

# ABOUT THE RAGTIMES

CHICKEN-PICKIN' RAG Op.28 1976

Duration: 3'

CHICKEN-PICKIN' RAG is a jolly ragtime piece, written in 1976, brought up to date to include modern funky music and various other sections. In the heyday of classic ragtime, in the late 19th century, the publicity said that "brokers forgot their cares" on hearing the music!

The piece opens with a little sentimental intro, leading into the main tune marked *Spikily*. This is followed by the next section marked *Cheekily*, and then another section marked *Funky!*. Then follows a contrasting section marked *Cantabile* - a gentle song-like passage. This is followed by a complete contrast, a hot dynamic passage marked *Freaky!*. After some contrasting passages, the piece ends with a *Freak-out!* and a final *Chuck! Chuck!*, like a chicken call.

KENTUCKY RAG Op.33 1976

Duration: 1'3

In the 'Blues Grass' county they have horse and trap races with their high-stepping, elegant horses; this atmosphere is what this rag evokes. The piece should be played not too fast (a plea cautioned by an early king of ragtime, Scott Joplin!), but prim and refined, with a sprightly bass like a dancing, high-stepping horse.

There is a lovely little hidden counter-melody in the bass in section [B]; try the left hand on its own and you will hear it. The last two bars are a typical bit of Country and Western-type scale and harmony.

PLASTIC CAKEWALK Op.14 1973

Duration: 2'30

The PLASTIC CAKEWALK is another ragtime piece brought up to date by the composer (hence the 'Plastic' in the title). A *Cakewalk* was a popular ragtime piece performed by a waiter who danced holding up a plate of cake.

This is a bright and lively piece of several contrasting sections: but there are also many blues and funky phases incorporated in the piece, which would not be present in the classic ragtime music of the day. The piece closes with a few broken fragments, and a bright ending.

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