

Colors from a Changing Sky

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Timothy Kramer

1994

Colors from a Changing Sky

Piano Solo (1994)

This work was commissioned as a competition piece for the 1994 San Antonio International Piano Competition. Inspired by the vivid images of a Texas sky, this piece began under the working title *Etude Gris* (Grey Etude). I was initially interested in how black and white keys could interlock to generate passages that would sound difficult but were very pianistic and fairly easy to play. I was also interested in designing a competition piece that would challenge each pianist with different aspects of playing. Hence, the opening section presents questions about phrasing and quick dynamic contrasts, the central section demands sheer athletic strength, and the closing passage calls for a sensitivity to both color and line. In order to tie the sections together, a melodic “spine” runs throughout the piece. Initially present in two and three note cells, it expands in the central section to five notes and eventually blooms against slow harmonic motion in the ending. Seemingly disparate elements soon coalesce into an overwhelming force and then slowly dissipate, a drama often played out in the sudden changes of weather.

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Performance Notes

1. Accidentals carry through the measure. Some have been added for ease of reading.
2. Pedaling may be slightly altered in order to accommodate different pianos and halls.
3. In particular, if the work is performed on a smaller piano, the opening gesture may require partial use of the damper pedal (1/4 Ped.) in order to achieve the proper effect. If this is done, release the pedal slowly into the third beat of the first measure.
4. While all tempi in this work are given with metronome markings, those marked *circa* (ca.) are - within reason - open to some interpretation.
5. The expanding ligatures on page 7 represent accelerations in rhythm (not tempo) across the broader pulse of a dotted half-note or a dotted whole-note (two dotted half-notes).

Colors from a Changing Sky

COMMISSIONED FOR THE SAN ANTONIO
INTERNATIONAL KEYBOARD COMPETITION
In Memory of Andrew Russell Gurwitz

Timothy Kramer
1994

$\text{♩} = 48$ *Quasi Fantasia*

(flickering light, reflections, lightning, distant reverberations)

Piano

Musical score for the first system. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The piece begins with a piano dynamic and a marking "(depress silently)". A finger number "5" is written above the first note. A forte dynamic "sf" is marked. A "Sos. Ped." marking with an arrow points to the right, followed by "l.v. sempre". The system ends with a 4/4 time signature.

Musical score for the second system. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The piece begins with a piano dynamic "p" and a marking "(lontano)". A crescendo "cresc." leads to a piano dynamic "p". A "Ped." marking is present. The system ends with a 4/8 time signature.

Musical score for the third system. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The piece begins with a piano dynamic "p" and a marking "poco agitato ($\text{♩} = 108$)". A forte dynamic "sf" is marked. A mezzo-forte dynamic "mp" is marked. A "rit." marking leads to a tempo of $\text{♩} = 48$. A "poco calando" marking is present. A piano dynamic "p" is marked with "(echo)". A "dim." marking leads to a piano dynamic "pp". A "Ped." marking with an asterisk is present. The system ends with a 4/4 time signature.

Musical score for the fourth system. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The piece begins with a piano dynamic "p" and a marking "a tempo". A mezzo-forte dynamic "mf" is marked. A tempo of $\text{♩} = 72$ is indicated. A "grazioso" marking is present. A mezzo-forte dynamic "mf" is marked. A piano dynamic "p" is marked. A "Ped." marking with an asterisk is present. The system ends with a 4/4 time signature.

lightly *a tempo* ($\text{♩} = 144$)

P *p* *p* ($\text{♩} = \text{♩}$)

(S.P.) → *mp dim.* - - - *pp*

4/4, 2/4, 4/8

brilliant ($\text{♩} = \text{♩}$)

P - - - *f* *sf* *p* *sub.mf*

(S.P.) →

6/8, 2/4

($\text{♩} = 48$) *poco rit.* - - - - -

elegant *mf* - - - *mf dim.* - - - *pp*

(S.P.) →

2/4, 3/8

poco presto ($\text{♩} = 160$) *lightly* *rit.* - - - - - ($\text{♩} = 144$)

sub. ff *sub. p* - - - *pp* *sf* *mf* *dim.* - - -

(S.P.) →

8/8, 2/8, 3/8

($\text{♩} = \text{♩}$) ($\text{♩} = 72$) ($\text{♩} = 144$)

P *mp espress.* *f* "hot"

(S.P.) →

4/4, 3/8, 2/8

accel. - - - - rit. - - - - $\text{♩} = 72$ celando -

rumble

2 *pp* 8 basso *f* 3 *pp* 4 *mp dolce*

(S.P.) →

dim. $\text{♩} = 48$ *More Ominous* (♩ = ♩)

2 *pp* 3 *mf espress.* 4

(S.P.) → *Ped.* *l.v.*

sprinkle

4 *p* 3 *mf* 2 *l.h. f* *pp* 3 *mf* 4 *mp cantabile*

(S.P.) →

$\text{♩} = 72$ (♩ = ♩) (♩ = 48) *becoming sprightly* $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

cresc.

Ped. *release Sos. Ped. I*

$\text{♩} = 108$

3 *sub.p* *f* 6 *sub.p* *f* 7 *sub.p* *cresc.* 8 13 *f* 3 2

Ped. *

Heavy, Dark
♩ = ca. 69 (♩ = ca. 138)

(♩ = ♩)

mp (echo) mf
3/2 2/2 p f > p
pp # 10 slowly release 8

una corda tre corde poco - accel. mp mf cresc.
5/4 3/4 7/4
pp # 6 8 Ped.

Flowing a bit faster (♩ = ca. 72) lontano; bell-like
f mp cresc. mf
5/2 3/4 6/8
p # sub.p 6 5

sub.p cresc. mf
5/2 3/4
sub.p

mf ff
f mf
Ped.

Handwritten musical score system 1. Treble clef, key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The right hand plays a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (5, 6, 5, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5). Dynamics include *pp* and *simile*. The left hand has a few notes.

Handwritten musical score system 2. Treble clef, key signature of three flats. The right hand continues the melodic line with slurs and fingerings (5, 5, 6, 5, 5, 5). Dynamics include *mp*, *sub.pp*, and *mf*. The left hand has a *cresc.* marking and some notes.

Handwritten musical score system 3. Treble clef, key signature of three flats. The right hand has slurs and fingerings (5, 5, 6, 5, 5, 5). Dynamics include *pp*, *mf*, and *p*. The left hand has notes and a *p* dynamic.

Handwritten musical score system 4. Treble clef, key signature of three flats. The right hand has slurs and fingerings (5, 5, 6, 5, 5, 5). Dynamics include *mf*, *cresc.*, *f*, *sub.pp*, and *f*. The left hand has notes and a *p* dynamic.

Handwritten musical score system 5. Treble clef, key signature of three sharps (F-sharp, C-sharp, G-sharp). The right hand has slurs and fingerings (6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6). Dynamics include *pp*, *f*, *p*, *f*, *sub.pp*, *cresc.*, and *mp*. The left hand has notes and dynamics *f*, *f*, and *f*. There are markings $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$, $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$, and $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$ above the staff, and $(\text{♩} = \text{♩})$ below the staff.

(♩ = ♩) *Tempestuous*

sub. pp cresc. mp 3 sub. pp cresc. f

f > f > f v sempre f v

poco a poco

sub. pp cresc. ff sub. pp cresc. ff

ff v (Ped.) → ff v

rallentando (♩ = ca. 120)

sub. pp cresc. fff sub. mf cresc. fff

ff v (Ped.) → ff v

Grandioso (♩ = ca. 60)

8 14 14

3 2 1

fff fff fff

(Ped.) → (1/2) 8 → l.v.

6 8 14 7

hammering

4 2 3

fff sub. p cresc

ff p * 8 → l.v. Ped. →

3
8
ff
fff
fff (loco)
l.v.
5
2
(Ped.) → 3
poco rall. - - - a tempo *

5
2
fff
l.v.
2
2
fff
sub. pp
r.h.
P
3
2
8
Ped. →
(slap with palm)
* Ped. → (sempre)
gliss

3
2
una corda
PPP (almost inaudible)
PP
6
6
6
6
6
6
(Ped.) →
slightly relax the tempo

p dolce
(pp)
espress.
poco
3
3
(Ped.) →

poco - a - poco - calando - - - (d=ca 45)
diminuendo
(pp)
al niente
3
3
3
3
3
(Ped.) →

Tranquil (open, luminous, clearing, receding)

tre corde $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 90$ ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 30$) *accel.*

(PPP) (lunga) $\text{♩} = 6$ *mp Lyrico* $\text{♩} = 3$ *pp 3* $\text{♩} = 3$ *3 cresc.* $\text{♩} = 2$

(Ped.) * Ped.

$\text{♩} = 104$ *ritard.*

$\text{♩} = 6$ (*mf*) *delicato* $\text{♩} = 3$ *f* $\text{♩} = 3$ *dim.* *mp* (echo)

(Ped.) →

sparkle $\text{♩} = 88$ *accel.*

P $\text{♩} = 4$ *PP* $\text{♩} = 3$ *P* *l.h.* *hesitating* $\text{♩} = 3$ *mp* *sub.* *sf* $\text{♩} = 7$

(Ped.) → * Ped.

$\text{♩} = 104$ *poch.* *sub. mp* $\text{♩} = 3$ *dim.* *molto calando* $\text{♩} = 108$ *PPP* *mp*

(Ped.) → *

($\text{♩} = 36$) *mf* *dim.* $\text{♩} = 3$ *mp* *mf* *dim.* $\text{♩} = 3$

Ped.

ritard. - - - - - calando - - -
 (♩ = ca. 76)

3/4 4/4 *p* dreamy 4/4 poco dim. - - (pp) 3/4 4/4

(♩ = 76) molto calando - - - - - (♩ = 76) a tempo calando - - -
 a tempo

3/4 *mp* dim. - - 4/4 (pp) 4/4 *p* 5/4 *pp*

a tempo molto calando - - - - - (♩ = 38) a tempo gently rolling ritard.
 rolling

pp *espress.* (ppp) 3/4 *una corda* 3/4 5/4 *poco* (pp)

Ped. - - - - -

calando (♩ = 33)

ppp (ppp) (lontano) niente

8 - - - - - slowly release

(Ped.) - - - - -

San Antonio
 July 25, 1994