

for the Goldberg Ensemble

BREAKING STRINGS

for 11 solo strings

full score

Peter McAleer

2002

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About

Breaking Strings was commissioned by the Goldberg Ensemble through the SPM (now Sound and Music). It was first performed by the group under the directorship of Malcolm Layfield at the Goldberg Contemporary Music Festival, Leeds 2003.

The music explores the concept of fracture: from flowing melodies ruptured and redistributed in tiny motifs across the instruments - hocket - to misalignment and the blurring of musical line. Many ways of splitting and splintering musical fabric can be seen in this score but the enigmatic title hints at perhaps more than just that:

*When to her lute Corinna sings,
Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And both in highest notes appear,
As any challeng'd echo clear.
But when she doth of mourning speak,
Ev'n with her sighs the strings do break.*

- Thomas Campion, *A Book of Airs*

Performance Note

Harmonics are written giving the pitch to be produced. I have not been presumptuous enough to instruct the players how to achieve them.

Where the double bass strays into the treble clef the custom of octave transposition is retained.

Forces

6 violins, 2 violas, 2 cellos, 1 double bass

Duration

10 minutes

Peter McAleer October 2002

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BREAKING STRINGS

for 11 solo strings

PETER McALEER

Allegro no troppo ♩ = 100

The score is written for 11 solo strings in 4/4 time. The tempo is marked **Allegro no troppo** with a quarter note equal to 100 beats per minute. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The score is divided into two systems: the first system contains Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, and Violoncellos 1-2; the second system contains the Double Bass. Each string part begins with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) marking, followed by an *arco* (arco) marking. The dynamic markings are *sfz > p* (sforzando to piano) and *f* (forte). The music features a melodic line in the upper strings and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower strings. A large watermark 'PETER McALEER' is overlaid on the score.

9

Violin 1-6, Viola 1-2, Violoncello 1-2, Double Bass

Measures 9-13 of the score. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Dynamics are marked *p* (piano) throughout. The score includes staves for Violin 1-6, Viola 1-2, Violoncello 1-2, and Double Bass.

14

A

Violin 1-6, Viola 1-2, Violoncello 1-2, Double Bass

Measures 14-18 of the score. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), and *sfz* (sforzando). The score includes staves for Violin 1-6, Viola 1-2, Violoncello 1-2, and Double Bass.

19

Musical score for measures 19-23. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. Dynamics include *f*, *sfz*, and *pp*. A large watermark 'PRELIER' is visible across the page.

24

B

Musical score for measures 24-28, marked with a 'B' box above measure 24. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. Dynamics include *sfz*, *f*, *p*, and *pp*. A large watermark 'PRELIER' is visible across the page.

29

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3

Vln. 4

Vln. 5

Vln. 6

Vla 1

Vla 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

D. B.

34

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3

Vln. 4

Vln. 5

Vln. 6

Vla 1

Vla 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

D. B.

BREAKING STRINGS

39 **C**

Vln. 1 *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *f*

Vln. 2 *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *f*

Vln. 3 *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *f*

Vln. 4 *sfz*

Vln. 5 *sfz*

Vln. 6 *f* *sfz*

Vla. 1 *ff* *f* *f* *f*

Vla. 2 *f* *f* *f*

Vc. 1 *ff* *f* *f* *f*

Vc. 2 *ff* *f* *f* *f*

D. B. *sfz* *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *ff*

45

Vln. 1 *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

Vln. 2 *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

Vln. 3 *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

Vln. 4 *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *legato*

Vln. 5 *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *non legato*

Vln. 6 *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *non legato*

Vla. 1 *f*

Vla. 2 *f*

Vc. 1 *f*

Vc. 2 *f*

D. B. *f* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

BREAKING STRINGS

51

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vln. 3 *f*

Vln. 4

Vln. 5

Vln. 6

Vla 1 *p*

Vla 2 *p*

Vc. 1 *p*

Vc. 2 *p*

D. B. *sfz*

59

D Poco Meno Mosso $\text{♩} = 90$

legato

molto Rall....

Vln. 1 *ff*

Vln. 2 *ff*

Vln. 3 *f*

Vln. 4 *f*

Vln. 5 *f*

Vln. 6 *f*

Vla 1 *ff*

Vla 2 *ff*

Vc. 1 *ff*

Vc. 2 *ff*

D. B. *ff*

BREAKING STRINGS

70 a Tempo ♩ = 90

Vln. 1 *ppp* *ff*

Vln. 2 *ff*

Vln. 3 *ff*

Vln. 4 *ff* *pppp*

Vln. 5 *ff*

Vln. 6 *ff*

Vla 1 *p* *ff*

Vla 2 *f* *ff*

Vc. 1 *pp* *ff*

Vc. 2 *ff*

D. B. *ff*

E

80

Meno Mosso ♩ = 70

Vln. 1 *pp* *pp*

Vln. 2 *pp* *pp*

Vln. 3 *pppp* *pp*

Vln. 4 *pp*

Vln. 5 *p* *pp*

Vln. 6 *p* *pp*

Vla 1 *p* *pp*

Vla 2 *p* *pp*

Vc. 1 *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

Vc. 2 *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

D. B. *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

BREAKING STRINGS

87

Vln. 1 *ppp*

Vln. 2 *ppp*

Vln. 3

Vln. 4

Vln. 5

Vln. 6

Vla 1 *pp*

Vla 2 *ppp*

Vc. 1 *ppp*

Vc. 2 *p dolce, espress.* *pp*

D. B. *ppp*

poco a poco animato
accelerando

100

Vln. 1 *ppp* **F** *f*

Vln. 2 *ppp* *f*

Vln. 3 *ppp* *f*

Vln. 4 *ppp* *f*

Vln. 5 *ppp* *f*

Vln. 6 *ppp* *f*

Vla 1 *ppp* *f*

Vla 2 *ppp* *f*

Vc. 1 *ppp* *mf* *f*

Vc. 2 *ppp* *f*

D. B. *ppp* *f*

109Allegro ♩ = 100

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vln. 3
Vln. 4
Vln. 5
Vln. 6
Vla 1
Vla 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
D. B.

114 **G**

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vln. 3
Vln. 4
Vln. 5
Vln. 6
Vla 1
Vla 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
D. B.

118

Musical score for measures 118-122. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. The music is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. A large watermark 'PREMIALE' is visible across the score.

123

Musical score for measures 123-127. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. The music is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. A large watermark 'PREMIALE' is visible across the score.

127 **H**

Musical score for measures 127-130. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. It features dynamic markings such as *sfz* and *f*, and a rehearsal mark **H**.

131

Musical score for measures 131-134. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. It features dynamic markings such as *sfz* and *f*.

Poco Meno Mosso ♩ = 90

135

Vln. 1 *sfz sfz sfz sfz* *pp*

Vln. 2 *sfz sfz sfz sfz* *pp*

Vln. 3 *sfz sfz sfz sfz* *pp*

Vln. 4 *sfz sfz sfz* *pp*

Vln. 5 *sfz sfz sfz* *pp*

Vln. 6 *sfz sfz sfz* *pp*

Vla 1 *pp*

Vla 2 *pp*

Vc. 1 *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

Vc. 2 *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

D. B. *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

141

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3

Vln. 4

Vln. 5 *pp*

Vln. 6 *pp*

Vla 1 *pp*

Vla 2 *pp*

Vc. 1 *p* *p* *p* *p*

Vc. 2 *p* *p* *p* *p*

D. B. *p* *p* *p* *p*

160

Musical score for measures 160-164. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. Dynamics range from sfz to ff.

K

165

Musical score for measures 165-169. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. Dynamics are primarily p.

170

Musical score for measures 170-174. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. Dynamics range from *p* to *sfz*.

175

L

Musical score for measures 175-179. The score includes staves for Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Bass. Dynamics range from *ff* to *sfz*. A section marker 'L' is present above measure 175.

181

Musical score for measures 181-186. The score is for a string ensemble consisting of Violins 1-6, Violas 1-2, Cellos 1-2, and Double Basses. The music is in a minor key and features a driving, rhythmic pattern. The dynamics are marked with *f* (forte) and *sfz* (sforzando). The strings play a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, creating a sense of tension and movement. The double bass part provides a steady, rhythmic foundation.

187

Musical score for measures 187-192. The score continues the string ensemble from the previous page. The dynamics are marked with *p* (piano) and *sfz* (sforzando). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures showing a change in dynamics from *f* to *p*. The strings play a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, creating a sense of tension and movement. The double bass part provides a steady, rhythmic foundation.

BREAKING STRINGS

193 M $\text{♩} = 50$

non vib. vib. sul tasto nat.

non vib. sul tasto non vib. *pppp* *p* vib.

mf *mp* *pppp*

sul tasto non vib. *pppp*

non vib. sul tasto *mf* *mp* *p* *pp*

vib. *pp*

non vib. sul tasto *mf* *mp* *p* *pp*

vib. *pp*

non vib. sul tasto *mf* *mp* *p* *pp*

vib. *pp*

non vib. sul tasto *mf* *mp* *p* *pp*

vib. sul tasto *p* *pp*

sul tasto non vib. *pppp*

sul tasto *mf* *mp* *p* *pp*

fff *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff*

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

205

sul tasto rit.....

nat. *ppp*

p vib. nat. *ppp*

non vib. *p* *ppp*

pp *ppp*

non vib. *pp* vib. *pp*

vib. *pp*

vib. *pp*

vib. nat. *pp* *pp*

pp

vib. nat. *pp* *pp*

pp

pp