

st359.1.77



sumtone

:

michael edwards

a new precision mechanism is governing the city
for guitar and mandolin

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programme note

a new precision mechanism is governing the city relates to the *Hidden Cities 5* (Berenice) section of Calvino's *Invisible Cities*:

"I should tell you of the hidden Berenice, the city of the just, handling makeshift materials in the shadowy rooms behind the shops and beneath the stairs, linking a network of wires and pipes and pulleys and pistons and counterweights that infiltrates like a climbing plant among the great cogged wheels (when they jam, a subdued ticking gives warning that a new precision mechanism is governing the city). Instead of describing to you the perfumed pools of the baths where the unjust of Berenice recline and weave their intrigues with rotund eloquence and observe with a proprietary eye the rotund flesh of the bathing odalisques, I should say to you how the just, always cautious to evade the spying sycophants and the Janizaries' mass arrests, recognize one another by their way of speaking..."

What I'm attracted to here is the dualism of the just and unjust citizens—something not unfamiliar to our present predicament of, for example, outlandishly overpaid rogue bankers versus oppressed sweatshop wage slaves—and in particular the mechanistic aspects of this hidden city as reflected in the mechanistic construction of my piece. It was created with my *slippery chicken* algorithmic composition software, which I've been developing since 2000, in particular here the combination of small, simple rhythmic units into larger, sometimes repeating sequences by means of an algorithmic technique I call *rhythm chains*. Each part of the algorithmically-created two-part counterpoint in the piece itself contains three voices, identified by register and playing technique (stopped, harmonic, and normale). The entry and eventual domination of the third voice in each part progresses over the duration of the six-minute piece; thus the whole creates a six-part counterpoint of slowly exchanging lines via a foreground of fast, intricate, and quite delicate yet rhythmically charged forward movement.

Notes

Duration at the indicated tempo: 5:52.5

Accidentals carry throughout the bar but only apply to a single octave/staff; they are repeated for clarification as deemed necessary.

Cross noteheads indicate stopped (“pizz.”) notes.

Diamond noteheads indicate the sounding pitches¹ of artificial harmonics, created from the note stopped an octave below.

It is clear that the close interweaving of normal, stopped, and both artificial and natural harmonics presents some considerable, if not (given the fast tempo) insurmountable difficulties. The players should use their interpretive discretion to not allow the technical challenges to interrupt the forward flow or to distract from the gently rhythmically bouncy character of the piece: where necessary, harmonics may be played as normal notes, albeit with a ‘harmonic’ character (more ringing and translucent in tone). As long as three different characters of notes emerge—and thus three different lines in each part, as differentiated through register also—considerable liberties may be taken where necessary. These characters may be further distinguished by plucking closer or further away from the soundhole, as deemed appropriate by the players; and harmonic and normal notes may ring on over subsequently indicated rests.

For more details about the performance of this piece, please send email to info@sumtone.com or write to the address at the front of the score.

¹Or rather, like all guitar notes, the written pitch is an octave above actual sounding pitch.

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fast and rhythmically spirited (♩ = 168)

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each containing a guitar (gtr) and mandolin (mln) part. The guitar part is written in treble clef with a 2/4 time signature, featuring a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking. The mandolin part is also in treble clef with a 2/4 time signature, mirroring the guitar's rhythm with a 'p' dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats), fingerings (circled numbers 1-5), and articulation marks (accents, slurs). Measure numbers 1 through 17 are indicated at the beginning of each system. The key signature changes from one sharp (F#) to one flat (Bb) and back to one sharp (F#) throughout the piece.

gtr 17 18 19 20 21

mln

gtr 21 22 23 24 25

mln

gtr 25 26 27 28

mln

gtr 28 29 30 31 32

mln

gtr 32 33 34 35 36

mln

gtr

36 37 38 39 40 41

mln

gtr

41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 50

mln

gtr

50 51 52 53 54

mln

gtr

54 55 56 57 58 59

mln

gtr

59 60 61 62 63 64

mln

gtr 64 65 66 67 68 69

mln

gtr 69 70 71 72 73

mln

gtr 73 74 75 76 77 78

mln

gtr 78 79 80 81 82

mln

gtr 82 83 84 85 86

mln

gtr 86 87 88 89 90

mln

mp *p*

gtr 90 91 92 93 94

mln

gtr 94 95 96 97 98 99

mln

gtr 99 100 101 102 103 104

mln

gtr 104 105 106 107

mln

gtr 107 108 109 110 111

mln

Detailed description: This system contains measures 107 through 111. The guitar part (gtr) features a complex melodic line with frequent triplets and various accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats). Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1 through 5. The mandolin part (mln) provides a rhythmic accompaniment, primarily using triplets and eighth notes. Some notes in the mandolin part are marked with an 'x', likely indicating a natural harmonium or a specific playing technique.

gtr 111 112 113 114 115

mln

Detailed description: This system contains measures 111 through 115. The guitar part continues with intricate triplet patterns and includes a measure with a 'b' in parentheses. The mandolin part maintains its rhythmic accompaniment with triplets and eighth notes. The key signature changes to one flat (B-flat major) in measure 114, indicated by a flat sign on the B line.

gtr 115 116 117 118 119 120 121

mln

Detailed description: This system contains measures 115 through 121. The guitar part shows a variety of rhythmic patterns, including 3/4 and 2/4 time signatures. The mandolin part continues with its accompaniment, featuring triplets and eighth notes. The key signature remains one flat.

gtr 121 122 123 124 125

mln

Detailed description: This system contains measures 121 through 125. The guitar part features more complex melodic lines with triplets and various accidentals. The mandolin part continues with its accompaniment, including triplets and eighth notes. The key signature remains one flat.

gtr 125 126 127 128 129

mln

gtr 129 130 131 132 133

mln

gtr 133 134 135 136 137

mln

gtr 137 138 139 140 141 142

mln

gtr 142 143 144 145 146

mln

mp p

gtr 146 147 148 149 150

mln

gtr 150 151 152 153 154 155

mln

gtr 155 156 157 158 159 160

mln

gtr 160 161 162 163 164

mln

gtr 165 166 167 168 169 170

mln

gtr 170 171 172 173 174

mln

gtr 174 175 176 177 178 179

mln

gtr 179 180 181 182 183

mln

gtr 183 184 185 186 187 188

mln

gtr 188 189 190 191 192 193

mln

gtr 193 194 195 196 197 198 199

mln

gtr 199 200 201 202 206 207 208 210

mln

mf *p* *pp*

gtr 210 213 214 215 216 217 219

mln

pp

gtr 219 220 221 223 226 227 228 229

mln

gtr 229 230 231 232 233 236 238 239

mln

gtr 239 240 241 243 244 245 248

mln

mp *pp*

gtr 248 249 250 251 252 255 256 257

mln

gtr 257 258 260 261 262 263

mln

(pp)
poco a poco cresc.

gtr 263 264 265 266 267 268

mln

gtr 268 269 270 271 272 273

mln

gtr 273 274 275 276 277 278

mln

gtr 278 279 280 281 282 283 284

mln

gtr 284 285 286 287 288 289

mln

mp

poco a poco dim.

gtr 289 290 291 292 293 294

mln

gtr 294 295 296 297 298

mln

pp

gtr 298 299 300 301 302

mln

gtr 302 303 304 305 306

mln

gtr 306 307 308 309 310

mln

gtr 310 311 312 313 314

mln

gtr 314 315 316 317 318

mln

gtr 318 319 320 321 322

mln

gtr 322 323 324 325 326

mln

poco a poco cresc.

gtr 326 327 328 329

mln

gtr 329 330 331 332 333

mln

gtr 333 334 335 336 337

mln

mf

gtr 337 338 339 340 341

mln

dim.

p

gtr 341 342 343 344 345

mln

mf

gtr 345 346 347 348 349

mln

mf

gtr 349 350 351 352 353

mln

gtr 353 354 355 356 357

mln

poco cresc.

gtr 357 358 359 360

mln

gtr 360 361 362 363

mln

mp pp

gtr 363 364 365 366

mln

cresc.

gtr 366 367 368 369

mln

gtr 369 370 371 372

mln

gtr 372 373 374 375 376

mln

gtr
376 *mf* 377 *p* 378 379 380
poco a poco cresc.

mln
mf *p*
poco a poco cresc.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 376 to 380. The guitar part (gtr) starts with a treble clef and a 7/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with triplets and a circled '3' above the first measure. The mandolin part (mln) has a treble clef and a 7/4 time signature, with a bass line consisting of chords and triplets. Dynamics range from *mf* to *p*. The instruction 'poco a poco cresc.' is written below both staves.

gtr
380 381 382 383

mln
380 381 382 383

Detailed description: This system covers measures 380 to 383. The guitar part continues the melodic line with triplets and circled numbers 3, 4, and 5. The mandolin part provides harmonic support with chords and triplets. The time signature changes from 7/4 to 3/4 in measure 381 and back to 7/4 in measure 383.

gtr
383 384 385 386

mln
383 384 385 386

Detailed description: This system covers measures 383 to 386. The guitar part features a melodic line with triplets and circled numbers 3, 4, and 5. The mandolin part continues with chords and triplets. The time signature changes from 7/4 to 2/4 in measure 384 and back to 7/4 in measure 386.

gtr
386 387 388 389 390

mln
386 387 388 389 390

Detailed description: This system covers measures 386 to 390. The guitar part continues the melodic line with triplets and circled numbers 3, 4, and 5. The mandolin part provides harmonic support with chords and triplets. The time signature changes from 7/4 to 2/4 in measure 387 and back to 7/4 in measure 389.

gtr
390 391 392 393 394

mln

gtr
394 395 396 397

mln

gtr
397 398 399 400

mln

gtr
400 401 402 403

mln

