Brittany J. Green

Portraits

for piano

BJG

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Portraits

for piano

I. La femme complexe

II. Le garçon qui passe

III. La mère dans le marché

IV. L'homme durci

V. La fille dans les nuages

Program Notes

Portraits is a five movement piano suite. Movements are based on a series of poems by Bessie Irene that depict people we all know. The first movement, "La femme complexe" explores feelings of longing, uneasiness, realization, and reassurance. Based on the poem *I am You,* "La femme complexe" is marked "slow and reflective," and conveys a meditative mood, full of subtle nuance.

Movement two, "Le garçon qui passe" is the shortest of the set. Based on the poem *Fleeting*, it conveys the swiftness of a fleeting moment. The rushing sixteenth notes and triplets create a sweeping mood reminiscent of trying to hold onto something that cannot last.

"La mère dans le marché," based on the poem *Mother in City Market*, is the third movement. It projects feelings of vulnerability, solemnity, heaviness, and exposure. This movement employs ninths chord voiced throughout several registers of the piano, and moves through a variety of keys, while exploring the timbre of the piano.

The fourth movement, "L'homme durci" portrays the confining walls of fury and frustration. Highlighting the lower register of the piano, this movement consists of only two notes- E and F. Unlike to previous movements, it focuses on rhythm and timbre over harmony and melody. This movement is based on the poem *Confinement*.

Lastly, the fifth movement, "La fille dans les nuages," portrays the complexity of struggling between who you are and who the world thinks you should be. Based on the poem *Beyond the Clouds*, the piece tells the story of a woman who hesitates to show the world who she is. The harmonic and melodic themes throughout various sections of the movement juxtapose the bleakness and beauty life can sometimes bring, creating a mood of melancholy and meditation.

I. La femme complexe

Performance Notes

Style
This movement should be played freely, slowly, and without a clear sense of time. The performer should pay special attention to the graphic distance between notes as an indication of the relative duration notes should be played. Additionally, the lengths of the blank measures are an indication of, relatively, how long notes should ring before moving on to the next measure. Notes with a smaller note head size are less important and should be played accordingly. Lastly, the performer may wish to draw from the poem below in determining how to interpret and convey the mood of the piece.

I am You
Little girl.
Longing for simpler times.
Heart hidden,
And nestled in the richness of melancholy.

The pitter patter of feet,
Crunching against the cold, country soil.
The cadence of breath.
The echo of fear.

Running for miles, is your soul not weary?

In your darkest hour,
You hum the song of your sorrow.
It resonates in the deepest parts of me,
Bubbling up to the top, as if your melody were my own.

I close my eyes and know you.

You are her.

She is me.

I am you.

-Bessie Irene

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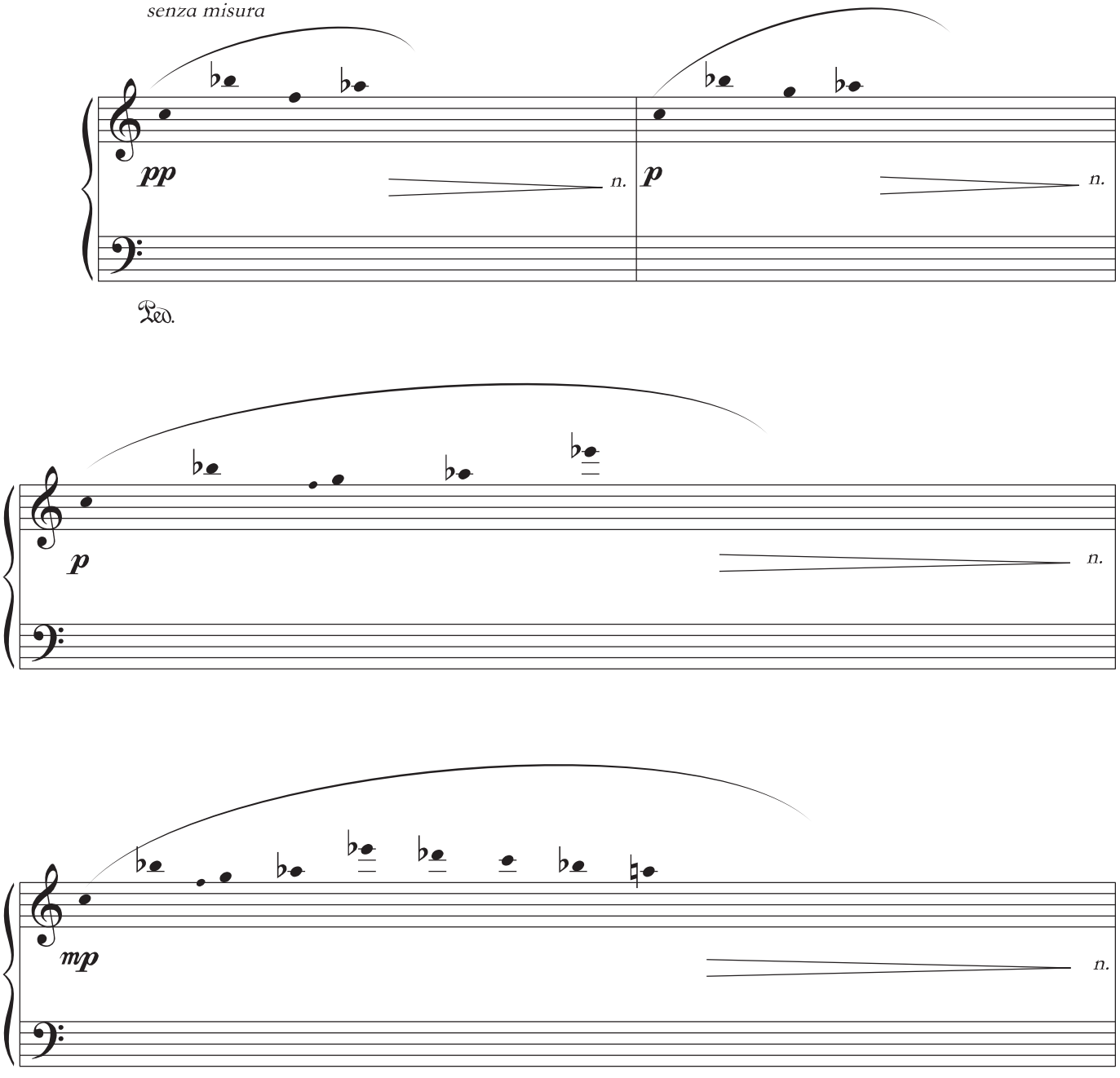
I. La femme complexe

Slow, Reflective

senza misura



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