

Program Notes

Octurne is a solo piano piece written over a two week period in the fall of 2004. The piece was part of a project to write new piano nocturnes for a concert presented in January of 2005. The piece is based entirely on the F octatonic scale. The octatonic scale wears many hats: It is often used in the contemporary music world as a scale with atonal implications both melodically and harmonically. However, in the jazz world the octatonic scale is often used to create interesting harmonic structures and melodic material. This piece was written to explore this musical relationship between these two art forms. The title is derived from the concept of using the octatonic scale to write a piano nocturne (hence the name, "Octurne").

OCTURNE

For Solo Piano

John Max McFarland

Pesantè, trudging along (♩ = 58)

The score is written for piano and consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 15-18) features a treble clef staff with a whole rest and a bass clef staff with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include *pp*, *ff*, and *p*. The second system (measures 18-21) continues the accompaniment and introduces a melodic line in the bass clef with dynamic markings *ff*, *pp*, *cresc. molto*, and *f*. It includes complex rhythms such as 5:4, 4:3, and 7:6. The third system (measures 21-24) features a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp* and *sempre*. Performance directions include *agitato* and *poco rit.*

pp
sempre Ped.

ff *p*

pp *cresc. molto* *f*
(top voice only)

mp *sempre*

agitato → *poco rit.*

5:4 8^{va} 2 2

A tempo **rit.**

(8) *(loco)* *cresc. molto*

5:3 4:3 5:3 4:3

8^{vo}

Maestoso (♩=48)

fff *mp* *fff* *ca 4"*

accel →

Ped. *Ped.*

Tempo II

mf *fff* *ppp* *fff*

10

Ped. *Ped.* *Ped.*