

JOSEPH BABER

SIX SINFONIAS

for Piano

Op. 47

Edited by Ian M. Stewart



Notes from the Composer

The Six Sinfonias for Piano, Op. 47 were written in 1980 as a wedding gift for Catherine McGlasson, a close friend, keyboard accompanist, and string-playing colleague of mine. The character of these works very much reflects the personal introspection of the dedicatee, thoughtful and private in nature. Only now have they been edited and recorded for public performance with the knowledge and good wishes of Ms. McGlasson herself.

Catherine McGlasson, pianist, harpsichordist, violinist, violist, and Suzuki Master is Artistic Director of Suzuki Talent Education of Appalachia located in Kingsport, Tennessee.

–Joseph Baber

Notes from the Editor

Editing Methodology

All fingering and pedaling is editorial. Key signatures and expressive tempo markings (e.g., “Tranquillo”) were not indicated in the original manuscripts and have been added with the composer’s approval. Time signatures were left out by request of the composer. Dynamics are based on the composer’s original notes included with the manuscripts, from which excerpts are reproduced in “Interpretive Suggestions.”

Interpretive Suggestions

NOTE: The following notes are meant to aid in interpretation of the pieces contained within this volume. They contain interpretive suggestions from the composer and myself (as his designated performer). These notes are intended for anyone looking for an interpretive aid, but especially non-professional pianists. They are strictly optional, and do not have to be followed.

The following designations for these Sinfonias were originally printed by the composer in a set of program notes. These were not included in the current edition to avoid them being taken as literal directions:

- 1 – a floating piece
- 2 – a walking piece
- 3 – an arioso for the right hand
- 4 – a caprice
- 5 – a prayer
- 6 – a finale on the rush of feigned passion

In addition to the above designations, the following notes were found accompanying certain passages in early copies of the work. These were removed from the final version of the collection, but they have been reproduced here to shed some light on the composer's suggested interpretation.

Sinfonia 1:

- m. 1 – “Begin quietly with ... wan and dreamy indifference.”
- m. 10 – “A little cadence; then go all wispy in [the] treble clef.”
- m. 12 – “Now, back to wan indifference.”
- m. 15 – “A little more wakeful in the second part.”
- m. 21 – “Wispieness returns.”
- m. 23 – “Start to warm up a little.”
- m. 26 – “Dwell just a tad on the exquisite bi-tonality.”
- m. 27 – “What was wispy before is now quietly poignant.”
- m. 28 – “Not so affected this time on the ‘meaningful’ pause!”
- m. 29 – “Conjure up a bit of noble resignation on this descending line, then do a tiny hesitation before the cadence, as if overcome by the seriousness of it all.”

Sinfonia 2:

- m. 11 – “If you get softer, nobody will notice that the last chord is ‘peculiar.’”
- m. 21 – “Don’t soften this time.”

Sinfonia 3 (introduction):

“Sustain the long melody line in a masterful way, while keeping the overwhelming emotions under control like a banked fire.”

Sinfonia 5 (introduction):

“It was necessary to make a sixth: a sort of hymn prelude with a quiet and legato manner all the way through.”

–Ian M. Stewart

Six Sinfonias

I

Joseph Baber, Op. 47, No. 1

Tranquillo ♩ = 42

Measures 1-4. Treble clef, bass clef, key signature of two flats. Includes dynamic marking *p poco rubato*.

Measures 5-8. Includes fingering numbers: 3 2 1 5 1 1 2 4 5 2 5 3 4 2.

Measures 9-12. Includes dynamic markings *pp* and *p*, and tempo markings *[poco meno mosso]* and *[a tempo]*.

Measures 13-16. Includes a repeat sign and a *cresc.* marking.

17 *wispy*

22 *cresc.* *mf*

25 *rit.* *pp* *poignantly* *a tempo* *p*

28 *with nobility* *breve*