Variations on a Theme by Haydn (1990) and the Invisible Drummer (1974) by Andre Previn: An Introduction and Approach to Performance

D.M.A. Document

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By

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Abstract

In the twenty-first century, it might be hard to find a classical pianist who possesses all the abilities of a performer, composer, and conductor. The strenuous routine of performing and learning new music to expand one’s repertoire leaves a classical pianist little time to devote on other fields. Andre Previn (1929-) is a successful musician who deserves recognition as a pianist, composer, and conductor, which is a rarity.

Because of Previn’s multiple influences, from performing as a classical musician in his youth, to arranging diverse music at MGM, to being principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra from 1968-1979, the style of his piano compositions are varied and not easy to portray. This is especially true for pianists who have been trained as classical musicians and have no jazz background.

*Variations on a Theme by Haydn* (1990) and *The Invisible Drummer* (1974) are piano solo works written during Previn’s “classical” period. However, the style of these two works is influenced by Previn’s jazz experience. It becomes a challenge for a purely classically trained pianist to capture both classical and jazz characteristics when performing these works.

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Variations on a Theme by Haydn (1990) and The Invisible Drummer (1974) by Andre Previn: An Introduction and Approach to Performance is designed to help classical pianists understand and interpret Previn’s works for solo piano by providing formal analyses and performance guidelines. Pianists will learn that by playing Andre Previn’s works, they should portray a jazzy character, encompass a refined sense of rhythm, use alternate techniques for rapid passages, and provide inspired interpretations.

Through this document, pianists will gain insightful information and suggestions on how to produce an artistic performance of Variations on a Theme by Haydn (1990) and The Invisible Drummer (1974). Additionally, musicians will recognize him as a jazz and classical pianist, a conductor, and a composer, which will result in more of his compositions will be performed.
Dedicated to

My Family
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Introduction

There are few artists as compelling as Andre Previn (1929-), a musician with a significant amount of musical diversity. Although Previn was trained in his youth as a classical pianist, his employment as an orchestrator at MGM (1948-1962) also exposed him to jazz and required him to compose extensively for films, with scores nominated for an Academy Awards including *Gigi*, and *Porgy and Bass.* Today Previn still composes many diverse genres of music, including solo/chamber, vocal, opera, and orchestra music. He has spent his life improvising pieces on the piano, orchestrating film scores, and giving performances (most recently, a performance in the Carnegie Hall in 2009 at 81 years of age). In 2008, Previn was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award of the London Symphony Orchestra.

Previn’s experience as composer, performer, and even conductor has influenced two of his piano solo compositions: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* (1990) and *The Invisible Drummer* (1974). *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* (1990) and *The Invisible

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4 Ibid.
Drummer (1974) were composed during Previn’s “classical” period, post Previn’s MGM employment. Previn wrote every note on the music, even those ‘jazz’ and more ‘improvisatory’ sections rather than asked pianists to create their own. However, an understanding of jazz style is still needed when interpreting these two works. A pianist, trained in only classical methods, is difficult to give a convincing interpretation of these pieces. Characteristics of jazz piano are significant in these pieces and must be learned in order to properly perform them.

This document offers pianists substantive information and suggestions to create a more ‘authentic’ interpretation of these two Previn works: Variations on a Theme by Haydn (1990) and the Invisible Drummer (1974). Through this document, a perspective view of these pieces, one that includes stylistic considerations based on Previn’s own experience, will be shown alongside formal analysis of the score. In addition, this document also contains performance guidelines for both works, as well as helpful information for performers from articles and books written about Andre Previn, and the author’s personal performance experience.

The biography of Andre Previn can be found in chapter one. The foundation of this chapter comes from “Great pianists of the 20th century” in which Harrison Max offers a biography of Andre Previn and suggestions of great recordings. Previn’s biography will help pianists connect Previn’s life experience to the musical characteristics in his works.

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Previn’s place in the history of the 20th Century, located in chapter two gives pianists a stronger rationale to learn more about Previn’s work. Chapters three and four offer formal analysis of the two piano solo pieces, the character of each movement, and performance guidelines for musicians to produce an artistic, and more ‘authentic’ performance of these works.

The last chapter consists of some core ideas of Andre Previn; and quotes related to interpreting his works. The primary sources are more abundant, including Previn’s own biography, music, recordings, videos, and interviews - as Previn’s words, and his conducting gestures give performers good sense of his musical ideas and personality.

The bibliography includes five categories: books, articles, recordings, on-line sources, and scores.

This study is conducted along with the author’s personal experience performing Previn’s works.

One Special Note: At the time of this writing The Invisible Drummer was not listed as one of Previn’s published works on his official website. Yet, in Donald Vroon’s record review from the American Record Guide (2004), pianists find a very high admiration of this work. Vroon was quoted as having said “The second and fifth preludes in The Invisible Drummer, from 1974, have a dreamy lyricism characteristic of the best film music, though they are far more textured and complex.” In this document,

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12 Ibid.
insightful information and suggestions of this piece will be discussed accompanied by musical analysis.
Chapter 1

A Brief Overview of Andre Previn (1929-)

Andre Previn was born in Berlin in 1929. Previn was a man of Russian-Jewish decent, who grew up in an atmosphere of music from his father - a lawyer and an amateur pianist. At the age of six Andre began piano study at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik. In 1938, due to the Nazi party’s expulsion of Jewish person, Andre’s family moved to Paris where he studied with Marcel Dupre at the Paris Conservatory.

In 1943, Previn moved with his family to the United States. His family, now citizens, settled in Los Angles to be close to Previn’s cousin, who was a music director at Universal Studios in Hollywood (MGM). While in Los Angeles, Previn had opportunities for additional study; piano with Max Rubinowitsch, theory with Ernst Toch and Joseph Achron, and composition with Mario Castelnuovo- Tedesco. Previn’s experiences in Los Angeles led him to work at the major Hollywood studios. Previn worked at MGM as

a music arranger and orchestrator from 1948-1962; taking sketches or piano parts devised by the studio’s contract composers and converting them into orchestral arrangements.\textsuperscript{17}

One of the great influences in the musical life of Andre Previn was that of jazz music; in Art Tatum and Charlie Parker in particular. The day he first heard Art Tatum’s playing in 1943,\textsuperscript{18} Previn described Tatum’s jazz music as “A guy in a hotel dance band with a white tuxedo and a funny hat.”\textsuperscript{19} soon becoming a collector of Art Tatum’s works. In Martin Bookspan and Ross Yockey’s book, “\textit{André Previn: a biography}”, Previn is quoted as having said,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“After I had them all written out note for note I started teaching myself to play them, like you learn a composition of Mozart’s.”}\textsuperscript{20}
\end{quote}

During his tenure at MGM, Previn began devoting himself to this new style of music (jazz). In 1951, he began studying conducting with Pierre Monteux, who was in charge of the San Francisco Symphonic Orchestra\textsuperscript{21}, but then left MGM and moved to San Francisco in 1952 because of its great jazz scene.\textsuperscript{22} During this same year, he married jazz singer, Betty Bennett.\textsuperscript{23}

Andre Previn went back to Hollywood in 1953 and was employed extensively as a music director and a pianist. In 1959, he won an Oscar Academy Award for his work on the soundtracks of *Gigi* (music by Alan Jay Lewner) and *Porgy and Bess* (Gershwin). Throughout his career, Andre Previn recorded numerous Gershwin’s works, including the Piano Concerto in F, Rhapsody in Blue (both with Previn as pianist and conductor), and many songs from Gershwin’s musical shows which were originally produced on Broadway, such as *The Man I Love*, *I got Rhythm*, and *Someone to Watch over me*. In 1962, Previn had his conducting debut with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Previn left MGM in 1963, choosing then to return to classical composition. From 1963, he has composed many different genre of classical music (including but not limited to works for solo piano, songs, orchestra, and opera). He was a regular conductor of the Houston Symphony Orchestra from 1967 through 1969. Beginning in 1968, he was the principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra; a post he held until his departure in 1979. From 1976 to 1984, he was a conductor of the Pittsburgh

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Symphony Orchestra. In 2008, Andre Previn was honored with the London Symphony Orchestra's Lifetime Achievement Award.


Chapter 2

Andre Previn’s Place in the History of the 20th Century Composer-Pianist

Andre Previn’s work as composer-pianist has been influenced greatly by other significant composers of the twentieth century (incidentally, who were also good pianists); Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), George Gershwin (1898-1937), Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943), and Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953). Previn’s music was influenced by these pianists/composers in various ways; Poulenc contributed to Previn’s style of orchestration, Gershwin gave Previn his ‘jazz’, Rachmaninoff - lyrical character, and Prokofiev inspired Previn’s ‘inner tradition.’

Poulenc’s influence on Previn can be seen in Previn’s Trio for piano, oboe, and bassoon, (1994). A French pianist/composer, Poulenc wrote only one trio for bassoon, oboe, and piano (1926) during his lifetime. Like Poulenc, Andre Previn composed only one work for this combination of instruments in his lifetime. Previn’s Trio shares musical characteristics also found in Poulenc’s trio, such as the extensive use of off-beats and sudden accents (Fig. 1 to 3).
Dedicated to Dr. Jeffrey Gold

Trio
for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano

I

André Previn

Fig. 1. Previn, *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano*, Mov. I. mm.1-5

Fig. 2. Previn, *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano*, Mov. I. mm.125-127
Andre Previn’s musical life may also have been influenced by the life (and the jazz) of Gershwin. Both men are composers, pianists, and conductors. Gershwin also began his career as a composer, writing over one hundred songs for Tin Pan Alley, and also for various Hollywood films.  

Andre Previn’s music also seems to have significant influence from Russian composers; then first being Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943). Rachmaninoff’s direct influence on Andre Previn is difficult to hear, with the exception of the lyrical aspect of the melodies in Rachmaninoff’s music, which can also be heard in Andre Previn’s works. The middle section in the second movement of the *Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon* shows Previn’s ‘Rachmaninoff-like’ lyrical character (Figure 4).

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An additional Russian influence on Previn is Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953). In the Grove Music Dictionary, Redepenning wrote that “Prokofief’s inner traditionalism, coupled with the neo-classicism he had helped invent, now made it possible for him to play a leading role in Soviet culture.” Like Prokofiev, Andre Previn’s music reflects some well established components of music of the classic era. Max Harrison, author of the liner notes for *80 Great Pianists of the 20th Century*, writes that Andre Previn’s repertoire, whether for solo piano or conducting, never comes further than such

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conservative figures as Britten and Shostakovich, nor goes back past Mozart.\textsuperscript{34} For instance, Previn borrowed Haydn’s theme for his \textit{Variations on a Theme by Haydn}; a work for solo piano. In the set of variations, traditional harmonic progressions appear, such as authentic cadences (V to I). Previn’s significant influence from twenty- century composers permeates these works - keeping the inner tradition from Prokofiev, lyrical melodies from Rachmaninoff, arrangements from Poulenc, and artistic similarities of Gershwin.

Chapter 3

Formal Analysis of Variations of Theme by Haydn

3.1 Origins of Andre Previn’s Variations on a Theme by Haydn (1990)

Andre Previn composed Variations on a Theme by Haydn for Emanuel Ax in 1990. This work is composed of seven variations with different tempo markings and titles, namely Very fast and mysterious, Rubato, Eight note= ca. 136, Molto espressive, Fast and nervous, Very slow, and Declamatory. Brisk. The entire work lasts about sixteen minutes.35

The first performance took place in Chicago by Emanuel Ax around 1990. According to Distler’s interview with Andre Previn, 36 there is a comical story about this piece. Pianist Emanuel Ax planned to give concerts composed of all Haydn piano sonatas but wanted to add some Haydn-related new works to each concert. He therefore asked Andre Previn to write a piece for him. Interestingly enough, in the premiere concert of Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Emanuel Ax decided not to play any Haydn piano

sonatas. Instead, he played all new works based on Haydn’s work, including *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* by Andre Previn.\(^{37}\)

### 3.2 Vary fast and mysterious

The theme in this work comes from the second movement (*Allegretto*) of Haydn’s symphony, No. 82 (Fig. 5), the “Bear” symphony. The origin of the nickname comes from the fourth movement (Finale, *Vivace*) of the symphony. The light character in the fourth movement typifies the dancing bear.\(^{38}\) Andre Previn keeps the original key of the symphony, F Major, and the same harmonic progression (V-I) in the theme of *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*. This displays one of Previn’s compositions techniques-choosing the traditional harmonic progression.

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\(^{38}\) Personal conversation with Professor Marshall Haddock, May, 2010.
The first variation begins with a scurrying introduction in all sixteenth notes. This variation shows one of the most important features of Twentieth century music---shifting meters. From m. 1 to m. 9, there are four different time signatures: 3/8, 4/8, 2/8, and 5/8, and the texture is a combination of contrary and unison (Fig. 6). The dynamic is marked in *pp* from m.1-9 and the register is low (see Fig. 6). Because of the low register of the
keyboard, using the *una corda* pedal in this passage is needed to create a good *piano* sound. In addition, the sustain pedal can be applied to this passage as well to add more mysterious colors. Pianists may consider using a half sustain pedal instead of a whole pedal in this rapid figure passage to avoid a muddy sound. Pianists should change the pedal frequently to aim a clear sound.

**Fig. 6.** Previn: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Mov.I, mm. 1-9
One of Andre Previn’s compositional techniques is exchanging notes in the left hand and ascending scales in the right hand, which can be heard from m.11 to 12 (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7. Previn: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Mov.1, mm. 10-13

He utilizes this technique in the third movement of his Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon (Fig. 8), as well. When playing m. 10-13 (Fig. 7), the wrist of the right hand needs to be free in order to build up the ascending scales. Having a free wrist means that the position of the wrist does not stay at one position when playing all rapid figures or scales, but that it moves in different directions while playing with different notes. This formula should be applied in the rest of this work. Regarding exchanging notes in the left hand, they should serve as a steady pulse-one of the important features in the jazz music.
Fig. 8. Previn, *Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon*, Mov.III mm. 175-176

Besides using a free wrist, how to group the notes is important from m.11-13 as well. Rachmaninoff once said, “An artist interpretation is not possible if the student does not know the laws underlying the very important subject of phrasing.”\(^{39}\) According to Thurmond’s concept of note grouping, he observed that continuous triplets and sixteenth notes should be grouped as in the following diagram. Thurmond suggested adding a *decrescendo* in each group.\(^ {40}\) (231-231, and 2341, 2341)


This is a very useful diagram. One will see that notes should lead from 2, 3, and to 1, or 2, 3, 4, and to 1. Do not think the phrase ends where the beats end, on the contrary, it ends on the first beat of the next phrase. In other words, the grouping of notes does not follow the beat of the notes (123-123, and 1234-1234).

Take measure 11 to 12 for an example (Fig. 7), continuous sixteenth notes are presented from both hands and the main melody is offered by the right hand. If pianists group the notes from the first note of the thirty second notes to the fourth one in the same group, the phrase would be too short and unmusical. However, if pianists group the notes from the second thirty-second notes to the first thirty-second notes of the next group, the phrase is longer and the music flows more. Do not forget the phrase does not finish on the last note of the thirty second note group, on the contrary, it should last until the first note of the next group. This formula should be remembered when playing continuous sixteenth notes or triplets in Previn’s works.

Not until m. 13 do we hear the main theme of the variation from the second movement of Haydn’s symphony No. 82 (Fig. 9). Moreover, the harmony progression is exactly the same as the theme of the symphony (ii⁶- I⁶- V- I). Pianists should pay attention to articulation from m.13-16, where thirty second rests appears twice in m.13, and a legato occurs in m. 14. Pianists should play a clear slur in m. 13, a legato in the right hand in m.14, and a non-legato eighth notes for both hands in m.15. Even Previn did not write staccato on eighth notes in m.15, in order to match the articulation of the original orchestra sound, where strings are marked staccatto on eighth notes (see Fig. 5), pianists should incorporate a staccato playing in the eighth notes in m. 15.
The theme, however, does not last very long. After three and a half bars (m. 13 to m.16), the music goes back to the original mood from the beginning (fast and mysterious) (Fig. 9). Between m. 19 to m. 23 has the sense of improvisation followed by the Haydn theme in G Major for four bars (m. 24-27) (Fig. 10). Pianists should keep the strict tempo from m.19-23, and place the accents on the right place (e.g. m.19-20). In addition, following the slurs, which Previn wrote in m. 20, is needed. To avoid a heavy sound, the touch from m. 21-23 should be light because the left hand is written in a low register and the rapid figure in the right hand requires a fast and light motion. All above suggestions should help pianists portray the right “improvisatory” character in this passage. In the second half of m. 27, the main theme occurs again in F Major (Fig. 10).
In m. 40 and m. 41, the left hand presents chromatic scales with the melody in the right hand (Fig. 11).
This pattern can be heard in the second movement of the *Trio for piano, oboe, and bassoon*, as well (Fig. 12). Like m. 11-13 (figure 7), pianists should apply free wrist to chromatic scales. Every pianist’s hand design is different. Pianists need to find their own way to search different positions of wrists when playing different notes. The primary goal is to avoid locking the wrist when playing. Without using a free wrist when playing scales, a mechanical sound may occur.
Five bars before the end (m. 58) of this variation the Haydn theme recurs. Besides the top line of the theme in the right hand, Andre Previn also adds a chromatic inner line with the dotted rhythms in the right hand. The variation ends in a very traditionally with a perfect authentic cadence ($V^7$-I) (Fig. 13).

![Fig. 13. Previn: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Mov.I, mm. 58-62](image)

Notice that every time the theme appears, Andre Previn marks a tempo indication. From the first time to the last, *poco meno mosso, poco meno mosso, and a little slower still* are listed. Pianists want to read all these indications carefully while performing the movement.

### 3.3 Rubato

From the title of this movement, pianists will derive a good direction to play this variation. The title also reflects the tempo markings in this piece. Throughout the entire
variation, we see *Rubato*, *accel.*, *Rall.*, *Poco rall.*, and *a tempo*, which means a pianist can take liberty while interpreting this movement.

The variation is in ABA form. A is from m. 1 to m. 13 and m. 34 to m. 39, while B is from m.14 to m.34. Notice that the key of the theme in the first movement is in F Major. The first A section in the *Rubato* movement begins in the relative minor of F Major, D Minor, followed by an arpeggiated E-flat Minor triad with a non-harmonic tone (C flat) with a fermata (Fig. 14).

The C flat in m.2 is important. It serves as not only the non-harmonic tone for the chord, but as a part of the theme. Pianists may take time between G-flat and C-flat in the right hand in m.2 to give an expressive tone on the top voice.
In m. 3, the second beat of the left hand includes a non-harmonic tone (E), as well. In m. 4, a C Minor ninth chord in an arpeggio with a fermata is displayed. The arpeggio chords with fermatas (m. 2 and m.4) in this variation show the liberty of the music. Pianists need to take advantage of the music indication in order to fulfill the character of the title (Rubato).

One of the most striking features of this variation is harmony, especially the non-traditional use of dominant seventh chords and I 6/4 chords. When Previn adds appoggiaturas to this harmonic structure, the affect is extremely charming and perhaps one of the most musical ideas in this section (Fig. 15).

![Fig. 15. Previn: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Mov.II, mm. 23-25](image)

This passage is comprised of non-harmonic tones, grace notes, and simple triads and sixth chords (see m.23 to m.25). In m. 23, the A flat serves as an appoggiatura of the C
Major chord, followed by the dominant ninth chord with the grace note (E). In m. 24, the harmony is expected to go back to I, which the right hand follows. The left hand, however, is still suspended in I 6/4. In addition, the second half of m. 24 is a sequence of what is found in m. 23 under *poco rall.* These techniques give the effect of various colors. In order to catch the jazz character, pianists can add a little dotted rhythm to the sixteenth notes. For example, on the second beat in m. 24, pianists can play the sixteenth notes with dotted rhythm to create a “swing” effect.

The return of the A section is an almost exact restatement of the first A section, except in different keys (C Minor and A flat Majors). The variation ends a very unusual and unstable chord, a F Major eleventh chord (Fig. 16).

Fig. 16. Previn: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Mov.II, mm. 36-39
3.4 Eight note\(=\) ca. 136

The third variation is the most difficult one among all the variations in terms of technique. The entire movement is composed of rapid thirty-second notes. This might be challenging for the performer, especially when the piece needs to be memorized. To make the memorization easier, a performer may apply different dynamics and stylistic indications while practicing. For instance, in m.1, playing the phrase with a \textit{crescendo} will be more effective than without (Fig. 17). Moreover, by shaping the phrase (i.e. do not accent on the downbeat according to Thurmond’s concept), a performer can learn to memorize the piece quicker.

![Fig. 17. Previn: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Mov.III, mm. 1-3](image)

\footnotesize{Morgan Thurmond, Note Grouping: A Method for Achieving Expression and Style in Musical Performance. (Pennsylvania: JMT, 1982), 86.}
In addition to shaping the phrase, fingerings can sometimes influence a performance, and it is therefore important to choose good fingerings. In order to choose good fingerings, a pianist has to look not only at the phrase for which she/he wants to set the fingerings, but also at the following phrase. A good example of this is m. 2. If the pianist only looks at m. 2 to choose the fingering, she/he may choose 1235 on the last four thirty-second notes in the right hand in m. 2. However, if the pianist looks at m. 3 first, she/he will find out that the connection between m. 2 and m. 3 is important because of the crescendo offered in m. 2. As a result, a different fingering occurs (i.e. 2323 on the last four thirty-second notes in the right hand in m. 2 and 5 on the first thirty-second note in the right hand in m. 3) (Fig. 17). This formula of how to choose the fingerings should be applied to any rapid figures in this work.

In m. 6, the first three beats are full of thirty-second notes in both hands. A pianist might have difficulties playing the continuing thirty-second notes smoothly. One way to solve this problem will be the concept of “one motion but many notes”, which means the pianist should use the body weight to play this passage. Pianists should drop the weight from their arms for the first note, and use their wrists and fingers to rotate the rest of them (Fig. 18) instead of using fingers only.
After the first appearance of the theme for five bars (m. 18 to m. 22), the beginning of the *a little slower* section dissipates the tension (Fig. 19). The right hand melody sounds improvised. It has a style which is free and enchanted. Pianists should allow themselves to take the liberty in the right hand but keep the left hand as steady as possible— an important rule for the jazz music. In addition, when the scale goes up, pianists can apply a *crescendo* to it; when the scale goes down, a *diminuendo* should appear. These interpretations will help pianists reach the character of the jazz music.
One of the features of Andre Previn’s music is that he uses repetition with a strong sense of rhythm, and he uses wide skips in register. It forms an isorhythm. This feature can be found in the end of movement III (Fig. 20).
In his *Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon*, the same pattern at the end of the first movement (Fig. 21) appears, as well. Unlike his solo piano work, in which the different parts are given to two hands, Andre Previn combined two double-reed instruments as one part, and the piano as the other part. In both cases, the isorhythm occurs. Pianist should play the rhythm evenly with a steady pulse inside.
3.5 Molto Espressivo

The fourth variation is the only variation for which Andre Previn wrote the key signature (F Major). The character of this F Major variation is as the title suggests, *espressivo*. The entire movement is very lyrical. Like the first movement, shifting meter appears in this movement, as well.

Compared to the first variation, Andre Previn employs even more time signatures in this movement, including 3/8, 4/8, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8, 8/8, 9/8, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 7/16. Although there are many changes in the time signature, listeners may not be able to recognize all the shifts because the eighth note remains constant throughout the variation (Fig. 22). A continuous legato playing is required in this variation (Fig. 22). Pianists
should play more with their finger pads regarding a legato playing. In addition, in order to achieve an effective legato sound, slightly overlapping two legato notes is necessary. For instance, in measure 1, pianists can hold a¹ in the right hand until hearing the sound of the b-flat¹; hold b-flat¹ until hearing the sound of c², and so on. This method ensures that there is no gap between two notes when playing a smooth and legato sound. The formula can be applied to any legato playing or expressive movement.

![Fig. 22. Previn: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Mov.IV, mm. 1-5](image)

By providing extra music after the perfect authentic cadence in m. 37 and shifting the meter (from 4/8 to 3/4), the \textit{not too slow} section presents the theme in a jazzy way (in D Major), and is also the only place pianists clearly hear the Haydn theme in the entire variation (Fig. 23). Like variation II, pianists can add a little dotted rhythm to the sixteenth note to create an effect of jazzy.
3.6 Fast and Nervous

Rhythm is the most important feature in the fifth variation. The material in this variation is composed of off-beats, sudden accents, and dotted rhythm with ties. Like variation I and IV, the time signature changes frequently through the Fast and nervous section. Notice that from m. 1 to m.8, Andre Previn writes rests in the beginning of every measure, whether it is for the right hand, left hand, or both hands (Fig. 24). The short thirty-second and sixteenth rests sound jittery. Like the title, this adds to the character of nervousness in this variation.

When portraying the beginning of variation V, pianist should always count the rest into their counting instead of counting notes only. This will help pianists gain a strong sense of the rhythm in this variation.
This dotted rhythm appears frequently in this movement. This pattern displays from m. 9 to m. 13, m. 42 to m. 43, m. 51, and in the ending (Fig. 25). When interpretation these figures, pianists can apply a crescendo to it, making the music flow more.
From m. 20 to m. 25, Andre Previn inserts dotted-rhythms with chromaticism between four voices in both hands (Fig. 26). Moreover, both hands are in unison. The dotted-rhythms, unison sonority, the diminished eighth, and minor seventh intervals in passages create an effect of a struggle. It may be easy for pianists to place an accent on the downbeat in this passage because it contains four voices and is easy to bring out. However, in order to make the chromatic line moves, pianists should focus on brings out the middle line (the chromatic line) more, especially the dotted eighth notes. By this interpretation, the line will sustain longer.
Through the entire piece, accents play an important role. Placing the accent in a wrong place would affect the interpretation negatively. Pianists should pay attention to where the composer places an accent in order to portray the right character. A good example of this lies in m. 31 to m. 32 (Fig. 27).
Looking at the music, we find there is no accent on the downbeat. Pianists must take caution not to ignore the correct placement of the accents. The temptation is to put the accent on the downbeat. Doing so will make the music sound predictable and loose the character instead of free flowing.

From m. 47 to m. 50, the style of improvisation can be heard with free flowing sixteenth-notes in the right hand. Again, a steady rhythm in the left hand and the right hand with a little *rubato* will give this passage more jazzy character.

Fig.28. Previn: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Mov.V, mm. 47-51
3.7 Very Slow

The sixth variation is the slowest variation. Unlike variation IV, which is also slow, variation VI is darker and more melancholic. The entire variation is a repetition of the same bass pattern (passacaglia) that occurs eight times with differing melodies. The bass foundation consists of minor chords (G Minor, C Minor, and F sharp Minor), a dominant chord (A flat dominant), and major seventh chords (E flat Major seventh, G flat Major seventh, and A flat Major seventh) (Fig. 29).

![Fig. 29. Previn: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Mov.VI, mm. 1-7](image)

The bass pattern presents the introduction from m. 1 to m.7, serving as the accompaniment of the entire movement (Fig. 29) and the melody enters in measure 8 (Fig. 30). Notice that the top voice from m. 1-7 forms the same melody as that in the original Haydn theme. In order to match the articulation of the original theme (i.e. a slur composed of an eighth note and sixteenth note) (see fig. 9), pianists should apply a *decrescendo* between m.1-2, m.3-4, and m.5-6.
Notice that the dynamics, from the first time to the fifth repetition, are all marked *piano* except the first occurrence (*mf*) (Fig. 29). Each time the texture is very simple. However, the tension of the music is heightened in the sixth restatement (Fig. 31) by the accented triplets, followed by the climax of the entire variation (Fig. 32) in *ff.*
In the last occurrence of the passacaglia (m. 50 to m. 59), Previn causes the melody to gradually disappear by heightening the register in the right hand and softening the dynamics ($p$ and $pp$) (Fig. 33).

Fig.32. Previn: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Mov. VI, mm. 43-49

Fig.33. Previn: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Mov. VI, mm. 50-59
From the above information, pianists learn that contrasting dynamic is a significant feature in this variation (also an important feature in the twentieth century music). Pianists should pay attention to the diverse dynamics when performing this variation.

3.8 Declamatory. Brisk

The last variation consists of two parts, Declamatory (m.1-11) and brisk (m.12-70). The former serves as an introduction of this variation, while the latter is in ABA form. Previn now introduces the Haydn theme with the bold use of harmonies (Declamatory). He utilizes different harmonies in both hands at the same time (Fig. 34). Notice that almost every chord in Declamatory is marked sostenuto (Fig. 34). The sonority of these harmonies and the sostenuto on each chord sound firm and strong. It definitely gives the music a declamatorial feel.

In order to achieve a thick sound, upper body weight must be used from m.1-3 (Fig. 34). If not, the sound of the chords might be too thin and not substantial enough. In order to apply the weight of the upper body effectively, loose shoulders and flexible arms (both upper arms and forearms) are indispensable. Having loose shoulders means the pianist should not accumulate tension in their arms, or lift their shoulders when playing. Maintaining flexible arms means the joint between the upper arm and the forearm should not be rigid, instead, it should be movable when playing. In addition, before playing each chord from m. 1 to m. 2 in Variation VII, pianists should slightly raise the upper arm and not lock the upper arm against the upper body.
There are two helpful training methods for pianists regarding the use of arm weight. First of all, pianists can put a mirror to their side when working on having flexible arms and check if arms are moving or not when playing. Secondly, besides looking at the mirror, pianists could try to place a pillow between the arm and the upper body when playing to maintain the space between arms and the upper body. These suggestions should help pianists to be able to use body weight effectively.

Fig. 34. Previn: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Mov. VII, mm. 1-3

In m. 5, the figure of the original theme appears followed by an arpeggiated dominant chord in m. 6 (Fig. 35).
The “brisk” section starts in D Major with the transformation of the Haydn theme rhythmically and in the intervals of the theme (Fig. 36). Previn chooses a triplet figure to replace the original rhythm (eighth note), and the original intervals of the theme (Minor third, Minor third, and Major third) have been replaced by Minor third, Major third, and Major third in m.13 (see Fig. 36). When playing the brisk section, pianist should keep the continues eighth notes steady and even in the left hand, serving the foundation for the triplet in the right hand.
Andre Previn extensively employs Major and Minor thirds in the theme throughout the entire movement. For example, one hears the thirds in m. 1-3, m. 5-6, m. 13-14, m. 18-19, m. 27, etc (see Fig. 34-36). Even in the B section (m. 33 to m. 40), clear Minor thirds can be heard in m. 33-35 (Fig. 37).

 Notice that every time the theme appears, each occurrence is rhythmically different (see m. 1, m. 13, and m. 33 from fig. 34, 36, and 37), which gives more excitement and variety to the movement. Pianists should play each figure differently for more variety.
Yet, keeping the feeling of two notes as a slur is still needed to respond the same articulation of the original theme (Fig. 9).

Before the return of the A section (m. 41), the dominant note (C) (m. 40) indicates the key of the return section (F Major), which is the same key of the theme of the first variation (Fig. 38).

![Fig.38. Previn: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Mov.VII, mm. 38-41](image)

The rest of the A section is almost exactly the same as the beginning A section, except in a different key. Forceful accents in both hands conclude this work (Fig. 39).
Fig. 39. Previn: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Mov. VII, mm. 67-70
Chapter 4

Formal Analysis of The Invisible Drummer

The Invisible Drummer-Five Preludes for Piano (1974)

Vladimir Ashkenazy has always evinced an interest in improvisatory jazz piano technique. Therefore, he requested that I write him some short pieces incorporating some aspects of the particular mode of expression. The title “The Invisible Drummer” refers to the fact that, particularly in Preludes I, III, and V, the tempo must be kept absolutely and inexorably strict, even if there is an occasional rubato within the bar. (Previn, 1974)

Andre Previn composed The Invisible Drummer in 1974 - dedicated to the pianist, Vladimir Ashkenazy. A renowned classical pianist and a conductor, Ashkenazy has been trained as a classical musician and had no significant jazz experience. The Invisible Drummer was neither listed as one of Ashkenazy’s released works on his official website and nor in the WorldCat database. In addition, none of the websites show information regarding the premiere of The Invisible Drummer. The Invisible Drummer contains five preludes. Each prelude portrays a very different character. The beginning tempo/expression markings of the five preludes are listed as Slowly, Rhapsodically, Moderato, Andante, and Fast.

45 ibid.
46 Decca Music group, http://newfirstsearch.oclc.org.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/WebZ/FSPrefs?entity=entitydetect=javascript=true;screen=large;sessionid=fsapp5-51712-g9ihgo79-fx6mz1.entitypagenum=1;0 (Accessed May, 23, 2010)
4.1 Prelude I

The first prelude is in rondo (ABACA) form. The first A section starts with a melancholy theme. In measure 5, the theme develops through a descending fifth in the left hand. In m. 7, both hands mirror each other, leading to the first climax (in m. 8 in fortissimo) (Fig. 40).

Fig. 40. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude I, mm. 1-8
One of the compositional techniques Andre Previn employs in his works is a sudden change in dynamics. In m. 8, there is a dynamic marking \textit{pp} on the third beat followed by the \textit{ff} (see Fig. 40). Contrasting dynamics are important features in Previn’s works. When playing m.8, pianists should take the opportunity to emphasize these differences.

Measure 9 to m. 16 serves as a bridge to leading to the B section, (i.e. \textit{Meno mosso; Tempo giusto}). Previn utilizes contrary motion in this section (Fig. 41).

Contrary motion combined with frequently changing meter (i.e. 3/4, 5/8, and 4/4) give this section a sense of instability. Notice that the biggest interval in the right hand occurring in the bridge section is the perfect eighth (see Figure 41). Pianists should bring out the top of the octave (m.9-10) to make the contrary motion more effective.
Before the B section (m. 17) starts, the first theme is being presented again from m. 13 to m.16 (Fig. 42).

The B section contains two contrasting parts. The former is in an improvisatory jazz style, while the latter is a scherzando; both uneven in length. The first part (*Meno mosso*) occupies twelve measures (m.17-28). Yet, the *scherzando* only contains five measures (m.29-33).

The beginning of *Meno mosso* is reminiscent of one of Andre Previn’s albums with Ray Brown and Joe Pass, “*After Hours*” in which piano serves as a main melody, and the bass/guitar plays a supportive line with a steady rhythm underneath (Fig. 43).
Measure 20 is a minor third sequence of m. 19 (Fig. 44).
Measure 21 to m. 23 serves as a transition to the climax at m. 25 (Fig. 45).

Fig. 45. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude I, mm. 21-26

Previn incorporated polyrhythms within *Meno mosso* (i.e. ten against two, and twenty-six against five) (Figure 43 and 45). Pianists may want to separate ten-tuplets into
five and five, which will help to make the tuplets more even. In addition, pianists can try to stop in different notes of ten tuplets to strengthen the fingers. The fifth finger is usually the weakest finger among all five fingers. Pianists should practice stopping on notes where the fifth finger is used (see Fig. 43).

On the other hand, the thumb is the strongest finger among all five fingers. If the pianist could learn to soften the sound of the thumb, and how to free it from unintentional accenting, it will make the ten tuplet more even and more musical. In m. 17, pianists may use the thumb on two Fs in the different registers and the middle C (see Fig. 43). Try to use the brush technique, and softly touch the piano with the side pad of the thumb instead of with the tip to soften the sound.

It is even harder to play the twenty-six against five evenly from m. 21 to m.23 (Fig. 45) because twenty-six can not been divided into five perfectly. Like a little slower section from Variaiton III of Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Pianists should try to keep the bass/eighth notes very strict, and play the twenty-six tuplets in the right hand fluently and musically. Pianists should practice the bass line first with a steady tempo, and then add the twenty-six tuplet line later. Imagining a steady heart beat and/or the pulse inside the body will help pianists to feel the precise rhythm. Playing the melody line slowly to get a good sense of all gaps between intervals is suggested. This will help pianists play the melody with fluency and beautiful tone.

In order to capture the 5/8 feeling in m. 19 (Fig. 44), pianists should group the notes in four, with the accents in the right place instead of grouping the notes in three,
which follows the accents marking. By changing the grouping, this section will not sound overly harsh – moving more freely with better direction.

When grouping in four of the thirty-two notes in m. 19, the placement of the accents will not be the same as that of the beginning of every beat (see Fig. 44). The first four-note group contains two accents while the second and the third four-note groups contain only one accent. This can be confusing without enough practicing.

Pianists should be diligent to all practice procedures. While playing m. 19 (Fig. 44), pianists should apply the same rule set for the thumb (i.e. soften the sound of the thumb to get the better balance between notes) as well.

Measure 25 (Fig. 45) is the climax of *Meno mosso*. It is heightened by the minor triad and diminished triad in the right hand with the trill in m.24, and the seventh chords in the left hand. Both hands move in inversion with expending intervals. To keep the intensity of the chord with the trill in m.24, pianists should play the eighth chords as long as they can with *sostenuto*. In addition, pianists should not leave any gap between the two trills, which might occur between the third eighth chord and the fourth eighth chord in measure 24. Be careful not to inadvertently add a gap in the trill. Doing so will ruin the climax. Adding a gap in the trill will also hurt the sound of the passage. The A Minor triad and B diminished triad on the second half of measure 24 are chords only. Once pianists have pressed these two chords, the tone does not remain for long. Playing the trills under the chords without any gap will help to compensate for the piano’s natural tendency to *decresendo* once the keys are pressed.
In order to create an effective climax in m.25, pianists can play the A Minor triad in m.24 with a soft trill. Next, start a crescendo with a clean non-stop trill until the beginning of m.25 (Fig. 45). Pianists should apply decrescendo to the trill in m.25 to make it smoothly connect to the following piano passage in m.26 (Fig. 45).

In the second section of B, scherzando, more tonal sounds appear than the previous section. Basically, the harmony moves from V to I both in m.29 and m.30: A Major to D Major (V-I) in m.29, and G Major to C Major (V-I) in m.30 (Fig. 46). This shows Previn’s compositional style- using the traditional harmonic progression.

![Fig. 46. Previn, The Invisible Drummer, Prelude I, mm. 29-30](image)

In comparison to the first A section, Previn added repeated notes in the right hand in the middle A section ad lib. (from m. 38 to 39) (Fig. 47).
Pianists may want to take the liberty to play all repeated notes in m. 38 and 39 but keep the melody in the left hand steady- the rule for the jazz music. Pianists should be aware of not overpowering the repeated notes in m. 38 and 39 in order to exaggerate the main melody in the left hand.

Measure 40-43 are in D flat Major. There is an obvious D flat Major scale in m. 40 (Fig. 48).
From m. 42 to 43, Previn creates polytonality by writing each hand in a different key (i.e. D flat Major in the right hand, and G Major in the left hand) (Fig. 48). Since m. 43 is a repetition of m.42 (except it is one octave lower), pianists might want to play m. 43 with a softer sound, which can give the effect of echo of m.42 (Fig. 48) and could help the music connect to the next C-section written in pp better.

In the beginning of the C-section (m.44-47), the bass line is formed by the same chords (i.e. B flat, E flat, A flat as a chord, and D flat, G flat, C flat as the other chord), and the same rhythm (i.e. eighth notes) with the same dynamic (i.e. pp) (Fig. 49).
Looking closer at Previn’s writing in m. 45 and m.47, pianists can find that the dynamics in both hands are quite different. The right hand is written in $ff$, yet the left hand is written in $pp$. Pianists should keep the eighth notes of the left hand steady with a soft sound while playing the octaves with accents in the right hand.
Measure 48 serves as a little coda followed by the return of the A section (Fig. 50).

Descending from octaves in m. 48 arpeggios in the left hand is in B Minor. The challenge in m. 48 might be the irregular accents in the right hand. It will be helpful if pianists can check their right hand position immediately after playing the fifth thirty-second note in m.48 (i.e. check D and B flat as a minor six) in order to place the pinky at the right place and make the accent on the right note. Pianists may remind themselves to shrink their fingers between the fifth thirty-second note and the sixth thirty-second note in m.48 in order to be able to play the minor third using the right position (Fig. 50).

Like the last chord in m. 33, Previn utilized the F Major chord in the second chord in m. 49 to prepare the arrival of the final A section (i.e. V-I) (Fig. 50).
section (m. 50 to m.53) is the shortest one among all A sections in Prelude I - occupying four measures only. There is a chromatic line hidden in the middle voice in m. 51 and 52. (see Fig. 52). Pianists can emphasize that line to freshen the interpretation.

4.2 Prelude II

Prelude II is the most romantic and attractive among all preludes in “The Invisible Drummer”. In the article, “Previn, Piano Pieces”, the author Donald Vroon believed that,

_He (Andre Previn) didn't completely leave Hollywood behind: the second and fifth preludes in The Invisible Drummer, from 1974, have a dreamy lyricism characteristic of the best film music, though they are far more textured and complex. These remind me of classical pieces by Korngold and Herrmann; you can hear the film influence and still enjoy them as beautifully shaped concert works._

Prelude II is marked as Rhapsodically (Fig.53). It should contain passion, imagination, and lyricism. Prelude II includes four sections: **Rhapsodically, lightly, gently, a little slower, and Tempo I.** Previn utilized Major ninths often through the entire movement.

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The beginning of the prelude starts with arpeggios in the left hand for four measures (Fig. 51). The solo line in the left hand from m.1 to m.4 includes two different time signatures (i.e. 2/4, 3/4), and five different rhythms (i.e. eighth-notes, triplet, sixteenth notes, five tuplet, and thirty-second notes). Pianists may take the liberty to interpret these four measures to create the feeling of rhapsody. The biggest interval occurring from m.1 to m.4 is a Major six (m. 2 and between m. 2 and m.3). The highest note is e¹ in m.2, and the lowest note is B flat in m.4 (see Fig. 51).

Pianists may want to pay more attention the Major six, the highest note, e¹, and the lowest note, BB flat when performing these first four measures. The timing between the two notes (i.e. A to F-sharp, F-sharp to A, and A to C nature) is key when performing (see Fig. 51). Pianists must feel the space of the interval honestly after pressing the first
note of the major six (i.e. Two As, and F-sharp). Then, pianists should decide how much should be given to the second note of the Major six.

Looking at Figure 51, a crescendo is marked on the first beat of m. 2, where the first Major six is located; a decrescendo is marked on the last beat of m.2, where the second Major six is located. However, the decrescendo is only applied to the last note of the second Major six (i.e. A, the last note in m. 2), and it does not apply to the last note of the third major six. Pianists should play the crescendo and decrescendo simultaneously while the Major six occurs in m. 2 because the markings are written above the notes.

However, regarding the decrescendo in m.2, it only applies until the A, not to the low C, which is a part of the largest interval (Major six) from m.1-4. Under this circumstance, pianists may still want to treat the C importantly with a deep tone. Pianists should treat the low C longer and deeper on the soft side in keeping with the character of the sostenuto. In addition, Because the dissonant interval (Minor second) in m. 2 comes after all tonal arpeggios in m.1 and the first beat of m. 2, pianists must hear the dissonant interval when playing the Minor second in m.2 to emphasize the special sonority (Fig. 51).

The lowest note, BB flat, in m. 4, serves as a semi tone for the melody as it moves to A Major in m.5 (see Fig.51). Previn wrote a crescendo marking on the last beat of m. 4. Pianists have the responsibility to lead the music from B flat Major to A Major with intensity. The parallel movement adds a certain strength to the music. Pianists should take care to make the crescendo in m.4 effective. Playing the triplets in m. 4 extremely legato with the crescendo crossing the bar line to m. 5 will be helpful.
From m. 5 to 8, the harmonic progression of the theme follows the basic tonal center (e.g. I-IV in AM from m. 5 to m.6, and I-V in CM from m.7 to m.8) (Fig. 52).

Fig. 52. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude II, mm. 5-8

Previn incorporated many sixth and third intervals in the right hand of these four measures. The combination of both hands creates polyrhythms from m. 5 to m.8; three against five, four against three, six against four, and six against five. With the rich texture in these four measures, pianists should bring out the top voice and the bass line more. In addition, all accents should be played with expression and *sostenuto* (see Fig. 52).

From m. 9 to m.12, the basic form of the rhythm (i.e. polyrhythm between two hands, and multi-tuplets on both hands) does not change greatly. Yet, the texture from m.
9 to m.12 is thicker than that from m.5 to m.8 because the number of the tuplets is increased in m.9 and m. 11 (Fig. 53).

The range of notes is expanded in both hands at m. 10 (E to $f^3$-sharp). Notice that in m. 11, the right and left hand parts do not only form polyrhythm, but also polytonality. The harmony in the right hand is in the tonic key, A Major, while the left hand is in F Major. Pianists should bring out the outer voices more from m.9-12 to support the rich texture and sonority. From m.12-13, pianists may want to play with a ruminative voice.
with a little *ritardando* in the end of m. 13. Both suggestions will be helpful for entering to the next section, *lightly*.

Notice that the key is changed quickly in the beginning of the *lightly* section. (i.e. A major in m. 14, and B flat measure in m. 15) (Fig. 54). Pianists should avoid playing with a heavy sound in order to show the changing of the keys. Pianists should still apply the character “*light*”, as the title suggested, to the music.

![Fig. 54. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude II, mm. 14-15](image)

This section contains many tempo-changing markings (Fig. 55). Additionally, the time signature shifts while the tempo marking changes (e.g. *accel*, *rall*, and *a tempo* occurs from m. 18- 21; the time signature changes from 2/4, 8/8, 5/8, and 3/4 from 18-21 as well) (Fig. 55).
It is suggested to start softly in m. 18 and do a crescendo and accel. when playing the repetitive material until the D Major seventh chord in m. 20. Then, on the first beat of m. 20, pianists should play crescendo as marked while holding back a little bit on the last two sixteenth notes (i.e. G flat and B flat). By holding the last two sixteenth notes back, pianists will set themselves up better for the rall. section in m. 20.
From the *rall.* in m. 20, pianists may want to bring out the left hand more in order to bring out the solo line and the interesting intervals between notes (i.e. Major seventh chord, Major second, and the semi-tone) (Fig. 55).

Like m. 13 (Fig. 53), m. 28 serves as a bridge to the next section, *gently, a little slower* (Fig. 55). Previn incorporated the mixture of Major triad, Minor triad, and diminished triad in the right hand, and the mixture of Major second and Minor second in the left hand in m. 27 (see Fig. 55). The combination of all these chords/intervals sound atonal in m. 28, which is in contrast to the previous two measures. (e.g. m. 26 and 27 are clearly in C Major) (Fig. 55). Pianists may want to contrast the music which is tonal with the music which is atonal from m. 26 to 28.

The next section, *gently, a little slower,* is the longest of all sections in Prelude II. It occupies twenty-seven measures (m. 29 to m.56) and shows the contrasting in the music in different textures. *Gently, a little slower* starts in a quiet and *tranquillo* mood in m. 29 (Fig. 56).

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Fig. 56. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer,* Prelude II, mm. 29-32
While towards the end of the section, the climax marked in \textit{ff} appears in m. 51 (Fig. 57).

![Fig. 57. Previn, \textit{The Invisible Drummer}, Prelude II, mm. 51](image)

Previn clearly marked all dynamics in this section. Pianists should examine the music first to find the many different dynamic markings. Measure 29 - 32 is marked \textit{piano}, m. 33 to 36 is marked \textit{mf}, m.38 is marked \textit{subito p}, and so on. Pianists should design the structure of the section in their minds, which means pianists should decide where to play more, where to play less, and how much weight to give to each dynamic. Using this process the different dynamics can be presented in different levels of intensity.

The first four measures \textit{gently, a little slower} are in C Major. They lie more on the soft side (Fig. 56). Because of the different subdivisions of the rhythm, the music feels asymmetric (as if in 6/8 and 3/4 meters).
In m. 38 to m. 41, the basic harmony is a Dominant eleventh chord in C (Fig. 58). Notice that the texture in these four measures become richer because of the different rhythms in both hands (i.e. from eighth notes to sixteenth notes in the right hand, and from two sixteenth notes to six sixteenth notes in the left hand). Pianist should try to make each measure different colors and highlight the diverse rhythms. In m. 52, part of the original theme from m. 5 is represented in the right hand (Fig. 59), and hints at arrival of the final section (Tempo I).
In measures 52-53, the diminution of the rhythm is displayed. The material from measure 55-56 is formed by using broken Major ninth chords in an ascending line with the two different tempo markings (accel and rall) (see Fig. 59). Pianists should play m.55 with gradually accel. until the downbeat of the last beat in m.56 (F-F#-E). Then, starting to
increase the tension by playing *rall.* and *crescendo* on the last beat in m.56 to prepare for arrival in m.57 (Fig. 59).

Unlike the *rhapsodically* section, where the largest range between two hands is from E to d♯₃, the largest range in *Tempo I* is from FF to d³ (Fig. 60). Pianists should deliver more expressive and passionate sound in the return *Tempo I.* Taking time between large intervals and bring out more outer voices is suggested.

Fig. 60. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer,* Prelude II, mm. 61-62
Prelude II ends with a single note with a *sffz.* (Fig. 61). Pianists should build up the sound from m. 69. Applying a non-stop *crescendo* from m.65-72 will create an effective ending.

4.3 Prelude III

Prelude III is in A Minor; parallel to the A Major key in prelude II. This prelude is in variation form. Following is a table of the formal analysis of prelude III.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Theme</th>
<th>Measure 1 to 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variation I</td>
<td>Measure 9 to 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation II</td>
<td>Measure 17 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation III</td>
<td>Measure 25 to 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calmly</td>
<td>Measure 33 to 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation IV</td>
<td>Measure 48 to 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation V</td>
<td>Measure 56 to 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return of the original theme</td>
<td>Measure 65 to 72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measure 1 to 8, the original theme is on the top line in A Minor, serving as a main melody for the movement. From m.1 to m.8, the harmonic progression is i-ii\textsuperscript{67}-i-vii, v\textsuperscript{7}/vi –triads in F-sharp Minor, D-flat Major, G Minor, E Major, and back to A Minor in m. 8 (see Fig. 62). The harmonic progression of Variation I (m 9-16) stays the same as the original theme. There is no real melody in Variation I since the material is composed of all eighth notes (Fig. 63).
Fig. 62. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude III, mm. 1-8

Fig. 63. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude III, mm. 9-16
Variation I is in polyphonic texture. In this variation the motion of the melody is both inversion and parallel (see Fig. 63).

Pianists should play all eighth notes with a very legato sound. In order to play a legato sound, pianists can try to “double” the notes. In the beginning of m.9, pianists can practice holding the e\(^3\) when playing b\(^2\) in the right hand; holding the b\(^2\) when playing c\(^3\), and so on. With this technique, pianists will make sure that every note is connected to each other. At first this exercise should be played slowly in order for the pianist to carefully listen to the connection between the notes.

There are many big leaps in Variation I. Pianists may need to change fingerings on the same note to make the following note connect to the previous one. The right hand contains a perfect eighth from the third beat to the fourth beat in m. 10. Since the thumb may have already been used for the previous note, f\(^1\), pianists will use the second or the third finger to play the c\(^2\), which is the first note of the C octave (see Fig. 63). For most pianists, an octave needs to be played by the thumb on the bottom and the fourth or fifth fingers on the top. If the thumb can not be used to start the octave, pianists may want to change the fingerings in order to start the octave on the thumb before moving to the next note. As a result, using the second or the third finger to play c\(^2\) and changing to the thumb before moving to c\(^3\) in m. 10 will be necessary (see Fig. 63).

Variation II is from m.17 to m.24. The original theme occurs in the middle voice. The harmonic progression is identical to that of the original theme (Fig. 64).
Unlike the material from Variation I (all eighth notes), Previn applied two against three as a countermelody to Variation II. Thus, three voices move together in Variation II. Besides polyrhythm of the countermelody, part of the main melody is composed of sixteenth notes (see m. 17 in Fig. 64). This may be challenging, as pianists need to play eighth note, triplet, and sixteenth notes at the same time.

Pianists should practice eighth notes with the sixteenth notes first in the left hand and make sure that the main melody is louder than the countermelody. In addition, all sixteenth notes should be played evenly and legato. The next step is to rehearse the top voice in the right hand and the bottom voice in the left hand together (triplets and eighth
notes) softly in a precise rhythm. Lastly, add the main melody in the middle voice. Using this process, pianists should be able to achieve a good sense of rhythm in Variation II.

In m.22 to m.24, the intervals between notes in the right hand get bigger and bigger. It is impossible for pianists to hold every slur. To solve the problem, pianists can hold the first note of the slur, C sharp, as long as possible, and play the second note of the slur softly. Between two notes of the slur, pianists should use the wrist to make the gap sound more smoothly. The wrist must be very flexible when playing m. 22-24.

The rapid figures, the occasional syncopated rhythm in the right hand, the off-beat accents in the right hand, and the steady rhythm in the left hand (Fig. 65) give Variation III a jazzy character.
According to Andre Previn’s notes on the work say,

“The title “The Invisible Drummer” refers to the fact that, particularly in Preludes I, III, and V, the tempo must be kept absolutely and inexorably strict...”

(Previn, 1974)

Because Variation III includes many diverse types of rhythms and rests (i.e. thirty-second notes, sixty-four notes, eighth rest, sixteenth rest, and thirty-two rests), a strict tempo can be challenging in Variation III. Strict tempo is a primary goal when interpreting prelude III.
Many repeated notes and accents are found in the right hand at the beginning of Variation III. The natural tendency is to rush repeated notes with accents. In order to keep a strict tempo, pianists may want to practice this variation with a metronome. Meanwhile, emphasizing every written accent when using the metronome is necessary, as well. This is beneficial for helping pianists get used to the places of the accents.

Pianists may want to try to use different fingers for each repeated note. The benefit is that the sound would be clearer, and the same finger would not feel too tired too soon. For example, on the last beat in m. 25, there are eight “ds” in the right hand. If pianists use the same finger to play each “d”, the hand might tire quickly. However, if pianists can apply different fingerings to those ds (i.e. 4321, 4321), the sound will be more clean, and the hand will not be too tired. Before entering Calmly, pianists should take the pedal completely off to clear the sound and make the silence happen naturally between each section (Fig. 66).
Fig. 66. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude III, mm. 30-37

*Calmly* serves as a bridge to the next variation. The time signature shifts often in *Calmly*. It starts in 3/4, moves to 5/8, and then is followed by 4/8 and 3/4 (Fig. 66). Two hands move in contrary motion often in *Calmly*.

The texture becomes complex in Variation IV and makes it difficult to recognize any key center in Variation IV and V. In the melody and chords in the left hand, pianists can observe the symmetry in the harmonic progression to the original theme (Fig. 67).
This gives the passage an A Minor feel even though the sixteenth notes in the right hand do not form any key in m. 48. In m. 50, the right hand is exactly the same as that in m. 48 except it is one octave higher with the different articulation; the left hand presents an A Minor scale as well, with double roots (see Fig. 67).

Notice that in m. 50 and m. 52, both hands present almost the same rhythm (e.g. sixteenth notes in the right hand and off-beat in the left hand) but with different articulations. In m. 50, the sixteenth notes in the right hand are staccato with one slur; in m. 52, the sixteenth notes in the right hand are grouped as four in a slur. Moreover, the
off-beat in the left hand contains no-accent in m. 50, but it contains the accents in m.52 (Fig. 67).

Pianists need to put some thought in the interpretation of these measures. Because the rhythms in m. 50 and 52 are similar, the interpretation should be different, making the music more interesting. Pianists should follow all articulation markings in these two measures (e.g. staccato with slurs, and slurs). Pianists should be sensitive to the accents in the left hand in m.52 to provide the contrast to the legato writing in the right hand.

From m. 53 to 55, the sixteenth notes in the left hand form the same harmonic progression as that of the original theme. (i.e. D flat Major in m. 53, G Minor, E Major in m.54, followed by A Minor in m.55) (Fig. 68).

Fig. 68. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude III, mm. 53-55
The material in the right hand in the first measure of Variation IV (m. 48) is restated with different articulation in the left hand in m. 55, the last measure of Variation IV (Fig. 67 and 68). It is suggested that pianists can pay particular attention to the melody line of the sixteenth notes in m.55 (i.e. the dissonant intervals between the notes). Moreover, pianists may want to play the first sixteenth note, a, in m.55 softly in order to emphasize the melody from c\textsuperscript{1}, which makes the starting point of the melody the same as that in m. 48 (see Fig. 67).

From m. 56 to 60, most of the rhythm is comprised in triplets and thirty-second notes in unison. Since the thirty-second notes are in the low register of the keyboard, pianists will want to play all rapid notes as clean as possible to avoid muddy sound. Previn’s suggestion: no pedal (Fig. 69). A slight staccato is recommended.
Fig. 69. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude III, mm. 56-60

From m. 59 to 60, shifting accents appear in both hands. In order to place the accents in the right place, pianists can practice holding the notes containing accents longer than the stated value.
Like Variation IV, it is difficult to recognize the tonal center in Variation V. From m. 61, there are triads in F-sharp Minor, D-flat Major, G Minor, and E Major. The harmonic progression is the same as that in the original theme (Fig. 70).

Fig. 70. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude III, mm. 61-65
Before the return to the original theme in A Minor, two measures (m. 63 and m.64) lie in A Minor in preparation (Fig. 70). The dynamic markings in m. 63 and 64 are listed as ff and p with a *decrescendo* in each measure. Pianists should take advantage of the thirty-second notes in the right hand to make a *decrescendo*. In addition, the volume should not be dropped too soon since the *decrescendo* is long.

The return of the original theme is an exact restatement of the original theme, but with different dynamics and tempo markings. The original theme starts with *mp*, while the return of the original theme was marked in *pp* (see m. 65 in Fig. 75). The original theme does not contain any marking to indicate slowing down, but the return of the original theme includes one *rall.* toward the end of the prelude with a hairpin (Fig. 71). Pianists should play the return of the original theme softly with all dynamic markings and tempo markings.

Fig. 71. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude III, mm. 70-72
4.4 Prelude IV

Prelude IV is in variation form in *Andante*. Below is the table of the formal analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Theme</th>
<th>Measure 1 to 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variation I</td>
<td>Measure 10 to 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge I</td>
<td>Measure 21 to 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation II</td>
<td>Measure 30 to 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation III</td>
<td>Measure 40 to 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge II</td>
<td>Measure 51 to 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation IV</td>
<td>Measure 59 to 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return to the original Theme</td>
<td>Measure 71 to 75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pianists find that the number of the measures in each section in prelude IV is considerable (approximately 10 measures for each section).

The basic harmonic progression in the original theme is CM: I-I-V-I6, BM: V4/2-I-V7, B♭M: I 6/4-V9-iii7-ii7, and back to CM: V13-I (Fig. 72).
Previn incorporated many seventh, ninth, and thirteenth chords in this prelude. His use of the chromatic scale and non-harmonic tones bring more color to the prelude. Measures 1 to 2, besides the basic harmonic notes in the outer voice, Previn inserted chromatic scales in the middle line of both hands (Fig. 72). Additionally, the F sharp and A sharp serve as appoggiaturas. The dissonant intervals between bass notes and the appoggiaturas (augmented forth and augmented third) create a sense of mystery and melancholy.

The use of appoggiaturas is found not only in m.1, but in m. 4, as well. In m. 4, the c-sharp eighth note in the left hand serves as an appoggiatura, delaying the entrance to B Major. Another type of non-harmonic tone appears in m.4: the D sharp eighth note on the third beat in the right hand is a suspension of the previous D sharp, and it resolves to C sharp. All these non-harmonic tones add a special sound to the original harmony.
Instead of always bringing out the top voice, pianists may want to emphasize the non-harmonic tone to create more tone colors.

The last chord in m. 4 is a dominant seventh chord. Pianists may expect the dominant seventh chord to go to the tonic for the next chord. However, Previn did not write a B Major or B Minor chord afterward. Instead, a I 6/4 chord in B flat Major appears in m. 5. The transition is quite special. Pianists should take some time between m. 4 and 5 to emphasize this interesting tonality.

Measure 7 is a sequence of m.6. The time signature of these two measures (5/8) is different from that in the previous measures (3/4). Pianists should play m. 6 and m. 7 in one instead of five to avoid too much subdivision in one measure and ease the flow of the music.

The original melody is restated one octave higher in Variation I (Fig. 73).

Fig. 73. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude IV, mm. 10-12
The harmonic progression is identical to the original theme. However, the texture in Variation I becomes more complex. The part of the voice is increased from four to six (see m. 11 in Fig. 73). In addition, the top melody of the original theme is doubled by third and six in Variation I (see m. 11 and 12 in Fig. 73). In order to get a richer sound, pianist should not only pay attention to the outer voices but also the inner chromatic line when playing m.11-12 (Fig. 73). In m. 14, there is a polytonality between two hands: the right hand is in B Major, while the left hands is in b Minor. Previn cleverly utilized mode mixtures (BM-bm) in two hands (Fig. 74).

Fig. 74. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude IV, mm. 14-15

The last measure of Variation I (m.21) is marked with *rit.* followed by a bridge section marked with “exact tempo”(Fig. 75). Pianists should change the mood immediately from *rit.* to *a tempo* to make the tempo marking effective.
Previn applied numerous dotted rhythms with contrasting dynamics to bridge I (f and p), which creates a sense of intensity. Notice that whenever the notes are marked in f, the direction of both hands are in parallel motion; Whenever the notes are marked in p, the direction of both hands move in inversion (see m.27-28 in Fig. 76). The entire bridge I section is a diminuendo in terms of rhythm. The rhythm goes from double dotted rhythm, dotted rhythm, and to eighth notes in bridge I (Fig. 76). In other words, the intensity reduces gradually through the bridge I section. All notes marked f are in the high register compared to the notes marked in p.
Playing the bridge section requires precise rhythms. When practicing the bridge section, pianists should subdivide the smallest notes inside the rhythm, either in double dotted rhythm, or in dotted rhythm. When encountering a double dotted rhythm, pianists can subdivide eight thirty-second notes for the double dotted eighth-note (e.g. m.27); when encountering a dotted rhythm, pianists should subdivide four sixteenth notes on the dotted eighth notes (e.g. m. 28).

The arrangement of voices in Variation II in prelude IV is reminiscent of variation II in prelude III (Fig. 64), where the main theme is in the middle line among all three voices, and where the main theme is accompanied by a counter melody and the bass line (Fig. 77).
The harmonic progression in Variation II is the same as that in the original theme. Like the original theme, the use of a chromatic scale appears in Variation II. Previn inserted a chromatic scale in the inner voice in the right hand in m.32. However, in Variation II, the rhythmic motion of the chromatic scale moves faster than that in the original theme. It changes from the eighth notes to the sixteenth notes (see m. 32 in Fig.77).

The biggest challenge for pianists in Variation II may be the contrary motion in both hands. It will feel uncomfortable to the pianist when the left hand has to bring out the main theme and play the bass line at the same time while moving in an contrary motion. If the thumb is used correctly, phrasing is emphasized, and the wrist is free, this section will sound appropriate.

First of all, there are three voices in this section. The melody is in the middle voice and the left thumb plays most of it (see Fig. 77). The thumb’s natural tendency is to play too heavily. Even though the thumb plays the most important line, pianists need to temper the use of their thumb so the melody sounds smooth. Pianists can use the right
hand to play the middle line with the top voice more and the left hand to play the bass line softly in order to feel these two separated voices.

Being mindful of the phrasing will help temper the natural tendency to accent the downbeats on repeated sixteenth notes (For how to group the phrase, see page 19-20).

Using a relaxed and unlocked wrist will keep the melody in the left hand from sounding mechanical. In 33, the wrist should be used on every beat when the right hand needs to leap from the first sixteenth note to the second one in m.33. The left hand can apply this rule, as well, whenever a leap is required (e.g. m. 31-33)

From m. 41 to m. 42, the key center changes on almost every beat (E♭M, CM, AM, and to CM) (Fig. 78).

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Fig. 78. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude IV, mm. 41-43
The relationship between these keys is tertian. Unlike m. 41 and 42, where the key is set beat by beat, the key in m.43 is set on the offbeat to the downbeat (i.e. EM, GM, and FM) (see m. 43 in Fig. 78). Previn utilized enharmonic modulation in m. 44 (Fig. 79), where the top melody contains a half note on F-sharp followed by an E flat (D-sharp) eighth note with the bass note in F-sharp, forming a dominant chord on B Major (Fig. 79). However, Previn changed the top note, D-sharp, to E-flat with an A-flat Major chord in the left hand, making the harmony become in A-flat Major.

Fig. 79. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude IV, mm. 44-47

Because Previn uses three clefs in Variation III, frequent leaps for both hands will be needed (Fig. 78 and 79). To make a convincing connection between the rapid modulations (see m.41-45 from Fig. 78 and 79), pianists may want to play all broken
harmonies as a single triad harmony first to feel the transition of the harmony. In m. 41, pianists can play the triads of E-flat M, CM, DM, and CM first. After feeling the transition between each key, then pianists can play the figure as written. It will help pianists maintain the harmonic progression without being distracted by all leaping motions.

Pianists should pay particular attention not only to the main theme but the harmony changes in both hands. A frequent leap between two hands might cause the disconnection of the main theme. In order for listeners to hear the main theme being played seamlessly with the changing harmony at the same time, pianists should use the pinky of the right hand and the thumb of the left hand more to project and maintain the tone of the main melody continuously (see Fig. 78). In addition, in order for the audience to hear the clean change of harmonies, pianists should change the pedal whenever the harmony changes, e.g. in m.41, one pedal for E-flat Major, one pedal for C Major, and so on. When using the pedal, especially from m. 41 to 45, pianists should hold the pedal with the quarter note to avoid the gap between the leap from quarter notes to triplets.

Before entering Variation IV in m. 59, the basic rhythm (sixteenth notes) for Variation IV is presented already in m.58 (Fig. 80).
One of the features in Variation IV is the continuous motion of sixteenth notes. The basic intervals between the sixteenth notes are formed by the Major and Minor second (Fig. 80). The melody in Variation IV mostly stays the same as that in the original theme; the bass note stays the same, as well. Pianist may surmise that the key in Variation IV, like the original theme, is still in C Major. Yet, because all sixteenth notes do not belong to any key, it is difficult for listeners to perceive any key.

Notice that from m. 59 to 61, all sixteenth notes move either in inversion or parallel motion between two hands. From m. 63 to 66, the music is full of dominant chords (Fig. 81). As a traditional harmonic progression, a dominant chord should be followed by a tonic chord (V-I) to form a cadence, which Previn applied to the end of the original theme. However, from m. 63 to 66, the dominant chords do not resolve to tonic chords. Instead, all dominant chords are followed by I 6/4 chords in B Major, B-flat.
Major, and A Major (Fig. 81). The dominant chord ($V^7$) serves as a foundation as a leading tone chord to I 6/4; one of Previn’s great compositional techniques.

![Image](image.png)

Fig. 81. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude IV, mm. 63-66

A subtle dynamic change appears in m. 63 to 66, including a one beat *crescendo* followed by a *sub.piano*. All the places marked *sub.piano* are places where I 6/4 chords appear. Pianists need emphasize the unresolved chords ($V^7$). Taking time between m. 64-65 and 65-66 is needed to create effective *sub. p* sounds.
Previn incorporated a C Major descending scale in m. 67, and a C Minor descending scale in m. 68, helping prepare the return to the original theme in C Major (Fig. 82). Before returning to the original theme, an authentic perfect cadence is founded in m. 70 to 71 (V-I) in C Major, showing Previn’s traditional use of the harmony. The return of the original theme includes polytonality. An E-flat Minor ascending scale is presented by the right hand, while the original theme is given to the left hand in C Minor. The prelude ends in a C Major chord with *ppp*. 
4.5 Prelude V

Prelude V has fast as a tempo marking, and contains little sense of theme and key. A strong sense of rhythm is the main component in this prelude. As Previn suggested in the note of “The Invisible Drummers” that performers should keep the steady tempo through the entire prelude V,

“The Invisible Drummer” refers to the fact that, particularly in Preludes I, III, and V, the tempo must be kept absolutely and inexorably strict...” (Previn, 1974)  

Prelude V includes the following four rhythmical themes,

1. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e4 a4 4 c4 A4 e4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d4 f4 d4 f4 d4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4&gt; 4&gt; 4&gt; 4&gt; 4&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The offbeat feeling is important when playing Rhythm I (R1). It creates a sense of uncertainty. Rhythm II (R2) is a combination of sixteenth notes and syncopations with ties and accents. Two hands move in an inversion on R2. Rhythm III (R3) is famous for shifting accents on eighth notes and sixteenth notes. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 7/8 on R3. Like R3, Rhythm IV (R4) contains different time signatures, 4/4 and 1/4. In the 4/4 measures, there are ties on every beat, while in the 1/4 measures, a triplet with staccatos is presented. All four rhythms often move in repetition or sequence in prelude V.

From m.1 to m.4, R1 has different dynamics (mf and mp). Measure 3 and 4 is a repetition of m. 1 and 2 (Fig.83).
From m. 5 to m. 8, R2 is displayed with different dynamics, as well (mf and mp) (Fig. 84).
Measure 7 and 8 are a repetition of m. 5 and m.6 (except the last beat). In m.9, R1 is presented again for four measures (m. 9 to 12). The sound of R1 is richer because Previn utilizes intervals instead of just single notes. In m. 9 to m.12, the intervals include Major and Minor six (Fig. 85).

Fig. 85. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude V, mm. 9-12

Pianists should bring out the offbeats. For example, in m. 1, the most important note to be presented would be the E in the second half of the second beat in the right hand (see Fig.83). By emphasizing the offbeat note, the character of R1 (uncertainty) will be communicated clearly.

When performing R2, pianists should bring out the accent notes more, adding to the sense of syncopation (Fig. 84). Be careful not to rush during the syncopation. Be
mindful that an inappropriate timing when playing the syncopation will be a native tendency.

R3 is presented from m. 13 to 16 (Fig.86).

Because of the shifting accents, especially in two different time signatures, pianists may have difficulty in grouping notes by four sixteenth notes or three eighth notes. First pianists should try to play notes written with accents only in both hands. After getting used to the placement of accents, then pianists can add the rest of the notes. Incorporating the suggestion above will improve the quality of one’s performance of this passage.

Measure 17 to 20 contains new material. Measure 19 to 20 is a sequence of m. 17 to 18 (Fig. 87).
Notice that a variety of dynamics (\textit{mf}, \textit{ff}, and \textit{crescendo}) take place as expected, e.g. a \textit{ff} applies to notes with accents, and a \textit{crescendo} applies to an ascending chromatic scale.

Pianists should follow all these dynamics and get a satisfactory result.

From measure 21 to 24, R1 is displayed (Fig. 88).
This time the ninth chords in both hands are basic elements of R1. From the beginning to m. 24, m. 23 serves as the climax so far. A $ff$ is marked in m.23. From 21-24, pianists do not need to play every note in the chord loud but the outer voice need to be projected.

In m. 25, R4 is first introduced in $p$ (Fig. 89).

![Fig. 89. Previn, The Invisible Drummer, Prelude V, mm. 25-26](image)

Unlike the previous rhythm figures (R1, R2, and R3), pianists should sense R4’s tonal center in m. 25 (e.g. m. 25 to 26 is in F Major).

One of the features of R4 is the change of the time signature (4/4 to 1/4) and different articulations (staccatos on triplets in 1/4 measures) (see Fig. 89). Eventhough Previn did not write $legato$ in 4/4 measures of R4, pianists can still play 4/4 measures of R4 with a legato sound, creating interest between the 4/4 measures (legato) and 1/4 measures (staccato).
From m. 37 to 40, the rhythm is reminiscent of R4 in m.25 and 26, where beats are often connected with ties except when there are triplets (Fig. 90).

In order to provide contrast between different rhythms and sounds in m. 37, m.38, and 39, pianists should play the dotted rhythms in m. 37 strictly with a non-legato sound; play the triplets evenly with a legato sound in m.38 and 39.

From m. 38 to 40, the music style lies more on the lyrical side (because of the use of neighbor notes in the melody, i.e. C, D, E, and F) (Fig. 90). From the second half of m. 40 to m. 41, the same rhythm in the left hand and sixteenth notes with accents in the right
hand form a jazzy character (see Fig. 90). Pianist should keep the left hand tempo steady when playing the passage in figure 90.

From m. 49 to 56, the same rhythm is repeated for eight measures using four different combinations of notes (Fig. 91).

Fig. 91. Previn, The Invisible Drummer, Prelude V, mm. 49-56
The top voice in the right hand forms a Minor third from m. 49 to m. 52, and a Major third from m. 53 to 56. These two intervals occur in the right hand in R1, as well (see Fig. 83). In m. 59, a cross fingering is even needed for the left hand (Fig. 92).

Fig. 92. Previn, *The Invisible Drummer*, Prelude V, mm. 57-60
Previn incorporated the dotted rhythm and the interval, sixth, into m. 65 to 68 (Fig. 93), giving the music more of a sense of rhythm and richer sound. Whenever two hands move in parallel, e.g. m. 65, m. 67, the left hand imitates the part of the right hand and it is one beat afterwards (Fig. 93). Pianists should make the entrance of the left hand in m. 65 and m.67 clear. From 73 to 76, R1 occurs again with ff followed by four measures presenting R2 from m.77 to m.80 (Fig. 94).
Tracking the arrangement of the use of rhythm figures from m. 72 to 80, pianists will find that Previn did not write transition between each rhythm figure. Instead, each figure starts abruptly. Pianists should be able to change the mood between each rhythm figure.

Measure 81 to 84 serves as a coda of prelude V (Fig. 95).
Two hands are in unison with two octaves apart. During the last three measures (m. 85 to m.87), R1 appears in $ff$ (Fig. 96). The prelude ends forcefully in a measure full of accents and rests (Fig. 96).
Chapter 5

How to interpret Andre Previn’s Music

“It's very liberating to play music with friends away from the restrictions of the printed note.”  

“A jazz player had to be his own composer and play not premeditatedly but make up his music on the spot. Improvisation. That’s what jazz was all about.”

“I have always had a “jazz side” to my career.”

Andre Previn’s compositional style clearly shows his love of jazz music. His official website shows he is still involved in many jazz concerts and festivals. Frequently performing concerts in the States and Europe.

A performer must portray a jazzy character when interpreting Andre Previn’s music. What comes easily for a jazz musician can be challenging for a classical musician.

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Previn believed that a good sense of jazz usually developed in one’s youth. 53 A trained classical musician might have difficulty interpreting a jazz work properly. 54

“Very often when musicians come purely from the classical field, they look at jazz as something you pick up, like roller-skating. It’s not so easy.” 55

A lack of jazz experience does not preclude a musician from performing Previn’s works. A performer can gain more understanding of the interpretation of Previn’s music by listening to a variety of jazz, and by watching movies scored by Previn; Scott Joplin’s ragtime, “The Easy Winners”, 56 and “Right as the rain” 57 are two good examples which will give a classically trained musician a good sense of the jazz style.

In the article, “The Maestro with that certain swing”, Previn pointed out the importance of secure rhythm when playing the piano and conducting 58 which admitted was influenced by his own jazz training. Previn does not agree with taking too much liberty with the time and rhythm, according to him, timing is key in a successful jazz performance. 59

Previn’s son, Lucas, is a great example of rhythm without brilliant technique. Previn observed that even though Lucas only had intermediate training on the piano, his

strong sense of rhythm compensated for that weakness. Previn thinks this ability is rare. It is more of a nature-born sense.  

If a classical musician takes a closer look at Previn’s piano music, it is clear that strong technique is required for many rapid figures and different technical passages. Classical pianists should take that strength and apply it to Previn’s piano works. Previn also believes that strict classical training developed his ability to be a successful jazz musician.

"Before my conducting career took off, I had the advantage of a strictly classical upbringing. So by the time I played anything in public, jazz or otherwise, I was a very highly trained pianist."  

It is important for the performer to have a personal, and unlimited interpretation of a piece. A different hall, a different mood, and a different audience could all inspire a different interpretation.

"Great music can never have just one interpretative option."  

I find my own interpretation is more mature when revisiting a piece. Performing is a long learning process. The more times you play, the more inspirations you might encounter.

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Each pianist may encounter different obstacles when playing the piano. In the article, “A Knight at the Keyboard”, from the journal, *Piano and Keyboard* (Jan./Feb. 1999), Previn observed “Every pianist finds pitfalls in different music.”

Pianists should display their strengths when performing. Through one’s practice, one should develop individual performance characteristics. A pianist should focus on the strengths; develop further while facing challenges in areas of weakness.

Performing Andre Previn’s music should portray a jazz character, encompass a refined sense of rhythm, a great technique for rapid passages, and inspired interpretations.

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Conclusion

Andre Previn’s Variations on a Theme by Haydn and The Invisible Drummers have significant challenges for the pianist. Both works require a strong sense of the rhythm and tempo in almost every movement. Previn even notates in The Invisible Drummers the importance of the strict tempo. Previn’s use of a mix of rapid figures and rests, accents, and shifting time signatures create much complexity in the rhythm. Conversely, Previn wrote expressive movements as well as seen in Variation IV in Variations on a Theme by Haydn and Prelude II and IV in The Invisible Drummers. These expressive movements are usually accompanied with legato writing. The contradictory nature of Previn’s sense of the rhythm and expression can be contrary for pianists; the former is more logical, while the latter requires more emotion. The performer should be able to channel these two different moods while playing Previn’s solo piano music. Additionally, deep influence from jazz music permeates Previn’s piano solo works, as well (e.g. a little slower section from Variation III of Variations on a Theme by Haydn, and Meno mosso; Tempo giusto section from prelude I of The Invisible Drummer both contains an improvisatory style of writing) and must be included in any ‘authentic’ interpretation.

There are not many books about Andre Previn. However, many live interviews have been transcribed and are valuable references for pianists looking to gain insight into
his work. By reading Andre Previn’s interviews and watching Previn’s performances (see reference list on p. 154), pianists have useful sources for further study. This, coupled with the performance guideline offered in this document, may assist pianists with creating successful performances of Previn’s works.

Finally, it is my hope that by reading this document, pianists will appreciate and understand Andre Previn’s music more thoroughly, be inspired by his music, and hopefully perform his pieces more frequently. Performing Previn’s music is a treasure for any musician. The performance approach in this document should prove helpful for any pianist willing to take on the challenge.
Appendix A

Chronological List of Works According to Genra

Theatre

Every Good Boy Deserves Favour (1976) Duration: 58'
A play for actors and orchestra
Text: Tom Stoppard

Opera

A Streetcar Named Desire (1998) Duration: 165'
Libretto: Philip Littell
Soprano, Soprano, Baritone, Tenor, Mezzo-soprano, Baritone, Tenor, Mezzo-soprano, 2 speaking roles, silent

Orchestra

Concerto for Cello (1960) Duration: 26'
Concerto for Guitar (1960) Duration: 25'
Principals (1980) Duration: 14'
Reflections (1981) Duration: 13' English horn and Cello
Concerto for Piano (1985) Duration: ca 28'
Honey and Rue (1992) Duration: ca 27' Soprano, orchestra and rhythm section
Text: Toni Morrison
Text: Dory Previn Shannon
Vocalise (1995) Duration: 4' Soprano and Cello
Sallie Chisum Remembers Billy the Kid (1995) Duration: 10' Soprano
Text: adapted by Michael Ondaatje from a text by Walter Noble Burns
Also available as Piano score

**Diversions** (1999) Duration: ca 20'

**Violin Concerto** ("Anne-Sophie") (2001) Duration: 38' Violin

Duration: 25' Violin, Double bass

**Chamber / Solo**

**Two Little Serenades** (1970) Duration: 6'
Violin and piano

**Paraphrase on a Theme of William Walton** (1973) Duration: 4'
Piano

**Four Outings for Brass** (1974) Duration: ca 12'
Horn, two trumpets, trombone, tuba

**Peaches** (1978) Duration: 5' Flute and piano

**Matthew's Piano Book** (1979) Duration: ca 14' Ten Pieces for Students
Piano

**Triolet for Brass** (1985) Duration: 18'
Horn, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, tuba

**A Wedding Waltz** (1986) Duration: ca 2'
2 oboes and piano

**Variations on a Theme by Haydn** (1990) Duration: ca 16'
Piano

**Cello Sonata** (1993) Duration: 31'
Cello and piano

**Sonata for Violin, "Vineyard"** (1994) Duration: 25'
Violin and piano

**Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon** (1994) Duration: 19'

**Bassoon Sonata** (1997) Duration: 14'
Bassoon and piano

**Hoch soll Er Leben** (1997) Duration: 3'
Horn, two trumpets, trombone, tuba

**Tango Song and Dance** (1998) Duration: 16'
Violin and piano

**String Quartet with Soprano** (2003) Duration: 27'
Violin, Violin, Viola, Cello, Soprano

**Vocal**

**Three Arias from "A Streetcar Named Desire"** (1998) Soprano (and Tenor, optional)
I want magic
I can smell the sea air
I was a boy

**Five Songs** (1977) Duration: 13'
Morning has Spread Again
Home Is So Sad
Friday Night in the Royal Station Hotel
Talking in Bed
The Trees

Mezzo-soprano and piano

Text: Philip Larkin

**Four Songs** (1994) Duration: ca 20'
Mercy
Stones
Shelter
The Lacemaker

Soprano, cello, and piano

Text: Toni Morrison

**Two Remembrances** (1995) Duration: 7'
A Love Song
Lyric

Soprano, alto flute, and piano

Text: Else Lasker-Schüler (translation by Michael J. Gillespie) and Frau Ava (translation by Willis Barnstone)
Three Dickinson Songs (1999) Duration: ca 10'
As imperceptibly as grief
Will there really be a morning?
Good morning midnight
Soprano and piano
Text: Emily Dickinson

The Giraffes Go to Hamburg (2000) Duration: 12'
Text: Isak Dinesen, from "Out of Africa"
Soprano, alto flute, and piano


Cadenzas
W. A. Mozart: Concerto for Flute and Harp, C major, K 299
W. A. Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 20, D minor, K 466 (3rd mvt.)
W. A. Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 24, C minor, K 491 (1st mvt.)

Musical
Coco (1960) Text: Alan Jay Lerner
The Good Companions (1964) Text: Johnny Mercer

Movie Scores
Bad Day at Black Rock (1954)
Elmar Gantry (1960)
The 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse (1961)
13 Academy Nominations
4 Oscars for
Gigi (1958)
Porgy & Bess (1959)
Irma la Douce (1963)
My Fair Lady (1964)
Appendix B

Discography According to the Recording Company

**Previn on Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft**

**MOZART: Piano Trios**
Anne-Sophie Mutter
André Previn
Daniel Müller-Schott
Piano Trio in C, K.548
Piano Trio in E, K.542
Piano Trio in B flat, K.502
CD Number: 477 579-6

**TCHAIKOVSKY. KORNGOLD: Violin Concertos**
Anne-Sophie Mutter
Wiener Philharmoniker
London Symphony Orchestra
André Previn
CD Number: 474 874-2

**ANDRÉ PREVIN: Violin Concerto**
Anne-Sophie Mutter
Boston Symphony Orchestra
André Previn
Leonard Bernstein: Serenade
London Symphony Orchestra
CD Number: 474 500-2

**ANNE-SOPHIE MUTTER. Tango Song and Dance**
PREVIN: Tango Song and Dance
BRAHMS: Hungarian Dances Nos. 1, 6, 7
GERSHWIN: Excerpts from "Porgy and Bess"
KREISLER: Schön Rosmarin. Liebesleid · Caprice viennois
FAURÉ: Violinsonate Violin Sonata No. 1 op. 13
André Previn Lambert Orkis
CD Number: 471 500-2

**ERICH KORNGOLD**
The Sea Hawk
The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex
Captain Blood
The Prince and the Pauper
London Symphony Orchestra
André Previn
CD Number: 471 347-2

**ANDRÉ PREVIN**
Diversions
Sallie Chisum Remembers Billy the Kid
Vocalise
The Giraffes Go to Hamburg
Three Dickinson Songs
Bonney ·
Fleming ·
Siebert Wiener Philharmoniker
London Symphony Orchestra
André Previn
ANNE-SOPHIE MUTTER Back to the Future

Werke von Bartók · Berg · Lutoslawski · Moret · Penderecki · Ravel · Rihm · Sibelius · Stravinsky · Levine · Lutoslawski · Ozawa · Penderecki · Previn · Sacher · Moll · Orkis

MAURICE RAVEL

L'Enfant et les Sortilèges Ma Mère l'Oye
Stephen · Owens · Lascarro · Wilson Johnson
New London Children's Choir
London Symphony Chorus
London Symphony Orchestra
André Previn
CD Number: 457 589-2

ANDRÉ PREVIN A Streetcar Named Desire

Fleming · Futral · Gilfry · Griffey · Forst · Lord · Gayer ·
San Francisco Opera Orchestra
André Previn
CD Number: 459 366-2

DUKE ELLINGTON

We Got It Good and That Ain't Bad An Ellington Songbook
Take the A Train · I Got it Bad and that Ain't Good · Do nothin' till you hear from me · Chelsea Bridge · Things Ain't What They Used To Be · Squatty · Come Sunday · Serenade To Sweden · I Didn't Know About · In A Mellow · It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)

CD Number: 463 456-2

André Previn, Piano
David Finck, Double bass

GEORGE GERSHWIN Songbook
They All Laughed · Someone to Watch · Over Me · Oh, Lady Be Good! · A Foggy Day · Soon / Do It Again! · I Got Rhythm · Embraceable You · He Loves and She Loves / Love Is Here to Stay · Fascinatin' Rhythm · Isn't It a Pity? · Boy! · What Love Has Done to Me! / I've Got a Crush on You · Love Walked In · The Man I Love · 'S Wonderful

CD Number: 453 493-2
André Previn, Piano
David Finck, Double bass

RICHARD STRAUSS
Horn Concertos No. 1 · No. 2
Oboe Concerto Duet Concertino for Clarinet and Bassoon with String Orchestra
Stransky · Janezic · Gabriel · Schmidl · Werba · Wiener Philharmoniker · André Previn

ERICH KORNGOLD
Symphony op. 40
Much Ado about Nothing op. 11 (Suite for Chamber Orchestra)
London Symphony Orchestra
André Previn
CD Number: 453 436-2

SERGE PROKOFIEV
Violin Concertos · Nos. 1 and 2
Sonata for Solo Violin op. 115
Gil Shaham
London Symphony Orchestra
André Previn
CD Number: 447 758-2

JEAN SIBELIUS
Violin Concerto
Serenades op. 69
Humoresque op. 87 No. 1  
Anne-Sophie Mutter  
Staatskapelle Dresden  
André Previn  
CD Number: 447 895-2

**SAMUEL BARBER**  
Violin Concerto op. 14  
Gil Shaham  
London Symphony Orchestra  
André Previn  
CD Number: 439 886-2

**FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN**  
Piano Concerto No. 2  
24 Préludes op. 28  
Maria João Pires  
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra  
André Previn  
CD Number: 437 817-2

**RICHARD STRAUSS**  
Der Rosenkavalier Le Chevalier à la Rose Il cavaliere della rosa (Suite) Orchestermusik · Orchestral Music aus / from Intermezzo · Salome Capriccio  
Wiener Philharmoniker  
André Previn  
CD Number: 437 790-2

**LUDVIG VAN BEETHOVEN**  
String Quartet op. 131(Version for String Orchestra)  
Wiener Philharmoniker  
André Previn
CD Number: 463 579-2

**Previn on Telarc**

Andre Previn Triple Play 3457

Andre Previn/Mundell Lowe/Ray Brown Old Friends 3309

Andre Previn/Ray Brown/Mundell Lowe Uptown
Songs of Harold Arlen, Duke Ellington & others 3303

Andre Previn/Joe Pass/Ray Brown
After Hours 3302

Andre Previn/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
The Essential Richard Strauss 0428

Andre Previn/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra/Franz Bartolomey
Strauss: Don Juan & Don Quixote 0262

Andre Previn/Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Horacio Guiterrez
Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 1 & Tragic Overture 0252

Andre Previn/Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra
Dvorak: Symphony No. 9 New World & Carnival Overture 0238

Andre Previn/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Strauss: Alpine Symphony 0211

Andre Previn/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra/Arleen Auger
Strauss: Ein Heldenleben & Four Last Songs 0180

Andre Previn/Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra
Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra / Janacek: Sinfonietta 0174

Andre Previn/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

Andre Previn/Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Strauss: Also sprach Zarathustra & Tod und Verklarung 0167

Andre Previn/Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 5 & Tallis Fantasia 0158

Andre Previn/Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra
Prokofiev: Alexander Nevsky & Lt. Kije 0143
Andre Previn/Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Holst: The Planets 0133

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 2  0138
Reference


Hurwits, David “Andre


