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Gaspar Cassadó – Suite for cello solo (first movement)

Arrangement, edition and recording for viola sola

Andrea Oliva Blanco

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Author: *Andrea Oliva Blanco*

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Supervisor: *Tilman Skowroneck*

Examiner: *Maria Bania*

Abstract

The following independent project is based on the first movement of the *Suite for cello solo* written by the Spanish composer Gaspar Cassadó. The thesis talks about the process of making an arrangement of the Suite's first movement for viola sola. At the beginning, it provides a brief section about the composer and his context and gives information about the importance of transcription in the repertoire available for viola. Then it shows a detailed process of transcription, following three different steps in the process each of them based in one different arrangement. At the end, it contains a small evaluation section talking about the result and the whole process.

Key words: arrangement, viola repertoire, Gaspar Cassadó Suite for cello solo

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1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation

Spanish classical music has had many important figures along the history. Some of them are well known internationally, but the fame of many others has not crossed borders. I noticed this when I moved to Gothenburg thanks to some conversations with many of my master colleagues. It is common that we talk about things we have done in the past and usually our conversations turn around music. One of those times I remember talking about composers I considered extremely famous and I realized the reality was not as I thought. It is interesting how perspectives change because of meeting people with different backgrounds. That is when I started to consider playing something of the Spanish repertoire during my master in Gothenburg and, as I had to find a topic I was interested in for this independent project, I realized this was the perfect start.

The name of Gaspar Cassadó and the idea of making an arrangement for viola of his Suite for Cello Solo came quickly into my mind. While I was thinking more about the topic and about how to proceed with it, I concluded making the arrangement of the first movement only would be enough. This would be the first time I make a proper arrangement of a classical piece, so I did not know how easy or difficult it would be for me and how much time and effort would I need.

Also, the piece is objectively demanding so it would be the perfect tool for improving my playing. It is not excessively long therefore it could perfectly fit as an encore in a solo concert. It has plenty of details and gestures that can be related to Spanish music, which makes me feel closer to the piece. Some examples of it could be the appearance of the Andalusian cadence as well as the gestures written as grace notes in the melody which can be consider as a reference of “cante jondo”, the vocal style used in flamenco.

Moreover, I consider it very interesting and beautiful which would give me the motivation to practice it. Throughout my years of study, I listened to many cellists performing the piece which made me want to play it but, as there was no arrangement available, I never tried. Now, this thesis was the perfect reason to do it.

As I would do it in the context of the Academy of music and Drama in Gothenburg, other viola players will hear about this independent project and maybe it could inspire them to start their own arrangements. Also, as the whole process of transcription is going to be detailly explained, it could be beneficial for those

who are in the same situation as me. It could be use as an example of methodology that may be interesting for other musicians who want to start their own arrangement.

Apart from that, it would be the perfect way to contribute to the field of music in general and the viola in particular. Thanks to it I would expand the repertoire available for my instrument, which could be consider also as a way of supporting not only my instrument but the community built around it.

1.2 Objectives

The goals and purposes behind this independent project are the following below:

- To increase the repertoire available for viola solo.
- To make Gaspar Cassadó and his Suite known at the Academy of Music and Drama in Gothenburg.
- To support Spanish music and style while playing it outside its country.
- To expand the repertoire I have studied, practiced and performed having the opportunity to play it easily in the future
- To improve my playing technically and musically due to the difficulties and challenges the piece has.
- To become a more well-rounded musician thanks to the development of skills that arranging requires.

1.3 Methodology and structure

The arrangement has been done in a structured way, following a personal system and always explaining the reason behind each of the decisions I have made. The main tool that I have used is personal experimentation and analysis with my instrument. I have used my viola and my playing in the practice room during every step of the work. This experimentation while playing has helped me to find the solutions to the problems I was facing with easy and it has also made me feel more connected to the result.

During the process, I have considered some opinions and perspectives given by some of my viola colleagues. Also, my viola teacher has participated during the whole process, giving me suggestions and helping me making decisions.

Considering the structure of this independent project, the work could be divided into four parts. First of all, I provide some background information about the composer and the context of the piece. After that, I make a short investigation into transcriptions and arrangements and its importance into viola repertoire. Later, there is an explanation of the arrangement process itself. Last part is an evaluation of the whole process and the result.

I would say that the main part of the project is the transcription process. In that part I have developed my own method of arranging, dividing it into four different parts. In each of those parts I have always used a model to work with and I have achieved an improved version of it. The tool that I have used to make those improvements, as I was saying before, has been personal experimentation with the viola.

Throughout this whole independent project, the reader will find the words “arrangement” and “transcription” in many occasions. Here we can read the definition of both terms following The Oxford English Dictionary:

- Arrangement “a musical composition arranged for performance with instruments or voices differing from those originally specified.”
- Transcription “an arrangement of a piece of music for a different instrument, voice, or group of these.”

Both definitions consider the object as a musical composition or piece and both talk about the difference between the original and the final instruments involved. In conclusion, there is no big distance between them. That is why, these both terms will be use as synonyms through this paper and the appearance of one or another will not have any specific connotation.

2. Contextualization. The composer and the piece

The goal of this chapter is to serve as a brief contextualization of the object of this thesis. Below are the most relevant facts of Gaspar Cassadó's life and work.

2.1 Gaspar Cassadó

Born in Barcelona (1897), Gaspar Cassadó i Moreu was a Spanish cellist and composer. He was the son of Joaquín Cassadó i Valls, organist and composer, whom he began his musical studies with. He continued at the Barcelona Conservatory and he moved to Paris in 1910 to be a pupil of the renowned cellist Pau Casals. There, he studied harmony and composition with Maurice Ravel and met some other composers as Manuel de Falla or Alfredo Casella. (Anderson, 2001).

His international career began in 1918 when he started to have commitments with celebrated and renowned musicians. He gave recitals and concerts with pianists as Harold Bauer, Arthur Rubinstein and José Iturbi, he joined Yehudi Menuhin and Louis Kentner for piano trios, and in the Brahms Double Concerto he was a notable partner to such players as Bronisław Huberman, Joseph Szigeti and Jelly d'Áranyi. He was also committed to the educational work, so during his career he was a cello professor at the prestigious Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena and at the notable Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Köln. (Kaufman, 2017)

As a composer, influenced by the figures of Manuel de Falla and Maurice Ravel, Cassadó produced a Cello Concerto, three String Quartets, one Piano Trio, many pieces for Guitar Solo and numerous compositions for Cello and Piano as well as transcriptions in which the cello always appears as the main instrument of the chamber music group. Cassadó's own pieces, along with those of his wife the pianist Chieko Hara, are preserved at the Tamagawa University Museum of Education in Tokyo (Pages, 2000).

2.2 Suite for Cello Solo

Gaspar Cassadó's Suite, as well as his Cello Concerto in D minor and his Piano Trio, comes from one of his most prolific periods, the mid-1920s. The first edition of the score is from 1926, published by Universal Edition A. G. It is dedicated to the cellist and art collector Francesco von Mendelssohn: "con affettuosa e profonda amicizia" [with affection and deep friendship], and was popularized by the Hungarian-American cellist János Starker (Pages, 2000).

The Suite is composed in D minor and is divided in three movements, each of them related to one kind of dance:

- I. Preludio-Fantasia. Andante

This movement is a Sarabanda, a slow dance from the baroque period developed during XVI and XVII and in triple metric. It quotes Zoltán Kodály's Sonata for Solo Cello and Maurice Ravel's ballet *Daphnis et Chloé* (Anderson, 2001).

- II. Sardana (Danza). Allegro giusto

It is the shortest and lightest movement of the piece. Written in a 6/8 structure, as its name specifies, it is inspired in the Catalan dance called *sardana*, original from the region of the Empordà.

- III. Intermezzo e danza finale. Lento ma non troppo-Allegro marcato

In this last movement Cassadó alternates two contrasting ideas: one of them (Lento) is a calm, melodic, and expressive theme which reminds of the typical Spanish dance *Jota*; the second and opposite one (Allegro tranquillo) very rhythmic, energetic and full of cadences and harmonic progressions typical of the Spanish music style. These two materials complement each other perfectly and make a combination for a great ending (Anderson, 2001).

3. The arrangement

This chapter could be considered as the heart of this independent project. There is a brief literature review related to arrangements in general and specifically the transcriptions for viola. It also contains the excerpts of the arrangement which could be considered the most interesting ones. They will allow the reader to understand better how this concrete transcription has been made.

3.1 Useful information regarding transcriptions

3.1.1 Transcriptions as part of the viola repertoire

First of all, it is necessary to point out how important transcriptions and arrangements are in the viola repertoire. The history of this instrument begins in the 16th century, when the viola was used in groups to fill the middle voice of the ensemble and complete the harmony of the piece. This reality, which continued during years, resulted in the lack of attention to the capabilities of the instrument and its corresponding stagnation in its development (Zaytseva, & Sushkova-Irina, 2018).

In the late 17th century, when the dimensions of the viola were standardized, composers were inspired to write more works in solo and ensembles with the viola in them, but still remarkably few in comparison to other similar instruments as the violin or the cello. It was in the 19th century when the emergence of more music schools, as well as renowned viola performers, elevated the standing of the viola (Mondragon, 2018).

Lionel Tertis (1876-1975), who is considered the forefather of modern viola playing, demonstrated the possibilities and potential of the instrument. He commissioned many new compositions but he also created lots of transcriptions based on pieces from centuries ago. These transcriptions helped considerably in the development of the viola as a solo instrument. Another important figure is William Primrose (1904-1982), who was also responsible for adding a large number of arranged and original compositions to the viola repertoire (Galvin, 2013).

The viola, therefore, acquired the status of a solo instrument quite late. This fact means that a big part of its repertoire nowadays consists of adaptations of musical works which were originally created for other instruments. Furthermore, as it was pointed out by Kurys (2016), transcriptions had also the possibility to increase not only the repertoire but the visibility of the viola.

Talking about the performers, arrangements can be advantageous for a number of reasons. They can fill gaps in a lacking canon of repertoire, and help in the development of the instrumentalist's technical skills. "For an instrument such as the viola, transcriptions are of supreme importance because they have allowed the viola to expand its pre-twentieth century repertoire choices, improve its existing technical standards, and explore new colors, techniques, and phrasings" (Galvin, 2013).

Arrangements have been used even as a tool to reach new audiences and create new connections in the context of classical music. Moreover, and despite the fact that viola repertoire has grown exponentially along the history, this way of increasing and expanding the repertoire through transcriptions, has remained relevant during the artistic creation of the last century.

3.1.2 Veit Benedikt Hertenstein

Veit Hertenstein is a German viola player, formed in the Haute Ecole de Musique in Geneva under the guidance of Nobuko Imai. Nowadays he is viola professor at the Musikhochschule in Detmold, Germany as well as part of the Schumann String Quartet (Veit Hertenstein biography, n.d.)

Hertenstein has four CDs recorded, three of them are based on the duo piano and viola and one of them is filled just with works for viola sola. In this last one, called Viola Virtuosa and recorded in 2022, Hertenstein plays some arrangements made by himself, arrangements of different pieces original written for violin or cello. One of these pieces is the Suite for Cello Solo by Gaspar Cassadó, which is recorded in its entirety.

This recording does not affect at all the arrangement done in this independent project, as I realized about its existence once all the job was already done. Also, the appearance of this CD does not come with a written transcription, which means, and as far as I know, my work would be still the first published arrangement of the first movement available for viola sola.

3.1.3 Characteristics of transcriptions

As in all things, there is the question of taste. An arrangement can be a simple transference or an elaborate transcription [...] It is a matter of opinion how far one can go in adapting the original to its new form (Forbes, 1979).

As Bekenova (2020) states in her doctoral dissertation, creating an arrangement or transcription of a musical composition is always a creative process. It does not matter how far the new work is from the

original one, in any case the process of transcription has to preserve the general idea and the artistic content of the work.

After a study of transcription literature, we can point out that there is no uniform or standardized way of making arrangements. Each person has their own vision and perspective and uses their own method or technique to achieve the objective. Nevertheless, the work of V. Borisovsky, author of more than 250 transcriptions for viola, reveals a kind of patterns which could be classified into three types of arrangements (Bekenova, 2020):

1. The ones that are as close as possible to the original text: the transformation is primarily a timbre transformation.
2. The ones that show distant links to the source text: arrangements where you can see a compositional variation or transformation from the original idea.
3. The ones that totally modify the original work: the transcription affects not only the timbre, melody and harmony but the compositional side and, therefore, the meaning of the original composition.

Having this in mind, one important point when working on a transcription for a solo instrument is to consider the feasibility of the arrangement, that is, the ease and possibility of performance. In order to get this, it is necessary that the arranger is somewhat familiar with the differences between the original instrument and the viola. Knowing these differences: range, sound production, etc. will allow the person in charge of the transcription to get this principle of playability.

3.1.4 Viola and cello. Instrument features

The viola and cello, both members of the string instrument family, have many commonalities that allow arrangers to smoothly transition from one to the other.

Apart from being from the same family and being played with a bow, the main resemblance could be their strings. Both instruments have four strings that are tuned a perfect fifth apart. C is the lowest, followed by G, D, and A, which is the highest. In both situations, the lower strings have a richer, darker sound, and composers frequently write that a particular phrase should be performed on a specific string, which is designated as *Sul C* (on the C string) or *Sul G* (on the G string). This is extremely useful when making a basic transcription from one instrument to another since not only do the open strings remain in the same place and with the 'same' frequency, but also when thinking about chords, left-hand positions, and harmonics.

Aside from being played in a different position, their range would be the biggest distinction. The cello has a playable range of C2-C6, making it one of the instruments with the widest range, while the viola's is C3-E6. (Hori, 2003)

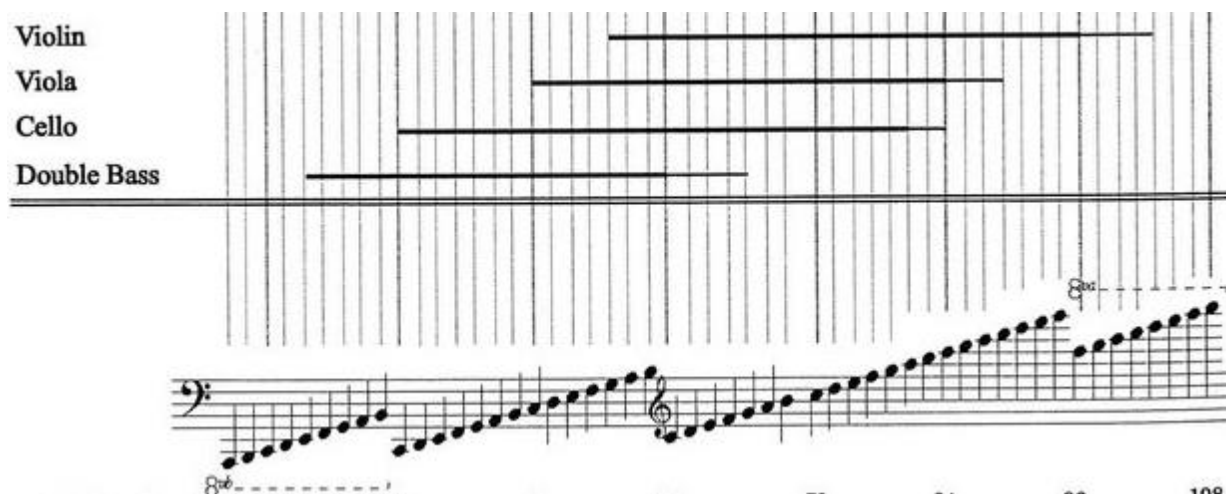


Figure 1. Range of the orchestra string instruments

Apart from the range, the difference in size and the position they viola and cello are played is something to consider while transcribing from one to another.

3.2 Transcription process

3.2.1 General ideas

The idea of the arrangement done in this independent project is to change as little as possible the original piece. Then, the result piece would fit into the first category of arrangements established by Bekenova, the ones that are as close to the original text as possible in which the result is just a timbre modification. Moreover, the similarities between the strings of the cello and the viola make easier the process of transcription.

Having said that, the tonality of the arrangement stays the same as the original, mainly around D minor. The notes are identical or as close to the original text as possible. However, and because of the difference in the ranges of both instruments (not only in frequency but also in width) there are some alterations within the octaves as well as some small adaptations. Also, because this piece employs the entire range of the cello, it is just impossible to transpose for the viola without doing these adjustments.

In addition to tonality, I respected the composer's wishes for open strings and harmonics whenever it is possible. I also followed as much as I could the different left-hand positions marked by the composer. The piece has a number of little gestures written as ornaments which have a defined left-hand location and open strings throughout. These little movements are easier to perform and have a more solid character when played as the composer wrote, that is the reason to keep them.

Talking about the edition, I decided to do the arrangement handwritten instead of using a music notation software. The idea came thanks to my supervisor, who suggested it with the idea to create something more personal.

Considering all of this, I decided to divide the process into three different steps which could help me to improve little by little without feeling overwhelmed. Each of these steps is based on a different version of the arrangement for viola. The idea is to consider the existing piece as “the version 0 - original” and start the first step by creating “version 1” following the one before. Next steps would continue as it goes, always having the version before as a reference. Like that, each version is an improvement of the previous one, which makes it easier to see and understand the process.

3.2.2 Version 1

This initial version may be described as a straightforward transposition from cello keys to viola keys. The main objective is to examine and experiment with the material as clean as possible, checking what works and what does not.

It is mainly done one octave higher than the original one, considering the range of the viola in comparison with the cello. Nevertheless, two parts have been already considered impossible to play properly and have been adapted to the range of the viola. The first one is from third beat of bar 33 until third beat of bar 35. The change of key in both scores makes it a bit more difficult to see but, while the original does not have any jump in between the scales, version 1 has a sudden octave jump.

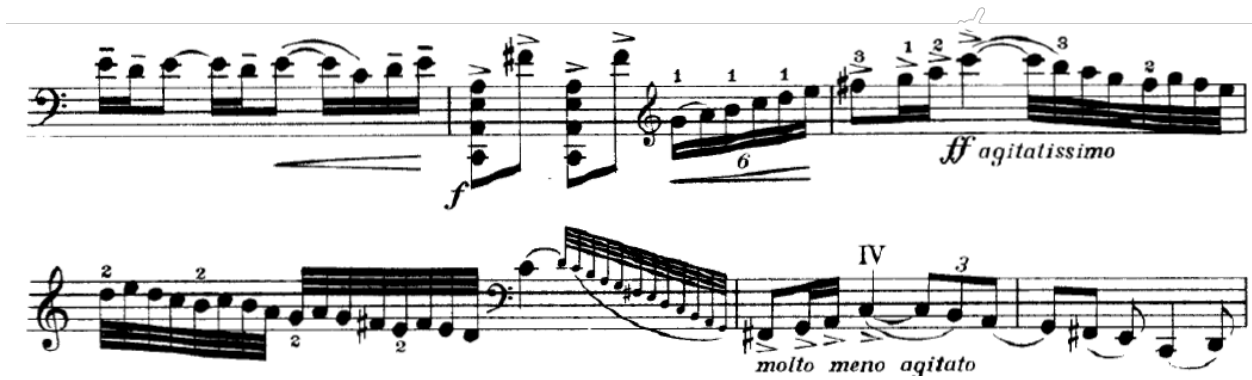


Figure 2. Original. Bars 32 – 36

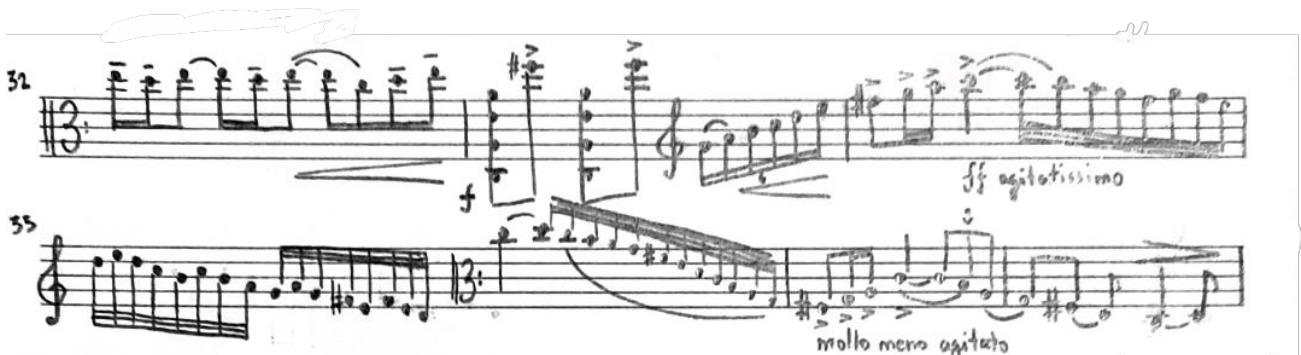


Figure 3. Version 1. Bars 32 – 36

The second octave adaptation occurs in bar 51 and first beat of 52. As well as in the previous case, the original continues the ascending line while the version 1 has an octave jump until the melody with the harmonics starts.



Figure 4. Original. Bars 51 – 52

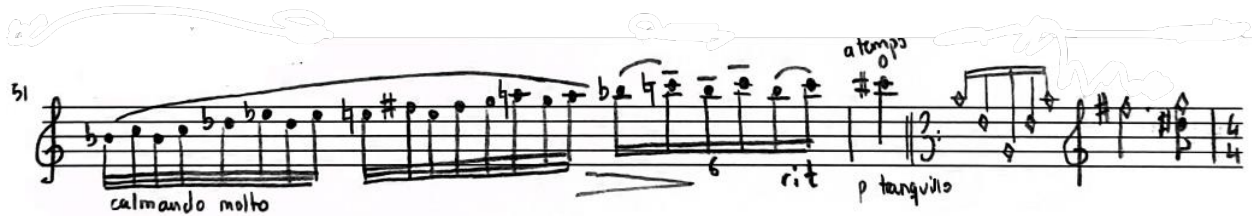


Figure 5. Version 1. Bars 51 – 52

Apart from these two changes, the rest of the version 1 is, as I said before, one simple transposition of keys and octaves. The changes and improvements of version 2 come after playing and experimenting with this first trial.

3.2.3 Version 2

In this second step of the transcription process the result is a playable arrangement. I have tried to fix all the small things that did not work while playing the first transcription, as well as to adapt the parts that could be extremely and unnecessarily difficult. I have also corrected some little mistakes regarding notes and articulations.

This version is done in a different music paper, which has less staves and more white space between them. Thanks to that it was possible to write all the chords and the expression, dynamic and tempo markings without overlapping anything. This helps the player considerably as the result is a much cleaner version.

Apart from that, I would like to explain some of the changes that I have done during this second trial. The first and maybe most important one occurs during the very beginning. I decided, after playing many times both options, to lower the octave from the beginning until bar 10. During this whole excerpt, Cassadó presents the main theme which establishes the main character of the piece. Although it was possible to play it one octave higher, avoiding making any change later, this version 1 did not sound as proud and confident as the original. Also, with this change the arrangement gets a nice darker sound, closer to the viola identity.

Because of this change in the octave the grace notes in bar 1 and bar 6 disappear. Additionally, some of the chords might change. Those changes never affect the identity of the chords, they are just changes in the disposition of the notes but without changing which chord they are. Also, most of the times, the base of those chords remains as in the original. See figures 6 and 7, the red notes disappear between versions, the blue ones change disposition in the chord.

Andante

5

8

f

f sostenuto

Marc. e con anima

Marc. e con anima

rit

Figure 6. Version 1. Bars 1 – 10

Andante

5

8

f sostenuto

f sostenuto

Marc. e con anima

Marc. e con anima

rit

Figure 7. Version 2. Bars 1 – 10

In the same way that happens during this beginning with the disposition of the chords, there is a small adjustment during bars 27 and 28. See figure 8 and 9, the red notes disappear, the blue ones change octave, the green ones are new.



Figure 8. Version 1. Bars 27 – 28

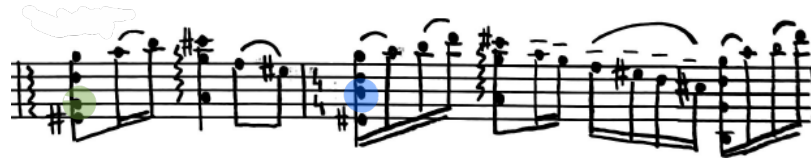


Figure 9. Version 2. Bars 27 – 28

While making the previous version 1, the straightforward transcription, I only made two significant changes which I explained before. Both of them consisted in lowering the octave during a few bars just to be able to play the excerpt properly. While playing and experimenting afterwards with this version 1, I realized the place the octave changed was too abrupt and could and should be changed. That is why, after considering and trying some options, I decided to rewrite the second chord of 33 and lower the octave already from there, creating a small melodic line that did not exit. To go back to the main octave of the arrangement, I decided to write a new grace note in bar 35 which would help me to connect the interval of seventh created because of the previous change. See figures 10 and 11, the red notes disappear, the blue ones change octave, the green ones are new.

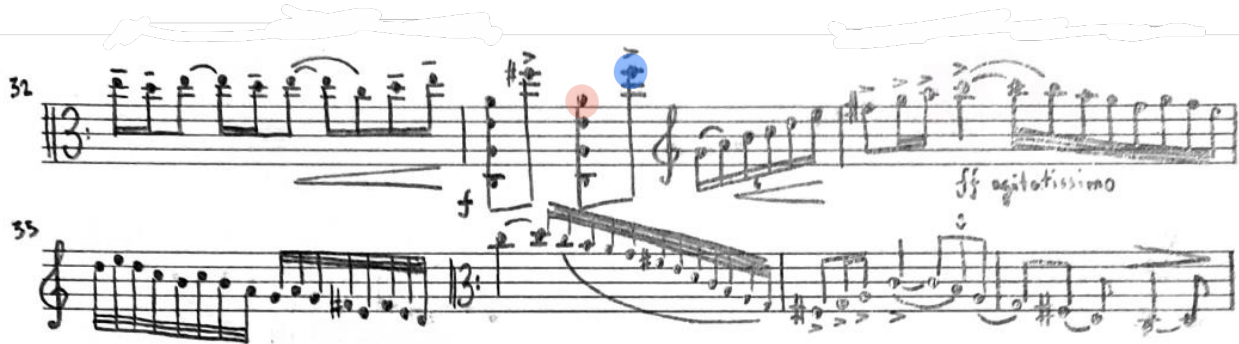


Figure10. Version 1. Bars 32 – 37

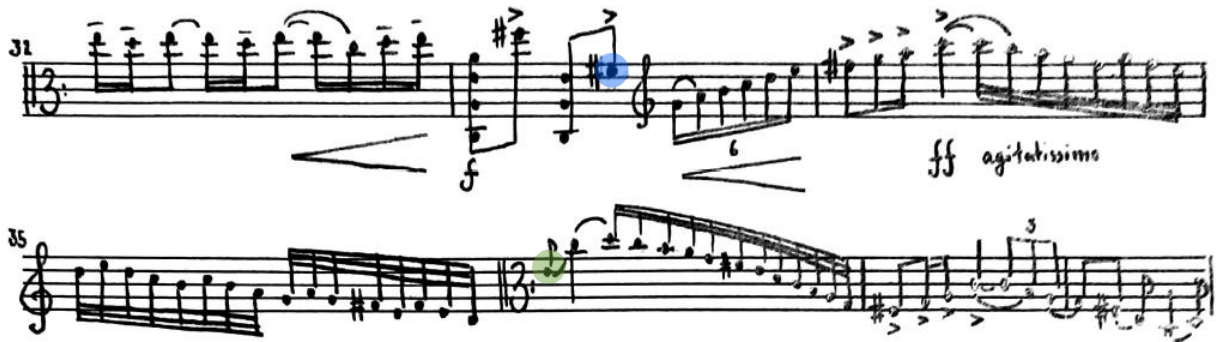


Figure 11. Version 2. Bars 32 – 37

The second excerpt I lowered in the Version 1 was the one between bars 51 and 52. In this case I decided to change the octave from almost the beginning of the phrase. Then, the main theme appears in the normal octave but when the phrase develops followed by a bigger group of notes each time, the melodic line is already in a playable position. At this point the original piece sounds like an improvisation of scales which seems effortless, and with this change is easier to get this idea.

Because of this change of octave, there is a small adjustment at the end of the line. The first note in bar 52 cannot be a harmonic anymore, so it needs to be played as a real note. To try to copy the original sound and color it is enough to play it closer to the bridge and change the *p* with *pp*.

See figures 12 and 13. The change is marked with a red line.

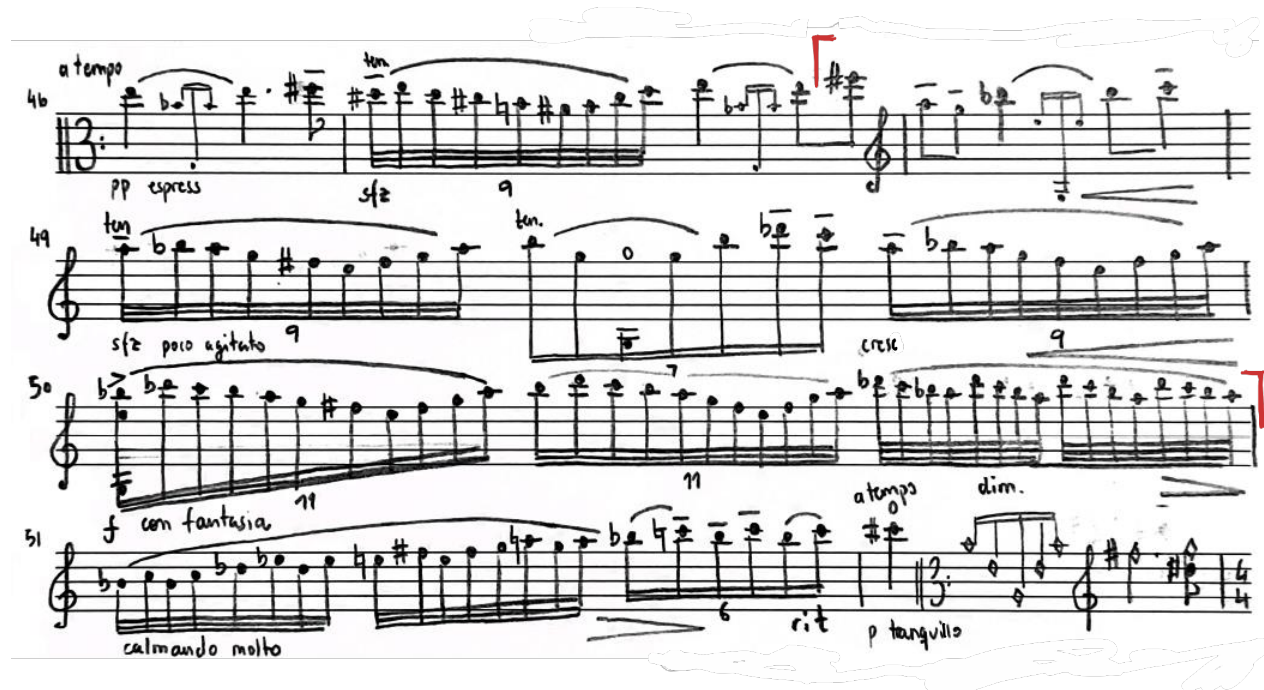


Figure 12. Version 1. Bars 46 - 52

Figure 13. Version 2. Bars 46 – 52

The last remarkable adaptation of this version 2 happens between bars 62 and 63. While the two first bars of arpeggios work perfectly for the viola, the two last ones do not. The reason is because, in order to play it as the cello does, it would be necessary to go high in position using all four strings. The problem in this case is not how high in position it is but the fact that all the arpeggios start with the fifth of the chord in the base. This means that, to play it properly, it would be necessary to play a fifth with the same finger higher and higher in C and G string. This is not a problem for the cello, as they can play fifths putting the finger flat and perpendicular to the fingerboard. Nevertheless, it becomes a bit more difficult for the viola. On the viola it is not possible to put the finger as perpendicular to the fingerboard as the cello. On the viola the space between strings is much bigger than on the violin, which makes it difficult to try to copy their technique. That is why, the best way to play it for viola players would be to pull the strings closer with one finger and then playing the fifth with another one. In conclusion, it is not the case of an unplayable excerpt but leaving it like the version 1 would make it too complicated, losing the character and phrasing it is supposed to have.

I decided then to eliminated the third of each chord, maintaining the A pedal played in an open string instead, which I consider gives something more special than a simple succession of major chords.

See figures 14 and 15. The red notes disappear.

Figure 14. Version 1. Bars 61 – 65

Figure 15. Version 2. Bars 61 – 65

From this point until the end, the version 1 works almost perfectly on the viola and does not need more adjustments. The only small change is the elimination of the Sul D and the harmonics and open strings in the last two bars. Instead of that, the end can be played in between D and A string, taking extra care of the sound produced while crossing strings.

3.2.4 Final version

This final version comes after practicing the second one and after receiving feedback from some of my viola colleagues. I decided to ask for their opinion in order to have an idea of how the arrangement was perceived from the outside. I ask them to check the arrangement and play it if they want so that we could discuss some details. Then, the result is a more playable arrangement but also a more convincing one.

I have been extra careful while writing. I have based this final version on version 2, but I have been also checking the original so that the tempo and dynamic markings appear in the exact same place. Doing that, I make sure there are no other possible interpretations of the indications written. I have adapted the last page so that it had ten staves and fit perfectly on the sheet. Thanks to that, the result is a much cleaner edition, easier to read and more pleasant to practice with.

Because of the suggestion of two of my colleagues, I have checked and adapt all the key changes so that they are the most comfortable option possible. It makes a big difference for the musician while performing and studying. Thanks to them I have also try to make a bigger difference every time I write a grace note or a real one. It could be a bit confusing sometimes as the size of all of them was almost the same.

Apart from that, I have added some bowings and fingerings that could help the musician playing, always checking the ones in the original version and the musical idea behind them. I have written some Sul C marks throughout the piece to show an interpretation idea that could be considered by the musician playing. All this information appear in gray instead off black in final version.

Talking about specific adjustments and changes, there are only two in comparison with the previous version. The first one occurs in bar 24. While the first grace notes of the melodic line are challenging but possible to play, the last ones before the last beat of the bar becomes unnecessarily difficult. Eliminating the first F sharp we will make it easier to play. See figures 16 and 17, the red note disappears.

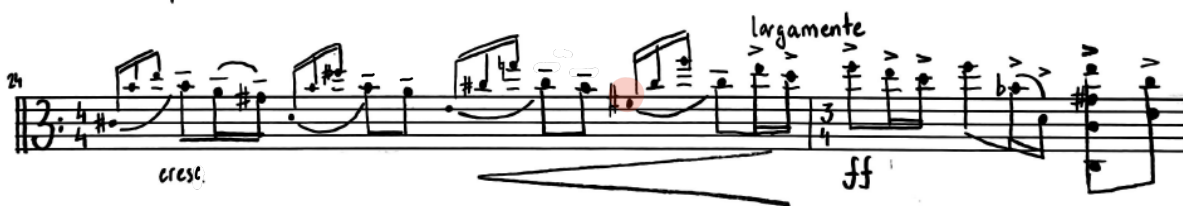


Figure 16. Version 2. Bars 24 – 25

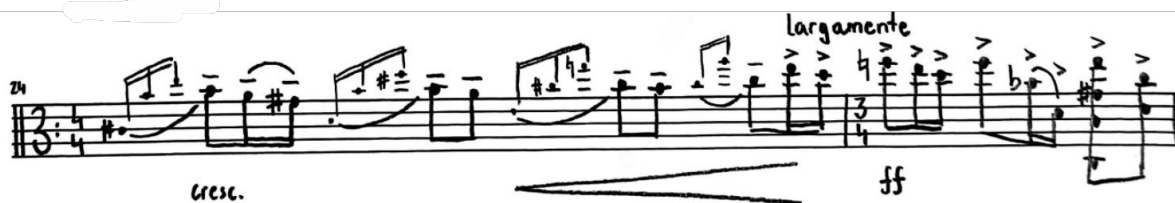


Figure 17. Final version. Bars 24 – 25

The second one happens in bars 53 and 54. The harmonics written are so high that it gets really complicated to play them properly. That is why I decided, after the comments of my colleagues, to lower the melodic line of harmonics without touching the arpeggios. See figures 18 and 19, the change is marked with a red line.

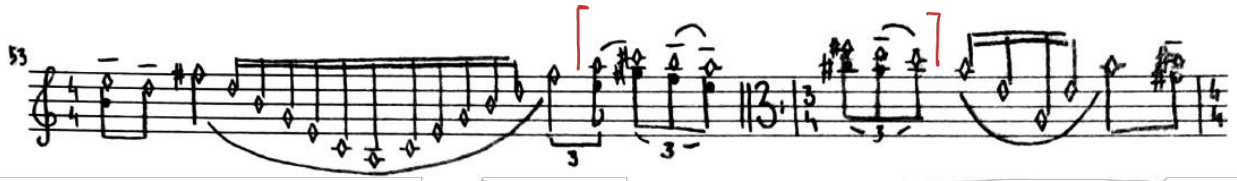


Figure 18. Version 2. Bars 53 – 54



Figure 19. Final version. Bars 53 – 54

3.2.5 Recording

To complete this work and make this independent project more interesting for the reader I decided to record my arrangement. It is not a professional recording, as it has been done using a Zoom recorder (model H5 handy recorder) in one of the practice rooms at the Academy of Music and Drama in Gothenburg. Nevertheless, it can serve as an auditive example for the final version of the arrangement.

Moreover, as I am the one playing, the listener can use this recording in order to understand all the decisions that I made through the process of arranging. Also, it can be used as an inspiration for more musical, phrasing and stylistic aspects. Recording: <https://youtu.be/GKPNWFJNqSk>

3.2.6 Comparison with Veit Hertenstein's version

Here I will talk about the differences and similarities between Hertenstein's version and my own. As I said before, this recording did not affect at all the process of arrangement that I followed. That is why It could be interesting to see a briefly comparison between both of them.

The first and biggest similarity is its proximity to the original work. We both decided to make an arrangement which would be as equal as possible with the original version for cello. That is why, Hertenstein keeps, as well as myself, the original key and plays it mainly one octave higher. We both change and adapt octaves in the same places when the viola range becomes a problem, and we both adapt, with small differences, the different chords that are too uncomfortable for the player. Apart from that, we both play it more or less in the same tempo, and phrasing more or less in the same way.

Some of the differences would be the beginning and main theme. While I decided to write it lower looking for a more “viola” sound, he prefers to keep the original octave. Others would be really small details, as there are only some differences in the dispositions of some chords as well as some small changes in the octaves while playing the harmonics. Apart from that, maybe the biggest difference would be about the interpretation of some of the excerpts.

In conclusion, there are just some small differences in between both arrangements, which make me believe I wrote mine in a correct and natural way.

4 Evaluation

In this small chapter I talk about my thoughts after finishing the arrangement I make my own evaluation of the transcription and the job but I also recap the comments of some viola players about the piece.

4.1 Individual analysis

Now that I have finished the arrangement, I can say the whole process has been interesting and entertaining, much more than I thought it would be.

Maybe, the most difficult part was to decide how I was going to proceed, where I was going to start and how I was going to divide and organize the process itself. I made a small investigation about this idea of 'the steps to make transcriptions' but I did not find anything helpful or interesting enough. Then, as I was always considering many different options at the same time, it took me a while to have the final plan. Nevertheless, once I had my method defined, everything became suddenly much easier. The work became following the plan while experimenting and testing with the versions in the practice room.

During this testing, I enjoyed the whole idea of making decisions, mainly whenever I had to think about how to adapt one excerpt to my own instrument. I realized I was usually quite fast looking for solutions so that the different parts would work on the viola. Also, most of the time, the ideas I had from the beginning were good and worked perfectly as an alternative to the problem. Thanks to this, I became more and more confident along the process, a feeling I could borrow and apply in other aspects of my professional life.

Apart from this, I have to say that I liked using pencil and paper to write the notes. Nowadays, we are used to use electronic devices for almost everything, so it was quite refreshing to stop looking at screens for a while. Also, because I am a person who loves painting and drawing, it felt closer to one of my hobbies.

Probably I only regret to have started so late with the project. At the end, the idea and activities involved in this independent project do not need a lot of time between the different steps. Having finished later than expected is only due to a late start.

However, thinking in general, I am quite satisfied not only with the result but with all the development through the different steps. I felt I achieved the goal I had but also that I made improvements along the way.

4.2 Opinions

While thinking about the method I was going to use and how I was going to organize this independent project I realized it was a good idea to get somehow a bit of feedback. As I was arranging the piece for viola solo, I thought the comments of different viola players would be helpful, that is why I consider asking my viola colleagues at the Academy of Music and Drama.

I would like to remark that none of them knew the piece before. I see this as an achievement, considering one of the objectives behind this project was making the piece and the composer known around the academy. Also, some of them got interested in the piece and asked me for a recording or kept the arrangement for themselves, which was really rewarding.

When I gave them the arrangement, I decided not to give any instructions, so that anyone could do whatever they wanted with it without being conditioned. Some of them just look at the score and gave me their impressions, others listened to it while reading it, others even played it.

All of them agreed about the edition and talked about how clear and well-written it was. They said it was very easy to read and understand and even pleasant to look at. I really appreciated all these comments as they made me feel the effort and amount of time I have put into this work was worth it.

The ones who played the arrangement told me it was perfectly playable. Of course, there are more challenging excerpts than others but they all agreed that it was possible to play them with practice. We also discussed together about some little details through the piece which made me improve the last version. All the comments were really helpful.

Some people asked about the background of the piece and the composer and we talked about the rest of the movements which complete the Suite. They suggested I could arrange the two other movements so that the piece would be finished for viola, a comment I will seriously consider.

5. Conclusions

One of the first things I had to do while thinking about the topic for this independent project was to decide and explain the objectives and goals behind it. Now, in this conclusive chapter, I would like to go back and check if it was possible to reach all of them.

The main goal I had defined was to increase the repertoire for viola solo, which I did. It is true that, as I have only made the transcription of one of the movements, it might seem that my input to the whole repertoire available for viola is quite small. However, it could be continued in the future adding the two last movements.

Second objective was to make Gaspar Cassadó and his Suite known at the Academy of Music and Drama in Gothenburg. I know for fact that thanks to this project all the members of the viola class now know about the composer and the piece, as they participated actively. Also, all my friends and people who I usually hang around with know the piece, as they have heard me talking about the project or even listen to the piece more than once. Additionally, as I had to experiment with it in the practice rooms at the academy, I had the chance to meet other people from other programs while I was playing it. Some of them asked me about the piece I was playing, so I could tell them about it.

The rest of the objectives I defined were more focused on myself and related to an improvement in my playing. Now I can say that I have expanded the repertoire I have studied thanks to this independent project, although I would need more time and practice in order to play the arrangement easily in a real performance. I could also say that I have improved some of my technical and musical skills thanks to it, but this is always something much more difficult and subjective to confirm. Maybe with a bit more of perspective and time, I will be able to affirm that.

Nevertheless, the thing I can surely confirm is to have become a more well-rounded musician as I have developed some skills while arranging the piece. As I said at the beginning of this independent project, this trial was the first time I was making a serious arrangement. Also, it was the first time I have been asked to comment on all the places the viola part differs from the original and how I landed on that decision. That is why, I had to analyze much more than when I play something that is already written. I had to be aware of things I am not used to such as how an excerpt should be written comfortably for my instrument, what I can consider unplayable and what is just difficult, where are the limitations of my instrument and where are the ones of my playing, how composers decide where to change keys so that it

is comfortable for the musician, etc. I think all of these aspects have made me improve, and I am glad that I could achieve that.

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7. Annexes

7.1 Gaspar Cassadó – Suite for Cello Solo (Score)

Aufführungsrecht vorbehalten
Droits d'exécution réservés

SUITE

per Violoncello solo

I PRELUDIO - FANTASIA

Gaspar Cassadó

Andante

f sostenuto *marc. e con anima*

f sostenuto

marc. e con anima *rit.*

a tempo *p dolce* *ten.* *sfz*

p *mf* *dim.*

Poco più mosso

p espress. *(marc. il canto)*

II

molto espress. *ten.* 5

cresc. *largamente* *ff*

dim. *a tempo* *p* *cresc.*

agitato poco a poco e cresc. *più agitato*

f *ff agitatissimo*

molto meno agitato

calmando *Andante* *p sostenuto* *cresc.*

f

a tempo
mp ma espress.
ten.
sfz
 9

ten.
sfz poco agitato
 9
 7 *cresc.*

f con fantasia
 11
dim.

calmando molto
rit.
a tempo
p tranquillo
 6

3 0 1 4 14 14 4 3 3 3 4 4 4 4

ppp dolciss.
 2 1 2 1
 4 4 4 4
 3 2 0 0
 0 2 0
meno p

sonoro
 III
a tempo
mf

p subito *mf sonoro*

poco rit. *V* **Poco più mosso**
p espress. (marc. il canto)

ten.
molto espress.

a tempo

Andante
p dolce *sf*

p *mf*

II *dim.* *p* *pizz.* *pp (ma sonoro)*

7.2 Arrangement. Version 1

SUITE PER VIOLONCELLO

arr. for viola sola

Gaspar Cassado
Arr. Andrea Olivero

I PRELUDIO-FANTASIA

Andante

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 1 starts with a forte (**f**) dynamic. Measure 5 features a circled note with the instruction **f sostenuto**. The tempo is marked **Andante**.

marc. e con anima

f sostenuto

marc. e con anima

a tempo

Musical notation for measures 6-10. Measure 6 begins with a piano (**p dolce**) dynamic. Measure 10 includes a **ten.** (tension) marking. The tempo is marked **a tempo**.

p dolce

sfz

p

mf

dim.

Poco più mosso

Musical notation for measures 11-16. Measure 11 starts with a piano (**p espress.**) dynamic. Measure 14 includes a **ten.** marking. The tempo is marked **Poco più mosso**.

p espress.

(marc. il canto)

ten.

molto espress.

Musical notation for measures 17-23. Measure 17 starts with a piano (**p**) dynamic. Measure 20 includes a **5** fingering. Measure 23 features a circled note with a **1** fingering. The tempo is marked **molto espress.**

cresc.

ff largamente

a tempo

Musical notation for measures 24-30. Measure 24 starts with a piano (**p**) dynamic. Measure 29 includes a circled note with a **1** fingering. The tempo is marked **a tempo**.

dim.

p

cresc.

29 *agitato poco a poco e cresc.* *piu agitato*

32 *ff agitatissimo*

35 *molto meno agitato* *Andante*

38 *mf* *p sostenuto* *cresc.*

42 *a tempo*

46 *pp espress* *sfz* *9*

49 *sfz poco agitato* *9* *cresc.* *9*

50 *f con fantasia* *11* *11* *a tempo* *dim.*

51 *calmando molto* *6* *rit* *p tranquillo*

53 *PPP dolciss.* *meno p*

59 *Sanora* *a tempo*

61 *p subito*

Musical notation for measures 61-63. Measure 61 starts with a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat. It features a melodic line with slurs and a bass line with chords. Measure 62 continues the melodic line. Measure 63 has a dynamic marking of *mf sonoro* and a tempo marking of *Poco più mosso*. A circled measure in 63 is marked *(mausc. il comba)*.

63 *mf sonoro* *Poco più mosso*

Musical notation for measures 64-66. Measure 64 has a dynamic marking of *p* and a tempo marking of *poco rit*. Measure 65 has a dynamic marking of *p espress*. Measure 66 has a dynamic marking of *molto espress.* and a tempo marking of *ten.* with a triplet of eighth notes.

66 *molto espress.* *ten.*

Musical notation for measures 67-70. Measure 67 has a dynamic marking of *molto espress.* and a tempo marking of *ten.*. Measure 68 has a dynamic marking of *molto espress.* and a tempo marking of *ten.*. Measure 69 has a dynamic marking of *molto espress.* and a tempo marking of *ten.*. Measure 70 has a dynamic marking of *molto espress.* and a tempo marking of *ten.*.

70 *a tempo*

Musical notation for measures 71-73. Measure 71 has a dynamic marking of *p dolce* and a tempo marking of *Andante*. Measure 72 has a dynamic marking of *p dolce* and a tempo marking of *Andante*. Measure 73 has a dynamic marking of *p dolce* and a tempo marking of *Andante*.

73 *Andante* *p dolce*

Musical notation for measures 74-76. Measure 74 has a dynamic marking of *p* and a tempo marking of *Andante*. Measure 75 has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a tempo marking of *Andante*. Measure 76 has a dynamic marking of *mf* and a tempo marking of *Andante*.

76 *mf*

Musical notation for measures 77-79. Measure 77 has a dynamic marking of *mf*. Measure 78 has a dynamic marking of *mf*. Measure 79 has a dynamic marking of *pp (ma sonoro)* and a tempo marking of *Andante*. A *pizz* marking is present above the staff.

79 *pp (ma sonoro)*

Five empty musical staves are provided below the main score, each consisting of a five-line staff.

7.3 Arrangement. Version 2

SUITE PER VIOLONCELLO

arr. for viola sola

Gaspar Cassadó

arr. Andrea Olivera

I PRELUDIO - FANTASIA

Andante

2

III
3

Handwritten musical notation for the first staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* and *sostenuto*.

f *sostenuto*

marc. e con anima

II

Handwritten musical notation for the second staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* and *sostenuto*.

f *sostenuto*

Handwritten musical notation for the third staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* and *sostenuto*.

marc. e con anima

a tempo

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p dolce*.

p dolce

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p*, *mf*, and *dim*.

p

mf

dim

Handwritten musical notation for the sixth staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p espress.* and *(marc. il canto)*.

p espress.

(marc. il canto)

Handwritten musical notation for the seventh staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *molto espress.* and *ten*.

molto espress.

5

Handwritten musical notation for the eighth staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *cresc* and *ff*.

cresc

ff

Handwritten musical notation for the ninth staff, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *a tempo*, *dim*, *p*, and *cresc*.

a tempo

dim

p

cresc

29 *agitato poco a poco e cresc.* *più agitato*

31 *ff agitatissimo*

35 *molto meno agitato*

38 *Andante* *p sostenuto* *cresc.*

42 *Mf*

46 *a tempo* *pp espress.* *sfz*

49 *poco agitato* *cresc.*

50 *dim*

51 *f con fantasia* *rit.* *a tempo* *P tranquillo*

Handwritten musical score with ten staves, numbered 53 to 79. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Red annotations include accents, slurs, and fingerings. Performance instructions are written in Italian.

53 *ppp dolciss.* *meno p*

55 *ppp dolciss.* *meno p*

59 *Sonoro* *mf* *a tempo*

61 *p subito* *mf sonoro*

63 *poco rit* *Poco più mosso* *p espress.* *(marc. il canto)*

66 *molto espress.* *ten*

70 *a tempo*

73 *Andante* *ten*

76 *p* *mf*

79 *dim* *p* *pp (mu sonoro)* *pizz*

7.4 Arrangement. Final version

SUITE PER VIOLONCELLO

arr. for viola sola

Gaspar Cassadó
arr. Andrea Oliva

I. PRELUDIO - FANTASIA

Andante

f sostenuto

marc. e con anima

f sostenuto

marc. e con anima

rit.

a tempo

p dolce

p

mf

dim

Poco più mosso

p espress.

(marc. il canto)

ten

5

molto espress.

24

cresc.

ff

Largamente

a tempo

26

dim.

p

cresc.

21 *agitato poco a poco e cresc.* *piu agitato*

32 *f* *ff agitatissimo*

35 *Sul C.* *molto meno agitato*

38 *calmando* *Andante* *mf* *P sostenuto* *cresc.*

42 *f*

44 *a tempo* *pp ma espress.* *sfz* *ten* *9*

49 *sfz* *poco agitato* *7* *cresc.*

50 *f con fantasia* *11* *11* *dim.*

51 *calmando molto* *rit* *a tempo* *p tranquilo*

55

55

ppp dolciss. meno p

59

Sonoro a tempo mf

61

p subito mf sonoro

63

poco rit. Poco più mosso
Sol C p espress. (more. il canto)

66

Sol C molto espress. ten 5

70

a tempo

73

Andante p dolce sfz ten 0

76

p mf

79

dim P pizz pp (ma sonoro)

7.5 Recording

<https://youtu.be/GKPNWFJNqSk>