JOHN AYLWARD

ARACHNE

for string trio
ARACHNE
for violin, viola and cello

By John Aylward

2017. 18'.

Notes:

Arachne attempts to capture Ovid's story of the master weaver who the Gods poison. Ovid's brilliant transformations move quickly and effortlessly, showing some kind of malleable quality to nature's creations. Everything seems one breath away from an effortless, and perhaps permanent change. Across three movements, I use simple gestures and instrumental techniques to reflect the ever-transforming landscape of Ovid's story.

"Ha, I only speak the truth and if Athena thinks otherwise then let her come down and challenge me herself," Arachne replied. Athena removed her disguise and appeared in shimmering glory. The two began weaving straight away. When Athena saw that Arachne had not only insulted the gods, but done so with a work far more beautiful than Athena's own, she was enraged. She sprinkled her with Hecate's potion.

"...as soon as the poison had touched Arachne, her hair fell away, and so did her ears and the nose. The head now changed to a tiny ball and her whole frame shrunk in proportion. Instead of her legs there are spindly fingers attached to her sides. The rest is merely abdomen, from which she continues to spin her thread and practice her former art in the web of a spider."

– Ovid, Metamorphoses. Trans. David Raeburn

Performance Notes:

Accidentals are used in the conventional manner. Some courtesy accidentals are used.

Tempo markings are approximate.

Tremolos should always be varied, never too smooth and convey irregular rhythm, not even rhythm. When 32 notes follow or precede tremolos, the 32nd notes should seamlessly transition into the tremolo so that there are no abrupt rhythmic shifts. Some accelerando and ritardando can be used to assist this effect.

Sul ponticello should almost always be used to bring out upper partials that should harmonize with the concurrent music. Strive to create fluctuating and overt harmonics when using sul ponticello.
To Ashleigh Gordon & Sound Energy

ARACHNE

John Aylward
(2017)

$\frac{\cdot}{\cdot} = 96$ sinister, otherworldly

\begin{align*}
\text{Violin} & \quad \text{pp distant, fragile} \\
\text{Viola} & \quad \text{ff rough, partially obscure} \\
\text{Cello} & \quad \text{pp distant, fragile}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{Violin} & \quad \text{fluctuating sul pont, bringing out harmonics} \\
\text{Cello} & \quad \text{harmonic gliss (fluctuating harmonics)}
\end{align*}
Poco a poco molto sul pont.

accel.....
(morph rhythm seamlessly into tremolo)

Poco a poco norm.

(ca. $\frac{3}{4} = 80$)

(poco a poco norm.)
poco rit...
tremolos seamlessly become 32nd-note rhythm)

accel.....
(morph rhythm seamlessly into tremolo)
irregular, fluttering oscillation from norm to sul pont.

rit.

$\frac{\text{rit.}}{\text{p}} = 54 \text{ cantabile}$

poco a poco norm.

poco a poco norm.

poco a poco norm.

poco a poco norm.

harmonic gliss (indeterminate harmonics)
growing in intensity, always fluid

$\text{\textit{poco a poco sul pont.}}$

$\text{\textit{poco sul pont.}}$
poco accel....

\[ \text{fast, fluid (} \frac{4}{4} = 120) \]
broadening....  a tempo  

sul pont. (fluctuating harmonics)

poco a poco sul pont.
senza rit...

distant, fragile

p

ppp
II. ELEGY

\( \text{\( \downarrow \)} = 54 \text{ Cantabile, Delicato, Molto Sonore} \)

\begin{align*}
\text{Violin} & & \text{Viola} & & \text{Cello} \\
\text{\( p \)} & & \text{\( p \)} & & \text{\( p \)} \\
\text{\( \text{legato} \)} & & \text{\( \text{legato} \)} & & \text{\( \text{legato} \)}
\end{align*}
poco rit.  
a tempo

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

poco rit.

a tempo

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

a tempo

pp

mf tenuto, molto espr.

pp
'A' harmonic, open 'E' string

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.
Vln.

Vla.

Ve.

senza rit....

Vln.

Vla.

Ve.
\( \downarrow = 96 \) tentative, gritty

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\( \approx \)
subito rit...

\[ \downarrow = 112 \text{ molto scorrevole} \]

poco a poco delicato

SP, scratchy, rough
\[ a \text{ tempo} \]
\[ \text{molto scorrevole} \]

- **Vln.**: harmonic gliss, fluctuating harmonics
- **Vla.**: harmonic gliss, fluctuating harmonics
- **Vc.**: harmonic gliss, fluctuating harmonics

SP, poco staccato

**accel.**

- **Vln.**: SP, fluctuating upper partials
- **Vla.**: poco a poco legato
- **Vc.**: SP
\[ \text{\textbackslash Vln.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vla.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vc.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vln.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vla.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vc.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vln.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vla.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vc.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vln.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vla.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vc.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vln.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vla.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vc.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vln.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vla.} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash Vc.} \]
\( \dot{J} = 96, \quad \text{dolce, sospeso} \)
slowly detune to low B

MSP, bring out upper partials

SP

rupido
(\textit{\textit{j} = 116}) \textit{molto scorrevole}

\textbf{Vln.} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Vla.} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{Vc.}

\textit{sempre MSP} \hspace{1cm} \textit{molto legato} \hspace{1cm} \textit{poco bravura, solo}

\textit{f} \hspace{1cm} \textit{norm.} \hspace{1cm} \textit{arco}
Vln.  
Vla.  
Vc.

190  
MSP  
fast, wide vibrato

191  
rough and scratchy, poco sul pont.

197  
fast, wide vibrato

rough and scratchy, poco sul pont.
molto rit...

\[ \text{\textit{molto tenuto, cantabile}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{poco a poco norm.}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{poco a poco norm.}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{poco a poco norm.}} \]
(senza rit.)