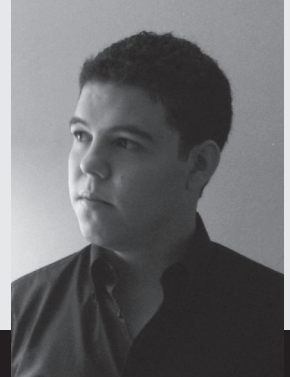


Three Small Waltzes



Matthew Hartdegen (1987-)

Matthew Hartdegen is currently a fourth year B.Mus. student at the University of Pretoria specialising in performing arts. His other subjects include Theory and Composition. Matthew has been composing since high school. He attended high school in Johannesburg at St Johns College, where he was awarded a music scholarship. Matthew matriculated with four distinctions – music: first instrument, second instrument, composition and biology.

Since 2006, when Matthew entered university, he has excelled at all his subjects, in particular, theory and composition. Matthew studies these subjects under Doctor Alexander Johnson, and piano under Professor Joseph Stanford. He aims to graduate this year. Hartdegen aims to begin with his masters degree immediately thereafter. Matthew recently won the prestigious Pretorium Trust bursary and came third in the 90th SASMT Anniversary Music Competition that was held in Pretoria.

Three small waltzes: No. 1

The impressionistic character of the entire set is established in the opening bars of this work as the harmonies are based almost entirely upon added tones and extended harmonies.

The key centre of the first waltz is a minor note with two distinct modes being established immediately. Those being: Dorian mode on A (A, B, C, D, E, F sharp, G) in the right hand and the Aeolian mode on A (A, B, C, D, E, F natural, G) in the left hand.

These two modes only seem to be fashioned together in the middle section (bars 11 to 20) where the mode is a B Locrian mode: B, C, D, E, F, G, A; but this subsides to a D Mixolydian: D, E, F sharp, G, A, B, C; at the conclusion of the middle section. This F sharp, found in the Mixolydian on D, helps unite the return of the embellished opening section

This piece is in a ternary form: A (bars 1 to 10); B (bars 11 to 20) and A (bars 21 to 32). What is an important aspect to notice about the return of the A section is the change of mode found at bar 27. The left hand's Aeolian mode

subsides to the right hand's Dorian Mode shown by the F sharp in the accompaniment's waltz pattern.

The harmonic approach taken in this particular waltz can be seen in the opening bars' accompaniment. The open sounding quality does not make the piece feel major or minor but rather modal. Even though there is the third found in the opening chord's harmony, everything is blurred for effect. Nevertheless the key centre is still maintained by the bass pedal A and the inner pedal C. The harmonies, if they were to be analysed, are all based upon 7th, 9th and 13th chords. In essence the harmonies are all tertian.

Texturally this waltz varies in each section. The opening is very warm and kept to the middle range of the piano. The middle section is quite the opposite being very cold and empty. Even though the texture changes towards the end of the middle section it is the opening of the middle section which sets the tone for the section. The end of the middle section introduces the textural change that is continued in the re-appearance of the opening section. This modified A section is thicker texturally as the harmonies are more filled out and the bass voices are doubled while a counter melody is added into the inner voices. The bigger range found in the closing section allows the over tones to expand and the notes to resonate that much more.

The basic motif that can be found in all three waltzes is found in bar 4: the acciaccatura. Even though the way the ornament is approached may vary, the grace note forms a recurring idea through all the waltzes. One would imagine that the waltzes accompaniment figure would also be standard throughout the set but each waltz has an entirely unique accompaniment pattern. Generally all the three waltzes do share a strong modal feel and they are all in ternary form.

In my conception of the three waltzes, the first waltz begins in a very empty and blurred fashion and progresses to the second waltz in a much thicker harmonic way that eventually arrives at the third. The third waltz is the most modernist. This can be seen by the use of the octatonic scale in the middle section of the third waltz and the more percussive

nature thereof. Nevertheless a very impressionistic character prevails throughout the set of pieces, as well as, a strong jazz influence and the influence of Ravel is significant.

Three small waltzes: No.2

This small waltz is a much larger work than the first waltz as it is richer and more generally more elaborate in its entirety. The first obvious difference is that the key centre shifts while in the first waltz the centre is generally centred around A. This waltz is centred on E minor but shifts to D minor during the middle section. Another noticeable feature of this second waltz is the flowing left hand waltz pattern that gives a nocturnal character. An additional noteworthy feature is the expansion of tertian harmonies to a more quartal state. This waltz is also much slower than the first but it will seem faster because of the syncopations.

As stated above this waltz is centred on E minor and D minor. This has more to do with the modal idea as the Dorian mode on E: E, F sharp, G, A, B, C sharp, D; is used extensively. Yet from bar 14 the mode shifts to an Aeolian on E: E, F sharp, G, A, B, C, D; but is soon back in its original mode at bar 22 where the opening melody is now displaced by one beat earlier and is modified to bring the A section to a close in the Aeolian mode on E at bar 31.

The new section at bar 32 is in a new modal area. It is a Dorian mode on D: D, E, F, G, A, B, C. This new section reminds me of the middle section of Ravel's *Alborada Del Gracioso* from *Miroirs*. The first two syncopations mirror each other and this pattern found in many places throughout this middle section.

At the *Poco Piu Mosso* section the A1 theme starts to speed up to the original tempo and now goes through a circle of 5ths progression (bar 49-52: b minor with a 9th and 7th; f sharp minor with an added 9th and 7th; c sharp minor 9th and 7th; g sharp 9th and 7th) to arrive securely at the *A Tempo* after the closing bars of the A section.

Now the waltzes final section reiterates the E Aeolian but gives way to the pieces opening E Dorian. This closing section, which could be seen as a coda, is enlarged to a climax but then disappears to nothing like the first waltz. The only difference is that this waltz ends on a major sounding chord built on fourths, while the first waltz remains in its A Dorian mode.

The second waltz is also in a ternary form: A (bars 1 to 31) B (bars 32 to 48) and A (bars 49 to 72). There can be the effect of a complex binary form, that being a balanced binary: A1 A2 B A2. As the conception is very vague, however, so the form should be more open and I would choose the ternary form first and foremost.

Harmonically this waltz is much thicker and more expanded than the first. The harmonies again are expanded tertian harmonies, 7ths, 9ths and 13ths but there is a very strong quartal feel. The harmonies at places are purely built in fourths. An interesting aspect can be seen in the harmonic

centres of each section. For instances the Dorian on E found in the A section has the key signature of D major and the Dorian on D found in the B section has the implied feel of D minor. This Major versus Minor is not obvious but for colouristic effects it is highly important. This effect is further augmented by the texture change, timbre change, and pedal usage (use of *una corda*) found in the B section. The syncopations found throughout the waltz help to blur the overall harmonies and generally the sound aspect is more important. This idea of sound being a major part of my compositional style has developed since I began composing and can be seen in all my works.

Pianistically this waltz is much more difficult than the first and is much longer than the first. The difficulty with this waltz is to play all the syncopations softly as sound effects rather than as independent voices. More over the rhythmic element is much freer in conception than the first waltz and is not at all regular.

The recurring factors in this set of pieces can be seen easily. The acciaccaturas are evident and the falling fourth motif found in the first waltz is again utilised at cadence points. The ending is also very similar, but instead of rising towards the final chord the music descends towards the end and the last chord floats above as if evaporating.

Three small waltzes: No.3

Of the entire set of waltzes, this is by far the most technically challenging pianistically and most contrasting. Nevertheless the recurring acciaccaturas and falling fourth motif is retained within the final waltz. This final waltz is indeed the most modernist of the entire set and utilises modes as well as the octatonic scale. The appearance of tone clusters adds to the vertical dimensions by changing the orientation of the harmonic context. More noticeable, than in the other waltzes, is the strong jazz influence seen in this final waltz.

The Waltz is in a definite ternary form-A (bar 1 to 25) B (bar 26 to 47) A (bar 48 to 63). The opening A section begins with a two-bar introduction and develops the opening theme until it cadences in a quasi-imperfect cadence. The B section is sub-divided and also begins with a two bar introduction-B1: (bar 26 to 39) and B2: (bar 40 to 47). The character change is obviously noted with the tempo marking and mysterious quality of the introduction. The B1 section is rhythmically livelier and at first seems to be held within a similar tonal region but this is soon extinguished. B2 is a modified version of A presented in the octatonic scale. The B2 section arrives with the pieces climax and from this point onwards the piece slowly winds down to its close. The final A section serves as a closing statement of the piece and is not a direct repeat of the opening A section.

The melodic conception of this work is completely modal except for the contrasting B section. The mode used is the Aeolian mode on F sharp (F sharp, G sharp, A, B, C sharp, D, E) in the A sections. In the B section the octatonic or whole-half scale on F sharp (F sharp, G sharp, A, B, C, D, E

flat, E natural) is utilised. The reason for its usage is that it creates the impression of mysteriousness, force, power, and is agitated as the triads or quartads that are built on the scale steps are either diminished chords (half and fully); major, minor or dominant 7th chords; and augmented chords. Yet the centre tone in this B section is F sharp and the quartad built upon this scale step is either half or fully diminished which gives us a strong locrian feel as the central triad or quartad is not stable.

This follows into the harmonic approach taken in this specific work. The creation of chords is almost solely tertian in essence but quartal qualities are noticeable. See the introduction to the A section. The bass movement is in perfect fourths with the chords being based on perfect fourths. Yet the final chord of the introduction to A has the introduction of the tri-tone, which becomes the central accompaniment of the B1 section. Another type of harmony is added in the B section. That being secundal harmony-tone clusters. The tone clusters are based upon the octatonic scale. Note at bar 39, the entire octatonic scale is present with the tone clusters in both hands.

An important influence of Jazz can be seen in the A sections as the all the chords are r^h or 9th chords. An obvious example is the last chord of the entire piece, this being an f sharp minor chord with an added sharpened r^h and 9th. An important harmonic relationship between these chords can be seen from bar 10-14. The chords are all third related. Bar 10 to 11: a minor with a sharpened 7th; bar 12: F major 7th; bar 13: d minor 7th; and bar 14: b minor 7th. Bar 23 contains conventional tertian chords but exploits split chord members to aid the cadence, which is a quasi-imperfect cadence or just an f sharp minor chord with a sharp 7th and 9th. At bar 57 the split chord members are discarded as to help round off the piece, and now the quasi-imperfect cadence that ended the first A section is changed to a quasi-perfect cadence. The reason for the use of quasi- is because there is a perception of this type of cadence but in reality it is not.

As a whole this waltz is the conclusion of the entire set, as it is the most climatic and virtuosic. What can be said about the character is that this final waltz is more percussive and modernist in conception. Nevertheless this waltz does not depart from the character of the entire set and the impressionistic character is not lost.

General remarks

This set of Waltzes was written to provide music that is accessible and playable for players at an intermediate level. The difficulty is found in trying to create the music's atmosphere. This is extremely appropriate as the music is in a neo-impressionistic style. The pianist will struggle to decide what pedalling to use, as there are no pedal markings given. The reason for this is because not everyone's taste is the same in interpreting contemporary music. Moreover there are certain sections that require a delicate ear in blending the harmonies without smudging and washing over the harmony changes. The technical difficulty of this set is also in bringing out the melodic lines as well as the counter-melodies that occur. Furthermore, the waltz figure in each of the small waltzes is unique but should never dominate the melody or piece as a whole. For a teacher, I believe that this music can ease their pupils into music of a contemporary idiom especially in terms of the use of modes, pedalling, pedal colouring effects, blending of tones within a chord and to help teach atmospheric playing.

I would like to suggest that the set be played as a whole but each waltz is complete and whole in itself and may be used separately. While composing the entire set I felt an inherent urge to bring in recurring motives. An important idea that I incorporated was the idea of using a motif as a building block to create an entire work. The general character throughout the set goes through a metamorphosis and the underlying pessimism felt in the first waltz is solidified by the last waltz. As the composer I can say that there is a strong melancholy that pervades the music but this is meant as a more nostalgic-view.

I hope that this music will be played in the future and that South African teachers can begin exposing their pupils to the rich musical heritage of our country. The many musical forefathers that our country has should not be overlooked and as a young South African composer I hope to continue this proud tradition. I am lucky enough to study under one of South Africa's important composers – Doctor Alexander Johnson as well as one of South Africa's great piano pedagogues – Professor Joseph Stanford. They have directed me towards a good future. Both of these lecturers, at the University of Pretoria, are leading figures in South Africa's music scene and will continue to be in the future.

Small waltz no. 1

dedicated to m-m

M.Hartdegen

Andantino ♩=86

mf *p subito* mp
con. ped

Musical notation for measures 1-8. The piece is in 3/4 time. The right hand starts with a melody in the treble clef, and the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment in the bass clef. Dynamics include *mf*, *p subito*, and *mp*. A 'con. ped' instruction is present below the first staff.

9 *pp sempre legato*
una corda *rit.*

Musical notation for measures 9-15. The right hand continues the melody, and the left hand has a more active accompaniment. Dynamics include *pp sempre legato*. Performance instructions include 'una corda' and 'rit.' (ritardando).

16 *espress.* *rit.* A tempo ♩=86
mf poco rubato ma non troppo
tre corde

Musical notation for measures 16-22. The tempo changes to 'A tempo' with a metronome marking of ♩=86. Dynamics include *espress.* and *mf poco rubato ma non troppo*. Performance instructions include 'rit.' and 'tre corde'.

23 *rit.*

Musical notation for measures 23-27. The right hand continues the melody, and the left hand has a more active accompaniment. Dynamics include *rit.* (ritardando).

28 *pp*
Ped.

Musical notation for measures 28-32. The right hand continues the melody, and the left hand has a more active accompaniment. Dynamics include *pp*. A 'Ped.' instruction is present below the first staff.

Small waltz no. 2

M.Hartdegen

Adagio Gracioso

mp con ped. *p* simile *mf* molto legato dolcissimo *p*

9 *mp* *mf* *p*

17 *mf* *p* senza marcato

24

30 **Lento** ♩=60 *mf* con passione *f*

una corda

36 *mp* M.D.

Poco Più mosso

41

mf

tre corde

accel.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 41 through 46. The music is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a flowing melody in the right hand with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line in the left hand with chords and eighth notes. The dynamic is marked *mf*. The instruction "tre corde" is written below the first measure, and "accel." is written below the sixth measure.

47

p subito

Detailed description: This system contains measures 47 through 51. The melody continues with similar rhythmic patterns. The dynamic changes to *p subito* (piano subito) starting in measure 49. The bass line consists of chords and eighth notes.

52

mf

rit.

-A tempo

Detailed description: This system contains measures 52 through 58. The music returns to the *mf* dynamic. The right hand melody is more active, while the left hand has a steady bass line. The instruction "rit." (ritardando) is written below the eighth measure, and "-A tempo" is written to the right of the system.

59

mf

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 59 through 65. The dynamic starts at *mf* and increases to *f* (forte) by measure 64. The right hand features a series of chords and moving lines, while the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

66

p

mp

8^{va}

Detailed description: This system contains measures 66 through 71. The music concludes with a *p* (piano) dynamic in measure 66, followed by a *mp* (mezzo-piano) dynamic in measure 70. The right hand has a melodic line that ends with a fermata. The left hand has a bass line with chords. An "8^{va}" (ottava) instruction is written below the final measure.

Small waltz no. 3

M.Hartdegen 11/02/09

Tempo Rubato **Andante Maestoso**

p
con ped.

mp
una corda

f pesante
tre corde

mf con forza
Poco Agitato

30

ppp *f*

33

mp

37

rit. *ppp*

40 **Allargando**

f *ff*

45

rit.

50

tr tr f

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 50 through 55. It is written for piano in a key with three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. The right-hand part features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and trills, marked with 'tr' and a wavy line. The left-hand part provides harmonic support with chords and moving bass lines. A dynamic marking of 'f' (forte) is present in measure 53.

56

pp 2

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 56 through 61. The right-hand part continues with melodic lines, including a double bar line in measure 57 and a second ending bracket labeled '2' in measure 60. The left-hand part features a steady accompaniment. A dynamic marking of 'pp' (pianissimo) is used in measure 57. The system concludes with a double bar line in measure 61.