.* (Sordano Piano) marking.

molto accel. - - - - - *Tempo I*

Musical score for the second system. The vocal line begins with *fz p* and includes a *gliss* (glissando) marking. The piano accompaniment starts with *p* and *pp* dynamics, followed by *f*.

Musical score for the third system. The vocal line includes lyrics "ha-u" and "Ga" with dynamic markings *fz p*, *vibr.*, *ff*, *sf*, and *fz*. The piano accompaniment features *p* and *ff* dynamics.

Musical score for the fourth system. The vocal line includes lyrics "l-ga" and "ha-u" with dynamic markings *fz p*, *mf*, *pp*, and *fz*. The piano accompaniment includes dynamics *mp*, *pp*, and *ppp*.

* audible aspiration

mf *p* *f* *5* *3* *mp* *vibr.* *f* *p subito*

bend ($\frac{3}{4}$)

lo ra-shit

p *mf* *ff* *3* *7* *6* *Ped.*

S.P. - - - -

fz *p* *fp* *vibr.*

bend ($\frac{3}{4}$)

Go 1-

p

mf *fz* *mp* *mf* *p* *fz* *p3* *3* *ff*

gliss ($\frac{3}{4}$) *gliss*

ga 1 ho-u 1' lo-ach ni

p *ff* *ppp* *3* *5* *4*

* - - - -

f > *p* < *fz* *p* < *mf*
ha *mm* *i ta pa chet*

mp subito
Ped.
ff
p
pp

f > *p* < *ff*
 (e)

ff > *mf*
pp
mf
p
fz
f
 **Ped.* *

mp *f*
fz *fz*
 S.P.

mp *f*
fz *fz*
 S.P.

Musical score system 1. The top staff shows a melodic line starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic, followed by a piano (*p*) dynamic and a glissando (*gliss*) marking. The bottom staff contains piano accompaniment with various techniques such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like *pp*. Pedal markings (*Ped.*) are present at the end of the system.

Musical score system 2. The top staff features a vocal line with lyrics: *-n' - fei k' ru vi mm b'it chu-la*. Dynamics range from *mf* to *ff*, with markings for *fz* and *vibr.*. The bottom staff provides piano accompaniment with dynamic markings such as *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *pp*. A *Ped.* marking is also visible.

Musical score system 3. The top staff includes a vocal line with performance instructions: *ff > p senza vibr. (whimpering)*, *bend*, *poco*, *col vibr.*, and *mfz*. The bottom staff contains piano accompaniment with dynamic markings like *mp* and *p*, and a *poco* marking. A *S.P.* marking is located at the bottom of the system.

mp *pp* *mp* *pp* *fzmp*
viv *a* *gliss* *in a-fei-lah* *(ah)* *gliss* *gliss* *gliss*

fz mf *ppp* *mf* *viv*

ffzmp *pp* *leiv* *ffz* *mp* *pp* *Red.*

mp pp
mfz p
pp
gliss
mf
p
Ped.

pp
p
poco rit.
vibr.
bend
(e) */a* *mm*
f
p
(Ped)

bend ten
col vibr.
ppp
senza vibr.
attacca
p
ppp

II

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72 \text{ rubato}$

ffz *mp* *f* *mp* *rit.*

Ped. - - - - - *

Slow (Tempo I)

accel. *rit.* *(Tempo II)* *rit.*

p *mp* *pp*

Ped. - - - - - *

Tempo I accel. rit.

Tempo II *8va* *rit.*

mp *mf*

Ped. - - - - - *

Tempo I *rit.* *poco più mosso* *rit.* *poco allarg.* *a tempo* *ten*

accel. *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *f*

Ped. - - - - - * *3* *Ped.* - - - - - *

rall

mp

kesh'a-li-ti b' he-

*Ped - - - - *

chahl-rah-shon chah-sid-ha-yi-ti b' he-chahl

Ped. - - - - *

mf *subito*

bet ta-hor ha-yi-ti ten.

Ped. - - - - *

Musical score system 1. The vocal line features a melodic phrase with lyrics: *b'-he-chal gi mal ya-shar ha-yi-ti*. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. Performance markings include *gliss*, *loco*, *mf*, and *p*. Pedal markings are present at the end of the system.

Musical score system 2. The vocal line continues with lyrics: *b' he-chal da-led ta-mim hayi-ti*. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. Performance markings include *fp*, *mf*, and *allargando*. Pedal markings are present at the end of the system.

Musical score system 3. The vocal line features a melodic phrase with lyrics: *b' hechal hey hi-ga-ti k'dushah lif-ney mal-chey hamlachim bez-nat ha-shem*. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. Performance markings include *a tempo*, *mf*, *accel. ad lib.*, *poco rit.*, and *a tempo*. Pedal markings are present at the end of the system.

b' he chal — vuhv a — mar — ti k'dushah lif — ney — mishamar
 v'ya —

mp *mf*

SP.

- tzar v'tzi-vah kol ha-briyot sheloh — yeshchituni — malachey hasharet —

poco allarg. a tempo

Allargando

ff *ten* *sffz*

S. P.

♩=96

mp expansive

b' he-kahl zayn

p subito

(s.p.)

ma d'ti b' kohl ko-chi nir -

piu sfz agitato

ta-ti v' niz-da-a-za-ti b' chol av'rai v'a-mar-ti

cresc.

sf

crescendo *poco* *a poco*

Rall. - - - Maestoso

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai a-dir b'cha-drei g'du-

The first system consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics "Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai a-dir b'cha-drei g'du-". The piano accompaniment features complex chords and triplets, with a dynamic marking of *ff*.

$\text{♩}=\text{♩}$

allargando

/a

The second system includes a vocal line with a fermata and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features various time signatures (5/8, 7/8, 5/16, 8/16) and dynamics like *mf* and *ff*. There is a section marked "S.P." (Soprano Part) in the piano accompaniment.

Adagio molto accel. - - -

attacca

(a)

The third system shows a vocal line with a fermata and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *mf* and a *ff* marking at the end. The system concludes with a double bar line and the instruction "attacca".

III

Slow, with ethereal delicacy (beat = ♩)

Musical score system 1, first system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a piano key signature of one sharp (F#) and a treble clef. The lower staff begins with a bass clef. The music is marked *ppp* in both staves. The lower staff includes the instruction *una corda* and *Ped*. A dynamic marking *mp* appears in the lower staff towards the end of the system. The system concludes with a repeat sign and the instruction *(sempre until *)*.

Musical score system 2, second system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff continues with a treble clef and a piano key signature of one sharp. The lower staff continues with a bass clef. The music is marked *mf* in the lower staff. The system includes dynamic markings *ppp* and *pp* in both staves.

Musical score system 3, third system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff continues with a treble clef and a piano key signature of one sharp. The lower staff continues with a bass clef. The music is marked *p* in the upper staff and *fz* in the lower staff. The system includes the instruction *tre corde* and dynamic markings *ppp* and *pp*.

Musical score system 4, fourth system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff continues with a treble clef and a piano key signature of one sharp. The lower staff continues with a bass clef. The music is marked *fz* in the lower staff. The system includes dynamic markings *ppp* and *pp*.

Musical score system 5, fifth system. It consists of two staves. The upper staff continues with a treble clef and a piano key signature of one sharp. The lower staff continues with a bass clef. The music is marked *fz* in the lower staff. The system includes dynamic markings *pp*, *f*, and *mp*.

fz *accel.*

p *f* *f* *P* *ff* *P* *ff*

molto allarg. *tempo I*

una corda

p *P* *mf* *pp*

(Led) *Led *Led (sempre until *)

p *ppp* *P* *PP*

tre corde *cresc.* *allarg.* *a tempo*

ppp *mf* *mp* *f*

(Led) *Led * S.P.

$\text{♩} = 69$

p *mf* *f*

mp (S.P.) *mf* *f*

p
mf
mp
f
mf
f
mp

mp
f
mp sub
 Led - - - - *

f
mf
f
ff
 Led - - - - *
 Led - - - - *
 Led - - - - *

mp incantatory

L' mi - - - - -

I. Initiation

fff p
f
p sub
f
 Led. - - (sempre until *)

- - - - - sak l' i - lah
mp
L' mi -

pp
f
f sub
p
f

chat l' ta - tah

p *f* *pp*

f *mp* *p* *mf*

mp *mp*

L' mer - chav gal - ga - lin L' mal - ha - ka bib - sha - ta L' mer - -

f *f* *fsub* *psub* *f*

mf *p* *f*

gal - ga - li - - - - - *mf*

p *f* *psub*

p *mf*

L' mi -

f *pp*

-sta - kha b' tzi - vah L'is -

p fp p fsub

-ra ha b' - ta - ga - - -

p

L' mish

mp mf mp mf fsub

- ta b'cha b' - i - kra - - - L' mi - mar - - -

mf mp f fp f mp f

mp *f* *p*

shib-cha L'me - - - dab-ka e-ti-en L'mi-mar shme-hen - - - L'mitz-

ff with supreme power and grace

ffz

peil'-i-lah V'l'mitz - pei l'ta- tah - - -

ffz *Led* - - - * *ffz* *Led* - - - - (Led sempre until*)

mf

L'mi-dah be-fe-rush cha-ya

ppp *mf* *ppp* *ppp*

mp

V'l'mach-zei be-cha-zut ma-ti-ah - - -

simile *molto ffpp* *mf* *mp*

Musical score for the first system. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a piano introduction with a dynamic marking of *p*. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a lead line with a dynamic marking of *pp* and the instruction *Led. - - (sempre until *)*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

Musical score for the second system. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a piano introduction with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a lead line with a dynamic marking of *pp* and the instruction *Led. - - (sempre until *)*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

Musical score for the third system. The upper staff (treble clef) contains the vocal line with the lyrics *L' - me - i - da bi - bar - kah* and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a piano accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *mf* and the instruction *Led. - - (sempre until *)*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

Musical score for the fourth system. The upper staff (treble clef) contains the vocal line with the lyrics *V' - i' - me'* and a dynamic marking of *p*. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a piano accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *mf* and the instruction *Led. - - (sempre until *)*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

poco *Slow*

hal - cha be - na - ha - ri nu - rah

II. Revelation
♩ = 69 *fantastico*

P *pp* *mp*

(Led) - - - * *S.P.* - - - - -

mf *f* *pp* *mf* *P sub*

Led - - - - *

f *ff* *mp* *P*

Led - - - *

mf *f* *rubato* *mp* *a tempo* *pp*

Led - - - - *

Musical score system 1. Treble clef: *mp*. Bass clef: *ppp* 8, *poco*, *pp*. Features triplets and a crescendo hairpin.

Musical score system 2. Treble clef: *mf*, *ff*, *mp sub*. Bass clef: *mp*. Features triplets, sixths, and a section marked *S.P.* with a dashed line.

Musical score system 3. Treble clef: *f*. Bass clef: *f*. Features triplets and a section marked *ped* (pedal) with a dashed line and the instruction *(sempre until *)*.

Musical score system 4. Treble clef: *loco*, *fz*, *fz*, *fz*. Bass clef: *mp subito*. Instruction: *senza crescendo*.

Musical score system 5. Treble clef: *fz*, *fz*, *accel.*, *c*. Bass clef: *fz*, *fz*, *fz*, *fz*, *fz*. Instruction: *accel.*

cresc. - - *poco* - - *a poco* - - - *Prestissima*

fz fz fz fz fz fz fz fz

*agitated, as if suspended
between terror and ecstasy*

J=69

f

Tza-fit v'cha-mit b-ti-vel ku-lah

v'cha-zit ye-tah mah

molto rit. J=69 mf sub fz fz fz

*Ped - - - (sempre until *)*

hi Sal-kit b'a-ga-lah min nu-rah v'is-ta-klit b'hi-cha-leh bar-dah

fz fz fz fz fz

poco rit.

J=60

declamatory

v'ish-ka-chit q'rush-ka q'rush-ka v' gi-malar-ni l' fi-da

Din hu - -

poco rit. fz fz fz fz fz

*(Ped) - - - * Ped. - - - (sempre)*

3 i - sa - mah u - chi - ta mah d'as - rin be - yah a - re a - - va - sa - rin

fz fz mf fz fz

(Ped) ** Ped*

3 be - yah sh' ma - ya - - - - v' a - rah n' i - dah mi - dah ten

fz fz p f pp

** Ped* ** Ped*

mp 3 v' te - vel mi - tra - a - she mik - da - mo - hi *ff* p' tach fum ya - mah - - u' sa -

mf fz fz

Ped ** Ped*

tam mey re-hiah - - b'tach shma-yau-ma-ro-vi l'te- vel - - a-kar a-

fz fz fz

2 3

4 4

poco allarg.

re-a u-ma-rev l'te-vel - - - - - feroce (tempo of beginning, beat = 1)

fz fz fz

3 4

fff

*Ped - - - - **

*(Ped) - - - - **

mf

*Ped - - - - **

mp

*Ped - - - - **

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