

for string quartet

Dave Soldier

THREE DELTA BLUES

about 11 minutes

- 1. *Preachin' Blues (Robert Johnson)***
- 2. *Moon Goin' Down (Charlie Patton)***
- 3. *Twenty Twenty Blues (Skip James)***

Version from November 20, 2010

1986, 1990

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These are three songs by wonderful composers /performers from the 1930's. Of course they are very changed, but I try to retain the phrasing and rhythms of the originals, and I urge the quartet to listen to them together. There is actually at least one measure that I simplified in rhythm, as my own quartet could never play it without losing count.

Regarding tempo, resist the urge to slow down endings too much – be guided by the original recordings. However, if you feel like speeding up some of the faster sections over the original, especially in *Preachin' Blues*, go ahead.

Note that in this style there is virtually always a subtle accelerando throughout the piece.

The unusual techniques are as follows;

The most important is the **blues third**. I use a downward small arrow, and it is carried through the measure as if it were a regular accidental. It genuinely is between the major and minor third, but singers and guitarists will often play around with it, gliding up or down to it or beyond it. **IF YOU DON'T PLAY THE BLUES THIRD THE MUSIC CANNOT WORK!**

There are a small number of other microtones, including some a quarter tone or so sharp on M17, 21, 81 2nd vln, *Twenty Twenty Blues*, indicated with an upward arrow. These are not precise, just in the direction of, and can be played with a finger gliss.

There are many **glisses**, they don't have to start from a particular note unless indicated, and can start quietly in most cases. When they end at a certain note, it is indicated. If in parenthesis, it is barely touched, and if a grace note, it ends in that general area, but with a diminuendo.

Speech pitch is indicated by **boxes on the note heads**. For that, you are "out of tune" and trying to imitate speech by the singers. I find that the best way to do this is to use the fingering arm to go OVER the neck from the other side, and to pinch the string between thumb and forefinger and lift it a bit. This virtually guarantees that the pitch will be approximate and sound as if it is spoken.

The **left hand slap** is indicated by **x note heads**. It is usually meant to imitate a foot stomp, especially in *Twenty Twenty*, or a hit on the guitar body. The way to do this is to slap the left hand fingers hard on the neck across all the strings. It is easy to do and can really help propel the rhythm and tempo.

Some notes have a mordant used as a "**squiggle**". That means to use a wide vibrato on the note, like the guitarists with a slide, or the singers sometimes do to emphasize a note.

The "**Bartok pizz**" on viola in *Moon Goin' Down* is a strong pluck that bounces the string on the neck.

The original version of *Three Delta Blues* ended with a duo for violin & cello, *Country Blues #2* by Muddy Waters. However, I think it usually more effective to have three pieces for the whole group, and hence I've substituted *Preachin' Blues*.

- Dave Soldier, November
2010

downward arrow is blues third
mordant means squiggle

1. Preachin' Blues

from Three Delta Blues

Robert Johnson
arranged by Dave Soldier, April 1990

Moderato

Violin 1 Violin 2 Viola Cello

subito faster

Presto

Vln. 1 Vln. 2 Vla. Vlc.

f

frog, with bite

mp frog, with bite

accel.

8

Preachin' Blues

12

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

16

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

pizz.

sffz ord.

sffz

20

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

gritty

arco

pp

frog, with bite

mp

mf

frog, with bite

pp

mp

Preachin' Blues

3

ord.

B

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

24

V V V V V V V V V V V V

pp solo f pp

p pp

frog, with bite blues 3rd on A

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

27

V V V V V V V V V V V V

ppp pp

mf gliss. solo pizz.

mf mp

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

30

V V V V V V V V V V V V

pp

V V V V V V V V V V V V

Preachin' Blues

34

Vln. 1 V V V V | 7 V V - | - | *f*

Vln. 2 | 7 - | - | - |

Vla. | 7 - | - | - |

Vlc. | 7 - | - | - | *pp*

arco

37

Vln. 1 V V V V | - | V V V V V V | 4

Vln. 2 | *pp* - | 5 - | 4 - |

Vla. | - | *mf* - | - |

Vlc. | - | - | - | *ppp*

40

Vln. 1 | *ff* gritty | ord.

Vln. 2 | *ff* gritty | ord.

Vla. | frog, with bite |

Vlc. | *ppp* pizz. | *fff* | *ppp* | *ppp*

ppp *mp* *f*

C

Preachin' Blues

5

43

Vln. 1 gritty

Vln. 2 gritty

Vla.

Vlc.

speech pitch
"yeah"

46

Vln. 1

Vln. 2 speech pitch

Vla.

Vlc.

accel.

50

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

pizz.
pp f

Preachin' Blues

53

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

arco frog, with bite

pp

D

57

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

pp left hand slap

arco solo

pp

f

62

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

speech pitch

Preachin' Blues

7

66

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

speech pitch

p

70

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

ff

f

73

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

pizz.

p

pp

pizz.

p

Preachin' Blues

76 arco
Vln. 1 *left hand slap*
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

accel. pizz. **E**
pp arco
ff *left hand slap*
mp
mf

80
Vln. 1
Vln. 2 *sfp*
Vla.
Vlc.

pizz.
f *p*
f *p*

84 arco
Vln. 1 *pp* *mf*
Vln. 2
Vla. arco frog, with bite
Vlc. arco frog, with bite *pp*

Preachin' Blues

9

87

Vln. 1 rit.

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

rit.

ppp

B

f

90

Vln. 1 pizz.

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

ppp

mp

p

p

for string quartet
downward arrow is blues third
mordant means squiggle

2. Moon Goin' Down

from Three Delta Blues

Charlie Patton, July, 1930

arranged by Dave Soldier, April, 1986

Allegro

F *accel. throughout piece*

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Moon Goin' Down

11

II

Vln. 1 pizz.

Vln. 2 pizz.

Vla.

Vlc. strong gliss.

arco

arco

f

f

mf

G

Vln. 1 use double stop blues e & open e

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc. arco

speech pitch

20

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

24

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

H

Vln. 1

left hand slap on X

Vln. 2

left hand slap on X

Vla.

Vlc.

32

Vln. 1

speech pitch

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

36

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

pizz.

arco

solo

f

I

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

p

left hand slap

ff
pizz.

44

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

arco

Moon Goin' Down

48

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

speech pitch

52

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

remember accel.

mp

ff

solosolo

"Bartok" snap pizz.

mf

(still pizz.).

f

56

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

arco

60

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

"Bartok" snap pizz.

arco

64

J

pizz.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

solo

f

use double stop blues e & open e

ff

ff

arc

68

arc

pizz.

arc

pizz.

arc

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

71

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

pizz.

74

arco

pizz.

arco

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

77

rit.

pizz.

ff

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

pizz.

ff

ff pizz.

pizz.

pp

for string quartet
downward arrow is blues third
mordant means squiggle

3. Twenty Twenty Blues

Skip James

from Three Delta Blues

arranged by Dave Soldier October, 1986

Presto **rit.** **Allegro** **accel. throughout piece**

Violin 1 Violin 2 Viola Cello

Vln. 1 Vln. 2 Vla. Vlc.

K

Vln. 1 Vln. 2 Vla. Vlc.

Vln. 1 Vln. 2 Vla. Vlc.

Measure 4: Violin 1 starts with a dynamic *f*. The section begins with a downward arrow indicating a blues third. The violins play eighth-note patterns, while the cellos provide harmonic support. The section ends with a downward arrow and a dynamic *mf*.

Measure 8: The section starts with a downward arrow and a dynamic *mf*. The violins play eighth-note patterns. The cellos provide harmonic support. The section ends with a downward arrow and a dynamic *mf*.

Measure 13: The section starts with a downward arrow and a dynamic *mf*. The violins play eighth-note patterns. The cellos provide harmonic support. The section ends with a downward arrow and a dynamic *mf*.

Twenty Twenty Blues

12

Vln. 1 Vln. 2 Vla. Vlc.

16

Vln. 1 Vln. 2 Vla. Vlc.

up arrow 1/4 sharp

L

19

Vln. 1 Vln. 2 Vla. Vlc.

Twenty Twenty Blues

19

22

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

26

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

M

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

This musical score page contains three systems of music for string quartet. The instruments are Violin 1, Violin 2, Cello (Vla.), and Bassoon (Vlc.). The key signature is mostly A major (three sharps). Measure 22 begins with Violin 1 playing eighth-note pairs. Measures 23-25 show complex sixteenth-note patterns with various dynamics like forte (f) and mezzo-forte (mp). Measure 26 starts with a dynamic f. Measures 27-29 continue the rhythmic patterns. System 3 begins with a measure labeled 'M', featuring sixteenth-note patterns with slurs and grace notes.

Twenty Twenty Blues

33

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

ff

mp

36

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

p

N

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

f

p

p

p

44

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

48

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

51

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

Twenty Twenty Blues

left hand slap

56

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

left hand slap

61

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

left hand slap

left hand slap

65

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

f

f

f

69

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

73

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

77

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

81

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

up arrow 1/4 sharp

86

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

ff

First Violin

Three Delta Blues

downward arrow is blues third
mordant means squiggle

arranged by Dave Soldier

1. Preachin' Blues (Robert Johnson)

Moderato

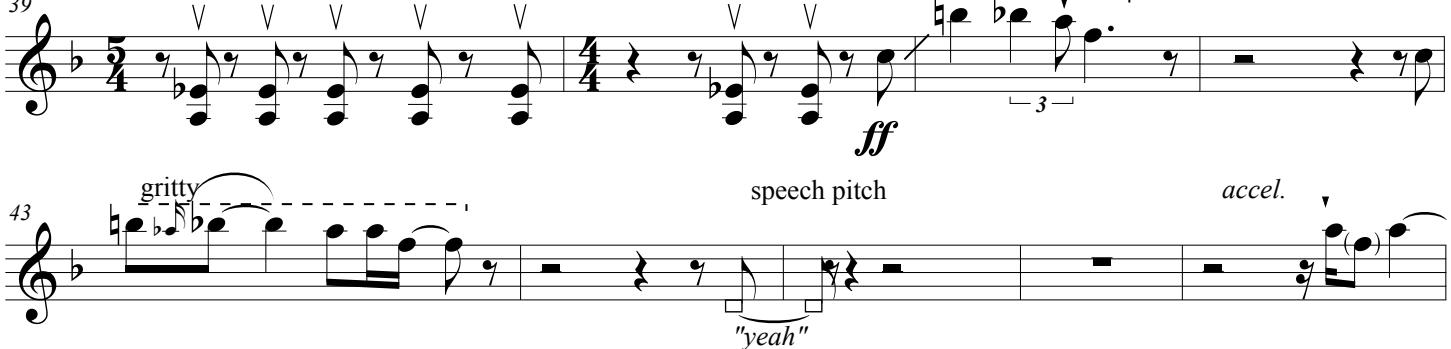
The sheet music for 'Preachin' Blues' consists of eight staves of musical notation for the first violin. The key signature is one flat, and the time signature varies between common time, 3/4, and 2/4.

- Staff 1:** Dynamics include *mp*, *subito faster*, and **Presto**. Measure 1 starts with a downward arrow over a note.
- Staff 2:** Dynamics include **f**. Measures 6-10 show various rhythmic patterns, including eighth-note pairs and sixteenth-note groups.
- Staff 3:** Dynamics include *accel.* Measures 11-15 continue the rhythmic patterns.
- Staff 4:** Dynamics include *gritty*. Measures 17-21 show more complex patterns with sixteenth-note figures.
- Staff 5:** Dynamics include **ord.** and **B**. Measures 22-26 show eighth-note patterns.
- Staff 6:** Dynamics include *pp*. Measures 27-31 show eighth-note patterns labeled 'frog, with bite' and 'blues 3rd on A'.
- Staff 7:** Measures 32-36 show eighth-note patterns.
- Staff 8:** Dynamics include **f** and **pp**. Measures 37-41 show eighth-note patterns.

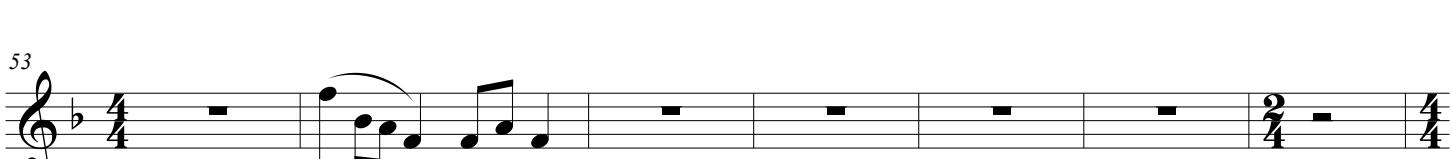
Three Delta Blues (1st Violin Part)

ord.

C gritty

39 

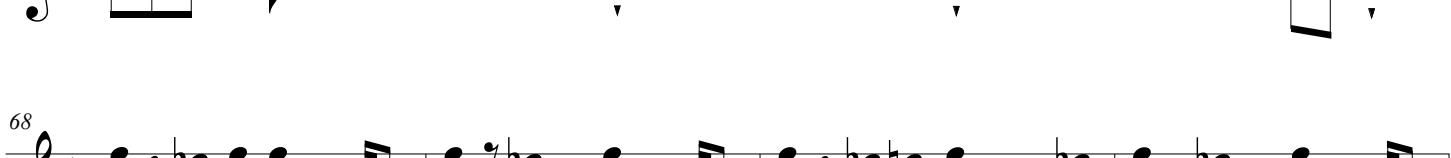
43 

48 

53 

D

64 

68 

72 pizz. 

Three Delta Blues (1st Violin Part)

3

76 arco

accel. pizz. E

80

84 arco

pp *mf*

86 *rit.*

89 *rit.* ~ pizz. *ppp*

ff *ppp*

2. Moon Goin' Down (Charlie Patton)

Allegro

F accel. throughout piece

4

mf

p

7

Three Delta Blues (1st Violin Part)

10 pizz.
14 arco
 G
18 f
 speech pitch
23
H
33 speech pitch
37 I
42

Three Delta Blues (1st Violin Part)

5

46

49

52 *remember accel.*

56

60

64

J

pizz. arco pizz. arco pizz.

70 arco

Three Delta Blues (1st Violin Part)

pizz. arco pizz. arco

73

3. Twenty Twenty Blues (Skip James)

rit. pizz.

76

Presto Allegro accel. throughout piece

K

4 2 4 6 4 2

f **3** **3** **3** **3** **3** **3**

4 2 4 6 4 2

mf **3** **3** **3** **3** **3** **3**

8

6 4 4 6 4 6

mf

11

6 4 4 6 4 6

f **3** **3** **3** **3** **3**

15

5 4 6 4 6 4

3 **3** **3** **3** **3** **3**

L

p **3** **3** **3** **f** **3**

Three Delta Blues (1st Violin Part)

7

21

25

M

33

ff mp

36

p

N

f p

44

mf

48

mf p

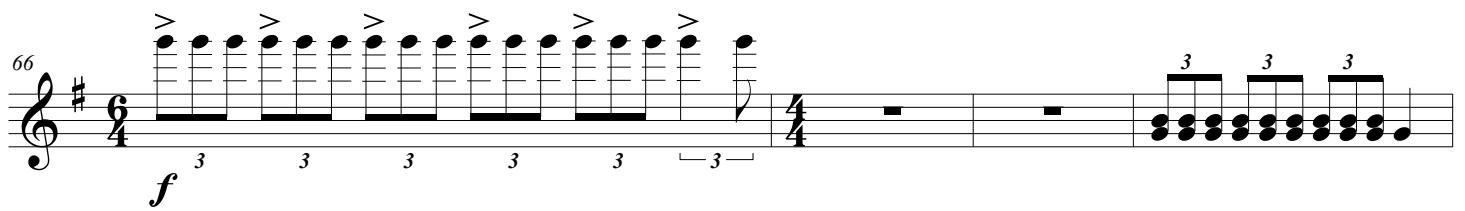
Three Delta Blues (1st Violin Part)

O

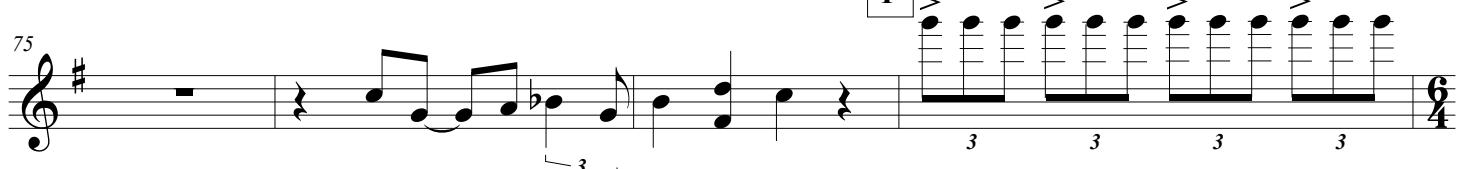
gradual accel. left hand slap

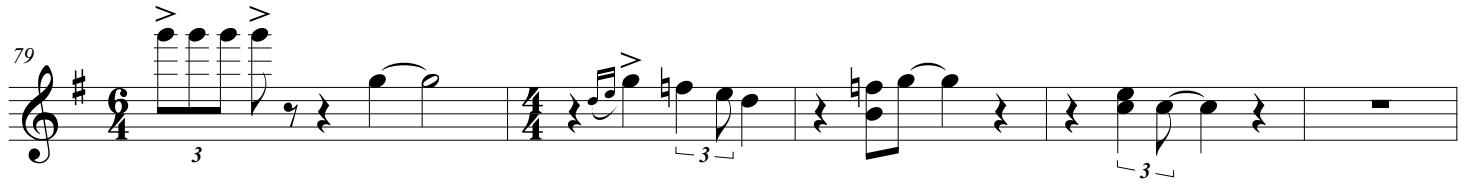
52 

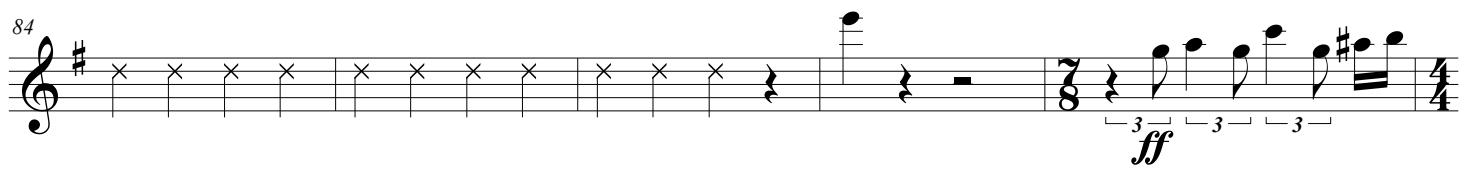
62

66 

70

75 

79 

84 

89

Second Violin

Three Delta Blues

downward arrow is blues third

mordant means squiggle

1. Preachin' Blues (Robert Johnson)

arranged by Dave Soldier

Moderato

Moderato
mp

A
Presto
subito faster
mf

accel.
mf

mf

pizz.
sfz
arco
pp
f

mf
f

ff
f

ff
f

Three Delta Blues (2nd Violin Part)

36

C gritty ord. gritty speech pitch

47

52

59

D left hand slap

64

69

73

pizz. left hand slap

p

Three Delta Blues (2nd Violin Part)

3

accel. arco E

ff

77

82

86

89

rit.

mp

2. Moon Goin' Down (Charlie Patton)

Allegro F

mf *p* *accel. throughout piece*

4

7

11

pizz. arco *f*

Three Delta Blues (2nd Violin Part)

G

use double stop blues e & open e



20

**H**

left hand slap on X

25



29



34



pizz.

arco

39

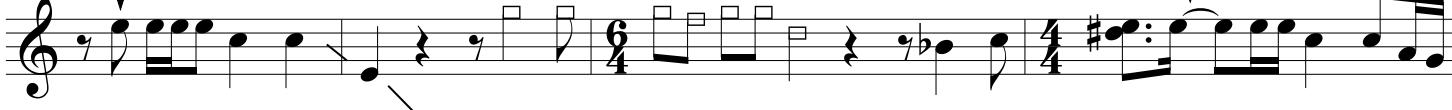
**I**

43



speech pitch

47



Three Delta Blues (2nd Violin Part)

5

51 *remember accel.*
mp

54

58

62

66 solo **J** use double stop blues e & open e
ff

70

75 *rit.* *pizz.*
ff

3. Twenty Twenty Blues (Skip James)

Presto *rit.* Allegro *accel. throughout piece* **K**
f

Three Delta Blues (2nd Violin Part)

6

11

16 up arrow 1/4 sharp L

20

24 M

29

33

38 N

Three Delta Blues (2nd Violin Part)

7

43

47

52

O gradual accel.

58 left hand slap

62

66 **f**

69

P

75 up arrow 1/4 sharp

79

84

Viola

Robert Johnson, Charlie Patton, Skip James

downward arrow is blues third
mordant means squiggle

Three Delta Blues

arranged by Dave Soldier,

1. Preachin' Blues (Robert Johnson)

Moderato

A **Presto**
subito faster frog, with bite

mp

6

II *accel.*

16 ord.

f

21 frog, with bite

mp

B

24

pp

mf gliss.

solo

29

pp

34

Three Delta Blues (viola part)

38

C frog, with bite

42

47 accel.

51 pizz.

56

62

71 accel.

72

E left hand slap

pizz.

mp

f

p

Three Delta Blues (viola part)

3

84 *arcofrog, with bite*

89 *rit.*

2. Moon Goin' Down (Charlie Patton)

Allegro

F *accel. throughout piece*

solo

10

15

G

19

23

Three Delta Blues (viola part)

27

H

left hand slap on X

31

35

pizz.

arco

39

I

left hand slap

ff

43

47

51

remember accel.

"Bartok" snap pizz.

ff

mf

55

Three Delta Blues (viola part)

5

59 arco "Bartok" snap pizz.

63 arco

J

70

74

77 rit. pizz. ff

Twenty Twenty Blues (Skip James)

Presto *rit.* Allegro accel. throughout piece

K

Three Delta Blues (viola part)

9

15

19

23

M

28

33

N

Three Delta Blues (viola part)

7

47

50

O

mf

gradual accel.

mp

58

left hand slap

63

f

67

72

p

77

82

88

Violincello

Three Delta Blues

downward arrow is blues third

mordant means squiggle

arranged by Dave Soldier

1. Preachin' Blues (Robert Johnson)

Moderato

The sheet music for Violincello consists of 11 staves of musical notation. The first staff begins with a dynamic of *mp*. The second staff starts with *mf*. The third staff features a tempo change to *subito faster* and *Presto*, with a performance instruction "frog, with bite" enclosed in a box labeled "A". The fourth staff begins with *mp*. The fifth staff continues the eighth-note pattern. The sixth staff starts with *accel.* (accelerando). The seventh staff ends with a dynamic of *pp*. The eighth staff begins with *mp*. The ninth staff features a tempo change to *p*, *pp*, and *mf*, with a performance instruction "frog, with bite" enclosed in a box labeled "B". The tenth staff begins with *pizz.* The eleventh staff ends with a dynamic of *ppp*.

Three Delta Blues (Cello part)

39

C
pizz.

42

46

accel.

51

55

D
arco solo
pp

61

speech pitch

67

speech pitch

72

Three Delta Blues (Cello part)

3

accel. E

76

82

86

2. Moon Goin' Down (Charlie Patton)

Allegro thumb pizz. upwards F *accel. throughout piece*

5

10

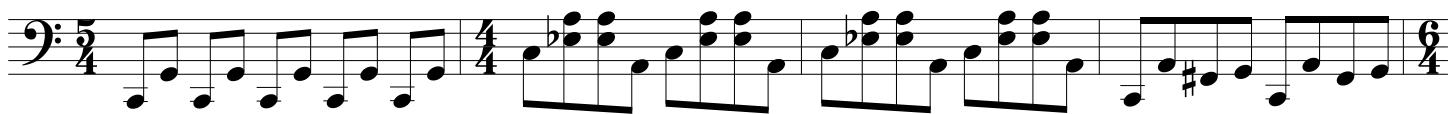
strong gliss.

G arco

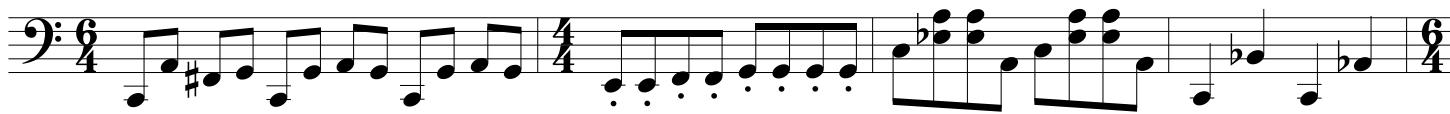
15

Three Delta Blues (Cello part)

19



23

**H**

27



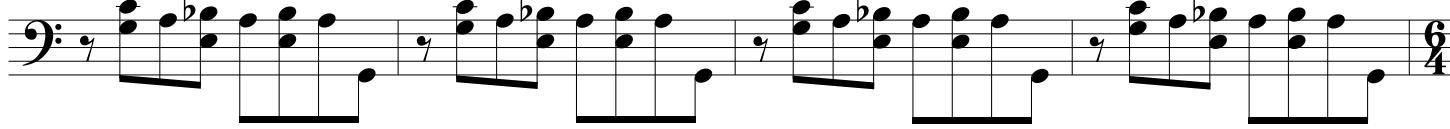
31

**I** pizz.

36



41

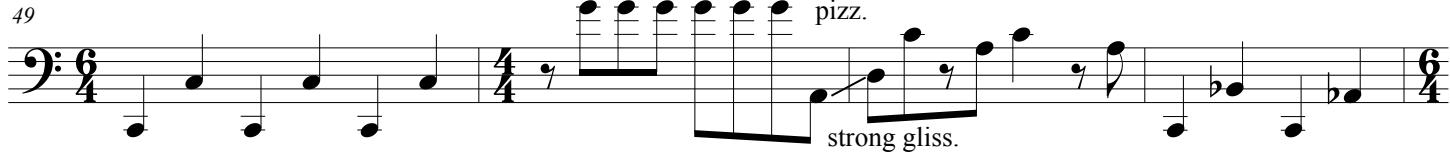


45



arco

49



pizz.

strong gliss.

Three Delta Blues (Cello part)

5

53 *remember accel.* solo (still pizz.).

58

63

J arco

ff

71

75 rit. pizz.

pp

3. Tweny Twenty Blues (Skip James)

Presto rit. Allegro accel. throughout piece **K**

6

Three Delta Blues (Cello part)

10

L

16

21

M

25

32

N

37

43

mf

p

Three Delta Blues (Cello part)

7

53

O

gradual accel.

mp

59

left hand slap

63

f

67

3

72

3

77

P

82

7

88

3