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My heroes are not your heroes

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My heroes are not your heroes

for solo piano

duration: 9 minutes

John Dorhauer
2011

In the most general terms, *My heroes are not your heroes* is about the loss and subsequent regaining of the self. Semantically, the piece blends varying elements of modernism, postmodernism, quotation and the absurd. Ideally, *My heroes* satisfies a few different musical trajectories simultaneously, although the exact interpretation of the piece was left intentionally open-ended.

Everything is structured around four separate lines of spoken text – “I am Batman,” “Your mother is Batman,” “No one is Batman,” and “We are all Batman” – that require the pianist to momentarily break the fourth wall. The idea for these texts came from the pianist for whom the piece was written, as did the idea of incorporating quotations of both the Batman and Superman themes. The most effective way I found to make elements that are so absurd (at least on the surface) work was to have them operate on different levels in equal proportions.

On a deeper level, I perceive the idea of “Batman” to be a superhero in the more general sense. In other words, Batman represents the idealized self. The two themes then represent opposite spectra of the self: Batman’s theme, which is reliant on driving rhythms and smaller intervals, represents the flawed nature of man, while Superman’s theme, which is defined by spacious, fanfare rhythms and wider intervals, is associated with the purer aspects of man and the desire for immortality. This image of the idealized self is originally associated internally in the first section. The second section begins to lose this sense by projecting it onto others, only to lose it completely in the third section. The final section presents the resolution of this conflict, where the idealized self can be shared with all humanity.

On a more visceral level, there is a constant conflict between motives associated with these widely known musical themes. Musical elements that are connected with either theme are presented independently in the introduction, but there is an escalating sense of conflict between these two distinct characters that drives the rest of the piece. Quotations are disguised amidst a dense harmonic language, but moments of more isolated quotations are intended to provide accessibility to the listener. This conflict ultimately leads towards the resolution that occurs at the end, where the Superman chorale remains in triumphant glory.

Whether the listener chooses to engage in an arc that is more philosophical or philistine (or something in between), there will undoubtedly be something to take away from this piece.

My heroes are not your heroes

John Dorhauer
2011

♩ = 92

Piano

pp *mf* *p*

mute strings
w/ RH

mp *mf* *mp*

ff *p* *mf* *mp*

f *p* *p* *sfz* *f*

3

3

3

3

6

6

3

3

3

3

8^{va}₁

8^{va}₁

8^{vb}

8^{va}₁

8^{vb}₁

8^{va}₁

8^{va}₁

Musical score for measures 9-10. Measure 9 features a treble clef with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass clef with a similar triplet. A dynamic marking of *p* is present. Measure 10 shows a treble clef with a *sfz* marking and a *p* marking with a hairpin, and a bass clef with a *pp* marking and a hairpin.

Musical score for measures 11-12. Measure 11 has a treble clef with a *mf* marking and a *p* marking with a hairpin, and a bass clef with a *pp* marking and a hairpin. Measure 12 features a treble clef with a *pp* marking and a hairpin, and a bass clef with a *pp* marking and a hairpin. A five-fingered chord is indicated in the bass clef.

Musical score for measures 13-14. Measure 13 is marked *ff* and includes a *ped.* marking. Measure 14 features a treble clef with a *ff* marking and a *3* marking, and a bass clef with a *3* marking. A *** symbol is located at the end of the system.

Musical score for measures 14-15. Measure 14 has a treble clef with a *3* marking, a *p sub* marking, and a *loco* marking. Measure 15 features a treble clef with a *5* marking, a *3* marking, a *sfz* marking, and a *mp* marking. A *8va* marking is present above the treble clef. The bass clef has a *3* marking and a *8vb* marking below it.

Musical notation for measures 17-18. Treble clef contains sixteenth-note runs with fingerings 6 and 5. Bass clef contains triplet patterns with dynamics *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *p*, and *mp*.

Musical notation for measures 19-20. Treble clef contains sixteenth-note runs with dynamics *p*, *mf*, and *mp*. Bass clef contains triplet patterns with dynamic *mp*.

Musical notation for measures 21-22. Treble clef contains sixteenth-note runs with dynamics *f* and *mf*. Bass clef contains sixteenth-note runs with dynamics *mf* and *f*. Includes markings *Red.* and ** Red.*

Musical notation for measures 23-24. Treble clef contains sixteenth-note runs with dynamic *f*. Bass clef contains sixteenth-note runs with dynamic *f*. Includes markings *Red.* and ***.

Violently slam 1st & 3rd pedals together

"I am Batman"

25

Musical notation for measures 25-26. Measure 25 shows a whole rest in both staves. Measure 26 shows a whole note chord in the right hand and a whole note chord in the left hand, with a fermata over the right hand chord.

Nostalgic (♩=60)

sempre pp

(continue to suppress sustain pedal)

26

Gently brush strings within the pitch range with the skin of the fingers

Musical notation for measures 26-28. Measure 26 includes a guitar-style chord diagram in the bass clef. Measures 27-28 feature arpeggiated chords with triplets and a piano (*p*) dynamic marking.

29

Musical notation for measures 29-31. Measures 29-31 continue the arpeggiated chord pattern with triplets and a quintuplet in the right hand.

32

Musical notation for measures 32-34. Measures 32-34 continue the arpeggiated chord pattern with triplets in both hands.

Using bound edge of 9 3/4" length notebook with a rounded binding, gently press groups of black keys. Notation approximates both pitch range and placement in time.

35

Musical notation for measures 35-38. The right hand has vertical bars on the staff. The left hand has chords and a melodic line with triplets and slurs.

39

Musical notation for measures 39-41. The right hand has vertical bars on the staff. The left hand has a melodic line with triplets and a quintuplet.

42

Musical notation for measures 42-44. The right hand has vertical bars on the staff. The left hand has a melodic line with a sextuplet and dynamic markings *sfz* and *p*.

45

mp sfz mp mf sfz mf

48

Strike mid-range strings with binding of notebook

Strike lowest strings with binding of notebook

sfz sfz sffz sffz f ff

50

"Your mother is Batman"

Slam notebook on ground - w/ gusto!

51

$\text{♩} = 92$ *mf*

pp mf p p f

My heroes...

54 *pp* *f*

3

pp *f* *pp* *f*

56 *p* *8va*

3

6

p

59 *ff*

5

3

ff

Suddenly Lethargic (♩=48)

61 *pp* *mf* *f*

3

mf *f*

8vb

My heroes...

65 *f*

mp *f*

67 *ff*

ff *mf* 8vb

69 *mf* *f*

mf *f* (8vb) *f*

70 *mp* *f*

mp *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *mp* *f*

72 *mp* *sfz* *pp*

mf

74 *f* *ff*

f *8vb*

76 *ff*

ff *8vb*

78 *"No one is Batman"* *ff*

ff

My heroes...

79 *mf* *f* *mf* *ff*

8vb *ff* *mf*

82 *mf* *ff* *mf* *ff*

(8vb)

85 arpeggiate freely with all 5 fingers *8va* *mf*

8vb *ff* *mf*

89 *ff* *8va*

(8vb)

tone clusters within given range

91

8va - - -

8vb - - -

fff

mp

3

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 91 and 92. Measure 91 features a dense texture of tone clusters in both the bass and treble clefs, indicated by a dashed line labeled '8vb'. The treble clef has a melodic line starting with a sharp sign and a fermata. Measure 92 continues the bass line with triplets and includes a fermata in the treble clef. Dynamics include *fff* and *mp*.

93

ff

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 93 and 94. Measure 93 has a treble clef with a fermata and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The bass clef has a triplet of chords. Measure 94 features a treble clef with a melodic line and a fermata, and a bass clef with a triplet of chords. A large slur encompasses the bass line of both measures.

tone clusters within given range

95

fff

8vb - - -

"We are all Batman"

Detailed description: This system contains measures 95 and 96. Measure 95 shows tone clusters in both staves, with a dynamic marking of *fff* and a dashed line labeled '8vb'. Measure 96 is mostly empty, with the text '"We are all Batman"' written in the right margin.

A Little Slower (♩=84)

97

mf ————— f mp

6

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 97 and 98. Measure 97 features a sixteenth-note scale in the right hand, starting on C4 and moving up to G4, with a dynamic marking of *mf* that increases to *f* by the end of the measure. A slur covers the entire measure, and a '6' is written above the notes. The left hand has a whole rest. Measure 98 continues the scale in the right hand, moving down to C4, with a dynamic marking of *mp*. A slur covers the entire measure, and a '3' is written below the notes. The left hand has a whole rest.

99

mf ————— mp

3

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 99, 100, 101, and 102. Measure 99 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (C4, D4, E4) and a left-hand whole rest. Measure 100 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (F4, G4, A4) and a left-hand triplet of eighth notes (C3, D3, E3). Measure 101 has a right-hand whole rest and a left-hand triplet of eighth notes (F3, G3, A3). Measure 102 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (B3, C4, D4) and a left-hand whole rest. Dynamics are *mf* in measure 99 and *mp* in measure 100. Slurs and '3' markings are present over the triplets.

103

3

3

3

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 103, 104, and 105. Measure 103 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (E4, F4, G4) and a left-hand whole rest. Measure 104 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (A4, B4, C5) and a left-hand triplet of eighth notes (D3, E3, F3). Measure 105 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (D5, E5, F5) and a left-hand triplet of eighth notes (G3, A3, B3). Dynamics are *mp*. Slurs and '3' markings are present over the triplets.

106

3

3

3

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 106, 107, 108, and 109. Measure 106 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (G5, A5, B5) and a left-hand whole rest. Measure 107 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (C6, D6, E6) and a left-hand triplet of eighth notes (F3, G3, A3). Measure 108 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (F6, G6, A6) and a left-hand triplet of eighth notes (B3, C4, D4). Measure 109 has a right-hand triplet of eighth notes (B6, C7, D7) and a left-hand triplet of eighth notes (E3, F3, G3). Dynamics are *mp*. Slurs and '3' markings are present over the triplets.

108

p

3

5

Detailed description: This system contains measures 108, 109, and 110. Measure 108 features a treble clef with a half note chord (F4, A4) and a bass clef with a triplet of eighth notes (G3, F3, E3) and a quarter note (D3). Measure 109 has a treble clef with a half note chord (F4, A4) and a bass clef with a quarter note (D3) and a half note (E3). Measure 110 has a treble clef with a half note chord (F4, A4) and a bass clef with a half note (E3) and a quarter note (D3). Dynamics include *p* in measure 108 and *pp* in measure 110. Fingerings 3 and 5 are indicated.

110

pp

ppp

3

3

8^{va}

Detailed description: This system contains measures 110, 111, 112, and 113. Measure 110 has a treble clef with a half note chord (F4, A4) and a bass clef with a triplet of eighth notes (G3, F3, E3) and a quarter note (D3). Measure 111 has a treble clef with a half note chord (F4, A4) and a bass clef with a half note (E3) and a quarter note (D3). Measure 112 has a treble clef with a half note chord (F4, A4) and a bass clef with a half note (E3) and a quarter note (D3). Measure 113 has a treble clef with a half note chord (F4, A4) and a bass clef with a half note (E3) and a quarter note (D3). Dynamics include *pp* in measure 110 and *ppp* in measure 112. Fingerings 3 and 3 are indicated. An 8^{va} marking is present in measure 113.