



*Gary Rushton*

# Ethicodrammi

For String Quartet

Full Score, 2020



Matyáš Bernard Braun:  
 Anger/Bravery/Justice/Pride  
 From the Statues of 24 Virtues and Vices at  
 Kuks Hospital, Czech Republic

Virtue and Vice are rather closely tied together, one can often transform into the other by excess or deficiency. When I first saw the statues at Kuks my first thought was that even the virtues were in such an extremely ornate style that they almost seemed to contain their corresponding vice within them. The high baroque style with ornate stonework strongly impressed on me the fluid dynamic between the ethical poles that Braun is positing to the viewer and from this I decided to think of the way in which a virtue can transform into a corresponding vice. Thus the two parables, or movements, are essentially two scenarios of ethical transformation.

The first parable is an exploration of justice and pride and the way in which they interact. Slowly sliding towards arrogance, the music begins unified. All the strings of the quartet work in unison to project the surety that justice requires. However as the piece continues there is a gradual fragmentation. Each of the instruments move away from the initial material, gradually at first, but increasingly different until they finally differentiate into uncertainty. Each prideful displays of virtuosity by the instrumentalists demonstrate that within every virtue is the seed of its negative image.

Parable II is structurally similar with one key difference. Instead of a gradual decline this movement explores the effect of stress upon an individual. Our brave protagonist is subjected to increasing difficulty, with the rhythmic and harmonic complexity increasing until a breaking point. After that the anger felt only serves to diminish any expression, ending in a gradual silencing of the instruments as their anger chokes them and renders them mute. Though the statute seems to be roaring with rage, the fact that it is silent stone makes this dissonance even more powerful.

My thanks to the organisers and performers of this project. It was a privilege to be able to write a piece based on such stunning sculptural work and to have it hosted in such an interesting and vibrant virtual world.

Notation notes:  
 Overpressure on the bow:



Commissioned by 'Trick the Ear' for use in a virtual reality gallery  
 featuring the statues above.

With thanks to Vojtěch Leischner, Kristýna Žáková,  
 and the Czech Ministry of Culture  
 September 2020

# Ethicodrammi

## Parable I

Gary Rushton  
Spetember 2020

Allegro con moto (♩ = 112)

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

*f* *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

*f* *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

*mf* *f* *f* *p* *mf* *mp*

*pp* *mf* *mp* *p*

8

A

*mf* *p* *<mf>* *p* *pp* *mp* *mf*

*mf* *p* *<mf>* *pp* *p* *pp* *p*

*p* *mf* *p* *<mf>* *pp* *p*

*mf* *p* *<mf>* *pp* *p*

[illegible]

25 **B**

mf *gliss.* *p* *f*

mf *p* *f*

mf *gliss.* *p* *f*

*p* *f*

29

pp p < f p mf

pp p < f p mf

pp p < f mf

pp p < f p 3

33 **C** Meno Mosso (♩ = 104)

f 3 p f

40 **D**

pp f > p

pp f > p

pp f > p

3 p f > p

f p

sul A

46

46

47

48

*f* *pp* *f*

3 3 3 3 3 6 6

49

49

50

51

*pp*

3 6 6

52

E

52

53

54

*pp* *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *f*

3 5 5

56

rit. . . . . -Allegretto (♩ = 82)

F

72

G Vivace (♩ = 148)

78 **H**

*mf* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *cresc.* *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

*gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*

3 3 3

84

*f* *p* *f* *ff* *pizz.* *arco.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *p* *f* *gliss.* *gliss.* *mf* *gliss.* *ff* *mf* *f*

3 3 3

90 **I**

*gliss.* *f* *ff* *ff* *p* *pizz.* *mp*

*subito pp* *pp* 3 3 3

3 *ff* *f*



94

tr.

3 3 3 3 3

3 3 3 3 3

7 7

pp arco

pizz.

mf

p

alla chitarra

5 5 5 5

arco

3/4 3/4 3/4 3/4 3/4

96

*tr*

*mf*

*p*

*p*

*mp*

[illegible]

101

*mf*

*f* *pizz.* *arco* *p*

103

*mf* *f*

105

**K**

*f* *p* *pp* *mf* *pp* *p* *mp*

108

col leg

Measures 108-111. Dynamics: *f*, *pp*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *mp*. Performance instructions: *col leg*.

112

ord. sul pont. pizz. *pp* *p* *f* *pp* *ff*

col leg ord. *p* *f* *pp* *ff*

pizz. *p* *pizz.* *p* *pizz.* *p*

Measures 112-115. Dynamics: *pp*, *p*, *f*, *pp*, *ff*. Performance instructions: *ord.*, *sul pont.*, *pizz.*, *col leg*.

118

sul G arco. *pp* *3*

arco. *pp* *3*

sul G *pp* *3*

Measures 118-121. Dynamics: *pp*. Performance instructions: *sul G*, *arco.*.

**M**

123

sul pont. *pp*

col legno battuto *p* *mp*

sul pont.

col legno battuto *p* *mp*

arco.

sul pont.

arco.

sul pont.

**N**

128

sul pont.

pizz. *p* *mp*

sul pont.

pizz.

arco.

3 pizz.

arco.

arco.

133

*pp* *p* *pp* *p* *mp*

*mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *p*

pizz. *p* *mp*

pizz. *mf* *mp* *p*

*f*

# Parable II

1 Lento (♩ = 54)

Measures 1-5 of the musical score. The piece is in 4/4 time, marked Lento (♩ = 54). The score is written for four staves: two treble staves and two bass staves. The first three staves are mostly empty, with rests. The fourth staff (bass) contains the main melodic line. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a crescendo to mezzo-piano (*mp*). The melody features eighth and sixteenth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 5. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Measures 6-11 of the musical score. Measure 6 is marked with a box containing the letter 'N'. The time signature changes to 3/4 in measure 6, then back to 4/4 in measure 7, and then to 2/4 in measure 8. The dynamics are varied: *f* (forte) in measure 6, *mp* (mezzo-piano) in measure 7, *f* (forte) in measure 8, *mp* (mezzo-piano) in measure 9, and *pp* (pianissimo) in measure 10. The melody continues in the bass staff, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 6 and a trill in measure 8. The key signature remains one sharp (F#).

Measures 12-15 of the musical score. The time signature changes to 2/4 in measure 12, then back to 3/4 in measure 13, and then back to 4/4 in measure 14. The dynamics are *p* (piano) in measure 12, *mp* (mezzo-piano) in measure 13, and *mp* (mezzo-piano) in measure 14. The melody continues in the bass staff, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 12 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 13. The key signature remains one sharp (F#).

## O

17

mp f pp p

mf p f p

mf pp

21

mf p mf p pp

mf p mf p pp

mf p

f pp

26

mf p mf p f

f mp p mp p mp p mp

f mp p mp p mp p mp

mf p f

30

6  
3  
3  
3  
p  
pp non cresc.  
pp  
mf  
p

33

f  
3  
p  
pp  
6  
6  
5  
3  
5  
5  
3  
f  
pp

36

mf  
p  
3  
5  
5  
3  
5  
5  
3  
p

38

*f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf*

42

*mp* *mp* *f* *p* *pp*

46

*f* *p* *f* *p* *pp*



53

54

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494

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500

501

502</

[illegible]

## Meno Mosso (♩ = 48)

65

arco. pizz. alla chitarra arco.

*ppp* *p* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

*ppp* *p* *pp* *p < f* *f* *pp*

*pp* *p* *pp* *p < f* *f* *pp*

*p* *f* *f* *pp*

3 3 3 3 3 3

sul pont. sul pont. pizz. alla chitarra

72 **T** sul pont.

*pp* 6 6 6 6 6 6

arco.

*mp* *mp* *f*

*f*

gliss. gliss.

74

sul pont.

*pp* 6 6 6 6

gliss. gliss.

75

6 6 6 6

6 6 6 6

gliss. gliss.

76

arco.

6 6 6 6

6 6 6 6

*p*

77

6 6 6 6

6 6 6 6

arco.

*p*

78

6 6 6 6

*ff*

*f*

79

*f* 6 *pp* 6 6 6

*f* 6 *pp* 6 6 6

*p*

81

**U**

*f* 5

*ff* 3

*f* 5 5

*p*

pressure off

83

*ff* 3 *f* 5 5 5 *mp* 3 *mp* 3

85

*f* 5 *p* 3 *mp* 3 *ff* 3 *jeté* *jeté* *ff* 3

88

*f* *ff* *ff* *f* 5 *pp* 6 6

90

*p* *p* *pp*

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

92

W

*f* *p* *pp* *pp* *ppp*

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

96

sul tasto

*p* *ppp* *ppp* *mf* *pp*

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

103

*sul pont.*

*ppp*  
*sul pont.*

*ppp*

*p* — *mf*

*pp*

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

3 3