

Jeffrey Ryan

# Fornax Chemica

for piano solo

Perusal Copy

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# Fornax Chemica

***Performance notes:***

Timing: ca. 10'30"

Pedal markings must be carefully observed.

***Programme note:***

A chemical furnace (Latin *fornax chemica*) was a small heater formerly used to heat chemical experiments. The idea of chemical transformation through heat and fire inspired this work for solo piano, which explores and combines the constituent elements of the piano sound. The piano has a wide range of sound possibilities, from a single note (with or without the pedal, which create different timbres) to a mass of up to 88 pitches (which requires the pedal, of course). The upper register can sparkle ephemerally, while the lower register can ring thunderously, and under the hands of a skilled performer, the piano is capable of many varied and subtly gradated colours. Cast in one movement, the music of ***Fornax Chemica*** bubbles and boils, crackles like fire, swirls like wind in the corners, rises like smoke in the air, and dissipates into the ether.

***Fornax Chemica*** was commissioned by Music Toronto for pianist Markus Groh. It is dedicated to Markus, whose mastery of the keyboard ignited my imagination; and to the memory of my former teacher Donald Erb (1927-2008), whose music, principles and pursuit of excellence continue to inspire me.



20

ff

6 6 9 6 6

23

♩ = 60 sub.

(no pedal)

26

*p* *mf* *pp* *mp*

29

like smoke

*p loco*

8vb

33

rit. to--

♩ = 42 Reaching out

*pp* *mf* *p*

(no pedal)

39 *p* simply, childlike *rit.* (♩ = 30)

♩ = 72 sub. Gently sparkling (right hand only) *rit. to---*

43 *p* *loco*

♩ = 60 *meno mosso loco* *rit. to---* (♩ = 42) (♩ = 42)

46 *p* delicately

50 *p* like a tam-tam *p* *mf* *p* *pp*

\*repeat pattern fast as possible

55 *pp* *Senza misura* ca. 10" *A tempo* ♩ = 60 *f* *tr* *alternate hands* *grad. release pedal* *(use both hands)*

(exact number of repetitions undefined—  
increase speed to merge with trill)

♩ = 84 *With nervous energy*

60

*fff*

*pp* *searching, quietly alert*

(no pedal)  
+ U.C.

63

66

68

71

(*pp*)

- U.C.

73

76

Musical score for measures 76-77. The piece is in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 76 contains a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. Measure 77 features a 3/4 time signature change. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* and *p*, and articulation marks like accents and slurs.

78

8va

Musical score for measures 78-79. Measure 78 continues the rhythmic pattern from the previous system. Measure 79 has a 3/4 time signature. A dashed line labeled "8va" indicates an octave transposition for the right hand. Dynamics include *f* and *p*.

80

8va

loco tr

ff

f p

Musical score for measures 80-81. Measure 80 features a *loco tr* (loco trill) in the right hand. Measure 81 includes a *ff* (fortissimo) dynamic. The system concludes with a 7/16 time signature. Dynamics *f* and *p* are also present.

83

tr

f

f p

f

Musical score for measures 83-87. This system contains five measures with various time signatures: 7/16, 3/4, 6/16, 7/16, 8/16, and 9/16. It features a *tr* (trill) in measure 83 and dynamic markings *f*, *f p*, and *f*.

88

p sub.

Musical score for measures 88-92. This system contains five measures with time signatures: 9/16, 8/16, 6/16, 7/16, and 6/16. A *p sub.* (piano subito) dynamic marking is used in measure 89. The score includes various rhythmic patterns and articulation marks.

93

mf

(no pedal)

Musical score for measures 93-97. This system contains five measures with time signatures: 6/16, 7/16, 7/16, 4/4, and 4/4. A *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking is present in measure 95. The instruction "(no pedal)" is written at the bottom of the system.

97

Musical score for measures 97-99. The piece is in 2/4 time. The right hand features a continuous eighth-note melody with frequent accidentals. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes.

100

Musical score for measures 100-102. The right hand continues with eighth-note patterns, while the left hand has a more complex accompaniment with some beamed eighth notes.

103

Musical score for measures 103-105. Measure 103 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 104 has a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 105 features a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes in both hands. A 9-measure phrase is indicated in the right hand.

106

Musical score for measures 106-110. A tempo change is indicated: *rit. to* (quarter note = 60). Dynamics range from mezzo-forte (*mf*) to mezzo-piano (*mp*). The right hand has a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand has a steady accompaniment. A note is marked *(no pedal)*.

111

Musical score for measures 111-116. A tempo change is indicated: quarter note = 42, *Mournfully*. Dynamics range from piano (*p*) to pianissimo (*pp*). The right hand has a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand has a steady accompaniment. A note is marked *loco like deliberate footsteps*. A key signature change to one flat is indicated at the bottom.

117

Musical score for measures 117-119. The right hand has a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand has a steady accompaniment. The key signature remains one flat.



120

Musical score for measures 120-124. The piece is in G major and 3/4 time. Measure 120 starts with a forte (*f*) chordal texture in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The dynamics transition to pianissimo (*pp*) by measure 122. The time signature changes to 4/4 in measure 124.

(as pedal is released, B and A# will continue to ring faintly)

125

Musical score for measures 125-130. Measure 125 features an 8va octave line in the right hand starting with a half note (♩ = 42). The right hand is marked *pp sempre*. The left hand has a mezzo-forte (*mf*) bass line. The time signature changes to 4/4 in measure 126 and back to 3/4 in measure 128. Dynamics in the left hand are *mf*, *mf*, *mp*, and *mf*.

131

Musical score for measures 131-137. Measure 131 has an 8va octave line. The right hand is marked *pp*. The left hand has a mezzo-forte (*mf*) bass line. The time signature changes to 4/4 in measure 132 and back to 3/4 in measure 134. Dynamics in the left hand are *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *mf*. The right hand includes the instruction *loco* and *accel. poco a poco to--*.

138

Musical score for measures 138-142. Measure 138 has a half note (♩ = 60). The right hand has a *cresc. poco a poco* instruction. The left hand has a mezzo-forte (*mf*) bass line. The time signature is 4/4. Dynamics in the right hand are *p* and *mp*. Measure 142 has a half note (♩ = 150).

143

Musical score for measures 143-147. Measure 143 has a half note (♩ = 168). The right hand has a mezzo-forte (*mf*) bass line. The time signature changes to 3/4 in measure 144 and back to 4/4 in measure 146. Dynamics in the right hand are *f* and *ff*. Measure 147 has a half note (♩ = 84).

148 *fff* *f swirling* *8va* *loco*  
(no pedal)

151 *8va* *loco*

153 *8va* *loco*

155 *p sub.*

158 *mf*

161 *p sub.*

164

mf p f p sub.

This system contains measures 164, 165, and 166. The music is written for piano in treble and bass clefs. It features sixteenth-note runs with sixteenth-note chords, each marked with a '6' and a slur. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, *f*, and *p sub.*

167

This system contains measures 167, 168, and 169. The music continues with sixteenth-note runs and chords, each marked with a '6' and a slur. The key signature has two flats (Bb, Eb). The time signature is 2/4.

170

mf p mf p

This system contains measures 170 and 171. The music continues with sixteenth-note runs and chords, each marked with a '6' and a slur. The key signature has two flats. The time signature changes from 2/4 to 3/4 and back to 2/4. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, and *mf*.

172

f

This system contains measures 172, 173, and 174. The music continues with sixteenth-note runs and chords, each marked with a '6' and a slur. The key signature has two flats. The time signature is 2/4. The dynamic is *f*.

175

This system contains measures 175, 176, and 177. The music continues with sixteenth-note runs and chords, each marked with a '6' and a slur. The key signature has two flats. The time signature is 2/4.

178

8va

This system contains measures 178, 179, and 180. The music continues with sixteenth-note runs and chords, each marked with a '6' and a slur. The key signature has two flats. The time signature is 2/4. The dynamic is *8va*.

l.h. (8va)<sup>-</sup> loco r.h. rit. to --- ♩ = 42 Delicately

181

*fff ff* *mf > mp* *p* *mp* *p*

♩ = 84 Murmuring, bubbling Senza misura

187

*pp* *pp sempre* (let sound accumulate)

8va<sup>-</sup> loco

rit. poco a poco to --- (♩ = 60)

evaporating, dissipating

(♩ = 42) (molto) ♩ = 60 A tempo ♩ = 42

8va<sup>-</sup>

*pp* gently

(8va)<sup>-</sup>

192

loco

like a soft breath

*p* like gongs

200  $\bullet = 72$  Flickering

depress silently\*

*p* like floating embers

*p* *mf* *p*

\*depress in any order as desired, so that  
all indicated keys are depressed by m. 202

205

*p* *mf* *p* *p* *mf* *f*

208 rit. to ——— (♩ = 60)

*p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *p* *pp*

213  $\bullet = 42$  Gently wafting

*p dolce* *pp* *pp* *lunga\**

\*hold until overtones  
have faded