

engravings
for cello solo

christopher burns

Engravings began as a series of nine brief etudes for the cello. Each of these miniatures was composed very freely and rapidly, inspired by one of the number of extraordinary cellists and composer-cellists I've met or worked with in the past ten years. These disparate miniatures were then layered together, interacting and interfering with one another, to create the collage that is *Engravings*. The finished work is a group portrait of influences on my development as a musician and person; it is also a depiction of Franklin Cox, the (tenth) cellist-composer who is both the commissioner and dedicatee of the piece.

duration 5'

Performance notes:

Dynamic changes are instantaneous (*subito*) unless explicitly connected by hairpins.

Triple stops are to be performed *sempre non arpeggiando*; perform with whatever dynamic and bow pressure is necessary to engage all three strings at once.

Accidentals persist through the measure of their appearance. Many reminder accidentals are included in the score.

Grace notes are to be performed before the beat.

The duration of all playing techniques other than *arco ordinario* are given explicitly.

Double barlines indicate sectional divisions of the form.

Bow positions:

sul dito : at the stopping finger of the left hand

m.s.t. : molto sul tasto

s.t. : sul tasto

s.p. : sul ponticello

m.s.p. : molto sul ponticello

bridge : bow directly on bridge (noise only, no pitch)

Arrows indicate smooth and continuous transitions between different bowing positions.

Bowing techniques:

scratch/overpressure: bow with overpressure, producing a mixture of tone and noise

sticking overpressure: overpressure to the point where the bow sticks irregularly against the string

flautando: bow more rapidly than normal, with less than normal pressure

vertical bow: maximize bow motion along the string, minimizing motion across the string

Left-hand techniques:

pull harmonic: use finger touching node to bend string slightly, producing an upwards glissando

dashed slurs indicate a legato transition between normal stopping pressure and harmonic pressure

flat seventh harmonic



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The score is divided into four systems, each with a tempo marking at the beginning:

- System 1 (Cello):** Tempo $\bullet = 72$. Starts with *ff* dynamics, moving through *p* and *mf*. Includes performance instructions: *flautando*, *flautando*, *m.s.t.*, and *ord.*. Fingerings (5, 3, 7:8) and a *non. arp.* marking are present.
- System 2 (Vc.):** Tempo $\bullet = 48$. Starts with *ppp* dynamics, moving through *ff*, *pp*, *f*, and *ff*. Includes the instruction *pull harmonic*. Fingerings (7:8, 5:3, 5, 7:8) and *non. arp.* markings are present.
- System 3 (Vc.):** Tempo $\bullet = 48$ to $\bullet = 64$. Starts with *f* dynamics, moving through *ff*, *mf*, and *sub. ppp*. Includes performance instructions: *battuto pizz.*, *non vib.*, and *s.t.*. Fingerings (3, 3, 5, 5, 3) and *m.s.t.* markings are present.
- System 4 (Vc.):** Tempo $\bullet = 72$. Starts with *f* dynamics, moving through *mp*, *p*, and *f*. Includes fingerings (3, 3, 3).

17

Vc.

fp *mp* *f* *p*

20

♩ = 84

Vc.

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

flautando *sul dito* *sul dito*

25

♩ = 58

Vc.

mp *f* *<ff* *p* *mf* *<ff* *p* *<ff* *f*

m.s.p. *s.p.* *ord.* *sticking overpressure* *non arp.*

28

Vc.

mf *f* *ff* *p* *f* *ff* *fff*

m.s.p. *s.t.* *scratch/overpressure* *non vib.*

Vc. $\bullet = 64$
m.s.p.
 30 *p* *pp* *mf* *s.p.* *ord.*

Vc. $\bullet = 64$
 34 *< f* *mp* *f* *ff* *mp* *m.s.t.*
scratch/overpressure *flautando* *battuto*

Vc. $\bullet = 48$
 38 *< f* *ff* *p* *f* *mp* *ff* *fff* *p*
m.s.p. *sul dito* *pizz.* *m.s.p.* *s.p.* *s.t.* *s.p.* *m.s.t.* *flautando* *m.s.t.*

41 $\bullet = 84$ $\bullet = 72$

Vc. *fff* *ppp* *mp* *p*

scratch/overpressure *s.p.* *m.s.t.*

5 5 5 3 7:8

vertical bow *m.s.t.*

44 (vertical bow) *m.s.p.* bridge *s.p.* ord.

Vc. *pp* *ff ppp*

m.s.t.

♩ = 58

Vc.

bridge → ord.

1

ppp \curvearrowright p

non vib.

5

3

III

IV

pp

m.s.t. → ord.

II

III

ff p

♩ = 48

Vc.

3

non arp.

5

non arp.

p ff f < fff ppp

flautando

IV

pp

♩ = 72

Vc.

s.p.

55

p

sub. f

p

flautando

I

III

II

IV

IV

♩ = 84
♩ = 96
♩ = 64
7:8 3 7:8 3 5 5
→ m.s.p. → s.p. → s.t. → m.s.t. → s.p. → m.s.p. →

Vc. 57 *pp* *f* *ff* *non arp.* *fff*

Vc. 61 *pppp* *p* *mf* *ff* *non vib.* leave bow on string