

CONCERTO

for midi and live string quartets

CHRISTOPHER McCORMICK

(2014)

Commissioned and composed for highSCORE contemporary music
festival, Pavia, Italy, 2014

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Concerto for string quartet and midi string quartet was written as an exploration of the possibilities of live performance in “competition” with synthesized performance. The title, (which was originally *anything you can do...*) refers to the Latin root of the word concerto, “certamen,” which means “to battle.” In the piece I explore the various things that each ensemble can and can’t do, and in pitting them against each other, attempt to shine light on the good/bad/ugly qualities of each. In performance, there should be an equal balance between the two ensembles, and as such it may sometimes be necessary to amplify the acoustic string quartet. If so, great care should be taken that the mix and equalizer of the amplification is as natural sounding as possible. The live quartet should be played with as much gusto and expressive, human quality as possible, and of course with absolute metronomic approach to tempo. The harsh juxtaposition of midi versus acoustic sound should always be made quite apparent.

Composed for and premiered by the Indaco quartet at the highSCORE contemporary music festival in Pavia, Italy, 2014.

CHRISTOPHER McCORMICK 2014

PERFORMANCE NOTES

In *Concerto*, there are a few moments of extended technique for the string players.

A tremolo marked with a (z) is unmeasured and should change ad libitum over time from fast to slow and vice versa. The effect should be that each player is gradually changing speeds at very different intervals with varying extremes of change in bowing. The effect should be subtle in more calm sections and bombastic in louder ones.

The dynamic marking n stands for *niente* and means no sound. Each **n** is either preceded or followed by a crescendo, and simply means to crescendo or decrescendo to or from no sound.

A straight line from note to note is a true glissando. These moments should be emphasized in the way that a rock guitarist emphasizes “bends” and “blue notes.”

Moments marked “cross fade” are an attempt to emulate the technique by the same name in recording engineering. The performer should attempt to blend as seamlessly as possible out of the texture as the instrument they are instructed to “cross fade” with fades in.

In m. 144 the acoustic quartet has an “x” note-head and is instructed to stomp loudly on the ground on that exact beat.

In m. 146 the violins (and in m. 152 viola and cello) are instructed to “sing [their] part” in any comfortable octave on any syllable or sound, preferably made up on the spot. The singing should be guttural and spontaneous.

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$\text{♩} = 100$

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello

Midi Violin I
Midi Violin II
Midi Viola
Midi Cello

evenly, without emphasis of triplet

off the string

n *p*

mp *pp*



0:07

A

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
M. Vln. I
M. Vln. II
M. Vla.
M. Vc.

p *mf* *sim* *mf*

p *mf* *sim*

coming out of the texture, very detached

sfz mp *mf* *pp* *mf*

mf *pp* *mf*

pizz *sfz mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

8

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
M. Vln. I
M. Vln. II
M. Vla.
M. Vc.



0:26

B open

12 open

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
M. Vln. I
M. Vln. II
M. Vla.
M. Vc.

Musical score for measures 21-24. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Middle Violin I, Middle Violin II, Middle Viola, and Middle Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measure 21 starts with a dynamic of *ffz p*. Measures 22-24 feature a crescendo from *p* to *f*. The Violin parts play a melodic line with triplets and accents, marked *legato*. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets, marked *ff*. The Middle Violin parts play a steady accompaniment with triplets, marked *mp*. The Middle Viola and Middle Violoncello parts play a steady accompaniment with triplets, marked *ff*. Measure 24 ends with a dynamic of *mp dolce* and the instruction *flautando*.



Musical score for measures 25-28. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Middle Violin I, Middle Violin II, Middle Viola, and Middle Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measure 25 starts with a dynamic of *mf*. Measures 26-28 feature a *molto rall.* (molto rallentando). The Viola and Violoncello parts play a melodic line with triplets and accents, marked *mf*. The Middle Violin parts play a steady accompaniment with triplets, marked *mp*. The Middle Viola and Middle Violoncello parts play a steady accompaniment with triplets, marked *mp*. Measure 28 ends with a dynamic of *mp* and the instruction *pizz*.

1:05

D

28 Quicker ♩=138

Musical score for measures 28-35. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Middle Violin I, Middle Violin II, Middle Viola, and Middle Violoncello. Dynamics range from piano (p) to fortissimo (ff). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#).



1:19

E

Musical score for measures 36-43. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Middle Violin I, Middle Violin II, Middle Viola, and Middle Violoncello. Dynamics range from piano (p) to fortissimo (ff). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#).

43

Vln. I *mf* *ff* *mf* *pp subito*

Vln. II *n* *ff* *p* *mf*

Vla. *ff* *pp* *arco flautando*

Vc. *ff* *pp* *mp* *pp*

M. Vln. I *n* *f* *pizz* *f*

M. Vln. II *f* *ff* *pizz* *f*

M. Vla. *ff* *pp* *mp* *pp*

M. Vc. *ff* *f*

don't change speed over bar

sul D

1:37

F

50

Vln. I *f* *ffz pp* *pizz* *ffz*

Vln. II *mp* *f* *ffz pp* *pizz* *ffz*

Vla. *ffz pp* *pizz* *ffz*

Vc. *mp* *ffz pp* *2pizz* *ffz*

M. Vln. I *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz*

M. Vln. II *ffz pp* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz*

M. Vla. *mp* *ffz pp* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz*

M. Vc. *ffz pp* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz*

pizz

58

Vln. I *f* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *f* *mf* *p*

Vla. *pp subito* *mf* *pp*

Vc. *pp subito* *f* *pp*

M. Vln. I *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *f* *mf* *p*

M. Vln. II *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *f* *mf* *p*

M. Vla. *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *pp* *mf* *pp*

M. Vc. *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *ffz* *pp* *f* *pp*



66

1:59

G

Vln. I *mf* *f* *f arco* *f*

Vln. II *mf* *f* *f arco* *f*

Vla. *mf* *mf arco* *mf*

Vc. *f* *f* *mf*

M. Vln. I *f* *mf*

M. Vln. II *f* *mf*

M. Vla. *mf*

M. Vc. *mf* *f* *mf*

72

Vln. I *mf, with intensity* *f*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *mf* *f* *mf*

Vla. *off the string* *pp subito*

Vc. *pp subito*

M. Vln. I *pp subito* *f*

M. Vln. II *pp subito* *f*

M. Vla.

M. Vc. *pp subito*

8va



77

Vln. I *molto vib.* *f* *off the string, crisp accents*

Vln. II *f* *off the string, crisp accents*

Vla. *pizz* *mp*

Vc. *mp*

M. Vln. I *arco* *f* *3*

M. Vln. II

M. Vla. *mp*

M. Vc.

88

Vln. I mute on

Vln. II *ppp*

Vla. mute on off the string *n* *ppp*

Vc. off the string *ppp*

M. Vln. I

M. Vln. II

M. Vla.

M. Vc.



93

Vln. I *n* *f* *ppp* mute on

Vln. II *f* *n*

Vla. *f* *ppp*

Vc. *f* *ppp*

M. Vln. I *pp* *ff* *p* *ff*

M. Vln. II *pp* *ff* *p* *ff*

M. Vla. *n* *f* *p* *f*

M. Vc. *mp* *ff* *p* *ff*

97

Vln. I *mp* molto vib.

Vln. II *mf* *f*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

M. Vln. I *f* cresc. poco a poco

M. Vln. II *f* cresc. poco a poco

M. Vla. *mf* cresc. poco a poco

M. Vc. *f* cresc. poco a poco

fff



♩ = 104 accel poco a poco to m.
according to M.M.s
2:53

100 **I**

Vln. I senza vib. *n* *f* *n*

Vln. II *n* *ff* *n*

Vla. mute off *n* *f* *n*

Vc. *n* *ff* *n*

M. Vln. I

M. Vln. II

M. Vla. *n* *mf*

M. Vc. *mf*

25

107 *ff* *flautando* $\text{♩} = 112$ *n* *mp, dolciss.* *mf*

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
M. Vln. I
M. Vln. II
M. Vla.
M. Vc.



111 *f* *arco* $\text{♩} = 116$ *emphasize bend* *mf* *poco* *mf < poco* *mp* *mf* *pp* *emphasize bend* *pizz* *n*

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
M. Vln. I
M. Vln. II
M. Vla.
M. Vc.

123 $\text{♩} = 132$ $\text{♩} = 138$

Vln. I *f* *ff*

Vln. II

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *mp* *f*

M. Vln. I

M. Vln. II

M. Vla.

M. Vc.



K 3:51
 $\text{♩} = 160$

126 $\text{♩} = 144$ $\text{♩} = 152$ $\text{♩} = 160$

Vln. I *ff, dolce* *ff*

Vln. II

Vla. *f* *ff*

Vc. *p* *f* *ff*

M. Vln. I *p* *fff*

M. Vln. II *fff*

M. Vla. *fff*

M. Vc. *fff*

130 pizz *f* *mf* arco *ff*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

M. Vln. I *n* *ff* pizz *mf*

M. Vln. II *n* *ff* arco pizz *mf*

M. Vla. *n* *ff* arco pizz *mf*

M. Vc. *n* *ff* arco pizz *mf*



135 pizz *mp* arco *mf* arco detached arco

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

M. Vln. I arco pizz *mp* detached arco pizz *mf*

M. Vln. II arco pizz *mp* detached arco pizz *mf*

M. Vla. arco pizz *mp* detached arco pizz *mf*

M. Vc. arco pizz *mp* detached arco pizz *mf*

139

Vln. I pizz *pp* arco *pp* *f* pizz *mf*

Vln. II pizz *pp* arco *pp* *f* pizz *mf*

Vla. arco *pp* *f* pizz *mf*

Vc. arco *pp* *f* pizz *mf*

M. Vln. I arco *p* pizz *mf* *f*

M. Vln. II arco *p* pizz *mf* arco *f*

M. Vla. arco *p* pizz *mf* pizz *fff* 3

M. Vc. arco *p* pizz *mf*

142

Vln. I arco *p* *ff* arco *f* *ff*

Vln. II arco *p* *ff* arco *f* *ff* very loud foot stomp

Vla. arco *p* *ff* arco *f* *ff* very loud foot stomp *mp*

Vc. arco *p* *ff* arco *f* *ff* very loud foot stomp *mp*

M. Vln. I arco *ff*

M. Vln. II pizz *ffz* arco *ff*

M. Vla. *ffz* *ffz* *p* pizz

M. Vc. *ffz* *ffz* *p*

arco

157

f dolce

mp

mp

mp

M. Vln. I

M. Vln. II

M. Vla.

M. Vc.

M. Vln. I

M. Vln. II

M. Vla.

M. Vc.



$\text{♩} = 80$

$\text{♩} = 105$
very freely

160

ff

pp

ff

pp

pp

pp

mf

ff

p

pp

p

pp

p

pp

M. Vln. I

M. Vln. II

M. Vla.

M. Vc.

M. Vln. I

M. Vln. II

M. Vla.

M. Vc.

5:07

N

Musical score for measures 170-173. The score includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The first violin and second violin parts feature continuous triplet patterns. The viola and cello parts have more complex rhythmic patterns with accents and dynamic markings such as *mf*, *sfz*, and *ff*. Middle violin and middle viola parts are mostly silent, while the middle cello part has some activity.

5:16

O

Musical score for measures 174-177. This section begins with a double bar line. The first violin and second violin parts play triplet patterns, with dynamic markings of *ff* and *pp*. The viola and cello parts also feature triplet patterns and dynamic markings. The middle violin and middle viola parts play chords with accents and dynamic markings like *ff* and *sfz*. The middle cello part has a similar chordal texture. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *ff*, *pp*, *sfz*, and *pizz*.

178

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. II *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

M. Vln. I *mf* *fff* *ff*

M. Vln. II *fff* *f*

M. Vla. *fff* *ff*

M. Vc. *fff* *f*

arco

3

5

3



182

Vln. I *ffz* *p* *f* *p < ff*

Vln. II *ffz* *p* *f* *p < ff*

Vla. *ffz* *p* *f* *p < ff*

Vc. *ffz* *p* *f* *p < ff*

M. Vln. I *p < ff*

M. Vln. II *p < ff*

M. Vla. *p < ff*

M. Vc. *p < ff*

8va

3

3

3

185

Vln. I *mp* *ff* *ff* *fff* *ff* *arco* *pizz*

Vln. II *mp* *ff* *ff* *mp* *fff* *ff* *arco* *pizz*

Vla. *mp* *ff* *pp* *fff* *ff* *pizz*

Vc. *mp* *ff* *pp* *fff* *ff* *pizz*

M. Vln. I *pizz* *mp* *ff* *ff* *fff* *ff* *arco* *pizz*

M. Vln. II *pizz* *mp* *ff* *f* *mp* *fff* *ff* *pizz*

M. Vla. *pizz* *mp* *ff* *pp* *fff* *ff* *pizz*

M. Vc. *mp* *ff* *fff* *ff* *arco* *pizz*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, numbered 22, covers measures 185, 186, and 187. It features eight staves for string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Middle Violin I, Middle Violin II, Middle Viola, and Middle Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into three measures. In measure 185, the Violin I and II staves play a melodic line starting with a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The Viola and Violoncello staves play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Middle Violin I and II staves play a triplet of eighth notes. The Middle Viola and Middle Violoncello staves play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. In measure 186, the Violin I and II staves play a melodic line starting with a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The Viola and Violoncello staves play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Middle Violin I and II staves play a triplet of eighth notes. The Middle Viola and Middle Violoncello staves play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. In measure 187, the Violin I and II staves play a melodic line starting with a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The Viola and Violoncello staves play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Middle Violin I and II staves play a triplet of eighth notes. The Middle Viola and Middle Violoncello staves play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Dynamics range from *mp* (mezzo-piano) to *fff* (fortississimo). Performance instructions include *arco* (arco) and *pizz* (pizzicato). The score is written in a standard musical notation style with a clear layout and a professional appearance.

