

Nolan Krell  
Some of them were superstitious  
for solo piano  
2015/2017

## Some of them were superstitious (2017 version)

### program note:

why romanticize a machine?  
 how can bodiliness become time?  
 where do the body and the machine intersect?  
 what constitutes an accident when the operator knows the risk of failure?

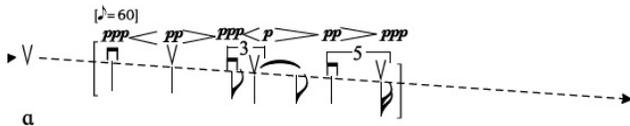
### performance directions:

#### Time structure:

The duration and time of this piece are determined by the pianist's breath. Each system represents one inhale and exhale of the performer. The first third of the measure as an inhale (represented by the "down-bow") and the remainder as an exhale ("up-bow"). This breath should always be through the mouth and on the edge of the audience's audibility.

Breaths should always be full and slow; the ends of which should have a desperate quality.

Breath may be unvoiced (dashed arrows) or voiced (solid arrows). When voiced, the performer should use the voice to create an unstable pitch in the middle range of the voice. This should be very breathy and linger on the edge of actual voice production.



Breath may be rhythmic for short durations (confined in the scope of the larger, "structural breath"). Once this rhythmic breathing is completed, the last breath should reform and continue with the larger breath.

#### Mouth shapes (in IPA):

m = closed mouth. The 'm' in 'moth'.

α = open mouth (but not dramatically wide). An 'ahhh' sound like in the word 'on'.

f = like the fricative 'f' in 'friend'.

ʃ = 'shhh' like in 'should'. There should also be a small whistling sound.

#### Hand techniques:



The key action takes place in the treble clef space of the system. The top line indicates the highest pitch on the piano. The bottom line indicates a key chosen by the performer to be the bottom of the range of the piece. This should be between 2 and 3 octaves below the highest 'c' (ie, the piece should exist between c5-c8 and c6-c8).

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| ■ | □ | Repeatedly tap the key.   |
| ◆ | ◇ | Grip key with thumb and index or middle finger and jiggle the key back and forth.   |
| ▲ | △ | With fingernail, scrape the surface of the key.   |
| ● | ○ | Ordinary depression of key while muting the string with your free hand. The key should be played as gently as required to make pitch. |

Pitches are not specified. They can be selected by the performer based on their approximate location within the range of the piece. A black notehead indicates a black key and an empty notehead indicates a white key. The line extending from a notehead indicates the duration of the action.

T/B = The 'top' and 'bottom' of the surface of a key: the top being the furthest point from the performer and the bottom being the closest to the performer. In the context of an ordinary muted note, this indicates where the performer is to touch the string: top being as far as reasonable from the performer and bottom being as close to the hammer as possible without touching it. An arrow from T to B or B to T indicates a gradual transition from one to another.

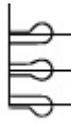
Circled Numbers:

Circled numbers are remembered pitches (there are 5 of them). An '!' preceded by a number indicates that a performer should memorize which pitch they perform for future indications of that circled number. It is reasonable to prepare these pitches in advance.

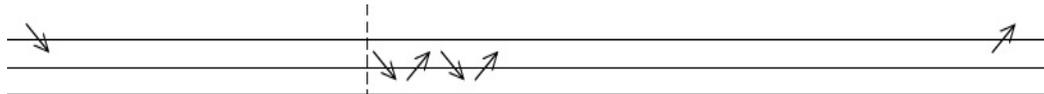


Grey contours do not indicate amplitude but rather the likelihood of pitch being produced. This does somewhat closely correspond to amplitude. The top line indicates a 100% chance of pitch and the bottom line indicates a 0% chance.

Pedals:



Pedal clef. Each line represents specific pedaling directions. This clef coordinates which pedal should be used. The top pedal on the clef is the right (sustain) pedal on the piano and the bottom pedal is the left (una corda) pedal. On the pedal clef, a downward arrow indicates pressing down the specified pedal and an upward arrow indicates releasing the specified pedal. This should not be done in an overly dramatic or emphasized way but it should also not be completely hidden. Sometimes the actions of the pedals coordinate with the actions of the hands.



This piece may be amplified.

Approximate duration: 7'-8'

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(unvoiced)  
□  
m

This system features a treble clef with a whole note B on the staff. A dashed line above the staff starts at a square box labeled 'm', rises to a 'V' at a vertical dashed line, and then descends. The piano part consists of a single downward arrow on the left and an upward arrow on the right, with a shaded area between the two staves.

□  
m

This system features a treble clef with a whole note B on the staff. A dashed line above the staff starts at a square box labeled 'm', rises to a 'V' at a vertical dashed line, and then descends. The piano part consists of three arrows (down, up, down) on the left and an upward arrow on the right, with a shaded area between the two staves.

□  
m

a

This system features a treble clef with a whole note B on the staff, marked with a circled '1' and an exclamation point. A dashed line above the staff starts at a square box labeled 'm', rises to a 'V' at a vertical dashed line, and then descends. The piano part consists of a downward arrow on the left, three arrows (down, up, down) on the right, and an upward arrow on the far right, with a shaded area between the two staves.

a m

②!  
T

[♩=60]  
*pp > ppp*  
(slight voice) [triplet]

f

③!  
T

④!

(unvoiced)

m a

[♩=60]  
*ppp < pp > ppp < p > pp > ppp*

B

T

②  
B

Diagram 1: A musical score system with a treble clef and a bass clef. A dashed line labeled 'V' starts at a square box on the left and curves upwards to a peak at a vertical dashed line, then curves downwards to the right. A dynamic marking 'f' is at the start. In the treble staff, a circled '1' is above a square box, with an arrow pointing from 'T' to 'B'. A grey shaded area is under the staff. In the bass staff, a downward arrow is on the left and an upward arrow is on the right.

Diagram 2: A musical score system with a treble clef and a bass clef. A dashed line labeled 'V' starts at a square box on the left, peaks at a vertical dashed line, and then descends. A dynamic marking 'f' is at the start. In the treble staff, circled numbers '3' and '4' are above square boxes. Arrows point from 'T' to 'B' in two locations. A grey shaded area is under the staff. In the bass staff, a downward arrow is on the left and an upward arrow is on the right.

Diagram 3: A musical score system with a treble clef and a bass clef. A dashed line labeled 'V' starts at a square box on the left, peaks at a vertical dashed line, and then descends. A dynamic marking 'f' is at the start. In the treble staff, circled numbers '3' and '4' are above square boxes. A grey shaded area is under the staff. In the bass staff, a downward arrow is on the left and an upward arrow is on the right. Above the staff, there is a tempo marking  $\text{♩} = 60$  and dynamic markings *pp*, *p*, *pp*, and *ppp* with arrows indicating a crescendo and then a decrescendo. Below these markings is a rhythmic notation: a square box with a '5' below it, followed by a 'V' with a vertical line, then a group of three 'V's with a '3' above them, and finally another 'V' with a vertical line.

Diagram 1: Musical score with treble and bass clefs. A dashed line labeled 'V' starts at a square box 'f' on the left, rises to a peak 'V' at a vertical dashed line labeled 'm', and then descends. In the treble clef, a horizontal line has a square box '2' and a 'B' below it. An arrow labeled 'T' points from the line to a grey shaded area. Another arrow labeled '(B)' points from the line to a larger grey shaded area. A circled '5' with an exclamation mark is below the treble clef. The bass clef is empty.

Diagram 2: Musical score with treble and bass clefs. A dashed line labeled 'V' starts at a square box 'f' on the left, rises to a peak 'V' at a vertical dashed line, and then descends. In the treble clef, a horizontal line has a circled '3' above it. A grey shaded area is below the treble clef. In the bass clef, there are several arrows: a downward arrow on the left, and a series of alternating upward and downward arrows on the right.

Diagram 3: Musical score with treble and bass clefs. A dashed line labeled 'V' starts at a square box 'a' on the left, rises to a peak 'V' at a vertical dashed line labeled 'm', and then descends. A solid line labeled '(slight voice)' starts at the peak 'V' and extends to the right. In the treble clef, a horizontal line has a circled '3' above it and a square box 'T' below it. A grey shaded area is below the treble clef. In the bass clef, there are arrows: a downward arrow on the left, and a series of alternating upward and downward arrows on the right.

(unvoiced)  $f$

$V$

$[ppp \leftarrow p \rightarrow ppp]$   $[=60]$

③

④

②

$[=60]$   $[3 \text{ } 3]$

T → B

$V$  (slight voice)

$m$

$f$

③

①

$[=60]$   $[3 \text{ } 5]$

T → B

$V$

$a$

$B$

⑤

$[=60]$   $[5 \text{ } 3]$

T → B

(unvoiced)  $f$

$V$

③

④