

About "*Forgive Me, Fryderyk*"

I've always had a particular fondness for Fryderyk Chopin's famous "Raindrop Prelude" since it is one of the few pieces of the standard repertoire I could actually play and because it reminds me so much of the minimalist music happening all around me during my formative years as a composer. Despite its inherent goal orientation, the inevitable cultural baggage of being created in 19th century Europe, the Raindrop Prelude is filled with static measures making it sound very contemporary and more along the lines of the kind of music I would want to have written.

"Forgive Me, Fryderyk" was born one day in 1984 when, on a whim, I made a photocopy of the printed score of the Prelude and cut it up so that each measure was on a separate fragment of paper. I put the fragments into an envelope, shook them up and then threw them up in the air and they landed scattered all over the floor. I then picked each scrap of paper up one by one and taping each one successively onto a blank sheet of paper to resemble a musical score. I made sure to turn the blank sides around so that there was always some music notated on each scrap but since the detached measures were not accompanied by clefs, they were often taped onto the paper upside down from their original orientation in the original score. While each measure was something Chopin had composed 150 years earlier, the order of the measures was completely random and completely new.

The result is a new piece of music that frequently echoes the "Raindrop Prelude" but which is no longer goal oriented. The measure-by-measure stasis that has also attracted me to this piano piece is preserved but the music is no longer firmly rooted. I've tried the procedure a few times and each time there is a similarly satisfying musical result. Oddly, it sounds like much of the music I write intentionally in which chance procedures rarely determine the content.

The score for *"Forgive Me, Fryderyk"* consists of a copy of the "Raindrop Prelude" with a set of instructions. An already dissected set of measures from the "Raindrop Prelude" is also contained in an envelope. A photocopy of a possible performance score realization is provided for perusal purposes only. Half the joy of *"Forgive Me, Fryderyk"* is randomly creating your own edition of it.

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