

Recital For Vibraharp

by Thomas L. Davis

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Foreward

The Vibraharp has long been associated with jazz and popular music, but only recently have composers of serious music become interested in it as a means of expressing their musical thoughts and ideas. As a result there is an extremely limited amount of available literature which has been specifically composed or arranged for the Vibraharp. It is hoped that the solos in this collection will in some small way help fill the need for "serious" Vibraharp literature.

A glance at the music contained herein will indicate that these solos are arranged in a somewhat pianistic style rather than in the traditional process of writing one four-voice chord over another. The latter is a marimba technique which severely limits the soloistic capabilities of the Vibraharp. The inventor of the instrument was once reported to have complained that, "they play it like a marimba when it was intended to sound like a violin, a piano or the human voice!"

With all of its capabilities of harmony, nuance, inflection and adaptability to almost any musical style, it is hoped that the Vibraharp might someday gain the status of musical prestige which is presently enjoyed by the Classical Guitar. It is to this end that these arrangements and compositions are dedicated.

Thomas L. Davis



Thomas L. Davis

Thomas L. Davis was head of the Percussion Department of the School of Music at the University of Iowa from 1958 until his retirement in 1996. Prior to that time he was a member of several jazz groups, both as a drummer and vibraharpist. Additionally, he was a member of Dick Schory's Percussion Pops Orchestra and participated in numerous recording sessions with that group. Many of his former students are now engaged in the world of percussion as college teachers, as members of orchestras, jazz and rock groups, and as studio percussionists. Mr. Davis is a frequent percussion clinician throughout the country, and a former member of the Board of Directors of the Percussive Arts Society.

PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS

4

PEDALLING

It will be noted that pedal indications have been omitted throughout this collection. It was felt that pedalling decisions should be left to the discretion of the performer, allowing an individual interpretation of musical phrasing.

DAMPING

While a few indications for mallet or finger damping have been included, the performer will undoubtedly find numerous other instances where one or the other of these techniques should be employed to enhance the musical phrase.

MALLETS AND STICKING

The choice of mallets has also been left to the performer's own discretion. Care must be taken, regardless of mallet choice, to be certain that accompanimental figures do not obscure melodic material. Sticking indications have been omitted to allow for individual differences in technical facility.

MOTOR USAGE

Selections of motor speed have been left to the discretion of the performer. One factor should not be overlooked: perhaps the purest, most musically sensitive sound of the vibraharp is obtained when the motor is turned off!

PROGRAMMING SUGGESTIONS AND CONTENTS

Since most of the solos included in this collection are of rather short duration, one might wish to program them in stylistic pairs. The following pairings are only suggested and the performer should feel free to depart from them:

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The six pairings above represent six definite musical periods or styles. No attempt has been made herein to present a complete anthology of musical style. Nevertheless, assuming that there have been numerous chronological stylistic omissions, these solos are representative of the following musical periods:

- I. Baroque
- II. Romantic
- III. Impressionistic
- IV. Folk Music of the British Isles
- V. 20th Century American Popular
- VI. 20th Century American Serious

Sarabande

J.S. BACH
arr. Thomas L. Davis

Andante moderato

119

p *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *cresc.* *mf* *pp* *f* *cresc.* *mp* *mp* *mf* *ritard.* *f* *molto rit.* *ff*

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Prelude in C Major

J.S. BACH
arr. Thomas L. Davis

Moderato (♩ = 112)

120

The musical score is written on six staves of a single treble clef. The tempo is marked 'Moderato' with a quarter note equal to 112 beats per minute. The key signature is C major. The score begins with a dynamic of *mp* and includes several dynamic changes: *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, and *f*. The music consists of a continuous eighth-note pattern with various phrasings and articulations, including slurs and ties. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, with some measures containing multiple beams for eighth notes.

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