

Imaginary Scenes

for violin & piano

Karim Al-Zand

(2005)

PROGRAM NOTE:

The four scenes which make up this work are inspired by diverse and somewhat whimsical literary sources. The title of the first scene is taken from a short and poignant verse by English poet and novelist D. H. Lawrence (1885–1969).

*The wind, the rascal, knocked at my door, and I said:
My love is come!
But oh, wind, what a knave thou art
To make sport of me when the days of my heart
Are drearissime,
And wearissime.*

Scèna amorosa was inspired by an intriguing letter published in the Musical Gazette of Milan on October 18, 1846:

“Looking for variety in the programs I executed at court, one evening...I improvised a sonata entitled ‘Scèna amorosa,’ the 4th string representing the man (Adonis) and the treble string the woman (Venus). This was the beginning of my habit of playing on one string.” —Niccolò Paganini.

The work of renowned illustrator J. J. Grandville (1803–1847) includes many fantastical and bizarre images that can be seen as early precursors to the Surrealist movement in art. In his collection *Un Autre Monde*, a series of engravings depicts an ‘apocalyptic’ ballet: dancing crabs, mice, grasshoppers and scarab beetles; a ballerina gradually transformed into a *chaise longue*; and a pair of eerily smiling marionettes (shown on p.18) whose joints are made of springs.

An episode from my folktale setting *Parizade and the Singing Tree* provided the musical and dramatic impetus for the last movement. In one scene, the young adventurer encounters an old man sleeping at the side of the road. The narrator relates: “as Parizade approached, the dervish awoke from his recent slumber and began excitedly to beckon her toward him.”

Premiere performance: *Imaginary Scenes* was written for Sergiu Luca and Brian Connelly, who presented the work’s premiere on October 5, 2005 in Houston, TX.

 September 2005

DURATION:

1. The wind, the rascal	5'40"
2. Scèna amorosa	4'30"
3. Mechanical marionettes	3'30"
4. Whirling dervish	3'30"
TOTAL:	ca. 17' 10"

Imaginary Scenes

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1. The wind, the rascal

*The wind, the rascal, knocked at my door and I said:
My love is come!
But, oh, what a knave thou art
To make sport of me when the days of my heart
Are drearishome,
And wearisome.*

D. H. Lawrence

Quickly; flowing, but with flexibility ♩=69 (♩=138)

fluid
ppp
ad lib. (blurry)
poco rit.
espres.
pp
a tempo
p
Spp

⑩

pp *p*

⑬

pp *poco cresc.* *mp*

8^{va} 15^{va} 8^{va}

⑮

mp *pp* *p*

⑱

p *mp* *p*

21 *mp*

24 *mf*

27 *cresc.*

30 *poco f*

32

34

accel.

cresc.

37

(molto)

becoming agitated

p

ff

Slower; playfully ♩ = 60 (♩ = 120)

40

pizz.

arco

mp

p

45 *tr[♯]* *tr[♭]* *pizz.*

50 *arco sul II* *mf* *tr[♯]* *sub p* *tr[♭]* *tr[♯]*

55 *pizz.* *arco tr[♭]* *tr[♭]* *tr[♭]* *pizz.*

60 *arco sul III* *mf* *ritenuto* *decesc.*

rit. ----- Faster; delicately quivering ♩=63 (♩=126)

66

pp mf

pp mf

tr *tr*

70

bd *bd*

73

3

76

3

78 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

81

cresc.

84

f *mf*

88 *quasi gliss.*

f

91

mf

95

mf

98

mp

102

mp

105

musical score for measures 105-106. The system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a 4/8 time signature, starting with a rest and then playing a series of eighth notes with a *p* dynamic. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The middle staff has a 4/8 time signature and contains a complex melodic line with many beamed eighth notes. The bottom staff has a 4/8 time signature and contains a bass line with eighth notes. A *p* dynamic is marked at the beginning of the bottom staff. A wavy line with a *tr^b* marking is present in the middle staff. The system ends with a measure containing a rest in the top staff and a note in the middle staff with an arrow pointing to the right labeled "to R.H."

107

musical score for measures 107-110. The system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a 3/4 time signature, playing a series of eighth notes. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a 3/4 time signature. The middle staff contains a melodic line with many beamed eighth notes and a *tr^b* marking. The bottom staff contains a bass line with eighth notes. A *p* dynamic is marked at the beginning of the bottom staff.

111

musical score for measures 111-112. The system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a 3/4 time signature, playing a series of eighth notes. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a 3/4 time signature. The middle staff contains a melodic line with many beamed eighth notes. The bottom staff contains a bass line with eighth notes. A *rit.* marking is present above the top staff.

113

musical score for measures 113-116. The system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a 4/8 time signature, playing a series of eighth notes. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a 4/8 time signature. The middle staff contains a melodic line with many beamed eighth notes and a *tr^b* marking. The bottom staff contains a bass line with eighth notes. A *pp* dynamic is marked at the beginning of the middle staff. A *ppp* dynamic is marked at the beginning of the bottom staff. A *una corda* marking is present at the bottom of the system. A *a tempo* marking is present above the top staff.

118

tr[♯] tr[♭] tr[♯]

Slowly, ad lib.

Tempo I ♩=69 (♩=138)

124

pp (tre corde)

poco rit. - - - - - a tempo

127

espres. p

130

Sno

132

take time - -

decresc.

decresc.

pp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 132 and 133. The upper staff (treble clef) features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 132 and 133, marked with a decrescendo (decresc.). The lower staff (piano) has a complex accompaniment with sixteenth-note patterns in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand, also marked with a decrescendo. A piano (pp) dynamic is indicated in measure 133. The text 'take time - -' is written above the right side of the system.

134

ppp

ppp

(una corda)

ppp

ppp

(una corda)

Detailed description: This system contains measures 134 and 135. The upper staff (treble clef) has a melodic line with a long slur over both measures, marked with a pianissimo (ppp) dynamic. The lower staff (piano) features a dense, flowing accompaniment with sixteenth-note patterns, also marked with ppp. The instruction '(una corda)' is written below the piano part in both measures. A dashed line with the letter 'S' above it is positioned above the upper staff in both measures.

2. Scena amorosa

“Looking for variety in the programs I executed at court, one evening...I improvised a sonata entitled ‘Scena amorosa,’ the 4th string representing the man (Adonis) and the treble string the woman (Venus). This was the beginning of my habit of playing on one string.”

Letter by Paganini published in the Musical Gazette of Milan, October 18, 1846

Slowly; impassioned and intense ♩=50 (tempo I)*

sul IV → *molto espres, with bravura*

f *mf* *f* *mp*

⑥

mf *p* *mp* *mf*

⑩ Moderately fast; light and carefree ♩=75 (tempo II)†

sul I → *cheerful, giddy*

p *bouncing* *p*

p *mf*

* The changes in character between the G-string music and the E-string music are accompanied by changes in tempo. Particularly near the end of the movement, where changes are rapid, time may be taken between tempos as needed, always maintaining the conversational effect.

† The sixteenth note pairs played unevenly, with the first note shorter than the second (in almost a triplet sixteenths rhythm).

15

mp

poco accel. - - - - -

20

mf

rit. - - - - -

25

p *sub.f* *mf*

tempo I
as before

Suddenly quicker; recitative

30

mf *f* *pp*

stretto (a tempo) stretto (a tempo) back to tempo I

anxious *tenderly*

34

mp *mf*

tempo II
as before

38

p *poco cresc.*

(take time)

43

mp

poco accel.

48

mf

rit. tempo I

53 *p* *sub.f* *mf*

Suddenly quicker; recitative stretto (a tempo) molto accel. becoming desperate

58 *mp* *f* *mp* *f port.*

back to tempo I accel. a tempo II

62 *ff* *sub.pp* *p*

tempo I tempo II

67 *mf* *mp* *mp*

72 *tempo I*
suddenly mournful
p *pp*

78 *tempo II* *brightly* *mf* *tempo I* *ten.* *pp*

83 *tempo II* *mf* *tempo I* *p* *tempo II* *f* *tempo I* *mp*

88 *tempo II* *f* *mf* *f* *sempre f* *molto vib.* *slowly* *a tempo*

95 *sub p* *molto cresc.* *accel.* *becoming agitated*

103 *pesante* *pizz.* *tempo I* *arco* *mp* *pp*

109 *mp* *p* *(sul III)* *warmly*

3. Mechanical marionettes



Marionettes with spring joints.
J.J. Grandville, *Un Autre Monde*

Moderately; delicate, brittle ♩=80 (♩=160)

poco rit. - - - (a tempo)

pizzicato throughout (II⁺)
mf *decresc.* *pp* *pp*
 pluck close to bridge
 (L.H. inside the piano†)
 scrape string with fingernail
 Sos. → *pp*

⑧

⑭ pizz. ord.
p

* Place a very thin, light-gauge metal chain inside the piano across the strings indicated.

† When not playing, the left hand should prevent the lower strings from resonating.

20

mf *vigorous*

mp *mf* *vigorous*

26

subpp *mp*

sub pp *mp*

32

mf

mf

38

f *sub p* *cresc.*

f *sub p* *cresc.*

44

f

mf

50

mp

mf

Sos. —

56

mf

62

mf

p *mf* *p* *mf*

67

with the fingernail

gliss. *f* *p* gliss.

p *mf*

72

with the fingernail

gliss. *mp* *mf* *f* *f* pizz. ord.

mf

78

gliss. *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* pizz. ord.

p *mf*

Sos. →

83

poco rit. - - - - (a tempo)

(no gliss.)

gliss. *mp* *p* *pp* 3

mp *p* *pp*

89

pizz. ord.
p

95

101

vigorous
mf

vigorous
ff

mp

f

tr
mp

107

f

sub pp

sub pp

f

sub pp

tr

mp

molto ritenuto

roll slowly

dampen immediately

4. Whirling dervish

“As Parizade approached, the dervish awoke from his recent slumber and began excitedly to beckon her towards him.”

from A Thousand and One Nights, 'The talking bird, the singing tree and the golden water.'

Extremely quickly; whirling, manic ♩=184+

(arco) *furtive*
pp

interrupting
pp

⑥

poco cresc.

poco cresc.

b^b

⑪

joyous
p

sparkling
p

pizz.

arco

⑮

mp

mp

b^b

19 *pizz.* *arco* *p* *delicate* *p*

24 *cresc.* *tr^b* *mf* *cresc.* *mf*

28

32 *arco* *Sw* *p* *sneak in* *mp*

37 (8va) -----

mf

42

mf
bouncing

46

$\overset{3}{\text{trill}}$

51

55

60

64

pizz. arco cresc. pizz. cresc.

68

arco

t^{tr} *t^{tr}* *t^{tr}* *f* *f*

72

forceful

77

mp

sub p

82

f

f

86

p

(hands crossed)

pp

smoothly, more pedal

90

mp

cresc.

p

95

sul pont.

glassy

mp

99

8va

102

ord.

mp

106

decresc. pizz. pp

110

arco f pp legato semprepp

114

f

118

f

137

mf

141

pizz. arco

p

146

cresc. *f*

150

wailing
quasi gliss.

cresc. *f*

155

159

sub. pp *molto cresc.* *f*

163

intense!

168

Faster; with abandon

ff *cresc.* *fff*

