

Cello Concerto

Chamber Version for Cello and Two Pianos

October 22, 2015–January 25, 2016
Duration: about 27 minutes

for Bonnie Thron and Grant Llewellyn

I have had the pleasure of making music with Principal Cellist of the NC Symphony Bonnie Thron and her husband clarinetist Fred Jacobowitz since 2008. She spoke with Grant Llewellyn, music director of the orchestra, in April 2015 about writing something for her as soloist. Grant then asked me to come up with a piece. After finishing other projects, I got to work on this concerto, after asking Grant for Welsh themes; one of his suggestions is the basis for the first movement.

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg)

Adagio; Cyflym; Adagio; Cyflym; Cymedrol; Ychydig yn gyflymach [9']

II. Heart Song *Largo* [8']

III. Contradanza *Fidelio* [2']

IV. Schlimmbesserung *Vivace* [7:20]

The theme for the first movement is the traditional Welsh song “Tros y Garreg”, or “Over the Stone”. The song is attributed to Rhys Bodychen, who fought at the Battle of Bosworth Field on the side of the Tutors against Richard III in 1485. The lyrics reflect on those who have fallen in battle. This melody has been altered from the original by George Thompson, who published Welsh airs in 1809, 1811, and 1817. I prefer his version for this purpose to the original. Note that the end of the melody resembles the theme from the last movement of J. S. Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5*, which factors into my treatment. Also, the traditional harp music of Wales led me to have an important harp part throughout this concerto. After having written music influenced by Russia, France, Germany, Austria, Moravia, Hungary, Romania, Spain, Cuba, India, and Mississippi, it was about time for me to try Wales—somewhere closer to my actual ancestry (English, Dutch, Scotch-Irish, Manx).

I made a point of using particularly incomprehensible, unspellable, and unpronounceable Welsh words for tempo markings in the first movement. *Cyflym* means “fast”; *Cymedrol* means “moderate”; *Ychydig yn gyflymach* means “a little faster.”

The very short third movement started life back about 1990 as the second movement of my *Fourth Sonata for Solo Violin*. (There is a total of ten such sonatas.) Originally I thought it was a tango, as I am easily bored with details in music theory and sometimes don’t look things up. In fact it is a contradanza, with the dance form originating in Havana. Hence the tempo marking “Fidelio”. The solo cello part can be performed by itself in a pinch.

The fourth movement is titled *Schlimmbesserung*, which is German for “an effort to make things better that ends up making things worse”.

Cover art: frontispiece from *Musical and poetical relics of the Welsh bards* by Edward Jones, 1784.

Publisher Parrish Press Garner NC 2nd Edition April 2022

billrobinsonmusic.com

Cello Concerto

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg) [9]

Bill Robinson

Theme
Adagio (♩ = 52)

Cello

Piano 1

Piano 2

10

19

26

Cyflym
(♩ = 110)

p *mp* *mf* *f*

p *pp* *ff*

Musical score for measures 30-33. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The cello line features a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked *ff*. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves with rhythmic patterns and chords, also marked *ff*. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8.

Musical score for measures 34-37. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The cello line has a melodic line with slurs, marked *p* and *ff*. The piano accompaniment features chords and rhythmic patterns, marked *pp* and *ff*. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8.

Musical score for measures 38-42. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The cello line has a melodic line with slurs, marked *ff*. The piano accompaniment features chords and rhythmic patterns, marked *pp* and *ff*. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8.

Musical score for measures 43-46. The system includes a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The cello line has a melodic line with slurs, marked *ff*. The piano accompaniment features chords and rhythmic patterns, marked *pp* and *ff*. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 12/8.

48 Adagio (♩ = 52) *p dolce*

48 Adagio (♩ = 52) *mp*

ff *mf* *p* *pp* *p dolce*

dolce *mf* *p* *pp* *p*

54 *cresc.* *(mf)* *f*

54 *cresc.* *(mf)* *f*

cresc. *(mf)* *f*

58 *mf* *f* *mf* *p* *pp* *p*

58 *mf* *f* *mf* *p* *pp* *p*

mf *f* *p*

62

63 *mp* *mf*

63 *mp* *mf*

mp

Cello Concerto Mov. 1

4

67 *mp* *p* *pp* *rit.* $\text{♩} = 110$ Cyflym

73 *mp* *cresc.* *mf* *f*

81 *ff*

80 89 95 *8va*

96

102

110

ff *mp* *cresc.*

ff *mp* *cresc.*

119

mf *f dim.* *p* *pp*

mf *f dim.* *p* *pp*

129 *almost a tempo* *p* *rit.*

138 *Cymedrol* *(♩ = 86)*

146 *f* *ff* *dim.* *(mf)*

154 *(mp)* *p*

163 (tutti) (♩=♩) *ff*

172 (solo) *ff* *p* 180

182 *mp* *mf*

191 196

Cello Concerto Mov. 1

201 *accel.* Ychydig yn gyflymach (♩ = 50) *mp*

201 *accel.* Ychydig yn gyflymach *mp* (♩ = 50) *mp*

201 *mp*

210

210

222 (♩ = ♩) *p* *cresc. p. a p.* (*mp*) (*mf*)

220 *p*

220 *p* *cresc. p. a p.* (*mp*) (*mf*)

229 *f*

229 *f*

229 *f*

236 *p* | *ff*

236 *p* *ff*

p *ff*

243

242

252

248 *mf*

248 *mf* *8va*

ff *mf* *mf*

256 *cresc.* *f* *ff*

256 *cresc.* *f* *ff*

cresc. *f* *ff*

262

262

269

271

(tutti)

269

276

(solo)

ff

276

280

ff *p* *pp*

280

Musical score for measures 21-22. The system includes a cello line and two piano accompaniment staves. The cello line starts with a *mf* dynamic and features sixteenth-note patterns with sixteenth rests. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. A crescendo hairpin is present between measures 21 and 22.

Musical score for measures 23-27. The system includes a cello line and two piano accompaniment staves. The cello line features sixteenth-note patterns with sixteenth rests, with dynamics *pp* and *p*. The piano accompaniment has a complex texture with sixteenth-note runs in the right hand and eighth-note patterns in the left hand. Dynamics include *pp* and *p*. There are changes in time signature from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4.

Musical score for measures 28-30. The system includes a cello line and two piano accompaniment staves. The cello line has a long melodic line with a dashed line above it, with dynamics *pp* and *p*. The piano accompaniment features triplets in both hands. Dynamics include *pp* and *p*. A box containing the number 30 is placed above the cello staff and below the piano staff.

Musical score for measures 31-35. The system includes a cello line and two piano accompaniment staves. The cello line has a melodic line with dynamics *pp* and *p*. The piano accompaniment features triplets in both hands. Dynamics include *pp* and *p*. Time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 and back to 4/4.

35 *p* *mp*

38 *mf*

39

42 *ff*

46 *ff*

8^{va}

50 *mp* 52 (♩=♩) *cresc.* *mf*

50 *mp* 52 *cresc.* *mf*

56 *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

56 *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

56 *8va* *8va*

60 *pp* *legato* *p*

60 *pp* *p* *8va*

60 *pplegato* *p* *8va*

64 *mf* *rit.* *a tempo* *f*

64 *mf* *rit.* *a tempo* *f*

64 *mf* *8va* *f* *mp*

81

81

ff

ff

ff

Lea Lea Lea Lea Lea Lea *

85

p

85

p

p

8va

89

p

90

pp

89

p

90

pp

pp

8va

94

rit. ----- *a tempo*

94

rit. ----- *a tempo*

pp

13 *p*

13 *Rea* *

13 *Rea* *

15 *8va* *p* *mp* *Rea* *

15 *Rea* *

15 *Rea* *

18 *20* *mp* *Rea* *

18 *8va* *mp* *Rea* *

18 *Rea* *

23 *f* *mp* *f*

23 *f*

23 *mp* *f*

27 29

ff *mp* *f* *ff* *non stacc.*

ff *mp* *f* *ff*

ff *mp* *mp* *f*

8va

33

rit.

ff *p*

rit. *ff* *p*

8va

8va

8va

*

(rit.)

38

rit.

pp

rit. *pp*

8va

8va

8va

8va

*

Vivace (♩ = 104)

Cello

f

Piano 1

Piano 2

5

10

15

16

19 25

f dim. *p*

f *p*

Cello *

26

p

34 35

f *f*

39

f *f*

43 *ff*

43 *8va*

47

48

48 *ff*

51 *ff* *f* *f dim.* *p*

51 *f* *dim.* *p*

51 *f* *dim.* *p*

8va

57 *f*

62 *f*

62 *f*

8va

63 *ff*

63 *ff*

63 *ff*

63 *ff*

8^{va} - - -

8^{va} - - -

68 *p*

73

68 *p*

73

68 *p*

76 *cresc.* *f*

76 *mf* *f*

76 *cresc.* *(mf)* *f*

8^{va} - - -

83 *ff*

83 *ff*

83 *ff*

8^{va} - - -

Reo

*

86

86 *8va* *8va*

86 87 88 89

90

90 91 92

93

93 *ff* 95

93 94 95

98

98 *ff dim.* (*mf*) *8va* *8va*

98 99 100

105 106

mp ----- *p*

105 106

p

8^{va}-----

111 118

8^{va}-----

111 118

p

119 *pp*

119 *pp*

8^{va}-----

119 *pp*

126 *cresc.* 128 *ff*

126 *cresc.* 128 *ff*

126 *cresc.* 128 *ff*

129

132

136

137

139

146

147 *p*

155 *pp* *p cresc.* 163

155 *p cresc.* 163

p cresc. 163 *8va*

164 *(mf)* *f* *ff*

164 *(mf)* *f* *ff*

(mf) *f* *ff* *8va*

168 *ff dim.* *(mf)* *(mp)* *pp*

168 *ff* *dim.* *(mf)* *(mp)* *pp*

175

175

p *ff*

p *ff*

p *ff*

8va

180

180

ff

183

183

fff

8va

188

188

ff *p* *pizz.*

p

p