

Joseph Klein

Chain of Circumstances







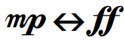





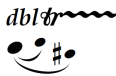

(2020)

for solo piano or piano four hands,
with optional dancer and/or interactive computer music

To Richard Shuster and Jordan Fuchs
Supported by a grant from Texas Woman's University

duration: variable (c.7-15')

Symbols

	accelerando/ritardando		
	durational continuum in senza misura sections (shortest to longest)		
	fermata continuum (shortest to longest)		
	senza misura		
	metered notation: beat units are fixed, measure units fluctuate		sweeping glissando (with hand)
	play within the dynamic range indicated		tremolando (freely)
	fluctuate around given dynamic		mute string with finger near pin block
	let the sound ring		scrape wrapped strings with fingernail
	double trill: rapidly alternate between the three pitches indicated		pluck string with fingernail

Performance Notes

Chain of Circumstances is a modular work consisting of a series of distinctive, contrasting, and relatively static “states,” which comprise the raw materials to be arranged and integrated at the discretion of the performer(s):

- The performer(s) should consider all manner of ways that the various modules may relate to one another when organizing the work.
- Modules may return any number of times during a given realization.
- A given module may interrupt any other module—or may itself be interrupted, fragmented, and reorganized.
- Gestures or fragments from any of the individual modules may be interpolated into a contrasting module at any time, in order to “perforate” the prevailing texture.
- Various modules may be combined to form larger units, which themselves may be considered discrete episodes or movements within the overall realization of the work.
- The only fixed element in the piece is Module 1, which is to serve as a prologue and epilogue to the piece. Other than this one formal consideration, there is no particular order that the interior modules must occur.
- The overall duration of the work is dependent on how frequently modules recur, as well as the degree to which the performer(s) dwell upon any given state; however, the duration is also dependent upon whether the work is performed with one or two pianists, with the optional solo dancer and/or interactive computer music, as these factors may influence the manner and degree to which the various states are explored.

The arrangement of these raw materials may either be determined ahead of time by the performer(s), or spontaneously determined during performance. When working with a dancer, a pre-determined arrangement of materials (with fairly consistent timings) may be desired—unless the choreography itself is of an improvisational nature, in which case a more spontaneous realization may be preferred.

Program Note

Chain of Circumstances, for solo pianist or piano four hands (with optional solo dancer and/or interactive computer music), is one of a series of open-form compositions that have occupied my creative interest in recent years. As with the other related works, *Chain of Circumstances* explores aspects of recombination, modularity, and non-linear musical structures. In this instance, the work is conceived as a series of disparate, distinctive, and relatively static musical states that provides an ever-changing sonic canvas, which the pianist(s) may alter at will. In performances that include solo dancer and/or electronics, the result is a kind of dynamic and unpredictable “feedback loop” between the various elements.

Chain of Circumstances was supported by a grant from Texas Woman’s University and composed in February-March 2020 for pianist Richard Shuster and dancer/choreographer Jordan Fuchs.

Chain of Circumstances

Joseph Klein
2020

Module 1 (Prologue/Epilogue)

Obsessive, resolute ♩ = 52

Sost. (sempre) →

—(Sost.)→

—(Sost.)→

—(Sost.)→

06/10/21

- This module must always begin and end the work.
- The performer may start playing at any measure; however, the duration of the first and final iterations must be no longer than one complete cycle.
- The performer may return to this module (sparingly) at any time during the performance; however, iterations other than the first or last must be no longer than four measures in duration (including rests).
- The performer may choose either of the pitches indicated, but may not change pitches within a given iteration. If proceeding directly to or from Module 2: choose B \flat to elide with section A; choose D \sharp to elide with section B.

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Module 2

A Suspended, languid (12-15" per system)

The first system of music consists of two staves. The treble clef staff begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G#4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The bass clef staff begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note B3, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note D4. The dynamic marking *mp±* is placed above the first measure. The tempo marking *And. (sempre)* is written below the first measure with an arrow pointing to the right. The system concludes with a double bar line.

The second system of music consists of two staves. The treble clef staff begins with a whole note G#4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The bass clef staff begins with a quarter note B3, followed by a quarter note C4, and a quarter note D4. The dynamic marking *mp±* is placed above the first measure. The tempo marking *And. (sempre)* is written below the first measure with an arrow pointing to the right. The system concludes with a double bar line.

The third system of music consists of two staves. The treble clef staff begins with a quarter note G#4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The bass clef staff begins with a quarter note B3, followed by a quarter note C4, and a quarter note D4. The dynamic marking *mp±* is placed above the first measure. The tempo marking *And. (sempre)* is written below the first measure with an arrow pointing to the right. The system concludes with a double bar line.

B

$mp \pm$
 Ped. (sempre) →

— (Ped.) →

— (Ped.) →

10/03/20

- The performer may begin at any point in this module, and should play no more than three complete cycles in a given iteration.
- While the dynamic level is primarily *mezzo-piano* throughout, the performer should feel free to occasionally accentuate random notes (*ad libitum*), which should punctuate the otherwise placid state of the prevailing texture.
- The performer may choose to play either section A or section B, and may not change sections within a given iteration.
- The overall effect of this module should be like that of wind chimes gently sounding in the breeze.

Chain of Circumstances — Module 3

- The performer may begin at any point in this module, and should play no more than one complete cycle in a given iteration before proceeding to the next module.
- Fragments of this module may be interjected at any time during the performance, typically acting as a disruptive element.
- In addition to playing this module as notated on the previous page, the performer may freely play these chord complexes (indicated below from lowest to highest) in any order, applying any of the gestures at the bottom of this page to any of the chords. In such cases, the character of the resulting music should always be similar to that on the previous page.

Chord complexes 1 through 10, arranged in two rows of five. Each chord is represented by a vertical stack of notes in the bass clef. Chord 1 is a triad (F, A, C). Chord 2 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A. Chord 3 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 4 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A and a sharp sign above the C. Chord 5 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A and a sharp sign above the C. Chord 6 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A and a sharp sign above the C. Chord 7 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A and a sharp sign above the C. Chord 8 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A and a sharp sign above the C. Chord 9 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A and a sharp sign above the C. Chord 10 is a triad (F, A, C) with a flat sign above the A and a sharp sign above the C. A dashed line labeled '8vb' is positioned below the first five chords.

Chord complexes 11 through 20, arranged in two rows of five. Each chord is represented by a vertical stack of notes in the bass clef. Chord 11 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 12 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 13 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 14 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 15 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 16 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 17 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 18 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 19 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 20 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A.

Chord complexes 21 through 29, arranged in two rows of five. Each chord is represented by a vertical stack of notes in the bass clef. Chord 21 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 22 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 23 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 24 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 25 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 26 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 27 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 28 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Chord 29 is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A.

Gestures I through IVb, arranged in a single row. Each gesture is represented by a vertical stack of notes in the bass clef. Gesture I is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Gesture IIa is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Gesture IIb is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Gesture IIIa is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Gesture IIIb is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Gesture IVa is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Gesture IVb is a triad (F, A, C) with a sharp sign above the A. Each gesture is marked with 'sfz' (sforzando) and a downward-pointing triangle.

Chain of Circumstances

Module 5

Brittle, nervous

RH (a)

Musical notation for RH (a) showing a sequence of chords with fingerings: 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4 3 2 3 4.

RH (b)

Musical notation for RH (b) showing a sequence of chords with fingerings: 5 1 4 2 3 2 4 1 5 2 4 3 4 2.

RH (c)

Musical notation for RH (c) showing a sequence of chords with fingerings: 1 3 2 4 3 5 3 4 2 3.

ff *e secco, sempre*

- Either of the two-handed runs at the left may be played to initiate this module (optional).
- Each of the patterns above and below may be repeated *ad libitum*; player may move from one pattern to another at any point.
- Player may begin on the first note of any broken-slurred grouping.
- Any of the right-hand patterns (above) may be combined with any of the left-hand patterns (below), *ad libitum*.
- Each hand moves independently, with erratic and uneven rhythm throughout. Performer should avoid any sense of alignment between the two hands.
- The overall duration of any given iteration of this module should be no less than 10 and no more than 30 seconds.
- The composite effect should be that of heavy rain hitting a tin roof.

ff *e secco, sempre*

LH (a)

Musical notation for LH (a) showing a sequence of notes with fingerings: 5 4 3 2 1 2 3 4 3 2 3 4.

LH (b)

Musical notation for LH (b) showing a sequence of notes with fingerings: 5 1 4 2 3 2 4 1 5 2 4 3 4 2.

LH (c)

Musical notation for LH (c) showing a sequence of notes with fingerings: 1 3 2 4 3 5 3 4 2 3.

01/13/21

1)

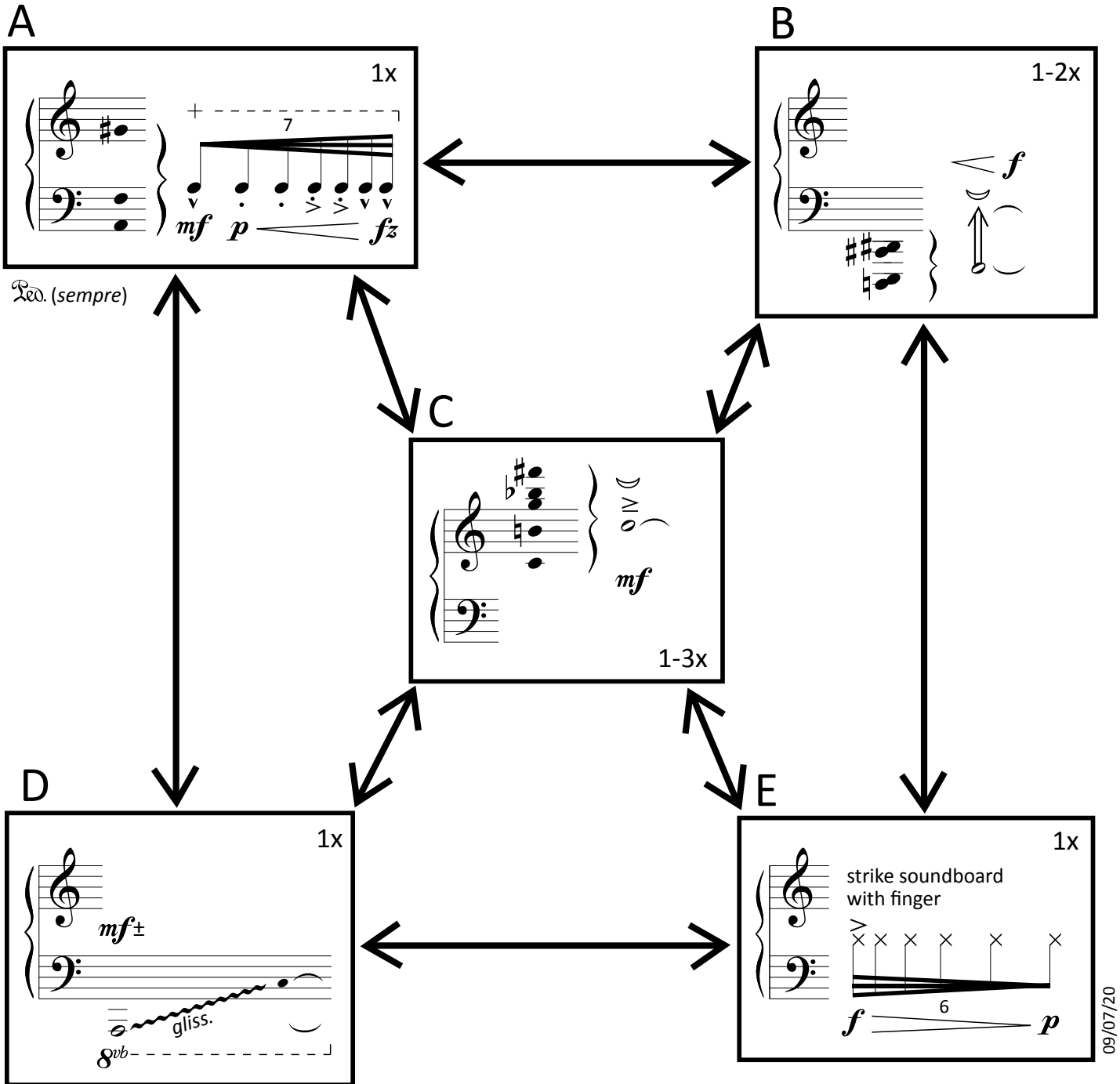
Two-handed musical notation for pattern 1, starting at measure 8 and ending at measure 15. The left hand plays a descending chromatic scale, and the right hand plays an ascending chromatic scale.

2)

Two-handed musical notation for pattern 2, starting at measure 8 and ending at measure 15. The left hand plays a descending chromatic scale, and the right hand plays an ascending chromatic scale.

Chain of Circumstances

Module 6
(Event-complex)



09/07/20

- Performer may begin at any place in the score and proceed according to the arrowed lines.
- In contrast to the other modules, all events within this module require play inside the piano
- The events in boxes A, B, and C may be played on any of the pitches indicated in the grand staff; it is recommended that the hammers be marked with color-coded stickers in order to aid the performer.
- The events in boxes B and C may be reiterated before proceeding to the next gesture. The number of successive iterations of any given event is indicated in the boxes (1x, 1-2x, 1-3x).
- Any of these events may be freely interpolated into one or more of the other modules at any time during the performance.
- In a given iteration of this module, none of the events may be played more than three times before proceeding to another module.
- The pedal is to be depressed throughout this entire module.

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Module 8

Florid, shimmering (*molto rubato*)

A

mp ± (*ad libitum*)
Red.

4"±
dbl tr

4"±
dbl tr

5

4"±
dbl tr

4"±
dbl tr

4"±
dbl tr

The musical score consists of three systems of piano music. Each system is written for a grand piano with a treble and bass clef. The first system begins with a box labeled 'A' and includes the performance instruction 'mp ± (ad libitum)' and 'Red.'. It features a series of arpeggiated chords with a tremolo effect, marked with '4"±' and 'dbl tr'. The second system starts with a measure number '5' and continues the arpeggiated texture. The third system concludes the piece with similar arpeggiated figures and tremolos. The overall style is 'Florid, shimmering' and 'molto rubato'.

B

11

14

18

02/26/21

- The performer may start at the beginning of either section A or section B, returning to the top once reaching the end.
- A given iteration of this module may be no less than one complete section and no more than three: e.g., A, B, AB, BA, ABA, BAB.
- Tempo and dynamics should be constantly fluctuating throughout, *ad libitum*;
- The duration of the double-trills should average around 4 seconds, but should fluctuate *ad libitum* between 3 and 6 seconds.
The effect should be an unpredictable suspension of the arpeggiated figures, and must always avoid falling into a regular pattern.
- Fragments of this module may be interjected at any time within another episode; in such instances, no more than three (consecutive) measures may be used.