

Jeffrey Ryan

Miss Havisham am Spinnrade

for solo bassoon

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Performance notes

Total performance time ca. 5 minutes

- ✕ Fingering only (key noise). Key noise is an integral part of this work, simulating the sound of the spinning wheel; finger the indicated pitches forcefully enough that key noise can be heard at the requested dynamic
- ♯[♮] 1/4-tone sharp (see chart below for suggested fingerings; other fingerings are possible)
- ♯[♮] 3/4-tone sharp (see chart below for suggested fingerings; other fingerings are possible)
- ⸫ Note ends with a strong breath accent
- ⸫ Give note a slight rhythmic and dynamic stress

Other performance notes are given as required in the score

Programme note

In the Charles Dickens novel *Great Expectations*, Miss Havisham has withdrawn from the world, devastated by the betrayal of her groom-to-be on their wedding day. Years later, she still sits in her bridal gown, the wedding feast (now mouldy and dust-covered) still on the table. In 1812, Franz Schubert scored his first art song success with *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, in which Gretchen sits at her spinning wheel, working away hypnotically while she anxiously awaits the return of her beloved Faust. As Goethe's poem tells us, her peace is gone, her heart is heavy. The piano accompaniment mimics the turning of the wheel, speeding up and slowing down as Gretchen is repeatedly distracted by thoughts of her lover, the harmonies shifting with her moods.

Miss Havisham am Spinnrade brings together these two 19th-century inspirations by imagining that Faust never returned, and Gretchen, like Miss Havisham, never stopped waiting, still spinning two centuries after Schubert immortalised her in song. She works madly, blank-eyed, stifling her weeping, for a moment losing herself in the fantasy of a wedding waltz that will never happen, yet unable to stop the wheel from turning.

Acknowledgements

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Canada Council
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Conseil des Arts
du Canada

to Sophie Danseaux

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♩ = 108 Not too fast

Mechanically, automatically, the mind elsewhere

(fingering only)

(play)

mf sempre*

pp like stifled weeping**

* finger forcefully for audible key noise at *mf*

** sound emerges from key clicks with as little attack as possible. Dynamics refer to sounded pitches; fingering continues at *mf*

(play, sim.)

(breath accents in *pp*)

6 *mf*

mf (fingering)

pp (sounded pitches)

6 *mf* *pp* < *mf*

pp < *mf*

mf

pp

6 *mf*

pp < *mf*

pp

rit. to - - - - - ♩ = 72

mfpp

3 *mfpp*

6 *mfpp*

6 *mfpp*

7 *mfpp*

mf > *pp*

pp

33

rit. to $\bullet = 48$

(S) (L) (S) (S) (L) (S) (L)

fr. non-tr.

mf *pp*

*p** *pp*

* audibly click alt Bb key

38

pp *mf*

41

$\bullet = 60$ *rit. to* $\bullet = 48$

pp *mf* *p* *pp*

46

mf *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

51

$\bullet = 108$ sub.

pp *ppp* muttering

55

$\bullet = 48$ sub. $\bullet = 108$ sub.

f *ppp* muttering again

59

$\bullet = 48$ sub. $\bullet = 96$

f *p* *f* *p* *f* *pp* sub.

poco accel. to

(*accel.*)

$\text{♩} = 108$

63

f

66

71

76

p

81

$\text{♩} = 72$ An imagined waltz

86

mf

92

98

104

p

mf

p

110

f

f

mf

f

mf

116 *f mf f mf*

122

128

134 *ff ff*
(use trill fingering) *tr* *(fingering only)* *(trill F key only)*

142 *mf*
 ♩ = ♩ = 108

147 *ff mf ff*

151 *mf ff*

155 *p mf p*

159 *mf p*

163 *mf p mf p mf mf*

168 *f* *f* raucously *ff*

D: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
E: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

172 *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

177 *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

rit. poco a poco to ————— (♩ = 90)
bend with embouchure

182 (♩ = 72) (♩ = 60) *mf* *p*

186 ♩ = 48 Mournful, resigned (bend)

191 *mf* *p* *pp* *mf* *p* *pp*

197 *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *p* *mp* *p*

202 *pp* *p** (♩ = 60) rit. to (♩ = 48)

* audibly click E key