

Mystics

Duo for two pianos

Ian Percy

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1. The Search for a Consistent Truth
2. Rapid Changes have been Foretold (the world will watch in awe)
3. Everything Changes whilst Everything Remains the Same (Impermanence is a constant truth)

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To celebrate Alexander Scriabin's (1872-1915) anniversary year, his *Mystic Chord*: C – D – E – F# – A – Bb – C was used as the primary pitch material within this work. A *Mystic Complement*: Db – Eb – F – G – Ab – B – Db completed the total chromatic and provided secondary pitch material used for contrast and balance. This piano duo (for two pianos) carries the listener through three movements of succinct and well-focused musical form:

1st movement: Both pianos begin playing the primary atonal material: The six pitches of the *Mystic Chord*. At figure F, the 1st piano plays the *Mystic Chord* and the 2nd piano plays the *Mystic Complement*, combining to create a 12-tone soundworld, but effectively playing in two different atonalities. Before the movement ends with a final statement of the opening theme, both pianos play the six pitches of the *Mystic Complement* at figure N in a relaxed and melodic passage with a modal 'quasi-blues' feel to the atonal pitch collection. The first thematic statement holds a reference to an invisible G, with all the pitches belonging to the G Jazz melodic minor scale and the final statement is in an 'atonal' A. The melodic material at figure N outlines a clear reference to an Ab 'atonal modality', and so the form passes through two semi-tone modulations before resolving a whole-tone above where it started. Whilst one could not help but consciously notice references to Lutosławski's semi-tonal formal modulations, the form (and eventual pitch-scheme) was a natural consequence of working with the *Mystic Chord*.

2nd movement: Pitch organisation rotates through specific parts of the pitch matrix. This is currently a work in progress...

3rd movement: Rotating through predetermined elements of the pitch matrix (and completing the rotations), this lyrical and expressive movement starts in *Chord* material and ends in *Complement* material after passing through the total chromatic twice along the way. The form is fluid and linear with energetic crescendos and similar semi-tone modulations as the first movement. The pitch organisation produced a clear contrast between flats and naturals in the primary and secondary (*Chord* and *Complement*) material and this provided the catalyst for the opening (and closing) piano clusters, where syncopated rhythms separate pentachords (pentaclusters), playing all five flat notes (black keys) from diatonic clusters, playing all seven natural notes (white keys). There was also a notable conflict between E flat and E natural in the primary and secondary (*Chord* and *Complement*) material. This pair of notes (and similar semi-tonal conflict and resolution) can be heard at pivotal formal landmarks within the movement and the pitch-scheme, it is also used to flavour the melodic contour of the writing.

Mystics
Pitch Matrices

Mystic Chord Matrix: Primary material

	I0	I2	I4	I6	I9	I10	
P0	C	D	E	F#	A	Bb	R0
P10	Bb	C	D	E	G	Ab	R10
P8	Ab	Bb	C	D	F	Gb	R8
P6	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Eb	E	R6
P3	Eb	F	G	A	C	Db	R3
P2	D	E	F#	G#	B	C	R2
	RI0	RI2	RI4	RI6	RI9	RI10	

Mystic Complement Matrix: Secondary material

	I0	I2	I4	I6	I9	I10	
P0	Db	Eb	F	G	Ab	B	R0
P10	B	C#	D#	F	F#	A	R10
P8	A	B	C#	D#	E	G	R8
P6	G	A	B	C#	D	F	R6
P3	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db	E	R3
P2	Eb	F	G	A	Bb	Db	R2
	RI0	RI2	RI4	RI6	RI9	RI10	

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Duo for two pianos

1. The Search for a Consistent Truth

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♩ = 60 Pensive and hesitant: An ambiguous genesis with a flexible pulse... A With growing confidence: A thematic statement...

Piano 1

Piano 2

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for two pianos in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 60 beats per minute. It is divided into two systems. The first system is for Piano 1, and the second is for Piano 2. Both systems start with a tempo marking of 60 and a mood of 'Pensive and hesitant: An ambiguous genesis with a flexible pulse...'. The first system for Piano 1 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand plays a series of eighth notes with accents, starting on G4 and moving up to B4. The left hand plays a bass line with an 8va marking and a Ped. marking. Dynamics include ppp, mf, p, and pp. The second system for Piano 2 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The right hand plays a series of eighth notes with accents, starting on G4 and moving up to B4. The left hand plays a bass line with an 8va marking and a Ped. marking. Dynamics include mf, mp, ppp, p, and pp. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

2 **B** A unified theme of intent...

11 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *pp*

B A unified theme of intent... **C** poco accel. **D** ♩ = 60 Floating...

(8).....

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

B A unified theme of intent... **C** poco accel. **D** ♩ = 60 Floating...

20 *p* *f* *ppp* *f* *ppp*

E A dramatic statement: High dissonance and a transition towards twelve-tone...

(8).....

mp *p* *ppp* *f* *ppp*

E A dramatic statement: High dissonance and a transition towards twelve-tone...

29 *mp* *p* *ppp* *f* *ppp*

E A dramatic statement: High dissonance and a transition towards twelve-tone...

(8).....

mp *p* *ppp* *f* *ppp*

E A dramatic statement: High dissonance and a transition towards twelve-tone...

F Eighty-eight keys and the total chromatic: A combined linear statement and a stream of consciousness...

Musical score for the first system, measures 31-40. The score is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. The treble clef part features a complex melodic line with many accidentals and slurs, starting with a dynamic marking of *p*. The bass clef part has a more rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and a dynamic marking of *ppp*. A dashed line labeled *8va* spans the first two measures, and another dashed line labeled *8vb* spans the last two measures. The word *sim.* is written below the bass clef in the second measure.

F Eighty-eight keys and the total chromatic: A combined linear statement and a stream of consciousness...

Musical score for the second system, measures 41-50. The score is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. The treble clef part continues the complex melodic line with many accidentals and slurs, starting with a dynamic marking of *p*. The bass clef part continues the rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and a dynamic marking of *ppp*. A dashed line labeled *8va* spans the first two measures, and another dashed line labeled *8vb* spans the last two measures. The word *sim.* is written below the bass clef in the second measure.

4 **G** ♩ = 60 With increasing momentum...

rubato *sim.* (arp. throughout)

p

sim.

Red.

Red.

G ♩ = 60 With increasing momentum...

mp

pp *8va* *sim.*

Red.



H A lyrical interjection on the total chromatic...

I A serene and reductive transition...

poco rit.

expressive rubato

pp (arp. throughout) *mp* *p* (sim.) *pp* *ppp* *p* (sim.)

Red.

H A lyrical interjection on the total chromatic...

I A serene and reductive transition...

poco rit.

expressive rubato

ppp *p*

Red.

J ♩ = 60 A return to thematic...

K

poco rit.

57

poco rubato

Musical score for system 1, measures 57-66. Treble and bass staves. Dynamics: *ppp*, *p*, *mp*, *pp*. Includes triplets and a fermata.

J ♩ = 60 A return to thematic...

K

poco rit.

poco rubato

Musical score for system 2, measures 67-76. Treble and bass staves. Dynamics: *pp*, *p*, *mp*, *pp*. Includes triplets and a fermata.

L ♩ = 60 Assertive and confident...

M

poco accel.

Musical score for system 3, measures 77-86. Treble and bass staves. Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *ff*, *pp*. Includes triplets and a fermata.

L ♩ = 60 Assertive and confident...

M

poco accel.

Musical score for system 4, measures 87-96. Treble and bass staves. Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *f*. Includes triplets and a fermata.

N ♩ = 60 Expressive lyricism with a relaxed pulse: The mystics have spoken...

rubato *sim.* (arp. throughout)

77 *pp* *p* *mp* *p*

N ♩ = 60 Expressive lyricism with a relaxed pulse: The mystics have spoken...

expressive rubato

88 *ppp* *p* *mp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *mf* *mp*

8th *ppp* *sim.*



poco rit.

88 *pp* *mp* *p* *pp* *p* *ppp*

poco rit.

98 *ppp* *mp* *mf* *ppp* *mp* *ppp*

8th *8th* *8th* *8th* *8th*

O ♩ = 60 A quiet thematic statement...

poco rit.

99

pp 3 *p* 3 *ppp*

Ped.

O ♩ = 60 A quiet thematic statement...

poco rit.

pp 3 *p* 3 *ppp*

Ped.

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2. Rapid changes have been Foretold

(The world will watch in awe)

2 ♩ = 108 The briefest of statements...

P

Q

R

S

107

Musical score for the first piano part, measures 107-116. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two staves (treble and bass clef). The music is mostly rests, with a few notes in the final measure (measure 116) on both staves.

2 ♩ = 108 The briefest of statements...

P

Q

R

S

Musical score for the second piano part, measures 107-116. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two staves (treble and bass clef). The music is mostly rests, with a few notes in the final measure (measure 116) on both staves.

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3. Everything Changes whilst Everything Remains the Same

(Impermanence is a Constant Truth)

3 ♩ = 60 A new beginning dissolves as an ancient conclusion appears...

119

ppp *pp* *f* *p* *ppp*

Sost.

Note: The dynamics for both pianos are proportional to how quietly piano 2 can play the clusters.

One can dampen the resonance of the piano strings with a lightweight scarf, in conjunction with the sostenuto pedal to help control the dynamics, but this reduces the natural harmonics within the pedalled resonances of the clusters.

3 ♩ = 60 A new beginning dissolves as an ancient conclusion appears...

(pentachords/pentacusters: black keys) (sim.)

pppp *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

(diatonic clusters: white keys) (sim.)

Sost.

T ♩ = 66 *poco accel.* [3+3] **U** ♩ = 72 Sometimes contemporary life can seem complex...

130 *pp p mp pp mp mf*

pp

T ♩ = 66 *poco accel.* [3+3] **U** ♩ = 72 Sometimes contemporary life can seem complex...

ppp p pp p pp (sim.) p mp p mp (sim.) mf

(pentaclusters: black keys) (sim.) (sim.) (sim.)

(diatonic clusters: white keys) (sim.) (sim.) (sim.)

pp

V So What! ... not all answers can be positive... *poco accel.* [♩ = 88] *accel. molto rubato* [♩ = 108] *rit. poco rubato* [♩ = 66]

139 *ff p f ff f p pp*

V So What! ... not all answers can be positive... *poco accel.* [♩ = 88] *accel. molto rubato* [♩ = 108] *rit. poco rubato* [♩ = 66]

(pentacluster: black keys) (diatonic clusters: white keys) (sim.) (pentaclusters: black keys) (poco rubato)

(diatonic cluster: white keys) (pentaclusters: black keys) *f ff fff (sim.) p pp ppp*

(diatonic clusters: white keys)

W ♩ = 66 Drifting in the melancholy poetic...

poco rit. [♩ = 60]

148

ppp *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*

ppp *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*

ppp *p* *pp* *mp* *pp*

W ♩ = 66 Drifting in the melancholy poetic...

poco rit. [♩ = 60]

expressive and lyrical

molto rubato

poco rubato

pp *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

mp *p*



X ♩ = 60 A plausible solution and the karmic rewards of self-restraint...

poco accel. ♩ = 66

poco rit. [♩ = 60]

159

p *mp* *mf* *f* *p* *pp* *ff*

mp *p*

X ♩ = 60 A plausible solution and the karmic rewards of self-restraint...

poco accel. ♩ = 66

poco rit. [♩ = 60]

ppp *mp* *mf* *mp* *ppp*

mp *ppp*

Y ♩ = 66 As above, so below: In awe and celebration... poco accel. ... ♩ = 72 ... poco rit.

171

p *mf* *p* *f* *ff* *mp* *fff* *p* *pp* *mp*

Red. Y ♩ = 66 As above, so below: In awe and celebration... poco accel. ... ♩ = 72 ... poco rit.

ppp *pp* *mf* *p* *mf* *f* *mp* *p*



♩ = 66 poco rit. ... [♩ = 50] Z ♩ = 60 ... and so it begins, so shall it be in the end ... poco rit. ... [♩ = 50]

180

mp *p* *ppp* *pp* *(sim.)* *8va* *pppp*

(pentachords/pentaclusters: black keys) (sim.)

(diatonic clusters: white keys) *8va*

♩ = 66 poco rit. molto rubato ... [♩ = 50] Z ♩ = 60 ... and so it begins, so shall it be in the end ... poco rit. ... [♩ = 50]

p *pp* *p* *pp* *ppp*

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