

See John Salmon's master class on this piece in this issue.

from *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata*

CHORALE

DAVE BRUBECK

Andante sostenuto (♩ = 60)

pp

pedal simile

Musical notation for measures 1-3 of the Choral section. The score is in 4/4 time and begins with a piano piano (pp) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with chromatic movement, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment. A 'pedal simile' marking is present at the end of the first measure.

4

p

mp

Musical notation for measures 4-7. Measure 4 is marked with a box containing the number '4'. The dynamics shift from piano (p) to mezzo-piano (mp). The right hand continues with a chromatic melody, and the left hand maintains a steady accompaniment.

8

f

Musical notation for measures 8-11. Measure 8 is marked with a box containing the number '8'. The dynamics increase to forte (f). The right hand features a more active melodic line with some grace notes, while the left hand continues with a rhythmic accompaniment.

12

6

6

6

6

6

6

Musical notation for measures 12-15. Measure 12 is marked with a box containing the number '12'. The right hand consists of chords, and the left hand features a prominent sixteenth-note accompaniment pattern, with each measure starting with a '6' (sixteenth notes) marking.

14 (8va) loco

simile

16

18

20

22

cresc.

25

Musical score for measures 25-28. The piece is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). Measure 25 features a piano introduction with a triplet of eighth notes in the bass line. The dynamic marking is *p* *espressivo*. The right hand plays chords and single notes, while the left hand has a more active melodic line.

29

Musical score for measures 29-31. The key signature changes to two sharps (D major). The right hand features a series of chords and a melodic line with a trill in measure 30. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with eighth notes.

32

Musical score for measures 32-35. The key signature changes to one flat (B-flat major). A *cresc.* (crescendo) marking is present over measures 32-34. The right hand has a melodic line with a trill in measure 33, and the left hand has a bass line with chords. The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) appears in measure 35.

36

Musical score for measures 36-39. The key signature changes to two sharps (D major). The dynamic marking is *mp* (mezzo-piano). The right hand plays chords and a melodic line with a trill in measure 37. The left hand has a bass line with chords and a melodic line.

40

Musical score for measures 40-43. The key signature changes to one flat (B-flat major). The right hand features chords and a melodic line with a trill in measure 41. The left hand has a bass line with chords and a melodic line.

44

Musical score for measures 44-47. The right hand has a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

48

bring out melody

p legato e espressivo

Musical score for measures 48-50. The right hand melody is brought out, and the left hand continues with eighth notes.

51

poco a poco cresc.

Musical score for measures 51-53. The right hand melody rises, and the left hand accompaniment also rises in volume.

54

f

p a tempo

Musical score for measures 54-56. The right hand has chords, and the left hand has eighth notes. Dynamics change from forte to piano.

57

Musical score for measures 57-59. The right hand has chords, and the left hand has eighth notes.

60

Musical score for measures 60-63. The piece is in G major (one sharp). The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a bass line with quarter and eighth notes. Measure 60 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp.

64

Musical score for measures 64-66. The right hand has a dense texture of chords and sixteenth notes. The left hand has a bass line with quarter notes. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present at the beginning of measure 64. Measure 64 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats.

67

Musical score for measures 67-70. The right hand features a complex texture of chords and sixteenth notes. The left hand has a bass line with quarter notes. Measure 67 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats.

71

Musical score for measures 71-74. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes. The left hand has a bass line with quarter notes. A dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo) is present in measure 71. Measure 71 starts with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats.

75

Musical score for measures 75-78. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes. The left hand has a bass line with quarter notes. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present in measure 75. Measure 75 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats.

79

p

Musical score for measures 79-82. The piece is in 2/4 time. Measure 79 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble clef begins with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The bass clef accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is placed above the first measure of the system.

83

so. sl.

Musical score for measures 83-86. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 83 features a triplet of eighth notes in the treble clef. The bass clef continues with a similar rhythmic pattern. A dynamic marking of *so. sl.* (sostenuto, slando) is placed below the first measure of the system.

87

mp

Musical score for measures 87-90. The key signature changes to two flats (Bb and Eb). Measure 87 has a treble clef with a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The bass clef accompaniment features a mix of quarter and eighth notes. A dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) is placed to the right of the system.

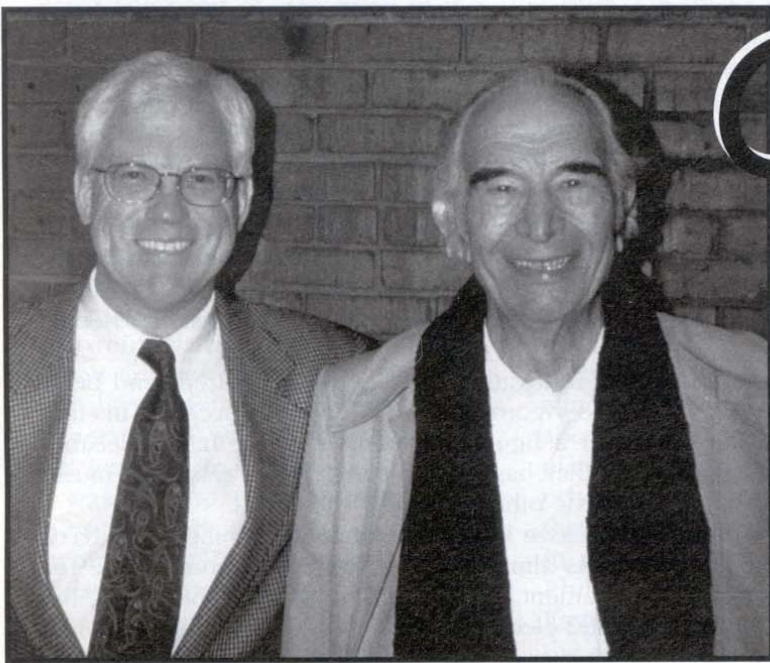
91

Musical score for measures 91-94. The key signature changes to one flat (Bb). Measure 91 features a treble clef with a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The bass clef accompaniment consists of quarter notes. The system concludes with a double bar line.

95

Musical score for measures 95-98. The key signature changes to one flat (Bb). Measure 95 features a treble clef with a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The bass clef accompaniment consists of quarter notes. The system concludes with a double bar line.

DAVE BRUBECK'S CHORALE



John Salmon with Dave Brubeck backstage in Chattanooga, TN (2000)

BY JOHN SALMON

bass voice; (2) a twelve-tone theme, heard in the top line of bars 11-14; and (3) another twelve-tone theme, this one expanding out symmetrically, embodied in the tenor line of bars 26 through the first beat of bar 31. (These three themes come together in the *Fugue*, the third movement of *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata*, creating, in essence, a fugue with three subjects.)

Andante sostenuto (♩ = 60)

Despite these dodecaphonic aspects, the work comes across as freely tonal with C major as the clearly perceived tonic. Two melodies unique to the movement—one fairly diatonic (the soprano line of bars 1-10), the other more chromatic (48-55)—are firmly rooted in C.

Despite these dodecaphonic aspects, the work comes across as freely tonal with C major as the clearly perceived tonic. Two melodies unique to the movement—one fairly diatonic (the soprano line of bars 1-10), the other more chromatic (48-55)—are firmly rooted in C.

There are traditional instances of *functionality*, as in the dominant-tonic relationship in bar 6 (C7 to F minor) or the half cadence of bar 55. There are also plenty of standard jazz chords, like the juicy D major nine chord on the downbeat of bar 17.

There are also examples of Milhaudian (and Brubeckian!) bitonality—as in bar 18 where the right hand plays an E7 chord while the left hand arpeggiates triads on B-flat, G, E, and D-flat.

But all this analysis may obscure the movement's central appeal—its heartfelt lyricism (as in bars 1-10), reminding me of the ingenuous songfulness of Edward MacDowell—and romantic textures straight out of Chopin or Rachmaninoff (as in bars 11-22). Hence a refined sense of *cantabile* and *legato* is indispensable to a good performance. Those unfamiliar with this *classical*

While Dave Brubeck may be best known as a jazz pianist, he is an equally prolific composer of works suitable for the concert stage, all written out and performable by classically trained musicians. Indeed, he has always described himself as “a composer who plays the piano,” rather than the opposite, and it is probably no exaggeration to assert that his compositional study with Darius Milhaud during 1946-47 was the pivotal experience that—even more than his many triumphs and successes as a jazz musician—has shaped his career. Milhaud encouraged Dave to become a professional musician, something that, astonishingly, Dave had doubted until Milhaud’s encouragement; to *dare*; and to compose using the jazz idiom, as Milhaud himself had done in 1923 with his groundbreaking *La création du monde*.

The present *Chorale* (you’ll find it in this issue beginning on page 24) is the second movement of Brubeck’s large-scale piano solo, *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata*. At 32 minutes, it is the longest of his piano pieces and the one with the most explicit references to J.S. Bach. To fully appreciate Brubeck’s ingenuity and the piece’s compositional sophistication, it helps to know the other movements. Three themes appear throughout the work’s four movements, unifying the cycle motivically: (1) a descending chromatic line, seen in the *Chorale* in bars 1-5 of the

side of Brubeck may be surprised to learn that no swinging or particular affinity with jazz styles is needed here. It is worth recalling that Dave's mother, Elizabeth Ivey Brubeck, was a classically-trained pianist who had studied with both Myra Hess and Tobias Matthay. As a boy, Dave heard his mother give numerous piano lessons on the music of Bach, Chopin, and MacDowell—sounds that predated Dave's later acquaintance with the jazz idioms of Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, and Teddy Wilson.

Above all, *Chorale* stirs deep emotions. I always get a lump in my throat at the music of bars 48-55. The gradually rising melody and the plangent double appoggiatura at 55 seem to express an intense but slightly repressed longing. The pianistic trick here is to maintain a very soft, very legato left hand, even sustaining the chord tones (if a tenth can be reached), while the right hand floats on top; yes, *bring out the melody* of the right hand, as Brubeck advises, but be gentle and placid about it in bars 48-51, allowing the crescendo only from 52 to 55.

Another magical moment occurs at 72, when the symmetrically expanding twelve-tone theme occurs in sixths in the right hand while the left hand descends chromatically. It begins *pianissimo* on a diminished seventh chord, in mystery and doubt (isn't that what a diminished seventh chord connotes, from Bach through Weber?), accumulating tension through increasing dissonance and a rising melodic line. An internal cataclysm has occurred. A spiritual challenge has emerged which culminates in measure 76, three-quarters of the way through the piece, in the proclamation of another of the twelve-tone themes (the one from 11-14). The four voices sing in unified rhythm. For those who know Dave's many choral works,

most with an explicitly religious text, it is hard not to imagine some climactic biblical verse sung here, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, all voices full throttle.

Catharsis (or, at least, diversion) arrives in bar 80 with a heavenly patch of E major, but it isn't *home* yet. An amazing deceptive cadence at bars 83-84—a B7 chord resolving to C major—brings us to the denouement we craved: tonic C major. By applying the sostenuto pedal after the downbeat of bar 83, and avoiding the damper pedal (but use your left foot for the soft pedal!), we can clearly hear all four voices of the B7 chord at the end of the measure. The resolution to C major is as dramatic as it is comforting.

It would be appropriate to excerpt this *Chorale* from *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata* for performance on recitals. What about preceding it with J.S. Bach's short, happy Prelude in C Major (BWV 924)? Only an advanced pianist should tackle the entire, four-movement *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata*, which quotes and could effectively be preceded by Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* in D Minor (BWV 903). The *Chorale*, on the other hand, is accessible to an intermediate student. ■

Pianist John Salmon, a longtime performer and colleague of Dave Brubeck, is the co-editor of Seriously Brubeck, a recent collection published by Warner Bros. Publications. He is on the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and is active as both a classical and jazz recitalist. His CD, John Salmon Plays Brubeck Piano Compositions (Phoenix PHCD 130), called "brilliant" by the magazine Piano & Keyboard, includes some of the works printed in this collection.