

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.

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vn

THE UNENDING ROSE (II)

VIOLIN SOLO

Silvina Milstein

'I am fire and air ...' (Cleopatra, act V)

Preview File Only

BRITISH MUSIC INFORMATION CENTRE,
10, Bedford Place, London, W11

'I am fire and air...' (Cleopatra, act V)

**maestoso, $\text{♩} = 66$
sonore**

4

6

9 (sul pont.)

13

15

18

very clear accents, ornamental figures sotto voce

PP ma ritmico

ppp

p

N.B.: the ornamental figures written in small notes should be played as fast as possible and without shortening the the surrounding durations.

(murmuring but with very clear accents)

20 sul pont. ord. sul pont. ord. sul pont.

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

very clear accents, ornamental figures sotto voce

22 sul pont. ord.

mf pp *mf pp* *mp*

24 *sonore* *exuberant sul pont.* ord.

mf pp *mf pp* *mf* *f* *p* *mf* *f*

tempo primo (♩ = 66)
molto delicato.

28 *ritmico* *pesante e sonore sul III & IV~*

sub. p *sub. mf*

31 *lontano sul pont.* *pesante ord.* *lontano sul pont.*

f *mp pp* *f* *mp pp*

33 *ritmico e delicato* *lontano sul pont.* *pesante ord.* *lontano sul pont.* *ritmico ord.*

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

36 *poco a poco sul pont.* *exuberant sul pont.*

mf *f* *ff*

più mosso (♩ = 84)

38 *ord.* *non vib.* *as if off stage* *(exuberant) ord.* 10:8

f *pp* *p* *mf* *pp* *mp* *p* *pp* *f* *sonore*

63 *brillante e molto ritmico*
p 5 *jeté* *simile*
sempre mf *sf*

65 *sf pp* *mf* *sf pp* *sf* *mf*

67 *f* *sf pp* *sf*

70 *mf* *sf pp* *sf*

72 *mf* *sf pp* *sf* *pp*
as if sounding off-stage

74 *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp* *ord.* *con fuoco* *ord.* *f*

76 *7:4* *fff* *sf pp* *sf pp* *f* *7:4* *ff*

78 *brillante e molto ritmico* *sul pont.* *ord.*
sf *f pp* *sf* *f pp* *sf* *f pp* *sf* *f pp* *sf* *f pp*

81 sul pont. ord. jeté

sf fpp sf fpp ff sf fpp sf fpp

84 sul pont. jeté 6 poco a poco lontano ord. 6 sul pont. 6 ord. sul pont. ord.

f sub.mp sub.pp p

88

molto diminuendo

90 trem., poco a poco sul pont. dolce ord. 5 poco più mosso (♩ = 124)

ppp niente mp p 5

92 tempo secondo (♩ = 100)

95 leggiero (like a Glockenspiel) sonore sempre ff poco più mosso (♩ = 124)

sempre ff

99 dolce sub. mp p 5

102 tempo secondo grazioso (♩ = 100)

