

Song

for Solo Cello

Taylor Brook
2015

Song for Solo Cello is dedicated to Anssi Karttunen. This score was written during the Summer of 2015 in Smithers, British Columbia, for a recital at the Scandinavia House in New York City, Fall 2015. This piece is part of a series of short solo cello compositions written for Mr. Karttunen by alumni of the Creative Dialogue program in Santa Fe and Helsinki.

This composition results from a collaboration with cellist Anssi Karttunen. The project began when I sent him an object that would serve as inspiration for a solo improvisation, an improvisation to form the basis for my score. From the improvisation, I drew out collections of pitches as well as some playing techniques and gestures that I then incorporated into the music. This method of working creates a dialogue between the performer and composer, encouraging a dimension of personalization. In this way, the piece represents a compositional duet.

The title, *Song*, alludes to the melodic and sung character of this composition. Mr. Karttunen's improvisation contains a generally textural and gestural character, more concerned with sound worlds and global textures than melodies and musical phrases in the traditional sense. However, I heard a great deal of melodic potential in the improvisation, which was only being hinted at, and took this as the challenge and focus of the work.

microtonal notation

The following accidental nomenclature is used:

♭ - ♯ approximately 1/4 tone flat or sharp (50 cents)

↓ - ↑ approximately 1/6 tone flat or sharp (33 cents)

♭ - ♭ - ♯ - ♯ - ♯ - ♯ approximately 1/12 tone flat or sharp (17 cents)

The microtones are most often used either to notate precise just intonation harmonies that sound relatively consonant or to notate out a gradual glissandi. After some experience working with these accidentals, I find that the quarter-tone and sixth-tone alterations constitute significant changes in pitch, while the 12th-tone alterations provide something closer to a minor shift in intonation. In the case of this score, the microtones were derived from an analysis of the improvisation on which this piece is based.

◆ / ◇ Harmonics are notated as diamond noteheads, filled in or hollow like standard noteheads.

bow placement indications:

ord. - ordinario - (use an ordinary bow position.)

s.t. - sul tasto - (Bow close to the end of the fingerboard.)

a.s.t. - alto sul tasto - (Bow over the fingerboard.)

p.s.t. - poco sul tasto - (Bow slightly towards the fingerboard from ordinario position.)

s.p. - sul ponticello - (Bow close to the bridge.)

m.s.p. - molto sul ponticello - (Bow very close to the bridge, thereby producing a harsh sound.

This technique will often silence or obscure the fundamental pitch of the string. When a number is attached to the m.s.p. indication, the player should try as much to bring out that particular overtone.)

p.s.p. - poco sul ponticello - (Bow slightly closer to the bridge than ordinario position.)

vibrato indications:

vib. - with vibrato

s. vib. - with no vibrato

m.vib. - with a lot of vibrato

Vibration indications may also be given with a visual prompt:

vib.



other indications:

harmonics with nail indicates for natural harmonic be played by pressing a right hand nail on the string so that the harmonic sounds more pure and clean than when played with flesh of the finger.

Double stops harmonics are played by the thumb on one string and the pinky or ring finger on another string.

Song for Solo Cello

for Anssi Karttunen

Taylor Brook

♩ = 56

harmonics with fingernail

III
cantabile

poco accel.

Cello

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

Vc.

a tempo *poco rit.* *a tempo*
p *pp* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *pp*

Vc.

p *mp* *p* *ppp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vc.

a tempo *accel poco a poco*
p *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vc.

(accel poco a poco) *f*

etc. (open strings on grace notes 2 octaves below where written)

Vc.

norm.
p *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *ppp* *p* *mp* *p* *poco*

Vc.

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

Vc.

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

27 Vc. *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *mf*

♩ = 63 slightly faster

31 Vc. *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *pp* *mp* *ppp*

IV III II → harm. → norm. *poco rit.* *a tempo*

34 Vc. *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *pp*

II I II 6 15^{ma} 15^{ma} II I II III IV III II

37 Vc. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* *p*

poco rit. *a tempo* *♩* = 72 slightly faster

41 Vc. *mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *f* *p*

44 Vc. *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *f*

s.t. s.p. ord. m.s.p. ord. *poco*

49 Vc. *p* *mf* *p*

a.s.t. ord.

53 Vc. *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *f* *mp*

poco accel. *♩* = 84

m.s.p. ord. s.p. ord.

59 Vc. *mf* *mp* *f* *p* *f* *mp* *p* *f* *p* *mp*

62 Vc. *p* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *ff* *mp*

65 Vc. *mf* *mp* *poco* *poco* *poco*

67 Vc. *poco* *poco* *poco* *f* *p* *mf*

70 Vc. *p* *mf* *ff* *sub. p* *mp* *ff*

74 Vc. *sub. p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *ff* *p* *mp* *f*

78 Vc. *ff* *mf* *ff* *p* *mf* *p* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

82 Vc. *mp* *f* *mp* *ff* *mp* *p* *fp* *f* *mp* *f* *ff* *mp*

86 Vc. *fp* *ff* *mp* *ff* *p* *ffp* *ff*

89 Vc. *p* *ff* *mp* *ff*

4
93

Vc.

m.vib. s.vib. vib. rit. s.vib.

p < *f* *p* < *f* *p* < *f* *p* < *f* *mf* < *ff* < *p* *pp* < *mp* < *pp* < *mp* < *pp* < *mp* < *pp*

96

Vc.

p *ff* *mf* < *ff* *mp* < *f*

doublestop non parallel harmonics

100

Vc.

mp *ff* *sub. p*

ord. s.p. ord.

103

Vc.

ff *mp* *p* < *mp* *p*

106

Vc.

ff *mf*

m.vib. s.vib.

109

Vc.

ff *f* *fff*

111

Vc.

fp *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp* *ff* *mf* < *ff*

s.p. ord.

113

Vc.

mp *f* *mp* < *p* *mp* (non cresc) *ff*

ord. II III

116

IV III IV III IV III

6 6

mp *poco* *sim.*

118

III IV III IV etc.

6

120

rit. $\text{♩} = 52$

I II III IV III II III IV III IV etc.

6 5 3 5

sempre mp *poco* *mp* *pp*

123

II III II II III

mp *p* *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *poco*

127

sempre mp *poco*

131

port. *poco accel.*

II II I II I II

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

$\text{♩} = 63$

134

II III

mp *poco* *poco*

138

Vary the placement of the strings and pressure of the bow to bring out multiphonics.

sempre mp *poco*