

Spiral

for solo viola
with digital delay or prerecorded accompaniment
or three violas

by Robert Davidson

Performance directions

This work may be performed by three violists, or as a solo work using digital delay, or using a prerecorded accompaniment (available for download or purchase).

Trio performance directions

Spiral is a simple canon. Following the first performer, the second and third enter at four-bar intervals. At bar 213, the first violist improvises a solo while the second and third violists repeat bars 201-212 in canon until cued by the first violist to go on to bar 217 (again following at four-bar intervals in canon).

The work ends when all players have reached the last line, at which point the first violist should cue the final repeat and all should end together.

Solo performance directions - prerecorded accompaniment

Preferably the soloist should prepare her/his own recording of the accompaniment, though an accompaniment performed by Bernard Hoey is available from the composer or may be downloaded.

The recording should be played back as the first entry in the canon, with the soloist entering at bar one when the recording has reached bar five.

At bar 213 the soloist should improvise a solo, resuming the canon again as the second entry, following four bars after the recorded viola when it is heard performing bar 217.

When the final line is reached, the soloist should listen for when the recording fades out, and then fade out when the recording has completely faded.

Solo performance directions - digital delay

A wide range of digital delay units or software will be effective in realising the work.

The requirements for the technology are:

1. A delay time of 6.67 seconds
2. A sample and hold function to allow the improvised solo at bar 213
3. A feedback setting of 60 %

Ideally the signal processing should be performed by an assistant, though the soloist may be able to perform this task with some rehearsal. Upon reaching the last line, the soloist should repeat the four bars until the delay sound is in unison with the live sound. The assistant should then fade the delay sound and the soloist should fade out after the delay sound has been completely faded.

Program Note

Canons fascinate me - they seem a perfect balance of surprise and familiarity, as each bar contains something old and something new. I also love how the advent of recording has made it possible to play a canon, one of the most ancient musical structures, with oneself.

Spiral is a big arch form, gradually getting busier and more intense, calming in the centre before running in reverse back to the opening material.

The work was originally composed in 1998 for cellist Nicholas Bochner, and then recomposed in 2000 for violists Patricia Pollett and Bernard Hoey.

Spiral

canon for viola

Robert Davidson

♩ = 144

Viola

p esp, cantabile, legato

5 (beginning of delay sound)

9

13

17

21

25

29

Spiral

33

Musical staff 33-36: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measures 33-36 feature a sequence of quarter notes with slurs: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

37

Musical staff 37-40: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 37-40 feature a sequence of half notes with a slur: G2, A2, B2, C3.

cantabile, dolce

41

Musical staff 41-44: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 41-44 feature a sequence of quarter notes with slurs: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

45

Musical staff 45-48: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 45-48 feature a sequence of quarter notes with slurs: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

49

Musical staff 49-52: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 49-52 feature a sequence of half notes with a slur: G2, A2, B2, C3.

clear, bell-like

53

Musical staff 53-56: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 53-56 feature a sequence of eighth notes with slurs: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

mp

57

Musical staff 57-60: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 57-60 feature a sequence of eighth notes with slurs: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

61

Musical staff 61-64: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 61-64 feature a sequence of eighth notes with slurs: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

65

Musical staff 65-68: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. Measures 65-68 feature a sequence of half notes with a slur: G2, A2, B2, C3.

Spiral

69

73

mf

77

81

85

89

93

97

101

105

Musical staff 105: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes.

109

Musical staff 109: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes.

113 *staccatissimo*

Musical staff 113: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes. The instruction *staccatissimo* is written above the staff.

117

Musical staff 117: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes.

121

Musical staff 121: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes.

125 *con brio*

Musical staff 125: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes. The instruction *con brio* is written above the staff. The dynamic marking *ff* is written below the staff.

129

Musical staff 129: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes.

with strong direction

133

Musical staff 133: Bass clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes. The instruction *with strong direction* is written above the staff. The dynamic marking *ff* is written below the staff.

137

Musical staff 137: Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a sequence of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some grace notes. The dynamic marking *ff* is written below the staff.

141

145

f

149 *cantabile, dolce*

153

157 *ben marcato*

f

161

molto ritmico e marcato

165

169

173

177

181 *mf*

185

189

193

197

201 *mp*

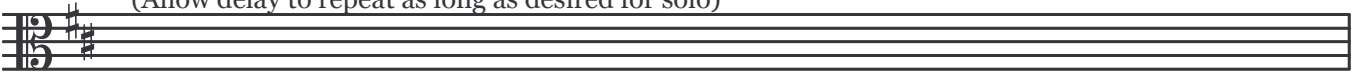
205

209

Spiral

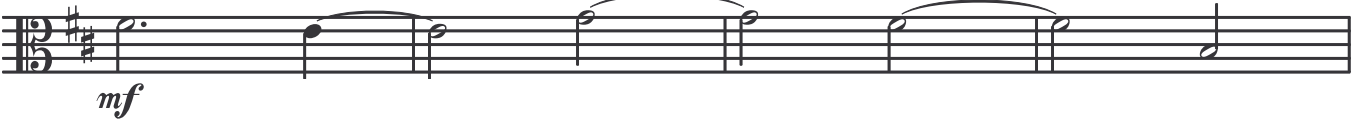
Set delay to repeat and improvise sustained, slow moving solo
(Allow delay to repeat as long as desired for solo)

213



Set delay to original setting

217



221



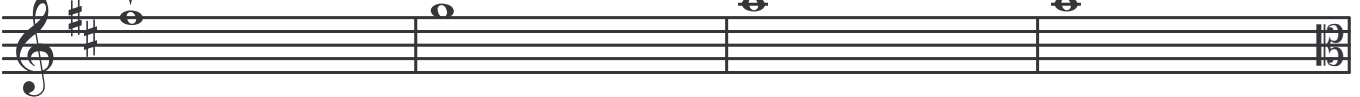
225



229



233



237



241



245



285



289



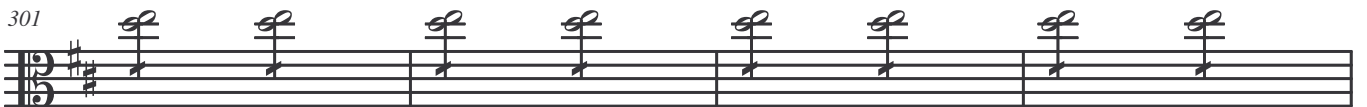
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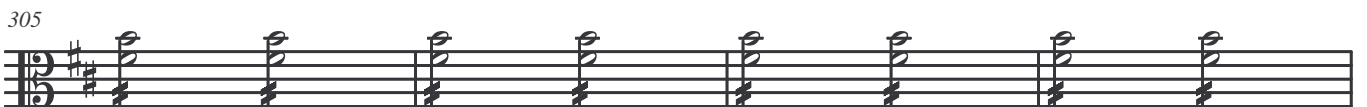
297



301



305



309



313



317



Spiral

321

325

329

333

337

341

345

349

clear, bell-like

353

357



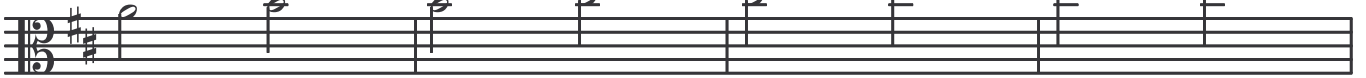
361



365



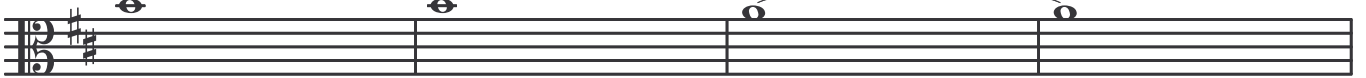
369



373



377



381



385

Repeat and fade (after a unison has been reached)

