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# Metamorphoses (15.178) for Violin Clarinet Cello and Piano

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Metamorphoses (15.178)  
for Violin, Clarinet, Cello, and Piano

By

Max Caplan

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for  
Honors in the Department of Music

UNION COLLEGE

June, 2016

## ABSTRACT

CAPLAN, MAX *Metamorphoses* (15.178), for Violin, Clarinet, Cello, and Piano.  
Department of Music, June 2016.

ADVISOR: Hilary Tann

A chamber music composition, approximately eight minutes long, for the above instrumentation. The title refers to a line from Ovid's epic, which reads, "All things are fluid, and every shape is born to change." Ovid puts the words in the mouth of the ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras, who soliloquizes on the meaning of life, the nature of time, and the interconnectedness of all things. The speech centers around his ideas of reincarnation (either literal or metaphorical), which, as a kind of metamorphosis, links the passage thematically to the rest of the poem.

*Metamorphoses* (15.178) reflects this central notion of change within permanence. Two main musical motives recur throughout the piece and constitute its fundamental fabric, thus paralleling Pythagoras' concept of cosmic unity. Yet each also undergoes metamorphosis: the first, from the ruminative opening melodic statement in the violin to the pounding bass ostinato in the final section; the second, from the playful imitative subject in the *Allegro* sections to the soaring unison melody at the climax.

# Metamorphoses (15.178)

for Violin, Clarinet, Cello, and Piano

MAX D. CAPLAN

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**Duration:** ca. 8 min.

**First performance:** May 23, 2016, Emerson Auditorium, Taylor Music Center, Union College, with the Musicians of Ma'alwyck

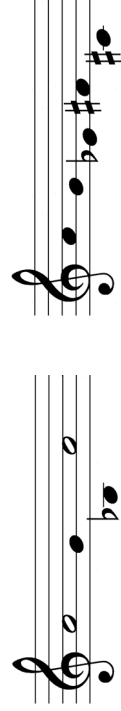
(Ann-Marie Barker Schwartz, violin; Brett Wery, clarinet; Petia Kassarova, cello) and Max Caplan, piano

*"There is nothing, in all the world, that rests:  
all things are fluid, and every shape is born to change.  
Time itself marches on in relentless motion –  
not unlike a river, for neither the river  
nor the fickle hour can stand, but as wave impels wave,  
each driving away the last and driven on by the next,  
so time flees and gives chase in equal measure  
and is ever new; for what was before, is gone;  
and what was not, is come to pass;  
and each moment is constantly reborn."*

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (15.177-85); tr. composer

**Program note:** The title refers to the following line from the above passage, quoted from the final book of Ovid's epic: "All things are fluid, and every shape is born to change." Ovid puts the words in the mouth of the ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras, who soliloquizes on the meaning of life, the nature of time, and the interconnectedness of all things. The speech centers around his ideas of reincarnation (either literal or metaphorical), which, as a kind of metamorphosis, links the passage thematically to the rest of the poem.

*Metamorphoses* (15.178) reflects this central notion of change within permanence. The two main motives are:



These recur throughout and constitute the fundamental fabric, paralleling Pythagoras' concept of cosmic unity. Yet each undergoes metamorphosis: the first, from the ruminative opening melodic statement in the violin to the pounding bass ostinato in the final section; the second, from the playful imitative subject in the *Allegro* sections to the soaring unison melody at the climax.

Other parts of the passage resonate: the "river" in the piano arpeggios; the "fickle hour" in the flitting, imitative passages (where each statement is soon replaced by the next); and the "relentless motion" of time in the final, inexorable crescendo. In contrast, the opening and inner sections are static and timeless, reflecting Pythagoras' belief in the fundamental eternity of all things.

**Acknowledgements:** I am grateful to my thesis advisor, Professor Hilary Tann, for her guidance and support at every stage of the compositional process, and to the members of the Musicians of Ma'alwyck.

UNION COLLEGE

April 2016

# Metamorphoses (15.178)

Max Caplan

Violin

Very free ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 66$ )  
*recitando*

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Cello

Piano

Very free ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 66$ )

Vln.

Più mosso ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 100$ )

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

Più mosso ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 100$ )

*rit.*

*8<sup>va</sup>*

*rit.*

*Rec.*

*p*





Violin I (Vln.) part: Measures 30-33. Measure 30: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 31: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 32: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 33: *mp*, *mf*.  
 Bass Clarinet (Bb Cl.) part: Measures 30-33. Measure 30: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 31: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 32: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 33: *mp*, *mf*.  
 Violoncello (Vc.) part: Measures 30-33. Measure 30: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 31: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 32: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 33: *mp*, *mf*.  
 Piano (Pno.) part: Measures 30-33. Measure 30: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 31: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 32: *mp*, *mf*. Measure 33: *mp*, *mf*.

Violin I (Vln.)

Bass Clarinet (B♭ Cl.)

Violoncello (Vc.)

Piano (Pno.)

Key signature: B♭

Time signature: 6/8

Violin I: *pizz.*, *p*

Bass Clarinet: *sf*, *f*, *fp*

Violoncello: *f*, *fp*

Piano: *f*, *fp*

# Metamorphoses (15.178)

4

45 Vln. **D** *cresc.*

45 B♭ Cl. *cresc.*

45 Vc.

45 Pno. **D** *cresc.*

51 Vln. **E** *f*

51 B♭ Cl. *f*

51 Vc. *f*

51 Pno. **E** *f*



**H**

Vln. 72 *p*

B $\flat$  Cl. 72 *p*

Vc. 72

**H** *espress.*

Pno. 72 *p*

**I**  $\text{♩} = 88 (\text{♩} = \text{♩})$

Vln. 81 *cresc.*

B $\flat$  Cl. 81 *p cresc.*

Vc. 81 *p cresc.*

**I**  $\text{♩} = 88 (\text{♩} = \text{♩})$

Pno. 81 *cresc.*

The musical score is for a piece titled 'Metamorphoses (15.178)'. It is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 72-81) features a horn (H) section and a piano (Pno.) section. The horn part begins with a melodic line in the right hand and a sustained chord in the left hand, marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The piano part features a complex, rapid sixteenth-note passage in the right hand, also marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The second system (measures 81-90) features a woodwind section (Vln., B $\flat$  Cl., Vc.) and a piano (Pno.) section. The woodwind parts are marked with a piano (p) dynamic and include various articulations like accents and slurs. The piano part continues with a complex, rapid sixteenth-note passage, marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, accents, and dynamic markings (p, cresc., f).

86

Vln.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

92

Vln.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vc.

Pno.

Moderato ( $\text{♩} = 100$ )

Moderato ( $\text{♩} = 100$ )

100 Vln. *pp* *rit.*

100 B $\flat$  Cl. *p*

100 Vc. *p*

100 Pno. *p* *rit.* *pp*

108 Vln. *a tempo*

108 B $\flat$  Cl. *p*

108 Vc. *p dolce*

108 Pno. *a tempo espress.* *mp* *p*

117 *rit.* **K** *a tempo* (♩ = ♩)

Vln. *p*

B♭ Cl. *p*

Vc. *p*

117 *rit.* **K** *a tempo* (♩ = ♩)

Pno. *mp* *pp* *p*

*8va*

123 *f*

Vln. *f*

B♭ Cl. *f* *leggiero* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

123 *8va* *fp leggiero*

Pno. *fp* *a piacere*

129 Tempo di allegro (♩ = c. 132)

Vln. *p*

B♭ Cl. *p* *pizz.*

Vc.

129 Tempo di allegro (♩ = c. 132)

Pno. *mf*

136

L ♩ = ♩

Vln. *f*

B♭ Cl. *p*

Vc. *f*

136

L ♩ = ♩

Pno. *p*



143 Vln. *f*

143 B $\flat$  Cl. *f* *arco*

143 Vc. *f*

143 Pno. *f*

149 Vln. *p* *M*  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

149 B $\flat$  Cl. *p* *M*  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

149 Vc. *p*

149 Pno. *mf*

157  $\text{N } \text{♩} = \text{♩}$

Vln. *f*

B $\flat$  Cl. *f*

Vc.

157  $\text{N } \text{♩} = \text{♩}$

Pno. *f*

165 *ff*

Vln. *ff*

B $\flat$  Cl. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Pno. *ff*

171 O

Vln. p

B♭ Cl. p

Vc. mp p

Pno. p mp p

175 P

Vln. p

B♭ Cl. mp p

Vc. mp p

Pno. mp p

cresc. poco a poco

8vb-

180 Vln. 6/8

180 B♭ Cl. 6/8

180 Vc. 6/8

180 Pno. 6/8

*mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

*mf* *cresc.*

9

9

9

9

(8<sup>vb</sup>)

185 Vln. 4/4

185 B♭ Cl. 4/4

185 Vc. 4/4

185 Pno. 4/4

*f* *cresc.*

*f* *cresc.*

*f* *cresc.*

*f* *cresc.*

9

9

(8<sup>vb</sup>)

192

Vln.

192

B $\flat$  Cl.

192

Vc.

192

Pno.

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194 Vln. *tr* *3*

194 B $\flat$  Cl. *3*

194 Vc. *tr* *3*

194 Pno. *8va*

196 Vln. *tr* *3* *f* *dolce*

196 B $\flat$  Cl. *tr* *3* *f* *dolce*

196 Vc. *tr* *3* *f* *dolce*

196 Pno. *espress.* *f*

200 Vln. *sf* *p*

200 B $\flat$  Cl. *sf* *p*

200 Vc. *sf* *p*

Pno. *sf* *p*

206 Vln. *Slow, inexorable* ( $\text{♩} = 66$ ) *cresc. poco a poco*

206 B $\flat$  Cl. *cresc. poco a poco*

206 Vc. *cresc. poco a poco*

Pno. *cresc. poco a poco*

R

3.



First system of the musical score for 'The Swan' by Maurice Ravel. The system includes staves for Violin (Vln.), Bassoon (B♭ Cl.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). The music is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The score shows measures 218 to 221, with a repeat sign at the end of measure 221. The piano part has a 'Gub.' (Gubaidulov) marking at the end of the system.