

Twitter Etudes No. 1

*Six Short Etudes
for Solo Violin*

by

John Burge

About the music...

Twitter Etudes, a short virtuosic work for solo violin by Canadian composer John Burge, was commissioned for the First Bader-Overton Violin Competition organized by the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, in April 2017. Serving as the required test piece for all the semi-finalists to perform, the work consists of six short etudes each of which limits the number of notes in each movement to just 140 distinctive attacks. All the etudes are given a descriptive title as follows: Octaves, Interrupted Scales, Broken Chords, Fughetto, G String Melody and Syncopated Accents. The composer really could not decide on the optimal ordering of the etudes and although they are printed in the order just listed, performers are encouraged to find their own ordering when performing the complete set. In fact, the composer notes that playing the etudes in the reverse arrangement of the printed ordering is a great option.

John Burge is grateful to Tricia Baldwin, Director of the Isabel Bader Centre for both her vision and energy in establishing this event and for providing the opportunity to compose the test piece for the very first competition. The competition was won by Yolanda Bruno and all of the semi-finalists' performances can be seen on YouTube.

About the composer...

Canadian composer John Burge (b. 1961) has been a professor of Composition and Theory at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario since 1987. In recognition of his work as a composer, he received one of the University's 2013 Awards for Excellence in Research and in 2014 he was inducted as a Fellow in the Royal Society of Canada's Humanities and Arts Division for both his work as a composer and his leadership in the arts in Canada. John Burge has written a large body of vocal, chamber, and orchestral compositions and a chamber opera entitled, ***The Auction***. He has always been drawn to writing for string instruments and his string orchestra work, ***Flanders Fields Reflections***, as recorded by Sinfonia Toronto, won the 2009 Juno for Best Recording of a Canadian Classical Composition. A passionate advocate of Canadian music, he was a member of the executive council of the Canadian League of Composers for fourteen years, holding the position of President from 1998-2006. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the SOCAN Foundation.

Total duration: Approximately 6 minutes

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– Six Short Etudes for Solo Violin –

Contents

- I. Octaves
- II. Interrupted Scales
- III. Broken Chords
- IV. Fughetto
- V. G String Melody
- VI. Syncopated Accents

Please note that the composer approves the playing of these six etudes in any order that the performer finds optimal for their own personal presentation. Each individual piece is quite distinctive and the composer even found that playing the short etudes in the reverse order suggested above worked very well.

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I. Octaves

John Burge

Maestoso ♩ = 60

f

3 *p*

mf

p (*mf*) (*p*)

6 *rit.*

8 *a tempo (no rit.)* *cresc.*
p (no cresc.)

10 *f* *f* *f* *p* *mp* *p* [1' 15"]

II. Interrupted Scales

Allegro ♩ = 132

f *ff* *mf* *mf* *mp* *f* *ff* *mf*

col legno battuto (III & IV) *(col legno battuto)*

4 *mf* > *mp* *mf* > *p* *f* *mf* > *f*

7 *ff* *mf* > *mf* > *mp* *mf* > *f* < *ff* *mf* > *f* <

10 *ff* *mf* > *fp*

12 *ff* *mf* > *mf* > *mp* *mf* [30"]

III. Broken Chords

Vivace ♩ = 100

2 *p*

3 *arp. sim.* *cresc. poco a poco*

6 *f* *molto rit.*

7 *sffp* *a tempo* *mp* [25"]

IV. Fughetto

2 Poco largo ♩ = 48

Musical score for IV. Fughetto, measures 2-11. The score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of Poco largo (♩ = 48). It features a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *pp* (pianissimo). The piece concludes with a double bar line and a rehearsal mark [55"].

V. G String Melody

2 Espressivo et molto rubato ♩ = 80

Musical score for V. G String Melody, measures 2-8. The score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of Espressivo et molto rubato (♩ = 80). It features a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The piece includes a triplet in measure 6 and concludes with a double bar line.

11 (V)
p *cresc.* *f* *mf* *mp*

14
p (*p*) (no *cresc.*)

17
f *mf*

20
mp *p* [2' 20"]

VI. Syncopated Accents

2 Allegretto marcato ♩ = 112
f *f*(sub.) *p*(sub.)

5
p(sub.) *f*(sempre)

8

11
p(sub.) *f*(sub.) (*f*) *sfp* [35"]