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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

Piano

$\text{♩} = 92$

pp *mf* *p*

mute strings w/ RH

8vb - - - - -

mp *mf* *mp*

ff

p *mf* *mp*

8vb

f *p* *p* *sfsz* *f*

My heroes...

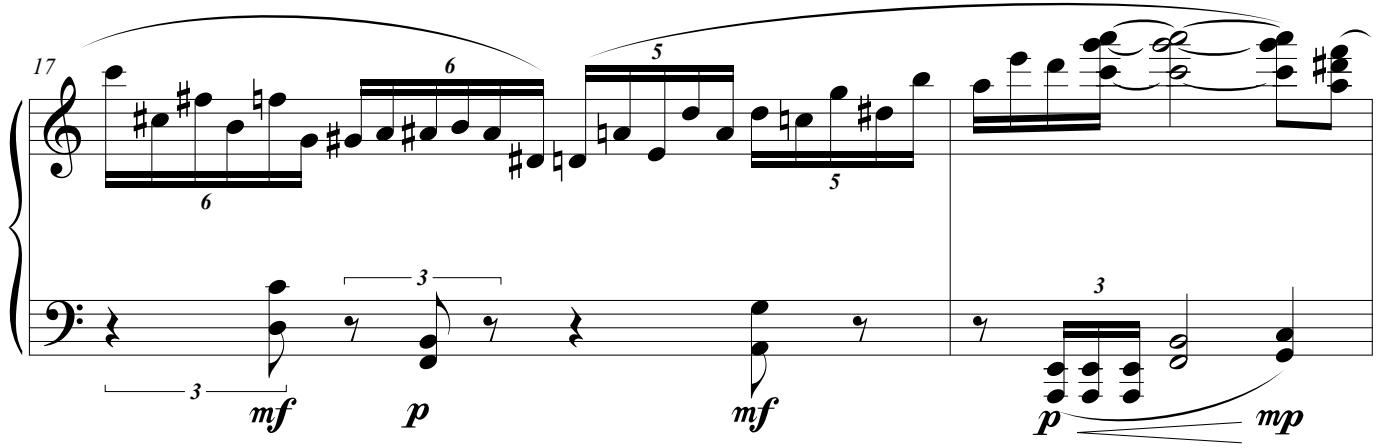
2

Musical score page 2, measures 9 and 10. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Measure 9 starts with a dynamic *p*. Measure 10 begins with a dynamic *pp*, followed by a dynamic *sfp* and a dynamic *p*.

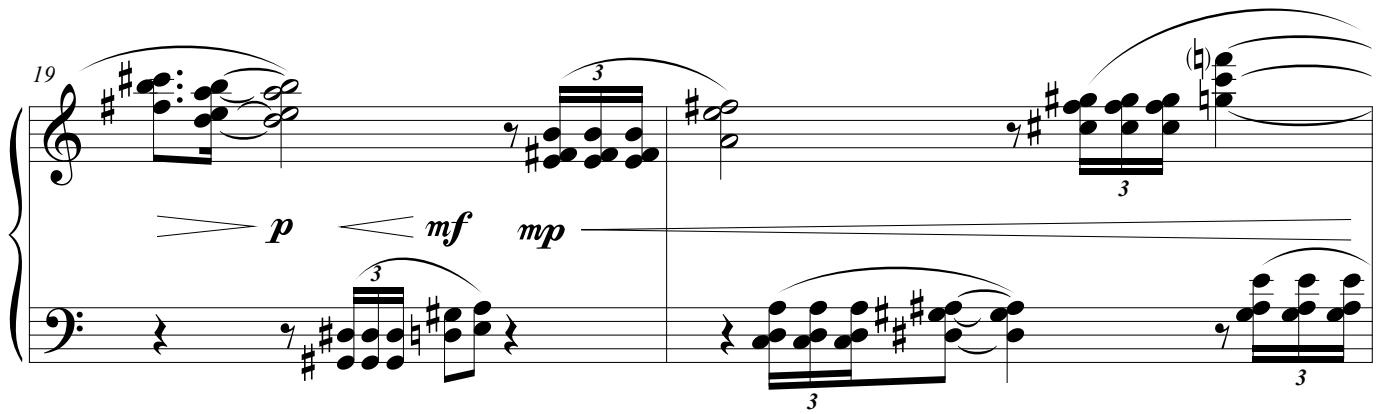
Musical score page 2, measures 11 and 12. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Measure 11 starts with a dynamic *mf*, followed by a dynamic *p*. Measure 12 starts with a dynamic *pp*, followed by another dynamic *pp*.

Musical score page 2, measures 13 and 14. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Measure 13 starts with a dynamic *ff*. Measure 14 starts with a dynamic *p sub*, followed by a dynamic *sfp* and a dynamic *mp*.

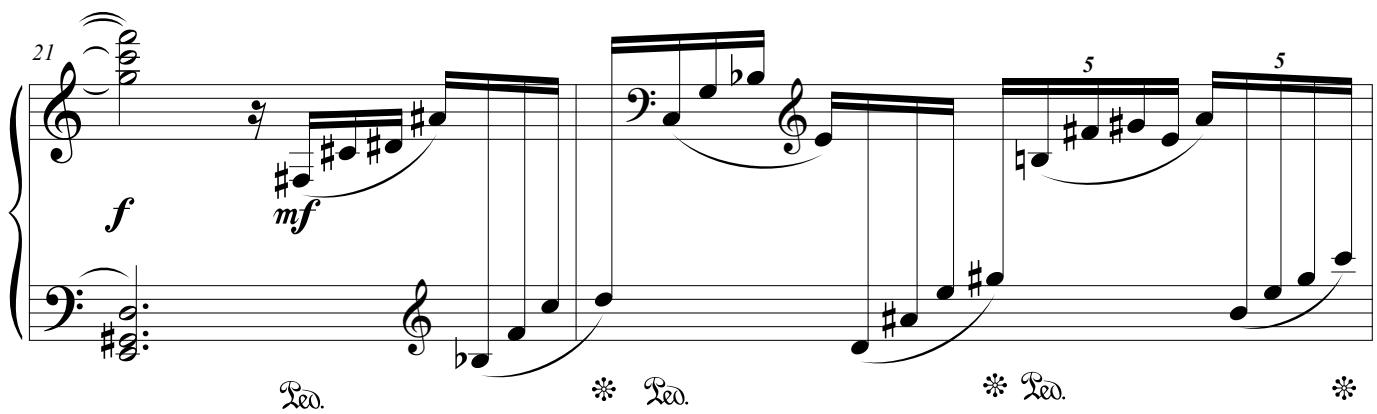
Musical score page 3, measures 15 and 16. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Measure 15 starts with a dynamic *p sub*, followed by a dynamic *sfp* and a dynamic *mp*. Measure 16 starts with a dynamic *8va*, followed by a dynamic *loc* and a dynamic *8vb*.



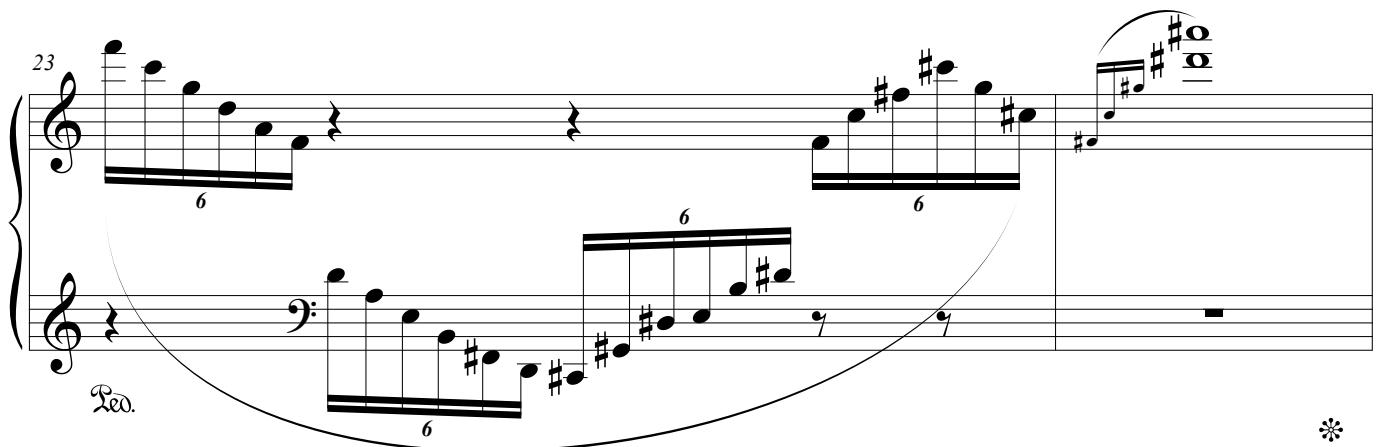
Musical score page 17. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp. Measures 17 through 20 are shown. Measure 17 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 18 begins with a bass note followed by eighth notes. Measure 19 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 20 ends with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 21 begins with a bass note followed by eighth notes.



Musical score page 19. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp. Measures 19 through 22 are shown. Measure 19 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 20 begins with a bass note followed by eighth notes. Measure 21 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 22 ends with a sixteenth-note pattern.



Musical score page 21. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp. Measures 21 through 24 are shown. Measure 21 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 22 begins with a bass note followed by eighth notes. Measure 23 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 24 ends with a sixteenth-note pattern.



Musical score page 23. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp. Measures 23 through 26 are shown. Measure 23 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 24 begins with a bass note followed by eighth notes. Measure 25 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 26 ends with a sixteenth-note pattern.

My heroes...

Violently slam 1st &
3rd pedals together**"I am Batman"**

25

sempre pp

Nostalgic ($\text{\textit{d}}=60$)

(continue to suppress sustain pedal)

26

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

p

28

3

5

30

3

5

32

3

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

39

42

My heroes...

6

45

8va

8vb

mf

sfsz

mp

mf

mf

mf

48

Strike mid-range strings
with binding of notebook

Strike lowest strings
with binding of notebook

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

"Your mother is Batman"

Slam notebook on ground
- w/ gusto!

50

d=92 *mf*

mf

51

p

pp

mf

p

f

My heroes...

7

54

pp

f

pp f

56

8va - - -

p

59

ff

ff

5 3

Suddenly Lethargic ($\text{♩} = 48$)

$\text{♩} = 92$

pp

mf f

8

My heroes...

65

f

mp

f

ff

67

ff

ff

8vb

mf

*mf**f*

69

mf

ff

8vb

f

70

*mp**f*

mp

mf

p

mf

mp

f

My heroes...

9

72

mp

sfz

pp

tr

mf

f

ff

ff

ff

ff

No one is Batman"

78

10

My heroes...

79

ff — *mf*

82

(8^{vb})

85

arpeggiate freely
with all 5 fingers

8^{va} — *ff* — *mf*

89

ff — *8^{va}* — *ff*

(8^{vb})

tone clusters within given range

91

8va---

mp

(8vb)---

93

ff

3

tone clusters within given range

"We are all Batman"

95

sss

8vb-

12

My heroes...

A Little Slower ($\text{♩}=84$)

Musical score for piano, showing two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the bottom in bass clef. Measure 97 starts with a dynamic *mf*, followed by a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 98 begins with a dynamic *mp*. Measure 99 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 100 ends with a dynamic *mp*.

Musical score for piano, showing two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the bottom in bass clef. Measure 99 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 100 begins with a dynamic *mf*, followed by a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 101 starts with a dynamic *mp*. Measure 102 ends with a dynamic *mp*.

Musical score for piano, showing two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the bottom in bass clef. Measures 103-106 show a continuous sixteenth-note pattern in the treble staff, with a dynamic *mp* at the end of measure 106.

Musical score for piano, showing two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the bottom in bass clef. Measures 106-109 show a continuous sixteenth-note pattern in the treble staff, with a dynamic *mp* at the end of measure 109.

108

p

5

110

pp

ppp

8va

3

3

3