

Imachinations (for solo bass)

Russell Wimbish

PhD Music
2020



Notes

This piece provides a structural framework for a textural performance on the double bass. Each graphic 'family', or group of graphics with similar visual characteristics, represents a distinct musical texture. The performer moves throughout the score until they have played through each graphic family. It is the performer who decides a) what textures each graphic family represents; b) the techniques that one must apply towards their instrument in order to produce these textures; and c) the order in which to play each family. This piece is not simply an impetus for free improvisation. The performer must think carefully about the sonic world they wish to establish and map musical information to each graphic family prior to performance. Furthermore, the mappings and the order in which the graphics are performed should remain stable across multiple performances.

In the following section, I share my own method of performing this work. I list each graphic family in the sequence in which I perform them and provide a brief description of my mappings. Nonetheless, this overview of my performance method is only intended to demonstrate how I have played the piece. It is my expectation that anyone who wishes to perform *Imaginations* 'correctly' must develop their own interpretational strategies and system of score navigation.



1. Roll the bow back and forth across the A, D and G strings, using natural harmonics and stopped notes to create dissonant and constantly shifting harmonies. As the half circles grow brighter in colour, alternate the rolled bow textures with aggressive, fast playing in a high register. This section can get very frantic, mixing *pizzicato* strumming with the aforementioned techniques.



2. These graphics, performed left to right, correspond to 'thick' textures achieved by bowing a series of double stops in the lower and mid- range registers. Colours indicates pitch register, timbre and bow speed. Play the red circle with a fairly bright timbre, keeping in the middle register (third through fifth positions) and using a somewhat fast bow bordering on *ponticello*. Play the blue circle with a slow *ordinario* bow, keeping the left hand in half through second positions. Size corresponds to temporal duration, so the performance of the red circle should be much longer than that of the blue.



3. These shapes indicate short, separated sounds. The larger buta shapes are longer in duration and have a clearly discernible pitch. The smaller orange and green shapes are much shorter in duration - almost to the point in which

they are non-pitched. The number of graphics does not correspond to the number of notes one plays. Rather, the graphics indicate two alternating textures within this one section.



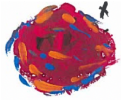
4. This graphic indicates rapid ascending and descending *glissandi* played *ponticello* and with a full bow. In the left hand, alternate finger pressure to produce rapidly fluctuating harmonics and overtones.



5. Play a quick succession of four separate techniques. The top orange line indicates a sustained trill. For the second line, play harmonics past the edge of the fingerboard whilst using a *tremolo* bow. The bottom red line indicates a quick succession of triple stops. The orange and green dots are interpreted in the same manner as no. 3.



6. Play short, non-pitched percussive sounds using a *ricochet* bow stroke whilst stopping the notes with the left hand. Alternate this texture with *pizzicato* ghosted notes.



7. Similar to no. 2. Play a series of double stops with a fast bow, *ordinario* or *ponticello*, in any position below thumb position. The blue hues indicate short melodic fragments that are interspersed with the textual playing.



8. These notes indicate melody. Melodies should be brief and, generally, atonal or tonally ambiguous. The blue line indicates that one should play these short melodies in the lower to middle registers with an *ordinario* bow.



9. Similar to nos. 2 and 7. The dark hues indicate to play a series of double stops in the low register of the bass; the red hues indicate brief excursions into higher registers. The green and yellow line is mapped as a sustained tone with heavy vibrato. This is played after the circle.



10. A melodic scramble – achieved by *glissandi*, played *arco* and *pizzicato*, that connect tones and brief melodic phrases. As this circle is not fully saturated with colour, the timbre is lighter and more reminiscent of a traditional ‘classical’ tone. Here, the melodic material may reference major or minor tonalities.