

# Harmonic Spaces

for piano (four hands)

*duration ca. 12:00*

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# Harmonic Spaces

Each of the short movements in this set is based on one or two wide intervals that mimic the spacing of overtones in the harmonic series. I used this approach to inspire my mind and ear into finding different ways of producing harmonies and atmospheres. The title “Harmonic Spaces”, then, refers both to those widely-spaced intervals and to the musical spaces I fill with colors, characters and motion. In the end, of course, the musical spaces are what really matter, but they wouldn’t have been the same without their harmonic inspiration.

## I - Simply and gracefully moving forward. (9<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> partials)

Much of this movement is a slow progression of widely-spaced chords with gracefully rising and falling note patterns appearing in and around them. Notes of the chords often appear in two groups, the first being louder and the second being quieter in the manner of an echo. These echoes help create a sense of space, but as you will hear, it is not an entirely empty or eventless space.

## II - With a steady, even flow (or groove). (7<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> partials)

The harmonic partials used in this slightly quirky movement are what give dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chords their characteristic sound and function. Furthermore, and as many people are already aware, such chords appear quite frequently in standard jazz practice. Therefore, even though this music is not intended to be jazz, some listeners may occasionally notice the outlines of gliding 7<sup>th</sup> chords that almost sound like they were borrowed from a jazz standard.

## III - Gentle, flexible, but rhythmically accurate. (11<sup>th</sup> Partial)

This is a peaceful and tranquil movement. It slowly unfolds like a quiet summer afternoon spent under a shade tree watching lazy clouds. Technically, because the 11<sup>th</sup> partial is a note that falls “between the cracks” of the piano keyboard, I use both the perfect 4<sup>th</sup> and augmented 4<sup>th</sup> (in very wide spacing) to approximate it. Sometimes the two notes are used melodically, like chromatic inflections, but sometimes they appear together as part of a complex chord.

## IV - With precision, energy and excitement. (13<sup>th</sup> Partial)

The characteristic interval of this movement often occurs as widely-spaced parallel motion between two voices. Because it’s an energetic finale, there is much use of syncopation and rhythmic interplay that makes for exciting ensemble work. There are also wide-ranging arpeggios that get shared between the two players, with the end result sounding like a joyful romp through a playground of rhythm, motion and contrast.



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## I

9th and 3rd partials

♩ = 60 Simply, gracefully moving forward.

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with two piano parts (1st and 2nd). The first system (measures 1-4) is in 3/4 time, with the 1st piano part in treble clef and the 2nd in bass clef. Dynamics range from *f* to *p*. A tempo marking "Gentle, unhurried." is present. The second system (measures 5-7) features a key signature change to one flat and a time signature change to 4/4. It includes a "loco" section with a melodic line in the 1st piano part. The third system (measures 8-10) changes to 5/4 time. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. The piece concludes with a fermata over the final notes.