

lines in motion

for violin, cello & piano

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(2022)

lines in motion

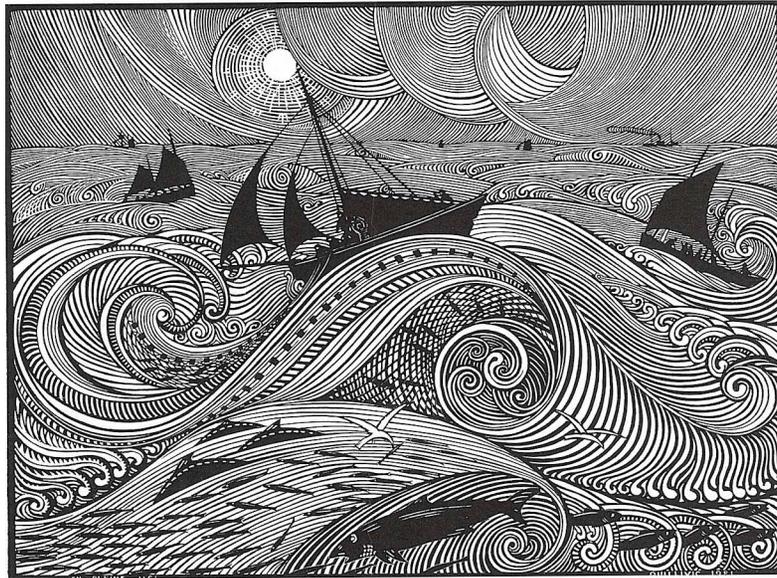
program note:

Lines in Motion is inspired by three striking black and white illustrations from the early 20th century. Though quite different in style, they all embody a strong sense of motion, with lines that project a kinetic energy that leaps off the page. In **En pleine mer** [On the Open Sea], the sweeping lines of Quillivic's maritime engraving are reflected in a roiling, liquid texture and undulating waves of sound. **In the Big City** echoes Masereel's imposing vertical cityscape through bold, chordal blocks interrupted by bustling activity. **At the Spirit Dance** turns Esherick's iconic woodcut figures into a bopping musical trio, swinging to a rhythmic groove.

duration:

ca. 10 minutes

*Lines in Motion was jointly commissioned by Chamber Music Columbus and Chamber Music Houston for the Merz Trio.
It was premiered on January 17th, and May 6th of 2023.*



En pleine mer [On the Open Sea], 1921, René Quillivic (1879–1969)

Very Quickly; playful ♩ = 108

Violin (Vln.) and Viola (Vc.) parts are marked *pp*. The Piano (Pno.) part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and a section marked *pizz. vigorous f* and *repeat*. The Piano part is divided into Left Hand (LH) and Right Hand (RH) sections. The tempo is marked "Very Quickly; playful ♩ = 108".

Violin (Vln.) and Viola (Vc.) parts continue with triplets and are marked *8^a-1*. The Piano (Pno.) part includes a section marked *repeat* and *arco*. The tempo is marked "Very Quickly; playful ♩ = 108".

Vln. *tr[#]* 5 *tr[#]* 5 *tr[#]* (no trill) *pp*

Vc. *tr[#]* 5 *tr[#]* 5 *pp*

Pno. *repeat* *poco rit.* ----- *a tempo*

RH
LH *mp* 3 3 3 3

Vln. as before ♩=52 IV *p* *f* *pp*

Vc. *p* *f* *pp*

Pno. *repeat* *p* *mf* 3 3 3 3

Very Quickly; playful ♩ = 108

Vln. *f* *tr* *intense, molto vibrato* *quasi gliss.*

Vc. *f*

Pno. *poco f* *p*

take time poco rit. - - - , a tempo repeat

Vln. *as before*

Vc. *zing!* *quasi gliss.* *ff* *f* *ff*

Pno. LH RH *repeat* *repeat*

Vln. *tr^b* *mf* *pp*

Vc. *mf* *pp* *mf*

Pno. *f* *p*

RH
LH

repeat

Very Quickly; rippling ♩=92

Vln. *tr^b* *mf* *ff* *mp* *tr^b*

Vc. *tr^b* *mp* *tr^b* *tr^b*

Pno. *ff* *gradually* *4x* *p*

RH
LH



Amerika [America] 1922, Frans Masereel (1889–1972)

2. in the big city

after the illustration "America" by Frans Masereel

Very Slowly; stark, austere ♩ = 40

Slowly; immense, imposing ♩ = 50

subito
Very Swiftly; darting about busily ♩ = 96

Very Slowly; as before (♩ = 40)
[piano only]

*continue the ascending pattern, moving the lowest note up equidistantly, the intervals thus gradually expanding.

Slowly, as before (♩=50)

Violin (Vln.) part: *f* (first measure), *fp* (last measure). Includes dynamic markings *f* and *fp*.
Viola (Vc.) part: *f* (first measure), *fp* (last measure). Includes dynamic markings *f* and *fp*.
Piano (Pno.) part: *f* (first measure). Includes dynamic marking *f*.
Pedal (Ped.) markings: Ped. \wedge (under first measure), Ped. \wedge (under last measure).
Tempo: Slowly, as before (♩=50).
Musical notation includes various time signatures (4/4, 3/4, 2/4) and accidentals.

Very Swiftly; as before (♩=96)

Violin (Vln.) part: *p* (first measure), *f* (middle measure), *fp* (last measure). Includes dynamic markings *p*, *f*, and *fp*.
Viola (Vc.) part: *p* (first measure), *f* (middle measure). Includes dynamic markings *p* and *f*.
Piano (Pno.) part: *f* (first measure), *mp* (middle measure), *mf* (middle measure), *f* (last measure). Includes dynamic markings *f*, *mp*, *mf*, and *f*.
Pedal (Ped.) markings: Ped. \wedge (under first measure), Ped. \wedge (under last measure).
Tempo: Very Swiftly; as before (♩=96).
Musical notation includes triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Very Slowly; as before (♩=40)
[piano only]

Slowly, as before (♩=50)

Violin (Vln.) part: *pp* (middle measure). Includes dynamic marking *pp*.
Viola (Vc.) part: *pp* (middle measure). Includes dynamic marking *pp*.
Piano (Pno.) part: *ff* (first measure), *sfz* (middle measure), *molto fff* (middle measure), *f* (last measure). Includes dynamic markings *ff*, *sfz*, *molto fff*, and *f*.
Pedal (Ped.) markings: Sost. \rightarrow (under first measure), Ped. \rightarrow (under middle measure), Ped. \wedge (under last measure).
Tempo: Very Slowly; as before (♩=40) [piano only] and Slowly, as before (♩=50).
Musical notation includes slurs, dynamic markings, and time signatures (6/4, 4/4, 3/4).

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

(15^a)

8^a

Very Swiftly; as before (♩=96)

sul pont.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

(8^a)

Rec.

v

Very Slowly; as before (♩=40)

[piano only]

ord. 1

slow gliss.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

fp

repeat quasi gliss.

ppp repeat and fade

sfz

molto fff

Sost.

8^b

Rec.

| straight lines |



Rhythms 17/42

Wharton Esherick

Rhythms, 1922, Wharton Esherick (1887–1970)

Performance Instructions

This movement incorporates some freedom in its execution: its individual elements are fixed, but their deployment is performer-driven to an extent. It is a “sandbox” piece.

At letters **A** and **D** the piano plays its groove continuously. The strings enter together *ad libitum* (cuing each other) on any  pulse, maintaining strict time thereafter. They begin with the section numbered ①, then play ②, then ③. When the strings reach the end of each numbered section (at the ) the piano should finish an iteration of the groove pattern *ad libitum*, then play the ringing G “bell.” The bell acts as a signal for the strings to release their fermata (when there is one) and to move on to their next numbered section, which is again begun and cued together *ad libitum*. After playing the “bell,” the piano *returns* to the groove immediately (i.e., strictly in time), unless the strings have just finished ③, in which case the piano *moves on* immediately (i.e., strictly in time) to the *next* groove (**B** or **E**).

At letters **B** and at **E** the piano plays its groove continuously while the strings enter *one at a time* (violin enters first at **B**, cello enters first at **E**) in a sort of canon, as indicated. The parts need not be aligned in any particular way, but each instrument should enter on a  pulse and maintain strict time thereafter. The strings each play their numbered sections ① and ② three times, with the bracketed portion extended with each iteration. The third playing is followed by immediately by continuous sixteenths, repeated as indicated, at which time the piano moves on to the music at either **C** or **F**.

3. at the spirit dance

after the woodcut "Rhythms" by Wharton Esherick

Quickly; light and joyous ♩=96 (♩=192)

Violin *mf* *f* *ff* *pizz.*

Cello *mf* *f* *ff* *pizz.*

Piano *poco f* optional: foot tap

a tempo
[9/16] a bopping groove

Sost. →

①

Vln. *arco* *insistent* *p* *cresc.*

Vc. *arco* *insistent* *p* *cresc.*

②

Vln. *dancing* *mf*

Vc. *dancing* *mf*

③

Vln. *assertive* *f* 1. 2.

Vc. *assertive* *f* *sfzp* *sfzp*

GROOVE

Pno. *sfz* ③

after

B

1 Vln. $3\times$ *f* add one each time *cresc.*

2 Vc. $3\times$ *f* add one each time *cresc.*

GROOVE

Pno. *f sffz* *sffz* *Sost. off*

C

Vln. *ff* *mf* as cool as can be

Vc. *ff* *mf* as cool as can be

Pno. *cresc.* *ff* *8^a*

Vln. *f* *ff* *pizz.*

Vc. *f* *ff* *pizz.*

Pno. *poco f* *Sost.* *a tempo*

D

①

Vln. arco *p* *cresc.*

Vc. arco *p* *cresc.*

②

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

③

Vln. *f*

Vc. *f*

sfzp

GROOVE

Pno. *sfz*

after ③

E

② Vln. *f* *cresc.*

add one each time

3x

① Vc. *f* *cresc.*

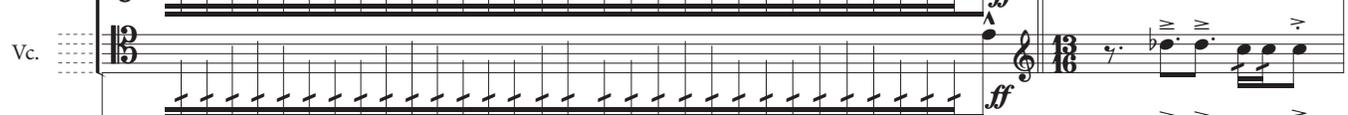
add one each time

3x

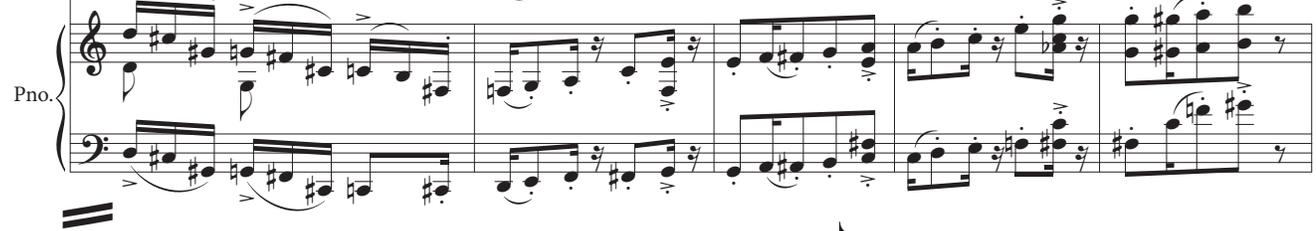
GROOVE

Pno. *Sost. off*

F

Vln. 
Vc. 
Pno. 

Vln. 
Vc. 
Pno. 

Vln. 
Vc. 
Pno. 

Vln. 
Vc. 
Pno. 

(corporal lines)