

SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES FOR A VIOLA RECITAL

by

Rossana Cauti

Diploma Tradizionale di Viola, Conservatorio “L. D’Annunzio”, Pescara, Italy
Postgraduate studies in Music Performance, Conservatorio di Lugano, Switzerland
Bachelor in Economics and Business, LUISS University, Rome, Italy

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By
Rossana Cauti

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Approved by:

Prof. Michael Barta, Chair

Prof. Edward Benyas

Prof. Jennifer Presar

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This research paper provides extended program notes relating to the pieces performed on Rossana Cauti Graduate Viola Recital, presented on April 21st, 2018. The performed pieces are J.S.Bach *Suite n.3 in C Major*, J.Brahms *Sonata op. 120 n.2 in E-flat Major*, B.Bartók *Viola Concerto op. 120*.

DEDICATION

When you leave for Ithaca,

may your journey be long

and full of adventures and knowledge.

Do not be afraid of Laestrigones, Cyclopes or furious Poseidon;

you won't come across them on your way

if you don't carry them in your soul,

if your soul does not put them in front of your steps.

I hope your road is long.

May there be many a summer morning,

and may ports for the first time seen

bring you great joy.

(..)

May you go to various Egyptian towns

and learn from a people with so much to teach.

Don't lose sight of Ithaca,

for that's your destination.

(..)

Don't expect Ithaca to give you many riches.

Ithaca has already given you a fine voyage;

without Ithaca you would never have parted.

Ithaca gave you everything and can give you no more.

If in the end you think that Ithaca is poor,

don't think that she has cheated you.

Because you have grown wise and lived an intense life,

and that's the meaning of Ithaca.

"Ithaca", by Konstantinos P. Kavafis

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CHAPTER 1
J.S.BACH
SIX SUITES FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO
SUITE N.3 IN C MAJOR BWV 1009
VIOLA TRANSCRIPTION – BRUNO GIURANNA

Prelude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Bourrée I
Bourrée II
Gigue

J.S.Bach composed the Six Suites for Solo Cello around 1720, while working in Cöthen as court *Kapellmeister* under the patronage of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. According to Christoph Wolff, J.S.Bach experienced ideal working conditions in the years between 1717 and 1723, which “encouraged him to pursue the musical contest for superiority”.¹ Between those, a supportive patron with strong musical background and an extremely fine instrumental ensemble, comprising the finest virtuosos, skilled enough to perform challenging music.² In addition, according to Miles Ogborn, Cöthen court featured a highly trained audience, able to appreciate aesthetic tastes in music that might appear too abstract in other cultural circumstances.³

Among the works composed in this period are the keyboard set of *15 Inventions and 15 Sinfonias* (BWV 772–801), *Well-Tempered Klavier* (BWV 846–869), the *Six Brandenburg Concertos* (BWV 1046–1051), the *Six Partitas and Sonatas for Solo Violin* (BWV 1001–1006), the *Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello* (BWV 1007–1012).

¹ Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, September 2001), 188.

² Hans T. David, Christoph Wolff and Arthur Mendel, *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, October 1999), no. 76, 86.

³ Miles Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London’s Geographies, 1680–1780*, (New York: The Guilford Press, July 1998), 78.

The *Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello* remained unpublished until 1824, and unknown until 1930. Even after publication, in fact, these works were considered practice *etudes*, rather than masterpieces for performance in the concert hall.

The Suites only gained popularity in the 1930s, as a result of the pioneering work of one man, the Spanish cellist Pablo Casals (1876-1973), who did for the Bach *Cello Suites* what Glenn Gould did for the *Goldberg Variations*.

Casals first discovered a 19th-century edition of the *Suites* in a thrift shop in Barcelona, and soon began to study and perform them in public. In 1936 he recorded Suites 1 & 2 at the Abbey Road Studios in London and by 1939 he had produced the first complete recording of the whole set.

From that moment on, Bach Cello Suites joined the cello repertoire, and Casal's recordings from the 1930 still remain a fundamental reference point for cellists performing today, together with Yo-Yo Ma's recording, awarded a Grammy in 1986.

The idea of an European Music Journey

The *Suite* was a popular form of instrumental chamber music in late Renaissance and Baroque eras, composed by a set of *idealized* dances – not to be danced anymore, but listened – originally from Italy, France, Germany, England and Spain. In a unique set of diverse mood, rhythms and characters, the *Suites* represent a treasure of European culture amalgam of Bach's time.

All six suites include four standard dances at their core:⁴

Allemande – From the French word for “German”, moderately paced in duple rhythm.

Courante – A triple meter dance, historically different in France and in Italy: here it follows the running Italian *Corrente*.

⁴ Kai Christiansen, “Earsense”, Kai Christiansen: founder of the *Chamber music exploratorium* at earsense.org, accessed March 30, 2018, <https://www.earsense.org/chamberbase/works/detail/?pkey=7920>.

Sarabande – Originally a sensuous dance of African and South American origin that made its way back to Spain. In France and Germany, the *Sarabande* assumed instead a slow character, in a triple meter and with the emphasis on the second beat. In Bach's cello suites, the *Sarabande* tends to be the deeply expressive emotional heart of the music.

Gigue – A lively dance from England, originally known as the Jig is the finale of each *Suite*, typically energetic and in a compound triple meter.

In addition to these traditional movements, Bach opens each *Suite* with a *Prelude*, an introductory movement historically used to warm up the fingers, establish the tonality of the piece, ensure the tuning of the instrument and possibly show some spontaneous virtuosity of the performer.

Finally, in the penultimate movement of each *Suite*, before the *Gigue*, Bach inserts a pair of additional “*galant*” style movements, often called with the German word “*Galanterien*”, to distinguish them from the substantial four main dances of the *Suite*.

Implied Harmony

J.S. Bach is considered the supreme master of counterpoint and polyphony in Baroque era. His exceptional ability overcomes in this work the limit of string instruments, until then limited to the production of a single note melody line. The *Six Suites* are rich polyphonic compositions, in which polyphony is either explicit, with the usage of chords, or formed by a succession of arpeggiated notes. Hearing arpeggiated notes, the listener's mind connects them into chords, and a single cellist is perceived in fact as multiple cellists, creating the illusion of simultaneous voices, each one playing within a certain range, responding and imitating the other voices.

Coherence and Variety

J.S. Bach often divided his compositions in sets and collections. For the *Six Suites*, the composer conceives a progression of complexity, intensity and length, both for the performer

and the listener. Coherence is preserved by the similar structure of each *Suite*, while the different key signatures assigned are meant to create variety and different characters between the *Suites*: some of the *Suites* are bright and exuberant, others in minor key, dark, melancholic and deeply reflective.

Listening Guide

Suite n. 3 in C Major

Prelude

An “improvisatory” quality is the most prominent characteristic of the *Preludes* of all the *Suites*: though the music is carefully written out, Bach wishes to create the effect that the performer is improvising it on the spot.⁵

The *Suite* opens with a simple descending scale, that establishes the brilliant, heroic character of the movement and defines the key for the entire *Suite*: C Major. The Key takes full advantage of the glorious resonance of the open C string on the viola, which will serve as a pedal and ring throughout the movement. From the opening scale, that remains a strong and prevalent motivic feature in the movement, Bach takes the listener to a breathless journey of continuous 16th note figures, passing through multiple key areas, utilizing pedal tones, and bringing us to a remarkable climax of chords, rests, and harmonic triumph.⁶

About halfway through the movement, arpeggios on an open G string pedal lead to the exciting heart of the movement, in which arpeggiated broken chords on four strings establish the dominant key area and maintain the improvisatory character of the movement.

The movement ends on a majestic sequence of harmonically rich chords, and unexpected, dramatic rests, and in a symmetrical repetition of the opening descending scale,

⁵ La Jolla Music Society. “Program Notes: Bach Suites for Unaccompanied Cello”, Eric Bromberger, 2016, accessed March 30, 2018, <http://ljms.org/directory/listing/program-bach-suites-for-unaccompanied-cello-i-ii>.

⁶ Stanford University, “The Cello Suites of J.S. Bach”, Christopher Costanza: cellist, 2012, accessed March 30 2018, <https://costanzabach.stanford.edu/commentary/suite-no-3-c-major>.

finally returning to C Major.

Allemande

The *Allemande*, deriving from an old dance of German origin, acquires in this *Suite* a rather light and graceful character. Fast rhythm patterns contribute to its unique character, that Bach builds from only eight rhythm patterns, varying them with incredible skills. Turns, double-stops and thirty-second notes contribute to enliven the movement. The descending C Major scale in the opening figure resembles the opening of the Prelude; as we will see, a unifying element in the piece as a whole.

Courante

Similarly to the first two movements, the *Courante* starts with a descending opening, this time a C Major arpeggio instead of a scale. Continuous eighth notes motion, and a “perpetual motion” feeling characterize this energetic and uplifting movement.

Sarabande

The *Sarabande*'s origin still remains mysterious and contradictory. Once considered lascivious and unfit for polite society, this Spanish-Latin American dance lost during Baroque some of its dance characteristics, becoming with Bach a vehicle for some of the most wonderfully expressive music in the cello suites and other works.⁷

This Sarabande opens with a rich, inviting chord in C Major. Dissonance already appears by beat 2 of the first measure, a chord leading to the dominant by the third beat of the first bar. The rhythmic structure and the dissonance create a sense of weight and focus, emphasizing the second beat of almost each bar in this movement.

The movement is clearly in four voices, and Bach masterfully uses the bass line to

⁷ Allen Winold, *Bach's Cello Suites, Volumes 1 And 2: Analyses and Explorations*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 78.

provide unity, harmonic grounding, and a sense of phrase length and shape.⁸

Bourrées

As a student in Lüneburg, J.S. Bach had the opportunity to hear and participate in performances of French dance music, and it was natural that he would incorporate it in various ways in his instrumental music.⁹ While composers of the Baroque period were establishing the basic suite form of *Allemande*, *Courante*, *Sarabande* and *Gigue*, they started experimenting with the incorporation of other movements, frequently French dance types, to bring more variety to the suite form. Each of the *Cello Suites* has a pair of dances inserted between the *Sarabande* and the *Gigue*, either *Minuets*, *Gavottes* or *Bourrées*. The *Minuet*, *Gavotte* and *Bourrées* were originally rural dances from provinces in France; they later became part of French court music.

Bourrée I and *Bourrée II* present two distinct characters: the first highly energetic and tuneful, the second, in c minor, sad and troubled in character.

Gigue

This closing movement, particularly lively and energetic, originates from popular dances in England and Ireland. Full of positive spirit and excitement, in a 3/8 meter, it is filled with conversational elements: figures that bounce between upper and lower registers, creating an exciting sense of dialogue.

⁸ Stanford University, “The Cello Suites of J.S. Bach”, Christopher Costanza: cellist, 2012, accessed March 30 2018, <https://costanzabach.stanford.edu/commentary/suite-no-3-c-major>.

⁹ Allen Winold, *Bach's Cello Suites, Volumes 1 And 2: Analyses and Explorations*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 81.

CHAPTER 2
JOHANNES BRAHMS, VIOLA SONATA IN E-FLAT MAJOR
OP. 120 No. 2

Allegro Amabile
Appassionato, ma non troppo Allegro
Andante con moto

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897), German composer and virtuoso pianist, composed the E-flat Major Sonata op. 120 No. 2, the second in a pair of sonatas which make up the Opus 120, in 1894, during a period of deep grief due to a number of bereavements. In his letters between 1877 and 1887¹⁰ he described the sadness affecting him for the loss of his closest friends, between those his old friend and Beethoven scholar Gustav Nottebohn, that Brahms assisted during his last days, even taking upon himself the trouble and expenses of his funeral¹¹. Four years before the composition of this Sonata, Brahms had decided to retire from composition¹², a decision that appears premature at the age of fifty-seven years old, but that is more understandable considering the perspective of the futility and sorrow that he must have felt.

In March 1891, while visiting the ducal Court of Meiningen, he felt instead an undeniable desire to compose again. On that occasion, Brahms was deeply impressed by the wonderful playing of Mühlfeld, the principal clarinetist of the Meiningen court¹³. He described Mühlfeld's virtuosity in a letter to Clara Schumann: "Nobody can blow the clarinet more beautifully than Herr Mühlfeld"¹⁴. With this new inspiration, Brahms abandoned his retirement plan and composed the Trio Op.114, the Clarinet Quintet Op.115, and the two

¹⁰Karl Geiringer, *Brahms, His life and Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 145-368.

¹¹ Florence May, *The Life of Johannes Brahms 2* (London: The New Temple Press, 1948), 101.

¹² Karl Geiringer, *Brahms, His life and Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 63.

¹³ Hans Neunzig, A. *Brahms* (London: Haus Publishing, translated by Mike Mitchell, 2003), 143.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 144.

Sonatas for Piano and Clarinet Op.120.

Shortly after publishing them, Brahms decided to transcribe for viola the clarinet part in all four of these works. While the rescoring of the Trio and Quintet never reached popularity, Op. 120 Viola Sonatas, which include the Sonata No.1 in f minor and the Sonata No. 2 in E-flat Major, have achieved lasting success, becoming just as standard in the viola repertoire as the clarinet version.¹⁵

The two different versions of these sonatas show Brahms' profound awareness of the potential of each instrument¹⁶. He didn't simply transcribe the clarinet sonatas for the viola; he composed instead two characteristic sonatas, one for each instrument, which share the same melody, harmony, and other musical ideas. Each version is different not only with regard to its tone color or timbre, but also regarding practical techniques, such as vibrato, lip pressure, leap shifting, volume, and range. Each score contains passages with different octaves. Even the identical passages of the two versions sound differently according to the character of the instrument¹⁷.

Brahms' principal alteration in the viola part, as compared to the clarinet version, was to change the register of several sections. The following measures from Sonata in E-flat Major show where Brahms took the viola part down an octave:

The image shows a musical score excerpt from Brahms' Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 120. The score is in E-flat major and 3/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff (measures 14-15) is in the treble clef, and the second staff (measures 16-20) is in the bass clef, indicating an octave shift. Measure 14 shows a melodic line starting with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note, a half note, and a quarter note. Measure 15 features a forte (f) dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 16 starts with a second ending bracket. Measure 17 features a piano (p) dynamic and the instruction 'sotto voce'. Measure 18 features a piano (p) dynamic and the instruction 'sotto voce'. Measure 19 features a piano (p) dynamic and the instruction 'sotto voce'. Measure 20 features a piano (p) dynamic and the instruction 'sotto voce'.

¹⁵ Hans Neunzig, *A. Brahms* (London: Haus Publishing, translated by Mike Mitchell, 2003), 42.

¹⁶ Colin Lawson, *Brahms: Clarinet Quintet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998), 15.

¹⁷ Lee Kyung Ju, *An analysis and comparison of the clarinet and viola versions of the two Sonatas for clarinet (or viola) and piano op.120 by Johannes Brahms*. (Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati, Nov. 2004), 19.

Figure 1
mm. 18-20/ First Movement

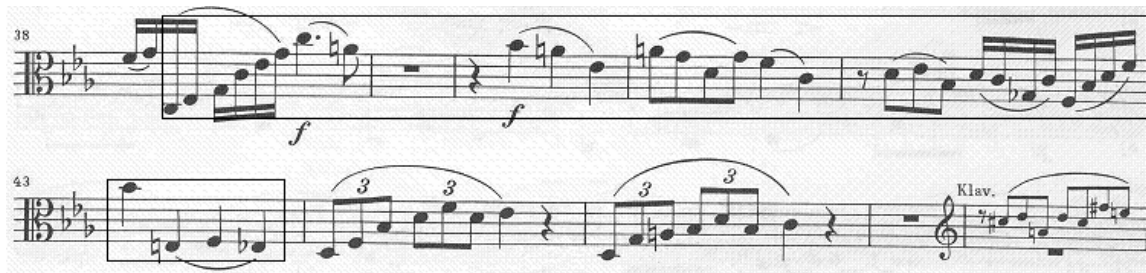


Figure 2
mm. 38-43/ First Movement



Figure 3
mm. 58/ First Movement

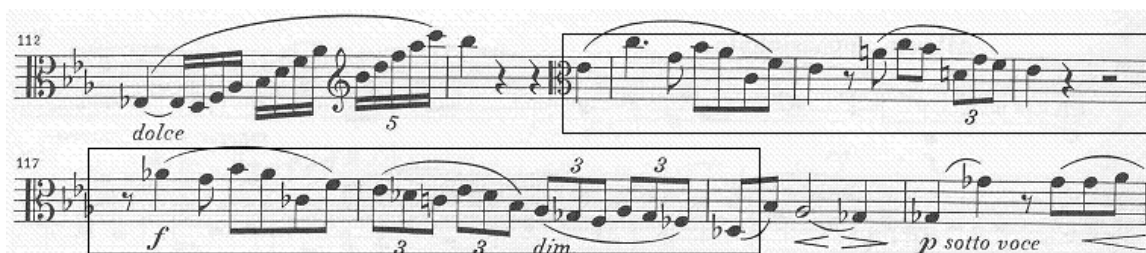


Figure 4
mm. 113-118/ First Movement

These changes in register between the two versions are evident in the original score of these sonatas, currently located in Hamburg's Staats und Universitätsbibliothek. Observing the two versions, it is clear how Brahms was aware of the differences in range and color between the two instruments. While a clarinet player can cover over four octaves using a variation in lip pressure and a choice of specific keys, it is difficult for a viola player to cover smoothly three octaves, because the fingers motion is limited by string crossings and large shifts. Brahms avoided these large leaps between notes rewriting the clarinet line and

lowering parts of the wide-ranging phrases¹⁸. The majority of published editions of the Viola Sonata in E-flat Major available respect the manuscript, even though the IMC edition by Milton Katims presents a version almost identical to the clarinet version, maintaining high octaves and large leaps in range.

One of the major supporters of the controversial IMC edition of the Brahms Sonatas op. 120 is the worldwide renowned Italian violist Bruno Giuranna, which in an interview in *Strad Magazine* stated the following:

The first thing you notice when you look at most piano score is that in numerous places someone has taken the viola part down an octave compared to the original. We can be certain that this so-called arrangement was not by Brahms... the composer probably agreed to the publication of the simplified version for commercial reasons, perhaps because in his day hardly any violists could be expected to play in high positions, certainly not lyrically or with *dolcezza*...¹⁹.

Giuranna points out that most of the editions played today were not arranged by Brahms, and that there is no longer any reason to play the piece in such a way, since modern violists achieved more developed technical skills than those of Brahms' period. He recommends retaining the original notes of the clarinet version as much as possible.

However, his argument is subject to some objections. Even though a copyist wrote the original scores, Brahms was always meticulous in carefully following the publication process and correcting mistakes²⁰. The Viola Sonatas were published when he was alive.

Considering Brahms meticulous habit on publication and his profound knowledge of the characteristics of the two instruments, it is implausible to think that the changes in his viola transcription were merely based on simplification choices. It is far more credible to

¹⁸ Michael Freyhan, "The viola's champion", *The Strad* (May 1997), 40-43.

¹⁹ Bruno Giuranna, *Masterclass: Brahms Viola sonata in E-flat*, (*The Strad*, 104, 1993), <https://www.thestrاد.com/bruno-giuranna-brahms-masterclass/1248.article>.

²⁰ Stowell Robin, *The early Violin and Viola: A practical guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 164.

claim that those choices were aimed at exploring the different tone qualities of the two instruments, intentionally composing two different versions.

Listening Guide

The Sonata starts with a warm, tender first movement that perfectly matches the word *Amabile*. The viola begins immediately with a distinct, sweet theme, accompanied by the graceful piano arpeggios. The piano imitates, accompanies, and leads the theme itself. The viola introduces the second theme, this time in B-flat Major, *sotto voce*, forming a canon with the piano. A surprising new lyrical theme appears in the closing section, before closing on an abrupt shift to the home key, in E-flat Major.

The second movement, a *scherzo* labeled *Appassionato, ma non troppo Allegro*, reminds one of Brahms' typical *intermezzi* of his chamber works and late pieces for solo piano. The central section of the movement is a *Trio* of a more somber character, almost hymn-like. The initial theme returns after the *Trio*, but this time develops taking some of the solemnity from the *Trio*.

The final movement, *Andante con moto*, begins with sweet warmth, similar to the first movement. This time, though, the theme generates a series of variations, closing the Sonata on a dreamy, wistful character.

CHAPTER 3
BÉLA BARTÓK, CONCERTO FOR VIOLA AND ORCHESTRA,
Sz. 120, BB 128

Moderato
Adagio Religioso
Allegro Vivace

Every nation, every tribe, every race needs someone to reflect back to them in terms of a more sophisticated intellectual and formal work, so that those can say “this is me”.²¹

Béla Bartók, Hungarian composer born in Nagyszentmiklós in 1881, represents one of the pioneers of ethnomusicology. His deep interest in folk music brought him to collect and compare music from Hungary, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldavia, Algeria, Turkey, Scotland. He is considered one of the founders of comparative musicology, later defined ethnomusicology.

A brilliant pianist and composer, he introduced elements of folk music into his compositions, elaborating themes and harmonies in highly innovative and never predictable ways. Bartók himself, in his article “*The Hungarian Folk Song*” expresses his deep appreciation for folk music.

...Peasant music is the outcome of changes wrought by a natural force whose operation is unconscious; it is impulsively created by a community of men who have had no schooling. For this reason, the single tunes are examples of high artistic perfection. In their small way, they are as perfect as the grandest masterpieces of musical art. They are, indeed, classical models of the way in which a musical idea can be expressed in all its freshness and

²¹Breakfast with the Arts, “Bartók”, Curtis W. Davis,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dWaH_TA3kI.

shapeliness – in short, in the very best possible way, in the briefest possible form and with the simplest of means.²²

Béla Bartók is nowadays considered one of the most important composers of the 20th Century, and regarded as Hungary's greatest composer together with Franz Liszt²³.

Despite of this, his life as a composer has been anything but easy. After the Nazis came to power in the early 1930s, Bartók openly expressed his opposition to the fascist regime. He reluctantly emigrated from Hungary to the United States in 1940 with his wife Ditta. Although he became an American citizen in 1945, he never felt completely at home in the USA. He was very well known in America as a pianist, ethnomusicologist and teacher, but not appreciated as a composer.

During his American years, concerts were few, and money short. The New York that he experienced was “much of what he sought to avoid all his life; noise, rush, many people and buildings, heavy traffic on the street with its accompanying gasoline, commerce and commercialism, tidal waves of opportunities for the practical-minded in any field, an Eldorado for the opportunist”²⁴.

Bartók did not compose much music during his five years in New York²⁵. He found his “Mahler's hut”, his peaceful inspirational place in Saranac Lake, upstate New York, away from the noise of the city.

The first major commission in the USA arrived from Serge Koussevitzky, composer and principal Conductor of Boston Symphony Orchestra. This *Concerto for Orchestra* quickly became Bartók's most popular work, although he did not live to see its full impact.

²² Bartók, Bela *The Hungarian Folk Song* (New York: State U of New York Press, 1981), III.

²³ Gillies 2001.

²⁴ Balogh, Erno. “Bartók's Last Years.” *Tempo*, no. 36 (1955): 12–16.
doi:10.1017/S0040298200052505.

²⁵ Philharmonia Orchestra, “Béla Bartók: In New York, with Esa-Pekka Salonen”, 2011, accessed March 30 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVBJ9khrs3k>.

Bartók started perceiving symptoms of his health problems late in 1940, after moving to the USA, when his right shoulder began to show signs of stiffening. In 1942 symptoms increased, but no underlying disease was diagnosed. In 1944 Bartók was diagnosed with leukemia, and by then little could be done²⁶.

Despite of the tragic diagnosis, Bartók decided to accept the most unusual and unexpected commission: a Viola Concerto.

In February 1945 the distinguished Scottish violist William Primrose asked for a concerto. Bartók was reluctant, claiming his insufficient knowledge of the technical capabilities of the solo viola. He was already working on his Piano Concerto No.3 and had no initial intention of composing more. Luckily, he soon changed his mind. Primrose himself received heavy critics from his colleagues and manager, regarding his commission. In 1970 he recalled, about this:

When I commissioned the concerto, most people thought I had made a big mistake, including people in my manager's office. Who on earth was going to ask me to play a concerto by Béla Bartók? I paid him what he asked—\$1,000—and I played the concerto well over a hundred times for fairly respectable fees. So it was almost like getting in on the ground floor in investing in Xerox or the Polaroid camera²⁷.

Bartók started composing during the summer of 1945, and on September 8 he wrote to Primrose:

I am very glad to be able to tell you that your viola concerto is ready in draft, so that only the score has to be written, which means a purely mechanical work, so to speak. If nothing happens I can be through in 5 or 6 weeks, that is, I can send you a copy of the orchestral score in the second half of October, and a few weeks afterwards a copy (or if you wish more copies) of the piano score²⁸.

²⁶ Chalmers 1995, 202–207.

²⁷ Phillip Huscher, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Program Notes “Béla Bartók Viola Concerto”: accessed March 30 2018, https://cso.org/uploadedfiles/1_tickets_and_events/program_notes/programnotes_bartok_violaconcerto.pdf.

²⁸ Ibid

But Bartók and Primrose weren't that lucky—the composer's time simply ran out. He died two weeks after writing to Primrose, leaving the orchestra part incomplete. Tibor Serly, composer, violist and Bartók's dear friend, decided to pick up the sketches and reconstructed the work from where it had been left. It was anything but a simple task, cluttered, unnumbered, with almost no indications for the instrumentation. Serly had to rely on his superior knowledge of Bartók's style, and on his own instinct and training.

Listening Guide

The Viola Concerto of Bartók is reminiscent of the simplicity of neoclassical tendencies between 20th century composers. It is surely impregnated with folk tunes, sometimes less explicit than in his earlier works. The composer's initial plan was a concerto that reminded one of *Harold in Italy* by Berlioz, in four movements, without pauses, and each movement containing a recurring theme. He instead composed a three-movement concerto, but still using traditional forms and without pauses in between the movements. The Viola Concerto's central key is A; frequent usage of chromaticism, traditional church modes, and octatonic sections appear throughout the entire concerto.

The opening movement, in the most classical of forms: sonata form, opens with a straightforward first theme, soaked with a Hungarian folk tune flavor. (Figure 5)



Figure 5

Bartók's beloved usage of symmetry makes this theme appear several times in less obvious contexts using inversion or retrogrades. (Figure 6 & 7)

poco rit. Bsn.
Piu lento, $\text{♩} = 76$
mp
mf
190

Figure 6

200
pp
rall. a tempo
Tempo I, $\text{♩} = 104$
poco f
210

Figure 7

A slow, brief interlude, largely for the viola alone, leads to the second movement. A bassoon solo handles the transition, following the viola solo cadenza and introducing the lyrical second movement. In an E mixolydian mode and ternary form, this movement is conceived in Bartók's favorite arch form, with serene chorale passages framing a sudden outburst that leads directly to the short finale, the last of Bartók's folk dances, complete with the sound of droning bagpipes.

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VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Rossana Cauti

rossana.cauti@gmail.com

Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Master in Music Performance, Viola, May 2018

Diploma Tradizionale di Viola, Conservatorio "L. D'Annunzio", Pescara, Italy, October 2010
Postgraduate studies in Music Performance, Conservatorio di Lugano, Switzerland, May
2014

Bachelor in Economics and Business, LUISS University, Rome, Italy, April 2011

Special Honors and Awards:

Illinois Chamber Music Society Award Recipient

Research Paper Title:

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