

Cello Concerto

Chamber Version

for Cello and Two Pianos

October 22, 2015–January 25, 2016

Duration: about 23-24 minutes

for Bonnie Thron and Grant Llewellyn

I have had the pleasure of making music with cellist Bonnie Thron and her husband clarinetist Fred Jacobowitz since 2008. When she asked me in the summer of 2015 to write her a cello concerto, I got started as soon as other projects were done.

This cello concerto is in four movements:

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg)

Adagio; Cyflym; Adagio; Cyflym; Cymadrol; Ychydig yn gyflymach [8']

II. Heart Song Largo [6:40]

III. Contradanza Fidelio [1:35]

IV. Schlimmbesserung Vivace [7']

The theme for the first movement is the traditional Welsh song “Tros y Garreg”, or “Over the Stone”. The song is attributed to Rhys Bodychen, who fought at the Battle of Bosworth Field on the side of the Tutors against Richard III in 1485. The lyrics reflect on those who have fallen in battle. This melody has been altered from the original by George Thompson, who published Welsh airs in 1809, 1811, and 1817. I prefer his version for this purpose to the original. Note that the end of the melody resembles the theme from the last movement of J. S. Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5*, which factors into my treatment. Also, the traditional harp music of Wales led me to have an important harp part throughout this concerto. After having written music influenced by Russia, France, Germany, Austria, Moravia, Hungary, Romania, Spain, Cuba, India, and Mississippi, it was about time for me to try Wales—somewhere closer to my actual ancestry (English, Dutch, Scotch-Irish, Manx).

I made a point of using particularly incomprehensible, unspellable, and unpronounceable Welsh words for tempo markings in the first movement. *Cyflym* means “fast”; *Cymedrol* means “moderate”; *Ychydig yn gyflymach* means “a little faster.”

The very short third movement started life back about 1990 as the second movement of my *Fourth Sonata for Solo Violin*. (There are a total of ten such sonatas.) Originally I thought it was a tango, as I am easily bored with details in music theory and sometimes don’t look things up. In fact it is a contradanza, with the dance form originating in Havana. Hence the tempo marking “Fidelio”. The solo cello part can be performed by itself in a pinch.

The fourth movement is titled *Schlimmbesserung*, which is German for “an effort to make things better that ends up making things worse”.

Cover art: frontispiece from *Musical and poetical relics of the Welsh bards* by Edward Jones, 1784.

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Cello Concerto

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg) [8']

Bill Robinson

Theme
Adagio (♩ = 52)

Cello

Theme
Adagio

[When played with orchestra, sections marked between (tutti) and (solo) are optional for the solo cello.]

Piano 1

Piano 2

10

10

19

Cyflym

19

Cyflym

(♩ = 110)

26

26

Musical score for measures 30-33. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets. A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present at the end of the system.

Musical score for measures 34-37. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *pp* (pianissimo) for the piano part, and *ff* (fortissimo) for the cello part.

Musical score for measures 38-42. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets. Dynamic markings include *pp* (pianissimo) and *ff* (fortissimo).

Musical score for measures 43-46. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets. A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present at the end of the system.

48 Adagio (♩=52) *p dolce*

48 Adagio (♩=52) *mp*

ff *mf* *p* *pp* *p dolce*

dolce *mf* *p* *pp* *p*

54 *cresc.* *(mf)* *f*

54 *cresc.* *(mf)* *f*

f *8va*

cresc. *(mf)* *f*

58 *mf* *f* *mf* *p* *pp* *p*

58 *mf* *f* *mf* *p* *pp* *p*

mf *f* *p*

8va

62

63 *mp* *mf*

63 *mp* *mf*

mp

67 *rit.* $\text{♩} = 110$ Cyflym

mp *p* *pp*

67 *rit.* $\text{♩} = 110$ Cyflym

mp *p* *mp*

73 *mp cresc.* *mf* *f*

73 *cresc.* *(mf)* *f*

mp *cresc.* *(mf)* *f*

81 *ff*

81 *ff*

ff

89 $\text{♩} = 110$ 95

89 *ff*

ff

96

96

102

102

110

112

110

ff *mp* *cresc.*

119

119

mf *f dim.* *p* *pp*

129 132 *p* *rit.*

129 *rit.* *p*

Lento

138 *Cymedrol* *(♩ = 86)*

138 *Cymedrol* *(♩ = 86)* *mp*

146 *f* *ff* *dim.* *(mf)*

146 *mf* *f* *ff* *dim.* *(mf)*

154 *(mp)* *p*

154 *(mp)* *p*

Lento

163 (tutti) (♩=♩) *ff*

163 (♩=♩) *ff*

172 (solo) *ff* *p* 180

182 *mp* *mf*

182 *mp* *mf*

191 196

Cello Concerto Mov. 1

201 *accel.* *mp* Ychydig yn gyflymach (♩ = 50)

201 *accel.* *mp* (♩ = 50) Ychydig yn gyflymach

mp

210

210

222 (♩ = ♩)

220 *p* *cresc. p. a p.* (*mp*) (*mf*)

220 (*p*)

p *cresc. p. a p.* (*mp*) (*mf*)

229 *f*

229 *f*

f

236

p | *ff*

236

p *ff*

p *ff*

242

243

243

mf

248

252

252

mf

256

mf

259

259

cresc. *f* *ff*

256

cresc. *f* *ff*

cresc. *f* *ff*

262

262

269

271 (tutti)

269

276

(solo)

276

280

ff *p* *pp*

280

II. Heart Song

[6:40]

Largo $\text{♩} = 50$

Cello

Piano 1

Piano 2

pp *legato* *p*

f *mp* *mf*

f *mp* *mf*

f *mp* *pp*

p *mf* *pp*

6 11 16 19

21 *mf* *f* *mp* *mf*

23 *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *p*

28 *30* *30*

31 *p*

35 *p* *mp*

38 *mf*

39

42 *ff*

42 *ff*

42 *f*

46 *ff*

8va

50 *mp* 52 (♩=♩) *cresc.* *mf*

50 *mp* (♩=♩) *cresc.* *mf*

mp 52 *cresc.* *mf*

56 *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

56 *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

8^{va} *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

mp *cresc.* *mf*

60 *pp* *legato* *p*

60 *pp* *legato* *p*

8^{va} *pp* *legato* *p*

64 *mf* *rit.* *a tempo* *f*

64 *mf* *rit.* *a tempo* *f*

8^{va} *mf* *rit.* *a tempo* *f*

mf *rit.* *a tempo* *f*

mf *rit.* *a tempo* *f*

mp

68 *p* *mp*

71 *p* *mp*

74 *mf* *8va*

77 *rit.* *a tempo* *mp* *ff* *dim.* *mp* *ff* *80*

81

81

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

Lea Lea Lea Lea Lea Lea Lea *

85

85

p

85

p

p

p

8va

89

89

p

90

pp

89

p

90

pp

pp

8va

94

94

rit. ----- *a tempo*

rit. ----- *a tempo*

94

a tempo

pp

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

III. Contradanza

[1:30]

17

Fidelio $\text{♩} = 66$

Cello *mp* *f*

Piano 1 *mp* *f*

Piano 2 *mp* *f*

4 *ff* *mp* *8va* *8va* *Reo* *Reo* *

7 *f* *f* *f*

10 *ff* *ff* *non stacc.* *mf* *Reo* *p* *

13 *p*

13 *Rea* *

13 *Rea* *

15 *p*

15 *Rea* *

15 *Rea* *

15 *Rea* *

18 *mp*

18 *Rea* *

18 *Rea* *

20

23 *f*

23 *mp* *f*

27 29

ff *mp* *f* *ff* *non stacc.*

ff *mp* *f* *ff*

ff *mp* *mp* *f*

8va 8va 8va

33

rit.

ff *p* *rit.*

ff *p* *rit.*

Lea Lea Lea *

ff *p*

Lea Lea Lea *

(rit.)

38

pp

pp *p*

pp *pp*

Lea Lea Lea Lea *

8va

Vivace (♩ = 104)

Cello

f

Piano 1

Piano 2

5

10

15

16

19 25

f dim. p

f p

f

Ped. *

26

p

34 35

f

f

f

39

f

43 *ff*

43

8va

47

48 *ff*

47

8va

ff

48

51 *ff* *f* *f dim.* *p*

51

ff *f* *f dim.* *p*

51

f *dim.* *p*

Leo

Leo

8va

Leo

57 *f*

57

62

f

62

f

8va

63 *ff*

63 *ff*

63 *ff*

8^{va}

68 *p* 73

68 *p* 73

68 *p*

76 *cresc.* *f*

76 *cresc.* *f*

76 *mf* *f*

8^{va}

83 *ff* 83 *ff*

83 *ff* 83 *ff*

8^{va}

86

Musical score for measures 86-89. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex texture with chords and triplets. The cello line has a melodic line with some grace notes. Measure 86 has a *8va* marking above the piano part. Measure 89 has a *3* marking above the piano part.

90

Musical score for measures 90-92. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex texture with chords and triplets. The cello line has a melodic line with some grace notes. Measure 90 has a *3* marking above the piano part.

93

Musical score for measures 93-95. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex texture with chords and triplets. The cello line has a melodic line with some grace notes. Measure 93 has a *95* marking above the piano part. Measure 94 has a *ff* marking above the piano part. Measure 95 has a *95* marking above the piano part.

98

Musical score for measures 98-101. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex texture with chords and triplets. The cello line has a melodic line with some grace notes. Measure 98 has a *98* marking above the piano part. Measure 99 has a *8va* marking above the piano part. Measure 100 has a *ff dim.* marking above the piano part. Measure 101 has a *mf* marking above the piano part.

105 106

mp ----- *p*

105 106

p

8^{va}-----

111 118

111 118

8^{va}-----

118

119 118

pp

119 118

pp

8^{va}-----

pp

118

126 128

cresc. ----- *ff*

126 128

cresc. ----- *ff*

8^{va}-----

cresc. ----- *ff*

129

129

132

132

ff

136

136

137

8va

ff

p

139

139

ff

p

f

mp

p

146

146

147 *p*

155 *pp* *p cresc.* **163**

155 *p cresc.* **163**

p cresc. **163** *8va*

164 *(mf)* *f* *ff*

164 *(mf)* *f* *ff*

(mf) *f* *ff* *8va*

168 *ff dim.* *(mf)* *(mp)* *pp*

168 *ff* *dim.* *(mf)* *(mp)* *pp*

175

Musical score for measures 175-179. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. Dynamics include *p* and *ff*. A *8va-* marking is present above the piano staff in measure 179.

180

Musical score for measures 180-182. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. Dynamics include *ff*.

183

Musical score for measures 183-187. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. Dynamics include *fff*. A *8va-* marking is present above the piano staff in measure 184.

188

Musical score for measures 188-192. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of two staves. Dynamics include *ff*, *p*, and *pizz.*