

Julia Usher

***A Chess Piece***

for

3 Clarinets and Soprano

Primavera

1980

John Fowles has likened our exercise of free will to the model of a game of Chess. The laws and possibilities of movement are fixed and limited: but the available choices, decisions and response are almost infinite, to the player. All our actions are modified by what has gone before, and by responses from our surroundings.

This music is based on a real game of Chess, played in 1980 by Tony Miles against Oscar Panno, In South America. I wrote to Tony Miles to tell him what I planned to do with his game.

Preview File Only

# Primavera

***11 Langham Place, Colchester, Essex. CO4 4GB***

# A Chess Piece

Text by Julia Usher

## for Sam

### OPENINGS

White begins:

Innocent statement of position:

I am.

Eighteen;

Seemingly endless choice of moves:

I can.

Consequence of action

Is response;

Each counter posed

Has complication.

Innocence is lost in implication.

Free to choose,

But now within the ambit

Of calculation.

Free to offer,

But in acceptance of the gambit,

Also a sacrifice.

And you, my dark opponent,

No pale reflecting mirror,

But a black intelligence,

That reads the map of my intent,

And castles opposition.

### A TEMPO

Caught.

In a sieve of meshing lines.

Laws laid down on the rank and file,

Standardised, and sieved to size.

Squared,

And pinned to the post,

No changing of sides,

Committed to attack;

Colour-coded

Whiter than white,

As black is black.

Rooked!

By the forced pace,

No breathing place,

Permitted to fall back a

space,

Position eroded.

### ENDGAME

"How should the game go??"

Ends threaten, forcing moves;

The forks grow fewer.

Checks deter

At every turn.

How to terminate

With strategy

What tactical freedom remains?

The walls grow higher;

Determination constrains.

"A legal move may not be retracted."

Axiom: "Every motion has an equal  
and opposite response.":"

There is no square but forward,  
Bartering strength for Time.

Choice merges with necessity -

"But there is a better way" -

Choose acceptance, and resign.--

**The score is TRANSPOSED. Accidentals apply only to the note itself, or to the same note within a ligature. Free sections should be flexible, but vertical reference points are observed, in the manner of 'col parte.'**

# Openings

1 Free not too slow, recit.

Sop *mf* P-Q4 White be-gins:(nn) in-no-cent state-ment # of po-si-tion(nn): I

Cl 1 *p*

2 Più mosso.

am...(m)

Eighteen; seemingly endless

Cl 2 *mf* -N-kb3 sfz change to E<sup>b</sup>

Cl 3 *pp* P-Qb4

choice of moves. I can (nn)

1 *mf*

2 *mp* Slow at first. 8ve loco accel. poco f

3 *ppoco f*

3

ten *mp* Con-sequ-ence of ac-tion

E<sup>b</sup> *calm* *pp* change to B<sup>b</sup>

2 *mf*

4

is re-sponse

each counter-

mp

sfz

pp

mp

5

posed

has com-pli-ca-tion.

pp

cresc

f

accel.

6

in no cence is

last

mf

f

grandissimo

tripla cresc / decresc

(ooooost)

..P-q4

6

SYNCHR. TEMPO  $\text{♩} = 92$  P x P

In im(m)pli-ca-tion.

p

cresc molto

vibrato

f marc p

f p f p f p