FOGO POSTO

(ARSON)

for

Solo Piano

João Godinho

Score

© João Godinho (b.1976)

February 2011

Approximate duration: 8'00"

Commissioned by MUSMA/Festival do Estoril 2011

Dedicated to Joana Gama

Performance notes

For any questions concerning the performance of this piece, please feel free to contact the composer at:
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Character and Expression

This piece lives out of contrasts of Character, Tempo, Dynamics and Colour. All aspects of the performance should contribute to reinforce these contrasts.

The quantitative *tempo* indications are merely suggestions. When choosing comfortable *tempos*, the performer should give priority to expressive/qualitative indications and to the resulting acoustics. In difficult passages, it is more important to clearly hear each note than to maintain speed metronomically.

The main texture of this piece consists on alternating notes between hands. In the context of this technique, articulation expressions like *marcato* and *legato* acquire slightly different meanings and possibilities:

marcato – it means that within each hand notes are to be played *marcato*. Since hands alternate most of the time, the resulting sound should be well articulated but a bit smoother than the usual meaning of the musical term *marcato*.

legato – it means that the notes within each hand should be played *legato*. Since hands alternate, notes overlap and the resulting sound is somewhat more blurred than the usual meaning of this term.

molto legato – it means that the notes within each hand should be played *molto legato*. The resulting sound of both hands playing should be even more blurred than in the previous case, since the amount of overlapping is bigger.

legato between hands (b.h) – it means that the performer should focus on the resulting melody of both hands alternating and try to make the resulting melody sound like a normal *legato*.

Occasionally the performer is asked to play combinations of these, for example *marcato* on the right hand (r.h.) and *legato* on the left hand (l.h.).

this notation means that the key should be held down until the *sostenuto* pedal has been depressed or until the finger that plays this note is needed again; it is also used to identify some of the notes that are being sustained due to the used of the *sostenuto* pedal.

Rhythm and Patterns

The main texture of this piece is a *moto continuo*. Its "skeleton" is built upon the combination (alternation) of different numbered patterns between hands. Most of the sections in this piece are a result of this process. The "formulas" are shown above the first note of each small section, which makes the sections them identifiable. For example, (6 x 5) means that in that section the right hand plays a 6 note pattern against a 5 note pattern in the left hand. (Individual patterns of each hand are not to be emphasized in the performance.) Although there are several exceptions within these formulas, the formulas might be helpful in the process of reading/decoding the score.

Although the score has an unusually high number of notes considering its duration, the memorization of the piece will be considerably easier once the performer has understood its repetitive patterns and the way they work together. In spite of the complex harmonic and rhythmic feel of the piece, the parts of each hand can be sometimes surprisingly simple; that can be easily understood if hands are played separately.

Due to the nature of the piece, the rhythmic feel is sometimes complex and there's more than one regular beat "to grab on to". Notes are usually beamed in groups of four or three, according to the time signature, but it is to the performer to discover and emphasize the resulting rhythmic feel of each passage.

Accidentals

The basic concept behind this texture of alternating hands relies on the fact that most of the time they work at different "heights". During most of the piece, while one hand is playing only "black" keys, the other one only plays "white" keys, in such a way that hands avoid collision.

Accidentals are valid during the whole bar. However, since the texture of this score is visually complex, cautionary accidentals are used frequently.

Pedals

This piece requires the use of the *sostenuto* pedal, besides the *una corda* and *sustain pedal*. Due to the fact that the *sostenuto* pedal is rarely required, the performer should inform the venue in advance about the need of a well calibrated pedal.

When the Ped. symbol is used alone, it refers to the sustain pedal. Occasionally, since more than one pedal might be used at the same time, the cautionary word "sustain" appears in front of it. Besides its conventional uses, the *sustain* pedal is used in the following ways:

1/2 Ped. - Half pedal – The sustain pedal should be slightly depressed in such a way that it doesn't "flood" the harmonies (unless that is specifically requested). This of course varies according to the instrument, to the acoustics of the concert room and to the register being played. After a ½ pedal indication, usually follows a "full" pedal indication cancelling out the "½".

Depress the sustain pedal gradually and release it abruptly at the end of the closed triangle.

The *sostenuto* pedal is used in a conventional way, that is, after certain keys have been played or depressed silently (senza sonare).

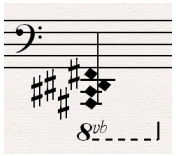
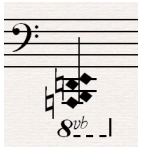
In this piece it is essential that the "amount" of *sustain* pedal used in each occasion considers the piano size and acoustics of the room.

Dynamics
When only one dynamics indication appears, it applies to both hands, regardless of its position.

Ossias:
Notes in brackets are optional.

This piece contains some *ossias* indicated in the score.

The first section of the piece (bars 1-7) requires subtle *sostenuto* pedal effects. If the conditions of the piano or concert room make it difficult for the audience to clearly listen to these delicate sounds, then consider using the following alternative procedures:

Bar 2: instead, press these notes *senza sonare*: 

Bar 3: instead, press these notes *senza sonare*: