

GEORGE BENJAMIN

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VIOLA, VIOLA

(1997)

FOR VIOLA DUO

Preview File Only

FABER *ff* MUSIC

*Viola, Viola* was commissioned by the Tokyo Opera City Foundation of which the Artistic Director was Toru Takemitsu for the opening of Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall. The first performance was given by Yuri Bashmet and Nobuko Imai in Tokyo City Concert Hall on 16 September 1997.

## PROGRAMME NOTE

The idea of a viola duo was that of Toru Takemitsu, who was responsible for *Viola, Viola* being commissioned for the opening of the Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall in 1997. My initial thoughts of how to solve the compositional problems inherent within this unconventional medium may have suggested the viola's accustomed role as a melancholy voice hidden in the shadows. Once under way, however, a completely different instrumental character – fiery and energetic – imposed itself.

My desire was to conjure an almost orchestral depth and variety of sound. At first the instruments are virtually braided together – numerous elements hocket between the players at a rate that the ear has difficulty in perceiving who plays what. Through this a larger array of instruments is suggested, each defined by motif, pace, dynamic and, above all, register. Only towards the work's *cantabile* centre do clearly independent lines begin to flourish. The implied harmony is intended to be as sonorous as possible, the texture at times maintaining four or more parts for sustained periods.

GB

Duration: 1.9 minutes

*Performance note*

Mordents and inverted mordents (↯ ↰) should be played on the beat, not before.

for Michael

# VIOLA, VIOLA

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Vivace  $\text{♩} = 60-66$   
(2+3)

The musical score is written for two violas. It begins with a tempo marking of Vivace and a metronome marking of 60-66. The time signature is 6/8, with a 2+3 pattern. The score is divided into systems, with measures 12, 20, 26, and 33 marked. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *ff*. Performance instructions include *marcato*, *molto sonoro*, *sostenuto*, *sempre*, *sim.*, *pont.*, and *nat.*. There are also markings for *ppp 3* and *ff 3*. The score includes various articulations such as accents, slurs, and breath marks. A large blue watermark "Preview File Only" is overlaid on the score.