Scott Joplin Essay, Research Paper

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EXTRA CREDIT

In the late 1890?s ; a craze for a new kind of music called ragtime swept the

country off it?s feet. Instant popularity of ragtime increased before the turn of the century.

By 1910, the ?ragtime? mania reached its peak in all elements of music: popular dance,

theater, and movie music.

Scott Joplin was a young black man that mastered and polish this subtle art.

Born in Texarkana, Texas on November 29, 1868, Scott became facinated with the piano

at an early age and was mentored by a old german teacher that took him in as a pupil.

Scott?s style of piano playing stress his smooth singing tone and subtle sense of rhythm.

Scott has the tendency to turn melodic lines into delicate and but simple notes. Generally

all of his pieces share the customary ragtime layout and composition of a pair of

contrasting lines, each repeated and followed by the return to the first line, then a new

section consisting of two or three repeated lines emerge and is usually subdominant.

In Scott?s piece the ?Magnetic Rag?. The reappearance of the orginal theme at the

close of the piece, shares a shocking likeness to Beethoven?s famous reoccuring ?I am

Death Theme?. In the ?Magnetic Rag?, the return of the opening theme at the end of the

piece creates a rondo-like structure with a scheme ABCDA, with the outer A section and

the central C section stands in tonal harmony. This can be compared to his other famous

pieces of work ?Maple Leaf Rag? and ?The Entertainer? which all exercise the

reappearing theme that shows a tendency to round out by always returning to the home

key.

?Magnetic Rag? was the last piece that Scott completed. It was subtitled :

syncopation classiques because of his wonderful blend of syncopation on every up-beat

and mad-cow improvisations tailored to sound like European dance music that influenced

early ragtime.