

Dedicated to the memory of Nathan Ivan Kaplan

Concert Etudes

by Nathan Ivan Kaplan
(1948 - 2000)
edited by Lawrence Sobol

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Introduction

I've had the privilege to work in collaboration with Nathan Kaplan on many occasions starting in the late 1960s while we were students at the Manhattan School of Music. In 1967 Nathan asked me to perform his *Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet*. This composition was very well received at the annual Composers' Forum.

Subsequently, I asked Nathan if he would be interested in collaborating on a book of concert etudes for solo clarinet. This book is the result of our two-year effort. I programmed these etudes on many of my concert engagements and performed five of them at Carnegie Recital Hall in 1970. During that year I recorded all 18 *Concert Etudes* at Jimi Hendrix's Electric Lady Studios under the composer's supervision. These recordings are available at kendormusic.com.

This fully-revised new edition should prove to be most helpful in preparing the student for some of the challenges found in contemporary music.

Lawrence Sobol
September 2014

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Concert Etude #1

The purpose of this etude is to introduce basic meter changes. This means that the time signature varies throughout the piece. Though navigating such music can be rather simple, in contemporary music it is often more complex. In this first etude, the changes in meter effect only the number of quarter notes in a measure while their beat value stays the same throughout. This etude is an expressive, folk-like melody which should be played in a warm singing style.

Andante molto cantando ♩ = 80 - 96

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Andante molto cantando' with a quarter note equal to 80-96 beats per minute. The dynamics start with a piano (*p*) marking. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff marks measure 11, where the time signature changes to 4/4 and the dynamic is marked *p subito*. The fourth staff continues in 4/4, with a *rit.* marking. The fifth staff marks measure 17, where the time signature changes to 3/4 and the tempo is marked *a tempo*. The sixth staff marks measure 23, where the time signature changes to 2/4 and the dynamic is marked *dolce*. The seventh staff marks measure 28, where the time signature changes to 3/4 and the dynamic is marked *cantare*. The eighth staff continues in 3/4. The ninth staff continues in 3/4. The tenth staff concludes the piece in 3/4, with a final *f* dynamic marking and a *p* marking at the end.

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Concert Etude #2

This etude has a dual purpose. First, it introduces what is known in music theory as the *tritone*, which occurs in any scale as the interval between the *tonic* or first note and the raised fourth note of the scale. Secondly, this piece is meant to be played in a flowing, very expressive style. When the extreme dynamics are followed, the music becomes very powerful.

Tritone example: 

Molto espressivo ♩ = 72



p *flowing*

10 *p* *p*

mf *f*

20 *mf* *f subito* *cresc. molto* *ffff*

Concert Etude #3

This deeply pensive piece features an abundance of rhythmic freedom. The effect of the recurring "A" notes can become almost hypnotic, and this hinges strongly on the dynamic caressing of each note. When it is practiced carefully, this etude will greatly improve your tonal quality and control. The way you play the first note can be repeated on every note of the chromatic scale.

Dreaming; hypnotic ♩ = 84 - 96

molto rubato

The musical score consists of seven staves of music in treble clef. The piece is characterized by a chromatic scale and frequent changes in time signature. The first staff begins with a 4/4 time signature, followed by 5/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 3/4. The second staff continues with 3/4, 5/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 3/4. The third staff has a 12-measure rest indicated by a box with the number 12. The fourth staff has a 4-measure rest indicated by a box with the number 4. The fifth staff has a 4-measure rest indicated by a box with the number 4. The sixth staff has a 21-measure rest indicated by a box with the number 21. The seventh staff concludes with a 5/4 time signature, followed by 4/4, and ends with a double bar line. Dynamics include *p*, *f*, and *pppp*. The tempo is marked as *molto rubato*. A large diagonal watermark reading "Preview Only" is overlaid across the score.

Concert Etude #4

Personal expression is again the primary goal here. Smooth playing and beautiful tone quality must be the objective of every note. Phrasing is vitally important -- aim at the key notes of each phrase, remembering that when the time signature changes, the quarter note value remains the same.

Ma ben dolce ♩ = 88

11

lyric

f *p* *cresc.*

f *p*

molto sostenuto

27

angular *dolce*

38

f *p* *mf*

pp *f* *ff* *rit.* *ff*

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Concert Etude #5

This etude should be played in a happy, dance-like style. Pay close attention to the steadiness of the tempo. Be aware of the tone quality of the first note; using a covering on the open G would be highly recommended.

Moderato ♩ = 88 - 96

The musical score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *f*. The second staff includes a dynamic marking of *p*, a *cresc.* marking, and a dynamic marking of *f*. The third staff has a dynamic marking of *ff*. The fourth staff has a dynamic marking of *mf*. The fifth staff has a dynamic marking of *mp*. The sixth staff has a dynamic marking of *p*. The seventh staff has a dynamic marking of *pp*. The eighth staff has dynamic markings of *ppp* and *pppp*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, beams, and slurs. There are also box numbers 6, 15, and 21. A large watermark 'Preview Only' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

Concert Etude #6

The emphasis here is staccato playing. To achieve a crisp staccato, keep your tongue near the reed and use just as much strength in bringing the tongue back to the reed as in the release or attack. The notes should bounce one to the next in an angular and articulate manner, broken only by the legato passages.


In strict tempo ♩ = 84 - 100

The musical score consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *f* and features a series of staccato eighth notes. The second staff continues with staccato eighth notes and includes a measure with a 6/4 time signature. The third staff starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*, followed by a section marked *ff* and *agitato*, which includes a sixteenth-note triplet. The fourth staff continues with staccato eighth notes. The fifth staff features a dynamic marking of *f* and includes a measure with a 5/4 time signature. The sixth staff continues with staccato eighth notes. The seventh staff concludes the piece with dynamic markings of *p*, *mf*, and *f*, ending with a final staccato eighth note.

Concert Etude #7

This etude is meant to be enjoyed! Pay close attention to the articulations and dynamics. In measure 16, the trill and grace notes may present some difficulty. Practice the passage very slowly without the trill to get a good firm feeling, then add the trill and try playing the whole passage in exact rhythm. This method of practicing all ornaments is strongly advised.

Example:



The example shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). A note on the second line (G) has a trill ornament above it, indicated by a star and the letters 'tr'. Below the note, there is a grace note (F#) and a trill line with the letter 'R' underneath it.

* Use second line G# key with high C to trill to D.

Leggiero ♩ = 84 - 96



The main musical score consists of ten staves of music. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Leggiero' and a metronome marking of '♩ = 84 - 96'. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *f*, *p*, and *ff*. It also features articulations like accents, slurs, and a trill. Specific measures are marked with box numbers: 10, 17, and 27. Performance instructions include 'solid', 'poco accel.', 'a tempo', 'bravura', 'rit.', and 'simplice'. The piece concludes with a *p* dynamic marking.

Concert Etude #9

Style is of utmost importance in this study. Lightness and charm play the important role. The entire etude must have a musical innocence. Try to make the trills extremely rhythmic and exciting.

Leggiero; happy ♩ = 100 - 108

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a trill (*tr*). The second staff includes a trill (*tr*) and a *canto* marking. The third staff is marked with a box containing the number 10 and the text "driving rhythm", with a *f subito* dynamic. The fourth staff features a trill (*tr*), a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, and another trill (*tr*). The fifth staff is marked *dolce* and includes a *f subito* dynamic. The sixth staff contains a trill (*tr*). The seventh staff is marked with a box containing the number 26 and a *dolce* dynamic. The eighth staff begins with a box containing the number 32, a forte (*f*) dynamic, and a trill (*tr*). The ninth staff includes a trill (*tr*) and a *stringendo* marking. The final staff concludes with a trill (*tr*) and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic.

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Concert Etude #10

Highlighting the difference between 3/4 and 6/8 time, this piece introduces the concept of playing with a steady 8th note pulse throughout. To be rhythmically accurate, you must pulse (or solfege) two 8th notes within the duration of one quarter note at all times. Please give due respect to the dynamic markings.

Allegro ♩ = 192 - 208 (♩ = ♩)

p

mf

f

tric

cresc.

f

cresc.

ff

pp

p

mf

f

mf

leggiero

p

decresc.

ppp

7

16

24

34

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Concert Etude #11

This study contains the major meter challenge of 3/8 measures scattered among those in quarter-note time. Treat these measures not as interruptions, but as rhythmic extensions of the music in the preceding measures. Thinking in terms of 8th notes when approaching them will help. Also refer to the suggestions for **Etude 6**, but this time using even greater diaphragm support to achieve a very short staccato that has resonance and depth.

Staccatissimo ♩ = 160 - 176

(side)
trb

f

7

12

17

Concert Etude #12

This etude was written to create a dance-like piece using a variety of meters. The particular challenge here centers around keeping a constant 8th note pulse. The last 12 measures should have an expansive feeling as you climb exultantly to the closing high E notes. In measure 7, practice the grace notes in the same way you worked out those in **Etude 7**.

Jauntily ♩ = 160 - 176

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a dynamic marking of *f*. The second staff continues with a 2/4 time signature. The third staff starts with a boxed measure number '7', a treble clef, and a dynamic marking of *p*, with the instruction 'gracefully'. The fourth staff continues with a 4/4 time signature. The fifth staff begins with a boxed measure number '18', a treble clef, and dynamic markings of *f*, *mf*, and *p*. The sixth staff features a treble clef, a 3/8 time signature, and the instruction 'no rit.'. The seventh staff starts with a boxed measure number '27', a treble clef, and dynamic markings of *f* and *f subito*, with the instruction 'broadly'. The eighth staff has a treble clef and the instruction 'canto'. The ninth and tenth staves continue the piece with various time signatures and dynamics.

Concert Etude #13

This etude is comic and upbeat in spirit. Enjoy performing this work and be playful with its sardonic humor.

Eloquent ♩ = 168 - 184

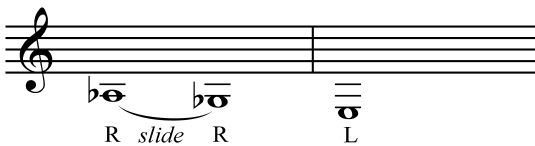
The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a *mp* dynamic. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff includes a measure marked '10' and features dynamics *mf*, *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*. The fourth staff continues the piece. The fifth staff includes a measure marked '23'. The sixth staff includes a measure marked '30' and features a *f* dynamic. The seventh staff continues the melody. The eighth staff includes a measure marked '40' and features dynamics *mp subito* and *poco accel.*. The score concludes with a final measure on the tenth staff.

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Concert Etude #14

In this etude, you should practice with a metronome at a much slower speed to develop an even, homogeneous sound throughout the registers and a solid rhythmic execution of the notes. Practice first at 50 bpm and slowly work up to 100 bpm. At the end of measure 6, slide from the Ab to the Gb in order to hit the low E in the next measures with the left pinky.

Example:



R slide R L

Steady tempo ♩ = 88 - 100



mf

f

6

mp

p

11

mf

16

f

Concert Etude #15

The difficulty in this etude is to play the odd scale patterns with impeccable evenness. Leaning on the first note of each run will help you maintain a steady tempo. Practice each run as a finger exercise: (1) play the run first as quarter notes, then as 8ths, and finally as 16ths; (2) then try playing the run four times perfectly in one breath. If this method of practicing is used, the etude can be of great technical benefit.

Allegro con molto ♩ = 80 - 108 (♩ = ♩)

The musical score for Concert Etude #15 is written for a single melodic line in treble clef. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Allegro con molto' and a metronome marking of ♩ = 80 - 108. The piece is in 4/4 time and consists of 19 measures. The score is divided into several systems, each containing one or more staves. The first system (measures 1-4) starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system (measures 5-8) features a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The third system (measures 9-12) includes a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The fourth system (measures 13-16) contains a piano (p) dynamic and a rubato section. The fifth system (measures 17-19) includes a ritardando (rit.) marking and a decrescendo (decresc.) marking. The piece concludes with a poco ritardando (poco rit.) marking. The score is marked with various time signatures, including 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, and 3/2. A large 'PREVIEW ONLY' watermark is overlaid diagonally across the score.

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Concert Etude #16

This etude introduces twelve-tone compositional techniques and goes a step further in rhythmic complexity. Twelve-tone writing is simply what it says: all twelve tones of the scale are present in the opening statement and are then presented in diverse variations. Because of the nature of this music, dynamics and rhythmic precision are very important. The 8th note is the basis of this entire piece and a metronome set at an 8th note = 176 should be used.

Espressivo ♩ = 176

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in treble clef. The piece is marked 'Espressivo' and has a tempo of 176 beats per minute, with the eighth note as the basic unit. The score is characterized by frequent changes in time signature and dynamics. The dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *ff* (fortissimo), with markings for *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *p subito* (piano subito). The piece includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. A large diagonal watermark reading 'Preview Only' is overlaid on the score. Measure numbers 6, 9, 15, 20, and 30 are indicated in boxes. The piece concludes with a 'declamatory' section starting at measure 30.

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Concert Etude #17

Written to challenge the more advanced student, this etude is very difficult in both rhythm and range. It is imperative to practice each measure slowly and carefully. Observe all dynamics, accents and articulations, as well as the introduction of 5/8, 3/8, and 5/16 time. The 16th-note value must remain steady when entering and departing the 5/16 measures.

Con fuoco ♩ = 144 - 184

The musical score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/8 time signature. It starts with a *ff* dynamic and includes accents. The second staff continues with a *f* dynamic and features a crescendo leading to a *ff* dynamic. The third staff includes a first ending bracket labeled '12' and features *pp*, *ff*, and *f* dynamics. The fourth staff starts with a *ff* dynamic. The fifth staff begins with a *mf* dynamic. The sixth staff includes a second ending bracket labeled '21' and features *f*, *ff*, and *f* dynamics. The seventh staff features *ff* and *pp* dynamics. The eighth staff includes time signature changes to 5/16 and 3/8, and features a *f* dynamic. A large 'Preview Only' watermark is overlaid diagonally across the score.

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About The Composer & Editor

Nathan Ivan Kaplan

Nathan Ivan Kaplan studied with American composers Nicholas Flagello and Ludmila Ulehla, and received his Bachelor of Music degree in composition from the Manhattan School of Music. His compositions have received both public and critical acclaim, and have been performed at concerts throughout the country.

Kaplan's *Eighteen Concert Etudes for Unaccompanied Clarinet* were written in 1969-1970 in collaboration with Lawrence Sobol, who played the premier performance at Carnegie Recital Hall on April 4, 1970. Peter G. Davis of The New York Times stated, "Mr. Kaplan composes in an unabashed 19th century romantic vein ... The unaccompanied pieces, written especially for Mr. Sobol, (exploiting) the clarinetist's remarkably large and luscious toned low chalumeau register." Robert Sherman of The New York Times hailed Kaplan's music as "rather Barber-like in its deeply expressive lyricism." This new edition of his unaccompanied clarinet solos is dedicated to Mr. Kaplan's memory.



Lawrence Sobol

Lawrence Sobol, clarinetist, educator and author has been hailed by The New York Times as "an intrepid musical explorer." The winner of a Ford Foundation grant (1964-1965) to study at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, he later received degrees from the Manhattan School of Music. Mr. Sobol studied clarinet with David Weber, Harold Wright, Ignatius Gennusa, Herbert Blayman and Rudolph Jettel.

He has performed extensively throughout America and Europe as soloist with orchestra, in recital and in chamber music programs. For over four decades Mr. Sobol has recorded and collaborated with America's leading composers, including Virgil Thomson, David Diamond, Roy Harris, Karel Husa, Ned Rorem, Michael Colgrass, William Schuman, Alan Hovhaness and Ezra Laderman, among others. Alan Hovhaness has said, "Lawrence Sobol is not only an outstanding artist on the clarinet, but also a remarkable musician ... He has great vitality and profound expressiveness."

Mr. Sobol has recorded for New World Records, Citadel, Klavier, Crystal, Kent West, Sine Qua Non, Poseidon, Grenadilla, Orion, Peters International Records and Elysium Recordings. His many recordings are heard worldwide, and he has produced more than 300 concerts including productions featuring Ornette Coleman and The Prime Time Band, Jessye Norman, and performances and recordings with Richie Havens, Luciano Pavarotti, Judith Raskin, William Warfield and Richard Tucker. In 2001 Mr. Sobol received the VH-1/MTV Lifetime Achievement Award and has recently recorded *Monochrome III* by Peter Schickele along with Stanley and Naomi Drucker.

Mr. Sobol's commitment to music education has been long standing. He has taught at the Smithtown (NY) Schools, and has served as Associate Professor of Clarinet at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College, CUNY and SUNY at Purchase. He has also lectured and performed at many of America's leading colleges and universities including Purdue University, Peabody Conservatory, Cornell University, SUNY Potsdam and the University of Miami. Presently Mr. Sobol is active as a clinician and consultant, and also mentors clarinetists in his Huntington, New York studio.

Veteran New York Times critic Theodore Strongin summed up Mr. Sobol's artistry: "Sobol's technique doesn't need mentioning, so smooth and effortless is his playing. What stands out with him is the extremely minute, concentrated and sensitive nature of his musical thought. You can almost touch it, it's so strong."

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