

**Jason Freeman**

**Just Tristan (2009)**

**for any number of pianos**

### **Program Note:**

Inspired by the tradition of open-form musical scores, I composed *Just Tristan* as a collection of fifteen chords, each a different voicing of pitches found in Wagner's "Tristan" chord. The chords are visually linked on the score by arrows. In performance, pianists follow those arrows to jump from chord to chord and create a unique version of the piece.

I composed *Just Tristan* at the request of Akademie Schloss Solitude, for a concert celebrating the Akademie's twentieth anniversary. My thanks to Schloss Solitude and to Jean-Baptiste Joly for supporting and nurturing my artistic and professional development as a composer.

Jason Freeman (<http://www.jasonfreeman.net>) studied composition at Yale University and Columbia University, and he was a fellow at Akademie Schloss Solitude between 2003 and 2005. He is currently an assistant professor in the music department at Georgia Tech in Atlanta.

### **Instrumentation:**

*Just Tristan* can be performed with any number of pianos (one pianist per piano). Solo piano, piano duo, or one hundred pianos are all possibilities.

(For the performance at Schloss Solitude: two pianos.)

### **Duration:**

Duration is entirely up to you.

(For the performance at Schloss Solitude: two minutes.)

### **Performance notes:**

- **Navigation:** Begin and end your performance on the original "Tristan" chord (the top, centered, boldfaced box). Use the arrows to move from one chord to the next. Play each chord just once before moving on to another one. Visit each chord as many times as you like. (Repeated alternations between two connected chords are also fine.)

- **Timing:** The duration of each chord is entirely up to you. Anything between a fraction of a second and many seconds is fine. The degree to which you play metrically or ametrically or maintain any sense of a beat is entirely up to you.
- **Pedaling:** I encourage you to apply pedal liberally, but it is really up to you.
- **Expression:** Since I composed the chords without knowing the order in which they would be performed, please treat the notation as a starting point, not as a strict document. Use your musical intuition with regard to dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and other expressive elements. There are no expressive markings in the score because I expect you to make such decisions yourself. I especially encourage you to shape groups of successive chords into larger-scale musical gestures and phrases. You may also wish to consider a large-scale structural strategy, and it may (or may not) be helpful for you to think about this in advance.
- **Multiple pianists:** Each pianist should perform independently from the same score. Do not coordinate movement through the score with the other pianist(s). Do, however, listen to the other pianists; the music they play should influence your own decisions about navigation, timing, and expression.
- **Reaching notes:** The third chord from the top in the right-hand column may be difficult for you to reach. If you cannot reach it, play the lowest note (F) as a grace note immediately preceding the other two notes.

If you have questions, please contact me via my web site (<http://www.jasonfreeman.net/contact/>). If you perform the piece, please also drop me a note. And have fun!

Jason Freeman, Atlanta, October 2, 2009

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