

Room 857

(for solo piano)

by

Michael Coleman

(1995)



Summer, 1995

Pensacola, Florida U.S.A.

Approximate duration: ca. 7 - 8 minutes

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Composer/Performance Notes:

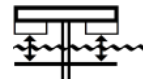
General Comments and Performance Directions:

- This work should have a free, improvisatory, atmospheric effect overall; it is basically a collection of various, short, recurring events, and could be described as a rondo.
- Accidentals are good only for the note they immediately precede (however, some cautionary accidentals are used).
- The damper pedal is never to be totally released until the end of the work.
- The temporal spacing from event to event is mostly shown by approximate durations in seconds (ex: ca. 3", etc.); there are also a few instances where the spacing is determined by note values. Dotted vertical lines are only to show coordination points between the staves. There are no measure lines; rehearsal letters are provided rather than measures and measure numbers.

Directions for Specific Events:

- 1.) This and similar passages are to be played in a very quiet and obscure manner, somewhat uneven, and always with the *u.c.* pedal. This event is also marked *sotto voce* which is given in the first occurrence. The small noteheads are to help emphasize this effect.
- 2.) The effect of these repeated notes (and subsequent occurrences) should be mechanical and clock-like.
- 3.) These events (within the box) are to be played inside the piano; beginning & end pitches of the glissandi are approximate and are to be played with the "3" finger (left hand); the "□" and "▽" symbols indicate using the flesh and nail of the finger, respectively. All glissandi should be played with strong finger pressure on the strings (regardless of the dynamic marking) to create a maximum displacement of the string vibrations.
- 4.) The *Coleman Effect* (an original effect by the composer (ca. 1992)): Gradually raise the damper pedal in extremely small increments to allow the felts on the dampers to slightly touch the strings repeatedly after each glissando. Apply the effect several times during each indicated occurrence. The effect will create a variety of effects (harmonics, slight crescendi, etc.) and it will vary from piano to piano and performer to performer. It is important that strong finger pressure is used with all the glissandi to create a maximum displacement of the string vibrations (#3) which is needed to generate this effect.

The following symbol is used to indicate where to begin the effect:



The damper pedal line will also change to an undulating line at the occurrence of the symbol and it indicates the approximate duration for which the effect should be applied:



The symbol used for the *Coleman Effect* is just a visual representation of a damper moving up and down to contact the piano strings represented by the solid line at the bottom of the symbol. The undulating line in the middle of the symbol is showing the continuation of the damper pedal line and it is visual representation of the effect. The symbol was designed by the composer.

- 5.) These chords should be bell-like and sonorous. The note durations should be somewhat uneven (similar to #1.)

Program Notes:

“Room 857” (1995) by Michael Coleman is a one-movement work for solo piano which could be described as a collection of various short recurring events resembling a rondo. This work is intended to have a free, improvisatory, atmospheric effect and was conceived by the composer as an improvisation on a nine-foot Baldwin grand piano in Room 857 at the Ashmore Fine Arts Building at Pensacola Junior College. “Room 857” also features an original special effect by the composer (“Coleman effect”) which is created by extremely small damper pedal movements to alter the string vibrations following various inside-the-piano glissandi. This will create a variety of effects, such as harmonics and slight crescendi, and it will vary from piano to piano and performer to performer. It was premiered by the composer in September 1995 at Pensacola Junior College and was one of Coleman's composition projects during his Artist Fellowship grant term of 1994-95 from the Alabama State Council on the Arts. The work is dedicated to Lawrence Moss.

Description of *Room 857* by The Birmingham News staff writer, Nancy Raabe...

Birmingham Art Music Alliance Concert

Monday, January 13, 1997, 7:00 PM

Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama

BAMA gives vivid glimpse into world of modern music

By Nancy Raabe, News staff writer, The Birmingham News

Link: <http://artmusic.org/category/reviews/>

"...Equally rewarding was Michael Coleman's "Room 857" for solo piano, performed by the composer. This brief but memorable work consisted of a simple but deeply affecting exploration of four discrete ideas - a clear, ringing proclamation in the upper register; a gentle and darkly textured arpeggio rising from the instrument's depths; a resounding flourish in the lower register accomplished by reaching inside the instrument and strumming the lowest strings; and, most remarkably, the eerie effect that Coleman unearthed within the decay of this last sound. As the piano's lower strings are vibrating, Coleman discovered that by applying the felts to the strings a new set of overtones can be generated, which causes the sound to well up anew. Repeated several times, the effect clearly astonished many of the 75 or so in the audience."

Contact Information:

Michael Coleman

8694 Ramble Woods Drive

Pensacola, Florida 32514

U.S.A.

Cell#: 504-343-3025

Email: mcoleman@uwf.edu

for Lawrence Moss

Room 857

(for solo piano)

Michael Coleman
(1995)

♩ = ca. 42

A *15^{ma}* (◡) *loco* *8^{va}*

ff 1.) *pp-ppp*
sotto voce *pp*
sonoro

u.c.

Ped. (sempre) →

Note: the damper pedal is never to be totally released until the end of the work.

ca. 2-3" *loco* 2.) *pp* *Pmeccanico*

ca. 2-3" *loco* 2.) *pp* *Pmeccanico*

u.c.

3.) *Inside the Piano*

f *8vb*

ca. 3" ca. 7" *8^{va}* ca. 3"

ca. 3" ca. 7" *8^{va}* ca. 3"

5.) *f-mf*
sonoro

4.) *Ped.* *Ped.*

loco **B** *15^{ma}* *loco*

pp-ppp *ff* *pp-ppp*

u.c. *u.c.*

pp *poco* *pp* *poco*

(u.c.) *8vb*

ca. 2-3"

p *ca. 8"*

f *8vb*

(Led.)

C *8^{va}* *ca. 3"* *loco*

f-mf (sonoro) *pp-ppp* *sffz*

u.c.

(Led.)

First system of musical notation. Treble clef: *ppp*, *sffz*, *pp-ppp*. Bass clef: *u.c.*, *u.c.*, *loco*. Includes a dynamic marking *8vb-----* with a wedge.

Second system of musical notation. Treble clef: *f-mf*, *poco*, *poco*. Bass clef: *mp*, *8vb-----*. Includes a boxed diagram of a piano key with a hammer action and a dynamic marking *8va-----*.

Third system of musical notation. Treble clef: *ca. 5"*, *f-mf*, *poco*. Bass clef: *mp*, *8vb-----*. Includes a piano key diagram with a hammer action and a dynamic marking *8va-----*.

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble clef: *ca. 5"*, *loco*. Bass clef: *f-mf*, *pp-ppp*, *u.c.*. Includes a piano key diagram with a hammer action and a dynamic marking *8va-----*.

E *15^{ma}* *8^{va}*

ff *p scherzando*

u.c.

loco *mf sonoro* *8^{va}* *ca. 1-2"* *ca. 2-3"*

mp *f* *p*

pp *mf*

u.c.

8^{va} *f con disprezzo* *pp* *8^{va}* *p*

(u.c.)

u.c.

8va

p

f *mp*

8vb

(Ped.)

ca. 4"

f *mf* *sfz*

(Ped.)

F

mp *pp*

8va

8vb

sfz *p*

u.c.

ca. 2-3"

ca. 30" to 40" (più a lungo possibile)

(Ped.)

(damper pedal released)

*Apply as much pressure on the strings as possible to this glissando while keeping the dynamic level as indicated. This is the longest duration in this work of applying the Coleman effect and it is recommended that the performer sustain the effect for as long as possible.