

JUDITH SHATIN

# Penelope's Song

Amplified Cello & 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, so she 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. Originally scored for amplified viola, this version was commissioned by flutist Lindsey Goodman, who has recorded it on her album *Reach Through the Sky*. I have also composed versions for clarinet, flute, soprano saxophone, violin and cello.

Artist Kathy Aoki and animator Marco Marquez created a compelling companion video available to accompany performance of *Penelope's Song* if desired. —JS

## Performance Notes

For electronic soundtrack and video, please contact [ast@judithshatin.com](mailto:ast@judithshatin.com).

The flute 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 tightly, there is more flexibility in the middle section.

World Premiere Flutist Lindsey Goodman Pastor Recital Hall Ashland University Ashland, Ohio
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Duration: 9:02

# Penelope's Song

Judith Shatin

**Strong** ♩ = 120

8 :08.5

Flute (2 weaving cycles)

Electronics

Weaving sounds

Denser weaving sounds

pattern continues

Fl.

:20

Thicker texture

Fl.

*Fltz.* :28.5

*ord.*

*mf* *f* *mp*

:34

Fl.

*mf* *mp*

Dancing :43

Fl.

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

:57

Fl.

*mp* *mf* *f* *ff* *f*

Spinning rattle added

1:07

Fl. *ord.* **1:16** *Fltz.* *ff* *ord.* *Fltz.* *f* *ord.*

Fl. **1:32** *mp* *mf* **Light, spinning sound**

Fl. *f*

Fl. **1:48** *f* *p* *mp*

Fl. *cresc.* *f* **2:00**

Fl. *mf* *f* *ff* *f* *ord.* *Fltz.*

Fl. *ff* *f* *ord.* *Fltz.*

2:14

Fl. *ff*

Pattern continues to chords

Weaving sounds fade  
Pitched sounds remain

Fl. *f*

Fl. *mp*

2:37

Wait for 3 chords  
Start after the 4th

*Defiant*

*Stoic*

Pattern continues  
8th notes gradually fade

2:52

3:02

*rit.*

*p*

*In Tempo*

*p* *f* *mf* *p* *mf*

*Rubato - a piacere to end of section*

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

Gradually turns to quiet spinning sounds

**Freely Dreaming** (Rhythm approximate)

Fl. *mp* *pp* **Cue 2** *p* < *mp* *p* *f* > *mp* *p*

Cue 1 ends at 3:56. Pitched Noise

**Wistful**

4:15

Fl. *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *p*

Wind Sounds low Hum

**Distant**

t. tr.

Fltz.

5:40

Fl. *mp* *mf* *pp*

Gong-like sounds

Fl. *mp* < > *p* *pp*

Repeat ad lib accel., then rit. 1/4 +/-

Repeat accel. rit. to ord.

(silence) Gong-like sounds

**Yearning**

5:41

Fl. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Humming Sounds

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

Fl. *p* *p* *f* *mp*

Cue 2 ends at 6:50 Cue 3 Bobbin Rattle

**Singing Recitative Style**

Fl. *mf*

7:08 *in Tempo* **Increasingly Dramatic** 7:20

Fl. *p*

8<sup>vb</sup>-----

7:26

Fl. *mf*

8<sup>vb</sup>-----

**Spirited**

7:32

Fl. *f*

ratchet sound

**Lightly**

7:40 7:48

Fl. *mf* *mp* <

7:58

Fl. *f* *mp*

Fl. *mp* *f*

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

**Determined**

8:16

Fl. *f*

Fl. *ff*

*Fltz.*

ord. 8:32

Fl. *f* *mf*

8:38

Fl. *f*

8:48

Fl.

*Fltz.* *ord.*

Fl. *ff*

9:02

Fl. *f* *cresc.* *fff*