

eight days in April

Chris Miller, 1988/2005

for solo piano

♩ = 50

pp 11 (pedal is depressed throughout piece)

7 7

9 **f** 9 1 10 **ff**

7 9 **f** 1 7 11

2

8 7 10

1 2 8 7 12 **f**

2 7 9

3

7 10 8 2

10 **ff** 7 1 8 **f** [3]

The musical score consists of ten staves of guitar notation, organized into five pairs. Each staff contains chord diagrams and fingering numbers. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *fz* (forzando). Some notes are marked with a fermata. Boxed numbers 4, 5, and 6 indicate specific measures or sections.

Staff 1: Chords with fingering 2, 8, 3, 8, 9.

Staff 2: Measure 4. Chords with fingering 9, 7, 7, 2.

Staff 3: Chords with fingering 9, 10 (triple), 8. Dynamic markings: *f*, *mf*.

Staff 4: Chords with fingering 7, 1, 7, 12. Dynamic marking: *mf*.

Staff 5: Measure 5. Chords with fingering 7, 10, 3, 10.

Staff 6: Chords with fingering 2, 9, 1, 12. Dynamic marking: *f*.

Staff 7: Chords with fingering 10 (triple), 8, 8, 7. Dynamic marking: *f*.

Staff 8: Measure 6. Chords with fingering 7, 8, 8, 8.

Staff 9: Chords with fingering 2, 9, 2, 9. Dynamic marking: *f*.

Musical staff 1: Treble clef. Measure 1: chord 8. Measure 2: *mf* dynamic, triplet of eighth notes, chord 10. Measure 3: chord 10. Measure 4: chord 3. Measure 5: chord 8.

Musical staff 2: Bass clef. Measure 1: chord 9. Measure 2: chord 7. Measure 3: chord 9. Measure 4: chord 7. Measure 5: chord 9.

Musical staff 3: Treble clef. Measure 1: chord 3. Measure 2: chord 8. Measure 3: *mf* dynamic, triplet of eighth notes, chord 7. Measure 4: chord 1. Measure 5: chord 11.

Musical staff 4: Treble clef. Measure 1: chord 7. Measure 2: chord 8. Measure 3: *f* dynamic, triplet of eighth notes, chord 8. Measure 4: chord 8. Measure 5: chord 7.

Musical staff 5: Bass clef. Measure 1: chord 11. Measure 2: chord 10. Measure 3: chord 11. Measure 4: chord 10.

Musical staff 6: Treble clef. Measure 1: chord 8. Measure 2: chord 7. Measure 3: chord 3. Measure 4: chord 7. Measure 5: chord 11.

Musical staff 7: Treble clef. Measure 1: *mf* dynamic, triplet of eighth notes, chord 7. Measure 2: chord 7. Measure 3: chord 7. Measure 4: chord 9. Measure 5: *f* dynamic, triplet of eighth notes, chord 9.

Musical staff 8: Bass clef. Measure 1: chord 2. Measure 2: chord 7. Measure 3: chord 7. Measure 4: chord 10.

Empty musical staff with five lines.

(hold pedal until strings have completely faded out)

Explanatory notes

eight days in april is an exploration of the variety contained within a limited material. The pitch material is based on the eight possible combinations of major or minor triads on b, e, and f-sharp. Each combination is built up, starting with two notes and adding notes until the full cluster is present. After this point notes are dropped until only two remain, which are shared by the next combination, and the process repeats.

Rhythmically, the piece operates on three levels. The first and most apparent is the constant and soft pulse of eight-note = 50. The next level is the number of repetitions of each chord, indicated by the number underneath the chord, and by short stems. An additional and contrasting level is provided by "shots," intervals using notes from the previous harmony which are played in between the soft and regular pulse at a louder dynamic.

The rests preceding the shots are only to clarify the rhythm of the shot. The preceding chord is played on the rest preceding the shot. Following the shot, the notes of the shot are left out of the chord until they have faded to the same dynamic as the repeated chord, or until a change of chord, at which point they are played again. The number of repetitions over which this interval should be omitted depends on the dynamic of the shot and the resonance of the piano, and is left to the discretion of the performer.

For example, the first chord and shot in the second system might be realized as follows:

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a chord of three notes (B, E, F#) marked with a dynamic of *f*. Below the first measure of this staff is the number '9'. The second staff also has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It shows a sequence of chords: a *pp* chord, followed by a *f* chord, and then a *pp* chord. The chords are connected by short stems, indicating a rhythmic pulse.

To facilitate the counting of repetitions, every fourth short stem after a change of chord or a shot is slightly longer.

Accidentals apply only as long as a note is immediately repeated. In the event of confusion, the order of the combinations of triads are:

- 1: bef#
- 2: BEf#
- 3: Bef#
- 4: beF#
- 5: BeF#
- 6: bEF#
- 7: bEf#
- 8: BEF#

Notes on compositional process

eight days in April was composed in 1988. The number of repetitions of each chord and the occurrence of shots were determined through chance procedures. In 2005, greater rhythmic and dynamic variety was introduced with the shots, also determined through chance procedures.