

Gestures

for solo violin

Charles Nichols

The five movements of *Gestures* for solo violin were originally composed to accompany a solo dancer, and each movement features a different technical challenge for the violinist. The first explores the juxtaposition of a relentless driving ostinato with a soaring suspended melodic line. The second plays with the duality between sinuous melodic material and punctuating crystalline left- and right-hand pizzicato. The third takes an historic view of implied polyphony, assimilating the solo violin music of Bach. The pitch material for this movement is woven from the melodies of the D minor Partita, and the rhythmic material and structure mirror the dance forms. The fourth movement is a Neo-Romantic piece, with sweeping melodic lines, and the fifth is a two-part chorale.

Composer, violinist, and computer music researcher **Charles Nichols** explores the expressive potential of instrumental ensembles, computer music systems, and combinations of the two, for the concert stage, and collaborations with dance and video. His research includes motion capture for musical performance, telematic performance, data sonification, and haptic musical instrument design. He teaches Composition and Computer Music at Virginia Tech, and is a faculty affiliate of the Institute for Creativity Arts and Technology. He has earned degrees from Eastman, Yale, and Stanford, and previously taught at the University of Montana, where he directed the Mountain Electroacoustic Laptop Ensemble and Composers Workshop Pierrot Ensemble. He has conducted haptic musical instrument research as a visiting scholar at the Sonic Arts Research Centre at Queen's University Belfast, taught computer music workshops at the Banff Centre, Charlotte New Music Festival, and the University of Rome, and composed as a resident at the Ucross and Brush Creek artist retreats. His recent premieres include *Il Prete Rosso*, for amplified violin, motion sensor, and computer, that controls audio effects with a wireless motion sensor on the bow hand of the violinist, *Sound of Rivers: Stone Drum*, a multimedia collaboration, with sonified data, electric violin, and computer music, accompanying narrated poetry, dance, animation, and processed video, based on scientific research into the sound of rivers, and *Nicolo, Jimi, and John*, a three movement concerto, for amplified viola, orchestra, and computer, inspired by the virtuosity of Paganini, Hendrix, and Coltrane.

Gestures for Solo Violin

I.

Charles Nichols

$\text{♩} = 56$
suspended, soaring

violin

mp \leftarrow *f*
relentless, driving

5

8

11

14

17

38 *f*

Musical staff 38-40. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Measure 38 starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Measure 39 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 40 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. There are trills over the G4 and F#4 notes in measure 39, and a triplet of eighth notes (D4, C4, B3) in measure 40. A dynamic marking *f* is below measure 38.

41

Musical staff 41-42. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Measure 41 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 42 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. There are trills over the G4 and F#4 notes in measure 41, and a triplet of eighth notes (D4, C4, B3) in measure 42.

43

Musical staff 43-44. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Measure 43 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 44 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. There are trills over the G4 and F#4 notes in measure 43, and a triplet of eighth notes (D4, C4, B3) in measure 44.

45

Musical staff 45-46. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Measure 45 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 46 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. There are trills over the G4 and F#4 notes in measure 45, and a triplet of eighth notes (D4, C4, B3) in measure 46.

47

Musical staff 47-48. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Measure 47 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 48 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. There is a slur over measures 47-48 with a '5' below it, indicating a quintuplet. There are trills over the G4 and F#4 notes in measure 47, and a triplet of eighth notes (D4, C4, B3) in measure 48.

49

Musical staff 49-50. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Measure 49 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 50 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. There is a slur over measures 49-50 with a '3' below it, indicating a triplet. There are trills over the G4 and F#4 notes in measure 49, and a triplet of eighth notes (D4, C4, B3) in measure 50.

51

Musical staff 51-52. Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Measure 51 has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. Measure 52 has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. There is a slur over measures 51-52 with a '3' below it, indicating a triplet. There are trills over the G4 and F#4 notes in measure 51, and a triplet of eighth notes (D4, C4, B3) in measure 52.

53

Musical staff 53: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. It features two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes) and a triplet of eighth notes at the end of the staff.

55

Musical staff 55: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. It features two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes).

57

Musical staff 57: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. It features two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes).

59

Musical staff 59: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. It features two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes).

62

Musical staff 62: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. It features two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes).

65

Musical staff 65: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. It features two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes).

68

Musical staff 68: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. It features five triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes).

+ = left hand pizzicato
 pizz = right hand pizzicato
 tr. = whole-step trill unless marked otherwise

II.

$\bullet = 54$
sinuous

1 *mf* *crystalline* *f* *arco* *tr* *pizz.* *arco tr*

7 *pizz.* *tr* *arco* *3* *pizz.* *pizz.* *arco* *arco*

13 *arco* *3* *mf* *f* *cresc.* *ff* *pizz. mf*

18 *arco* *3* *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *tr* *arco tr* *tr 112* *arco tr 112* *pizz.* *pizz.*

23 *arco* *3* *f* *pizz.* *pizz.* *arco* *3* *mf cresc.*

43 *pizz.* *pizz.* *arco* *f* *arco* *tr*

46 *pizz.* *tr12* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *tr12*

49 *tr* *3* *pizz.* *pizz.* *arco* *arco*

52 *pizz.* *tr* *pizz.* *arco* *3* *arco* *pizz.* *pizz.* *arco* *arco* *3* *arco*

55 *arco* *arco* *arco* *3* *pizz.* *arco* *3* *pizz.*

III.

♩ = 58

graceful, elegant, genteel

Musical score for section III, measures 1-12. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 58. The performance style is described as *graceful, elegant, genteel*. The dynamics are marked as *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score consists of seven staves of music, each containing measures 1 through 12. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several triplet markings (3) and a sextuplet marking (6). The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

13



Musical staff 13: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of chords and melodic lines. The first measure starts with a treble clef and a sharp sign. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords indicated by vertical lines.

14



Musical staff 14: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of chords and melodic lines. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords indicated by vertical lines.

16



Musical staff 16: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of chords and melodic lines. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it, and a group of five notes is marked with a '5' above it. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords indicated by vertical lines.

18



Musical staff 18: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of chords and melodic lines. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it, and a group of six notes is marked with a '6' above it. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords indicated by vertical lines.

19



Musical staff 19: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of chords and melodic lines. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some chords indicated by vertical lines.

IV.

♩ = 52

introspective, dreamy

The musical score consists of seven staves of music in treble clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. Measure numbers 6, 11, 14, 19, 23, and 27 are indicated at the start of their respective staves. The dynamics range from *mf* to *fff*, with markings for crescendo, decrescendo, and *sub.* (subito).

Staff 1 (Measures 1-5): *mf*, *mf*, *f*, *p*

Staff 2 (Measures 6-10): *mf cresc.*, *f*, *p*

Staff 3 (Measures 11-13): *mf cresc.*, *f*

Staff 4 (Measures 14-18): *sub. mp cresc.*, *ff*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*

Staff 5 (Measures 19-22): *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*

Staff 6 (Measures 23-26): *ff*, *fff*

Staff 7 (Measures 27-30): *decresc.*, *sub. mf*

31 *f* *ff*

Musical staff 31-35. Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The melody features several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes) and a dynamic shift to fortissimo (*ff*) towards the end of the staff. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and then to 5/4.

36 *f* *mf*

Musical staff 36-40. Continues with the treble clef and one sharp key signature. It starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a crescendo hairpin. The dynamics shift to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The staff contains triplet markings and ends with a whole note chord marked with a sharp sign (#).

41 *mf*

Musical staff 41-44. Continues with the treble clef and one sharp key signature. The dynamic is mezzo-forte (*mf*). The staff features various rhythmic patterns and rests.

45 *f*

Musical staff 45-48. Continues with the treble clef and one sharp key signature. It begins with a dynamic of forte (*f*) and includes a crescendo hairpin. The staff contains triplet markings and a slur over a group of notes.

49

Musical staff 49-51. Continues with the treble clef and one sharp key signature. The staff features multiple triplet markings and a slur over a group of notes.

52

Musical staff 52-55. Continues with the treble clef and one sharp key signature. The staff includes triplet markings and a slur over a group of notes. The piece concludes with a final chord.

V.

♩ = 104

pure, smooth, calmed

1 *pp*

5 *pp*

10

15 *pp* *p* *cresc.* *p*

19 *mp* *sub. p*

22 *pp*

27 *p*

32 *mp* *mf* *pp*

35

40

45

51

55

13