BACH
(Times Twenty Four)

For solo violoncello

Ian Percy

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2014/17

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This short piece for solo violoncello was composed entirely from the BACH motif. It is part of a series of miniatures realised for a variety of instruments by the composer during 2014.

When one considers the pitch variables within the three forms of minor scale (natural, melodic and harmonic), the literal spelling of the BACH motif: B^b-A-C-B is closely related to the key of C minor.

Wanting (through compositional instinct) to contrast this dissonant tetrachord (chromatic minor-third) against trichord consonance, the composer used the notes F, C and E to signify the key of C Major and utilised the key scheme of Bach's *Twenty Four Preludes and Fugues* to cycle through alternating motivic transposition and inversion of the two parent cells (trichords and tetrachords) in a linear process to frame the initial form and pitch skeleton.

As the score evolved, interlocking combinations of shared pitches, dovetailed and overlapped to blur the various transpositions of the two parent motifs. Further inversions and passing notes clouded their place within the form of the music and prevented the listener from recognising the repetitive nature of the initial linear pitch-cycle.
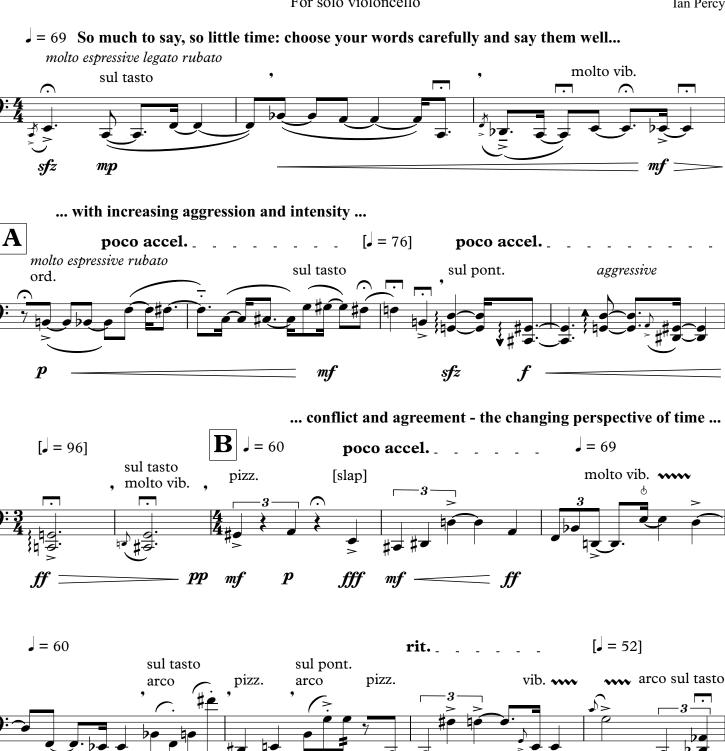

This piece offers a 21st century interpretation of the BACH motif as a potential compositional germ-cell from which to establish elements of pitch organisation and form, combining twelve-tone language with functioning harmonic motion and tonal concepts of form and structure. The theories have an organic potential for contemporary lyricism that far exceeds the boundaries of this modest study.

The score was edited and part recomposed in May 2017.

Ian Percy
2017

BACH
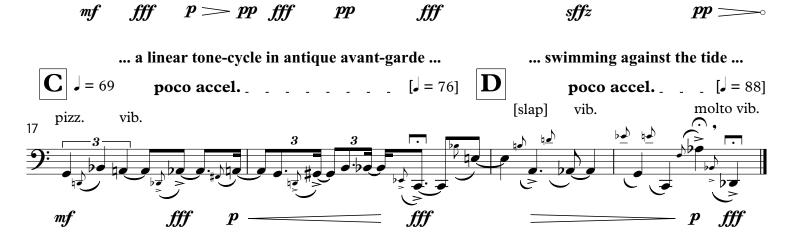## [Times Twenty Four]
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