

Sonata No. 2, 15'18"

- I. Agitato (2014, revised 2017) 6'42"
- II. Passing, a prelude (2006, revised 2017) 3'12"
- III. Toccata (2006, revised 2017) 5'14"

Drama and tension are evident throughout **Sonata No. 2**. In three movements, *Agitato* opens with a whole-tone pattern in 4+6/8 meter. The opening interval is the augmented fourth, highlighting dissonance within the whole-tone iridescence. The contrast between the eerie melody which ensues, and then the major 2nd dyads which accompany its second rendition, heighten tension. After building to a climax, a melody in augmented triads enters. This melody is developed with three against two patterns, creating rhythmic tension within the beauty of the melody. A jazzy commentary on the melodic material ensues which increases the drama, leading to a restatement of the second melody. However the meter is changed, and this leads to different emphasis in the melody, transforming the gentle tune into something more macabre.

After the drama of the opening movement, respite is needed. *Passing, a prelude* is impressionistic and colourful, with the drama in this piece lying in the piano figuration which becomes increasingly complex. Sweeps of quartal arpeggios gain pace, with groups of four, then five intensifying the melodrama, before a thunderous return of the theme in the bass.

Toccata, in mixed meters and using the full scope of the piano, explores dramatic tension in new ways. Opening very simply with a simple, percussive, melody, this is interrupted with the pianist variously stomping the floor and tapping the piano. Changing and complex meters, minor second parallel dissonances, and the pianist playing as many notes as possible in crashing chords, are all devices which create thrilling impact. The middle section is a quirky waltz accompanied by quartal harmonies, which becomes a mazurka through altering rhythmic emphasis. The toccata material returns, excitement levels mount with enhanced octaves and full use of the keyboard. Thunderous chords at opposite ends of the piano bring this breath-taking romp to its conclusion.