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Adrienne M. Mascho 석사학위논문

The Romantic American:

*Research and Analysis of Samuel Barber's Cello Sonata,
Op. 6*

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Abstract

The Romantic American:

Research and Analysis of Samuel Barber's Cello Sonata, Op. 6

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Our research aims to focus on Barber's Cello Sonata, Op. 6, and the history behind it, including the influential people who supported the young composer in his rise to early success. Barber's first and only cello sonata, written at age 22, is a significant composition in Barber's life and career because it was conceived at a turning point in the composer's personal and professional life. This composition was considered the first American cello sonata, and remained the only one for the next 18 years¹. Strongly opposed to the modern movement of avant-gardism which was popular in the United States at the time, Samuel Barber, considered to be neo-romantic, was inspired by composers such as Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy and Sibelius, and wanted his works to communicate romanticism, beauty and emotion. Barber's award-winning Cello Sonata can be

¹ Elliott Carter's Cello Sonata was premiered in 1948.

seen as a transitional composition in the composer's career, revealing elements found in both his early and mature styles.

Additionally, the author provides a more detailed analysis of the Cello Sonata, incorporating structural analysis and descriptive interpretation. Likewise, a descriptive approach to performance will provide suggestions regarding fingering, bowing, phrasing and interpretation of performance instructions. The author desires that the romantic ideals communicated by Barber through the Cello Sonata can, in a sense, be reintroduced to the performer. Doing so increases the awareness of its musical and historic value, both to musicians and scholars, and highlights the Cello Sonata as an early masterwork of Samuel Barber—one of the greatest American composers of the twentieth century.

Included in the appendix is a graphic timeline focusing on the Cello Sonata's significance in Barber's life, specifically the years 1932-1937. The timeline includes noteworthy compositions, influences, honors, early performances and a discography of the Cello Sonata, with names of the performers. The purpose of the timeline is to present a visual summary of the following research.

Keywords: Barber, Samuel, Cello, Sonata, Opus 6, neo-romantic

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Preface – A Review of Research

There are but a few Samuel Barber scholars from whom we can obtain significant historical information. Namely, Barbara Heyman, whose comprehensive biography includes a large body of private correspondence between the composer and his family and colleagues throughout the composer's entire life. From Heyman's publication we can draw the most complete picture of Samuel Barber and his Cello Sonata.

Peter Dickinson presents a very remarkable centenary tribute compiled of numerous interviews with close friends and colleagues of Barber. The highlight of this recently published biography is an interview with Orlando Cole, the cellist and classmate of Barber, who helped him during the composition of the Cello Sonata. The interviews help the reader construct a setting for both the composition of the Sonata while they attended the Curtis Institute as well as its early performances.

Nathan Broder published the first Samuel Barber biography in 1954. Although it contains much insight into Barber's personal life, it was written while the composer was still living and still composing, rendering the research aspect of the work out of date. Furthermore, the formal analyses are generalized, allowing but a pittance of reference to the Cello Sonata.²

² Broder, p. 47-48. Broder describes Barber's style as being "traditional and simple... lyrical." (p. 73) Further in the section headed "Chamber Music," the Cello Sonata

Wayne Wentzel's recent research guide for the Barber scholar offers summaries and reviews on published works, such as Heyman's and Broder's biographies. It contains articles, performance notes and research papers, and offers important updates to Don A. Hennessey's 1985 bio-bibliography. Wentzel himself wonders why such little research has ever been done on Barber's works in detail³.

presented as, "thoroughly traditional in style and form, and is well written for the instruments. Aside from the fine melody that serves as a second subject of the opening movement, and the fact that the second movement combines an Adagio with a Scherzo, the work seems to call for *no special comment* [emphasis added].

³ Wayne Wentzel, p. 2. He makes note that, to date, only one published thesis has been done on the Cello Sonata.

I. Introduction by the Author

Samuel Barber's Cello Sonata is a work which should be considered in greater depth. Completed in 1932, the Sonata is both romantic and American, like the composer himself, who at 22 years old was promising to be much more than a composition student. During this period in America, when Barber penned his first, and only, cello sonata, composers were not thought of as musicians, and often regarded as slaves to the great virtuosos⁴. There was a prevailing sense that no great composer could come out of America⁵. However, in fact, Barber excelled as a triple-major in piano, voice and composition at the newly founded Curtis Institute of Music in central Philadelphia. In this conflicting environment, Samuel Barber's music was often passed off as "neo-romantic," not only because he composed music inspired by the late romantics such as Brahms, Debussy and Sibelius, but also because he opposed the avant-gardism of the popular composition scene in America and in Europe and Russia.

This is where we will take a much closer look at Barber's Cello Sonata. There are two reasons why this piece, Opus 6, should draw our attention. The first angle is the historic significance which the piece holds in in the life of the composer. As one of Barber's earlier works, written during his last year at the

⁴ Heyman, p. 118. An undated letter to Mrs. Coolidge, probably September or October 1933," Cadeigliano (in the Elizabete Sprague Coolidge Collection, Library of Congress, Music Division).

⁵ *Ibid.* During Barber's attendance at the Curtis Institute, director Josef Hofmann was regarded as having a negative attitude towards the value of American composers.

Curtis Institute, the Cello Sonata, Op. 6 was produced at a turning point in his personal and professional life. The success of the Cello Sonata gave Barber a foothold into his career after graduation. By exploring Samuel Barber's background leading up to his Sonata's composition, we will also uncover an intimate network of people who were influential to him, supporting the young composer in his rise to early success.

Secondly, yet equally as important, is the current and lasting value that Barber's Cello Sonata offers to the cellist and to classical repertoire. The Cello Sonata contains skillfully executed romantic features as well as modern and experimental elements for Barber's time⁶. Within the traditional *sonata-allegro* form, the composer uses inventive rhythms and ambiguous harmony, in addition to an unorthodox *Adagio* movement. It is by no means ordinary, and when performed according to the descriptions Barber has written, the Cello Sonata proves to be an outstanding piece, worthy of as much acclaim abroad as it has already received in America since it was first performed in 1933.

The following investigation into the Barber Cello Sonata's historic and musical significance is the basis for our research. Furthermore, for the two reasons stated, we will first explore the background of Samuel Barber and the

⁶ Heyman, p. 112n: "The cellist Marion Feldman finds the sonata an excellent teaching piece precisely because it combines Romantic and modern features."

environment which shaped his personality and compositional style during “the formative years”³ of this young composer. In addition to studying Barber’s history, philosophy and the network of influential people in his life, we will also analyze and comment on the Cello Sonata itself. The author’s goal for these analyses is to organize material, arrive at distinct musical understandings communicated by Barber through the score and to further clarify notation and interpretation of performance instructions.

Additionally, we hope to draw certain conclusions about the composer’s concept and ideals for the piece. By doing this, the performer and scholar can have a well-informed basis through which to interpret the Cello Sonata in his or her own personal style, yet remain true to the composition and the romantic ideals that Samuel Barber sought to express through its performance. We can then, through the Cello Sonata, essentially rediscover Samuel Barber, the romantic American composer who’s brilliant and deeply moving Cello Sonata resounds of romantic lyricism, yet continues to thrive comfortably in the modern era.

II. Early History and Background

Music at Home

The American composer, Samuel Osborne Barber II, was born on March 9, 1910 in West Chester⁷, a quaint suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His parents were Roy Barber, a well-respected doctor, and Margeurite “Daisy” McLeod Beatty, the daughter of a pastor. Samuel Barber was raised in a modestly affluent household with his younger sister, Sara, his closest companion during childhood.

The young Barber, an intellectually gifted and a good-looking boy, was noticeably musically talented at a very young age. His mother claimed that her son had been a pianist “since his infancy⁸”. Although Barber desired to take piano lessons at the age of six, Mrs. Barber thought her son would be better suited on the cello, and so he was given cello lessons⁹. However, after a short time, he began taking piano lessons and writing pieces for the piano. Barber recalled a piano piece in the key of C minor, entitled *Sadness*, which he had penciled down at the age of eight, as his first composition. He wrote a collection of nursery

⁷ Barber’s home address was 107 South Church Street, West Chester, PA.

⁸ Heyman, p.10 refers to Broder, p. 6, regarding Anne Homer, (in *Louise Homer*, p. 369), and a news article in the *West Chester Daily Local News*, July 13, 1921.

⁹ Anna L. Baker, a neighborhood friend of the Barbers, recalls a Christmas program where the young Samuel had to be “lifted up on a chair in order to play his little cello.” Dickinson, p. 5. Anna L. Baker, interview with Brent D. Fegley, November 24, 1981.

songs, *Mother Goose Rhymes set to Music*,¹⁰ for his sister to sing with him on the piano. At the age of ten, Barber composed the first act of an operetta entitled *The Rose Tree*¹¹.

Even though young Samuel Barber was surrounded by musicians, his uncle Sidney Homer and Aunt Louise Homer, his nanny and his younger sister, he sensed at an early age that a career in music was not suited for a young man of his upbringing¹². In this note, Barber expresses his sincere worries:

“To Mother *and nobody else*. Now don’t cry when you read it... To begin with I was not meant to be an athlete [sic]. I was meant to be a composer, and will be I’m sure. I’ll ask you one more thing.—Don’t ask me to try to forget this unpleasant thing and go play football.—*Please...*¹³”

Nonetheless, Samuel Barber began performing his own compositions at various events in town and holding small family concerts at the Barbers’ home. When Barber was just ten, he presented a piano concert at their church, which included the premiers of two of his piano pieces and a song written for soprano¹⁴.

¹⁰ 1922. Heyman, p. 20. (*Library of Congress* lithograph).

¹¹ This unfinished project was inspired by and composed with the aid of his Irish nursemaid, Anne Sullivan Brosius, who wrote the libretto. She was constantly singing around the house, and Barber liked to listen to her singing the Irish folk songs and poetry, while she accompanied herself on the accordion. Heyman, p. 21.

¹² Anne Homer, *Louise Homer*, p. 370. His Aunt Louise recalled that in West Chester, Pennsylvania, “There was a certain attitude toward music, a belittlement, as though it had no valid place in the scheme of things.”

¹³ Barber recalls having expressed his “worrying secret” in this written note at the age of nine, leaving it on his desk for his mother to read.

¹⁴ Heyman, p. 12.

At the age of fourteen, he was appointed to the post of organist at a church in West Chester.¹⁵

Music at School

At this young age, Barber was enrolled as a charter student at the Curtis Institute of Music in downtown Philadelphia, just thirty miles from his home. The elite music school had opened its doors for the first time on October 1, 1924, and Barber was the second student to cross the threshold. His composition classes were held on Friday mornings, so Barber was able to be excused from school every Friday to study at Curtis¹⁶. It was the ideal environment in which a young composer could thrive. The blossoming composition student, eager to escape the social and artistic limitations of West Chester, quickly took root at Curtis and flourished there as a brilliant, creative and serious scholar. For him, success would be synonymous with his first official works, which scarcely resembled those of a developing composition student.

The first six of Barber's works were composed while a student at the Curtis Institute, where Barber held a triple major in piano, voice and composition. Remarkably, most of these early works are still performed and recorded today.

¹⁵ By that time, Barber had become a serious musician, and was fired from Westminster Church after only a short time, "mainly because he refused to play fermatas when none were indicated in the hymns." Heyman, p. 13.

¹⁶ Coincidentally, his morning classes were followed by the Philadelphia Orchestra's Friday afternoon concert series, held at the Academy of Music, just a block away from the Curtis Institute.

Barber's first opus, *Serenade for String Quartet* (1928), along with *Three Songs*, Op. 2 (1927-34) and *Dover Beach*, Op. 3 (1931), were performed in Philadelphia, instantly bringing Barber into the spotlight as a brilliant pianist, tenor and composer. His first orchestral work, Overture to *The School for Scandal*, Op. 5 (1931), readily won critical acclaim and a Bearn's Prize¹⁷. The Cello Sonata, Op. 6 (1932), was the final piece of his nine-year education at the Curtis Institute, and was dedicated to his composition teacher, Rosario Scalero. Written during the summer vacation of 1932, the Sonata was completed in the fall. It was for his Cello Sonata and *Dover Beach* that Barber won the Prix de Rome¹⁸ as well as his first Pulitzer fellowship.¹⁹

Fortunately, Barber's reputation at Curtis allowed his new pieces to be performed by contemporary virtuosi in well-known venues across Philadelphia and New York City. Significantly, Werner Janssen, conductor of the New York Philharmonic, offered to present a full program of Barber's music on a public radio broadcast in 1935²⁰. Therefore, it was these early compositions, including the Cello Sonata, which confirmed the young Barber as a noteworthy American composer with a very promising future.

¹⁷ The Bearn's Prize (\$1200) was offered by Columbia University. Barber's first performed work, the *Violin Sonata* (1928), won him the first Bearn's Prize, but Barber destroyed the score shortly thereafter.

¹⁸ The Prix de Rome winner received a stipend of \$2500 and an optional studio in Rome for two years.

¹⁹ Heyman, p. 123. The Pulitzer fellowship was a traveling scholarship of \$1500.

²⁰ Broder, p. 27. Mme. Carlos Salzedo proposed this project to Barber as part of NBC's Music Guild series.

During his nine years at the Curtis Institute, Barber finally became solidified in his direction as a professional composer after struggling with doubt and apprehension²¹. Likewise, it was in Philadelphia where he was able to meet other teachers and musicians of the highest quality and attend exclusive performances by the Philadelphia Orchestra. At Curtis, Barber would meet three of the most influential people in his life, as well as collaborate with his classmate to compose the Cello Sonata.

Upon completing his schooling in 1933, the composer would seek to escape the confines of the stifling academic atmosphere and explore the world and its new opportunities. Even while a student, Barber desired to escape his hometown²², and America in general, favoring the scenery, music and lifestyle of Europe. Barber had not imagined that his early works would receive such recognition and honors. His career excelled to such a degree that Barber became celebrated as one of America's greatest composers during his own lifetime. In this light, the Cello Sonata can be viewed as representing a turning point in Barber's life, an escape from the past and a journey into the future.

²¹ Heyman, p. 45. Barber's cousin, Katherine Homer, had written in her diary (June 28, 1928), "Sam gloomy over his future. He doesn't want to be a pianist. Says he can't. Singing still very indefinite, and he's not sure whether he can be better than a second-rate composer."

²² Broder, p. 18. In 1928, Barber writes his family, "I sit on the forward deck at the very bow of the boat looking towards Europe—as far as possible from West Chester as it is in my power to be!"

Personal Influences

Samuel Barber's natural talent as a musician and composer was not the only reason he became successful early in his career. Barber was encouraged and mentored very closely by a few gifted and influential people, with whom he developed lifelong relationships.

Barber's uncle, Sydney Homer, was an accomplished composer of American art song whose wife, Louise Homer, became a legendary contra-alto for the New York Metropolitan Opera. In the absence of support and musical advice from Samuel Barber's natural father, Homer took notice of Barber's talent and potential. Homer was largely responsible for the development of the young composer. Homer acted as Barber's mentor and confidant to a great degree, keeping close correspondence with his nephew throughout his life²³.

Before becoming a student at the Curtis Institute, Samuel Barber was carefully advised by Homer to ultimately "develop a style of your own...²⁴" and "a taste that should, in time, amount to a passion... Your whole life will be influenced by the forming of your taste in the next few years."²⁵ Homer also added that as a developing composer, he must attend as many orchestra or chamber concerts as possible, and to study the scores beforehand. He relayed the importance of a

²³ Many of these intimate and revealing letters can be read in the biographies written about Barber.

²⁴ Heyman, p. 37, in a letter dated November 12, 1924.

²⁵ Heyman, p. 18. Letter from Homer, December 19, 1922

good composition teacher and also the necessity of “mastering a practical instrument... that is what Mozart and Beethoven did.”²⁶

As Barber began his studies at Curtis, he discovered freedom from the “prevailing moral and cultural conservatism” of home. Sydney Homer’s insight helped to shape Barber’s philosophy as a maturing composer. A notable letter received by Barber in November of 1924 states:

“If you write naturally and spontaneously, you will develop as style of your own, without being conscious of it. It is the unconscious charm that is so elusive and valuable, in art, as in Life. Everything now, depends on the development of your taste and the refinement of your sensibilities. If you think of music from the point of view of sensationalism and publicity, your work will show it. If you learn to love the poetic under-current and the subtleties of beauty and spirituality which have been expressed in music, your work will show it just as much. The wonderful thing about art is that a man can conceal nothing; it reveals him as naked and unadorned.... Sincerity and beauty seem to stand the test, but love for mankind and willingness to serve humbly seem to fill the world with joy.”

Four years after Barber began his formal music training, a composition student from Italy, Gian Carlo Menotti, entered the Curtis Institute. Speaking no English, he immediately became friends with 18 year-old Barber by communicating in French. At Curtis, the two both studied under composer Rosario Scalero. It was through the timeliness and intimacy of this relationship that Barber

²⁶ Heyman, p. 18, as quoted from a letter, Dec. 19, 1922.

became enamored with Italy, the great Italian composers as well as the music of Brahms. Barber and Menotti spent whole summers in Italy, which offered a tranquil place of refuge where Barber could compose. Feeling out of place in America, Barber could develop his creativity in Italy and also escape from Philadelphia.

Menotti became an inseparable source of happiness and inspiration for Barber. Menotti described Barber as both brilliant and socially popular²⁷, but at times withdrawn²⁸ and “tormented”²⁹. Menotti’s influence in Barber’s life was also musically significant,³⁰ as the couple shared an estate house on the outskirts of New York City, Mount Kisco, where they lived and composed together for thirty years³¹.

As a financial supporter of Barber’s career, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, founder of the Curtis Institute, had a remarkable influence throughout Barber’s life which cannot be overstated³². Both her significant contributions as well as her personal interest in Barber’s career helped Samuel Barber succeed in areas he

²⁷ Heyman, p. 41*n*, reported classmates Rose Bampton and Menotti.

²⁸ Broder, p. 44.

²⁹ Larson, *Introduction* p. ix

³⁰ Menotti became well-known as a talented opera composer and librettist, collaborating significantly on Barber’s first opera masterpiece, *Vanessa* (1957) and the revision of *Antony and Cleopatra* (1975).

³¹ This country mansion, which they called *Capricorn* was procured for Barber and Menotti by Mary Louise Curtis Bok. This large home had a central room and two expansive wings on opposite ends, where Barber and Menotti could compose at the same time, but without disturbing each other.

³² Dickinson, p. 177. Orlando Cole said that “She did practically anything he asked for.... That relationship was very helpful and very necessary.”

could have not done so without her aid. Early publishing endeavors, concerts, interviews, recordings and travels began as a sponsorship but also served as a means of stability throughout Barber's lifetime and developed into a life-long valued friendship.³³

Bok, like Homer, held a similar philosophy of music education:

"It is my aim that earnest students shall acquire a thorough musical education, not learning only to sing or play, but also the history of music, the laws of its making, languages, ear-training and music appreciation.

They shall learn to think and to express their thoughts against a background of quiet culture, with the stimulus of personal contact with artists-teachers who represent the highest and finest in their art. The aim is for quality of the work rather than quick, showy results.³⁴"

Bok took interest in Barber from 1934, after he had finished his courses but before actually graduating from Curtis. She arranged for Barber and Menotti to meet Carl Engel, the publisher of G. Schirmer, to audition their new works, including Barber's Cello Sonata. Engel immediately liked Barber's songs. Even though Schirmer did not initially accept the Cello Sonata for publication, Bok secretly sponsored the publication cost of \$325³⁵. Therefore, with the inclusion of the Cello Sonata, along with *Dover Beach* and *Three Songs, Op. 2*, came Barber's

³³ Heyman, p. 34n. Barber's statement at the death of Bok was, "Rather than recall Mary (Curtis Bok) Zimbalist as a philanthropist and social benefactor, I prefer to think of her as a life-long friend who never failed me." (*Overtures*, Oct. 1, 1974, p. 25).

³⁴ Heyman, 33-34. From The Curtis Institute's catalog. The Curtis Institute Library holds these catalogues dating from 1924-34.

³⁵ Hans Heinsheimer, "The Composing Composer, Samuel Barber," *ASCAP Today* (1968): 7.

first major publishing contract. This boost to Barber's career and confidence was significant during a time when the composer was uncertain about his future as a composer. Soon thereafter, Carl Engel offered Barber a loan, so that he could continue composing full-time.

During this year of transition 24-year-old Barber, considered supplementing his income by joining a choir. Because of Engel's loan, however, Barber was able to continue to compose without financial pressure. Unlike most composers, Barber found himself in a unique position to be a true full-time composer. He was able to "find the time and peace of mind necessary for good work."³⁶

Rosario Scalero was the most directly influential person to Barber's music. Scalero taught Barber for eight years at Curtis, and also during the summers at his home in Italy. The teacher was traditional in technique and form yet unconventional in his teaching methods. He instilled in Barber the importance of counterpoint over harmony and how to learn from great composers by studying their works, instead of teaching with a textbook³⁷. Under Scalero, Barber developed ability in increasingly complex forms and contrapuntal techniques.

³⁶ Heyman, p. 120. Homer advised Barber in a letter, January, 1935.

³⁷ "With fugues, for example, when I told him, "But Maestro, I have never written a fugue," he answered, "Don't be ridiculous, do you think that Bach had someone to teach him how to write a fugue? Just look at his fugues; you have eyes, you have ears." (In a letter written by Homer to Barber dated November 12, 1924. Heyman, p. 38.

Barber recognized that the success of his first works, including the Cello Sonata, were due to Scalerò's method which allowed Barber to develop his creativity within the framework of fine technical skill. The craftsmanship of his compositions gave Barber a reputation for possessing an original and expressive musical style with beautiful lyricism³⁸.

As much as Barber's inherent talent contributed to his success, the continued partnership between Barber and his mentors, teachers and friends offered a generous support to the young composer. Their belief in the value of his music was crucial to Barber's success and continued composing. Barber maintained lasting relationships with Homer, Menotti, Bok, Engel and Scalerò, through whom he gained a publishing venue, acquired national recognition and developed a reputation as one of America's leading romantic composers.

Importance of Radio

During this time in Barber's life, there existed another undeniable technological advance, the radio. In the fall of 1934, Engel had promoted Barber to the conductor of the New York Philharmonic, Werner Janssen, who requested that Barber's works be performed on an exclusive NBC Music Guild Series. During

³⁸ Critic Olin Downes writes: "This composer seeks the special color and the evocation of mood that he wants in a genuinely musical way... "Janssen Presents New Native Music," New York Times, March 25, 1935.

this one-hour radio program, Barber and Orlando Cole played the Cello Sonata³⁹. Barber requested, "I hope you will do me the honor of playing my Sonata with me. Don't get nervous, I promise to practice a great deal.... For this they will pay you \$25 extra... It is the coming thing in radio, and a good thing for you to get on."⁴⁰

It was through such early radio broadcasts that the young composer's "student" works would bring him instant fame. Broadcasts of now historic performances aired in the United States, Europe and Russia made it possible for him to attain such success and recognition even during his lifetime. Furthermore, the radio helped Samuel Barber to see the actuality of his vision:

"My aim is to write good music that will be comprehensible to as many people as possible, instead of music heard only by small, snobbish musical societies in the large cities. Radio makes this aim entirely possible of achievement. The universal basis of artistic spiritual communication by means of art is through the emotions."⁴¹

Barber later remarked in a newsletter:

"I am glad of this opportunity to perform my music on the radio when all types of people from different parts of the country are listening, for to such an audience I address my work. Too many composers today

³⁹ Heyman, p. 121. At first, French cellist Hubert was contracted with NBC to play, but this performance fell outside of the defined terms.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* Letter to Cole. January, 1935.

⁴¹ Heyman, p. 130, and footnote: Gama Gilbert, "Philharmonic Plays Youth's Work Today," Philadelphia Bulletin, March 24, 1935.

write with one or both eyes on small snobbish audiences in the larger cities, and then wonder why their music spreads no further.⁴²”

Barber was extremely excited to have his works aired on the radio at that time, fully understanding the impact it would have on his own compositions to fulfill his musical purpose.

History of Barber’s Cello Sonata, Op. 6

During the years 1928 through 1932, Barber was still lighthearted in his studies as a composer and overtaken by his relationship with Gian Carlo Menotti. Barber could find a place of peaceful reclusion at the estates owned by Menotti’s family. After a summer hike through Germany and the Swiss Alps, Barber and Menotti returned to the mountainous grassy villas sprawled along Lake Lugano in Cadegliano, Italy. Here, Barber composed his Sonata for Cello and Piano⁴³.

After just two weeks, Barber had already completed the first movement, and was working on the *Presto* of the second movement.⁴⁴ Barber was optimistic regarding Scalero’s evaluation of his sonata: “Maestro looked over my cello

⁴² In *Overtones*, a Curtis Institute publication. Heyman, 122n. News release, Jan. 16, 1935, Barber clipping files, New York Public Library, Music Division.

⁴³ Broder, p. 22.

⁴⁴ Heyman, p. 111 – Letter of July 16, 1932, Cadegliano.

sonata and thinks I am always making progress. I wrote it entirely without piano.⁴⁵”

Returning to Curtis from his summer abroad, Barber showed the first and second movements of the Cello Sonata to his classmate, Orlando Cole, a young cellist who had begun his studies at Curtis the same year as Barber⁴⁶. Cole played an indispensable role in helping Barber through the Sonata’s completion. As the first performer of the Sonata, Cole offered innumerable suggestions for notation and phrasing, demonstrating to Barber the capabilities of the cello’s range⁴⁷. Cole recalls Barber’s method:

“As he was writing it, he would pass the pages to me and we’d play it together and see how he liked it and how I liked it, and if I suggested and changes. He had a great feeling for the cello, having had a few cello lessons... Barber and I gave many performances of it together. The printed edition carries my bowings and fingerings, but they were made back in 1935 during the days when we played gut strings. During the last 60 years I have made a few changes.⁴⁸”

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ As a member of the Curtis Quartet, Cole was in a unique position to perform other works by Barber including *Dover Beach* and the String Quartet, Op. 11.

⁴⁷ Heyman, p. 110.

⁴⁸ Jeffrey Solow, Program Notes, 2010.

The second movement of Barber's cello sonata is quite unique, being composed of a *Presto – scherzo* set between two complimenting *Adagios*. Looking at the original cello score from which Cole played during the composition process, we discover that the *presto* was composed first, while Barber was in Cadegliano, and the *adagio* sections were added later, as they were "appended at the bottom of the page with instructions at the end of the first adagio—'*vide scherzo.*'"⁴⁹

In the *Presto* section, Barber had originally notated the tripled eighth-note passage as staccato quarter notes in triplets with a time signature of 12/4. Even though the original notation was difficult for the cellist to read, Barber at first tried to preserve his "pretty chains of quarter notes."⁵⁰ The manuscript which was used by Cole shows that the cellist had already, in fact, penciled in bars connecting each triplet, essentially changing the passage to 12/8. The composer eventually allowed the publisher to change the passage to the grouped eighth notes which we see in the 1936 edition⁵¹.

⁴⁹ Heyman, p. 111.

⁵⁰ Heyman, p. 31.

⁵¹ Heyman 113. Cole, interview with the author, April 21, 1982.

Early Performances and Reviews

While Cole and Barber finished the composition process in November, the completion date of the Cello Sonata, Op. 6, is officially December 9, 1932⁵².

Barber dedicated his last work under Scalero, in his teacher's honor. The published edition reads, "*To my teacher, Rosario Scalero*" on the first page above the Sonata's title line. However, in Cole's original manuscript, Barber had written, "*To Orlando, physician at the birth of this Sonata, in appreciation of his help and interest.*"⁵³

Barber and Cole first gave an informal concert at the Art Alliance in Philadelphia, early in January of 1933⁵⁴. On March 5th of the same year, the premier of the Cello Sonata, Op. 6 was held at the League of Composers in New York City, and performed by Cole and Barber. Cole performed the Sonata in the fall of 1934 at Philadelphia's Mellon Galleries, with pianist Ralph Berkowitz. On February 4, 1935, Barber and Cole would again perform the Cello Sonata on an NBC special program entitled, "An Hour of Barber." Barber was introduced by Carl Engel, who announced this occasion to be, "an event of considerable musical importance." Further commenting that he would rather not elaborate on Barber's

⁵² This date was written on the last page of the manuscript by the composer himself.

⁵³ Heyman, p. 110. *From the collection of Orlando Cole.*

⁵⁴ Orlando Cole. Interview with Barbara Heyman, April 21, 1982. (Heyman, p. 114)

talent, because there was “nothing more calamitous for youth than to be tagged with prophecies of future greatness.⁵⁵”

At the Sonata’s premier at the French Institute in New York, Barber was unaware that Herbert Hutchinson of The New York Times was there, though he only heard the beginning of the first movement of the Cello Sonata. The critic insinuated that Barber’s music, though having “poetic beauty of mood,” was without enough “cohesion, unity or salience of line.⁵⁶” Even though Hutchinson did not have the full picture of Barber’s Sonata at the time, Sidney Homer also had difficulty understanding the Cello Sonata, when Barber first played it on the piano in the fall of 1934. Barber wrote to Cole about his uncles’ response, “At last he ‘got’ it—and has said such fine things about it. Strange how many hearings it takes for people to really understand it, even when they are *favorably* disposed!⁵⁷”

Regarding the ability to comprehend Barber’s Cello Sonata or appreciate it at the first hearing, we can observe the composer’s situation with the Prix de Rome. In 1934, Barber submitted the scores to *Music for a Scene from Shelley* and his Cello Sonata, Op. 6, only to be turned down for the prize. However, the following February, after his NBC radio performance, Barber received word that Mason and Powell⁵⁸ hoped that Barber would audition the Cello Sonata for

⁵⁵ Broder, p. 27-28.

⁵⁶ Heyman, 114. Hutchinson had also heard *Dover Beach*, earlier on the same program, and had made this remark inclusive of both pieces.

⁵⁷ Heyman, 115. Barber’s letter to Cole, ca. October ~ November, 1934.

⁵⁸ Daniel Gregory Mason and John Powell represented the American Academy in Rome, who awards the Prix de Rome.

them⁵⁹, and resubmit his scores. Mason stated he might better understand the form of Barber's Sonata if he actually heard it for himself⁶⁰. Barber heard after the audition that Mason had been "so excited he could not sleep that night."⁶¹ May of 1935 brought official word that Barber's Cello Sonata and *Shelley* had been awarded the Prix de Rome. The prize was announced on May 9th, just three days after Barber received the Pulitzer fellowship⁶², also for his Cello Sonata.

Even Barber himself witnessed how an additional hearing of the Sonata could provide a clearer understanding or interpretation. The summer of 1935, while in Maine⁶³ preparing the Sonata's score for publication, Barber heard cellist Felix Salmond practicing it. "It sounds like a different work. I had forgotten I wanted it to sound that way—dramatic. And he plays with fire,⁶⁴" reported Barber. Two years later, Salmond and Berkowitz would perform the Cello Sonata in New York at Town Hall, on February 7, 1937. Two weeks later, Salmond also played the Sonata at Wigmore Hall in London, with Barber at the piano.

From a young age, Barber regarded his role as a composer as this: "I'm not out to make any mark for anyone or anything but to please myself and what I

⁵⁹ Cole played with Barber at this audition.

⁶⁰ Heyman, p. 122.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* Letter to Cole, late February, 1935.

⁶² Musical America, May 25, 1935. The Pulitzer is a travelling scholarship of \$1500. (Heyman, p. 122-123).

⁶³ Barber spent the summer in Camden, Maine, at the Bok estates, which was a frequent retreat for musicians and other elite. (Heyman, p. 104*n*).

⁶⁴ Heyman, p. 115. Letter to Jeanne Behrend, August 1935.

feel is right about music.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, he was obviously conscious to the praise or criticism received for his music. Following Barber's first radio broadcast in 1935, Barber wrote excitedly to Cole, "Fine reports from the broadcast. Toscanini⁶⁶ liked the cello sonata and the Daisies⁶⁷— can you beat it!! —AND my voice. Everyone tells me how much I have improved!! Don't laugh!... About 15 telegrams, fine reception in Florida, California, etc. ... I am terribly grateful to all of you, and especially to you.⁶⁸" Even following this achievement, Barber was sensitive about auditioning the Sonata for the Prix de Rome. Barber expressed his concerns to Cole, "This is T-E-R-R-I-B-L-Y important for me, much more so than you think.⁶⁹"

Although the Sonata was well received, and had much audience in its first few years, Barber was still somewhat surprised at its success. On April 22, 1936, Luigi Silva and Barber performed the Cello Sonata at the American Academy in Rome. He wrote to Cole that he had been "agreeably surprised at the performance of the Cello Sonata by Luigi Silva, and also at the reception by the

⁶⁵ "Samuel Barber: Portrait of a Musical Master." Unpublished monograph. Students in American History Seminar, Henderson High School, West Chester, Pa, 1982-83. p. 29.

⁶⁶ During the summer of 1933, Barber met first Maestro Toscanini in Italy. Over the following years, Barber worked on a short piece to present to the conductor. In the summer of 1937, he presented him the scores to *Essay* and *Adagio* (an orchestral adaption from the 2nd movement of String Quartet, Op. 11). In 1938, Toscanini selected both of Barber's works, premiering the *Adagio for Strings* and *Essay* live on NBC radio, with the New York Philharmonic.

⁶⁷ from *3 Songs*, Op. 2 (1927-28)

⁶⁸ Heyman, p. 122. Letter to Cole, likely around February 30, 1935.

⁶⁹ Heyman, p. 123. Letter to Cole, Feb. 1934.

audience. I had doubts about how that piece would go over. But Silva is a fine musician, and put it across.⁷⁰

Just days before Barber's 27th birthday, a surprise party held for him at the Curtis Institute. His friends presented several of his compositions, with Salmond and Berkowitz performing the Cello Sonata⁷¹. This event was orchestrated by Mary Bok, and it made such an impression that Cole and Sokoloff would play Barber's Sonata at future birthday party reunions in 1960, 1970 and 1980.⁷²

Likewise, at the London performance in 1937, Barber wrote to Homer recounting the positive response to his Cello Sonata. Homer replied with cautious praise, "You had an intelligent audience that was willing and ready to appreciate, and you had an honest chance to test the vitality and strength of your Sonata."⁷³ Mary Bok had sponsored a previous event in London, in 1935, involving select Curtis students to perform for British royalty at the home of Lady Astor. Barber was praised by the audience, particularly recounting that, "Lady Astor went behind the scenes during the concert and complimented my music by asking if I

⁷⁰ Heyman, p. 117. Letter to Cole, May 6, 1936.

⁷¹ Heyman, p. 115.

⁷² Heyman, p. 115n.

⁷³ As we read further in Homer's letter, we can see the concern that Barber's uncle had toward his nephew's early rise to fame. "Public life has its value and often lifts a man to great efforts and inspires great conceptions, but production is done in the dark, underground, as it were, and an honest acquaintance with himself and an understanding of his own conviction is the hardest but most necessary job a composer has, if he wants to do anything but artificial work." Letter from Homer. July 23, 1937, Bolton, NY. Heyman, p. 124

was dead yet!⁷⁴” Even the Curtis Institute lauded Samuel Barber by proclaiming, “Who can say what future glories will cover this disciple of The Curtis Institute?”⁷⁵

Though Barber had never intended to please a particular group of people with his music, the composer did take criticism and praise to heart. Fortunately for Barber, the popularity of his Cello Sonata signaled just the beginning of an extremely successful career, and Barber’s reputation as a sought-after composer continued to grow.

Despite such early success, Barber was at odds with the general trend of 20th century music and the experimentalism of many composers of that day. It could be said that Barber’s style suffered an identity crisis to some extent, especially since his early works were generalized as “neo-romantic.” It is clear that Barber was a romantic composer. Yet, during this period, Barber was accused of being too conservative, “being out of touch with contemporary sounds.”⁷⁶ It was ironic that although the young American composer had already won the Prix de Rome and two Pulitzers, some considered his work to not be American enough⁷⁷.

⁷⁴ Broder, p. 29. Letter to his parents.

⁷⁵ *Overtures*, May 1936, p. 36 (Heyman, p. 123).

⁷⁶ Wentzel, p. 4.

⁷⁷ Critic Olin Downes comments on *The School for Scandal* (1931-32): “It is no more American in flavor than Wolf-Ferrari... What influence was responsible for this? Could it have been the teachings of that admirable theorist and teacher of the Curtis School of Music, Rosario Scalero, with whom Barber studied before he went to Rome? It is hardly likely. Nor was the music written in Rome...We do not agree with the sort of musical patriot who attempts to prove that the accident of birth entitles and individual of otherwise modest claims to recognitions as an American composer. On the other hand,

It was quite obvious that Barber was not following the same trends as other composers of his time. Regarding the 1937 London performance of the Sonata, an anonymous critic wrote:

“...a most heartening work in a time when an unaffectedly romantic outlook is considered in some quarters tantamount to retrogression. Those who approve of the neoclassicism of Stravinsky and the “*Gebrauchsmusik*” of Hindemith will hardly find this sonata to their liking.

But Mr. Barber need not be disturbed by their disapproval. For while his work, as is to be expected in a composer still in his formative years, shows influences as those of Debussy in parts of the first movement of Elgar in parts of both the first and the second, and of Sibelius in the third, it no the less reveals an individual approach throughout all three movements, without any of the intellectual striving after originality which is characteristic of most of the efforts of our younger moderns.⁷⁸”

Although at first criticized for remaining too conservative and pandering to nostalgic audiences, it was essentially the originality and sincerity in Barber’s compositions which allowed his works to communicate to a vast array of audiences, and to endure the test of time.

music that lives and says something seldom if ever fails to suggest race and environment...” “Barbirolli Leads Music by Barber,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1938.
⁷⁸ *Anon.* “Felix Salmond Appears Here in Cello Recital,” *New York Herald Tribune*, Feb. 7, 1937. (Heyman, p. 115).

III. Analysis of Barber's Cello Sonata, Op. 6

An overview

The Cello Sonata is a beautiful example of Samuel Barber's neo-romantic style. Through the prominent use of emotional expressionism, Barber upheld the positive ideals and techniques of the Romantic period. His creative treatment of harmony within the sonata form was often not traditional, however, and by incorporating 20th century elements of rhythm and tonality, Barber's Cello Sonata demonstrates a synthesis of the romantic and the contemporary. The composer's creative use of tonal ambiguity, expressively contrasting dynamics and rhythmic uncertainty in his working out of motivic elements produce a sense of uneasiness. However, the pastoral melodies (M. I, second theme / M. II, *Adagio*) and intense, climbing passages with enormous leaps⁷⁹, (M. I, II, opening themes) imbibe us with an imagery of the large open space of nature, which inspired Barber during this transitional period of his life. With Barber's Cello Sonata, the listener feels comfortable enough with the familiarity of traditional forms and harmonies to be pleasantly impressed with the unexpected harmonic and rhythmic turns Barber

⁷⁹ Frequently, Barber included octave leaps (Mov. I, m. / Mov. II, m. 55 / Mov. III, 96), and leaps combining an octave and a tenth (Mov. I, m. 108, / Mov. II m. 8) or a ninth (Mov. III, m. 127).

presents. This balanced and approachable style allows the listener to develop a sense of “sympathy for contemporary composition.”⁸⁰

The Cello Sonata, Op. 6, is composed in the traditional sonata form of three movements: the first, *Allegro ma non troppo*, is followed by a unique second movement, *Adagio - Presto – Adagio*, the final movement being a tumultuous *Allegro Appassionato*. Barber brilliantly scored the Sonata so that its deep, lower register of the cello can be fully utilized, becoming “very cellistic, very singing. It takes advantage of the best qualities of the instrument,” remarked Orlando Cole.⁸¹ Using similar tonal ranges between the cello and piano also promotes cohesion between the two instruments, reinforcing the Sonata as a work of chamber music. In Barber’s words, chamber music presents certain difficulties because “nobody is boss.”⁸² Therefore, with the two instruments constantly exchanging themes and converging within a similar tonal range, the Cello Sonata becomes a challenging work of ensemble.

Driving us along through the entire three movements is Barber’s creative, yet meticulous, treatment of rhythm. The composer achieved these variables with time signature changes, working out of repeated motives, augmentation, hemiolas and two-against-three rhythmic tension between the cello and piano.

⁸⁰ Wayne Wentzel (research item #428). Edel, Oliver. “Sonatas for Cello and Piano.” *Repertoire* 1 (October 1951): 50-51. [Henn B90h].

⁸¹ Heyman, p. 110. Interview with the author, April 21, 1982.

⁸² Regarding *Dover Beach*, Barber replied that the “difficulty is that nobody is boss—not the singer, not the string quartet. It’s chamber music.” Allan Kozinn, “*Samuel Barber: The Last Interview and the Legacy*,” part 2, *High Fidelity* (July 1981): 45.

The Cello Sonata begins and ends dramatically, building up throughout with swells of increased agitation and activity, tonally ambiguous development sections, graciously interrupted by the gorgeous and tranquil melodies for which Barber has become so well-known. Through these unique ways, the sonata draws in the listener with dramatic dynamics and by creating the desire to reach a satisfying resolve, and delaying that resolve, both harmonically and rhythmically, until the last few measures of the final movement (from m. 158).

Having a clear understanding of the overall form and concept of the Cello Sonata is helpful for presenting a big picture. However, so that we can observe Barber's style of neo-romanticism, we must also identify the key compositional elements and techniques Barber used, and notice which are traditional and which are experimental. Therefore, in the following analysis, we will be observing where certain themes are introduced, repeated and modified either tonally or rhythmically. In addition, the author highlights relevant passages which demonstrate Barber's creative treatment of traditional forms. The purpose of this type of analysis allows for a deeper comprehension of the sonata's content, which will naturally lend itself to a cohesive performance overall.

A Problem of Cohesion

The major difficulty which arises in a performance of the Cello Sonata is a potential lack of cohesion due to the complexity of compositional elements

Barber used. Complexity arises because these elements, such as abrupt shifts in rhythm, *allargandi* and *rallentandi*, sudden dynamic change and multiple performance instructions, almost always appear in combination with each other. Harmonically and rhythmically, the cellist is hardly able to settle down in one tonal area before suddenly being pushed forward or pulled back in some way.

Since Barber was a very detail-oriented composer, the performance instructions found in the Cello Sonata should be the starting point from which to interpret the various passages throughout the piece. As a performer, one must understand how to execute the various instructions marked as they are: *agitato*, *intense*, *molto appassionato*, *risoluto*, *energico* and *con fuoco*, in order to portray the intended effect as well as to add contrast to a variety of characters within the Sonata.

Secondly, it is necessary to identify where each section leads, its relation to a theme or motive and its role within the movement as a whole. Harmonically, comprehending a passage in relationship to, or divergence from, a tonal center will also aid in developing cohesion. Naturally, Barber intended this Sonata to maintain continuous energy from beginning to end. Therefore, careful attention must be paid to the numerous transitions within the Sonata in order to achieve a fluent and musically accurate performance.

Finally, the cellist must physically endure the demands of Barber's Cello Sonata by balancing passionate energy with conservative restraint. Accordingly,

the cellist must take into account the various bowing and left hand techniques necessary for achieving the desired execution of a passage. Therefore, not only the bow direction, but also the amount of bow and area to be used must be considered. For these reasons, the author has added occasional bowing suggestions, as well as diagrams portraying areas of ensemble work between the cellist and pianist. Also included are sections of the cello score which show added or changed fingerings. These fingerings are suggested as an alternative to the ones printed⁸³, and can be recognized as they appear in a different font. However, the author implores the cellist to experiment with various combinations of bowing and fingering until arriving at ones which are both musically accurate and comfortably executed. Therefore, regarding any matters of bowing and fingering, a cellist should make their own educated decisions, naturally resulting from good musical interpretation, rather than simply from theory.

Compositional Elements

Barber was a romantic composer. The most obvious romantic compositional style Barber utilized in the Cello Sonata is the extreme dynamic contrasts with ubiquitous performance instructions. The first instance begins at the start of the Cello Sonata, with the intense climbing *crescendo* from *piano* to *forte, molto espressivo* in the first three measures, and restated in augmentation

⁸³ The printed fingerings were Orlando Cole's from the 1936 G. Schirmer edition, when he played with gut strings.

at the recapitulation (from m. 91) as *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*.^{fig. 1} In this sonata, almost every dynamic marking is accompanied by a performance instruction, further signifying in what character the performer should interpret that specific dynamic. Whether it be a sustained *pianissimo, tranquillo* leading to a *subito fortissimo, molto intenso allargando* (Mov. I, m. 99)^{fig. 1} or a *crescendo* drawn out over six measures (Mov. III, m. 89-95),^{fig. 7} Barber's Cello Sonata relies heavily on dynamic contrast for its vitality.

Barber was an economical composer. The themes and motives which he wrote, he utilized by reiterating them in many different ways, often working them out over varying harmonic plains. Barber used passages of brief repetition,^{REF: fig. 3,}⁹ and frequently reused material by stating a theme in augmentation, in diminution or by repeating a motivic element of that theme in ascending or descending steps, sometimes in inversion.^{REF: Fig. 2} A clear example would be to notice the climactic passage in the recapitulation of the first movement (m. 92-101),^{fig. 1} where clearly the Sonata's opening four measures are restated in augmentation and with accentuated dynamics.

Figure 1

Another way Barber reworked themes is by having the cello and piano switch roles, so that each is playing the part which originated with the other instrument. Looking at the *Allegro ma non troppo*, (Mov. I, m. 82-86), it appears that the cello enters with new material. However, observing the piano part earlier at m. 16-17, we can see that this material had already been briefly introduced. Immediately after, at m. 87, the piano and cello switch parts, but instead of E as the tonal center, it climbs a whole step to F \sharp . Similarly, in the *Allegro appassionato* (Mov. III, m. 12), we have the first theme in C minor, played by the piano. When the cello plays the same theme, however, it is suddenly in F \sharp minor. Interestingly, at the recapitulation (Mov. III, m. 95), we see a reversal of roles: the piano brings back the same theme in F \sharp minor, and the cello enters ten measures later (m. 105) in C minor.

The Cello Sonata demonstrates how Barber wrote in unique styles of polyphony, diverging somewhat from the traditional boundaries. There are passages where Barber wrote in canon. For example, the opening four measures

of the Sonata there is a canon between the cello and piano which is offset by one beat. Additionally, rather than introducing entirely new material, Barber reuses previous motives or parts of a theme, working them out rhythmically and tonally to varying degrees.

Figure 2

The image displays a musical score for the first movement of a sonata, specifically measures 67 through 81. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 67-73) features a cello part (Mov. I) with a dynamic of *ff* and a tempo marking of *pun poco più mosso ed agitato*. It includes a box labeled '67' and a note 'octave C'. The second system (measures 74-77) shows the piano part with a dynamic of *p* and a note '(G#) cello'. The third system (measures 78-81) shows the piano part with a dynamic of *sempre f* and a note 'returns to cello'. Annotations throughout the score include 'motivic development', '3 phrases of ascending min. 6th / aug. 5ths', 'appears in inversion and in canon', 'rhythmically appearing', and 'melodically appearing in piano R. H.'. Fingerings and articulation marks are also present.

In the development of the first movement (Mov. I, m. 67-81), *fig. 2* the rhythm of the cello part is composed almost entirely of the repeated motive of “eighth-note / dotted-quarter-note” in an ascending intervals, commonly a minor sixth or an augmented fifth. The piano part expresses the motive in inversion and in canon with the cello, thus achieving a harmonically unstable development by means of contrary motion (m. 74-75). However, reaching m. 76, the rhythmic

pattern begins a step-wise descent in the cello and appears only rhythmically in the piano's left hand. Finally, the motive transfers melodically to the piano part (m.78-80), until briefly returning to the cello part (m. 81).

Figure 3

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Cello and Piano. The Cello part (top staff, bass clef) begins at measure 35 with a melodic line of eighth notes. The Piano part (bottom staff, treble and bass clefs) provides a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Annotations include 'repeated motives' with arrows pointing to the melodic line, '(2nd time, intensify vibrato)' pointing to the second occurrence, and 'phrase ends m. 41' at the end of the line. A '3 against 2' time signature is indicated between the staves.

Barber was a melodically-oriented composer. Therefore, in regards to a tonal center, the Cello Sonata may appear to be in C minor, judging solely by the key signature of three flats. However, most of the passages within its three movements rarely take hold of a stable tonal center. In only a few places, such as the second theme in the *Allegro ma non troppo* (Mov. I, m. 44-59, in A_b), and the final ten measures of the *Allegro Appassionato* (Mov. III, m. 150-167, in C minor), does the listener experience true tonal stability. For example, the third movement enters with the piano in C minor, but when the cello echoes the same opening theme twelve measures later, it appears suddenly in F_♯ minor, which is an extremely distant key from C minor.^{REF: fig. 7} Additionally, Barber writes passages which allude to a tonal center, but which are harmonically unstable. Often, we

can hear the direction of a melodic line leading toward or revolving around a tonal center. A good example is in the recapitulation section of the final movement (Mov. III, m. 141-149), *fig. 4* where the tonal center is not steadfast, yet both the cello and piano part point to C as the tonal center. In this instance, the passage concludes with a simple and harmonically weak plagal cadence (m. 149).

Figure 4

Barber's use of deceptive tonality occurs in the *Adagio*. *fig. 5* The second movement opens with an expressive melody which the listener may expect to settle in E_b major, but instead, the line hovers at the seventh scale degree (Mov. II, m. 3 – last D). From the middle of the fifth measure, we sense G minor, but two measures later, we fall into A_b major. Finally, in m. 8, the melody from m. 1-2 returns, and we anticipate E_b major to return as the tonal center. However, (as in

m. 3), the listener is misled, and we end on a surprisingly bright and open C major chord. In addition to ambiguous tonality, Barber also favored modal mixture, shifting between major and minor quite freely (Mov. II, m. 8-9 *fig. 5* / Mov. III, m. 141-144). *fig. 4*

Figure 5

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a cello and piano. The first system, labeled 'Mov. II Adagio', begins with a tempo marking of *mp espr.* and a first-measure rest. The cello line features a melodic line with a 'Temporary meter change' indicated by a bracket over measures 1-3, which 'settles on 7'. The piano accompaniment includes a 'homophonic texture' and a 'V of G min.' chord. Annotations include 'E \flat as tonal center' and 'leads to D \flat '. The second system starts at measure 6 with a *mf* dynamic and includes 'deceptive voice leading' and 'modal mixture'. The piano part shows chords for (G min.), i, \flat V \flat (IV \flat of A \flat), I (A \flat maj.), II, IV, vi, vii \flat (v \flat of C maj.), and I (C maj.). The system concludes with a *pp* dynamic, a *rit.* marking, and a 'Presto: 12/8' section with 'C as tonal center'.

Barber was a rhythmically creative composer. A key feature we find in the opening measures of the Cello Sonata is actually a two-fold view of how Barber treated rhythmic structure. The composer often created an illusion of acceleration or deceleration of tempo by altering rhythms within the true tempo. First, is Barber’s technique of using “written-out” *allargando* (Mov. I, end of m. 2) *fig. 6.A*

and written-out *accelerando* (Mov. III, m. 24, piano), *fig. 6.B* where the rhythms within a passage compress incrementally, imitating an *accelerando*.

Figure 6-A

Figure 6-B

It is important to notice that in such places, there is not a true change in tempo unless Barber has written one. In some cases, there are performance instructions which appear contrary to the written-out *accelerando*, where Barber also wrote *ritenuto*, and *allargando* (Mov. III, m. 24, piano). *fig. 6.B* However, note the example of a written-out *accelerando* which is enforced by similar performance instructions (Mov. I, m. 27, piano), *fig. 6.C* where we see that a written-out *accelerando* within the music is immediately followed by a *molto accelerando*

in the performance instructions. This allows for the continuation of the *accelerando* effect. REF: figs.10, 20

Figure 6-C



Accordingly, the performers must be in complete agreement as to who leads when arriving at passages marked as *a tempo* (Mov. I, m.30-39).^{fig. 11} Throughout the Sonata, the performers should still maintain accuracy within the true tempo while accommodating Barber's descriptions.

The second aspect to how Barber used rhythm creatively can be observed in temporary shifts in meter throughout the sonata (Mov. I, m. 15 / Mov. II, m. 3 / Mov. III, m. 90),^{fig. 7} allowing the composer to take more liberty expressing a theme outside the confines of a strict meter. Additionally, Barber creates tension by giving the cello part and the piano part contrasting rhythms, which to the ear sound like duple meter against triple meter (Mov. I, m. 31-33 / Mov. II, m. 35-36).^{fig. 3} The use of hemiolas and syncopations (Mov. I, m. 37, 50 / Mov. III, m. 116, 127)^{fig. 20} are typical to Barber's compositional style, and are commonly encountered in the Cello Sonata.

Figure 7

Musical score for Samuel Barber's Cello Sonata, Movement III, measures 89-95. The score is written in bass clef and 4/4 time, with a temporary meter change to 9/4. It features dynamic markings (mp, ff, allarg.) and performance instructions (Tempo I°, in F# minor, recap. in C minor). The score includes fingerings and articulation marks.

The cooperation between the traditionally romantic features and the experimentally modern compositional elements which are found in Samuel Barber's Cello Sonata can easily be understood separately, but are often at work in conjunction, thus becoming more complicated. Therefore, now that we have established a clearly-defined musical context in which to view the Sonata, we can further identify where various elements occur in each movement, and how Barber combined these elements in his own creative style. The following commentary focuses on the performance, offering a description of the passages in relationship to sonata form, including suggestions of technique for the cellist and for the ensemble.

Although incorporating several techniques which were rhythmically and tonally experimental, Barber's Cello Sonata remains true to the traditional sonata form. We observed that Barber utilized motivic repetition, sometimes in canon or in augmentation. Motives and themes were often exchanged freely between the cello and piano in an ever-active polyphony. Barber enjoyed creating tension with unexpected rhythmic clashes, hemiolas and written out *allargandi* and

accelerandi. Finally, the extent to which Barber was a romantic composer was most easily observed through his use of performance descriptions and contrasting dynamics. These elements composed within the Cello Sonata can be understood not only as insight into a better performance of the piece, but also as a reflection on the life of an American composer who used extensive creative means to express a new kind of romantic music.

A Performance Description

Movement I. Allegro ma non troppo:

The opening of the Cello Sonata should be viewed as the entrance of the Sonata's main character, because we will encounter this first theme many times and in various forms throughout the *Allegro Appassionato*. While Barber's use of the triplet in m. 2 conveys the feeling of slowing down, a *poco ritardando* does not appear until the next measure, so care should be used not to slow down prematurely (Mov. I, m. 1-4).^{fig. 1} The first four measures of the Sonata should not "stand alone," but rather the opening phrase needs to be connected to the fifth measure, especially in terms of energy. The cellist's body should remain at play during the eighth rest, bow slightly in the air, as if never having finalized the statement from the first four measures. Indeed, m. 5-8 should be treated as the continuation of the initial four-measure climb and quasi-resolution⁸⁴, a sustained *forte* ably leading the cello down to a B₂.

⁸⁴ *Quasi-resolution* refers to m. 5-8 being in an unstable tonal center of C minor. Therefore, the B₂ acts both as a 'leading tone' pointing to C minor, and as the anticipation of the resolution to the previous chord (m. 8), ii6/4 → 5/3.

Figure 8



The following section (m. 9-26) *fig. 9* incorporates similar thematic material as m. 5-8, but it is played out over fourteen measures instead of eight. Measure 9 enters with a *subito piano*, in contrast to the previously sustained *forte*. As we saw in m. 5-6, Barber's utilized this sense of rhythmic uncertainty in a stepwise ascension, noticeably "off the beat" in m. 9 and m. 12, but "on the beat" in m. 10-11. In these seven measures, there is a gradual *crescendo* leading the direction of this first theme up to m.16 with a high C echoed by its lower octave. Here, the two measures of half notes (m. 16-17) will be resolved in a tumbling step-wise descent to B_b (m. 22). The interval of a descending octave makes a motivic reappearance in m.23-24. During these two measures, the piano plays the exact theme heard in the opening cello part (m. 1-4), while the cello plays a broken ascending line over a C pedal tone, each one marked as *sforzando*. This sequence on the low C must increase dynamically over the four occurrences, the fifth being a sustained *forte*, which begins a dramatic ascension to the high E_b (m. 27).

Figure 9

The image displays a musical score for a piano part, consisting of four staves. The first staff begins at measure 9, marked 'Mov. I'. It features a 'p subito' marking and a 'cresc. poco a poco' instruction. Annotations include 'off the beat' and 'on the beat' with brackets. The second staff continues the piece, with a 'repetitions to increase intensity' annotation and a 'f sempre' marking. The third staff starts at measure 16 and includes a 'motivic reiteration' annotation. The fourth staff begins at measure 23, with 'increase intensity each repetition' and 'sf' markings, and a 'piano has theme' note. A reference to 'mm. 26-28: see piano score diagram' is also present. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The first theme, stated by the piano from m. 23, leads to a *sforzando* at m. 28, *fig. 10* and also serves as a springboard for the piano's transitional *quasi cadenza*, which has begun a measure earlier under the cello's E₁. The cellist should hold the two-beat fermata using a conservative up-bow, starting at *piano*. During this E₁, the piano is instructed with *molto accelerando*, adding to the written-out *accelerando* which drives both piano and cello together into a *forte* at m. 28, where the low F must sound on the downbeat. The pianist concludes with a written-out *quasi-cadenza* wherein Barber includes markings of *a tempo*, *stringendo* and *espressivo*.

Figure 10

The image shows a musical score for a cello and piano. The top staff is the cello line, and the bottom two staves are the piano line. The score is in a key with two flats and a 3/4 time signature. The cello line starts with a measure marked '26' and includes a 'quasi cadenza' section. The piano line has a 'p' dynamic marking and features several triplet patterns. Performance instructions include 'written-out accelerando', 'molto accel.', 'atempo', and 'stringendo'. There are also notes like 'Stay with piano L.H.' and 'Save bow on E V'.

From m. 31, the cello and piano need to meld together in a warm and pulsating legato, with the cellist cautious not to accentuate the triplets. Rather, this passage (m. 31-33) should be a controlled, yet energetic continuation of the piano's line, similarly stated a second time from the end of m. 36 through m. 39.

fig. 11 The passage of m. 28-39 as a whole can be viewed as a written-out cadenza for both instruments, but accentuating the piano. During this interlude between the first and second themes, it becomes important to utilize the partnership of the cello's low range and intensity with the piano's rhythmic drive and somewhat heavy chords, while at the same time maintaining a fluid and lyrical line. This "line," essentially running from m. 28-42, relates a conversation between the two instruments, wherein the cellist is responding to the piano in emphatic phrases. Finally, in this section, the cellist should allow the pianist to set the *a tempo* in the measure preceding both of the cello's entrances (m. 30 and 36). *fig.11*

Figure 11

The second theme, a beautiful pastoral melody, enters *pianissimo* at m. 44, resting tonally in A₁ major. The technique in m. 42 requires the cellist to stop with the bow on the string, prepare the left hand for the E₁, while relaxing the bow hand to facilitate a delicate up-bow entrance. This all must be done in a split-second, and smoothly coordinating the E₁, which should be played on the D string⁸⁵. The second theme is repeated, at m. 50, and we must notice that Barber wrote in canon here, with serene syncopation with the piano on the lower E₁. Since the cellist needs to play in fluid *cantando* with accurate rhythm, the piano left hand should serve as the rhythmic standard.

There are two phrases (m. 57-66) which we encounter before reaching the development (m. 67). The first is a brief *mezzo forte* descent from D₁ to the low A₁. Then, at m. 60, there is a rhythmically simple motive of two eighth-notes (G₁-A₁) in repetition, acting as a pedal for the piano's upper-octave descending

⁸⁵ From m. 41-49, the cellist can remain on the D string, which enables the *tranquillo* to have a consistent tone quality.

sequence. This passage in the piano (m. 60-63) appears in the cello part at the end of the second theme in the recapitulation (m. 140-143), as a role reversal.

The *fortissimo* at m. 67 has to be an absolute surprise, signaling an immediate character change to *agitato*, as again the opening theme is reiterated by recurring motivic segments in distant harmonic points. These waves of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* should also be played linearly, composing three large arcs, the third being extensively sustained, and remaining *forte* (m. 67-81).^{REF: fig.2}

There is a frequent mistake made by many cellists when playing this next passage of the Sonata. The mistake occurs in the last sixteenth note of m. 86, with an erroneous B_♭ instead the B_♯ Barber intended. There is ample evidence in favor of this “correction.” First, the initial half note of m. 86, as well as the B’s occurring in the piano part are all B_♯. Furthermore, the following measure shows that Barber wrote a courtesy natural on the B, proving that the final note of m. 86 should be played B_♯.^{86 fig.12}

⁸⁶ Cellist Jeffrey Solow* recalls, “When I questioned him [Cole] about it after hearing a student of his play the natural, he told me, ‘I always played a B_♭ and Barber never corrected me.’ Obviously, Barber simply never noticed it and Landy [Orlando Cole] never asked him about it. Exactly as I did when I first learned the sonata, Landy mistakenly learned it as a B_♭ instead of a B_♯, and taught his students to play the natural, as well.” Email to the author, Feb. 21, 2013.

*Professor of Cello at Temple University, where Orlando Cole (1908-2010) taught for over thirty years.

During m. 82-92, there is much polyphonic activity between the cello and piano. The cello enters *subito pianissimo espressivo*, and achieving a *forte* over the next four measures. This motive was first seen in m. 16-17 of the piano part. Arriving at m. 87, the cellist experiences a sudden descending passage, which is melodically a preview of the *Adagio* theme (Mov. II, m. 1-2).^{fig. 12} The same descending motive was introduced *pianissimo* in the piano part at m. 82, but now, Barber indicates *forte cantando* for the cello. This is the final passage of the development before the *pianissimo tranquillo* entrance of the recapitulation at m. 92.

The recapitulation begins with an extended climbing phrase (m. 92-101),^{fig. 1} which is a clear reiteration of the opening material in rhythmic augmentation. If the cellist apportions energy via bow use, and coordinates the fingering during the *molto intenso allargando*, avoiding *glissandi* between the A₄ down to E₃, it will be a clean preparation for the climax (from m. 102). This passage ends with a

tumbling written-out *accelerando*, the only place where Barber indicates a *piacere (ad libitum)* (m. 105).

Figure 12

Mov. I

B#

87 courtesy natural

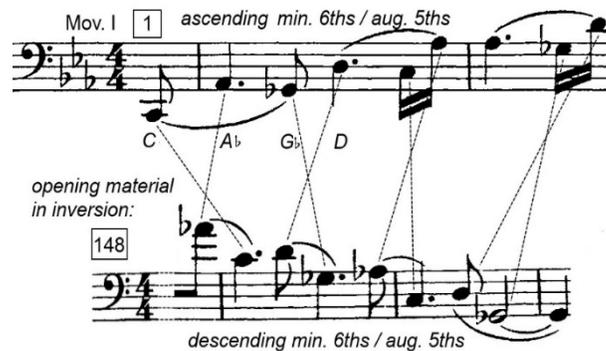
f cantando

Mov. II Adagio *mp espr.*

Although the remaining sections of the *Allegro ma non troppo* seem to comfortably fall into the traditional sonata form, Barber brings back the second theme (from m. 122)

Figure 13

centered on C major. He also included a cadenza-like passage for the cello (m. 144-147), over a sustained F minor chord in the piano.



Barber writes this passage *a*

tempo until the end of m. 147, through which the cellist must sustain energy without making a premature *ritardando* until reaching the upper A₂. Here, we see an inversion of the Sonata's opening line, wherein a reversal of the pitches in each interval preserves the sequence of minor 6ths or augmented fifths (m. 147-150).^{fig.13} Just as the second theme in the recapitulation did, the final measures of the first movement settle calmly on a *pianissimo* C major chord⁸⁷.

⁸⁷ Due to the intensity of previous passages in the first movement, the cellist should expect the C string to be slightly out of tune, and adjust it accordingly with the left hand, if necessary.

Movement II. Adagio (Adagio – Presto -- di nuovo Adagio):

Adagio:

From the outset of the second movement, the cellist must be aware of the proper tempo of the *Adagio*, which Barber has indicated as 40bpm to the quarter note. Likewise, at measure 48, *di nuovo* (again) *Adagio* has been written, meaning the two *Adagio* tempi should be consistent with one another.

Although both of the *Adagio* sections share remarkable similarities, such as contour and rhythm, a comparison of the opening three bars of the first and second *Adagios* reveals a basic contrast in motion.^{fig. 14} The opening measures in E₁ outline a stepwise descent of a third (B₁- A₁- G) whereas measures 48-50, in the key of B₁, utilize an ascending third (B₁- C- D). Rhythmically notable in the third measure, Barber uses the time signature 6/4, giving the feeling of settling on the D for an additional two beats. However, the line continues an ascent in the following measure as the meter returns to 4/4, and the lower D leads up to a D₂ in m. 6.^{fig. 5}

Figure 14

Contrasting direction of 2 Adagios:

Mov. II 1
Adagio ♩ = 40
mp espr.
stepwise descent of a third
lift off after vib.
III

48
di nuovo Adagio
p — *mf*
molto espress.
poco rit. *mp a tempo*
use bow
II III

The opening Adagio presents a peaceful contrast to the intensity of the first movement and the playfulness of the following *Presto* section. A broader vibrato will suit the cello part, as the piano part consists of a chorale-like accompaniment. However, a liberal use of audible shifts or *glissandi* should be avoided, allowing for simplicity and clarity of pitch. Wherein there are no changes in tempo until m. 9, any use of *rubato* or *tenuto* should be clearly led by the cellist, being attentive to maintain forward momentum.

The second and third measures should be played on the G string for a mellow sonority. This technique will enable the final D of m. 3, held with vibrato, to contrast with the brightness of the open D string beginning the fourth measure. The harmonic G of m. 3 should only sound after its initial execution with vibrato, which compliments the ascending melodic line. Finishing this G on a harmonic also allows the cellist to prepare the left hand for the following E₁, without an

audible shift. The *mezzo-forte* in m. 6 marks the height of this section, and therefore, the crescendo connecting m. 8-9 should not exceed the loudness or intensity of the previous *mezzo-forte*. This E₂, along with the remaining measures should also be played on the G string. The final measure of the *Adagio* (m. 10) is a simple whole note. However, the cellist should match the piano's articulation by reserving the *pianissimo* until the final two beats of the measure.

***Presto*⁸⁸:**

Although the *Presto* section may be the most technically challenging part of the sonata, it remains harmonically simple and the requirements for its successful performance are fairly straightforward. Mainly, the players have to be both relaxed and in perfect synchronization. The passages must be musical and seemingly free from any restraint that may result from too much head-counting. Keeping a steady tempo and accurate left hand are essentially all that are needed to achieve a balanced ensemble. The cellist's bow should start all sections on the string, and especially during the triplet passage from m. 28, the bow should remain straight at a 90-degree angle to avoid scratchiness.

Barber takes advantage of the driving rhythm to incorporate a nine-measure *crescendo (poco a poco)* (m. 30-38). However, there should not be any

⁸⁸ Erroneously, the beginning of the *presto* is marked measure "10". The *Presto* starts at true measure "11." Regardless, the printed measure numbers should be used.

increase in tempo until reaching the end of m. 38. Accordingly, the cellist must control the amount of bow being expended through the *crescendo* (m. 38-40), for there is a *fortissimo* 4-note-chord arrival point at m. 41 which must be played with the low B₁ and F sounding together first, and the upper D and B₁ arriving strictly on the downbeat. After reaching the climax (m. 41), the pianist sets the *a tempo* (*Presto* 160 bpm), which must be maintained through m. 45. The *Presto* theme which was introduced by the cello in m. 10-11 is reiterated in the piano part (m. 42-43). The cello expresses a brief phrase at m. 43, which is also a melodic return of the material from m. 11.

Melodically, Barber utilizes repetitions in order to create diversity and build intensity. In passages like m. 35-41,^{REF: fig.3} the performer must take the initiative to avoid sounding repetitive, as it will easily bore the listener and stagnate the forward momentum Barber intended. Instead, one should first identify where repetitions occur, and decide how to perform them in a musically interesting way. The cellist should expand on their own creative use of tone, vibrato and bow speed for unique coloration. Therefore, repetition gives the performer an opportunity to create contrasting parts within the contour of an extended phrase.^{REF: fig.9}

During the final four measures of the *Presto*, the piano's left hand has a series of single B₁ eighth notes in decreasing frequency, indicating a written-out *allargando*. The last B₁, now joined by the cello, occurs in m. 48, and begins the *di*

nuovo Adagio. The cellist should rest and prepare the bow on the string immediately after the final *pizzicato* (m. 45) in order to allow the body and mind to become settled in the character of *Adagio* once more.

Di nuovo Adagio:

In contrast to the first, at the second *Adagio*, Barber has indicated *molto espressivo* and *crescendo* within the very first measure (m. 48).^{fig. 15} Also, this *Adagio* section is noticeably seven measures longer than the first. This is because Barber takes more time to express the first *Adagio*'s opening motive (m. 1-3) with a slight rhythmic variation which allows the climax, an octave-higher B₂, to occur *fortissimo* on the downbeat (m. 53-55).^{fig. 15} Immediately following, we will again find the opening motive, this time played out in expansion over the next six measures. Barber uses a slightly altered repetition in m. 55, as the last two *tenuto* eighth notes are not part of the original motive, thus briefly breaking the descending line.^{fig. 15}

Figure 15

recap. of Adagio main theme

53 *f* *ff* (continued at bottom line)

Mov. II Adagio

1 Sustained E^b allows climax to occur on downbeat

55 *ff* (courtesy B flat)

variant expansion of main theme

2 1 V

Detailed description: This figure shows three staves of music in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats. The first staff (measures 53-55) is a recapitulation of the Adagio main theme, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and reaching fortissimo (*ff*) by measure 55. A note in measure 54 is marked as 'Sustained E^b allows climax to occur on downbeat'. The second staff (measures 56-58) is a 'variant expansion of main theme', starting with fortissimo (*ff*) and marked '(courtesy B flat)'. It features a 'variant' in measure 56 and continues with a melodic line that includes fingerings (2, 1) and accents (V) in measures 57 and 58.

Maintaining proper energy and direction during the *diminuendo* and through the *ritardando* is essential, and thus it is important to avoid a *diminuendo* until reaching the end of measure 60.^{fig. 16} The cellist is responsible for initiating the *ritardando* at m. 62, and should clearly guide the pianist through to the final two-measure chord. Once more, the listener expects the ending of the *Adagio* to finally rest into the tonal center of E_b, which it does in the final measure, resolving via *appoggiatura* in the piano.

Figure 16

Mov. II 58

maintain energy till the end

(II 1 4 3 2 1 4 2)

S'ill forte, no rit.

dim. poco a poco

celist controls the rit.

rit.

p

dim. poco a poco

p

Detailed description: This figure shows a piano score for measures 58-60. The top staff is the cello part, and the bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The cello part starts at measure 58 with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes a fingering sequence (1 4 3 2 1 4 2) and an accent (V). A note above the staff says 'maintain energy till the end'. The piano accompaniment features a *dim. poco a poco* dynamic marking. A box highlights measures 59-60, with the instruction 'celist controls the rit.' and 'rit.' (ritardando) written above. The piano part ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature is two flats.

Movement III. Allegro Appassionato:

The opening theme is played twice, first with the melody in the right hand of the piano. The piano's thundering entrance must connect with the cellist's response in F \sharp minor which appears twelve measures later. *fig.17* The cellist must act as if they were playing the pianist's part, so that when the second entrance occurs, there is no break in energy. Barber uses hemiolas in the melody line, and to avoid segmenting the melody, it should be played *in 2*. This theme is composed of a climbing single-measure motive (m. 15-17), repeated a second time in shortened rhythm (m. 19-20) to allow each ascending step to fall on the beat and sub-beats, increasing tension leading to the upper F \sharp (m. 21). For the cellist, these half notes (m. 19-20) should be executed with a full bow in alternating directions.

fig. 17

Figure 17

Allegro appassionato M.M. ♩ = 80

connect with piano "in 2"

12

First occurrence

Second occurrence

F# octave span

ff

allargando

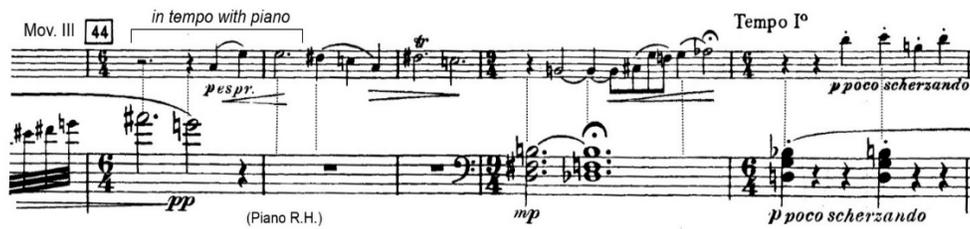
The *fortissimo* preceding m. 12 should be taken conservatively, as the cellist still has much more time to build a *crescendo*.^{fig. 17} A slight decrescendo at the C_♯ of m. 19 should prepare the stage for the *crescendo* leading to m. 22.

During the *allargando*, the cello part must not diminish or come to a rest, because the energy needs to be transferred immediately and fully back to the pianist, who enters with the second theme in *forte, a tempo* (m. 22-23).

When the cello reemerges in m. 23, we can see more of Barber's use of the written out *accelerando* in the piano part (mm. 24, 31)^{REF: fig. 6.B} which intensifies over the next seven measures arriving at another *fortissimo*. Here, we can see a reiteration of the piano's motive from m. 22-23. Again, the cellist must again avoid the inclination to slow or release energy until the pianist has introduced the cadenza-like passage at the *Tempo primo* (m. 36).

This tranquil interlude played by the piano (m. 36-44), which occurs again in the recapitulation, needs to be joined expressively by the cello at m. 44.^{fig. 18} Therefore, the cellist should be conscious of the rhythm in the piano part, taking up the final two beats of the second half of the measure without delay.

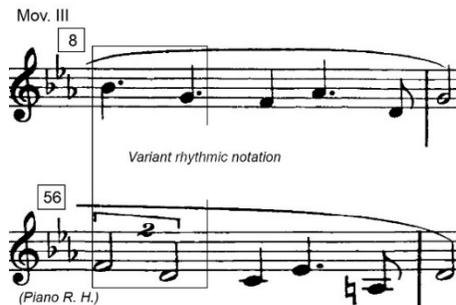
Figure 18



The *poco scherzando* should not be grotesque, but rather playful, especially if the downbeats are kept light and clean as written, likewise complimented by the piano. Also, starting the *scherzo* section on the D-string will allow the tone color to remain consistent. This passage (m. 48-53), mimicking the opening theme, appears in a melodically disjunctive rhythm. These six measures should compose a continuous descending phrase. Accordingly, if the cellist's left hand is quick and accurate, the passage will avoid sounding labored.

Now the piano takes the opening theme alone, in a harmonically simplified way, this time in *piano* (m. 54-61), and briefly repeated by the cello in a motivic segment (m. 61-64). It is interesting to notice that Barber used a different way of notating the rhythm in m. 56 of the piano part⁸⁹.

Figure 19



⁸⁹ A similar occurrence appears in m. 77 of the piano part.

At m. 65, the cello has a six-measure swell in a lone voice which must not lag, as Barber wrote *senza rallentare*, because it is leading forward to the *poco animando* as an extension of the scherzo's development. The cellist has ascending arpeggios pitted against the piano's reiteration of the earlier introduced second theme (m. 22-23). The piano part in m. 76-78 is echoed in the cello part for two measures, bringing us into a motivic section surrounding E (m. 81-82). A very similar conversation between the piano and cello is repeated from m. 83-89, this time *forte, deciso* (boldly) and developed into a dramatic ascending climax with a tonal center of F \sharp minor. ^{REF: fig.7} The cellist's use of the bow must be passionately unrestrained at this point (m. 95-98), while the piano reiterates the original theme in *fortissimo* and in the *Tempo primo*. Furthermore, the hemiola of the cello part to the piano's right hand in m. 96 must be aligned by paying attention to the eighth notes in the piano's left hand.

Fortunately, the cello is allowed to briefly rest during the following six measures before bursting in with the fiery recapitulation at m. 105, referring back to the tonal center of C minor which occurred at the beginning of the third movement. Instead of resolving downward, however (as in the opening theme), the line jumps to a high E \flat following the *allargando molto* (m. 114-115) ^{fig. 20} and tumbles down two and a half octaves in a rhythm syncopated against the piano in a written-out *accelerando*.

Figure 20

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: piano (top staff) and cello (bottom staff). The piano part begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a quarter note and a half note. The tempo is marked 'Meno mosso' with a metronome marking of 60. The dynamics are 'ff' and 'ritenuto'. The cello part begins with a quarter note, followed by a half note, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The tempo is marked 'allargando molto', and the dynamics are 'ff'. The cello part includes a 'written-out' section marked 'accelerando' and a final section marked 'Cello sets the a tempo' with a 'sfz' dynamic. The score includes various performance instructions such as 'in sync. with piano' and 'Cello sets the a tempo'.

The last triplet of this measure (m. 116) allows the cellist and pianist to synchronize for the following *sforzato* downbeat (m. 117).^{fig. 20} At the same time, the leap outlining an octave B₁ requires that the cello set the *a tempo*. This passage (m. 117-140) is a reiteration of the expositional second theme (m. 25-47). However, there is a brief *pianissimo* motivic passage (m. 141-149)^{fig. 4} which melodically alludes to the previous *poco scherzando* section (m. 48-53). This passage outlines a dynamic arc wherein the *crescendo* to *mezzo forte* (m. 145) is enhanced by a *poco stringendo*, and the *decrescendo* gradually returns to the original tempo (*tornado al tempo*).

Finally, the piano and the cello are of equal resolution in character and theme, the cello echoing the piano, who has brought back the second theme. We can hear the repetition twice, the first time *forte risoluto*, and the second time *fortissimo energico* (m. 150-157). Once more, we can see how Samuel Barber uses repeated phrases to create new surprises and turns in rhythm and harmony. The first four-measure phrase in the cello part (m. 151-153) is repeated at m. 155, though this time, the G (m. 157) is prolonged with an *allargando molto*, through which the piano part leads rhythmically. The cello's arrival at a triumphant high B₁

fortissimo espressivo following a brief pause⁹⁰ empowers the final lines of the Sonata. Finally, there is settling of harmonic resolution in C minor, though for a moment flashing to C major (m. 162). Additionally, we observe a rhythmic and melodic homophony in the final passage. The Cello Sonata ends with an emphatic series of *sforzandi* from both parts (m. 162-168), with the following rests accentuated for dramatic effect. Likewise, the final chord of the piece is followed by silence. It is during these few seconds when the grand and passionate nature of Barber's Cello Sonata can resound in the mind of the listener and reward the efforts of its performers.

⁹⁰ In m. 157, the cellist should not only observe the quarter rest, but also should coordinate with the pianist to allow a "breath" to precede the high B.

IV. Samuel Barber's Legacy

By 1932, having spent almost nine years at Curtis, Barber believed that he had reached the limits of what he could learn from structured academia, and what he could stand in that type of social and musical environment.⁹¹ It was the point in his life where he had to make a conscious decision to be a career composer, and embrace the uncertainty which followed. Fortunately for Barber, there would be much success ahead.

The Sonata marks a period of transitions from the sincere yet inexperienced backdrop of Barber's early years into his more confident, creative years during which came several well-known compositions. Barber's later works, his operas and songs, remained romantic, regardless of the apparent traits of modernism, such as the disjunctive line of the opening melody in his Cello Concerto (1945). Likewise, even though the youthful optimism of Barber's life at the time can be viewed in the Cello Sonata, it contains elements of his own personal style that would be evident in future works, including *Music for a Scene from Shelley*, op. 7 (1933), the String Quartet, op. 11 (1936) and its adaptation, *Adagio for Strings* (1938), the Violin Concerto (1939), and even in much later works such as his Piano Sonata (1949) and his last work, the *Canzonetta* for Oboe,

⁹¹ In correspondence with Jeanne Behrend, Barber warns, "Stay away from the Curtis! They are non-musicians. ...I am never in Philadelphia. Thank God!" Heyman, p. 81n. *Letter to Behrend*, Oct. 3, 1933.

completed posthumously. By briefly glancing at the general trends of Barber's other works, we can get an idea of how the Cello Sonata reflects a turning point in the compositional style of Barber's life works.

Barber wrote several successful instrumental pieces in the years following the Cello Sonata's premier, *Music for a Scene from Shelley*, Op. 7 (1933), *Symphony in One Movement*, Op. 9 (1936),⁹² *Essay for Orchestra*, Op. 12 (1937) and the String Quartet, Op. 11 (1936). These works sufficiently demonstrate the continual manifestation of Barber's neo-romantic style. Most notably is the second movement of the quartet, *Adagio*, which Barber orchestrated for Toscanini as *Adagio for Strings* (1938). The similarities between the *Adagio*, the *Essay* and the second movement of the Cello Sonata are striking. Additionally, the somewhat neglected outer movements of Barber's string quartet reflect the energetic ascending line of the Cello Sonata's opening in much the same way.

The fact that Barber is most known for his romantic melodies, and that these melodies are present in almost every work, is not sufficient grounds for stating that the Cello Sonata was responsible for the prevalence of lyricism in Barber's future works. However, it is worthy to note that the Cello Sonata is representative of Barber's already developed compositional style, and that his

⁹² This was Barber's first Symphony, which he dedicated to Menotti.

creative use of harmony, solid grasp of counterpoint and inherent musical talent for the melodic line had already been established by age twenty-two.

Barber's Later Life

Throughout his life, Barber relied on traveling and literature for his inspiration. His happiness relied on his independence, especially from the cities in the summertime.⁹³ The support and companionship he drew from Menotti as well as his close network of friends and professional relationships endured until his death from cancer on January 23, 1981. Barber was awarded two Pulitzer Prizes for *Vanessa* and the Piano Concerto. He became such an influential composer that he was commissioned for an opera to open the New York Metropolitan Opera House in 1966⁹⁴. During the 1950's Barber served as president of UNESCO's International Music Commission (IMC) and joined ASCAP.

Barber did much to further the composition of new music and increase the rights and recognition of younger composers who found themselves in situations similar to his own. By his death, Barber had already received thirteen prestigious awards, including two for his Cello Sonata. He had made his name a lasting one in American music.

⁹³ Broder, p. 23. Barber writes to his family, "Give me a place to live in the country and a peaceful room with a piano in which to work, and I ask for nothing more."

⁹⁴ *Antony and Cleopatra*, 1966. Franco Zeffereilli wrote the libretto based on the Shakespeare text. The premier was a disaster. However, a later edition edited with Menotti won Barber a Grammy Award.

Recordings

Samuel Barber remains one of the few composers to ever have nearly all of his works recorded.⁹⁵ Unfortunately, there were no recordings made of any of the early performances of the Cello Sonata given by Cole, Silva or Salmond. The first recording of the Cello Sonata was made in 1947 by Russian cellist Raya Garbousova⁹⁶ with Erich Itor Kahn. A further well-known recording of Barber's Sonata made by Piatigorsky and Berkowitz in the same year further "established it as an integral part of the cello repertoire."⁹⁷

Since the first recordings, LPs featuring the Cello Sonata were sparse. In 1951, it was recorded by Ricci and Mittman, and two years later, a performance by Rose and Andrews was recorded⁹⁸. For 60 years following its composition, the Sonata had only appeared in six recordings. However, Barber's Cello Sonata has continually gained awareness, and in the past twenty years, at least twenty-eight professional recordings have been made of the Cello Sonata, each featuring different musicians⁹⁹.

⁹⁵ Donal Henahan (January 24, 1981).

⁹⁶ Gorbousova premiered and recorded Barber's Cello Concerto in 1945.

⁹⁷ Piatigorsky's recording was not released until 1954.

⁹⁸ This recording was not released until 2007.

⁹⁹ See Appendix: Timeline, Discography for details of recordings.

V. Concluding Remarks

Barber's Cello Sonata has become one of the most frequently performed chamber works by an American composer¹⁰⁰. Mainly due to its beauty, playability and practical display of romanticism within modern music, the Sonata has become a favorite among American music school graduate recital programs. The fact that it was composed in Barber's romantic style is not a shortcoming, but actually a strength of the Sonata. Though Barber used traditional form, the composer's own sincerity and desire to work outside of the confines of tradition become so apparent when observing the Cello Sonata in detail.

At the time of the Sonata's composition, Barber had struggled with his environment, seeking originality and freedom in his life and in his music. He was surrounded by contemporary composers who pushed avant-gardism as the only way to create progress in new music. However, Barber believed that music was about expression, sincerity and creativity, and that these qualities of music must not be sacrificed in order to fulfill the expectations of a certain group.

Therefore, in viewing the Cello Sonata in historical and musical context as we have, it becomes clear that it is not only a representative work by Samuel Barber, but that it is a musically good one. The Cello Sonata achieves all of what Barber meant to do with his music, to communicate artistically and spiritually through

¹⁰⁰ Eric Bromberger, Program Notes, AEW Hamelin and Weilerstein.

emotions in a comprehensible way. Barber's ideal of music in general was that it is to be enjoyed all people. Therefore, in putting forth an accurate analysis and collection of research on the Cello Sonata brings Barber's vision for his music closer to its actuality.

A performer of Barber's Cello Sonata will absolutely benefit from understanding the composer and his work in greater detail. When one considers the Cello Sonata against the background of Barber's younger life, it is undeniable that the music cannot be separated from the man, and to know one is to know both. Likewise, knowing Samuel Barber as a romantic composer is not sufficient to understand his music. To recognize Barber as a romantic American composer is to acknowledge the depth of struggle from which his Cello Sonata was created.

"I say all art is born of sympathy. Do you agree? I hear it constantly in your works."¹⁰¹

- Sydney Homer, before his death in 1950

¹⁰¹ Heyman, p. 310.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Appendix:

Top Left: 6-year-old Barber with his cello. Broder, p. 17 Inset

Top Right: Barber (1924) with Sidney Homer. Heyman, p. 39

Center: Barber (right) and Menotti, Rome, 1936. Broder, p. 33 Inset

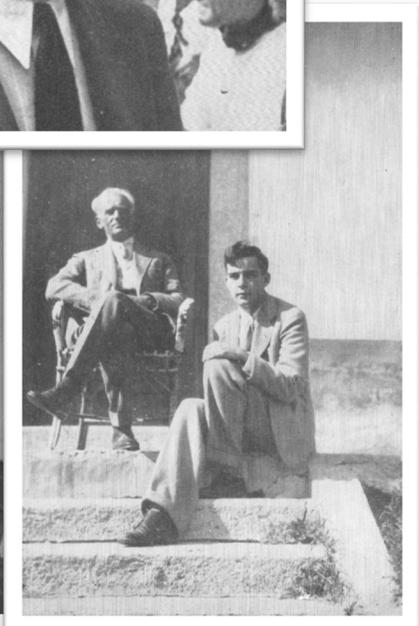
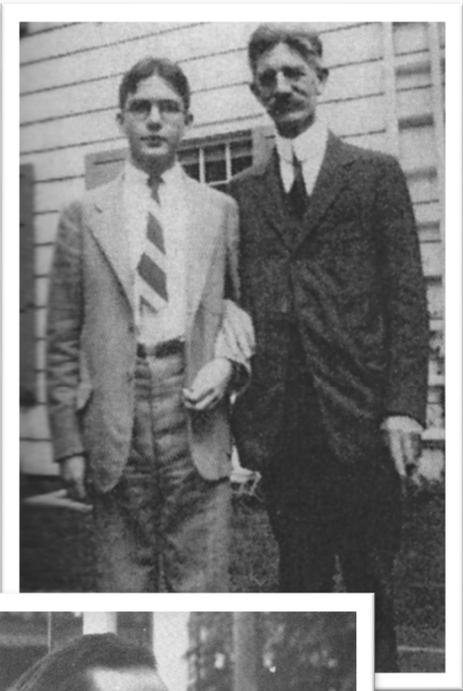
Bottom Right: Barber and Scalero in Italy, 1934. Broder, p. 33 Inset

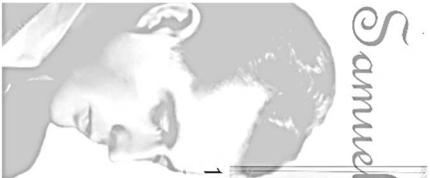
Bottom Left: Barber, Bok, Rodzinski, 1937. *ClevelandClassical.com.*

December 6, 2011.

Timeline image: Samuel Barber ca. mid-1930's. Copyright © Corbis.

Appendix





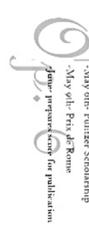
Samuel Barber

1910



1932	- June: composes and moves while on vacation in Italy - Fall: completes and moves with Cole during last months at Curtis - December 9th: Completed
1933	- January: first performed in Philadelphia (Cole-Barber) - March 9th: premier in NY (Cole Barber)
1934	- Fall: Philadelphia (Cole-Barberovitz) - Oct. - Engel (Saxman) agrees to publish - Reported for Prix de Rome
1935	- Feb. 4th: NBC Radio, Phila. (Cole-Barber) - Auditions for Menus Powell - Re-widens score for Prix de Rome - May 6th: Pulitzer Scholarship - June: prepares score for publication
1936	- April 27: Rome (Siva-Barber) - Published by G. Schirmer
1937	- Feb. 4th: "From Hill, NY (Salmund-Barberovitz) - March 9th: Curtis Inst., Phila. (Salmund-Barberovitz) - June 24th: London (Salmund-Barber)

Cello Sonata



요약 (국문초록)

낭만주의 미국인 : 사무엘 바버와 첼로 소나타 6 번

연구와 분석

이 연구의 목적은 바버 첼로 소나타 6 번과 그 창작 배경을 살펴보고, 그가 이른 나이에 작곡가로서 성공할 수 있게 영향을 준 사람들을 소개하는 것이다.

22 살에 쓴 첫 번째 작품이자 그의 유일한 첼로 소나타인 이 곡은, 작곡자 개인의 삶과 전문가로서의 삶 양쪽에서 전환점이 된 곡이기에 중요한 작품이다. 이 작품은 미국 역사상 첫 번째 첼로 소나타인데, 그 후 18 년 동안 다른 첼로 소나타 작품이 나오지 않았다.

당시 미국에서 유행하던 아방가르드 모더니즘에 강하게 반대했기 때문에, 신낭만주의자로 여겨지는 사무엘 바버는 베토벤, 브람스, 드뷔시, 시벨리우스 같은 작곡자에게 영향을 받았고 작품에서 낭만주의, 아름다움, 감정 등이 잘 드러나길 바랐다. 그의 첼로 소나타는 초기 스타일과 원숙한 스타일 양쪽에서 발견되는 요소들을 보여주고 있고, 그의 경력에 있어서 과도기적인 작품으로 보여질 수 있다.

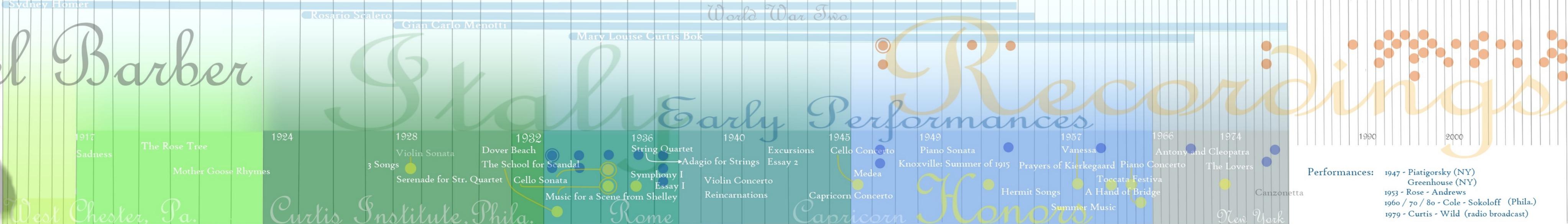
필자는 그의 첼로 소나타에 대한 자세한 분석과 통합적인 구조적 분석, 묘사적인 해석을 제공한다. 또한, 연주에 대한 묘사적 접근이 운지법, 활쓰기, 프레이징, 연주 지시에 대한 해석을 제공한다. 필자는 이러한 측면에서 첼로 소나타를 통해 그가 이야기하는 낭만적 이상이 연주자에게 재소개되어 지기를 바란다. 그렇게 하는 것이 음악가나 학자 양쪽 모두에게 그의 소나타의 음악적, 역사적인 가치에 대한 인식을 증가시키고, 21세기 가장 위대한 미국 작곡가 중 한 사람인 사무엘 바버의 초기 걸작인 첼로 소나타를 강조한다.

특별히 1932-1973년 사이의 첼로 소나타의 중요성에 초점을 맞춘, 바버의 생애가 포함된 연표가 부록에 담겨있다. 이 연표는 주목할만한 작곡, 영향, 영예, 연주자의 이름과 함께 초기 공연과 첼로 소나타 음반 등을 포함하고 있다. 이 연표의 목적은 연구에 대한 시각적인 요약 제공을 위함이다.

주요어: 바버, 사무엘, 첼로, 소나타, 6번, 신낭만주의

학번: 2011-23015

Samuel Barber



- 1947- Garbousova - Kahn
Piatigorsky - Berkowitz (released 1954)
- 1951 - Ricci - Mittman
- 1953 - Rose - Andrews (released 2007)
- 1979 - Solow - Dominguez
Curtis - Wild
- 1989 - Kirchbaum - Vignoles (released 2001)
- 1992 - Rejto - Rowley
Wang - Rosenburger
- 1993 - Hanani - Levin
Honigburg - Brake
- 1994 - Stepanyk - Margalit
- 1995 - Gruber - Tsachor
- 1996 - Epperson - Burnett
Rider - Shapiro
Pleeth, Masterclass DVD (released 2008)
- 1997 - Munroe - Feldman
Diaz - Sanders
- 1998 - Rolston - Blaha
- 1999 - King - Jensen
- 2000- Michel - Bergman
- 2001 - Bengtsson - Kavtaradze
- 2003 - Rose - Wolf
Richey - Richey
- 2004 - Alcantara - Gardenal
Ivanov - White
- 2006 - Gutiérrez - Perez
- 2008 - Blaumane - Katsnelson
Haimovitz - Burleson
- 2011 - Berlin - Vorster
- 2012 - Viersen - Avenhaus
Handy - Markham
- 2013 - Poltéra - Stott
E. Feldman - Finney
McCracken - Greene

Performances:
 1947 - Piatigorsky (NY)
 Greenhouse (NY)
 1953 - Rose - Andrews
 1960 / 70 / 80 - Cole - Sokoloff (Phila.)
 1979 - Curtis - Wild (radio broadcast)

Cello Sonata Op. 6

<p>1932</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -June- composes 1,2nd mov. while on vacation in Italy -Fall- completes 2,3rd mov. with Cole during last months at Curtis - December 9th- Completed 	<p>1933</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -January- first performed in Philadelphia (Cole-Barber) -March 5th- premier in NY (Cole-Barber) 	<p>1934</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fall- Philadelphia (Cole-Berkowitz) - Oct. - Engel (Schirmer) agrees to publish - Rejected for Prix de Rome 	<p>1935</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Feb. 4th- NBC Radio, Phila. (Cole-Barber) - Auditions for Mason, Powell - Re-submits score for Prix de Rome -May 6th- Pulitzer Scholarship -May 9th- Prix de Rome -June- prepares score for publication 	<p>1936</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -April 22- Rome (Silva-Barber) -Published by G. Schirmer 	<p>1937</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Feb. 7th - Town Hall, NY (Salmond-Berkowitz) -March 7th - Curtis Inst., Phila. (Salmond-Berkowitz) - June 21st - London (Salmond-Barber)
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