

Angus Davison & Sonya Lifschitz

New Light



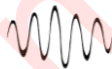

4 techniques, 10 fingers, 300000 possibilities

"Perhaps many of the perplexing problems of the new music could be put into a new light if we were to reintroduce the ancient idea of music being a reflection of nature." - George Crumb

About the piece

New Light may be thought of as a science kit for extended piano techniques. The score consists of sixteen cards which can be arranged to create a multitude of pieces. Four cards feature extended piano techniques; four feature a visual prompt/gesture inspired by nature; four specify a register of the piano; and four suggest approximate duration.

To create a version of the piece, match each technique with a different visual prompt, register, and duration. Over 300,000 different permutations are possible. The performer is invited to experiment and find those combinations which speak to them most. They are also encouraged to repeat the process and to experience each technique in a new light. An example piece is given below.

harmonics  low 6 secs	strike  high 12 secs	mute  mid-low 24 secs	strum  mid-high 18 secs
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Explanation of extended techniques

N.B. *To execute these techniques accurately, ensure the strings are clearly marked, by affixing small stickers on the dampers with pitches labelled on them.*

- **Harmonics:** Touching the string lightly with one hand produces a harmonic when the string/key is plucked/struck with the other hand. The specific places on the string which produce the harmonics when touched are called 'nodal points'. 2nd partial (octave above the original pitch) nodal points are located near the centre of the string in the middle register of the piano. 5th partial (a major 3rd above the original pitch) nodal points are located just above the dampers in the lower register of the piano. Experiment to find the exact location of the nodes, then mark the nodal points on the strings with chalk.
- **Muting:** To create a muted sound, touch the string quite firmly with the fingertips or palm of one hand and strike the corresponding key/s with the other. This works best when the muting hand is in front of the dampers, that is, on the side of the dampers closest to the performer.
- **Strum:** silently depress a chord of your choosing on the keyboard. With your other hand, strum the corresponding strings in ascending or descending glissando motion. Do not hold the sustain pedal down while strumming. However, sustain pedal may smooth the transition from one chord to another. Depress the pedal just before transitioning to the next chord and release the pedal just before strumming the strings of the new chord.
- **Strike:** the metal beams inside the frame of the piano can be struck with fingertips or knuckles. A variety of timbres and pitches can be achieved by striking the beams at different locations. Also, experiment with striking the soundboard with your 3rd finger through the circular openings inside the metal frame.



silently depress
a chord with one
hand and

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the
corresponding
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other

touch the
nodal point on
the string
to produce a

harmonic

when the string is
plucked/struck

firmly touch
the strings in
front of the
dampers to

mute

the sound when
the keys are
struck

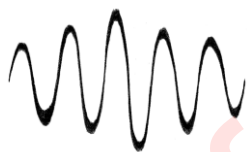
strike

the metal beams
of the piano or
the soundboard
of the piano
inside the circular
openings of the
frame

echoing



undulating



ringing



evaporating



low

register

mid-low

register

mid-high

register

high

register

c.24

seconds

c.18

seconds

c.12

seconds

c.6

seconds