

2018.3

Sebastian Adams

For violin and cello

duration: c. 5 mins [indeterminate]

Commissioned by Music Network

2018.3 was commissioned by Music Network for performance by Yury Revich and Benedict Kloeckner

Duration: indeterminate / approx. 5 minutes

Instrumentation: violin, violoncello

Scordatura: both instruments play with their lower two strings tuned down, as described below. The score is provided in two ways: (a) sounding pitch (b) scordatura notation [notes on the detuned strings are written with the note that is to be fingered, as if the strings are tuned conventionally]

Performance Notes:

- The sound should always be senza vibrato. Virtually all expression should be with the right hand.
- viola da gamba should be the sonic reference: plain, delicate, subtle, rich in harmonic content
- Both players should seek interactions between their notes (and between theirs and the other players') at all times.
- Pure tuning (i.e. flattened major thirds) should be aimed for throughout.

Freedom in the score:

- The score is only a guide: it can be altered. The piece is virtually an improvisation, and writing it down inevitably compromises by turning it into a fixed structure.
- Rhythm and tempo should be treated as utterly free.
- Pitch may also be inflected/ornamented throughout (although a fairly plain playing style is effective and appropriate).
- If wished, melodies and sections can also be altered by extending, repeating or contracting them. [this last aspect is optional – the melody can be left as written!]
- Although rhythm is free, there are certain places where the two players must be in time/together, because the rhythm/timing is either motivically or structurally important. These are indicated in two ways:
 - (a) with a dashed line connecting both players' notes
 - (b) with a marking "this bar in strict time"
- Attention should be paid to the space, audience and atmosphere when deciding the speed, intensity and duration of gestures in the piece.
- A performance of this work should attempt to combine the various rules and freedoms of the score and performance notes with the players' own musical sensibilities.
- Dynamics are generally not specified and are at the discretion of the performers. However, an overall arc from quiet to loud and back is obviously sensible.

Key:

∞ - bars with an infinity sign between the two staves can last as long as the players wish [generally a long time]

vertical dashed lines – sync point (play this chord perfectly together)

comma – silent pause [length at player's discretion, drone can be paused or kept sounding as wished]

"-14" "0" etc. – these indicate deviations from Equally Tempered tuning, in cents. -14 is the deviation of a pure major third from equal temperament.

Scordatura:



Slow - Tempo Not Remotely Strict

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$

VIOLIN: Repeat chord with rhythm ♩.♩.♩ or ♩.♩ or similar [any uneven, pulsing rhythm], altering rhythm and speed freely, and without respect to any meter. ensure a resonant and undying sound, blending the attack of each note with the death of the previous one.

Violin tuning:
F#3 C#4 D4 E5
Violino

Cello tuning:
A1, F2, D3, A3
Violoncello

As before - continue seamlessly

emerge slowly from nothing - make your sound as imperceptible for as long as you dare, and at the peak of volume, your sound should sit within the violin sound.

Notated rhythms in this melody are a guide only to relative duration of notes [i.e. a crotchet beside a minim should be shorter than the minim. It does NOT need to be the same length as a crotchet a few notes later].

continue to sound this C# at all times, unless considered impractical. Allow its strength to vary - it does not need to be consistent with the melody note.

[violin continues A + C# until its next marking]

Cease sounding low C#

[Sound low C# again].

Do not time your notes with cello crotchets

passionate

rhythm approximate - even notes, marked articulation

keep repeating

Repeat chord with rhythm ♩.♩.♩ or ♩.♩ or similar [any uneven, pulsing rhythm].

Segue from playing melody into exploring interactions between your chord and the cello chord

BOTH: Repeat chord with any uneven, pulsing rhythm. Interact with the other player, but do not synchronise

sim. (uneven rhythms)

18

Vln.

Vc.

spend as long as you wish here.

rhythm approximate

keep repeating

rhythm approx.

keep repeating

21

Vln.

Vc.

this bar in strict rhythm

3

BOTH: as b. 19

BOTH: as b. 20

this bar in strict rhythm

3

3

this bar in strict rhythm

3

3

25

Vln.

Vc.

BOTH: strict rhythm until further notice
[allow tempo to push forwards, though]

f wild

f wild

27

Vln.

Vc.

15

16

15

16

29

Vln.

Vc.

16

3

16

4

16

4

32

Vln.

Vc.

7

8

7

8

REPEAT OVER AND OVER
timing ad lib. - move from
measured notes to tremolo

34

Vln.

Vc.

cut off
sharply

ff

ff

3

∞

37

Vln.

Vc.

∞

gradually work this motif into a climax and then reduce it until only the low A remains. Vary the length and quality of each repetition. The cello should lead here, with the violin filling out the upper range of the cellist's chord. The violin should only play on the upper notes of the cellist's chords. [this means they should gradually cease playing in this bar]

18/4

18/4

38

Vc.

18/4

When only the low A remains, slow down, making very powerful drags on the low A.

After a while, accelerate to trem. with extreme intensity.

3

Once trem. gradually move sul pont. and bring out more and more upper partials. (ascending through a series of partials)

39

Vln.

Vc.

∞

emerge slowly from nothing - make your sound imperceptible for as long as you dare, and at the peak of volume, your sound should sit within the cello sound.

p

Now gradually slow down and diminuendo until you are playing very long, quiet bows. Still emphasise upper partials completely.

Diminuendo further as the violin note becomes clearly audible - drop to nothing roughly when the violin plays A.

40

Vln.

Vc.

∞

Without a new attack, add the A to the C#. Repeat this chord over and over, in slow, quiet, even, peaceful pulses. Once the cello starts playing, focus on interactions with their chord but try not to play in sync with them.

-14
0

p

Allow the first violin third to bloom, and then enter. Repeat this chord over and over, in slow, quiet, even, peaceful pulses. Focus on interactions with the violin chord but try not to play in sync with them.

-14
0

p

BOTH: To finish the piece, lose momentum. Rather than a definite end point, try to reach a place where the music inevitably ceases through atrophy.

∞

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Vc.

cut off sharply

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REPEAT OVER AND OVER
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