

# **TIME PATTERNS**

for solo violin, viola or cello

*Adam Mirza*

## Performance Notes

In *Time Patterns*, several musical parameters evolve simultaneously but at different rates of change creating a crisis for the performer that can only be overcome by an improvised reactivity to the score.

### Time

Each full line has a time-span of 10 seconds (all pages but the final are 50" in total); durations of individual notes are proportional to the length of separation between a note and the subsequent one. Except in cases where bow articulation affects note length, all notes are **sustained** until the next given note.

### System: Top Staff and Bottom Staff

Left hand and right hand *actions* are isolated from one another onto two staves.

#### Bottom staff

The bottom staff directs the right hand and the bow placement. The four lines indicate which string is being played, i.e. I – II – III – IV, descending from the top line.

A note head indicates that the performer should draw the bow at that point on that string continually until a new note head appears.

The bracketed text above the staff indicates where the bow is played along the string, from "sul tasto" to "normal" to "ponticello".

Italicized instructions provide information on bow technique: "Heavy bow pressure" should create at least a scraping sound, and—at louder dynamics—should create subtines if possible (the pitch gets so distorted that it drops below the fundamental).

Note that light finger pressure for *Left Hand* is indicated in the bottom staff by the harmonic circles above note heads.

#### Top staff

#### Register and Position

The top staff uses a thick black line to indicate the position of the left hand along the length of the fingerboard. The three lines and four spaces indicate seven *registers*. Each register contains an interval span approximately equal to (or perhaps slightly less than) a fourth, although this is by no means either fixed or precise. The actual hand position within that span is compositionally undefined. The hand position in the lowest register, for example, could be anywhere between 1<sup>st</sup> position and 4<sup>th</sup> position; in the 2<sup>nd</sup> register (1<sup>st</sup> line from the bottom), the hand position could be anywhere between 4<sup>th</sup> position and 7<sup>th</sup> position; etc. The performer should experiment with the location of the highest (7<sup>th</sup>) register such that the total span of all 7 registers reaches or exceeds slightly the length of the fingerboard.

The precise position within a register is compositionally undefined, and therefore a result of performer's immediate "improvisation". But, indeed, this indeterminacy should be understood to extend to even those parameters that are nominally "defined," i.e. the span and location of the registers themselves need not be strictly fixed. For, with this parameter as with all others in this piece, it is the relative relationships and trends of the developing material that convey the idea rather than the absolute atomistic characteristics of that material. A successful realization will depend as much on a sort of gestural improvisation as on fidelity to the score.

The fingers of the left hand should stop all four strings. The finger position should be very wide at the beginning (approximately M6's between subsequent fingers and strings) and should gradually narrow to P5's by the end of the piece. Note that in two moments (towards the middle and the end) there left hand staff cuts off, indicating that the strings should be left open.

#### Vibrato and position shifts

The left hand registeral (macro) motion indicated by the thick black line is supplemented with information describing subtle agitations within a register. Here again it is more important to capture the shape of the idea—the degree of agitation—than attempt a legalistic description of every detail.

Information in <>'s specifies vibrato style. The first term gives one of four rates, from "slow" to "extremely fast". The precise meaning can be determined by the performer. The second term gives regularity of both the vibrato rate ("regular" to "irregular" to "erratic"). Finally, an interval span that indicates the width of the vibrato.

In some passages, such as the opening, there are slashes (/ \) above the register line. These indicate abrupt position shifts *within* the current register. These shifts should be approximately a M2 + ¼ tone, or less, in size.

### System Information

Brackets before dynamics are visual aids that distinguish different dynamic sections.

### Optional Rule

The performer may pause for 4-6" on any one note in the middle half of the piece. This means that the note should be maintained in completely even manner: same dynamic, bow pressure, vibrato.

### Aesthetics

"But not only are the individual phases in Hegel's thought hard to interpret, the transitions between them, and the sequence they form, are in the last degree difficult and extraordinary. For Hegel's main philosophical originality lies in the fact that he does not offer us a *single* set of concepts and principles, a single notional schema in terms of which things are to be understood, but rather a long array of such schemes, adopted and discarded in turn, and arranged in what Hegel holds to be a fixed order of philosophical adequacy or "truth". Hegel does not merely offer us an atomistic pluralistic view of things, but *also* one that is continuous and monistic; he does not merely see things mechanically and materialistically, but *also* teleologically and vitalistically; he is not content to sketch various forms of metaphysical and theological dualism, but also to dissolve them in an extreme of atheism and humanism. And not only does he offer us many such conceptual schemes, but he also seeks to combine or reconcile them in what seems a barely intelligible fashion: thus, one has so much a necessity that none the less embraces contingency in itself, or an "infinity" which is an attribute of what is, from another point of view, finite. And the transitions from one such conceptual scheme to the next do not follow formulaic patterns; they resemble, rather, a descent of "tongues" obeying ever new grammar. Hardly has a definite picture been formed than Hegel shakes the kaleidoscope and a wholly new pattern forms itself by slips, slides. And changes of perspective too numerous and too subtle to mention. Sometimes one does not know whether one is *in* a definite thought-phase or in the process of moving to the next: things fixed in quality at the beginning of a paragraph may be freely variable at its end, the rigorously distinct atoms of one paragraph are the flowing segments of the next, and so forth. One's difficulty is increased since Hegel uses this kaleidoscopic shaking method, not merely in developing notions and points of view, but also in describing and accounting for the world. The forms of nature, the experiences of the individual mind, the interplay of nations in history – all these are dealt with in the same radical "transforming" fashion, the very revers of what we should normally think of as coherent and "logical". Hegel has described the course followed in his own *Phenomenology of Mind* as a "highway of despair"; to some it would seem, rather to be a sort of philosophical Buchenwald, with new forms of senseless intellectual torment crowded into each instant."

J. N. Findlay, "Hegel," *A Critical History of Western Philosophy*; Ed. D. J. O'Connor, 1964.

"Imagine six panels of ricepaper used as a room divider, say in an apartment in Tokyo, a city whose air quality has degenerated alarmingly over recent years. Soot has been deposited on the roof which, one day, springs a leak in such a way that splashes and splashes of soiled water get deposited in various irregular patterns while the apartment stands empty. The new tenant, an aesthete, recoils upon beholding the sordid sight: he demands removal and replacement with some nice panels, so the place "is fit to live in." Whereupon he is informed that a rare screen, six panels wide, by one of the great masters of the art, has come onto the market; that it would fit the space to perfection, that it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It is bought and installed, and it is thrilling to look at it. To be sure, the same distribution of grays and blacks may be found that defaced its merely domestic predecessor, and for our purposes the panels in fact are exactly congruent. *These* blacks, however, are mountains, *those* gray smudges clouds. The fine splatterings in the panel to the extreme right compose a token representation of rain softening into mist. The irregular streak over here is a dragon ascending, at times indistinguishable from the mountains, at others from the clouds, making his mysterious way—Way—through the boundless, softly articulated universe to whatever is its destiny and our own. It is a philosophic work, dense with depth and mystery and beauty; before it one is moved to the profoundest meditations, transfigured by its power—though its indistinguishable counterpart rightly provokes us only to disgust. Our aesthete spends hour upon hour in contemplation of its bottomless wonder, now and again shuddering at the recollection of the desecration it replaced. Those dirty panels had no mystery and certainly no depth and absolutely no beauty. ( Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*)

# TIME PATTERNS

for solo violin, viola or cello

adam mirza (1978)

(10")

<extremely fast, erratic vibrato: m2>      <fast, irregular vibrato: m2>

[normal]

n      mp      n

[poco ponticello]      heavy bow pressure

mp      n ] [mp

normal bow pressure      [ponticello]

(mp)      ] [n cresc. ----->

<non vibrato>

[poco ponticello]

(mp) (cresc.) ----->

ff      m ] f

[normal]

ff

[poco sul tasto]

ff      n      f      mf      p      ff

[sul tasto]

(ff)      mf      p      mf      ff      mp      mf      ] [mp

(mp)      ] [mp cresc. ----->

[poco sul tasto]      lightly, lifted

ff      ] [p

on the string heavy bow pressure -----> normal bow pressure      [normal]

ff

smooth bow changes, thin tone      [poco ponticello]

(ff)      n      mp

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *mp*. A fermata is placed over the notes.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *f*, *p*, *mf*, *ff*, *mp*, *f*, *pp*, *f*, *p*. Includes the instruction *[ponticello]* and *normal bow change, tone*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *ff*, *mp*, *f*, *p*, *[fff]*, *[mf]*, *[p]*, *[f]*, *[pp]*. Includes the instruction *heavy bow pressure (subtone)* and *[poco ponticello] normal bow pressure*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *[pp]*, *[ff]*, *[mf]*. Includes the instruction *<moderate, regular vibrato: 1/4 tone - m2>* and *[normal]*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *(mf)*, *[poco sul tasto]*. Includes the instruction *<non vibrato>*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *(mf)*, *[n]*, *cresc:----*. Includes the instruction *<moderate, regular vibrato: 1/4 tone - m2>* and *heavy bow pressure*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *[sul tasto]*, *normal bow pressure*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *ff*, *mp*, *mf*, *ff*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *pp*, *ff*, *mp*, *p*. Includes the instruction *[poco sul tasto]*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *ff*, *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *ff*, *mp*, *ff*, *p*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *p*, *ff*, *p*, *mp*. Includes the instruction *[normal]*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *mp*, *f*, *p*, *[f]*, *mp*. Includes the instruction *<non vibrato>*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *mp*, *n*, *[mf]*. Includes the instruction *[poco ponticello]*.

Musical staff with notes and dynamics *[pp]*, *[ponticello]*. Includes the instruction *quickly introduce and increase vibrato*.

<extremely fast, irregular vibrato: M3> -----> <non vibrato>  
[poco ponticello]  
(pp)

heavy bow pressure -----> normal bow pressure  
[ff] decresc.....

[normal]  
-----> n [f]

[poco sul tasto]  
[ff] ----- n ----- mp ----- [pp] cresc.....

gradually introduce <slow, regular vibrato: 1/4 tone>  
near tip, thin, loose bow changes ----- [sul tasto]  
-----> ff [pp]

normal bow location, tone, pressue ----- gradually introduce <moderate, regular vibrato: m2> ----- [poco sul tasto]  
[ff] mf p

gradually introduce <fast, regular vibrato: m3>  
mf ff mp mp [ff] decresc.....

gradually introduce <moderate, regular vibrato: P4> [normal] -----> <slow, regular vibrato: M6>

[poco ponticello]  
-----> n