

Unfinished Business

Concerto for processed orchestral recording and live orchestra
Composed by Alex Ness for the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra,
on the occasion of its [2018/19 call for scores](#)

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Instrumentation

The same as for Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" (2222 – 2230 – timp – str), plus tape

Duration

Approx. 14'30"

Performance notes

Sound setup

The tape part should be played through a single conspicuous speaker placed next to the conductor and aimed at the audience, as if it were an instrumental soloist. A high-quality MP3 of the tape part is available online [here](#), and a higher-quality WAV is available on request.

Synchronization

Throughout the piece, the orchestra plays along with a synchronized orchestral recording: please refer to [this mockup](#) for an approximation of the intended effect. The live orchestra's tempo is exactly $J = 60$ throughout; therefore, the conductor should use a watch, click track or video timer to keep time and to maintain a precise relationship between the live and prerecorded music.

Program notes

When I saw the CCCO's call for scores, I was inspired by the "Voices of the Past, Present, and Future" theme, and especially by the opportunity to reframe Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* in a novel way. I composed *Unfinished Business* around an audio recording of an excerpt from the *Unfinished*'s first movement, as performed by the Berlin Philharmonic under the baton of Wilhelm Furtwängler in 1953. The recording is played first as-is, *solo*, and then time-stretched (that is, slowed down while preserving pitch) to roughly a tenth of its original speed. The time-stretching allows the ear to peel apart the complex aggregate sonority into its underlying frequencies. Meanwhile, the live orchestra overlays dense, slowly-shifting chords designed to support this microscopic listening experience. I hope this "concerto" casts a fresh perspective on Schubert's work and gives some surprising insight into our perception of orchestral sound.

Unfinished Business

Alex Ness

♩ = 60 exactly

00:00 (start tape)

Score in C

Flute 1 30

Flute 2 30

Oboe 1 30

Oboe 2 30

Clarinet 1 30

Clarinet 2 30

Bassoon 1 30

Bassoon 2 30

Horn 1 30

Horn 2 30

Trumpet 1 30

Trumpet 2 30

Trombone 1 30

Trombone 2 30

Trombone 3 30

Timpani 30

Violin 1-1 30

Violin 1-2 30

Violin 2-1 30

Violin 2-2 30

Viola 1 30

Viola 2 30

Violoncello 1 30

Violoncello 2 30

Contrabass 1 30

Contrabass 2 30

01:30

Fl. 1 *mp*

Fl. 2 *mp*

Ob. 1 *mp*

Ob. 2 *mp*

Cl. 1 *mp*

Cl. 2 *mp*

Bsn. 1 *mp*

Bsn. 2 *mp*

Hn. 1 *p*

Hn. 2 *p*

Tpt. 1 *p*

Tpt. 2 *p*

Tbn. 1 *p*

Tbn. 2 *p*

Tbn. 3 *p*

Timp. *p*

Vln. 1-1 *mf*

Vln. 1-2 *mf*

Vln. 2-1 *mf*

Vln. 2-2 *mf*

Vla. 1 *mf*

Vla. 2 *mf*

Vc. 1 *mf*

Vc. 2 *mf*

Cb. 1 *mf*

Cb. 2 *mf*

02:00

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

02:30

51

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hr. 1

Hr. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

03:00

61

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

03:30

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

04:00

81

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

04:30

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

05:00

101

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

10/27

06:00

121

Fl. 1 *f*

Fl. 2 *f*

Ob. 1 *f*

Ob. 2 *f*

Cl. 1 *f*

Cl. 2 *f*

Bsn. 1 *f*

Bsn. 2 *f*

Hn. 1 *mf*

Hn. 2 *mf*

Tpt. 1 *mf*

Tpt. 2 *mf*

Tbn. 1 *mf*

Tbn. 2 *mf*

Tbn. 3 *mf*

Timp.

Vln. 1-1 *mp*

Vln. 1-2 *mp*

Vln. 2-1 *mp*

Vln. 2-2 *mp*

Vla. 1 *mp*

Vla. 2 *mp*

Vc. 1 *mp*

Vc. 2 *mp*

Cb. 1 *mp*

Cb. 2 *mp*

06:30

131

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Timp.
Vln. 1-1
Vln. 1-2
Vln. 2-1
Vln. 2-2
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
Cb. 1
Cb. 2

07:00

141

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

07:30

151

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Timp.
Vln. 1-1
Vln. 1-2
Vln. 2-1
Vln. 2-2
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
Cb. 1
Cb. 2

08:00

161

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Timp.
Vln. 1-1
Vln. 1-2
Vln. 2-1
Vln. 2-2
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
Cb. 1
Cb. 2

08:30

171

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Timp.
Vln. 1-1
Vln. 1-2
Vln. 2-1
Vln. 2-2
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
Cb. 1
Cb. 2

09:00

181

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Timp.
Vln. 1-1
Vln. 1-2
Vln. 2-1
Vln. 2-2
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
Cb. 1
Cb. 2

09:30

191

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Timp.
Vln. 1-1
Vln. 1-2
Vln. 2-1
Vln. 2-2
Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vc. 1
Vc. 2
Cb. 1
Cb. 2

10:00

201

Fl. 1 10

Fl. 2 10

Ob. 1 10

Ob. 2 10

Cl. 1 10

Cl. 2 10

Bsn. 1 10

Bsn. 2 10

Hn. 1 10

Hn. 2 10

Tpt. 1 10

Tpt. 2 10

Tbn. 1 10

Tbn. 2 10

Tbn. 3 10

Timp. 10

Vln. 1-1 10

Vln. 1-2 10

Vln. 2-1 10

Vln. 2-2 10

Vla. 1 10

Vla. 2 10

Vc. 1 10

Vc. 2 10

Cb. 1 10

Cb. 2 10

20/27

10:57

220

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

11:33

232

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

12:00

241

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

12:27

250

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

13:03

262

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

13:30

271

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Timp.

Vln. 1-1

Vln. 1-2

Vln. 2-1

Vln. 2-2

Vla. 1

Vla. 2

Vc. 1

Vc. 2

Cb. 1

Cb. 2

280

27/27

Unfinished Business

♩ = 60 exactly

Short score

Alex Ness

00:00 (start tape)

The image displays a musical score for the piece "The Rose Tree". The score is arranged in four main sections, each with a bracketed group of staves:

- Winds:** Consists of two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. A large "30" is written above the staff, indicating a 30-second duration.
- Brass:** Consists of two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. A large "30" is written above the staff, indicating a 30-second duration.
- Timpani:** Consists of one staff (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. A large "30" is written above the staff, indicating a 30-second duration.
- Strings:** Consists of three staves (treble and two bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. A large "30" is written above the staff, indicating a 30-second duration.

At the bottom left, there is a small number "8".

01:30

This musical score is for the song "The Rose Tree" and is arranged for a full orchestra. The score is divided into four main sections: Winds, Brass, Timp. (Timpani), and Strings. The Winds section includes a Flute (Fl.) and a Clarinet (Cl.). The Brass section includes a Trumpet (Tr.) and a Trombone (Tbn.). The Timp. section includes a Timpani (Timp.). The Strings section includes Violins (Vln.), Violas (Vla.), Cellos (Vcl.), and Double Basses (Db.). The score is written in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Winds section begins with a melody in the Flute, while the Brass section provides harmonic support. The Timp. section features a rhythmic pattern. The Strings section provides a steady accompaniment. The score is marked with dynamic levels such as *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score is numbered 31 at the top left and 8 at the bottom left.

36

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

02:00

41

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

46

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

02:30

51

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

56

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

03:00

61

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

66

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

03:30

71

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

76

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

04:00

81

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

86

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

04:30

91

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

96

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

05:00

101

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

106

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

05:30

111

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

10

10

10

10

10

10

06:00

121

Winds *f*

Brass *mf*

Timp.

Strings *mp*

8

06:30

131

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

07:00

141

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

07:30

151

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

08:00

161

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

08:30

171

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

09:00

181

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

09:30

191

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

201

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

10

10

10

10

10

8

211

Winds *mf*

Brass *ff*

Timp.

Strings *f*

8

The musical score for measures 211-216 is presented in a standard orchestral layout. The Winds section (flutes, oboes, and bassoons) is marked *mf* and plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Brass section (trumpets and trombones) is marked *ff* and plays a similar rhythmic pattern. The Timp. (timpani) part is marked *f* and plays a series of eighth notes. The Strings section (violins, violas, cellos, and double basses) is marked *f* and plays a complex rhythmic pattern. The score is written in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#).

11:33

226

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

12:00**12:27**

241

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

13:03

256

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

13:30

13:57

271

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

286

Winds

Brass

Timp.

Strings

8

This musical score page contains measures 286 through 289. The score is arranged in four systems, each for a different instrument group: Winds, Brass, Timp., and Strings. Each system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef). The Winds and Brass sections play a sustained chord in the first two measures, followed by a rest in the third and fourth measures. The Timp. section plays a single note in the first two measures, followed by a rest in the third and fourth measures. The Strings section plays a sustained chord in the first two measures, followed by a rest in the third and fourth measures. The number '2' is written above each staff in the first two measures of each system, indicating a two-measure rest. The number '8' is written below the first staff of the Strings section in measure 286.