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KAIKHOSRU SHAPURJI SORABJI

FANTASIETTINA
SUL NOME ILLUSTRE
DELL'EGREGIO POETA
HUGH MACDIARMID
OSSIA
CHRISTOPHER GRIEVE

MCMLXI

Piano Solo

Performing Edition by Ronald Stevenson
MCMLXXXI

duration 4'30"

BRAVURA SERIES OF PIANO MASTERWORKS
BARDIC EDITION AYLESBURY ENGLAND

NOTES ON SORABJI'S *FANTASIETTINA*

The manuscript of this short work for piano solo, composed in 1961 in honour of the distinguished Scottish poet Hugh MacDiarmid's seventieth birthday in 1962, was lent to Ronald Stevenson, the Scottish composer-pianist, shortly after it was written. As it was by no means the most legible of Sorabji's manuscripts, Stevenson decided to make a copy of the work, in pencil; as it happens, this was a most fortunate idea as far as posterity is concerned – not long after the original manuscript had been returned to Sorabji, apparently it disappeared. The composer himself has no precise recollections as to what became of it, and it has not yet come to light (Summer, 1987).

Stevenson kept his own copy of this work to himself for years, not wishing either for it to be reproduced or even for the composer to see it, as he did not feel certain that he had represented Sorabji's intentions accurately; however, in 1979 Sorabji did eventually have the opportunity both to study and approve Stevenson's copy, and subsequently the joint permission of the composer and Stevenson was obtained for the microfilming of Stevenson's MS copy for inclusion in a collection of microfilms of Sorabji's MSS.

Alistair Hinton

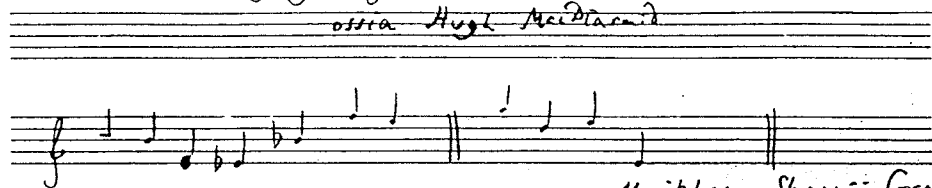
Sorabji is a living, legendary composer of Parsi and Spanish-Sicilian parentage, long domiciled in the United Kingdom. He has written a vast amount of music and has published two volumes of essays. In 1930 he premièred his mammoth piano solo *Opus clavicembalisticum* in Glasgow. It was published in 1931. A few years later, another pianist performed part of it in London; but it lasted much longer than it should have. From then, Sorabji banned performance of all his work without his express permission.

This self-imposed ban still obtains, though he has recently sanctioned performances by a very few musicians, including Michael Habermann, Geoffrey Madge, John Ogdon, Jane Manning, Yonty Solomon and myself.

Opus clavicembalisticum was dedicated to the Scottish poet Hugh MacDiarmid (Christopher M. Grieve), for whose seventieth birthday in 1962 Sorabji composed this Little Fantasy. It frames a slow central episode with two lively outer sections. Its sonorities are by turns bell-like, velvety and volcanic. It juxtaposes Occidental kinetic drive and Oriental stasis and ecstasy.

Ronald Stevenson

Fantasiättina sul nome illustre
dell'egregio poeta Christopher Grieve
ossa Hugh MacDiarmid



Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji
MCM LXI



Shortly after composing this work I Kaikhosru Sorabji,
lent the manuscript to Ronald Stevenson who made
a pencil copy first before returning it to me. Some
time later my original manuscript was lost and had not come
to light when the microfilming was made. Mr Stevenson's
copy of this work is carefully and wholly approved and authenticated
by me and is reproduced in its entirety on the microfiche by my
or Mr Stevenson's permission. Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji

Facsimile of first pencil sketch towards the performing edition made by Ronald
Stevenson 1962 with written approval by the composer. (Reproduced by kind
permission of Ronald Stevenson and Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji).

The image displays a handwritten musical manuscript for a piece titled 'CG/HM(c)D' motto from *Opus clavicembalisticum*. The manuscript is organized into four distinct systems of staves:

- System 1:** Features a circled section of notes with the word "dedication" written above it.
- System 2:** A complex piano accompaniment with multiple staves, including various markings such as "C", "H", and "D" circled, and a circled "E" at the beginning.
- System 3:** A single staff containing a sequence of notes and letters: C, G, H, M, D.
- System 4:** A complex piano accompaniment with multiple staves, including markings like "loco", "H", "D", and a star symbol.

Facsimile of 'CG/HM(c)D' motto from *Opus clavicembalisticum* (Pages 36-37 of MS) and printed version from the published score (Pages 38-39) (Reproduced by kind permission of the composer and J. Curwen and Sons Ltd., 8-9 Frith Street, London, W1V 5TZ).



Pratyaksh Ronald Stevenson
Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji
IV. VII. MCMLXVI. A.D.

Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji ca. 1950

The inscription reads: "Greetings to Ronald Stevenson from Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji. IV. VII. MCMLXVI. A.D."

Soggetto musicale in rubrica:

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a 3/8 time signature. The staff contains ten notes, each marked with a diamond symbol. The notes are: C4, H[r]4, (m)I4, (e)S4, T⁽ⁱ⁾[oph]E4, R4, G4, R[i]4, E[v]4, and E4. A double bar line is placed after the fifth note. Below the staff, the phonetic labels are aligned with the notes: C, H[r], (m)I, (e)S, T⁽ⁱ⁾[oph]E, R, G, R[i], E[v], and E.

C H[r] ^(m)I ^(e)S T⁽ⁱ⁾[oph]E R G R[i] E[v] E

FANTASIETTINA

sul nome illustre dell'egregio poeta
Hugh MacDiarmid ossia Christopher Grieve

Performing Edition by:
Ronald Stevenson
MCMLXXXI

Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji
X IV MCMLXI

Vivo: con impeto

8

loco

6

6

(*Red.* 3)

B

stacc.

sordo

pp

ppp una corda oscuramente

6

senza Red. (a meno che u.c.)

8 bassa

3

3

3

3

1 2 3 1 4 2 3 1 2 3 1 4 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 2

5

scorrevole

5

5

pochiss.

pochiss.

8 bassa

pochiss.

pochiss.

pochiss.

loco

5 3 2 1

5 4 2 1

3 2 1

5 4 2 1

3

3

cresc. molto

poco Red.

4

5

1

4

8

3

3

3

sfz

8

[*p*]

Meno mosso: poco lento

sonorità calda
e morbida

loco

First system of the musical score. It consists of three staves: Treble, Middle, and Bass. The Treble staff has a melodic line with a 5-measure rest, followed by a triplet of eighth notes (5, 1, 3, 2, 1) and a triplet of sixteenth notes. The Middle staff starts with a *ppp* dynamic and contains a *m.s.* (mezza sostenuto) section with a 5-measure rest. The Bass staff has a melodic line with a 4-5-1-4 triplet and a 3-measure triplet. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-5.

Second system of the musical score. The Treble staff features a *delicatiss.* (delicately) section with a 6-measure rest and a *m.d.* (mezza dolce) section. The Middle staff has a *m.s.* section with a 3-measure rest. The Bass staff contains a complex melodic line with multiple triplets and sixths, including a 1-2-3 triplet and a 4-5-1-4-2-5 triplet. A key signature change to [Cb] b is indicated at the end of the system.

Third system of the musical score. The Treble staff includes a *ritoccare* (ritardando) section with a 3-measure rest and a *m.d.* section. The Middle staff has a *m.s.* section with a 3-measure rest. The Bass staff features a *ritoccare* section with a 3-measure rest and a *m.s.* section. A *ritoccare* instruction is written above the Bass staff: "ritoccare questa „fa” silenziosamente".

Fourth system of the musical score. The Treble staff begins with a *legg. stacc.* (leggiero staccato) section marked with a *mp* dynamic. The Middle staff has a *sim.* (sostenuto) section. The Bass staff contains a melodic line with a 3-measure rest and a 5-measure rest. The system concludes with a double bar line.

loco

m.d.

(Red. 3)

m.s.

m.d.

loco

(Red. 3)

ossia:

loco

m.d.

trattenuto

quasi clarinetto con Red.

calmato pp

Red. ten.

8

pp

loco

cantato

mp

ppp

senza „fa“

Red. ten.


8

m.d.

m.s.

sim.

m.d.

 segue Red. a destra ten. sfumato

loco

Più vivo

pp

poco a poco cresc.

sovrapporre a pedale (pedal overlap)

Red. ogni armonia

3

5

5

3

4

[d minor] *sffz*

pausa drammatica

ossia:

D

Vivace: staccato marcato, ruvido, brusco

ff quasi una eruzione volcanica (siciliana)

pedale in pezzettini (Red. in dabs)

loco

sffz

sffz

[c# minor]

EDITORIAL NOTE

The editor has doubled the note-values in the interests of legibility, e.g. where the original MS had quintuplet semiquavers (16th notes) at the beginning of the piece, the performing edition has quintuplet quavers (8th notes), etc.

FANTASIETTINA EXERCISES

All to be practised in the complete range of dynamics (ppp-fff) unless where otherwise indicated.

Exercise 1 – Left Hand: Repetition

Exercise 2 – Left Hand: Repetition and chordal leaps

Exercise 3 – Left Hand: Repetition and chordal leaps

Exercise 4 – Left Hand: Scales

Exercise 5 – Textures and touches

Exercise 6 – Textures and touches

Exercise 7 – Right Hand: Tremolo and trill

Exercises 5 and 6 are combined in the 3rd measure after letter C. The two hands combined should sound as similar as possible to exercises 5 and 6 played separately. This is a graphic example of how Sorabji sometimes writes for one piano (2 hands) what other composers would write for 2 pianos (4 hands).

The chords in the coda letter D should be 'taken' in the air and attacked from a height of about a foot above the keyboard. They should be practised with closed eyes as an aid to accuracy, at first only two chords at a time, repeated *accelerando*; then three chords, then four, etc., in increasing numbers of chordal progressions.

Ronald Stevenson

May, 1987

FANTASIETTINA EXERCISES 1 - 7

1 LH

senza $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2
ped. 5

$\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2
5

segue sim.

8 bassa

8 bassa

2 loco

$\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2
5 5 5

segue sim.

3

$\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2
5 5 5

5

segue sim.

4

$\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 3 2
5 5 5

5

segue sim.

5

5

5

5 *cantabile legatissimo*

mp *con Ped.*

6

pp stacc. *sim.*

senza Ped. *sim.*

7 *RH*

segue sim.