

Howard Hersh

The Idea of North

for vibraphone

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Program Note

The Idea of North is an extended work for solo vibraphone that evolves from rapid rhythmic pulsations to a spacious landscape of slow repeated harmonic mobiles. With the exception of a single forte outburst, the entire piece is played quietly.

Although there is no literary connection between the music and Glenn Gould's radio documentary of the same name, it does echo the open, crystalline country depicted in Gould's landmark sound essay.

The Idea of North was composed in 1995 for Nebojsa Zivkovic (who wanted to "float on clouds") and premiered by him in Koszalin, Poland.

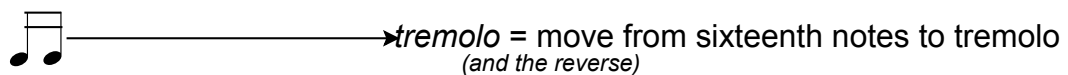
Duration: ca. 15 minutes

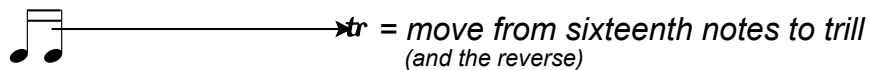
Playing Instructions

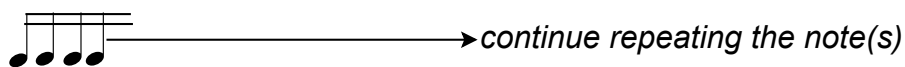
^ ^ ^ = shorter to longer fermatas

♯ = repeated sixteenth notes / ♯ = tremolo

accidentals are notated traditionally, valid for the measure

 *tremolo* = move from sixteenth notes to tremolo
(and the reverse)

 *tr* = move from sixteenth notes to trill
(and the reverse)

 *continue repeating the note(s)*

||: :|| $\xrightarrow{6X}$ *total number of iterations*

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for Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic

Softly and very fast ($\text{♩} = 136$)

Senza Ped.

poco

trem. poco poco più più (mp) Ped.

—(bring out groupings)—

continuous, no groupings Ped.

Bring out

Bring out

As fast as possible (*Arabesque*)

Tempo

ca. 6"

Continue with sixteenth notes, vary order and patterns of notes (vary continuously, no repeated groupings)

Add C

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 109$ (*Superimpose glissandi on top of the moving cluster*)

Add G# (*poco* > on first G#)

ca. 6X

ca. 10X

poco più f

15 16
(*) → Ped.

Very rapidly

Senza Ped. Ped. *

Tempo primo (♩ = 136) (Very lightly)

6 8 18 16
* (sempre senza Ped.) →

18 25 16

25 31 16

11 17 7 16 16

7 16 8 4 44 16
subito **fff** (pulsations) subito *p* 1/2 Ped.

1/2 Ped. * 1/2 Ped. *

poco a poco crescendo breve longer trem.

fff long subito molto *p* Ped.

Slowly & freely (♩ = 43-50)

— (sempre con Ped.) —>

rit.
meno *f*

poco più mosso (♩ = ca. 53)

— (sempre con Ped.) —>

poco meno mosso (♩ = ca. 48)

meno mosso (♩ = ca. 40)

♩ = ca. 110

bring out melody

rit. . . . a ♩ = ca. 92

rit. . . . a

ritard so that the old sixteenth is just a bit faster than the new eighth

—(sempre con *rd.*)—

♩ = ca. 85

poco rit. Tempo

poco rit. Tempo

Tempo

rit.

Slow Gamelan

molto rit.

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 46$
non troppo con rubato

poco rit.

Ped.

Tempo

poco più mosso

poco rit. $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 46$

New Tempo

Più mosso ($\text{♩} = 50 - 60$)

ten. Ped.

poco rit.

ten.

Tempo (hold back the start of each new phrase)

Ped.

poco rit. - Tempo

poco più mosso

ten. Ped.

Tempo

poco rit.

ten.

Tempo

Ped.

rit. . . a . . $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 37$ ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 75$)

(Sempre con Ped.) poco ten.

8 metric equivalent of top line [$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 37$]

Musical score system 1. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The right hand features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand plays a steady accompaniment of quarter notes. A tempo marking "(Very steady; in background)" is present below the left hand.

Musical score system 2. Continuation of the previous system, showing the melodic line and accompaniment.

Musical score system 3. Continuation of the previous system, showing the melodic line and accompaniment.

Musical score system 4. Continuation of the previous system, showing the melodic line and accompaniment. A tempo marking "(Start together)" is placed above the first measure of the right hand.

Musical score system 5. Continuation of the previous system, showing the melodic line and accompaniment. A "rit." marking is placed above the right hand.

$\text{♩} = 46 - 52$ (sempre con rubato)

From here to page 11, use the tempos as a guide only; let the speeds and shapes follow a slow, spacious evolution

Musical score system 6. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The system shows a change in meter from 6/4 to 8/4. The right hand has a melodic line with accents, and the left hand has a chordal accompaniment.

Musical score system 7. Treble clef, key signature of two sharps. The system shows a change in meter from 4/4 to 6/4. The right hand has a melodic line with accents, and the left hand has a chordal accompaniment. A tempo marking "molto p" is present below the right hand. A final instruction "(sempre con Ped.)" is written below the system.

poco meno mosso poco rit. ♩ = ca. 63 poco rit.

Tempo poco rit. Tempo poco rit.

♩ = ca. 45 poco rit. Tempo poco meno mosso rit.

Tempo molto p poco rit. To

♩ = 50 - 60 rit. Tempo rit. Tempo rit.

♩ = 40 (slow grace) poco più mosso Tempo (♩ = 40) poco ten. molto p

poco meno mosso rit. molto p

♩ = 43-48 rit. Tempo rit. Tempo

rit. ♩ = ca. 43 molto p 3

poco meno mosso

(♩ = 45 - 55)

poco meno mosso

Tempo

poco meno mosso

Tempo

poco meno mosso

(♩ = 38 - 45)

♩ = ca. 56

meno mosso

Rapid, as at the beginning

(sempre con *Ped.*)

(move into the foreground, still molto p)

(non troppo)

(6) (8) (6) (4) (2) (4) (3) (2) (9)

poco etc., continuous *s* with varying groupings / subtle shadings of groupings

(continue with changing groupings)

(sim.)

(distinct 3's)

not too long

(*Ped.*)

Senza ritard

Senza *Ped.* Nevada City, California - 3/13/95 (6/06)