

JUDITH SHATIN

Penelope's Song

Amplified Violin & Electronics



Program Note

Penelope's Song is a tribute to Penelope, Queen of Ithaca and wife of Odysseus. It was inspired by Homer's *Odyssey*, which tells of the travails of Odysseus, with ten years at war in Troy, and, due to the sea-god Poseidon's wrath, another ten. Scant attention is paid to Penelope, left waiting all this time with greedy suitors attempting to woo her to become king. To stave them off she said she would take no suitor until she finished weaving a shroud for her husband's father, Laertes. But she unraveled at night what she wove by day and made no progress. *Penelope's Song* traces the weaving, Penelope's ruminations and the nightly unraveling, culminating in explosive ripping.

I created the electronics from recordings of Charlottesville weaver Jan Russell working on her wooden looms. I processed them and wove a sonic fabric with the acoustic and digital elements as warp and weft. The original was scored for amplified viola and electronics. This one, for amplified violin and electronics, was toured and recorded by Hasse Borup on the album *Tower of the Eight Winds* on the Innova label.

Artist Kathy Aoki and animator Marco Marquez created a compelling companion video available to accompany performance if desired. —JS

Performance Notes

For electronic soundtrack and video, please contact asst@judithshatin.com.

The violin should be lightly amplified and mixed with the electronics in order for both to inhabit the same sonic atmosphere. If the venue is small enough, this may not be required, though it is always desirable. A monitor may be necessary in addition to stereo speakers depending on the venue.

The electronics were notated to give guideposts, rather than giving exact detail. While the rhythmic sections of the electronics and instrumental part synchronize, there is more flexibility in the middle section.

World Premiere Timothy Summers Musikhuset Lille Sal Aarhus, Denmark 3/28/06

Duration: 9:02

Penelope's Song

Judith Shatin

Strong ♩ = 120

Violin

Electronics

Weaving sounds

Denser weaving sounds

pattern continues

Cue 1

:08.5

:20

Thicker Texture

pattern continues

28.5

mf

f

mp

:34

mf

pizz

arco

pattern continues

:41

Dancing

mp

55.5

mf

mp

f

mp

p

f

1:05

mp

mf

f

ff

f

Spinning rattle added

The musical score is written for Violin and Electronics. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Strong' and a quarter note equal to 120 beats per minute. The score is divided into several systems, each with time markers in minutes and seconds. The first system (0:00 to 0:08.5) features 'Weaving sounds' in the electronics and a violin line starting at 0:08.5 with 'Denser weaving sounds'. The second system (0:08.5 to 0:20) includes a 'Cue 1' and 'Thicker Texture' in the electronics. The third system (0:20 to 0:34) shows dynamics of *mf*, *f*, and *mp*. The fourth system (0:34 to 0:41) includes 'pizz' and 'arco' markings. The fifth system (0:41 to 0:55.5) is marked 'Dancing' and features dynamics of *mp*, *f*, *mp*, *p*, and *f*. The sixth system (0:55.5 to 1:05) includes 'Spinning rattle added' and dynamics of *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*, and *f*.

1:14

ff *f*

1:31.5

Gradually change to sul pont

mp *p*

Light, spinning sound pattern continues

mp *p*

cresc. *f* sul pont

cresc. *f*

ord 1:48 *Spiccato* *mp* pattern continues

ord *p* *mp* pattern continues

ord *ord* 2:00 *f*

ord *ord* *f*

2:04 *mf* *f* *ff* sul pont. pattern continues

mf *f* *ff* sul pont. pattern continues

ord. *f* *ff* *ord* *f*

ord. *f* *ff* *ord* *f*

2:14

ff -

Pattern continues to chords

Weaving sounds gradually fade; Pitches remain

f

f

2:37

Wait for 3 chords Start after 4th

Defiant

p

f

Stoic

Pattern continues, Eighth notes gradually fade.

rit.

2:52

p

3:02

In Tempo

mf

f

mf

p

Pattern continues

mf

f

mp

mf

mp

p

mp

Rubato - a piacere to end of section

Gradually turns to quiet spinning sounds

mf

mp

pp

mp

p

f

mp

Cue 2

Pitched Noise

Cue 1 ends at 3:56.

Freely Dreaming (Rhythm Approximate)

sul pont

ord **Wistful** 4:13 **4:36** *Distant*

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

Wind Sounds Low Hum

5:10

mf *pp* *mp*

Gong-like Sounds

Repeat ad lib. Accel, then rit.

1/4 +/-

8vb

overvibrate little finger pressure

5:27

p *pp* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Gong-like Sounds Humming Sounds

Repeat a piacere accel to ponttīt to ord

Yearning 5:41

8vb

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

Sul D

Repeat a piacere, changing register ad lib. Slightly louder each rep.

8va

Singing Recitative Style

Cue 2 ends at 6:50

Cue 3

Bobbin Rattle

8vb

7:08

f *mf* *p* *mf*

In Tempo Increasingly dramatic

7:20

8vb

Spirited

7:26

7:32

f

ratchet sound

Lightly

7:40

mf

7:48

mp

pattern continues

7:53

7:58

f

mp

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

Determined

8:15

ff

sul pont

8:32

ord

f

8:38

To sul pont

sul pont

ord

sul pont

8:48

To sul pont

sul pont

ord

*Wild
sul pont*

9:02

ord *To sul pont*

cresc. possibile al fine