

EXPANDING THE VIOLA REPERTOIRE THROUGH NEW RECORDINGS: A SELECTION
OF 21st-CENTURY UNACCOMPANIED VIOLA PIECES

by

CLAUDIA MALCHOW

(Under the Direction of Maggie Snyder)

ABSTRACT

This document accompanies a recorded album, consisting of selected music written for unaccompanied viola in the 21st-century. The goal of this recording project is to produce high-quality recordings of each selected work, along with easily accessible information about each piece relevant to both first-time performers and listeners of these pieces. The selected works include unique voices of living composers, all of whom come from varying backgrounds. The written document provides brief biographical information for each featured composer, followed by information about each accompanying piece that might be helpful for someone as they approach the piece for the first time. The compositions are presented in the order in which they appear on the album.

INDEX WORDS: Caroline Shaw, Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti, Mary Kouyoumdjian, Derrick Skye, A.S. Cosman, Amanda Harberg, in manus tuas, ko'u inoa, hill and valley for solo viola, Hum for solo viola, Heartstrings, For Sydney, viola, solo viola, 21st-century viola, viola and singing

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2022

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May 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first and foremost like to express my sincerest gratitude to my major advisor, Professor Maggie Snyder, who helped me to rediscover my love for playing the viola, and without her continuous encouragement, I would not have chosen to pursue this degree. I would also like thank Dr. Michael Heald and Dr. Emily Gertsch for their overflowing support and guidance as I navigated these past few years. I wish to acknowledge my past viola mentors, Victoria Chiang and Dr. Sherida Josephson, as they each played a significant roll in my viola journey, and still inspire me every single day.

Thank you to the composers included in this project for creating such beautifully unique and moving music. Huge thanks to my recording engineer, Michael Van Wagenen, for bringing this project to fruition. Special shoutouts go to Emily Eng and Nathan Groot for giving up their time to sit in on recording sessions and provide feedback during the recording process.

Thank you to the many great friends who have offered their enthusiastic support along the way, keeping me grounded during some of the most stressful times. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank my parents and my sister for being my number one fans and cheerleaders for all of my music endeavors and academic ventures. Even when I did not know where the next steps were going to take me, my family was there to support me the entire way. One last acknowledgement—to my sweet cat Starley, who stuck with me during this entire process despite her distaste for the viola.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

As a violist, due to the sheer abundance of recordings and program notes that have been produced over the years, it is easy to have some point of reference when preparing standard repertoire pieces. Countless recordings and pieces of academic writing exist for these works, and it is all easily accessible. Perhaps the reason musicians overlook opportunities to perform new music of the 21st century is related to the lack of resources with regard to available recordings or to the significant lack of programming. It is important that 21st-century musicians not only understand the value of programming these pieces, but that they also actively seek out ways in which to engage audiences with new music.

My hope is that this doctoral project will encourage violists to both perform and engage with the music of our time, and shift the attitude in which today's musicians approach 21st-century solo music.

Review of Literature

Some selected publications and sources that enhance the preparation for the performing portion of the project are “*Viola spaces: contemporary viola studies*” by Garth Knox, and Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti’s free online resource *Shaken Not Stuttered*. The former includes etudes that implement 21st-century extended techniques specifically for the viola,¹ and the latter generally

¹Garth Knox, *Viola spaces: contemporary viola studies* (New York: Schott, 2009).

demonstrates extended techniques for strings.² Judith Irene Lochhead's *Reconceiving structure in contemporary music: new tools in theory and analysis* advises how to examine and listen to 21st-century music.³ Too often musicians rely on recordings to determine what should be brought out in the music, this source helps to offer a strategy for listening/examining music that might be unfamiliar to one's ear.

Delimitations

The compositions selected for this recording project were chosen solely based on my personal preferences as a performer. Though some of these pieces might have ties to each other somewhere down the road, it was not my intention for any of these pieces to directly relate to one another, other than the fact that they are all written for solo viola during the 21st century. The information included about each piece includes performance notes directly from the composers themselves, as well as some of my own conclusions and speculations, some of which are not related at all to information provided by the composers. The overall aim of this project is to increase the accessibility of the selected pieces, including program note information and easy to access recordings.

Link to Online Album (SoundCloud)

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/sets/speak-works-for-solo-viola/s-wmlp6vqN6sk>

²“Extended Techniques for Strings,” Shaken not Stuttered, accessed January 30, 2022, <https://www.shakennotstuttered.com/extended-techniques-strings>.

³Judith Irene Lochhead, *Reconceiving structure in contemporary music: new tools in music theory and analysis* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

MUSICAL CONTENT

ko‘u inoa (2017), Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti

Brief composer biography:

Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti (b. 1983) is a Kānaka Maoli composer, performer, and recording artist. Committed to sharing contemporary music with new audiences and making it more accessible, she created *Shaken Not Stuttered*, a free online resource that includes video demonstrations of extended techniques for strings.⁴ Lanzilotti has received numerous awards and recognitions for her compositional contributions, and strives to emphasize the music of our time, seeking to expand explorations of timbre and nontraditional techniques.⁵ Lanzilotti is an actively performing violist and as a result, she has contributed a number of works to 21st-century viola repertoire, many of which include fixed media or live electronics. Much of her compositional inspiration comes from her native Hawaiian roots, and this influence is reflected in her solo viola piece titled *ko‘u inoa*.

⁴ Extended Techniques for Strings,” *Shaken not Stuttered*, accessed January 30, 2022, <<https://www.shakennotstuttered.com/extended-techniques-strings>>.

⁵ Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti, “About,” *Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti*, accessed April 30, 2021, <<http://leilehualanzilotti.com/>>.

*ko‘u inoa***Link to recording:**

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/ko-u-inoa-anne-leilehua>

Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti describes her work *ko‘u inoa* (translates to “my name”) as “a homesick bariolage based on the anthem Hawai‘i Aloha...”⁶ Written by Reverend Lorenzo Lyons, the anthem that inspired Lanzilotti’s piece was derived from the hymn “I Left it All With Jesus,” written by James McGranhan. Reverend Lorenzo Lyons set the following text to James McGranhan’s music⁷:

*E Hawai‘i e ku‘u one hānau e
Ku‘u home kulaīwi nei
‘Oli nō au i nā pono lani ou
E Hawai‘i, aloha ē*

O Hawai‘i, o sands of my birth
My native home
I rejoice in the blessings of heaven
O Hawai‘i, aloha

*E hau‘oli nā ‘ōpio o Hawai‘i nei
‘Oli ē! ‘Oli ē!
Mai nā aheahe makani e pā mai nei
Mau ke aloha, no Hawai‘i*

Happy youth of Hawai‘i
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Gentle breezes blow
Love always for Hawai‘i

*E ha‘i mai kou mau kini lani e
Kou mau kupa aloha, e Hawai‘i
Nā mea ‘ōlino kamaha‘o no luna mai
E Hawai‘i aloha ē*

May your divine throngs speak
Your loving people, o Hawai‘i
The holy light from above
O Hawai‘i aloha

*Nā ke Akua E mālama mai iā ‘oe
Kou mau kualona aloha nei
Kou mau kahawai ‘ōlinolino mau
Kou mau māla pua nani ē*

God protects you
Your beloved ridges
Your ever glistening streams
Your beautiful gardens

⁶Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti, “ko‘u inoa” performance notes, Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti (ASCAP) (2009).

⁷“Hawai‘i Aloha,” Huapala, Hawaiian and Music and Hula Archives, Accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.huapala.org/Hawaii/Hawaii_Aloha.html>.

Daryl Jamieson wrote an article included in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* that suggests ways in which zen-derived aesthetics of contemporary music can be interpreted and implemented. Perhaps the most relevant element included in this piece is the lack of a time signature, meter, or measure numbers.⁸ Because of the lack of meter or written out rhythmic durations, no two performances of this piece will be the same, even if they are coming from the same performer. These techniques highlight the notion that music is something that happens in the moment, and is often times reactive to what a performer might be thinking or feeling during the time of a performance.

hill and valley for solo viola (2021), Mary Kouyoumdjian

Brief composer biography:

Mary Kouyoumdjian (b. 1983) is a first generation Armenian-American composer and documentarian. She believes that art is an amplifier of expression, and her works often integrate recorded testimonies or field recordings to “invite empathy by humanizing complex experiences around social and political conflict.”⁹ Her works include large-scale concert works, multimedia collaborations, and scoring for films. She draws heavily on her heritage for her compositional inspiration and unique sound worlds, and strives to blend the old with the new within her compositions. *The New York Times* and the *New York Music Daily* have described her music as

⁸Daryl Jamieson, “Hollow Sounds: Toward a Zen-derived Contemporary Music,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, (2018).

⁹ Mary Kouyoumdjian, “About,” *Mary Kouyoumdjian*, accessed January 30, 2022, <<https://www.marykouyoumdjian.com/about.html>>.

“emotionally wracking” and “politically fearless.”¹⁰ Kouyoumdjian’s *hill and valley* for solo viola evokes some particularly harrowing moments, and though it does not outrightly suggest any political meaning, one might be able to infer a deeper meaning considering her general approach to composing.

***hill and valley* for solo viola**

Link to recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/hill-and-valley-for-solo-viola>

The only performance note provided in her score is a quote from William Wetmore Story, “i wander o’er hill and valley.”¹¹ William Wetmore Story was an American sculptor, critic, and poet who practiced law after receiving a law degree, but ultimately quit law to pursue his interests in the arts.¹² The quote provided by Kouyoumdjian is taken from the first stanza of Story’s work titled “Alpine Song:”

With alpenstock and knapsack light
I wander o'er hill and valley,
I climb the snow-peak's flashing height
And sleep in the sheltered chalet, —
Free in heart — happy and free —
This is the summer life for me.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Mary Kouyoumdjian, *hill and valley for solo viola* (Brooklyn, NY, 2021).

¹² “William Wetmore Story,” Smithsonian American Art Museum, Accessed March 24, 2022, <<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/william-wetmore-story-4670>>.

¹³ Mary Elizabeth Phillips, *Reminiscences of William Wetmore Story: The American Sculptor and Author* (United States: Rand, McNally, 1897), pg. 164.

Though these words evoke a general enthusiasm towards life, Kouyoumdjian's *hill and valley for solo viola* does not evoke the same feelings of glee or gratitude. In fact, the juxtaposition of this quotation with Kouyoumdjian's music seems eerily dissonant.

Kouyoumdjian includes some performance instructions throughout the score indicating vibrato suggestions, contact point directions, and tempo suggestions, though she indicates at the beginning to feel free to push and pull with regard to the tempo. Two defining characteristics of this piece are the almost constant double-stop drones, and the long, drawn out *glissandi*. Primarily in the key of G minor, the entire first page of the piece has a consistent open G-string drone accompanying the moving notes. Despite the performance note "i wander o-oer hill and valley," this drone keeps the sense of key somewhat grounded, implying just the opposite.

Though the constant G-string drone makes the piece feel grounded, Kouyoumdjian's use of *glissandi* is what closely captures the feeling of wandering, as the notes are constantly gliding from one to the next via a single gliding finger. She instructs that the *glissandi* be drawn out for the full notated duration, which often varies the speed at which one slides:



Figure 3. hill and valley for solo viola, Mary Kouyoumdjian,
mm. 17-19

The excessive use of *glissandi* might portray a feeling of yearning or longing, perhaps for the happy carefree life described in Story's text. Given Kouyoumdjian's focus on political statements within her music, this could be a subdued manifestation of that, emphasizing the idea that though many have the born privilege of walking through life "Free in heart — happy and free—,"¹⁴ that is not the case for everyone. Alternatively, she could also be making a point that though some carry themselves with such a demeanor, everyone has their own demons and sorrows that they struggle with, unbeknownst to those around them.

Nearing the end of the piece, Kouyoumdjian rapidly shifts contact point areas. One phrase might be indicated as *flautando*, over the finger board, where the next is notated as *molto ponticello*, up against the bridge. The last instruction given is "sul ponticello, ghostly (little vib.)," causing the viola to sound distant, slowly dying away.

Hum for Solo Viola (2020), Derrick Skye

Brief composer biography:

Derrick Skye (b. 1982) is a composer whose works can be characterized by his integration of musical practices from different cultures around the world. He has Ghanaian, Nigerian, British, Irish, and Native American ancestry, and his identity through these roots have led him to develop a compositional aesthetic that incorporates many of these influences, paying homage to his cultural identities.¹⁵ Skye's website biography beautifully states that he views music as,

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵Derrick Skye, "Bio," *Derrick Skye*, accessed January 30, 2022, <<https://www.derrickskye.com/about/>>.

“...a doorway into understanding other cultures and different ways of living. Through learning the music of other cultures, the opportunity for dialogue rather than conflict between strangers is opened, and our society can become one with less conflict due to cultural misunderstanding.”¹⁶

This approach to composition and music led him to serve as the artistic director for Bridge to Everywhere, a chamber ensemble and nonprofit arts organization based in Los Angeles. Bridge to Everywhere’s mission is to celebrate and highlight cultural diversity. Derrick Skye’s commitment to highlighting music of all cultures is evident in his work *Hum* for Solo Viola.

***Hum* for Solo Viola**

Link to recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/hum-for-solo-viola-derrick>

Hum was originally written for solo cello, with the following program note: “*Hum* is a piece that imitates the human voice. It is a personal meditation, meant to sound as if one is improvising a song in an intimate moment.”¹⁷ There are extensive performance notes that are provided, giving the performer various instructions for the techniques required to perform this piece.

The most characteristic technique in *Hum* is the blink symbol, a symbol that indicates an ornamentation where the note is approached from above as a rapid grace note:

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Derrick Skye, “Hum for solo viola” performance notes, Spiva Copyright (2021).

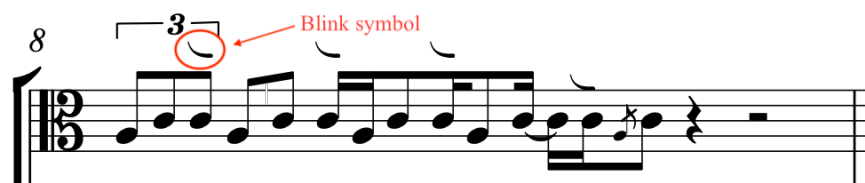


Figure 4. *Hum* for Solo Viola, Derrick Skye, m. 8

The grace note from above should be between a half step and quarter step above the main note, and should not be accented, nor should the main note. In the performance notes, Skye offers some context about where this blink symbol comes from, and where it can be found in music outside of this piece:

“This type of ornament can be found in several flute and string traditions, including the Bulgarian *kaval*, Indian *bansuri*, and Dagomba flutes of Northern Ghana, as well as the bowed Iranian *kamacheh*, and in Bulgarian vocal techniques.”¹⁸

This blink technique is most easily executed if the performer thinks of the grace note as a simple flick of the finger, or just a light tap on the string above (or below when indicated) the given note.

Other performance instructions include notes on timing to enhance the feeling of improvisation that this piece invokes, directing the performer to treat rhythms as approximate,

¹⁸ Ibid.

but keeping up with the overall pacing. A large portion of the piece incorporates an open string drone to be played under the melodic line:

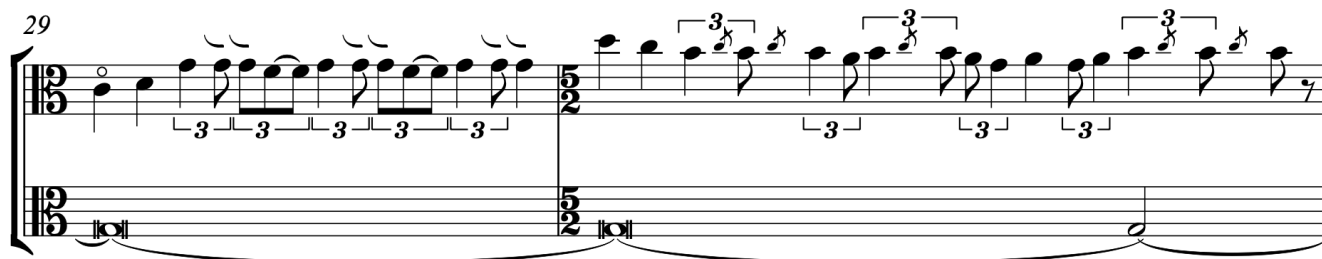


Figure 5. *Hum* for Solo Viola, Derrick Skye, mm. 29-30

The performer has a few options when interpreting these drones: they can play them as written, they can choose to pluck them with the left hand, and they can choose whether or not to play them during rests. The performer also has some freedom when considering the overall form of the piece, as Skye indicates that the piece should be played through beginning to end once, but after that the performer is free to play any phrases/sections of the piece any improvised amount of times. The piece can end with any phrase that the performer may choose. The last performance note indicates that the performer may choose to either sing or hum along with the viola line at any point throughout the piece, or not at all.

Many of these variables that Derrick Skye requests allow for a performing experience unique to both the performer and listener. The elements that are described and defined in the performance notes offer the performer a large amount of artistic freedom, which is not often something performers encounter in music before the 21st-century.

***in manus tuas* (2009), Caroline Shaw**

Brief composer biography:

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982) is an American composer, producer, violinist, and vocalist. Over the last decade she has written over 100 works for a variety of instruments and ensembles, many of which were written for and premiered by renowned performers and ensembles.¹⁹ In 2013 she was the youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for Music for her *Partita for 8 Voices*. Her music reimagines the sound world for the instrument(s) she is writing for, and she routinely explores the instrument's sound capabilities through the use of extended techniques.²⁰

in manus tuas

Link to recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/in-manus-tuas-caroline-shaw>

This exploration of sound is beautifully showcased in Caroline Shaw's piece *in manus tuas*. Originally written for the cello in 2009, she based this piece on an early Thomas Tallis motet.²¹ Through this piece she is depicting a first-hand experience:

“the sensation of a single moment of hearing the motet in the particular and remarkable space of Christ Church in New Haven, Connecticut.”²²

¹⁹ Caroline Shaw, “Bio,” *Caroline Shaw*, Accessed January 31, 2022
<<https://carolineshaw.com/bio/>>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Caroline Shaw, “in manus tuas” performance notes, Caroline Shaw Editions (2009/2013).

²² Ibid.

Shaw accomplishes this by utilizing three main techniques: exploring the sound quality of the instrument, singing from the performer, and a large, untimed *bariolage* section.

The piece begins with a scratchy tone, indicated with scribbles above the notated pitches. The scribbles indicate the emergence and disappearance of the notated tone from/into a scratchy, pitchless sound:

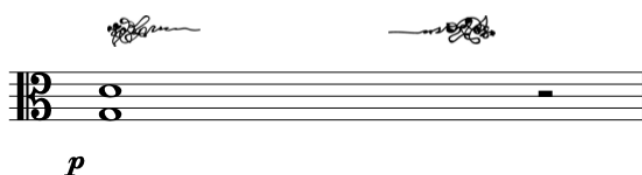


Figure 6. *in manus tuas*, Caroline Shaw, m. 1

Shaw requests that the scratchy, pitchless sounds be gentle, so as not to interrupt the meditative feeling of the opening line. Just as the piece begins, it ends with the emergence and disappearance of the indicated pitch through the scratchy tone. String players usually make an effort to avoid scratchy tones like this, so this is one way in which Shaw incorporates elements and techniques to expand the instrument's capabilities and sound world.

Perhaps one of the most unique elements utilized in this piece is vocalized lines. The vocalization is to be included simultaneously with the viola line, and can be vocalized using any vowel, or with the mouth closed. Shaw notates this using a double staff in the score:

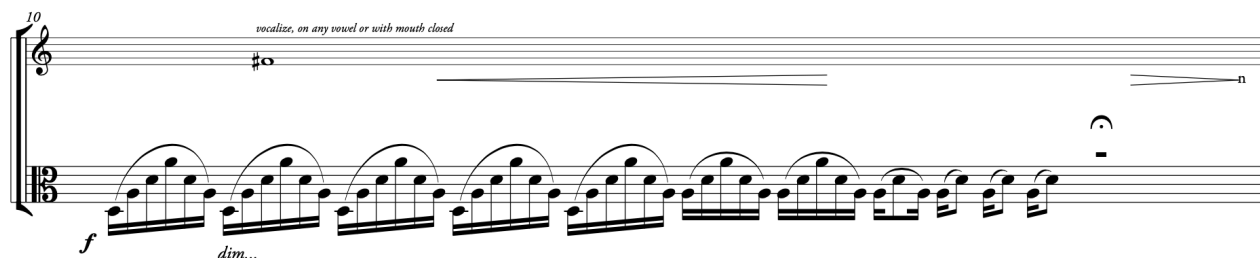


Figure 7. *in manus tuas*, Caroline Shaw, m. 10

Often time the singing continues after the viola playing stops, creating what sounds like a lingering echo. This perfectly portrays the feeling Shaw mentions in her program notes of sitting in a large, resonant church while music lingers and rings. The added element of human voice creates an intimate feeling, but might pose slight challenges to the performer. The performer should take into consideration what vowel will speak over the viola playing most effectively, as well as consider an appropriate pace to play the accompanying viola part underneath so that they do not run out of air and cut the vocalization short.

Lastly, Shaw includes a commonly used string technique called *bariolage*. The middle section of this piece (measures 30-46) is one large *bariolage* section, and the timing is almost entirely up to the performer's discretion. Shaw indicates some pacing suggestions, but leaves it ultimately up to the performer. She notes that she had originally carefully scripted this section in terms of timing, but decided to change it as to not alter the meditative nature of these moments.²³

Contrasting the *bariolage* is a hymn-like melody line that both precedes and follows the *bariolage* section. The first time it is to be played with the bow, and the second time it is played

²³ Ibid.

solely *pizzicato*. This section of music is characterized by resonant double stops and chords. When the hymn-like melody returns marked as *pizzicato* at the end of the piece, Shaw incorporates large silences both within and in between phrases. These silences draw out the music and create even more space for reflection within an already meditative work.

***Heartstrings* (2021), A.S. Cosman**

Brief composer biography:

A.S. Cosman (b. 1998) began composing her own music at the young age of twelve, primarily writing for stringed instruments. An accomplished violist herself, she has written a handful of pieces for the viola, and anticipates composing more in the future. Her compositional influences range from Vivaldi to Prokofiev, and she enjoys genre bending within her compositions, often times including elements of rock and roll and other musical genres.²⁴

Heartstrings

Link to recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/heartstrings-as-cosman>

Written for a student film at the University of Georgia of the same title, *Heartstrings* is Cosman's second score produced for a film project.²⁵ Written with no dialogue and featuring Cosman's music, the film depicts two young music conservatory roommates who are also friends. One of the friends begins to experiment with partying and alcohol, while the other is tempted and contemplates the outcome and consequences if she chooses to go down that road as

²⁴ A.S. Cosman, email message to Claudia Malchow, March 26, 2022.

²⁵ Ibid.

well. Ultimately, she decides that she loves music more and is not willing to risk the potential negative outcome of partying. As a result, the two friends grow apart, though now they have gained a better understanding of one another's values.

The film can be divided into three main segments. The beginning is where the two friends are seen hanging out constantly and playing music together, setting the stage with their relationship. The middle section is where the main character's friend begins dabbling in alcohol and a life of partying, and this is also where the main character begins to envision what her life might look like if she makes the same decisions. The last section is where we see the main character pick music over temptation, and though she and her friend chose two different lifestyles, they still maintained a relationship with one another.

This beginning-middle-end structure is also reflected in A.S. Cosman's accompanying composition, more specifically in A-B-A' form:

A	B	A'
mm. 1-16	mm. 17-73	mm. 74-94
E-flat major	E-flat major—C minor—D minor—C minor	E-flat major

Figure 8. *Heartstrings* form diagram

Just as the film does, Cosman sets the stage in her first section, with an opening octave *double stop* establishing tonic in the key of E-flat major. The opening section is slow, yet virtuosic, clearly influenced by viola cadenzas of the classical era. Firmly grounded in the key of E-flat

major, characteristic elements of the A section include arpeggiated figures and consonant double stops that further establish E-flat major.

The B section is nearly twice as fast as the opening section and is almost consistently sixteenth notes or triplet sixteenth notes. The music turns darker and more aggressive than the opening section, and starting in measure 40 Cosman incorporates rapidly changing time signatures, furthering the unsteady feeling of this section. This unsteadiness of meter perfectly reflects the main character's inner struggle in the film.

Within the rapidly changing time signatures are brief moments that feel reminiscent of Vivaldi's second violin concerto, most well-known as "Summer." Cosman incorporates an almost direct quote in measures 54-57:



Figure 9. *Heartstrings*, A.S. Cosman, mm. 55-56



Figure 10. Concerto No. 2 for Violin and String Orchestra, "Summer,"
III. Presto, Antonio Vivaldi, mm. 41-43

The timing of this reference is compelling, because it is juxtaposed in the film while the main character is contemplating two different life paths. By interpolating a brief phrase from this extremely well known piece of music, perhaps this moment in the score foreshadows the main character's ultimate decision to choose music over social temptations.

The A' section opens the same as the beginning of the piece, with an E-flat octave double stop, reestablishing the home key of the piece as the main character re-centers herself. Though the A' section opens exactly as the beginning of the piece, after a few measures it wanders off and varies from the A section, ultimately ending in the home key and reflecting the maintained relationship of the two friends in the film.

For Sydney (2011), Amanda Harberg

Brief composer biography:

Amanda Harberg (b. 1973) is an active composer, pianist, and educator. Through her compositional works, she strives for her music to communicate on an emotional, spiritual, and intellectual level, weaving together her love for classical Western tradition with contemporary influences.²⁶ She has composed a number of successful works for the viola including *Prayer* for Viola and Piano, *Concerto* for Viola and Orchestra, *Philadelphia Suite* for Viola and Piano, and *Elegy* for Viola and Orchestra. Her works are well-written for the viola, falling nicely on the instrument, and beautifully highlighting the deep, warm tones unique to the viola.

²⁶ Amanda Harberg, "About," *Amanda Harberg*, Accessed March 20, 2022, <<https://amandaharberg.com/about/>>.

For Sydney

Link to recording (Movement I, *Lullaby*):

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/for-sydney-movement-i-lullaby>

Link to recording (Movement II, *Dance*):

<https://soundcloud.com/claudia-malchow-68157020/for-sydney-movement-2-dance>

Harberg's work *For Sydney* for solo viola is written for her daughter. The piece is divided into two movements, a lullaby movement and a dance movement. The program note states that a characteristic of Harberg's palette is "the simultaneous strength of musical structure along with boisterous fun, and *For Sydney* is a tour de force in blending these traits, while remaining idiomatic for the violist."²⁷

The drawn-out melody lines in the first movement, *Lullaby*, portray a sense of calm, as if characterizing a mother's love for her child. Harberg writes this movement in 6/4 meter, giving it a slow dancelike feeling, as if one is rocking their child to sleep. She often uses the major seventh interval, specifically from the pitch C up to B, and during the most climactic moment of the movement jumps from B up to C, a minor ninth interval. When played with a slight *portamento* up to the top pitch, these large intervals can be emotionally effective for the listener.

The second movement, *Dance*, is energetic and lively. This movement instantly captures the lively spirit of a cheerful, carefree child through her use of meter. The meter is constantly changing back and forth between simple and compound, as well as duple and triple time signatures, never feeling completely grounded. Figure 10 shows an example of the constantly changing meters in measures 4-7:

²⁷Amanda Harberg, *For Sydney* for Solo Viola (Theodore Presser Company, 2016).



Figure 11. *For Sydney* for solo viola, Amanda Harberg, mm. 4-7

This poses some potential struggles when performing this piece, as there are some difficult rhythms or pulse issues as a result. To the listener, the meter is often completely unpredictable, perhaps capturing the happy-go-lucky spirit of a toddler. When learning this piece, the performer should rely heavily on sixteenth-note subdivisions, gradually increasing the tempo as the rhythmic feel and groove begin to fit together.

Conclusion

The ultimate goal of this recording project was to produce high-quality recordings of pieces written for solo viola in the 21st century, paired with a written document that includes information to help guide a first-time performer or listener. The viola as a 21st-century solo instrument is underrepresented in the repertoire, and these recordings aim to promote the selected composers and their compositions for solo viola. In making a conscious effort to engage in the music of our time, today's musicians can help highlight under-programmed works written for the viola.

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GLOSSARY OF STRING TECHNIQUES

Bariolage—used in string instruments to describe several ways of mixing open strings with stopped notes in rapid succession.

Flautando—produces a soft flute-like tone and is accomplished by bowing lightly and rapidly across the string with a contact point near or over the fingerboard.

Glissando—In string playing, a sliding movement usually accomplished using a single finger, often times to get from one note to the next.

Pizzacato—plucking the strings with the fingers.

Portamento—small slide from one note to another. Less deliberate than a glissando, acting more as an ornamentation.

sul ponticello—bow close to/on the bridge of the instrument, produces a thin, metallic sound.

sul tasto—bow near or over the fingerboard, resulting in an ethereal tone.