

Iron City Shuffle

Music by John Dandrea

Piano solo

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I composed this piano solo as a sort-of appreciation for my brother Tom, who lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for many years. Although he has moved to Florida due to his job requirements, he lived in Pitt for nearly 28 years. He and I will always have our hearts and souls in that great “steel city” of Pittsburgh all our lives.

Although I only had a few occasions to travel to Pittsburgh in visits to my brother and his wife, they were always memorable and wonderful visits and the times spent there were enough for me to feel the heartbeat of the city, its attitude and its pride. More than the home of the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Pirates, there’s a definite feeling of unity and pride by those that live in Pitt and an infectious “can do” feeling, tempered by a more laid-back lifestyle and attitude than where I live, in the Baltimore-DC area in Maryland.

The piano solo I came up with for this dedication wasn’t contrived or consciously constructed – it was more like I felt the heartbeat and rhythm of this wonderful city and of the feeling I had every time I was with my brother on an always-too-short visit to his home in Pittsburgh. It just came out – quite easily and naturally, while I wasn’t even thinking of creating a song – as it often goes.

The song has a shuffle sort of beat, a stepping of the keys in a relaxed kind of walk, like the feeling of shuffling out to the concession stand at the Stadium – once the incredible Three Rivers Stadium, and now at the PNC Park - in between innings for some beer and hot dogs – and a feeling that life just couldn’t get any better than being there, taking time out from life’s stresses and just enjoying living. It’s a definite attitude, and an ability to relax that some folks just don’t “get”.

This song, while just an instrumental, is filled with meaning for me, and a deep appreciation and thank-you to my brother and his wife for all those wonderful times that I was given a glimpse of the world in which they lived. It was a different world for me to see and to experience – and my life was made better for having been able to have that experience. Thanks, Tom!

~ John