

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Sonata
in A Minor

"Per Arpeggione"
(1824)

arranged for Viola and piano

Full Score

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Franz Schubert

Sonata in A Minor “Per Arpeggione”

The “Guitarre d’amour” was invented in 1821 by Johann Georg Stauffer (1778-1853). About the size of a ‘cello, this instrument had a fretted fingerboard and six strings, tuned the same as the guitar (E A D G B E). It later became known as the “Arpeggione,” because of its facility with guitar-like arpeggiations.

Due to a number of technical problems, the Arpeggione never became popular, and suffered a rapid obsolescence. Its guitar-shaped body made it awkward to hold, and it was difficult to play loudly on a single string because of the low curvature imposed by its many strings. In fact, the sonata presented here is probably the only significant work written specifically for this unusual instrument.

Schubert wrote this piece in 1824, and the care taken to suit the music to the instrument is quite apparent. It can be noted that rarely are dynamics stronger than “p” indicated, especially in fast passages. He made good use of the instrument’s arpeggiating abilities, and wrote the music to show off the arpeggione’s extensive range.

The fact that the music has outlived the instrument by some two centuries is a tribute to Schubert’s genius for memorable melodies. It is sometimes used as a showpiece by exceptional ‘cello players, as only the most capable virtuosi can reach the impossibly high places. Even on viola the higher ranges are difficult, and the lower registers (below open C) are of course impossible.

Nonetheless, the piece lends itself ideally to the tonality of the viola. In this arrangement, I have relied heavily on the assistance of Jean-Pierre Coulon. The low ranges had to be re-octavised to fall within the range of the viola. For the high parts, I have opted to re-octavise a few passages to make the piece more accessible to amateur and semi-professional players. The octave on the A string was taken as the practical limit.

Regarding bowings - Schubert’s bowings for the arpeggione are of course of limited use, but do give an idea of the phrasing. Since I am not myself a violist, I have deferred to the bowings offered in the edition by Paul Doktor. Still, the player is encouraged to take these with a grain of salt, and to work out for him- or herself bowings and phrasing that are appropriate to one’s individual style and capacities. Similarly, the dynamics indications are best taken as suggested starting points. As implied earlier, had the piece been written for other bowed instruments, it would have probably had a lot more mf, f, and ff markings.

Tempo indications in the original are sketchy, and in several places ambiguous. The markings shown (and reflected in the demo midi file) are my own interpretation, largely influenced by a wonderful midi created by John Cowles.

A note on the passage starting at bar 330, and similar passages later in the piece. The recommended way to play this is to double-stop the C and G strings, playing the A on the G-string as a “drone.” This gives an interesting “fiddle” effect and is easier than negotiating the shifts if the section is played on adjacent strings in 3rd position.

Special thanks to Werner Icking of GMD for his encouragement, and to Jean-Pierre Coulon for his welcome collaboration.

Fred Nachbaur, January 1999

Sonata "Per Arpeggione" in A Minor

Franz Schubert (1824)

Allegro moderato

The musical score consists of four systems of music. System 1 (measures 1-5) features the Viola (Bass clef, 4/4 time, B-flat key signature) and the Piano right (G clef, 4/4 time, A major). The piano part includes dynamics (p, mf, cresc., decresc.) and performance instructions (Adagio legato, accel. poco a poco). System 2 (measures 6-10) continues with the same instrumentation and dynamics, including a dynamic marking of (p) in measure 9. System 3 (measures 11-15) shows the piano left hand taking a prominent role, with the piano right providing harmonic support. System 4 (measures 16-20) returns to the piano right and left hands, with dynamic markings including decresc., pp, cresc., fp, and decresc.

21

cresc.

pp

cresc.

pp

25

cresc.

mf

decresc.

cresc.

(*mf*)

mf

29

pp

f

A

tr

tr

pp

A

f

fz

v

34

p

fz

p

cresc.

decresc.

38

decresc.

pp

ritard.

3

(a tempo)

pp

41

44

cresc.

p

cresc.

47

p

cresc.

f

tr

decresc.

f

decresc.

p

51

cresc. *decresc.* 3

2

cresc. *decresc.*

decresc.

pp

54

cresc.

57

B

f *decresc.* *f* *decresc.*

B *f*

decresc.

60

p

cresc.

f

p

p

cresc.

f

decresc.

p

64

tr ~~~

cresc. *decresc.*

cresc. *decresc.*

3

8

68

tr ~~~

cresc. *decresc.*

cresc. *decresc.*

(Pizz.)

f

72

fz

cresc.

fz

p

fz

p

C (poco rit.)

[Pizz.]

p

(poco rit.)

78

decresc.

Arco

f

p

cresc.

f

p

83

cresc.

decresc.

cresc.

3 *3* *3* *3*

88

D (*a tempo*)

(a tempo)

D *pp*

91

(poco rit.)

fp

(poco rit.)

94

fp

cresc.

f

cresc.

cresc.

f

cresc.

97

v
fz p pp cresc.

v
fz p pp cresc.

102

E (a tempo)
mf
(a tempo)

E mf

105

pp cresc.

pp

108

cresc.
(poco a poco)

#p #f

112

mf

cresc.

f

f

115

ff

cresc.

ff

cresc.

ffz

decresc.

pp

120

p

cresc.

fp

decresc.

(ritard.)

fp

126

F (*a tempo*)

mf

a tempo

F *p*

131

136

140

143

147 (Pizz.) (Arco) *decresc.* *pp* *f* *(ritard.) v*

151 H *tr* *~~~* *cresc.* *decresc.*

H *f* *decresc.* *cresc.* *decresc.*

155 *p* *(poco accel.)* *decresc.* *ritard.*

p *(poco accel.)* *decresc.* *ritard.*

159 *(a tempo)* *pp* *(a tempo)* *pp* *pp*

162

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

165

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

167

cresc.

f

dim.

p

cresc.

decresc.

3

cresc.

decresc.

171

2

p

p

174

J f

177

p p

180

cresc. f decresc. p
cresc. f decresc. mf decresc. p

184

cresc. decresc. 3 fp decresc. tr
cresc. decresc. fp decresc.

188

cresc. decresc.

decresc.

cresc.

K

(rit.)

p

192

cresc.

decresc.

pp

pp

cresc.

197

decresc.

dim.

dim.

f

decresc.

f

f

203

decresc.

p

p

decresc.

ff

207 *Adagio (mm=60)*

214

220

226

233

f decresc.
p
pp
cresc.

cresc.
f decresc.
p
cresc.

239

decresc.
[M] *p*
cresc.

decresc.
[M] *p*
cresc.

244

fp
decresc.
3
cresc.
decresc.

fp
decresc.
cresc.
decresc.

249

p
cresc.
fp decresc.

p
cresc.
decresc.
fz

254

p cresc.
decresc.
N *p*

p cresc.
decresc.
N *p*

260

v
v
v
pp

decresc.
pp

268

v
v
v
v
2

274

(accel.)
rit.
3
Allegretto (mm=105)
Allegretto (mm=105)

p

281

290

297

305

314

cresc. *decresc.*

(2)

p

cresc. *decresc.*

p

322

pp

cresc. *fz*

pp

cresc. *fz*

330

P (Allargando)

mf (depress "a" silently and hold)
(Allargando)

p

336

decresc.

pp

decresc.

pp

342

cresc. *mf*

cresc. *mf*

cresc. *mf*

348

p *cresc.* *decresc.* *pp*

p *cresc.* *decresc.* *pp*

cresc.

355

p

Q

p

Q *p*

361

pp

pp

369 (poco rit) (accel.) (Allegro)
 cresc. mf (Allegro)
 fz mf p

375 decresc.
 decresc.

381 pp p
 pp p

388 pp pp

396

(molto rit mm=85)

(cresc.) (decresc.)

(molto rit mm=85)

405

(poco accel.) (poco rit.)

(poco accel.) (poco rit.)

413

(poco rit.) (Allegretto)

p (Allegretto)

421

cresc.

cresc.

Musical score for orchestra, page 437, measures 1-8. The score consists of three staves. The top staff uses a bass clef, the middle staff a treble clef, and the bottom staff a bass clef. Measure 1: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns. Measure 2: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns. Measure 3: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns. Measure 4: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns. Measure 5: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns. Measure 6: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns. Measure 7: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns. Measure 8: Bassoon and Double Bass play eighth-note patterns.

446

decresc.

cresc.

decresc.

decresc.

cresc.

decresc.

Musical score for piano, page 154, measures 1-2. The score consists of three staves. The top staff uses bass clef, the middle staff treble clef, and the bottom staff bass clef. Measure 1 starts with a dotted half note followed by eighth-note pairs. Measure 2 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 3 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 4 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 5 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 6 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 7 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 8 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 9 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 10 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 11 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 12 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 13 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 14 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 15 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 16 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 17 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 18 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 19 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern. Measure 20 starts with a sixteenth-note pattern.

462

S *meno mosso*

cresc. *fz* *p*

cresc. *fz* *p*

468

pp *p* *pp*

pp

475

cresc. *decresc.* *cresc.* *decresc.* *leggiertente*

cresc. *decresc.* *cresc.* *decresc.*

481

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *pp* *cresc.*

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *cresc.*

489

f *decresc.*

ritard. **T**

a tempo (allegro)

p

a tempo (allegro)

p

496

cresc.

fp

501

cresc.

f *decresc.*

p

cresc.

f

p

508

f

cresc. *decresc.*

pp

cresc. *decresc.*

pp

516

cresc.

f decresc.

pp

p cresc.

cresc.

f decresc.

pp

p cresc.

524

decresc.

(poco rit.)

Pizz. (allargando)

decresc.

(poco rit.)

p (allargando)

cresc.

531

decresc.

cresc.

cresc.

538

decresc.

cresc.

cresc.

543

547

poco rit.

V Arco *(a tempo)*

mf

(a tempo)

V *mf*

552

558

decrec.

pp

v

mf

decrec.

pp

mf

564

cresc.
decresc.

cresc.
decresc.

571

W
pp

W
pp

577

p

584

(rubato)

rit.

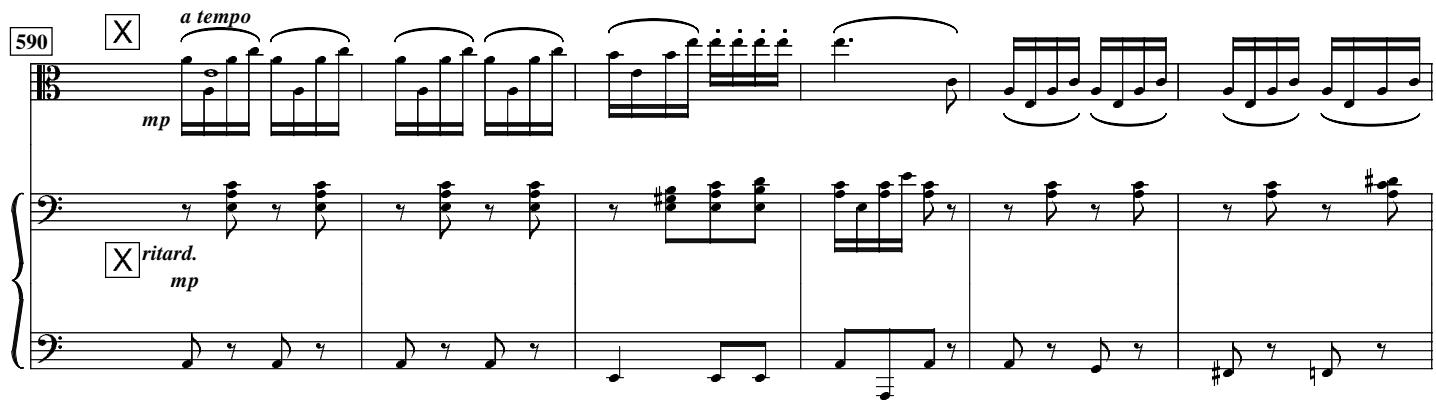
cresc.

ffz

pp

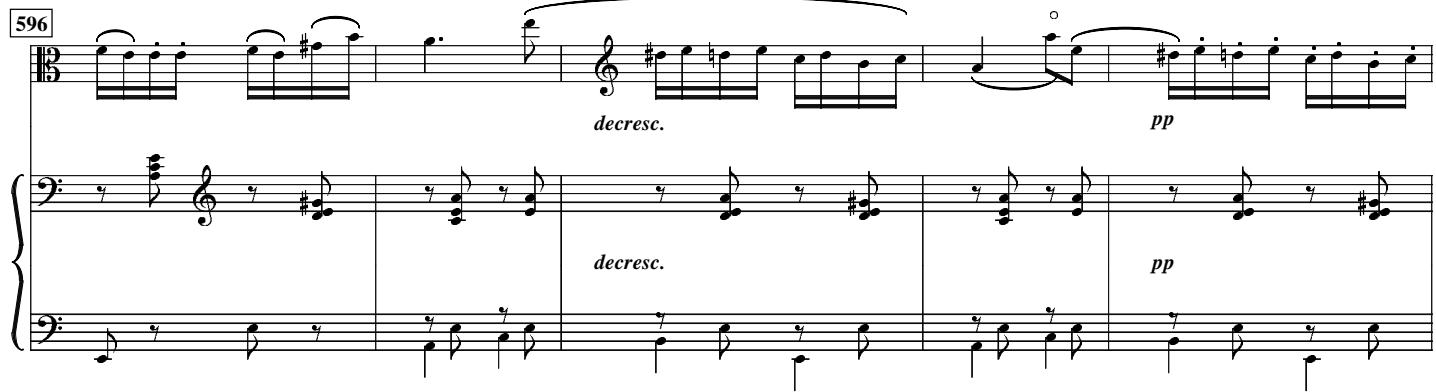
cresc.

590  *a tempo*
 *ritard.*
mp



596  

decresc. 



601   

p  



609  



618 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

ritard.

626 *a tempo*

a tempo

Y

634

cresc. *decresc.* *pp*

cresc. *decresc.* *pp*

642

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *cresc.* *decresc.*

cresc. *decresc.* *p* *cresc.* *decresc.*

Musical score for orchestra, page 10, measures 649-650. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is for strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello), the middle staff is for woodwinds (Flute, Clarinet, Bassoon), and the bottom staff is for brass (Trombone). Measure 649 starts with a dynamic of *mf*. The strings play eighth-note patterns with grace notes. The woodwinds play eighth-note patterns. The brass plays sustained notes. Measure 650 begins with a dynamic of *cresc.*. The strings play eighth-note patterns with grace notes. The woodwinds play eighth-note patterns. The brass plays sustained notes. Measure 651 begins with a dynamic of *f*, followed by *decresc.*. The strings play eighth-note patterns with grace notes. The woodwinds play eighth-note patterns. The brass plays sustained notes.

657

Z

p

cresc.

Z

p

cresc.

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 10, measures 664-665. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the orchestra, featuring woodwind and brass instruments. The middle staff is for the piano. The bottom staff is for the cello. Measure 664 starts with a dynamic of *decresc.* in the orchestra, followed by a piano dynamic. Measure 665 continues with dynamics *p*, *decresc.*, and *pp*.

Musical score for piano, page 672, measures 1-4. The score consists of three staves. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a common time signature. It features sixteenth-note patterns with grace notes and dynamic markings like *dim.*, *ff*, and *p*. The middle staff shows a bass clef and a common time signature, with a dynamic marking *decresc.* The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a common time signature, with dynamic markings *ff* and *p*. Measure 1 starts with a forte dynamic. Measure 2 begins with a dynamic marking *dim.* Measure 3 ends with a dynamic marking *ff*. Measure 4 ends with a dynamic marking *p*.