

TRIPTYCH



FOR GUITAR

NELL SHAW COHEN
2011

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I

II

III

DURATION CA. 7 MINUTES

Triptych (pronounced “trip-tik”) is a term from visual art describing an artwork divided into three sections that are displayed as a group. Triptych structures have appeared in a variety of genres of art, including Japanese woodblock prints, and they were especially popular in European Medieval and early Renaissance religious art. European triptychs were usually painted or carved wood or ivory panels connected by hinges for standing or folding, and would have two narrow panels flanking a larger, contrasting middle panel.

My three-movement piece for solo guitar reflects this structural model. The first movement parallels the third in overall tempo, density, tonality, and duration, and contains similar musical devices (e.g., the ongoing use of droning upper strings). The middle movement is somewhat longer, slower, sparser, and more lyrical.

As a former rock guitarist with some (very minimal) experience with classical guitar performance, I chose to compose most of this piece on the instrument in order to achieve a “guitaristic” effect that would take advantage of the resonance of the open strings and explore the full register of the instrument.

Triptych was composed for guitarist Devin Ulibarri. We collaborated throughout the creation of the piece.

—*Nell Shaw Cohen*

Triptych

I

Nell Shaw Cohen (2011)

With forward momentum (♩ = c. 120)

Guitar

p *f* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *f* *p*

rit.

Triptych - I

A little slower; relaxed, beautiful (♩ = c. 108)

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff in the key of D major (F# and C#). The tempo is marked as 'A little slower; relaxed, beautiful' with a quarter note equal to approximately 108 beats per minute. The score is divided into five systems, each starting with a measure number (34, 40, 46, 51, 56). Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1-4 above notes. Dynamics include piano (p), mezzo-forte (mf), and forte (f). Performance instructions include 'gentle vibrato' and 'p' (piano) for the final notes. The score features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The key signature changes from D major to D minor (F natural and C natural) starting at measure 46. The piece concludes with a final double bar line at measure 59.

Lyrical (♩ = c. 72)

C II 1/2

mp

poco rit. ----- *a tempo*

mf

f

p

tasto ----- *> pont.* ----- *> tasto etc.*

p

pp

C II 1/2

(p)

3

III

With energy, but relaxed; a la Renaissance lute (♩ = c. 120)

With energy, but relaxed, a la Renaissance lute (♩ = c. 120)

② 0 1 2 ③ 0 0 ④ 0 ③ 0

mp *f*

6 2 3 0 1 0

mp

13 0 0 0 C II 2/3

mf *f*

kaleidoscopic

19 4 3 2 1 4 0 0 1 3 ② 2 3 4 ② 4 0 1 ③ 2 ③ 1 4 0 etc.

mf

D.C. al Coda

25 ③ 4 ② ④ ⑤ 1 0 ④ ⑤ ④ 0 4 1 2 4 1 2 4 1 2

mf

30 Coda *poco rit.* C II 3 2 0 2 0 2 0 1 4

mp *f* *p* *pp*