YET SOMEHOW COMES EMPTINESS

for violin solo

2008

BRYAN W. CHRISTIAN

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written for and dedicated to Stanislav Pronin

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PROGRAM NOTE

My understanding of emptiness is in no way associated with nihilism. Rather, I believe that emptiness allows *form* to be perceived. This is quite different than one of principle mantras of Buddhism: "form is emptiness, emptiness is form." Nor is my understanding analogous to Islamic mysticism; despite that the title is pulled from a line in the 13th century Sufi poet Mowlana Jalaluddin Rumi's poem, "This World Which Is Made of Our Love for Emptiness."

In the west, Martin Heidegger's ideas about emptiness and form (or being) are perpendicular (they are not on the same spectrum, yet do have a "crossing point") to Eastern thought: "If we stop for a moment and attempt, directly and precisely and without subterfuge, to represent in our minds what the terms "being" and "to be" state, we find that such an examination has nothing to hold onto." Later he writes, "The less a being man is and the less he insists upon the being which he finds himself to be, so much nearer does he come to being."

The relation of my understanding to these other philosophies is not a negation. Rather, my understanding of form as related to emptiness, specifically in this piece, is also perpendicular to both Buddhist philosophy and Heideggerian philosophy, both of which are perpendicular to one another. (The truth perhaps lies at the point where all understandings, which lie on different axes, intersect.)

Emptiness allows form to be perceived. Yet somehow comes emptiness…

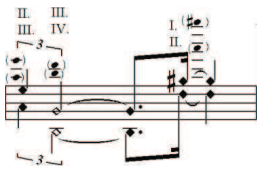
PERFORMANCE NOTES

Possibly Ambiguous Abbreviations:

p.a.p.	*poco a poco*
s.t.	*shrill tone*

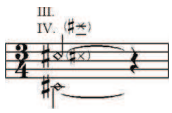
Natural harmonics:

Natural harmonics are notated using the diamond shaped note head to indicate harmonic finger pressure and to indicate where the performer should stop the string. The string on which they are to be played is indicated using a roman numeral and the sounding pitch indicated above in parenthesis.



Non-sounding natural harmonics:

Non-sounding natural harmonics are the sounds produced when a string is stopped with harmonic finger pressure at a nonexistent, or nonresonant, harmonic node. Similarly to natural harmonics, non-sounding natural harmonics are indicated with a diamond shaped note head to indicate harmonic finger pressure and to indicate where the performer should stop the string. The string on which they are to be played is indicated using a roman numeral. As the sounding pitch of non-sounding natural harmonics is indeterminate, and may consist of multiple "harmonic-like" sounds, an "x" note head is placed in parenthesis one octave above the stopped node.



Shrill tone / poco a poco shrill tone:

Shrill tone is the sound produced when a sting is stopped with harmonic finger pressure at a nonexistent, or nonresonant, harmonic node while applying substantial bow pressure in *sul ponticello* position. The desired sound consists of many harsh and bright "harmonic-like" sounds. Often a shrill tone is approached *poco a poco.* In this circumstance glissando to the appropriate pitch (if glissando is indicated/required), while loosening the finger pressure from ordinary to harmonic touch. At the same time, the bow pressure should gradually be increased as the bow is positioned to *sul ponticello.*

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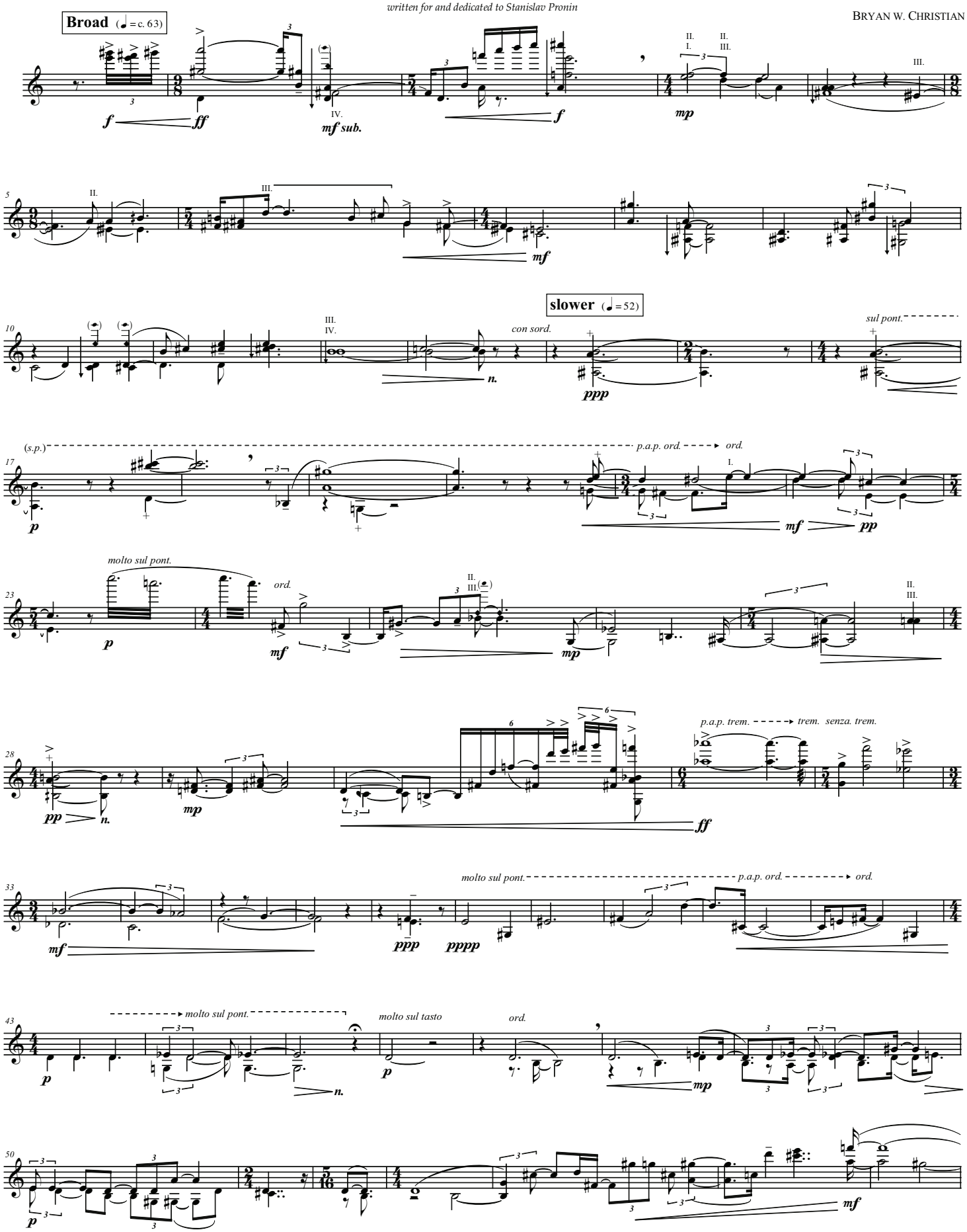

REMAINDER OF SCORE UNAVAILABLE TO PREVIEW

for a full score, please send a request to
order@bryanchristian.net