

**PIANO SONATA, 1948**  
by  
**GEORGE ANTHEIL**  
**MY FOURTH PIANO SONATA**

Although "sonatas" are usually classed as chamber music, the modern piano sonata is, I believe, an exception; it is invariably more demanding than the modern violin-piano sonata, or any other combination of piano and stringed or wind instrument. This is difficult to understand, as violin piano sonatas, in particular, are invariably played by the most accomplished players, capable of the utmost virtuosity in solving technical details. Yet, a violin-piano sonata which is too demanding invariably makes the impression of a violin concerto reduced, unhappily, for a chamber concert stage upon which it does not rightly belong.

On the other hand, the modern piano sonata, from Chopin-Liszt onwards, very often approaches the piano concerto medium: its material, perhaps, is a little more weighty than the piano concerto, yet it is essentially demanding, exploring the limits of the modern keyboard, as well as the limits of the composer's invention in the purely musical sense. It is my hope, therefore, that my Fourth Piano Sonata fulfills this difficult requirement.

Aesthetically, the work represents the fusing together of many of the elements of my earlier music together with that of the recent symphonies, particularly the Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. Although I hope that my musical expression has many sides (for I believe that the composer of today must attempt, at least, to round out his musical expression, and not be a composer of one or two moods; or of a system, or of some single new style — which then, all too often, quickly passes out of style) still, undoubtedly, one of the elements of my expression which is most often commented upon is that it has the iron ring of modern civilization: the sound of this kind of music—which I've expressed as early as my Ballet Mecanique in 1923—may be heard again in the first, and particularly the last movements of this sonata. The furious, sometimes gleeful, sometimes horrific march of modern civilization may, I think, be heard in these movements. It has also been pointed out by several eminent critics, that my music has a strong satirical and ironic sense: in the first movement of this sonata one may hear, if one chooses, a certain gleeful burlesquing of a Chopinesque passage, or a caricature of something which has amused me in the past: these passages are fleeting, but, I hope, colorful.

The middle movement is conceived as a slow movement to contrast with the two outer movements which are rather aggressive. But it is more than that; it is also the expression of a neo-romanticism which, in this age of steel, I feel to be more and more a part of the dreams and ideals of the world which threatens to become submerged in grim reality. I wanted to endow this movement with a sense of personal tragedy—and romance too. It works out a new sort of lyricism which I hope will be expressive of this sort of humanity, and even tenderness.

Formally, the first movement is strictly sonata-allegro, with a well-defined first theme, second theme, development section, and rather foreshortened recapitulation. Commencing with several steely introductory chords (which signal the whole mood of the sonata to come) it plunges immediately into a gleeful first theme, not unrelated to—but also not derived from—the whole world of Chopin-Liszt, to which our entire modern piano literature must make some bow, at one time or another. The mood of the first theme is satirical. The second theme, on the other hand, is lyrical and expressive of the modern age, its poetry, its longing. The development is rather extended, and goes the gamut of "feroce" expression. The recapitulation, arriving at the end of a long dramatic retransition, is short: I like my recapitulations to be sum-ups, rather than extended restatements.

The second movement is not strictly any form, although, in its long retransition to the first theme (at the end of the movement) it seems to have been intended as a quasi-sonata-allegro movement. It is, more accurately, a sort of trio song-form, but with development in its central section. Like the sonata-allegro form, its "exposition", or "A" section has two themes, the second theme having definitely the character of such. Yet there is no real development section, or transition to it: development commences almost from the beginning of the movement. My main objective, herein, was to present a series of long well-rounded out lyrical lines which pressed on and on to the "recapitulation".

The third movement is essentially a toccata; a rhythm is established and retained until the inevitable end.

The movements are: Allegro giocoso, Andante, Vivo.

The 4th Piano Sonata was specifically written for Frederick Marvin, who gave its first performance at Carnegie Hall in 1948, and it is dedicated to my lifelong friend, Virgil Thomson.

GEORGE ANTHEIL

(Recorded by Frederick Marvin on ALCO LP # L107)

*to Virgil Thomson*

# SONATA No. 4

1

*George Antheil*

*Allegro Giocoso-Ironico*

*Allegro Giocoso-Ironico*

1

*George Antheil*

*Allegro Giocoso-Ironico*

*ff*

*mf*

*n.p.* *cresc.* *a poco* *a poco*

*f*

*grazioso leggero*

*f*

*ped.*

*(b) f*

*ped.*

4

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 4.

Measure 1 (Piano): Crescendo (cresc.)

Measure 2 (Orchestra): Molto Sostenuto e marcato

Measure 3 (Orchestra): *s.v.a bassa*, Loop, stacc.

Measure 4 (Piano): Poco Sostenuto

Measure 5 (Piano): molto marcato

Measure 6 (Piano): ff

Measure 7 (Piano): *quasi Timpani*

Measure 8 (Piano): mf

molto dim

*mf*

*p*

*pp*

Basso, Molto Stacc. e pp

*sva*

*f*

*ff*

*f*

*ff*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

Musical score for piano, page 6, featuring four systems of music:

- System 1:** Treble clef, 9/8 time. Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *mf*. Measures show eighth-note patterns.
- System 2:** Bass clef, 9/8 time. Measures show eighth-note patterns. Measure 12 starts with *f*.
- System 3:** Treble clef, 8/8 time. Measures show eighth-note patterns. Measure 12 starts with *staccato*.
- System 4:** Bass clef, 9/8 time. Measures show eighth-note patterns. Measure 12 starts with *mf*. The section ends with *Molto Secco.*

Poco a Poco Meno, Espressivo 7

p

pp

f - Subito

p

mp

poco accel.

ff

p

Brillante, Con Brio

detache

cresc. a poco a poco

mf

*Quasi Timpani*

*sfz* — *f*

*mf* — *mp*

*f*

*pp*

*mp*

*f*

Musical score for piano, showing four staves of music. The score includes dynamic markings, tempo changes, and performance instructions.

**Top Staff:**

- Measure 1: 2/4 time, B-flat major. Measures 1-2: eighth-note patterns. Measure 3: 12/8 time, B-flat major. Measures 4-5: eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 6: 6/8 time, B-flat major. Measure 7: dynamic *fff*.
- Measure 8: 6/8 time, B-flat major.

**Second Staff:**

- Measure 1: 2/4 time, B-flat major. Measures 2-3: eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 4: 12/8 time, B-flat major. Measures 5-6: eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 7: dynamic *p*.

**Third Staff:**

- Measure 1: 2/4 time, B-flat major. Measures 2-3: eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 4: 12/8 time, B-flat major. Measures 5-6: eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 7: dynamic *p*.

**Fourth Staff:**

- Measure 1: 2/4 time, B-flat major. Measures 2-3: eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 4: 12/8 time, B-flat major. Measures 5-6: eighth-note patterns.
- Measure 7: dynamic *p*.

**Performance Instructions:**

- Molto marcato**: Measures 1-2.
- cresc. a poco a poco**: Measures 3-4.
- Molto secco**: Measures 5-6.
- p**: Measure 7.

Musical score for piano, page 10, featuring five staves of music. The score consists of two systems of measures.

**Staff 1 (Top):** Measures 10-11. Key signature changes between F major (two sharps) and G major (one sharp). Time signature changes between common time and 8/8. Dynamics: *f*, *fff*, *f*, *fff*, *ff*, *f*.

**Staff 2:** Measures 10-11. Key signature changes between C major (no sharps or flats) and G major (one sharp). Time signature changes between common time and 6/8. Dynamics: *f*, *mf*.

**Staff 3:** Measures 10-11. Key signature changes between B-flat major (two flats) and G major (one sharp). Time signature changes between common time and 6/8. Dynamics: *b**f*.

**Staff 4:** Measures 10-11. Key signature changes between B-flat major (two flats) and G major (one sharp). Time signature changes between common time and 6/8. Dynamics: *b**f*.

**Staff 5 (Bottom):** Measures 10-11. Key signature changes between B-flat major (two flats) and G major (one sharp). Time signature changes between common time and 6/8. Dynamics: *f*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *mp*.

cresc. a poco

mp

a poco

poco a poco-

rit. (cresc)

ff

Meno Mosso; Molto,

Marcato (feroce)

sva

sva

sva

sva

peda.

peda.

(8va) -

*sforz.*

*fff*

*Stacc.*

*f*

*Molto sfz*

*sfz*

*fff*

*sfz*

*sfz*

*ff*

*sfz*

*ff*

*ped.* -

*ped.* -

8va  
sfz  
ff  
ped.  
8va basso

Rit.  
(=)

(8va) A Tempo

presque  
fff  
ff

Ma Molte Marc.

Anco.

Poco dim.

f

Tempo 1°  
Allegro Giocoso



Poco a poco cresc.



8va ----- 10cc.

poco a poco cresc.



ff sonore

ped



Stacc.

*ff*

*mf*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*cresc. al fine.*

*sva.*

*lunga*

*sva.*

*lunga*

## 2

Andante  
Cantabile  
sostenuto  $\text{J} = \left\{ \begin{matrix} 73 \\ 50 \end{matrix} \right.$

p sonore      mp

sforz. basso-----

cresc.

mf

mp

sforz. basso-----

Sostenuto cresc.      mf

mp sonora

Musical score for piano, page 17, featuring four staves of music with various dynamics and markings:

- Staff 1 (Treble Clef):** Measures 1-10. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{mf}$ ,  $\text{f}$ . Articulation:  $\text{sf}$ .
- Staff 2 (Bass Clef):** Measures 1-10. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{mf}$ ,  $\text{f}$ . Articulation:  $\text{sf}$ .
- Staff 3 (Treble Clef):** Measures 1-10. Dynamics:  $\text{mf}$ ,  $\text{espressivo-coloroso}$ ,  $\text{p}$ ,  $\text{f}$ . Articulation:  $\text{sf}$ .
- Staff 4 (Bass Clef):** Measures 1-10. Dynamics:  $\text{mf}$ ,  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{ff-sonoro}$ ,  $\text{sf}$ .
- Staff 5 (Treble Clef):** Measures 11-12. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{mf}$ ,  $\text{p}$ ,  $\text{f}$ . Articulation:  $\text{sf}$ .
- Staff 6 (Bass Clef):** Measures 11-12. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{mf}$ ,  $\text{p}$ ,  $\text{f}$ .
- Staff 7 (Treble Clef):** Measures 13-14. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{Poco Allarg.}$ ,  $\text{f}$ . Articulation:  $\text{sf}$ .
- Staff 8 (Bass Clef):** Measures 13-14. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{Poco Allarg.}$ ,  $\text{f}$ .
- Staff 9 (Treble Clef):** Measures 15-16. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{Poco piu animato}$ ,  $\text{f}$ . Articulation:  $\text{sf}$ .
- Staff 10 (Bass Clef):** Measures 15-16. Dynamics:  $\text{f}$ ,  $\text{Poco piu animato}$ ,  $\text{f}$ .

poco rit. Rubato A tempo

mf

mp

mf

mp

mf mp

mf

(p) Leggero

pp

poco rubato

poco rubato

poco a poco cresc.

Ancora poco piu animato, poco a poco agi-

tato molto

ped.

cresc.

8va

Tumultuoso, molto agitato

ped.

fff-molto marcato

fff molto marcato

20

Molto marcato

Leggiero

mp

mf marcato

mp

L.H.

Accel.

Poco Allarg. p

Ped.

A tempo Primo

Rit.

p

mp

m2

mp

L.H.P.

mp

Sonora

3

Allegro (Presto)  $d = 124$ 

Handwritten musical score for three staves, page 22, section 3. The score includes dynamic markings like **ff** and tempo  $d = 124$ . The music consists of six systems of handwritten musical notation.

**Staff 1:** Treble clef, common time. Measures 1-3 show eighth-note patterns. Measure 4 starts with a bass note followed by eighth-note patterns. Measure 5 ends with a bass note. Measure 6 begins with a bass note followed by eighth-note patterns.

**Staff 2:** Bass clef, common time. Measures 1-3 show eighth-note patterns. Measure 4 starts with a bass note followed by eighth-note patterns. Measure 5 ends with a bass note. Measure 6 begins with a bass note followed by eighth-note patterns.

**Staff 3:** Bass clef, common time. Measures 1-3 show eighth-note patterns. Measure 4 starts with a bass note followed by eighth-note patterns. Measure 5 ends with a bass note. Measure 6 begins with a bass note followed by eighth-note patterns.

**Text:** L.H. ossia.

A page of musical notation for orchestra and piano, featuring six staves of music. The notation includes various dynamics such as *f*, *mf*, *p*, *ff*, and *s*. The first staff is for the piano, and the subsequent staves are for different sections of the orchestra. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The notation is dense with notes and rests, indicating a complex musical score.

23

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*ff* Molto marcato

8va basso

8va -----

(8va Basso) -----

(ग्रा)

A page of musical notation for orchestra and piano, featuring six staves of music. The notation includes various dynamics such as forte, piano, and sforzando, as well as performance instructions like "sva" and "ms". The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The piano part is indicated by a treble clef and a bass clef, while the orchestra parts are indicated by a treble clef and a bass clef with a "P" symbol. The notation is written in black ink on white paper.

poco cresc.

8va

8va basso

molto seleno

pp

zzz

5 4 3 2 1    2 3 4 3 2 1    4 5 2

3 3 3 3 3 3

8va

Molto secco

pp

8va basso

Molto secco

ppp

p

This page contains six staves of musical notation. The top staff uses a treble clef and includes dynamics 3, 3, 3, followed by 8va. The second staff uses a bass clef and has 8va basso. The third staff uses a treble clef and has 8va. The fourth staff uses a bass clef and has 8va basso. The fifth staff uses a treble clef and has Molto secco. The sixth staff uses a bass clef and has ppp. The music features various rests, slurs, and grace notes.

ff      ff      ff      pp

f      ff      pp

mp      mp

p poco a poco rit.

Tempo 1° Leggiero

Poco-----a poco-----cresc -----

pp

endo

8va -----

1000

8va -----

8va -----

1000

8va -----

(8va)

8va -----

8va -----

8va -----

8va -----

6va-----

(6va)

Rit---ard.  
cresc.

Tempo 10 - forte

ff

ff

ff

6va basso-----

S1      B1      B2      B3      B4      B5

Tempo 10

Molto rit.

S1a basso----

ms

100

S1 Presto (possibile)

S1a

22

23

24

25

26