

# PIANO(S) AND STRING QUARTET



James M. Creed, 2024

## notes

*Piano(s) and String Quartet* is a simple piece about tuning, about scales, about passing through, and about torsion. The first performance took place at Avalon Café, London, in September 2024, performed by Fernando Yada, Jay Austin Keys, Anne Yin Han, Matthew Gilley, Freya Hicks, and Rebecca Burden. Two pianos were used: the old, creaking upright that had been at the venue for some years, which could no longer hold tuning, and Fernando's more stable upright which he was donating to the venue due to some logistical complications around moving to a new flat. The performance, then, served as a welcome party for the new piano, and a farewell for the old one. The two pianos were mostly in tune with each other around middle C, and much less in tune at the far ends of the keyboard—perfect for this material. Oddly, Fernando's piano had two extra white keys at the top of the keyboard, so through the long, shared scale there was a sense of approaching a shared tuning, departing from it, and then one piano being left alone for the final stretch. It was very beautiful, and entirely unexpected—none of us had realised until it was already happening. There's no need to reconstruct that situation in approaching other performances of the piece, but I think it's useful to know about.

For string quartet and any number of pianos

- Piano(s): pedal throughout
- Strings: no vib.



- — *ppp*; fast pulse, quiet enough that it is uncertain in the hand
- — free bowing (long); continue until rest
- & ─ — each tone 6–8 seconds; no particular pulse
- & ↗ — 30bpm/2 seconds

- Approx. 15 minutes
- Thanks

00'10" 02'00" 02'30" 02'45" 03'00"

Pno. *mp*

Vln. *mf*

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for a chamber ensemble. It features five staves: Piano (Pno.), Violin I (Vln.), Violin II (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Vc.). The Piano part is in the top system, with a dynamic marking of *mp* and a fermata at 00'10". The Violin I part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata at 02'00". The Violin II part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata at 02'30". The Viola part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata at 02'30". The Cello part has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a fermata at 02'30". The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, with time stamps indicating the duration of each measure. The overall layout is clean and professional, with clear notation and dynamic markings.

03'30" (continues through rest of piece)

Pno.

*ppp*

03'30" 04'00" 04'45"

Vln.

*mp*

Vln.

*mp*

Vla.

*mp*

Vc.

*ppp* *mp*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for a chamber ensemble consisting of Piano (Pno.), Violins (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Piano part begins at 03:30 with a series of chords in the right hand, each marked with a *ppp* dynamic. The Violin, Viola, and Violoncello parts have a section from 03:30 to 04:00 with sustained notes, followed by a section from 04:00 to 04:45 with moving eighth notes. The dynamics for the strings are *mp*. The score is divided into three measures by vertical bar lines, with time markers at 03:30, 04:00, and 04:45.



Pno.

once piano scale finishes

Vln.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: The score is for a piano and string ensemble. The piano part (Pno.) is written in treble clef and consists of a sequence of chords in the right hand, each marked with a double bar line and a fermata. The string parts (Vln., Vla., Vc.) are written in treble clef for the violins and bass clef for the viola and cello. They play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The first violin part has a note with a fermata above it. The second violin part has a note with a fermata below it. The viola and cello parts have notes with fermatas above and below them respectively. The text 'once piano scale finishes' is written above the first violin staff.

Piano score for measures 1-4. The score is divided into four systems: Piano (Pno.), Violin I (Vln.), Violin II (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Vc.).

- Piano (Pno.):** Treble clef. Measures 1-4 feature a sequence of eighth-note chords (dyads) in the right hand, all beamed together and held by a long slur. The bass line is empty.
- Violin I (Vln.):** Treble clef. Measures 1-4 feature a sequence of eighth notes in the right hand, all beamed together. The left hand is empty.
- Violin II (Vln.):** Treble clef. Measures 1-4 feature a sequence of eighth notes in the left hand, all beamed together. The right hand is empty.
- Viola (Vla.):** Bass clef. Measures 1-4 feature a sequence of eighth notes in the left hand, all beamed together. The right hand is empty.
- Cello (Vc.):** Bass clef. Measures 1-4 feature a sequence of eighth notes in the left hand, all beamed together. The right hand is empty.

Measures 5-8 are marked with repeat signs (double bar lines with dots). The notation for these measures is identical to measures 1-4. A vertical line labeled "x4" is placed at the end of measure 8, indicating a four-measure rest.

Measure 9 is marked with a bracket and the text "approx 30\"", indicating a duration of approximately 30 seconds.