

1968

The Silent Piano

Louis Simpson

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq>

Recommended Citation

Simpson, Louis. "The Silent Piano." *New Mexico Quarterly* 38, 4 (1968). <http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol38/iss4/4>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Quarterly by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.

LOUIS SIMPSON

THE SILENT PIANO

We have lived like civilized people . . .
O ruins, traditions!

And we have seen the barbarians,
breakers of sculpture and glass.

And now we talk of "the inner life,"
and I ask myself, where is it?

Not here, in these streets and houses, . . .
so I think it must be found

in indolence, pure indolence,
an ocean of darkness . . .

in silence, an arm of the moon,
a hand that enters slowly.

* * *

I am reminded of a story
Camus tells, of a man in prison camp.

He had caryed a piano keyboard
with a nail on a piece of wood.

And sat there playing the piano.
This music was made entirely of silence.

LOUIS SIMPSON

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

A bearded man seated on a camp-stool—
"The geologist. 1910."

"Staying with friends"—a boy in a straw hat,
on a porch, surrounded with wisteria.