

# Degu Sounds 2, 4, 6, 10, 15

for piano

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Edition notes:

This edition was made specifically for <http://www.jashiin.com>. No changes were made to the music. The pieces are presented in the order they were composed. The small essay that accompanied the first publication is added as a preface.

## Degu Sounds: A Note

So much program music relies on ineffective ideas. The silliest are perhaps cinematic clichés: the piano's low register for evil characters, a slow ascent from said register for anything majestic and grand, sweet harmonies for characters in love. Much better, but still ineffective are attempts at rendering extra-musical sounds in music, such as imitations of rain, thunder, or bird song transcriptions – even when used creatively, as in many Messiaen pieces. When executed, such ideas may be interesting to listen to and convey something of the sounds they represent. They surely expand the otherwise limited palette available to the composer. But because they are based on such a straightforward, simplistic idea - a copy of the surface layer of a natural phenomenon – they can't possibly achieve any considerable depth.

This newest work is my idea of what program music could be if more complex principles were applied. Our family keeps several degus - Chilean rodents known, among other things, for their extensive vocabulary of vocalizations. These piano pieces are based on degu vocalizations, but they never render any of those in a straightforward way. Actual sounds are isolated and magnified, or radically slowed down and transposed, or used as blueprints for ideas more complex than the sounds themselves. An extraneous musical vocabulary is used when necessary – limited transpositions to convey the idea of an individual degu, a certain type of large chords to convey the idea of sleep, and so on. A single "frrr" from a degu may be interpreted as a minute of all kinds of sounds. The same minute may then be interpreted as an encounter between several degus because of the nature of sound.

The result is simultaneously based heavily on degu sounds and mostly unrecognizable as such even by those who are intimately familiar with those. Most importantly, I wanted the work to have the same quality the original sounds have: while a certain group of sounds may be identified as conveying e.g. fear or a desire for grooming, the details may forever stay beyond our reach. How much information does a degu get from its conspecific's soft "warbling" sound? We don't know. How much does an isolated piano trill convey? In some pieces, we may know, but in these we hopefully don't and never will.

# Degu Sounds – No. 6

Often Stimulates Reciprocal Chittering From Conspecific and Further Nose-nose Contact or Allogrooming

♩=40?

Jashiin  
2015

Piano



5



10



Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

15



Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

20



\_\_\_\_\_

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

25

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

30

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

34

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

39

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

43

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

48

Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

52

A musical score for four measures. The first measure (52) has a whole rest in the treble clef and a quarter rest in the bass clef. The second measure (53) features a treble clef with a quarter rest, a bass clef with a quarter rest, and a melodic line in the treble clef starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, and A4, ending with a quarter note G4. The third measure (54) has a whole rest in the treble clef and a whole rest in the bass clef. The fourth measure (55) has a whole rest in the treble clef and a whole rest in the bass clef. A horizontal line is drawn below the first measure.



14

tr

tr

3

Ped.

Ped.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 14, 15, and 16. The music is in 4/4 time. Measure 14 features a treble clef with a trill (tr) on the first note and a bass clef with a trill (tr) on the second note. Measure 15 shows a treble clef with a triplet of eighth notes (3) and a bass clef with a trill (tr) on the second note. Measure 16 has a treble clef with a trill (tr) on the first note and a bass clef with a trill (tr) on the second note. Pedal markings (Ped.) are present under the first and second measures.

17

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 17, 18, and 19. The music is in 4/4 time. Measure 17 features a treble clef with a half note and a bass clef with a half note. Measure 18 has a treble clef with a half note and a bass clef with a half note. Measure 19 has a treble clef with a half note and a bass clef with a half note. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 19.

# Degu Sounds – No. 15

Use Decreases Until Pups Are Roughly Two Weeks Old

Jashiin  
2015

♩=105

Piano

*pp* T e p l o š e r s t ' .  
*p f pp ff ppp*  
Ped. Ped.

7

T e p l o š e r s t ' .  
*pp ppp pp ppp f ff*  
Ped.

13

*ppp ppp p*  
Ped. Ped.

20

*mp pp p ppp*  
Ped.



# Degu Sounds – No. 10

Warning of Immediate Agonistic Action Intended to Repel Conspecific

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2015

**Piano**

$\text{♩} = 120$

mp

*p*

*tr*

*trm*

*gliss.*

*Ped.*

7

12

19

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*trm*

*trm*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*Ped.*

*Ped.*

*Ped.*

*Ped.*

25

3

gliss.

3

tr tr

Ped.

30

tr

3

gliss.

Ped.

Ped.

35

3

tr

gliss.

gliss.

gliss.

38

gliss.

tr tr tr tr

Ped.

Ped.

# Degu Sounds – No. 4

Can Trigger Chittering, Tail Beating and Sometimes Warbling  
in Conspecifics Within Auditory Range.

Jashiin  
2015

Piano

♩=44  
*p*  
3  
3  
3  
Ped.

6  
Ped.

12  
3  
3  
Ped.

19  
3  
tr  
Ped.

26  $\text{♩} = 64$

Ped.

32

5 3 3 3

37 *gliss.*  $\text{♩} = 54$

Ped.

42

Ped. Ped. Ped.

48

Ped.

54

$\text{♩} = 64$   $\text{♩} = 54$

Ped.

59

$\text{♩} = 44$

Ped.

65

$\text{♩} = 64$

Ped.

gliss.

