Variations and Distorted Reflections (After Stradella)

For solo violin

Ian Percy
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Ian Percy
(2014/17)
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*(After Stradella)*  
For solo violin

**Movement Subtitles**

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Variations and Distorted Reflections
(After Stradella)
For solo violin

This is a multiple-movement work composed around the ground bass for Allessandro Stradella’s (1639-1682) Twelfth Two-Part Sinfonia (A – E – B – E – F – G – A – F – E – C – D – E – A), using the overall form, pitch-scheme and internal structures of the original manuscript as a template for pitch-organisation, texture, form and proportion. The initial conception of this work evolved out of a collaborative recording project with violinist-musicologist Dr Alberto Sanna: The Stradella Project – Alessandro Stradella: Two-Part Sinfonias.

The multiple movements (twenty-five in total) reflect upon the atmosphere and stylistic character of the Stradella variations with elements of direct and subliminal quotation often using the original melodic contour and/or rhythmic impetus as a starting point, but have been reinterpreted (distorted) and entirely recomposed from a contemporary perspective. Some of the latter movements contain more of the original material in recognisable form and are credited as such within the score.

The writing is filled with reminiscences of the past alongside glimpses of the future, but hopefully combining to create a timeless music realised within a personal compositional autograph highlighting the idiomatic (and virtuosic properties) of the solo violin and the creative talent behind the original variations. Some movements are undeniably a product of the twenty-first century.

Note:

Twelve of the movements (initially composed during 2014) were extensively edited during completion of the score in the summer of 2017. Materials and textures for movements X, XIV, XVIII and XXII (the recurring theme) were influenced by an earlier work from the composer: An Instant Conception for small chamber ensemble and percussion (2009).
Variation II

[... people tend to romanticise the past ...]

\[ \text{B} \quad \text{... the past has passed ...} \]

\[ \text{C} \quad \text{... and all have gone ...} \]
Variation III

[... hidden memories and passing reflections ...]

senza misura, con rubato: The truth is often just out of reach ...

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{\( \frac{3}{4} \)} & = 40 \quad \text{accel.} \quad \text{rit.} \quad \text{a tempo} \\
\end{align*} \]

\begin{align*}
poco rubato & \quad \text{molto legato rubato} \\
vib. & \quad \text{molto espress. legato rubato} \\
\end{align*}

... but that should not stop us reaching ...

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{\( \text{\( \frac{4}{4} \)} \)} & = \text{accel.} \quad \text{rit.} \quad \text{a tempo} \quad \text{E} & \quad \text{when the bough breaks (the wind blows)} \quad \text{rit.} \\
\text{sul tasto} & \quad \text{dolce} \quad \text{ord.} \quad \text{lament} \quad \text{molto legato rubato} \\
\end{align*} \]
Variation IV

[... a linear melodic statement for the passing of time ...]

Ian Percy
Variation V

[... changing the wrapping does not alter the contents ...]

... as if brushing the dust from an old manuscript ...

\[ \text{\textit{poco rubato}} \quad \text{sul pont.} \]

\[ \text{\textit{sul tasto dolce}} \quad \text{ord. \textit{molto rubato}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{F} \quad \text{\textit{p}} \quad \text{\textit{mp}} \quad \text{\textit{mf}}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{G} \quad \text{\textit{accel.}}} \]

... the past can often be littered with regrets ...

\[ \text{\textit{molto legato rubato}} \quad \text{\textit{dolce}} \quad \text{\textit{molto espressivo legato rubato}} \quad \text{\textit{aggressive}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{mp}} \quad \text{\textit{mf}} \quad \text{\textit{p}} \quad \text{\textit{mf}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{[\textit{j} = 69] \quad \text{\textit{accel.}}} \quad \text{\textit{[\textit{j} = 80]}} \quad \text{\textit{rit.}}} \quad \text{\textit{[\textit{j} = 40]}} \quad \text{\textit{j = 58 \rit.}} \quad \text{\textit{[\textit{j} = 40]}} \quad \text{\textit{j = 40 \attacca}}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{sul tasto dolce}} \quad \text{\textit{ord. \textit{molto espress.}}} \quad \text{\textit{aggressive, but aggression dissipates with dynamic and pulse ...}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{f}} \quad \text{\textit{p}} \quad \text{\textit{mp}} \quad \text{\textit{PPP}} \quad \text{\textit{mf}} \quad \text{\textit{PPP}} \quad \text{\textit{PPP}} \]
Variation VI
[... inside time, outside time ...]

\( \text{f} = 52 \) ... assertive, lyrical and expressive ...
\( \text{poco rit.} \) ... poco accel. \( \text{f} \)

[combine gliss. with arp. techniques ad.lib.] \( \text{poco rubato} \)

\( \text{mf} \)

\( \text{rit.} \) ... \( \text{accel.} \) ... \( \text{[tone trill]} \)

\( \text{rit.} \) ...

\( \text{H} \) \( \text{f} = 52 \) ... there will always be elements of doubt ...
\( \text{H} \) \( \text{sul tasto} \)

\( \text{mp} \)

\( \text{H} \) \( \text{f} = 40 \) ... yet life rolls on regardless ...
\( \text{rit.} \) ...

\( \text{lively, but restrained} \)
\( \text{molto lyrical rubato...} \)

\( \text{mf} \) \( \text{f} \)

\( \text{mf} \) \( \text{f} \)

\( \text{mf} \) \( \text{ff} \)

\( \text{ff} \)
Variation VII
[... a poetic and retrospective soliloquy ...]

senza misura, con rubato

\[ \text{7} \]
\[ \text{\textit{\textbf{j = 40}} \quad \text{... sometimes feeling down can be appropriate ...} \]

\textbf{sul tasto} \quad \textbf{sul pont. ord.} \quad \textit{dolce} \quad \textit{molto espress.}

\textbf{molto legato rubato} \quad \textbf{[min 3rd trill]}

\begin{align*}
\text{f} & \quad \text{mf} & \quad \text{f} \\
\text{rit.} & \quad \text{. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .} \\
\text{f} & \quad \text{sfz} & \quad \text{ff} & \quad \text{f} & \quad \text{mf} & \quad \text{f} & \quad \text{pp} & \quad \text{ppp}
\end{align*}
... animated and just a little bit clumsy ...

\[ \mathcal{I} = 72 \]
\[ \text{poco accel.} \]

\[ \mathcal{I} \]
\[ \text{poco rubato} \]
\[ \text{sul pont.} \]

\[ \mathcal{I} \]
\[ \text{ord.} \]

\[ \mathcal{I} \]
\[ \text{sul pont.} \]

\[ \mathcal{I} \]
\[ \text{aggressive} \]

\[ \mathcal{K} \]
\[ \mathcal{K} \]
\[ \text{a product of the 21st century} \]
\[ \text{poco accel.} \]

\[ \mathcal{K} \]
\[ \mathcal{K} \]
\[ \text{arp. double-stops throughout} \]
\[ \text{sul pont.} \]

\[ \mathcal{L} \]
\[ \mathcal{L} \]
\[ \text{a release of pent-up frustrations} \]
\[ \text{sul tasto} \]
\[ \text{poco accel.} \]

\[ \mathcal{L} \]
\[ \mathcal{L} \]
\[ \text{molto espress. legato rubato} \]
\[ \text{sul pont.} \]

\[ \mathcal{L} \]
\[ \mathcal{L} \]
\[ \text{ord. animated and aggressive vib.} \]
Variation IX

[... and never the twain shall meet ...]

... an awkward conversation across the centuries ...

 senza misura, con rubato

... a stream of consciousness and a rapid interchange of ideas and thoughts ...

... the conversation ends more cordially than it began, but distance remains ...
Variation XI
[... a cautious lullaby for all ages...]

Ian Percy

\[
\begin{aligned}
&\begin{align*}
11 \quad \text{\textbf{\}} &= 50 & \text{\ldots with respect for tradition \ldots poco accel.} \ldots \ldots & R \quad \text{\{} &= 56 & \text{\ldots with more energy \ldots poco rit.} \ldots \ldots \{ &= 50 \\
\end{align*}
&\text{\ldots molto espressive rubato}

\begin{align*}
&\text{\ldots to walk the hallowed halls ...}
&\begin{align*}
S \quad \text{\textbf{\}} &= 66 \quad \text{rit.} \ldots \ldots & \text{\{} &= 50 \quad \text{rit.} \ldots \ldots \{ &= 40 \\
\end{align*}
&\text{\ldots molto legato rubato}

\begin{align*}
&\text{sul tasto \ldots \ldots I II III ord.}
&\text{lyrical rubato \ldots \ldots I II III ord.}
&\text{molto espress. \ldots \ldots I ord.}
\end{align*}
\end{aligned}
\]
Variation XII

[... in the blink of an eye ...]

\[ \begin{align*}
poco \ rubato \\
sul \ pont.
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
with \ enthused \ energy ... \\
ord.
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{... the rapid flashbacks of flying time ...}
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{... the fluidity of the mind's eye ...}
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{... there was a memory that I wanted to recall ...}
\end{align*} \]
Variation XIII

[... what was that we were saying ...]

sul tasto molto rubato molto espress.
gli. molto espress. molto rubato molto rubato
arco sul tasto pizz. arco sul tasto pizz. arco sul pont.
molto espress. pizz. arco sul tasto
molt. espress. molto rubato molto rubato molto espress. molto rubato molto espress. molto rubato

... skeletons in the closet (with no recognisable pulse) ...

pizz. molto rubato arpa ad lib. throughout ...
arco sul tasto pizz. arco sul tasto pizz. arpa ad lib. ...

... and there we go, drifting again ...

molt. espress. legato rubato lyrical and forlorn
molt. espress. molto rubato molto rubato molto espress. molto rubato molto espress. molto rubato

Morendo

sul pont.

Vib.
Variation XIV

[... the changing circadian rhythms of humanity ...]

\[ \textit{poco rit.} \quad [i = 66] \quad \textit{poco rubato} \]

\[ \textit{mf} \quad \textit{f} \quad \textit{mf} \quad \textit{... in reflection ...} \]

\[ \textit{a little slower} \quad \textit{molto rubato} \]

\[ \textit{Z} \quad \textit{... trap doors, hidden meanings and false prophets ...} \]

\[ \textit{AA} \quad \textit{... and an anomalous crescendo ...} \]

\[ \textit{PP} \quad \textit{PPP} \quad \textit{P} \quad \textit{mp} \quad \textit{mf} \quad \textit{P} \quad \textit{mf} \quad \textit{rit.} \quad [i = 60] \]

\[ \textit{molto rubato} \quad \textit{aggressive} \quad \textit{sul pont.} \]

\[ \textit{f} \quad \textit{fff} \quad \textit{mf} \quad \textit{sfz} \]
Variation XV

[... a reminiscent distraction from the intensities of modern life ...]
Variation XVI
[... give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar ...]

Alessandro Stradella
(Ian Percy)
Variation XVII

[... the past has passed and the lesson long forgotten ...]

\[ \text{\textit{molto rubato}} \]

[poco rubato] [whole-tone trills]

177 \( \downarrow = 50 \) ... sometimes it is wise to keep a respectful eye on the past ...

\[ \text{\textit{poco rit.}} \]

[poco rubato] [as it seems time can dilute the lessons of memory ...]

174 \( \downarrow = 44 \) FF \( \downarrow = 50 \) ...
Variation XVIII

[... and so take from Caesar that which belonged to Caesar ...]

\[ \text{molo rubato} \quad \text{sul tast}\]

\[ \text{a little quicker} \quad \text{sul pont.} \]

\[ \text{[\( \downarrow = 60 \)] accel.} \quad \ldots \quad \text{[\( \downarrow = 72 \)] in perpetual motion ...} \]

\[ \text{poco rubato} \quad \text{ord.} \]

\[ \text{[more like a ricochet echo than individual articulations]} \]

\[ \text{poco accel.} \quad \ldots \quad \text{[\( \downarrow = 76 \)]} \]

\[ \text{molto espress. rubato} \]

\[ \text{ff} \]

\[ \text{poco rubato} \]

\[ \text{f} \quad \text{ff} \quad \text{f} \]
... things may not be quite as bad as first feared (with cautious optimism) ...

poco accelerando

molto espressivo

lively and energetic ...

with positive energy and exaggerated character

sul tasto
... simplicitas est forma (simplicity is beauty) ...

... sancta simplicitas (sacred simplicity) ...

Variation XIX
[... in simplicitas ...]
Variation XX

[... a second in three and the infinite triptych ...]

[... betwixt and between ...]

Ian Percy

\[ \text{\textbf{20}} \] \( j = 50 \) ... pensive anxiety - betwixt and between ... \( \text{accel.} \) ... \( \text{\textbf{[}j = 60\text{]} \) \( \text{rit.} \) ... \( \text{\textbf{[}j = 50\text{]} \) \( \text{rit.} \) ... \( \text{... in mysterious ambiguity ...} \)

\( \text{poco rubato ord.} \)

\[ \text{\textbf{218}} \]

\( \text{mf} \) \( p \) \( f \) \( p \) \( \text{--- mf} \) \( p < f \) \( \text{pp} \) \( f \) \( p \) \( \text{--- pp} \)

\[ \text{\textbf{==}} \]

... distorted reflections - contorted imitations ...

\( \text{\textbf{[}1\text{]} \) \( j = 50 \) \( \text{accel.} \) ... \( \text{\textbf{[}j = 60\text{]} \) \( \text{rit.} \) ... \( \text{\textbf{[}j = 50\text{]} \) \( \text{rit.} \) ... \( \text{\textbf{[}j = 40\text{]} \) \( \text{rit.} \) ... \( \text{... in mysterious ambiguity ...} \)

\( \text{poco rubato ord.} \)

\[ \text{\textbf{224}} \]

\( p \) \( \text{--- mf} \) \( \text{pp} \) \( \text{--- f} \) \( p < f \) \( p \) \( \text{--- f} \) \( mp \) \( \text{--- ff} \) \( p \) \( \text{--- PPP} \)
Variation XXI
[... ghosts in the machine ...]
[... a third in three and the eternal trinity ...]

\( \sqrt{\text{everyone has skeletons in the closet ...}} \)
molto rubato  arp. ad lib. throughout ...
pizz.

\( \sqrt{\text{an abstract emotion ...}} \)
arpo sul pont.

\( \sqrt{\text{molto express.}} \)
pizz. arco sul tasto
pizz.

\( \text{rit.} \)
arp. ad lib. ...

\( \sqrt{\text{everyone has conversations with the past ...}} \)
molto rubato  
molto express.
arco sul tasto
pizz.
arco sul tasto
pizz.  morendo

\( \text{mf} \quad \text{p} \quad \text{mp} \quad \text{f} \quad \text{ppp} \quad \text{pp} \quad \text{mf} \)

\( \text{p} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{pp} \quad \text{mp} \quad \text{p} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{p} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{ppp} \)

Ian Percy
Variation XXII

[... streams of consciousness and conversations across time and space ...]

[... the infinite triangle is a straight line ...]
... with increasing intensity and excited energy ...

molto rubato

f

poco rubato

ff

poco accel.

molto espressivo rubato

ff
... life is within the passing seconds of the present ...

lively and energetic ...

with positive energy and exaggerated character

... it is hard to keep an animal from running away ...

a little slower ...

... these days!

molto espress.

aggressive

molto espress.
Variation XXIII

[... what was then, what is now, and what will never be ...]

Alessandro Stradella
(Ian Percy)

\[ q = 72 \]... a golden olden (a fifth in three) ...

molto espress.

\[ mf \]

... arpeggiate double stops throughout ...

\[ \approx \]

... self-similar replication ...

poco rit.

\[ p \]

sul pont.
Variation XXIV

[... what goes around comes around ...]

Alessandro Stradella
(Ian Percy)

\[ j = 50 \] ... staring at an ancient artefact ...

do

\[ j = 40 \] poco rit. ...

\[ j = 50 \] poco rit. ...

\[ j = 40 \] poco acc...
Variation XXV

 [...] ad infinitum - the past is always present [...] 

 [...] and there will always be hope [...]

Alessandro Stradella
(Ian Percy)


d = 100 ... a lively and energetic statement (a blast from the past) ...

ord. poco rubato

\[ \text{ff} \]

\[ \text{TT} \] ... in the last reserves of energy one can find a second wind ...

molto espressivo rubato

sul tasto

poco rit. ... exaggerated and flamboyant
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