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The Rose

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The Rose

for viola et piano

Sean Clarke

2017/18

Biography

Sean Clarke is a composer, flutist and theorist from Calgary, now based in Ottawa. He completed a doctorate in composition at the University of Montréal under the guidance of Ana Sokolovic and Jonathan Goldman, generously supported by a SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Doctoral Scholarship. Previously, he studied flute and composition at the Royal Northern College of Music under Peter Lloyd and Anthony Gilbert, and the University of Calgary under Allan Bell and David Eagle.

His works have been performed in France, America, and across Canada, by the National Youth Orchestra, Quatuor Bozzini, Robert Aitken, Land's End Ensemble, Ensemble Mise-En, Ensemble Arkea, and Project Iso, as well as featured in the World Saxophone Congress and the Canadian University Music Society annual conference. Sean has presented his theory research, which focuses on the music of Pierre Boulez and formal function in contemporary music, at national and regional conferences.

As a freelance flutist, Sean has performed in contemporary music festivals in Montréal, Calgary and Saskatoon, with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Red Deer Symphony, and in concert series including the Société de Musique Contemporaine de Québec's Série Hommage and McGill University's Schulich Professional Concert Series.

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Composed in 2017 (revised 2018) for violist and vocalist Margaret Carey, based on her poem *Rose Petals*:

Rose blossoms slowly flowering into full beauty,
Their fragrance piercing through the midday heat,
Distracting the mind from mundane drudgery,
Each bud opens, embracing its distinct beauty.

Rose petals pirouetting softly down in the wind,
Seducing the senses with their brilliant colors,
Velvety softness and elasticity in independence,
Innate uniqueness, despite fragility, fully realized.

If you fall, alone in the sun, you will wither and fade,
But if you land in the water, you will remain fresh,
Buoyantly traversing and navigating churning seas,
Will you leave to explore, or will you stay with me?

Program Notes

As with any text setting, the composer's reading of a poem both molds the music and distorts the poem itself. My personal interpretation of the poem is firmly imprinted on the music, an interpretation that is only one of many possible readings. The voice enters at key points, offering fragments of the opening and closing lines of the poem, altering the course of the piece as a whole.

As I worked, I also became increasingly influenced by a second outside force: the *Andantino* of Schubert's *Piano Sonata* in A major D.959. This movement echoes through the piece. Not only do two distorted quotations appear at important formal moments, but more abstract aspects of the music are alluded to: the central section builds to a disproportionately violent climax; sharp *fortissimo* chords interrupt the gradual denouement; semi-tones pervade several sections; rolled chords appear throughout, usually as slow, drawn-out arpeggios; and the ending is an obsessive, repetitive dirge in the lowest registers of both instruments.

Instrumentation

Viola / Voice (*ossia*: Viola)*
Piano

* This work can be performed as written for viola/voice & piano, or for viola & piano with the vocal lines played on the viola and the hummed line in mm. 121-128 played *pizzicato*. If sung, the vocal lines can be transposed down an octave if necessary.

Duration

ca. 12'

The Rose

Sean Clarke
Text: Margaret Carey

Dolce - Largo

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 36$ ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$)

Brutal - Poco piu mosso

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 44$ ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 88$)

Sung: ♩

Viola
(Ossia:
all sung
passages
played
on viola)

Rose blo- ssoms

Piano

pp *p* *poco rit.* *pp* *ff* *fff* *f* *ff*

8va *8va*

8vb

Red.

Viola: ♩

4

mf *mp* *pp* *poco rit.*

fff *ff* *mf* *mp* *p*

Red.

Fragile, delicate, elegant - Poco meno mosso

8 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 40$ ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 80$)

pp *p* *pp*

5:4 *3*

Red. ** Red.*

Poco meno mosso

♩ = ca. 36 (♩ = ca. 72)

12

pp *p* *pp* *p*

mp *p* *pp* *p*

* *Ad.* * *Ad.*

Poco piu mosso

poco rit. ----- ♩ = ca. 40 (♩ = ca. 80)

16

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

poco rit. -----

mp *p* *mf*

* *Ad.*

20

p *f* *mp* *p*

poco rit. --

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

* *Ad.* * *Ad.*

Bleak, desolate - Meno mosso

♩ = ca. 32 (♪ = ca. 64)

Piu mosso

♩ = ca. 40 (♪ = ca. 80)

23 *sul tasto*

ppp *pp* *p* *ppp*

una corda ppp *pp* *p* *p* *pp*

27 *Dolce*

Sung: pp *mf* *mp* *mf sub. p* *pp*

(*Ossia: Slow-*
on viola) *ly* *flow'r-* *ing in-* *to full* *beau-* *ty*

pp *mp* *mf* *p*

Turbulent, brutal - Poco piu mosso

32 ♩ = ca. 42 (♪ = ca. 84)

Viola:

pp *ff* *p* *ff* *sfz* *sfz* *fff* *f* *mf* *p*

8va *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va*

ff *sfz* *sfz* *fff* *f* *mf* *p*

Delicate, elegant - A tempo

♩ = ca. 42 (♪ = ca. 84)

36 *poco rit.* -----

ppp *pp* *p*

mp *p* *pp*

5

* *Red.* *

40 *poco rit.* ----- *a tempo*

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

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

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* *

44

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

mp *mf*

* *Red.* * *Red.* *

Bleak, desolate, foreboding

Poco meno mosso

 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 40$ ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 80$)

47

poco rit.

mp *f* *pp* *pp*

poco rit.

f *ff* *f* *mf* *pp*

trem. between notes

Ed.

**Ed.*

50

p *mp*

Bring out moving line

54

mf *sfz* *sfz*

Turbulent - Poco piu mosso

♩ = ca. 44 (♪ = ca. 88)

poco accel. -----

58

f *ff* *sfz* *ff* *f* *ff* *mf*

poco accel. -----

* *Red.*

62

ff *mf* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

sfz *f* *ff*

* *Red.*

Appassionato - Piu mosso

♩ = ca. 52 (♪ = ca. 104)

66

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

fff *mp* *mf* *ff* *mp*

* *Red.*

69

mf ff mf f ff f ff

mf ff mf f fff f

Red. Red. Red.

Con fuoco - Poco piu mosso

72 ♩ = ca. 56 (♩ = ca. 112)

ff sfz sfz fff

ff sfz sfz fff

Red. Red.

Brutal - Meno mosso

♩ = ca. 44 (♩ = ca. 88)

74

poco rit.

fff

ffff

fff

poco rit.

8va

sfz

ffff

sfz

fff

sfz

8va

Red. Red. Red.

Molto appassionato - Poco meno mosso

rit. ----- ♩ = ca. 44 (♩ = ca. 88)

76

ff sfz fff ff fff ff

rit. -----

8va

80

fff ff fff

8va

8vb

84

Brutal

fff sfz fff

8va

8vb

87

Musical score for measures 87-90. The score is written for a piano with three staves: a single treble staff and a grand staff (treble and bass). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 at measure 88. Dynamics include *ff*, *f*, *mf*, and *f*. There are triplets in measures 87, 88, and 89. Measure 90 is a whole rest.

90

Bleak, fragile - A tempo

♩ = ca. 44 (♩ = ca. 88)

Musical score for measures 90-94. The score is written for a piano with three staves. The key signature has two flats. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 at measure 91. Dynamics include *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. A *poco rit.* marking is present above measures 90 and 91. Measure 94 is a whole rest. A tremolo (tr) is indicated in the bass staff for measures 92-94.

95

Musical score for measures 95-98. The score is written for a piano with three staves. The key signature has two flats. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 at measure 96. Dynamics include *mp*, *pp*, *mf*, and *mp*. Measure 98 is a whole rest. A tremolo (tr) is indicated in the bass staff for measures 96-98.

100

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

tr *tr* *tr* *tr*

Dolce, delicate / Brutal, violent

Poco meno mosso

♩ = ca. 42 (♩ = ca. 84)

106 *Sung: pp* *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp* *pp*

Will you ... Will you stay ...

(Ossia:
on viola)

pp *fff* *p* *mp* *fff* *pp* *p* *ff*

Ped. sost. *Ped. sost.* *Ped. sost.*

111

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

Ped. sost. *Ped. sost.* *Ped. sost.* *Ped. sost.*

Elegant, delicate - Poco piu mosso

♩ = ca. 44 (♩ = ca. 88)

Viola:

131

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

p *mp* *mp*

Red. ** Red.*

Bleak, desolate

135

p *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

p *pp*

** Red.* *tr* *8vb* *Red.*

139

ppp *pp* *ppp* *ppp*

ppp

8vb ** Red.*