

The New Criterion

Poems

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Etude on a music stand

by [Wyatt Prunty](#)

Abstractly skeletal and waiting,
Dull nickel-shine unfolding up
Where the dutiful music spreads, curls,
This is the sad equivalence
Of upright for the printed sheet
And three prongs down for all the rest,
Such managing for so much same,
As though one score kept keeping score,
There where the chorus hollows halls,
And shallows on one self-sustaining chord,
As window-broken light, or shadowed turns,
As front rows empty darkly back,
And prodigy and glee and impresario
Imperceptibly the bow unfolds.

Wyatt Prunty's *Unarmed and Dangerous: New and Selected Poems* is available from Johns Hopkins University Press.

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