



String Trio (2012)

for violin, viola and violoncello

Nigel Morgan

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About the music

In my work for solo piano *The White Light of Wonder* I developed a way of creating sequences of 4-part chords through algorithmic means. The resultant harmony was often surprising and unusual, chords being separate and independent objects rather than formed from a distinct tonality into any kind of hierarchy. Much when writing *To the Dark Unseen* for a string ensemble of 10 players later I experimented with a method of organising when and where chords could sound using a beat / space technique in which the composition of the chords on every beat changed. In this short String Trio I have brought the two devices together.

There are three distinct sections in this Trio played without a break. Both the first and the third have extensive links of ornamentation between chords. The second is a pulsating movement of iterations of chords. The harmonic sequence is identical in one and two, but in three the harmony is generated entirely from the starting chord of movements 1 and 2 to produce just eight chords that are then arranged in a series found in Franco Donatoni's String *Quartet The Heart's Eye* – 1 2 8 1 2 3 7 8 1 2 3 6 7 8 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 1 2 3 4 5 then subjected to a palindrome.

This String Trio is the first of a series of trio compositions to include Wind, Brass and Percussion ensembles. The music is dedicated to the violist and composer Simon Rowland-Jones.

String Trio

agilmente ♩ = 60

Vn. *mf* *mf* *p* *f* *dim.* *mf (dolce)* *mf*

Va. *mf* *p* *mf* *eco* *mf (dolce)* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *mf* *eco* *p* *f* *mf*

17 **A**

sub. *p* *p* *pp* *mf* *mp*

p *pp* *mp* *mf* *mf*

sub. *p* *mp* *mp* *mf*

33 **B**

p *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *eco* *mp* *mf*

mf *mf* *p* *eco* *mp* *mf*

p *mf* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf* *mp*

51 C

p *mf* *mf* *mp* *f* *f* *mp* *mf* *mp*

mf *mf* *pesante* *mf normale*

mf *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

71 D

mp *mp* *mp* *f* *p* *mf* *mp*

mp *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *p* *mf* *mf*

mf *mp* *f* *p* *f* *mf*

93

mp *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

mf *f* *mf* *mp*

f *mf* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mf*

attacca

108 *animato* ♩ = 180

Vn *mf*

Va *mf*

Vc *mf*

E

119

p *mp* *f* *mp*

p *mp* *f* *mp*

p *mp* *f* *mp*

F

131

sub. p

sub. p

G

143 **H**

mf

mf

mf

155 **I**

f

f

f

166 **J**

f

f

f

179 **K**

sub. *p* *mf* *f*

sub. *p* *mf* *f*

sub. *p* *mf*

191 **L** **M**

mf *mp*

mf *mp*

mf *mp*

204

mf *mf*

mf

mf

attacca

215 *sostenuto e dolce* ♩ = 90

Vn *p* *tasto* *mp* *P* *p* *tasto*

Va *p* *tasto* *mp* (normale) *p* *tasto*

Vc *p* *tasto* *mp* (normale) *mf* *p* *tasto*

225 *mp* *p* *mf* (normale) *pp* *mf* (normale) *pp* *mf* (normale)

236 *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

248

S

Musical score for measures 248-258. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#).
 - Measure 248: Treble staff has a half note G4. Bass staff has a half note G2. Lower Bass staff has a half note G2.
 - Measure 249: Treble staff has a half note A4. Bass staff has a half note A2. Lower Bass staff has a half note A2.
 - Measure 250: Treble staff has a half note B4. Bass staff has a half note B2. Lower Bass staff has a half note B2.
 - Measure 251: Treble staff has a half note C5. Bass staff has a half note C3. Lower Bass staff has a half note C3.
 - Measure 252: Treble staff has a half note D5. Bass staff has a half note D3. Lower Bass staff has a half note D3.
 - Measure 253: Treble staff has a half note E5. Bass staff has a half note E3. Lower Bass staff has a half note E3.
 - Measure 254: Treble staff has a half note F#5. Bass staff has a half note F#3. Lower Bass staff has a half note F#3.
 - Measure 255: Treble staff has a half note G5. Bass staff has a half note G3. Lower Bass staff has a half note G3.
 - Measure 256: Treble staff has a half note A5. Bass staff has a half note A3. Lower Bass staff has a half note A3.
 - Measure 257: Treble staff has a half note B5. Bass staff has a half note B3. Lower Bass staff has a half note B3.
 - Measure 258: Treble staff has a half note C6. Bass staff has a half note C4. Lower Bass staff has a half note C4.
 Dynamics: *f* (measures 249-251), *mp tasto* (measures 252-254), *mf* (measures 255-257), *pp* (measures 258-259).
 Performance instructions: *mp tasto* (measures 252-254), *f* (measures 255-257).
 Measure 258 contains three triplet markings over the notes G5, A5, and B5 in the Treble staff.

259

T

U

poco rit.

Musical score for measures 259-268. The score is written for three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#).
 - Measure 259: Treble staff has a half note G4. Bass staff has a half note G2. Lower Bass staff has a half note G2.
 - Measure 260: Treble staff has a half note A4. Bass staff has a half note A2. Lower Bass staff has a half note A2.
 - Measure 261: Treble staff has a half note B4. Bass staff has a half note B2. Lower Bass staff has a half note B2.
 - Measure 262: Treble staff has a half note C5. Bass staff has a half note C3. Lower Bass staff has a half note C3.
 - Measure 263: Treble staff has a half note D5. Bass staff has a half note D3. Lower Bass staff has a half note D3.
 - Measure 264: Treble staff has a half note E5. Bass staff has a half note E3. Lower Bass staff has a half note E3.
 - Measure 265: Treble staff has a half note F#5. Bass staff has a half note F#3. Lower Bass staff has a half note F#3.
 - Measure 266: Treble staff has a half note G5. Bass staff has a half note G3. Lower Bass staff has a half note G3.
 - Measure 267: Treble staff has a half note A5. Bass staff has a half note A3. Lower Bass staff has a half note A3.
 - Measure 268: Treble staff has a half note B5. Bass staff has a half note B3. Lower Bass staff has a half note B3.
 Dynamics: *ppp (pont.)* (measures 259-261), *p tasto* (measures 262-264), *senza vibr.* (measures 265-268).
 Performance instructions: *p tasto* (measures 262-264).
 The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs in all staves.