
S e v e r a n c e

f o r g u i t a r
edited by Geoffrey Morris

"You all know the wild grief that besets us when we remember times of happiness. How far beyond recall they are, and we are severed from them by something more pitiless than leagues and miles. In the afterlight, too, the images stand out more enticing than before... And constantly in our thirst-haunted dreams we grope for the past in its every detail, in its every line and fold. Then it cannot but seem to us as if we had not had our fill of love and life; yet no regret brings back what has been let slip."

-Ernst Juenger: On the Marble Cliffs

Duration: about 7 minutes

Originally written between '88 and '91 at the request of Magnus Andersson
with funding provided by the Darmstadt Internationales Ferienkurse für Neue Musik;
reworked and recopied, March '94

- 1 Accidentals only apply to the notes they immediately precede.
- 2 No vibrato whatsoever.
- 3 Fingerings given are the composer's suggestions, and are by no means mandatory. Better solutions may well be available.
- 4 Except in specific non-legato sections, all lines should be legato.
- 5 The score is to be understood as inhabiting a world dominated by interpretative rubato. It is nominally notated at 3½ centimetres to 1 second (in performance, however, the time-space seems to average out nearer 2 cm per second (= mm36ish)), and players may, if they wish, go through the score and mark the seconds in, but it is the composer's preference that unfolding time be 'felt' rather than 'calculated'.

Consequently, the rhythmical life is notated unusually; in place of exact detailed -'intellectual'- information, beaming is a reinforcement of distances between noteheads, which are directly proportional to durations. This lessening of rhythmical specificity is not to be understood as licence to waywardness, the musical substance having been composed as rigorously as ever; the character of the resulting music implies a certain elasticity. An ideal performance, therefore, would be one of considered, and consistent, inexactitude.

- 6 In addition to the modified rhythmical notation, the gracenote life of the piece is more elaborate than usual, utilising several degrees of rapidity. These are beamed as if they were quavers, semiquavers, and demisemis (8ths, 16ths, and 32nds), although the ratios between their tempi should not be fully 4:2:1, but a narrower ratio ...2:1½:1, for instance. They should always be rapid, but varyingly so. To distinguish them from the metrically uneven 'in-time' music, all groups have a slash at one end. These motoric gracenotes should always have the psychological effect of an uncomfortable intrusion, whether of agitation or respite.
- 7 Notes with a dotted ring around them are isolatedly sul pont.
- 8 Golpe: preferably flat hand slapped on body.
- 9 Dynamics are tiered through seven levels: ppp - pp - p - mf - f - ff - fff

All marcati within prevailing local dynamic unless otherwise indicated.

- 10 Notes where the written pitch is an octave higher than the specified position are to be played as RH octave harmonics. The first few have 'RH' indicated next to the string/fret numbers, and the fingered pitch is given in brackets each time.

belatedly, for Magnus

GUITAR

POCO
MARTELLATO
E NON-LEGATO

Handwritten guitar score for "Severance" by Chris Dench '94. The score is written on five systems of five-line staves. It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Performance instructions include "POCO MARTELLATO E NON-LEGATO", "SP" (Sustained Pedal), "ORD." (Ordinate), "P" (Piano), "ff" (fortissimo), "mfz" (mezzo-forte zangherato), "f" (forte), "p" (piano), "sfz" (sforzando), "poco RALL." (poco rallentando), and "marcato in dim.". Fingering is indicated with circled numbers (e.g., ①, ②, ③, ④, ⑤, ⑥, ⑦, ⑧, ⑨, ⑩, ⑪, ⑫, ⑬, ⑭, ⑮). Dynamic markings include "1'' and "2'' above notes. The score concludes with a "HALF-FINISHED" stamp at the bottom center.

© Chris Dench '94: Severance

- 1 -
HALF-FINISHED

Handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of five systems of staves. The notation includes notes, chords, and various performance markings. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

System 1: Starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. Includes markings for *ORD* and *SP/ORD*. A large bracket labeled "2" spans across the system. The tempo/mood marking is *CANTABILE E MALINCONICO (non troppo presto!) UN RO' AGITATO*. Dynamics range from *mf* to *ppp!*. Includes fingering numbers like 1^{xii}, 5^{xii}, 3, 4^{xii}, 5^v, and 3.

System 2: Starts with a dynamic marking of *ppp*. Includes the marking *legato*. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *f*. Includes markings for *poco mf* and *ppp cresc...*.

System 3: Starts with a dynamic marking of *p*. Includes the marking *MOLTO RT.* and *A TEMPO*. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *f*. Includes a marking for *poco*.

System 4: Starts with a dynamic marking of *ff*. Dynamics range from *pp* to *f*. Includes a marking for *poco pesante*.

System 5: Starts with a dynamic marking of *f*. Includes a marking for *meno f*. Dynamics range from *mf/pp* to *pp*. Includes a marking for *poco*. A large bracket labeled "2" spans across the system.

Other markings include *ST.* and various fingering numbers (1^{xii}, 5^{xii}, 3, 4^{xii}, 5^v, 3, 7, 5^v, 2^{xii}, 2^{xii}, 2^{xii}).

mfz/mf e cresc...
MOLTO RALL. p mf e cresc... ff
CON PASSIONE: AGITATO, FEROCO E PRESTO mf

pp (come prima) f poco p (sim.) sfz ff!
2''
dolpe:

poco più cantabile
ff!
p/ff! p pp/

f ff! p ff mf ff p ff! p

ppp sfz ppp sfz p/f ff
HAMMER-ON

Musical score with five systems of staves. The notation includes chords, melodic lines, and various performance instructions.

System 1: Dynamics range from *ff* to *mf*. Includes the instruction *poco mf* and *(RH HAMMER-ON)*.

System 2: Dynamics range from *ff* to *pp*. Includes the instruction *SLOWLY!* and *ORD*.

System 3: Dynamics range from *ff* to *pp*. Includes the instruction *DESOLATO E MORENDO (fragile: thin and inelegant)* and *suddenly animated*.

System 4: Dynamics range from *mf* to *ppp*. Includes the instruction *animated again* and *animated initially, but collapsing*.

System 5: Dynamics range from *mf* to *pp*. Includes the instruction *(detached)*.

Additional notes: *pesante*, *TEMPO*, *2nd (For these chords, RH always close to LH)*, *ffz - RALL.*, *ppp (but resonant)*, and *SLOWLY*.

Handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of five systems of staves. The notation includes various dynamics, articulations, and performance instructions.

System 1: Starts with "animated". Includes fingerings ①^{XI}, ②^{XIX}, ③^{XIX}, and ④^{XII}. Markings include "SLOWLY" and "(sim.)".

System 2: Starts with "(pp)". Includes "BALL." and "(bend)". Dynamics range from "mfz" to "f". Includes a "2nd" marking.

System 3: Starts with "SLOWLY". Includes "più mf (poco pesante)". Dynamics include "mf", "pp", "p", "mfz/p", "mf", "ff", and "mf". Includes a "3rd (RH)" marking.

System 4: Starts with "p" and "pp". Includes "suddenly animated". Dynamics include "mf", "pp", "p", "mfz", and "pp".

System 5: Starts with "SLOWLY". Includes "(RH)". Dynamics include "pp", "poco mf", "ppp", "mf", and "pp". Includes a circled "5th" marking.

Performance Instructions: "REST PALM ON BRIDGE - PICK OVER SOUNDHOLE" is written in the bottom right corner.