

## For two lovers and a double bass

*(for Alun and Erica Hart)*

Position yourselves around one double bass; find positions in which you can both press the fingerboard and pluck/bow the strings. Explore different positions throughout the performance. Be close to each other, then distant, then close again, etc. Don't avoid touching each other's bodies, which you know so well. Support each other's weight if you need to. Come back to making eye contact with each other throughout the piece.

Four stages of varying durations, numbered 1 to 4. Memorise these stages, so you don't have the need for this score. How you progress from one stage to the next is part of the challenge of the piece, and it requires constant mutual agreement [give and take, like sex]. This progress, or flow, is established in performance, through action, and communicated to each other with your whole embodied presence – rather than decided verbally in advance – like a seduction game.

1) Pizzicato. Very slowly. Together, play very long notes; wait for the sound of the previous note to completely die out, holding the pitch (i.e. no glissando), but changing pitch at every sound. You may play a string that the other one is pressing (a good game to play); you may press a string the other one is pressing (stealing the note away). Do this for as long as you want. Look for different positions around the instrument and around each other, taking care not to stop the resonance of each note.

2) Carry on as before but slowly introduce some slowly evolving glissandos (up and/or down). Your hands may meet on the fingerboard, on the bridge, on the body of the instrument, on the body of each other's body. At points, you can try to play each other's notes.

3) In a disciplined and controlled way, introduce increased activity levels and more movement (shorter notes, some diads, triads, swift grace notes). Keep slowness and stillness. Keep moving around the instrument taking turns to support each other and the instrument.

4) After an appropriate amount of time (again, follow your spontaneous and combined judgment) reduce activity again, slow down the glissandos, return progressively to long held single notes.

Keep moving, as before. If you feel you have supported the weight of the instrument for a while, deliberately abandon it so the other has to catch it, save it.

While you perform 1-4 keep changing your positions in relation to the instrument and in relation to each other. Both should be responsible for holding the weight and balance of the instrument and of each other.

Though you are welcome to vocalise during the performance, don't talk to each other, but each can talk to the audience. You can make vocal noises at each other but no words.

You don't have to love each other to perform this piece but you must have some level of physical intimacy, or the desire.

### **Variation**

Players improvise their own trajectory, ignoring the points above but keeping the physical relationship to each other and to their instrument.