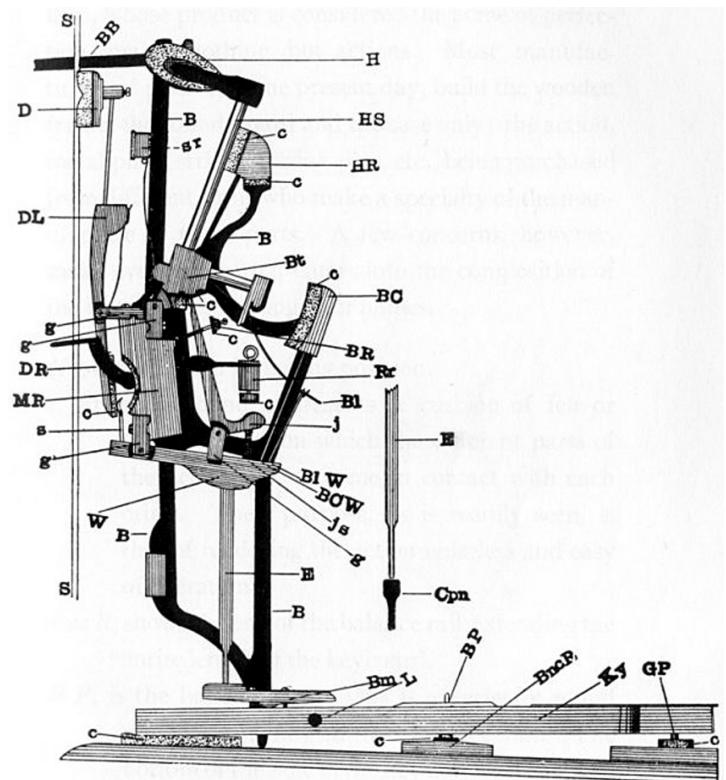


EUGENE O'BRIEN



CLOSE HARMONY

TWO PIANOS



CODEX
NUOVO

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Program Note

Close Harmony is a lively, intense and occasionally whimsical nine-minute etude for two pianos. In the first of two double meanings, the title refers to the close-position major and minor triads and commonplace harmonic progressions that form the core of the work's ordinary and even banal vocabulary. Familiar to every first-year music theory student (I-IV-V-I) and aficionado of three-chord rock, these triads and progressions erupt into melodies and dense chords that eventually encompass all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale, chords and melodies that clash with the simple triads from which they sprouted.

At the same time, the etude is a tour de force of keyboard acrobatics and rhythmic intricacy, both of which suggest the second meaning of the title: the close, intense ensemble coordination and harmony demanded of the two pianists.

Commissioned by the Cleveland Fine Arts Duo (Jacqueline Platten, Marshall Griffith) and premiered by the Duo in 1986, *Close Harmony* is dedicated to the memory of the American pianist Paul Jacobs, a champion of 20th-century music, frequent two-piano partner of Ursula Oppens, and official pianist of the New York Philharmonic from 1961 until his untimely death in 1983.

—Eugene O'Brien

To the Memory of Paul Jacobs

CLOSE HARMONY

FOR TWO PIANOS

EUGENE O'BRIEN

Very fast $\text{♩} = 132$

Piano I

Piano II

**) Depress silently and capture and capture with the sostenuto [II] pedal. Damper pedal may be used throughout, but sparingly.*

***) with the upper pitch always softer than the lower pitch, like an overtone*

(II →)

(II →)

Musical score for two staves (Piano and Violin) in 2/4 time, B-flat major. The score includes dynamic markings (p, f, pp), articulations (trills, grace notes), and performance instructions (e.g., 3, 8va, II →). Measure 3: Piano (p), Violin (p). Measure 4: Piano (p), Violin (p). Measure 5: Piano (pp), Violin (f). Measure 6: Piano (p), Violin (p). Measure 7: Piano (p), Violin (f). Measure 8: Piano (f), Violin (p). Measure 9: Piano (p), Violin (p). Measure 10: Piano (p), Violin (p). Measure 11: Piano (p), Violin (p).

(loco)

p f

(II ->)

13 (pop)** 15ma - - - >

(sim.)

p f

p f

f pva - - - (II) 3 3

p f

p f

p f

(II ->)

**) 8va sopra* applies only to the upper pitch (here and throughout)

22

(11-->)

8va - 3 - (loco) > (pp) 2/3f 2/3f 2/4 f 3 - 8va - (loco) > (11-->)

8va - 3 - (loco) > (pp) 2/3f 2/3f 2/4 f 3 - 8va - (pp) 2/3f 2/3f 2/4 f 3 - 8va - (11-->)

*) 2/3rds of a quarter-note triplet (i.e., the final quarter-note of the triplet is missing)

27

(11-->) 8va - 3 - (loco) > 3 - (pp) 15ma - 3 - (loco) > 3 - 8va -

8va - 3 - (loco) > 3 - 8va - 3 - (pp) 15ma - 3 - (loco) > 3 - 8va -

31

(11-->) 8va - 3 - (loco) > 3 - (pp) 15ma - 3 - (loco) > 3 - 8va -

8va - 3 - (loco) > 3 - 8va - 3 - (pp) 15ma - 3 - (loco) > 3 - 8va -

Handwritten musical score for two staves, measures 35-45. The score includes dynamic markings such as f , mp , p , pp , $2/4$, $3/4$, $2/3$, $(loco)$, gva , and b . Measure 35 starts with a forte dynamic f followed by a dynamic change to mp . Measure 36 begins with a dynamic p and a tempo change to $2/4$. Measure 37 shows a dynamic p followed by a dynamic f . Measure 38 features a dynamic p and a tempo change to $2/4$. Measure 39 contains a dynamic p and a tempo change to $2/3$. Measure 40 shows a dynamic p followed by a dynamic f . Measure 41 features a dynamic p and a tempo change to $2/4$. Measure 42 shows a dynamic p followed by a dynamic f . Measure 43 contains a dynamic p and a tempo change to $2/4$. Measure 44 shows a dynamic p followed by a dynamic f . Measure 45 features a dynamic p and a tempo change to $2/4$.

8va-1
 (ppp) $b\ddot{\text{o}}$
 mp f p
 $\text{(II-->) } \underline{3} \underline{3}$
 49
 $gva-1$
 $(loco)$ $b\ddot{\text{o}}$
 (ppp) $b\ddot{\text{o}}$
 $(loco)$ \gg
 $3 f$ $\text{(II-->) } \underline{3} \underline{3}$
 8va-1
 8va-1
 $\text{2/3 } \underline{3} \underline{3} \underline{2}$
 (II-->)

$\text{3 } \underline{3} \underline{3}$
 (ppp) $b\ddot{\text{o}}$
 $(loco)$ \gg
 f p
 $\text{(II-->) } \underline{3} \underline{b\ddot{\text{o}}}$
 53
 $gva-1$
 $(loco)$ \cdot
 $\text{3 } \underline{3} \underline{3}$
 $\text{15ma7 } (ppp)$
 $\text{3 } \underline{3} \underline{3}$
 8va-1
 $\text{2/3 } \underline{3} \underline{3} \underline{2}$
 (II-->)
 $\text{p } \text{8va-1 } \underline{3}$

$\text{3 } \underline{3} \underline{3}$
 $(loco) \gg$
 f p
 $\text{(II-->) } \underline{3} \underline{b\ddot{\text{o}}}$
 57
 $\text{3 } \underline{3}$
 $\text{3 } \underline{3}$
 $\text{f } \gg$
 $\text{2/3 } \underline{3} \underline{3}$
 (II-->)

72

74

76

78

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 84, measures 1-2. The score consists of two systems of music. The top system is for the orchestra, featuring multiple staves with various instruments. The bottom system is for the piano, indicated by a brace and staff. Measure 1 starts with a dynamic of p and a tempo of $2/3$. Measure 2 begins with a dynamic of f and a tempo of 3 . The score includes markings such as pp , f , v. , gva , and gva... . Measure 2 ends with a dynamic of p and a tempo of $2/3$.

