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RICE UNIVERSITY

CONCERTO FOR VIOLONCELLO AND ORCHESTRA

by

MICHAEL ROBERT MATHIS

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

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ABSTRACT

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The work is rooted in the lyrical, dramatic, and voicelike character of the cello in concertato relationship with the orchestra, and merges an intense dramatic impulse with a particular vision of musical unity and shape. It unfolds in a manner like a play of Shakespeare--The Merchant of Venice in particular.

It is in one movement with five main parts--Molto espressivo; Scherzando; Adagio; Scherzando--Cadenza; Molto espressivo. In the first section of the first part, the cello solo represents the thesis of the work and primary harmonic and motivic material and scales. In the next section, the orchestra is the main vehicle of the antithesis. A transitional and developmental section follows, which leads finally to a section of strongly percussive character. Each main part is articulated by a variant of the percussive section. The full implications of the antithesis are realized in the Adagio, where the technical climax occurs. The dramatic issues of the first developmental section are interrupted, or temporarily "abandoned" but are resumed in a section of like character following the Cadenza and leading to the dramatic climax. A full synthesis of the thesis, antithesis, as well as the percussive sections does not occur until the final part.

The musical shape, structure, rhythms, harmonies, melodies, motives on all levels, the "new tonality" of the work, and, in fact, most expressive details, all grow out of the Grundgestalt of the work. Grundgestalt is Arnold Schoenberg's most fundamental compositional concept. It represents the basic shape on the deepest and most abstract level of an individual artwork, and according to Schoenberg himself, constitutes the link between the two Viennese schools and is even of more fundamental importance than his famous twelve-tone technique. The Grundgestalt of the Concerto is represented by the motive C sharp - F sharp - C natural, with F sharp as the tonal center and a primary conflict existing between the tritone and perfect fifth "dominants."
CONCERTO FOR VIOLONCELLO
AND ORCHESTRA

MICHAEL MATHIS
INSTRUMENTATION

Flutes 1 and 2
Piccolo
Oboes 1 and 2
English Horn in F
Clarinet 1 and 2 in Bb
Bass Clarinet in Bb
Bassoons 1 and 2
Contra Bassoon

French Horns 1 and 2 in F
Trumpets 1 and 2 in C
Trombones 1 and 2
Tuba

Celesta
Harp

Timpani
Percussionist 1:  Vibraphone, Tubular Chimes, Glockenspiel, Crash Cymbals, Tambourine

Percussionist 2:  Triangle, Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Tam-Tam, Crash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal, Tambourine, Wood Block

Violoncello Solo

Violins 1
Violins 2
Violas
Violoncellos
Double Basses

Transposed Score
The image contains a musical score with various notations and instructions for different instruments. The score includes sections for Flute (Fl. 162), Piccolo (Picc.), Oboe (Obo.), English Horn (Eng. Hn.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bb Clarinet (B. Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn (Hn.), Tuba, Celesta, Harp, Timpani, Crash Cymbals, and Strings (Violins, Violas, Cellos, Double Basses). The score also features dynamic markings such as f (forte) and p (piano). Instructions for the instruments include crescendo (cresc.), diminuendo (dim.), and various note durations and articulations.