

# Nocturnal Gaze

for amplified solo piano

Zachary Van Houten

Duration: 9 minutes

2012

### Performance Notes

When amplifying the piano, the microphone(s) should be in close proximity to the strings. This allows for the intimate harmonics and other inside piano techniques to speak better to the audience.

The piano desk should be removed to allow easier access to the inside of the piano.

### Program Note

This piece is inspired by George Crumb's *Makrokosmos* and his use of extended techniques for piano. It is also my musical interpretation of my experiences with night photography and staring at the vast and infinite night sky.

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Diamond heads are sounding pitches.  
One hand plays the note in parentheses on the keyboard.  
The other hand lightly touches the appropriate node to produce the designated harmonic.  
Use chalk or some object to mark the nodes.

Slow, Deliberate

*p* *mp* 5 sec. *p* *sfz.* *mf* 5 sec. *p* *mf* 5 sec. *mf* 8 sec.

Ped.  
(Held throughout.  
Wedge in an object  
to keep dampers open)

*mf* *f* *mf* 8 sec. *mp* 12 sec. 5 sec.

plucked ord.

Run fingernail along single string

*mf* *ff* 10 sec. *mf* 5 sec. *mp* *p* 12 sec. 20 sec.

quick stroke using fingernail *f* *mf* *f* *f* quickly and as high as possible

*ff* 8<sup>vb</sup>  
Strike lowest strings with the palm of the hand  
like playing a drum

*p* *f* 8<sup>vb</sup>

*f* 8<sup>vb</sup>

repeat note as many times as desired

*f* *p* *f* *p* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

*ff* *p* *f* *ff* *f*

8<sup>vb</sup> *p* *f* 8<sup>vb</sup> *ff*

quickly and as high as possible

*ff* *p* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *ff* *fff*

8<sup>vb</sup> 8<sup>va</sup> 8<sup>va</sup> 8<sup>vb</sup> *fff*

let the sound die into nothing

freely with approximate rhythm

repeat as many times as desired

*mf* *mf* *mp* 10 sec. *mp*

(b) ord. slide finger along string while repeatedly attacking the note.

10 sec. Plucked

*p* *fff* *mf* *sfz.* ord. *sfz.* *n*