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Frida Sketches

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for string quartet

by Paul Max Edlin

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Programme Note

The Mexican painter Frida Kahlo had an extraordinary life. Born in 1907, she died at middle age in 1954. At six she developed polio and a terrifying bus accident in her teens meant that she suffered life-long physical and health problems. She married the Mexican artist and muralist Diego Rivera, who was twenty years her senior. They had a tempestuous marriage, divorced and remarried. No doubt due to her illness and her confinement to bed or being strapped in a body cast, Frida became self-obsessed and made many extraordinary self-portraits. These self-portraits tell us as much about Mexican culture, religion and symbolism, about the tragedy of the country at that time, its politics and its history as they do about Frida and her love-hate relationship with Diego. Frida also kept a diary, and that is yet another fascinating glimpse into this surreal artist's equally surreal world.

As a composer who has been surrounded by visual art all my life and for whom surrealist painting is particularly relevant, Frida Kahlo's work excites me. Furthermore, I have a love for symbolism in music and enjoy transferring extra-musical ideas into music itself – thus a piece becomes even more than its apparent surface. A piece 'becomes' what it is because of what inspires it and what drives it. Using ciphers, Frida's name, the names of those who were around her, the name of her home, etc all 'create' the musical notes. The diary inspires the musical structure – especially the passages which are 'stream-of-consciousness' that are actually highly poetic and highly rigorous in design. Finally, the music of Lotti's 'Crucifixus' permeates passages, and so it should as this is music that alludes to Frida's world and her own crucifixion as a result of that tragic accident.

Frida Sketches is a sketch about the woman and her world, and it is a starting point for me to track a new path. The work was written for the Arditti Quartet to whom it is dedicated.

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Frida Sketches

inspired and ignited by the paintings and diaries of Frida Kahlo

for String Quartet

for the Arditti Quartet

Paul Max Edlin

♩ = 44

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

pp

p

pp

p

p

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

4 ♩ = c 66

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

mf

mf

6

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

sul pont.

sul pont.

sul pont.

sul pont.

$\text{♩} = c 56$

8

Vln. 1 *mf* $5:4$ $5:4$ *mp* $5:4$

Vln. 2 $5:4$ *mp* $5:4$

Vla. $5:4$

Vc. *pp* $5:4$

11

Vln. 1 $3:2$ $3:2$ $3:2$ $7:4$ $7:4$ $5:4$ $3:2$ $5:4$

Vln. 2 $3:2$ $3:2$ $3:2$ $7:4$ $7:4$ $5:4$ $3:2$ $5:4$

Vla.

Vc.

14

Vln. 1 *f* $3:2$ $3:2$ *mp* $3:2$

Vln. 2 *f* $3:2$ $3:2$ *mp* $3:2$

Vla. $3:2$ f $3:2$ $3:2$ *mp* $3:2$ $3:2$

Vc. *pp* $5:4$ $3:2$ *mp* $3:2$ $3:2$

2

16

Vln. 1

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

Vln. 2

f *p* *pp* *mp*

Vla.

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

Vc.

mf *mp* *p*

18

Vln. 1

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

Vln. 2

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

Vla.

pp *p* *mf* *p*

Vc.

p *pp* *mp* *mp*

21

$\text{♩} = c 62$
tenderly

Vln. 1

p *mp* *f*

Vln. 2

pp *mp* *f*

Vla.

p *mp* *f*

Vc.

mp *f*

25

Vln. 1 *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *mp*

Vln. 2 *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *mp*

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

28

Vln. 1 *mp* *p*

Vln. 2 *p* *mp*

Vla. *p* *p*

Vc. *mp* *p*

30

Vln. 1 *f* *5:4* *5:4* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2*

Vln. 2 *f* *5:4* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2* *(b)*

Vla. *mp* *3:2* *f*

Vc. *mp* *f* *3:2*

4

32 $\text{♩} = c 72$

Vln. 1 *mf* *f* *f*

Vln. 2 *mf* *f* *f*

Vla. *p* *mp*

Vc. *p* *mp*

35

Vln. 1 *mf*

Vln. 2 *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

37

Vln. 1 *f* *mf*

Vln. 2 *f* *mf*

Vla. *f* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf*

39 $\text{♩} = c\ 52$

Vln. 1 *ff* *f*

Vln. 2 *ff* *p*

Vla. *ff* *pp*

Vc. *ff* *pp*

5:4 3:2 3:2

41

Vln. 1 *pp* *pp*

Vln. 2 *p* *mp* *pp*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

5:4 6:4 3:2 3:2

43 $\text{♩} = c\ 62$

Vln. 1 *f* *p*

Vln. 2 *pp* *p*

Vla. *pp* *f*

Vc. *pp* *f*

3:2 5:4 3:2 3:2 3:2

45

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

47

Vln. 1 *p*

Vln. 2 *p*

Vla. *mf* 5:4

Vc. *mf*

3/4

48

Vln. I *mp* 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *mp* 3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2

7

50

Vln. 1

f

mf

Vln. 2

mp

Vla.

mp

Vc.

53

Vln. 1

pp *f* *ff* *p* *pp*

Vln. 2

pp *f* *ff* *p* *pp*

Vla.

p *f* *ff* *p* *p*

Vc.

p *ff* *p*

57

Vln. 1

mp *mf* *ppp*

Vln. 2

mp *mf* *ppp*

Vla.

mp *mf* *ppp*

Vc.

mp *p*

8

3:2

59

Vln. 1 *f* *mp* *9:8* *(5)*

Vln. 2 *f* *p* *3:2* *ff*

Vla. *p* *p* *3:2* *mf* *ff*

Vc. *p* *mp*

62

Vln. 1 *f* *fff* *pizz.* *arco* *3:2* *mp* *3:2* *3:2*

Vln. 2 *f* *fff* *pizz.* *arco* *3:2* *mp* *3:2* *3:2*

Vla. *f* *fff* *pizz.* *arco* *3:2* *mp* *3:2* *3:2*

Vc. *f* *fff* *pizz.* *arco* *3:2* *mp* *3:2* *3:2*

64

Vln. 1 *p* *mp* *mf* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2* *sul pont.* *3:2 nat.* *ppp* *f*

Vln. 2 *p* *mp* *mf* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2* *sul pont.* *3:2* *ppp*

Vla. *p* *mp* *mf* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2* *sul pont.* *3:2* *ppp*

Vc. *p* *mp* *mf* *3:2* *3:2* *3:2* *sul pont.* *3:2* *ppp*

[illegible]

Violins 1 and 2, Viola, and Violoncello (Vc.) score. The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The Violins 1 and 2 parts are in treble clef, while the Viola and Violoncello parts are in bass clef. The Violoncello part includes a 'sul G' instruction. The score is divided into three measures, with the first measure starting at measure 70. The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The Violins 1 and 2 parts have a 3:2 ratio indicated above the first two measures. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a 3:2 ratio indicated above the first two measures. The Violoncello part has a 3:2 ratio indicated above the first two measures. The Violins 1 and 2 parts have a 3:2 ratio indicated above the first two measures. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a 3:2 ratio indicated above the first two measures. The Violoncello part has a 3:2 ratio indicated above the first two measures.

73

Vln. 1

mf

sul pont.

9:8

9:8

5:4

5:4

f

nat.

Vln. 2

mf

sul pont.

9:8

9:8

6:4

f

nat.

Vla.

mf

sul pont.

5:4

5:4

p

nat.

Vc.

mf

sul pont.

5:4

5:4

p

nat.

Violins 1 and 2, Viola, and Violoncello

Measures 76-78

Violins 1 and 2: *ff* (measures 76-77), *mp* (measure 78)

Viola: *ff* (measures 76-77), *mp* (measure 78)

Violoncello: *ff* (measures 76-77), *mp* (measure 78)

79

Vln. 1

sul D

f

col legno

ff

mp

5:4

pizz.

mp

5:4

Vln. 2

f

pizz.

ff

mp

p

pizz.

mp

5:4

Vla.

f

5:4

pizz.

ff

col legno

mp

p

pizz.

mp

5:4

Vc.

sul G

f

col legno

ff

mp

p

pizz.

mp

5:4

85

Vln. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *sub p*

Vln. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp* *p*

Vla. *mp* *mp* *p*

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

88

Vln. 1 *p* *f*

Vln. 2 *mp* *f*

Vla. *p* *mp*

Vc. *p* *mp*

90

Vln. 1 *mf*

Vln. 2 *mf*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

[illegible][illegible]

95

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

mf

f

13

97

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

f

mf

3:2

3:2

5:4

3:2

3:2

3:2

5:4

3:2

mf

[illegible][illegible]

104

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

108

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

111

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

114

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

116

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

pizz.

ff

119

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

[illegible]

124

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

detache e brutale

ff

arco e sul pont.

f

arco e sul pont.

f

detache e brutale

ff

126

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

arco e sul pont.

detache e brutale

ff

128

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

ff

130

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

132

(increase tension of bow on string to create distortion)

(with distorted grinding quality of tone)

Vln. 1

fff

(increase tension of bow on string to create distortion)

(with distorted grinding quality of tone)

Vln. 2

fff

(increase tension of bow on string to create distortion)

(with distorted grinding quality of tone)

Vla.

fff

(increase tension of bow on string to create distortion)

(with distorted grinding quality of tone)

Vc.

fff

detache e brutale

♩ = 52

134 nat.

Vln. 1 *ppp*

Vln. 2 pizz. *ffff* arco *ppp* *pp*

Vla. pizz. *ffff* arco *ppp* *pp*

Vc. pizz. *ffff* arco *ppp*

3:2

140

Vln. 1 *p*

Vln. 2 *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *mp* *pp* *p*

3:2

146 con sord.

Vln. 1 *pp*

Vln. 2 con sord. *p*

Vla. con sord. *p*

Vc. con sord. *p*

3:2

151

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

156

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

p

pp

$\text{♩} = c 62$

160

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

pp (sempre)

sul tasto

p

p

p

164

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

3:2

9:8

10:8

3:2

9:8

10:8

3:2

167

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

11:8

3:2

7:4

7:4

11:8

3:2

7:4

7:4

11:8

3:2

7:4

7:4

169

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

pp

3:2

3:2

3:2

p

p

p

171

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p

p

pp

ppp

p

pp

ppp

p

p

[illegible]

184

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

ppp

pp

ppp

pp

ppp

mp

3:2

3:2

3:2

3:2

5:4

191

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

con sord.

p

pp

3:2

3:2

pp

p

♩ = 72

196

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

sul tasto

Vla.

sul tasto

Vc.

sul tasto

p

5:4

9:8

5:4

10:8

5:4

9:8

5:4

10:8

5:4

9:8

5:4

10:8

200

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

5:4

3:2

11:8

3:2

7:4

7:4

3:2

11:8

3:2

7:4

7:4

3:2

11:8

3:2

7:4

7:4

203

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

3:2

3:2

5:3

3:2

5:4

3:2

5:4

3:2

5:4

p

p

p

[illegible]

208

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

3:2

11:8

11:8

11:8

11:8

210

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

mp

212

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

mp

pp

pp

pp