



JAMES M. STEPHENSON

SONATA

for

TROMBONE

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Sonata for Trombone and Piano (2004)

Program Notes as written by Mark Hetzler

[Liner notes for "American Voices, Vol II; Sonatas". Summit Records DCD 531]

Mark writes:

"Having known Jim since our time together as students in Boston, I have always marveled at the quality of his compositional technique as well as the creativity and inventive approach he takes with his craft. His Sonata is composed of three movements, each pitting contrasting themes and styles against each other, and together growing to form an overall and complete musical statement.

The first movement starts with a very slow and mysterious, blues-like ballad. The modern style of his musical voice can be heard immediately in the trombonist's slippery first entrance (this piece is not afraid to reach outside of the traditional classical mold). Soon the opening music builds to an exciting climax and then turns reluctantly, easing back to set up the Tarantella, a very exciting romp showcasing triple tonguing, arpeggios, scale passages and a very dramatic inter-play between trombone and piano. The movement's opening ballad material resurfaces after the tarantella's energy is extinguished in a tumultuous outburst of descending major 7ths (a motive Jim returns to throughout the sonata).

The second movement is quite short, but it packs a wallop with its wild character and robust swagger. Subtitled "Homage to Prokofiev" (one of Jim's favorite composers), this movement relies on very colorful melodies, a hilariously extroverted piano accompaniment and seemingly ridiculous statements shouted through the trombone.

The sonata keeps building with the final movement, a twisted Rondo form that again looks to wild energy to keep both players on their toes. The manic energy goes back and forth between pianist and trombonist for the entire movement, with the exception of a very surreal interlude conveyed by a dream-like melody in the trombone over a hypnotic and somewhat impressionistic accompaniment in the piano.

Martha (Mark's accompanist) and I have played Jim's Sonata often over the past several years and, as our interpretation of the piece continues to grow, so does my sense of wonder and satisfaction with this work."

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for Mark Hetzler
Sonata for Trombone and Piano

I.

James M. Stephenson, III
(2004)

Lento - Espressivo

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a Trombone (Tbn.) part on the top staff and a Piano (Pno.) part on the bottom staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The first system (measures 1-3) features a *Rubato* tempo for the piano, starting with a *pp* dynamic. The piano part includes a sixteenth-note triplet in measure 2 and a *In Tempo* marking in measure 3. The second system (measures 4-7) begins with a circled 'A' above measure 4. The piano part has a sixteenth-note triplet in measure 4 and a *poco mp* dynamic marking in measure 7. The third system (measures 8-11) features a *poco mp* dynamic marking in measure 8 and a *poco* dynamic marking in measure 11. The piano part includes several *poco* markings and a *slur* in measure 11.

12

Tbn.

Pno.

mf

p

mp

molto

6

9

6

3

15

Tbn.

Pno.

ff

f

ff

Tempo

accel.

3

6

6

3

3

3

19

Tbn.

Pno.

ff

ff

f

poco

poco

poco

poco

3

3

3

11

(C)

22

Tbn.

Pno.

p

mp

p

mp

p

mp

p

mp

p

mp

p

mp

p

mp

(D)

26

Tbn. *poco a poco cresc. e poco mosso* *mf*

Pno. *mf*

30

Tbn. *ff ma dolce*

Pno. *rit.*

33

Tbn. *mp leggiero, energico*

Pno. *rit.* **(E) Vivo, Tarantella** (♩ = 96, if possible)

36

Tbn.

Pno.

40

Tbn.

Pno.

44

Tbn.

Pno.

48

Tbn.

Pno.

F

52

Tbn.

Pno.

mf *p* *mf* *pp*

56

Tbn.

Pno.

59

Tbn.

Pno.

mf less leggiero, more melodic

60

63

Tbn.

Pno.

67

Tbn.

Pno.

l'istesso tempo

71

Tbn.

Pno.

75

Tbn.

Pno.

ff

l'istesso tempo

79

Tbn.

Pno.

mp

(H)

83

Tbn.

Pno.

87 **I**

Tbn. *mf* *mp* *mp* *p*

Pno. *mf* *mp* *mp*

91

Tbn. *p* *f*

Pno. *p* *fz*

95

Tbn. *ff* *sempre*

Pno. *ff* *fz*

99 **J**

Tbn. *f* *ff* *mf* *f*

Pno. *f* *mf* *mp*

103 (K)

Tbn. *mf* less leggiero, more melodic

Pno. *f* *mf*

107

Tbn.

Pno.

111

Tbn.

Pno.

114

Tbn. *f* *ma dolce*

Pno. *l'istesso tempo*

Tbn. 118

Pno. 118

118

119

120

Detailed description: This system covers measures 118 to 120. The Trombone part (Tbn.) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a melodic line that includes a tritone interval. The Piano part (Pno.) consists of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The right hand plays a melodic line with a long slur, while the left hand provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

(L) *l'istesso tempo*

Tbn. 121

Pno. 121

121

122

123

ff

f

f

ff

Detailed description: This system covers measures 121 to 123. The Trombone part (Tbn.) has a melodic line with a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic, followed by a decrescendo to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Piano part (Pno.) features a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The right hand has a melodic line with a crescendo to *f* and a decrescendo to *ff*. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with a triplet in measure 123.

(M) *Slowing*

Tbn. 124

Pno. 124

124

125

126

127

128

ff

mf

f

f

mf

f

Detailed description: This system covers measures 124 to 128. The Trombone part (Tbn.) has a melodic line with a crescendo to *ff*, a decrescendo to *mf*, and a final crescendo to *f*. The Piano part (Pno.) features a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The right hand has a melodic line with a crescendo to *ff* and a decrescendo to *mf*. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with a triplet in measure 124 and a decrescendo to *f*.

Tbn. 129

Pno. 129

129

130

131

132

133

mf

mf

Detailed description: This system covers measures 129 to 133. The Trombone part (Tbn.) has a melodic line with a decrescendo to *mf*. The Piano part (Pno.) features a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The right hand has a melodic line with a decrescendo to *mf*. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with a decrescendo to *mf*.

135 *molto rit.* N Tempo Primo: Lento - Espressivo

Tbn.

Pno.

135

p

6

Tbn.

Pno.

141

p

poco *mp*

3 3

poco a poco cresc. e poco mosso

Tbn.

Pno.

145

l'istesso tempo

Tbn.

Pno.

149

ff *f* *p* *gliss.*

pp

ppp *p*

3 3

II. Intermezzo - Gavotte Homage to Prokofiev

Gavotte $\text{♩} = 92$

Trombone

Piano

Tbn.

Pno.

Tbn.

Pno.

A

B

mf *f* *p* *pp* *fz* *mf* *fp* *f* *f sempre* *p*

Tbn. *poco* *mp* *sub. mf*

Pno. *f* *mf*

Tbn. *f* *f sempre*

Pno. *f* *fz* *fz* *fz*

Tbn. *p dolce, floating*

Pno. *p*

Tbn.

Pno. *molto*

29

Tbn. *mf* *f* *f sempre*

Pno. *mf* *f*

33

Tbn.

Pno. *ff* *f* *p*

(D)

37

Tbn.

Pno.

41

Tbn. *p* *f*

Pno. *f*

(E)

Tbn. *gliss.* *ff*

Pno. *ff* *fz*

Tbn. *f* *dim.*

Pno. *f*

Tbn. *pp* *8va*

Pno. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *8vb*

III.

With abandon, Wild (♩ = 160)

Trombone

Piano

ff

ff

Tbn.

Pno.

5

Tbn.

Pno.

9

pp non cresc., non vib.

loco

pp

p

molto

3

3

13

Tbn. *ff* *mp*

Pno. *p*

17

Tbn.

Pno.

21

Tbn.

Pno.

25

Tbn. *mf* *f* *mf*

Pno. *f* *mf* *mp*

(B)

Tbn. 29

Pno. 29

3

f *mf* *f*

3

Detailed description: This system covers measures 29 to 32. The Trombone part (Tbn.) features a melodic line with triplet eighth notes and quarter notes. The Piano part (Pno.) has a bass line with eighth notes and chords, including a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f*, *mf*, and *f*. A circled '3' is present at the end of the piano staff.

Tbn. 33

Pno. 33

p *mp* *p*

3

Detailed description: This system covers measures 33 to 36. The Trombone part (Tbn.) has a melodic line with triplet eighth notes and quarter notes. The Piano part (Pno.) features a bass line with eighth notes and chords, including a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *p*, *mp*, and *p*.

Tbn. 37

Pno. 37

f *mf* *f*

3

mf *f*

3

Detailed description: This system covers measures 37 to 40. The Trombone part (Tbn.) has a melodic line with a fermata in measure 38 and a circled 'C' above measure 39. The Piano part (Pno.) features a bass line with eighth notes and chords, including a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f*, *mf*, and *f*.

Tbn. 41

Pno. 41

f *f*

3

Detailed description: This system covers measures 41 to 44. The Trombone part (Tbn.) has a melodic line with triplet eighth notes and quarter notes. The Piano part (Pno.) features a bass line with eighth notes and chords, including a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f* and *f*.

Tbn. *p* *f* *p*

Pno. *sfz* *ff*

Tbn. *f* *mf espr.*

Pno. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *all within p*

Tbn.

Pno.

Tbn. *mf*

Pno.

Tbn. 61 *f*

Pno. 61 *mp*

Tbn. 65 *mp* *mp leggiero*

Pno. 65 *mf*

Tbn. 69 *f*

Pno. 69

Tbn. 73 *mp* *f* *mp* *f* *f*

Pno. 73 *f*

Tbn. 77

Pno. 77

Tbn. 81 (F)

Pno. 81

f

f

Tbn. 85

Pno. 85

p

mp

p

ff

ff

f

p

Tbn. 89

Pno. 89

p

p

f

p

simile

93

Tbn.

Pno.

97

Tbn.

Pno.

f

f

ff

al

101

Tbn.

Pno.

p

poco rallentando

Ⓒ Moderato (♩ = 132)

105

Tbn.

Pno.

mp espr.

Ⓓ

Tbn. *mf*

Pno.

Tbn. *mp*

Pno.

Tbn. *p* *mp* *poco*

Pno.

Tbn. *mp*

Pno.

125

Tbn. *p* *sub. pp* **J**

Pno. *sub. pp*

129

Tbn.

Pno.

133

Tbn. *accel.*

Pno.

K Tempo primo (♩ = 160)

137

Tbn. *p* *f* *p* *f*

Pno. *f* *p* *f*

Tbn. *fz* *p* *p*

Pno. *p*

Tbn. *sub. p* *f*

Pno. *f*

Tbn. *p*

Pno. *p*

Tbn. *mf* *p*

Pno. *mf* *f* *p*

157

Tbn.

Pno.

f

pp

loco

f

161

Tbn.

Pno.

ff

ff

4
2

3

165

Tbn.

Pno.

(M)

f marcato

169

Tbn.

Pno.

173

Tbn.

Pno.

177

Tbn.

Pno.

181

Tbn.

Pno.

185

Tbn.

Pno.

189

Tbn.

Pno.

189

2 3 1 2 3 4

5 4 3 2 1 2

p

193

Tbn.

Pno.

193

mp

f

3

fz

f

ff

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