

# **Freedom From Happiness**

## **A Musical Exploration of Divination**

Scientists and athletes are doing the same thing. And they're not the only ones. They are but shining examples of the perfection we seek: that happiness that's always just slightly out of reach. We try not to make mistakes and we idolize those who are extraordinarily skillful. In music too we admire those who play "well".

As a mystic I wanted to find a way to create a piece that might be performed by wonderfully capable piano players, the best I could find, but where the piece would, by its design, make it impossible for the great skill achieved by the performer to have any effect whatsoever on the performance. Yet I wanted the piece to feature the beauty of that particular pianist's playing; I wanted it to feature the luck of the individual performer, while relegating skill to the background.

Contrary to what one tends to assume, noise, randomness or chance and luck are not the same thing. In fact they are almost unrelated: randomness and determinism are opposites, for example, but luck has no problem infiltrating even the most strictly deterministic process. Indeed that's why science has such a hard time even admitting the fact of luck: it frustrates all attempts to separate oneself from it. The fact that one can objectify noise, randomness or chance though is what enables that to be used as a kind of screen on which to view luck. This is often exploited in divination, and in **Freedom From Happiness** as well.

## **How it Works**

The idea is to divide the keys of a piano into groups, then to use a simple algorithm to generate one sequence of chords each of which contains a random selection of notes, but always half of the notes in that group, meanwhile generating a second sequence of chords where each chord is made up of the notes from that group that are not present in the corresponding chord in the first sequence. This is simpler than it might sound. For example if we choose a group of notes like say C, D, E, F, G, A, B and another C and then we run this algorithm it might happen that for the first pair of chords it outputs, one chord might consist of the notes C, D, F, and B, in which case the other chord would necessarily consist of the notes E, G, A and the other C. Simple. For the next pair of chords the notes in each chord would probably be different (because they are chosen randomly) but they'll always compliment such that all of the notes in that particular group are represented. In other words the score is seemingly pointless, because no matter how the notes are allocated the effect when the two chords are played at the same time is that exactly all of the notes in that group are played; the only thing that changes from chord pair to chord pair is which notes from a given group happen to be in which chord.

If we divide the entire piano keyboard into groups like that such that every note of the keyboard is included once in a group, and if (at least hypothetically) there could be several piano players performing together this piece on a single piano, then the effect would be that they would, for each combination of all of the corresponding chords, be playing exactly all of the notes on the piano. If we were to sequence these chords in a score and ask the performers to play one chord every six seconds then every six seconds all of the notes of the piano are going to be played, and the only thing that's going to change is which performer happens to be playing exactly which notes in a given measure.

The above short description conveys the basic idea in this piece. Add to that the fact that the groups of notes--their position on the keyboard and the number of notes they contain--are chosen such that the chords are "easy to play," even for a not-very-skilled performer; for a skilled pianist to play the piece is almost trivially simple (that's by intention: this piece is not about trying to induce "mistakes" by inventing a difficult task).

If the piece were to be performed by a machine (or a "perfect" human) then every six seconds exactly all of the notes on the piano would be played in exactly the same way, without any variation. The celebration of luck is introduced by the following trick: as it happens, the invention of the piano's "action" necessitated the sacrifice of parts of the dynamic range of the instrument. Over much of the range from soft to loud the volume of a given note is easy to control, but at very low volume it is virtually impossible to control, no matter how skilled a performer might be. I can imagine that over the centuries mechanical geniuses have managed to extend the "usable" dynamic range of the piano. This is fortunate, because a side effect is that at extremely low volume achieving control of the action is basically impossible. The best piano players I've ever met (and I think I've met some amazing piano players) have confirmed that this is so; it's never necessary to force anything to achieve this unpredictability. So, the last two details in this explanation are: one, that the piece is to be played at a volume that's low enough that only a small percentage of the notes that are "played" even produce any sound; the other is that the performers should not use any sort of mechanical time keeping device to measure "six seconds" (a human feels "six seconds" very differently from how a machine measures that, and, whether the piece is performed by multiple humans or by a single pianist in a multi-track recording, the tendency is for time to be pretty flexible).

### **Special Instructions to the Performers**

1. Please play the piece *extremely* softly, so softly that only a small percentage of the notes played even produce a sound. Exactly what percentage of the notes should sound is not fixed though; perhaps 1 to 2 percent, perhaps more, perhaps less.
2. Please don't use any sort of mechanical time keeping device, and please do not refer to other performers or try to coordinate where you are in the piece with where you think they might be.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 21-33 +2 Part I

Transposed +2 octaves; play this part 2 octaves below where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 21 23 24 26 28 29 31 33 (where note 60 = middle C).

The musical score consists of six staves of music, each starting with a bass clef. The first staff begins with a dotted quarter note followed by a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 20$ . The subsequent staves are numbered 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50, indicating measures. Each staff contains a series of eighth-note chords, primarily consisting of a root note and a third. The notes are consistently spaced at one-half note intervals across all staves.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 21-33 +2 Part II

Transposed +2 octaves; play this part 2 octaves below where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 21 23 24 26 28 29 31 33 (where note 60 = middle C).

$\text{♩} = 20$

A musical staff in 2/4 time. The key signature is G major (no sharps or flats). The pattern consists of an eighth note followed by a rest, then a G major chord (G-B-D) sustained for the remainder of the measure. This pattern repeats throughout the piece.

10

A musical staff in 2/4 time. The key signature is G major (no sharps or flats). The pattern consists of an eighth note followed by a rest, then a G major chord (G-B-D) sustained for the remainder of the measure. This pattern repeats throughout the piece, starting at measure 10.

20

A musical staff in 2/4 time. The key signature is G major (no sharps or flats). The pattern consists of an eighth note followed by a rest, then a G major chord (G-B-D) sustained for the remainder of the measure. This pattern repeats throughout the piece, starting at measure 20.

31

A musical staff in 2/4 time. The key signature is G major (no sharps or flats). The pattern consists of an eighth note followed by a rest, then a G major chord (G-B-D) sustained for the remainder of the measure. This pattern repeats throughout the piece, starting at measure 31.

41

A musical staff in 2/4 time. The key signature is G major (no sharps or flats). The pattern consists of an eighth note followed by a rest, then a G major chord (G-B-D) sustained for the remainder of the measure. This pattern repeats throughout the piece, starting at measure 41.

51

A musical staff in 2/4 time. The key signature is G major (no sharps or flats). The pattern consists of an eighth note followed by a rest, then a G major chord (G-B-D) sustained for the remainder of the measure. This pattern repeats throughout the piece, starting at measure 51.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 35-47 +1 Part I

Transposed +1 octave; play this part 1 octave below where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 35 36 38 40 41 43 45 47 (where note 60 = middle C).

The musical score consists of five staves of bass clef music. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 20$ . The subsequent staves are numbered 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50, indicating measure counts. Each staff contains a series of eighth-note chords. The chords are composed of notes from the set {35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 43, 45, 47}, which correspond to the notes C, D, E, G, A, B, D, and F respectively, based on the note number 60 = middle C.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 35-47 +1 Part II

Transposed +1 octave; play this part 1 octave below where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 35 36 38 40 41 43 45 47 (where note 60 = middle C).

The musical score for Part II, C 35-47 +1, is presented in five staves of bass clef music. The tempo is set at quarter note = 20. The music is composed of eighth-note chords. Measure numbers 10, 20, 30, 41, and 51 are marked above the staves. The score consists of the following measures:

- Measure 10: Bass clef, common time. Chords: G7, C7, F7, B7, E7, A7, D7, G7, C7, F7.
- Measure 20: Bass clef, common time. Chords: G7, C7, F7, B7, E7, A7, D7, G7, C7, F7.
- Measure 30: Bass clef, common time. Chords: G7, C7, F7, B7, E7, A7, D7, G7, C7, F7.
- Measure 41: Bass clef, common time. Chords: G7, C7, F7, B7, E7, A7, D7, G7, C7, F7.
- Measure 51: Bass clef, common time. Chords: G7, C7, F7, B7, E7, A7, D7, G7, C7, F7.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 48-62 +0 Part I

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 48 50 52 55 57 59 60 62 (where note 60 = middle C).

The musical score consists of eight staves of music, each starting with a bass clef. The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 20. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The notes are represented by small black dots on the staff, indicating the pitch and duration of each note. The score is designed to be played on a single instrument, likely a keyboard or synthesizer, where the notes correspond to specific keys or buttons.

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# Freedom From Happiness

## C 48-62 +0 Part II

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 48 50 52 55 57 59 60 62 (where note 60 = middle C).

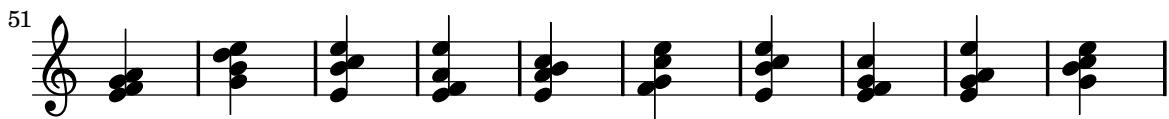
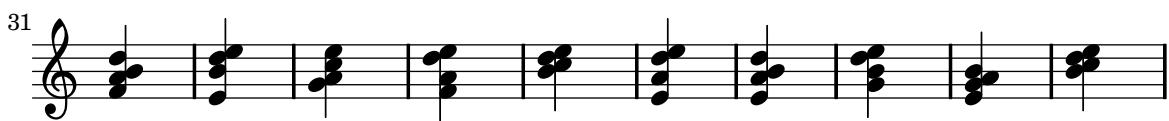
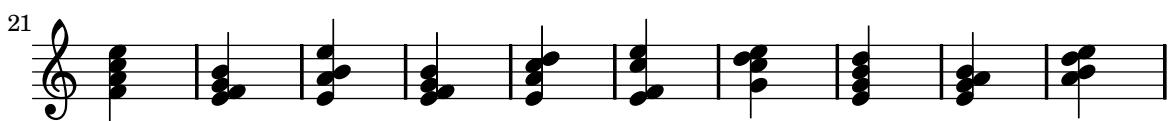
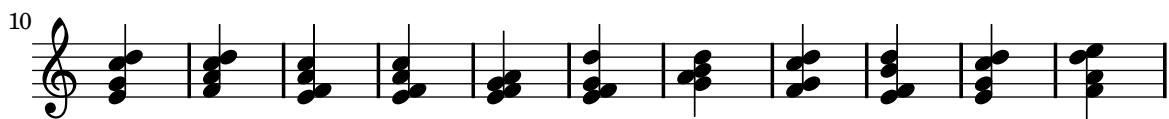
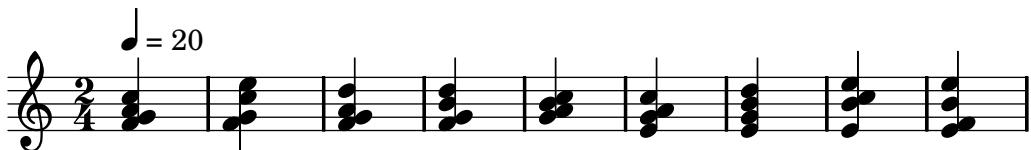
The musical score consists of eight staves of music, each starting with a bass clef. The tempo is indicated as  $\text{♩} = 20$ . The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. Measure numbers 10, 20, 31, 41, and 51 are explicitly marked above their respective staves. The notes are represented by vertical stems with small horizontal dashes, indicating a rhythmic value of eighth notes. The music is composed of eighth-note chords, primarily consisting of three notes per chord. The notes are distributed across the bass clef staff, with some notes appearing on the middle line and others on the spaces between the lines.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 64-76 +0 Part I

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 64 65 67 69 71 72 74 76 (where note 60 = middle C).



# **Freedom From Happiness**

C 64-76 +0 Part II

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 64 65 67 69 71 72 74 76 (where note 60 = middle C).

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# Freedom From Happiness

## C 79-93 -1 Part I

Transposed -1 octave; play this part 1 octave above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 79 81 83 84 86 88 91 93 (where note 60 = middle C).

The sheet music consists of five staves of musical notation, each starting with a treble clef and a common time signature (indicated by a 'C'). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 20. The music is composed of eighth-note chords. The first staff begins with a chord of G major (B, D, G). The subsequent staves show a repeating pattern of chords: G major (B, D, G), A major (C, E, A), and B major (D, F#, A). The staves are numbered 10, 20, 30, and 40 respectively, indicating the measure count. The notation is transposed one octave below the original pitch.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 79-93 -1 Part II

Transposed -1 octave; play this part 1 octave above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 79 81 83 84 86 88 91 93 (where note 60 = middle C).

The musical score consists of eight staves of music, each starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is 2/4 throughout. The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 20. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. Measure numbers are provided at the beginning of each staff: 10, 20, 31, and 41 for the first four staves, and 51 for the last four staves. The music is composed of eighth-note chords, primarily consisting of F# major (F#-A#-C#) and its inversions. The notes are represented by stems pointing upwards, indicating they are played one octave higher than written.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C 95-108 -2 Part I

Transposed -2 octaves; play this part 2 octaves above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 95 96 98 100 103 105 107 108 (where note 60 = middle C).

The sheet music consists of six staves of musical notation. Each staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (indicated by a '4'). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 20. The music is composed of eighth-note chords. The first staff starts with a C major chord (C, E, G) followed by a G major chord (G, B, D). Subsequent chords include A major (A, C#, E), F# major (F#, A, C#), D major (D, F#, A), B major (B, D, F#), G major (G, B, D), E major (E, G, B), and C major (C, E, G). The second staff continues with the same sequence of chords. The third staff begins with a G major chord followed by an E major chord. The fourth staff begins with a D major chord followed by a B major chord. The fifth staff begins with an A major chord followed by a F# major chord. The sixth staff concludes with a C major chord. Measure numbers 10, 20, 30, and 40 are placed at the beginning of the second, third, fourth, and fifth staves respectively.

# **Freedom From Happiness**

## **C 95-108 -2 Part II**

Transposed -2 octaves; play this part 2 octaves above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 95 96 98 100 103 105 107 108 (where note 60 = middle C).

The sheet music consists of six staves of musical notation. Staff 1 (measures 1-9) starts with a tempo of  $\text{♩} = 20$ . Staff 2 (measures 10-18) and Staff 3 (measures 19-27) continue the pattern. Staff 4 (measures 28-36) and Staff 5 (measures 37-45) follow. Staff 6 (measures 46-54) concludes the piece. The music is written in common time (indicated by '4') and uses a treble clef. The notes are represented by vertical stems with small horizontal dashes indicating pitch. The first staff begins with a note at the top of the staff, while subsequent staves begin with notes lower down.

# Freedom From Happiness

C# 22-39 +1 Part I

Transposed +1 octave; play this part 1 octave below where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 22 25 27 30 32 34 37 39 (where note 60 = middle C).

The musical score consists of five staves of music for a bass clef instrument. The key signature is C# major (two sharps). The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 20. The music is in common time (indicated by '2'). The first staff begins at measure 20, showing a series of eighth-note chords. Subsequent staves begin at measures 10, 21, 31, 41, and 51, each continuing the pattern of eighth-note chords. The notes are represented by various symbols such as open circles, solid dots, and stems, creating a unique visual texture.

# Freedom From Happiness

C# 22-39 +1 Part II

Transposed +1 octave; play this part 1 octave below where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 22 25 27 30 32 34 37 39 (where note 60 = middle C).

$\text{♩} = 20$

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# Freedom From Happiness

C# 42-56 +0 Part I

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 42 44 46 49 51 53 54 56 (where note 60 = middle C).

The musical score consists of eight staves of bass clef music. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 20. Measure numbers 1, 9, 18, 26, 34, 43, and 52 are explicitly labeled. The score consists of measures 1 through 56, with measure numbers 1, 9, 18, 26, 34, 43, and 52 explicitly labeled. The score consists of measures 1 through 56, with measure numbers 1, 9, 18, 26, 34, 43, and 52 explicitly labeled.

# Freedom From Happiness

C# 42-56 +0 Part II

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 42 44 46 49 51 53 54 56 (where note 60 = middle C).

$\text{♩} = 20$

The musical score consists of eight staves of bass clef music. The first staff begins with a quarter note followed by a series of eighth notes and rests. Subsequent staves continue this pattern of eighth notes and rests, with some variations in the note heads (e.g., open circles, solid dots). Measure numbers 8, 17, 26, 35, 44, and 53 are indicated above the staves. The key signature is C# major (two sharps), and the time signature is 2/4.

# Freedom From Happiness

C# 58-75 +0 Part I

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 58 61 63 66 68 70 73 75 (where note 60 = middle C).

The sheet music is composed of five staves of musical notation. The key signature is one sharp (G major). The time signature is common time (indicated by '4'). The tempo is quarter note = 20. The notes are primarily quarter notes and eighth notes, forming chords and simple melodic patterns. Measure numbers 1 through 50 are indicated at the beginning of each staff.

# Freedom From Happiness

C# 58-75 +0 Part II

Not transposed; play this part where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 58 61 63 66 68 70 73 75 (where note 60 = middle C).

The sheet music displays six staves of musical notation. Each staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps (G major), and a common time signature (indicated by a '2'). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 20. The music consists entirely of chords, primarily consisting of three notes per chord. The first staff (measures 10-15) shows a sequence of chords: G major, A major, B major, C major, D major, E major, F major, and G major. The subsequent staves (measures 21-51) continue this pattern of chords, maintaining the same sequence and structure. Measure numbers 10, 21, 31, 41, and 51 are printed above their respective staves.

# Freedom From Happiness

## C# 77-90 -1 Part I

Transposed -1 octave; play this part 1 octave above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 77 78 80 82 85 87 89 90 (where note 60 = middle C).

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# Freedom From Happiness

## C# 77-90 -1 Part II

Transposed -1 octave; play this part 1 octave above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 77 78 80 82 85 87 89 90 (where note 60 = middle C).

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# Freedom From Happiness

## C# 92-106 -2 Part I

Transposed -2 octaves; play this part 2 octaves above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 92 94 97 99 101 102 104 106 (where note 60 = middle C).

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# Freedom From Happiness

## C# 92-106 -2 Part II

Transposed -2 octaves; play this part 2 octaves above where it is here shown.

Generated from MIDI note numbers: 92 94 97 99 101 102 104 106 (where note 60 = middle C).

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