

Viola Quintet

Leon Haxby


Variations on a
Theme by Edward Elgar


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Viola Quintet
Duration: c. 5' 30


Performance Directions:


Directions given in bars 10-15 to Viola III & IV are to the players' discretion. In Variation 1, it may be helpful for Vla. 1 to mark out the beats as this is a rhythmically complex passage. In Variation 4, Vla. III acts as a metronome for the ensemble so it is important she/he is extremely strict. In Variation 5, Vla. I is not muted. All variations run *attacca*, except between 4-5 where there should be a pause. Markings such as '*pomposo*' and '*patriottico molto*' indicate that a little sarcasm can be employed.

 = cresc. from silence

 = dim. to silence

 = Bartók pizz.

 = quarter flat

 = three-quarter flat

brullo = bleak

Più caldo = warmer

Programme Notes:

In this piece I wanted to explore the limitations of a once popular form – Theme & Variations. I purposefully took a tune which I find extremely dull, and tried to turn it on its head.

The first variation takes fragments of the melody (heard in Vla. I), and is harmonically based around the home key Ab. The second variation treats the melody in a Waltz style, though the harmonies become less traditional throughout the Waltz and the second time through is interjected with violent fragments of the countermelody by Vla. II. Variation 3 uses the melody both for harmonic and melodic material, creating intense clusters. Variation 4 uses the accompaniment as the melody, putting it through various meters changing at a fast pace. The last Variation doesn't alter the melody at all but completely changes the atmosphere through ethereal harmonies.

This piece is inspired by Alkan's *Le festin d'Ésope* variations, where he takes a small, simple melody and slowly rips it to shreds.

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Andante. Nobilmente e patriottico ♩ = 72

Viola I
Viola II
Viola III
Viola IV
Viola V

pp
pp
pp
pp
pp

p troppo dolce
p troppo dolce
pp
p pomposo
p pomposo

pizz.
nat.
nat.

drum fingers on lower bout
simile
nat.
drum fingers on lower bout
simile
nat.

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

ppp
ppp
ppp
ppp
ppp

start falling asleep
look over at Vla. III

12

Vla. I *mf* *patriottico molto* *mf* *p*

Vla. II *mf* *patriottico molto* *mf* *p*

Vla. III *sfz* *pp* *p*
awake startled arco, con sord. *concentrate and count the beats visibly*

Vla. IV *nudge Vla. III* *mf*

Vla. V *mf*

1 With surgical precision

18

Vla. I *pp* *pizz.* *p espress.*

Vla. II *pp* *pizz.* *pp* *pppp*

Vla. III *espress.* *pp* *pizz., senza sord.* *ppp* *pppp*

Vla. IV *pp* *pizz.* *sfz* *pppp*

Vla. V *pp* *nat.* *molto sul pont.* *nat.* *Ab sul IV*

sfz

26

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

pppp *sfz* *pppp*
ppp *pppp* *sfz* *pppp*
pppp
sfz *sfz* *ffp* *pppp* *sfz*

molto sul pont.
6 6

28 **2** Tempo di Valse $\text{♩} = 56$ arco

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

p espress.
sfz *pizz.* *mf dim.* *p*
sfz *mf dim.* *p*
sfz *mf dim.* *p*
mf dim. *mp*

34

Vla. I
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

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

42

Vla. I *mf* *patriottico molto* *mf* *p*

Vla. II *ff* arco marcato 2nd time only

Vla. III *f* *pp*

Vla. IV *f* *pp*

Vla. V *f* *p*

50

Vla. I *pp* 1. *ff* pizz. 2.

Vla. II 2nd time only *ff* pizz. *f*

Vla. III *f* *f*

Vla. IV *f* *f*

Vla. V *f* *f* *p*

3

58 Grave ♩ = 56

arco marcato

Score for five violas (Vla. I to Vla. V) from measure 58 to 62. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

- Vla. I:** Starts with a rest. Measures 59-60 play a triplet of eighth notes (B-flat, A, G) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 61 has a rest. Measure 62 plays the triplet again with *pp* dynamics.
- Vla. II:** Measures 59-62 play a dotted quarter note (B-flat) with *ff* dynamics.
- Vla. III:** Measures 59-62 play a dotted quarter note (B-flat) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 62 has a *pp* dynamic marking.
- Vla. IV:** Measures 59-62 play a dotted quarter note (B-flat) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 62 has a *pp* dynamic marking.
- Vla. V:** Measures 59-60 play a triplet of eighth notes (B-flat, A, G) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 61 has a rest. Measure 62 plays the triplet again with *pp* dynamics.

Performance instructions include "arco, sul tasto" for Vla. I, II, III, and IV, and "arco marcato" for Vla. I and V.

63

Score for five violas (Vla. I to Vla. V) from measure 63 to 65. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

- Vla. I:** Measures 63-64 play a triplet of eighth notes (B-flat, A, G) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 65 has a rest.
- Vla. II:** Measures 63-65 play a dotted quarter note (B-flat) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 65 has a *pp* dynamic marking.
- Vla. III:** Measures 63-65 play a dotted quarter note (B-flat) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 65 has a *pp* dynamic marking.
- Vla. IV:** Measures 63-65 play a dotted quarter note (B-flat) with *ff* dynamics.
- Vla. V:** Measures 63-64 play a triplet of eighth notes (B-flat, A, G) with *ff* dynamics. Measure 65 plays the triplet again with *pp subito* dynamics.

4 Vivace ♩ = 154

67

Vla. I *ff* *pp* *ff* *mf* pizz.

Vla. II *fff* *f* tap lower bout w/knuckle

Vla. III *fff* *f* pizz.

Vla. IV *gliss.* *fff* *f*

Vla. V *fff* *mf*

73

Vla. I

Vla. II

Vla. III

Vla. IV

Vla. V

80

Vla. I

Vla. II

Vla. III

Vla. IV

Vla. V

86

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

90

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

5 Lento brullo ♩ = 62
arco, sul tasto

93

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

pp senza espress.
arco, sul tasto, con sord.

pp senza espress.
nat.

pp espress.
arco, sul tasto, con sord.

pp senza espress.
arco, sul tasto, con sord.

pp senza espress.

101

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

109

Più caldo poco a poco

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V

113

Repeat twice more

poco rit. . . .

Vla. I
Vla. II
Vla. III
Vla. IV
Vla. V