

# Spain



**Artist:** Chick Corea  
**Album:** *Light as a Feather* (1973)  
**Genre:** Jazz Fusion

'Spain' is an instrumental jazz fusion piece written by composer and pianist Chick Corea. It is arguably Corea's most recognisable work and is now considered a jazz standard. The piece takes some inspiration from classical guitar composer Joaquín Rodrigo, with a direct reference to one of his guitar concertos in the beginning of the piece. The original composition featured on the album *Light as a Feather*, the second studio album to be released by Chick Corea and his band Return to Forever.

Corea was born Armando Anthony Corea in 1941. His father was a jazz trumpeter and leader of a Dixieland band in the 1930s and '40s. He introduced his son to the piano at the age of four, and by eight years old Chick Corea had begun learning the drums, which led to his well-known technique of using the piano percussively.

Corea began his music career in the 1960s, with several tours, and the recording and release of his first studio album *Tones for Joan's Bones*. Throughout his career he released 81 studio albums, participated in countless collaborations and remains a prominent figure in the world of jazz.

## Performance Notes



There is considerable harmonic and rhythmic colour in this modern jazz classic by Chick Corea, much informed by Spanish flamenco music as played by guitarists such as Paco De Lucia and Paco Pena. This exclamatory music contains single notes (the famous unison line phrases), octaves (played with a smoother, *legato* feel) and combinations of melodic passages with underlying bass notes to imply the chord changes. It is worth exploring where your picking hand interacts with the strings, from *ponticello* (near the bridge) for a bright cutting tone through to natural (over the sound hole) for a warm and bold tone. Both hands will need to be precise for note quality and rhythmic clarity; the lyrical beauty of the middle section can be highlighted by playing at a moderate volume so that the upper and lower notes (often resembling call and response style phrasing) are clear and clean. The *rasquedo* styled flourish at bar 29 and the descending string rake at bar 48 should be bold and confident. For the solo section,  $G_{maj}^7 - F\#^7$  are the main chords, and the notation shows the use of  $F\#$ -Phrygian Dominant ( $F\# - G - A\# - B - C\# - D - E$ ). This is an ideal mode to use, encouraging phrases that are shaped by semitone drops such as  $G - F\#$  and  $B - A\#$ . Aim to use this mode on the improvised repeat for longer scalic passages alongside chord tones (*i.e.*, notes derived from the chord) to get to the heart of each chord's sound.

# On Sunday (Dance)

Frantz Casseus

Adagio cantabile

1 4 2 3 4 3 2 4

CII

CII

CIV CIII

CVII

CIX

CVII

CII

CIV

CII

1. Fin

2.

*m* *a* *m*

*p* *i* *p* *i* *p*

CVII

CIII

# Technical Exercises

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There are three groups of technical exercises at Grade 8:

- Group A: Scales
- Group B: Arpeggios & Broken Chords
- Group C: Technical Studies

For groups A and B, the examiner will request a selection from each group to be performed. For group C, you may choose **one** technical study to perform from the three listed in the grade book.

## Group A: Scales

**All Scales** must be played:

- Unaccompanied
- At a minimum tempo of ♩=144
- Ascending and descending across the number of octaves as shown for each example
- *Tirando* or *apoyando* (examiner choice – candidates must prepare for both technical requirements)
- Fingers only

### Two-octave scales:

Root 6 and root 5 scales need to be prepared in any key

Chromatic scale is played starting on G only

### Three-octave scales:

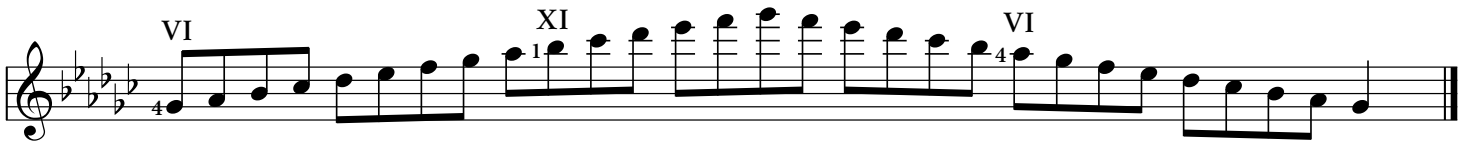
Need to be prepared in the keys E-G chromatically.

### Two-Octave Scales

Major scale, root 6th, two octaves (F# major shown)



Major scale, root 5th, two octaves (G $\flat$  major shown)



# General Musicianship Questions

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In this part of the exam you will be asked five questions, divided between two topics as detailed below.

## Music Knowledge

At Grade 8 you will be asked four questions based on your choice of a piece of music that you have played in the exam.

The questions will be drawn from the following:

- explain the meaning of any tempo markings found on your score
- identify the key signature and give the relative major or minor key
- identify any pitches in a melodic sequence found on your score, as chosen by the examiner
- identify rhythmic values (notes and/or rests) from any rhythmic values found on your score, as chosen by the examiner.
- identify and explain any expressive markings in your piece
- briefly explain and demonstrate one stylistic and one technical consideration in preparation and performance of the chosen piece

## General Music and Instrument Knowledge

At Grade 8 you will be asked to do one of the following:

- state the chord progressions of any of the following cadences in the keys of C, D, F or G major, as chosen by the examiner: perfect, imperfect, plagal or deceptive
- explain how to play artificial harmonics

*(Note: Demonstrations are acceptable to support an explanation, but must have the spoken understanding).*