

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Sonata
in A Minor

"Per Arpeggione"
(1824)

arranged for Viola and piano

Full Score

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Franz Schubert

Sonata in A Minor "Per Arpeggione"

The "Guitarre d'amour" was invented in 1821 by Johann Georg Stauffer (1778-1853). About the size of a 'cello, this instrument had a fretted fingerboard and six strings, tuned the same as the guitar (E A D G B E). It later became known as the "Arpeggione," because of its facility with guitar-like arpeggiations.

Due to a number of technical problems, the Arpeggione never became popular, and suffered a rapid obsolescence. Its guitar-shaped body made it awkward to hold, and it was difficult to play loudly on a single string because of the low curvature imposed by its many strings. In fact, the sonata presented here is probably the only significant work written specifically for this unusual instrument.

Schubert wrote this piece in 1824, and the care taken to suit the music to the instrument is quite apparent. It can be noted that rarely are dynamics stronger than "p" indicated, especially in fast passages. He made good use of the instrument's arpeggiating abilities, and wrote the music to show off the arpeggione's extensive range.

The fact that the music has outlived the instrument by some two centuries is a tribute to Schubert's genius for memorable melodies. It is sometimes used as a showpiece by exceptional 'cello players, as only the most capable virtuosos can reach the impossibly high places. Even on viola the higher ranges are difficult, and the lower registers (below open C) are of course impossible.

Nonetheless, the piece lends itself ideally to the tonality of the viola. In this arrangement, I have relied heavily on the assistance of Jean-Pierre Coulon. The low ranges had to be re-octavised to fall within the range of the viola. For the high parts, I have opted to re-octavise a few passages to make the piece more accessible to amateur and semi-professional players. The octave on the A string was taken as the practical limit.

Regarding bowings - Schubert's bowings for the arpeggione are of course of limited use, but do give an idea of the phrasing. Since I am not myself a violist, I have deferred to the bowings offered in the edition by Paul Doktor. Still, the player is encouraged to take these with a grain of salt, and to work out for him- or herself bowings and phrasing that are appropriate to one's individual style and capacities. Similarly, the dynamics indications are best taken as suggested starting points. As implied earlier, had the piece been written for other bowed instruments, it would have probably had a lot more mf, f, and ff markings.

Tempo indications in the original are sketchy, and in several places ambiguous. The markings shown (and reflected in the demo midi file) are my own interpretation, largely influenced by a wonderful midi created by John Cowles.

A note on the passage starting at bar 330, and similar passages later in the piece. The recommended way to play this is to double-stop the C and G strings, playing the A on the G-string as a "drone." This gives an interesting "fiddle" effect and is easier than negotiating the shifts if the section is played on adjacent strings in 3rd position.

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Fred Nachbaur, January 1999

Sonata "Per Arpeggione" in A Minor

Franz Schubert (1824)

Allegro moderato

Viola

Piano - right

Piano - left

(Adagio) legato

accel. poco a poco

p

cresc. decresc.

6

Allegro moderato

mf

Allegro moderato

cresc. decresc. cresc. decresc. (*p*)

11

decresc. *p* cresc.

16

decresc. *pp* cresc. *fp* decresc.

cresc. decresc. *pp* cresc. *fp* decresc.

cresc. cresc.

21

cresc. *pp*

cresc. *pp*

25

cresc. *mf* *decresc.*

cresc. *(mf)*

29

pp *f* *tr* *fz*

pp *f* *fz*

34

p *fz* *p* *cresc.* *decresc.*

38

decresc. *pp* *(a tempo)*
decresc. *pp* *ritard.* *(a tempo)*

41

44

cresc. *p* *cresc.*
cresc. *p* *cresc.*

47

p *cresc.* *f* *decresc.* *p* *tr*
p *cresc.* *f* *decresc.* *p*

51

cresc. decresc. 3 *pp*

cresc. decresc. *pp*

decresc.

54

cresc.

57

B

f decresc. f decresc.

B *f decresc.*

60

p cresc. f p

p cresc. f decresc. p

64 *tr* *cresc.* *decresc.* 3 *S*

68 *tr* *cresc.* *decresc.* *S* (Pizz.) *f*

72 1. 2. [C] (poco rit.) [Pizz.] *fz* *p* *cresc.* *fz* *p* [C] *p*

78 *decresc.* *f* *Arco* *p* *cresc.* *f* *p*

83

cresc. *decresc.*

cresc.

88

(a tempo)

(a tempo)

pp

91

(poco rit.) *fp*

(poco rit.)

94

fp *cresc.* *f* *cresc.*

cresc. *f* *cresc.*

97

fz *p* *pp* *cresc.*

102

mf *(a tempo)*

E *mf*

105

pp *cresc.*

108

pp *cresc. (poco a poco)*

112

mf *cresc.* *f*

f *cresc.* *f*

115

ff *cresc.* *ffz* *decresc.*

cresc. *ff* *ffz* *pp*

120

p *cresc.* *fp* *decresc.* *(ritard.)*

fp

126

F *(a tempo)* *mf* *a tempo*

F *p*

131

cresc. decresc. pp cresc.

cresc. decresc. pp cresc.

136

fp decresc. p

fp decresc.

140

pp

p pp

143

cresc.

cresc.

147

(Pizz.) (Arco)

decresc. pp f (ritard.)

151

H tr

cresc. decresc.

H f decresc. cresc. decresc.

155

(poco accel.) ritard.

p (poco accel.) decresc. ritard.

p decresc.

159

(a tempo)

pp (a tempo) pp

pp

162

cresc. *p*

cresc. *p*

165

cresc. *p*

cresc. *p*

167

cresc. *f* *dim.* *p* *cresc.* *decresc.* *tr* *3*

cresc. *decresc.* *p*

171

p

p

174

174

175

176

f

f

177

177

178

179

p

p

180

180

181

182

183

cresc.

f

decresc.

p

cresc.

f

decresc.

mf

decresc.

p

184

184

185

186

187

cresc.

decresc.

fp

decresc.

fp

decresc.

188

cresc. decresc. *p* *(rit.)* **K**

cresc. decresc. *p* **K**

192

cresc. decresc. pp cresc.

pp

197

decresc. dim. f decresc.

dim. dim. f

203

decresc. p ff

p decresc. ff

207 *Adagio (mm=60)*

p cresc.

Adagio (mm=60)

legato pp

214

decresc. cresc. decresc.

cresc. decresc.

220

3 cresc. decresc. pp 3 pp cresc.

cresc. decresc. pp pp

226

decresc. mf cresc. 3 mf decresc. p cresc.

cresc. mf decresc. p

233

f *decresc.* *p* *pp* *cresc.*

cresc. *f* *decresc.* *p* *cresc.*

239

decresc. *M p* *cresc.*

decresc. *M p* *cresc.*

244

fp *decresc.* *cresc.* *decresc.*

fp *decresc.* *cresc.* *decresc.*

249

p *cresc.* *fp decresc.* *decresc.*

p *cresc.* *decresc.* *fz*

254

p *cresc.* *decresc.* **N** *p*

p *cresc.* *decresc.* **N** *p*

260

p *pp*

decresc. *pp*

268

274

(accel.) *rit.* *3* *Allegretto (mm=105)*

p *Allegretto (mm=105)*

p

281

290

cresc. *pp* (2nd time louder) *cresc.*

cresc. *pp* (2nd time louder) *cresc.*

297

decresc. *cresc.* *decresc.*

decresc. *cresc.* *decresc.*

305

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *decresc.*

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *decresc.*

314

cresc. *decresc.* *p*

cresc. *decresc.* *p*

322

pp *cresc.* *fz*

pp *cresc.* *fz*

330

P (*Allargando*)

mf (*Allargando*)

(depress "a" silently and hold)

P *p*

336

decresc. *pp*

decresc. *pp*

342

cresc. *mf*

cresc. *mf*

348

p *cresc.* *decresc.* *pp*

p *cresc.* *decresc.* *pp*

cresc.

355

p

p

Q

Q

361

pp

369 *(poco rit)* *cresc.* *mf* *(Allegro)* *(accel.)*

(poco rit) *fz* *mf* *p*

375 *decresc.*

decresc. *decresc.*

381 *pp* *p*

pp *p* *pp* *p*

388 *pp*

pp *pp*

396 *(molto rit mm=85)*

(cresc.) *(decresc.)* *(molto rit mm=85)*

405 *(poco accel.)* *(poco rit.)*

(poco accel.) *(poco rit.)*

413 *(poco rit.)* *(Allegretto)*

p *(Allegretto)*

p

421

cresc.

cresc.

429

pp *cresc.* *decresc.* *cresc.*

pp *cresc.* *decresc.* *cresc.*

437

decresc. *cresc.* *decresc.* *p*

decresc. *cresc.* *decresc.* *p*

446

decresc. *cresc.* *decresc.*

decresc. *cresc.* *decresc.*

454

p *pp*

p *pp*

462

cresc. *fz* *p* *meno mosso*

cresc. *fz* *p*

S S

468

pp *p* *pp*

pp

475

cresc. *decresc.* *cresc.* *decresc.* *leggermente*

cresc. *decresc.* *cresc.* *decresc.*

481

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *pp* *cresc.*

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *cresc.*

489

ritard. **T** *a tempo (allegro)*

f *decresc.* *p* *a tempo (allegro)*

496

cresc. *fp* (2)

501

cresc. *f* *decresc.* *p*

cresc. *f* *p*

508

f *cresc.* *decresc.* *pp*

cresc. *decresc.* *pp*

516

cresc. *f* *decresc.* *pp* *p* *cresc.*

cresc. *f* *decresc.* *pp* *p* *cresc.*

524

decresc. *p* *cresc.*

decresc. *p* *cresc.*

(poco rit.) *(allargando)*

(poco rit.) *(allargando)*

U *Pizz.*

531

decresc. *cresc.*

decresc. *cresc.*

538

decresc. *cresc.*

decresc. *cresc.*

543

547

poco rit.

V *Arco* *(a tempo)*

mf

(a tempo)

V *mf*

552

558

decresc. *pp* *mf*

decresc. *pp* *mf*

564

cresc. *decresc.*

cresc. *decresc.*

571

pp

pp

577

p

p

584

pp

pp

(rubato) *sf* *p* *cresc.*

fz

rit.

590 X *a tempo*
mp

X *ritard.*
mp

596

decresc. *pp*

decresc. *pp*

601

p *pp* *pp*

p *pp*

609 ²

(meno mosso) *(meno mosso)*

618 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *ritard.*

Musical score for measures 618-625. The system includes a vocal line in bass clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The tempo markings are *poco rit.*, *a tempo*, and *ritard.* The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

626 *a tempo*

Musical score for measures 626-633. The system includes a vocal line in bass clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The tempo marking is *a tempo*. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

634

Musical score for measures 634-641. The system includes a vocal line in bass clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). Dynamics include *cresc.*, *decresc.*, and *pp*.

642

Musical score for measures 642-649. The system includes a vocal line in bass clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). Dynamics include *cresc.*, *decresc.*, and *p*.

649

mf *cresc.* *f decresc.*

mf *cresc.* *decresc.*

657

p *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

664

decresc. *p* *pp*

decresc. *p* *decresc.* *pp*

672

dim. *ff* *p*

decresc. *ff* *p*