

HUITZIL

for cello
(2014/19)

TREVOR BAČA

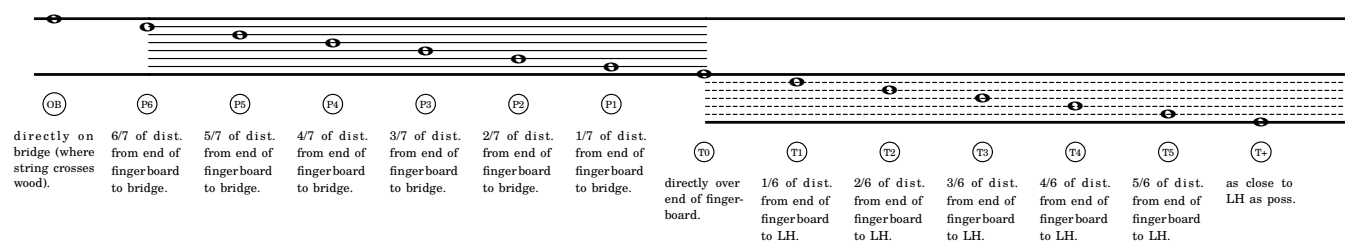
She says:

“Do not look in his eye but whisper instead to his ear. His giant round ear let to droop from the weight of obsidian curves of the lobe. He will ask you to pierce the bend of his tongue with the needle-sharp point of your beak. But pierce you must not. You must carry to him my record of dreams and the future they describe as I sleep. You must speak silently to him the words of our wedding and the wishes of birds that they carry with them as their freight. He will remember our dreaming-together and the heaviness we shared in our sleep. Then he will close his eyes. And when he does you must brush with your wings the bend of his ear and leave there like sand the husks of my words which he in his sleep will know but not hear. Then in the daylight he will carry with him our record of dreams and the future they describe as I sleep.”

Hummingbird carries her words like salt on his wings and takes to the sky in his flight.

Interpretation. Tune the C-string down a minor third to A1; pitches notate as they sound. The piece comprises two parts separated by a cadenza. The first 54 measures interweave three musical voices. Vibrato is allowed and the tempo can vary, per the usual interpretation of ‘music’; no further indications appear in the first half of the piece. Distinguish the voices — black, blue, red — *ad libitum*, though chiefly in phrasing and dynamics. “You must decide what to do with the notes.” The conceit in the first half of piece has to do with the dreams of the score’s inscription: each voice carries a wish from a lover to her beloved; each voice is touched by the sadness of being left behind.

The second half of the piece separates the right hand from the left. Fourteen string contact points, or SCPs, notate on a dedicated staff given at the top of each system. Heavy staff lines indicate points directly on the wood of the bridge (OB), directly over the end of the fingerboard (TU), and all the way up the fingerboard as close to the position of the left hand as possible (T+). Intermediate staff positions give degrees of ponticello (on solid staff lines) and successive positions up the length of the fingerboard (on dashed staff lines):



The locations of OB, TU, T+ are exact. The locations of P1 – P6 and T1 – T5 can vary: interpolate these points linearly (as distances) or interpolate them exponentially (as pitches). Once you determine the locations of the 14 contact points, keep them constant: the points outline a loving cartography of the string (and the inflection points of flight).

The conceit of the second half of the piece has to do with the flight in the inscription of the score: Huitzil, in Nahuatl, is Hummingbird. And it is Hummingbird, the first Americans say, who can fly to the beyond, messenger-bird of our dreams no matter their charge.

The cadenza separating the two halves of the piece — the middle systems on page two — can be improvised. The cadenza separates dreams from flight. It should be played in anticipation of joy.

Huitzil was written for Alan Toda-Ambaras who gave the world premiere on 22 November 2015 at Cabot House on the campus of Harvard University. Duration: about 10 minutes.

HUITZIL

for Alan Toda-Ambaras

Trevor Bača (*1975)

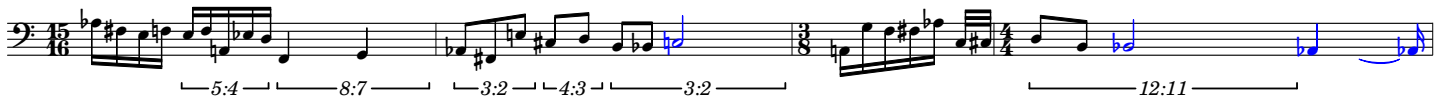
♩ = 78

CELLO



phrasing, dynamics: see preface

5



9



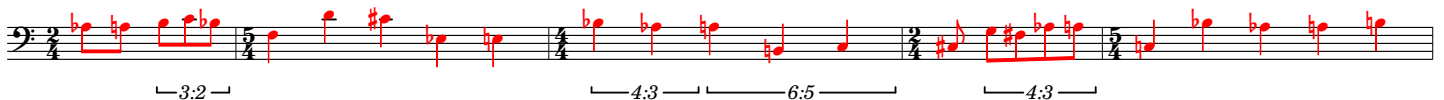
13



17



22



27



32



37



51 

(directly on bridge)

[illegible]

The first system of the musical score for 'The Little Boat' is shown. It consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The first three measures are grouped with a bracket labeled '3:2'. The last two measures are grouped with a bracket labeled '5:4'. The system ends with a double bar line.

[illegible][illegible]

♩ = 44
sub. trem. mod.

(trem. mod.) trem. stretto
┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐

ffz fz mfz mfz mfz mfz mpz mpz mpz mpz ffz
mp ppp p

..... ♩ = 66
più stretto più largo più stretto

♩ = 44
sub. trem. mod. trem. stretto
┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐

ffz ffz ffz fz mfz mfz mfz mpz mpz mpz mpz ffz
mf mp ppp

♩ = 44 ♩ = 88
sub. trem. mod. più stretto più largo più stretto più largo trem. mod.

(directly above end of fingerboard)

ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz
p f

┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐

ffz fz fffz ffz mfz fz ffz fffz ffz fz fffz
mp p mp p mp p

┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐

ffz mfz fz fffz fffz ffz fz fffz ffz
mp p mp p mp

┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ (directly on bridge) ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 3:2 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐ ┌ 5:4 ┐

mfz fz fffz fffz ffz fz fffz ffz mfz fz ffz fffz
p mp p

♩ = 88

(trem. mod.) - - - - - più stretto - - - - - più largo - - - - - più stretto - - - - - mod. sliding back onto string ...

ffz *pp* *fz* *fz* *mfz* *mfz* *mpz*

♩ = 44

3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 5:4 5:4 5:4

mfz mfz mfz mfz mfz mfz mfz mfz fz mpz mpz mpz mpz mpz mfz mfz mfz

mp *p* *pp* *mf*

3:2 3:2 (trem. mod.) - - - - - trem. stretto

3:2 3:2 3:2 3:2 5:4 5:4 5:4 5:4

fz mpz mpz mpz mpz mpz fz fz fz fz fz mfz mfz mfz mpz mpz mpz mpz ffz

p *mf* *mp* *ppp*

♩ = 44 - - - - - ♩ = 66 - - - - - ♩ = 44 - - - - - ♩ = 88

sub. mod. - - - - - più stretto - - - - - più largo - - - - - più stretto sub. mod. - - - - - più stretto - - - - - più largo - - - - - più stretto - - - - - trem. mod.

ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz ffz

p *mf* *p* *f*

3:2 3:2 5:4 5:4 5:4 5:4 3:2 3:2

ffz *fz* *fffz* *ffz* *mfz* *fz* *ffz* *fffz* *ffz* *fz* *fffz*

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

5:4 5:4 5:4 5:4 3:2 3:2 5:4 5:4 5:4 5:4 (directly on bridge)

ffz mfz fz fffz ffz fz fffz ffz mfz fz fffz ffz ffz

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

♩ = 44 ♩ = 88

sub. trem. mod. - - - - - più stretto - - - - - più largo - - - - - più stretto - - - - - più largo - - - - - mod.

First system of the piano score. The right hand plays chords in G major. Dynamics include *ffz*, *p*, *ffz*, *ffz*, *ffz*, *ffz*, *f*, and a final *ffz* triplet. The left hand is mostly silent.

Second system of the piano score. The right hand plays chords. Dynamics include *ffz*, *fz*, *fffz*, *ffz*, *mp*, *fz*, *ffz*, *fffz*, *ffz*, *fz*, and *fffz*. The left hand has a melodic line with dynamics *mp*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, and *mp*. Above the staff are tempo markings: 3:2, 3:2, 5:4, 5:4, 5:4, 5:4, 3:2, 3:2.

Third system of the piano score. The right hand plays chords. Dynamics include *ffz*, *mpz*, *fz*, *ffz*, *fffz*, *ffz*, *fz*, *fffz*, *ffz*, *mpz*, *fz*, *ffz*, *fffz*, and *ffz*. The left hand has a melodic line with dynamics *mp*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, *mp*, and *p*. Above the staff are tempo markings: 5:4, 5:4, 5:4, 5:4, 3:2, 3:2, 5:4, 5:4, 5:4, 5:4. The system ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

♩ = 88

(trem. mod.) - - - - - stretto - - - - - largo - - - - - stretto

Fourth system of the piano score. The right hand plays chords. Dynamics include *fz*, *fffz*, *ffz*, *mpz*, *fz*, *ffz*, *fffz*, *ffz*, *fz*, *fz*, and *mpz*. The left hand has a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *pp*. Above the staff are tempo markings: 3:2, 3:2, 5:4, 5:4, 5:4, 5:4. The system ends with a double bar line.

♩ = 66

largo - - - - - stretto - - - - - larg. - - - - - strett. - - - - - larg. - - - - - strett. - - - - - larg.

Fifth system of the piano score. The right hand plays chords. Dynamics include *mpz*, *mpz*, *mpz*, *mp*, *pp*, *mp*, *pp*, and *mp*. The left hand has a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *pp*. The system ends with a double bar line.

strett. - - - - - larg. - - - - - strett. - - - - - larg. - - - - - strett.

Sixth system of the piano score. The right hand plays chords. Dynamics include *pp*, *mp*, *pp*, *mp*, and *pp*. The left hand has a melodic line with dynamics *pp*, *mp*, *pp*, *mp*, and *pp*. The system ends with a double bar line.

Cambridge, Mass. (September – October 2014);

Madison, Wisc. (February – March 2019).

