

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](http://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

# 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

*p*

11 *p subito*

*rit.*

*a tempo*

23 *dolce*

28 *cantare*

*f* *p*

*f* *p*

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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.



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*

*p*

*f*

12

*p*

21

*pppp*

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef. It begins with a tempo/mood marking 'Dreaming; hypnotic' and a tempo range '♩ = 84 - 96'. The piece is marked 'molto rubato'. The notation includes a chromatic scale starting on a half note 'A' (marked *p*), followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *f* (forte) and *pppp* (pianissimo). There are two measure numbers in boxes: '12' and '21'. A large, diagonal 'Preview Only' watermark is overlaid across the center of the page.

# 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

The musical score for Concert Etude #4 consists of ten staves of music. The tempo is marked 'Ma ben dolce' with a quarter note equal to 88 beats per minute. The score begins in 4/4 time, changes to 3/4 at measure 11, and returns to 4/4 at measure 27. A large 'Preview Only' watermark is diagonally across the score. Performance markings include dynamics such as *f*, *p*, *mf*, *ff*, *pp*, *cresc.*, *rit.*, *molto sostenuto*, *angular*, *dolce*, and *lyric*. Measure numbers 11, 27, and 38 are indicated in boxes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

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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

*f*

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*ff*

*mf* *mp*

*p*

*pp* *ppp* *pppp*



# 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 for Concert Etude #6 consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and 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 mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, followed by a section marked *agitato* and *ff* (fortissimo). The fourth staff continues with staccato eighth notes. The fifth staff includes a measure with a 6/4 time signature and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The sixth staff features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a series of staccato eighth notes. The seventh staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by mezzo-forte (*mf*) and forte (*f*) dynamics, and concludes 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.



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

Leggiero ♩ = 84 - 96



*mf*

*mf*

*p*

10 *solid* *f*

*poco accel.* *bravura* *tr* *ff*

17 *a tempo* *f*

*a tempo* *rit.*

27 *simplice*

*p*

# Concert Etude #8

Rhythmically, the challenge here is not so much meter change as awareness of the correct execution of the dotted 8th/16th-note pattern. Make sure that you hold the dotted 8th for its full value.

Example: Yes  
No

Molto rhythmic ♩ = 80 - 88

*f*

*ff*

*driving*

*f*

*ff*

*p subito*

*mf*

Opt.

*f*

*ff*

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# 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 for Concert Etude #9 consists of ten staves of music. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as trills (tr), accents (>), and dynamic markings (f, mf, ff, dolce, stringendo). The piece is marked 'Leggiero; happy' with a tempo of 100-108 beats per minute. The score is divided into sections by measure numbers: 10, 26, and 32. The final measure is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A large 'Preview Only' watermark is overlaid diagonally across the center of the page.

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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 (♩ = ♩)

7

16

24

34

*p*

*mf*

*f*

*ff*

*pp*

*ppp*

*cresc.*

*decresc.*

*leggiero*

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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 for Concert Etude #12 is written in treble clef and consists of 30 measures. The tempo is marked 'Jauntily' with a quarter note equal to 160-176 beats per minute. The score begins in 4/4 time, moves to 3/4, then 2/4, and continues with various other time signatures including 3/8, 6/8, and 9/8. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte), *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f subito* (sudden forte). Performance instructions include 'gracefully', 'no rit.' (no ritardando), 'canto' (singing style), and 'broadly'. Measure numbers 7, 18, and 27 are indicated in boxes. The score concludes with a final cadence in 3/4 time.

# 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

mp

mf

p

pp

ppp

10

23

30

f

mp subito

poco accel.

40

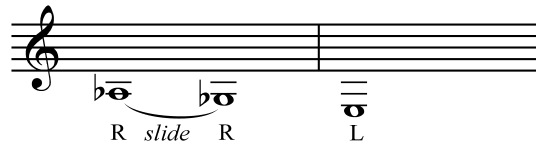
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# Concert Etude #14

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:



Steady tempo ♩ = 88 - 100

The main musical score consists of seven staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The second staff includes a forte (f) dynamic. The third staff, starting at measure 6, includes a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The fourth staff includes a piano (p) dynamic. The fifth staff, starting at measure 11, includes a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The sixth staff includes a forte (f) dynamic. The seventh staff, starting at measure 16, includes a forte (f) dynamic. The score features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A large 'Preview Only' watermark is overlaid diagonally across the center of the page.

# 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 in 6/4 time and features a variety of time signatures including 3/4, 4/4, 2/4, and 3/2. The piece is marked 'Allegro con molto' with a tempo of 80-108 beats per minute. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *decresc.* (decrescendo). Performance instructions include *rit.* (ritardando), *rubato*, and *a tempo*. The score contains several measures of complex, rapid scale-like passages, some of which are marked with a first note accent (>) to maintain tempo. Measure numbers 5, 11, 14, and 19 are indicated in boxes. The piece concludes with a *poco rit.* (poco ritardando) marking.

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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

*f* *mp* *f* *p*

6

9

*p*

*mp* *mf*

*p subito* *f* *ff*

15

20

*f* *f subito*

30 *declamatory*

*f* *ff*

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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

ff pp

f ff

pp ff f pp

ff

mf

f ff f

ff pp

f ff

32

*f*

*p*

*f*

*ff*

43

*f*

*ff*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*ff*

52

*ff*

*f*

*ff*

*mf*

57

*f*

*ff*

*mf*

*p*

*ff rit.*

The musical score consists of nine staves of music. The first staff begins at measure 32 and ends with a double bar line. The second staff continues from measure 32 and includes a 16-measure rest. The third staff continues from measure 32 and includes a 3/8 time signature change. The fourth staff begins at measure 43 and includes a 16-measure rest. The fifth staff continues from measure 43 and includes a 3/8 time signature change. The sixth staff continues from measure 43 and includes a 16-measure rest. The seventh staff begins at measure 52 and includes a 3/8 time signature change. The eighth staff continues from measure 52 and includes a 16-measure rest. The ninth staff begins at measure 57 and includes a 16-measure rest. The score concludes with a final double bar line.

# Concert Etude #18

This etude should be played with much intensity.

Agitato ♩ = 60 (♩ = 120)

The musical score for Concert Etude #18 consists of ten staves of music. The tempo is marked 'Agitato' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats (half note = 120). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes various dynamics: *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), *p* (piano), *ff* (fortissimo), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *rit.* (ritardando). The tempo changes to 'a tempo' at measure 11. The score is marked with measure numbers 7, 11, 15, and 18. The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and is characterized by its intense and dramatic nature.

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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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