

Silvina Milstein

The Unending Rose (1999)

solo violin

first performance: Darragh Morgan, The Tabernacle, Notting Hill , London., 1 February 2001

duration: 15

N.B.: these pieces may be performed separately or as a set

- I – ‘And told her in words that have no sound ...’ (Borges, The Unending Rose)
- II – ‘I am fire and air ...’ (Shakespeare, Cleopatra, act V)

This set of pieces takes its title from a poem by Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) in which the Sufi poet Attar of Nishapur addresses a rose in ‘words that had no sound, as one who thinks rather than one who prays’:

... You are music,
firmaments, palaces, rivers and angels,
O unending rose, unlimited, intimate,
which the Lord will show to my dead eyes’.

Attar has reached old age; he admits to be blind and to know nothing, but foresees that ‘there are more ways to go; and everything is an infinity of things.’

The Sufi images of eternity as experienced by Borges as he approaches the end of his days, gave me an intuition of, what Lukács calls the ‘touch of vertigo’, ‘... the most profound meaning of form: to lead to the great moment of silence’. So I attempted a piece that has the form of a sigh, a sort of exhalation, whose contrasting and precipitous second half while aspiring to the ‘unending’ eventually turns out to be a ‘cadence’.

The second piece borrows its epigraph from the closing scenes of Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra. As the venom of the asp precipitates her rapturous and defiant ending Cleopatra says ‘she is fire and air’. According to Plutarch when Caesar’s men found the queen she was ‘stark dead laid upon a bed of gold, attired and arrayed in her royal robes.’ The piece rapidly shifts from majestic dance-like gestures to moments of exuberance and intimacy, inspired by the acting style of Vanessa Redgrave as Cleopatra.

S.M.

✓

THE UNENDING ROSE (I)

VIOLIN SOLO

Silvina Milstein

'And told her in words which had no sound...'

Preview File Only

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE
10, St. Pancras Place, London, W9.1

THE UNENDING ROSE

violin solo

'And told her in words which had no sound ...'

Silvina Milstein (1999)

flowing, ♩ = 108
soave (ethereal)

affettuoso e poco marcato
(sonore, viola tone)
off the string *poco port.*

p *descrec.* *niente* *f* *pp*

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

8 *soave (ethereal)* *descrec. sub.* *pp* *mp*

11 *very warm vib.* *grazioso (dance-like)* *mfpp* *mp* *f* *p* *f*

15 *pizz., gliss. arco* *affettuoso* *mf sonore* *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

18 *grazioso* *lontano (from far away)* *non vib.* *affettuoso* *dolcissimo non vib.* *p* *f* *p* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

21 *flautando* *(non vib.)* *(vib.)* *sul pont.* *ord.(E)* *p* *p* *ppp* *mp*

24 *trem.* *cantabile* *ord.* *niente* *mf* *ff* *p*

‡ = quarter-tone sharp; play G quarter-tone sharp pizz. and then let the open string ring

27 *dolce*
f > *p* *mp* > *mf* < > *p* *cresc.*-----

30 *cantabile (always flowing)* *lontano* ----- *affettuoso*
mf *p* < > ----- *mf* ----- *pp* *p* < ----- *niente p*

35 *sul III & IV* ----- *as if sounding off-stage* ----- *sul III & IV* ----- *off-stage* -----
mf < > *p* ----- *ppp* ----- *niente p* ----- *mf* < > *p* ----- *ppp* ----- *niente*
(bottom note extremely quiet) (bottom note extremely quiet)

37 *dolce* ----- *p* ----- *mf* ----- *nat. harm.* ----- *descrec.* ----- *niente*

39 *sul pont.* ----- *ord.* ----- *sul II & IV* ----- *como se da lontano (as if from far away)* ----- *sempre cantabile* -----
p ----- *mf* ----- *pp* ----- *mp* *sonore*

43 ----- *pp* ----- *mp* *sonore* ----- *pp*

46 *deciso e sonore ma cantabile*
niente p ----- *mf* > *p* ----- *f* *sonore*

48 *sul III* ----- *on the string* -----
(*f* *sonore*) ----- *sf* ----- *sub. p* ----- *mf* ----- *ff* ----- *sub. p*

51 *ord. pp* ----- *sul I* ----- *sul tasto* ----- *p* ----- *f* ----- *p*

tempo I, ♩ = 108

55 *affettuoso*
sul I
p *f* *sub. p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

57 *recitando*
sul tasto, non vib.
ord. V₀ *jeté* *gracioso*
mp *f* *fff* *pp* *mf*

60 *poco pesante e ritmico* *recitando* (sonore) *rit.*
sul III & IV
p *mp* *sub. f* *cresc.* *fff*

63 *a tempo* *gracioso (dance-like)*
mf *f* *p* *mp*

65 *lontano*
sul II
pp *mp* *f* *p*

67 *dolce*
sul III
as if off-stage
flautando
f *p* *ppp*

71 *mp* *pp* *mf* *pp*

74 *poco*
sul E
on the string
sul tasto, non vib.
p *f* *sub. p* *f* *mp*

76 (sonore) *poco rit.* ♩ = 88
p *mp* *sub. f* *fff* *p* *f*

• bring out the top line, use the G#s to reinforce the attacks of the top line but do not draw attention to the rhythm of the bottom line.

79 dolce *con fuoco* *staccato*

p *mf* *p* *sf* *mf* *measured* *descrec.* *pp*

tempo I, ♩ = 108

82

sf *ff* *sub p*

84 *jeté* *rit.* *a tempo* *poco rit.*

f *sf* *niente*

86 *a tempo deciso* *soave* *poco rit.*

f *p* *f* *p* *poco a poco sul pont.* *pp*

88 *a tempo* *trem.* *deciso ord.*

mf *niente* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

poco meno mosso, ♩ = 88

91 *con fuoco* *staccato*

sf *mf* *descrec.* *pp* *sf* *ff* *sub. p*

tempo I, ♩ = 108

93 *quasi recitativo*

f *descrec.* *pp* *p* *mf* *p*

97

f *p* *mf* *f sempre mf* *sf* *f*

102 *sussurrando (murmuring)* *sul pont.* *ord.* *sul pont.* *ord.* *sul pont.*

pp *mp*

meno mosso, ♩ = 88

106 staccato

ff mf pp f

109 non vib. ord. non vib. poco a poco sul pont.

descrec. pp descrec. ppp

114 sul pont. IV

ppp p f mf

117 pizz. gliss. arco ♩ = 80

f fff gliss. f p

119

121 sul I

124 sul I & II

mp mf

127 poco sul I

mf p

129 on the string

sub.p

⊗ all pause marks in this section add only a semiquaver to the written value; these notes should be played 'en dehors' f sonore

