

Linear Construction (No. 5)
for Cello

Alex Groves

Linear Construction (No. 5)

for Cello

Instrumentation

Cello

Duration

5'

Notes

Linear Construction (No. 5) borrows its title from a series of sculptures by Naum Gabo - intricate pieces made from clear plastic shapes with nylon thread woven around them. I'm drawn to the way their complex, fluid appearance is created from a very simple construction, creating an ephemeral and weightless form that constantly evolves as you circle it.

This piece isn't an attempt to directly translate any of the works into sound. Instead, it tries to mirror that dialogue between simplicity and complexity. A four bar cell acts as the sole musical material for the piece - four chords, a constant pulse. The material, however, is in constant flux. Moving from point to point, it undergoes timbral and dynamic transformations that create a feeling of simultaneous stasis and motion.

Linear Construction (No. 5) was written for Gabriella Swallow during the first lockdown in 2020. It was created for and released as part of Nonclassical's *I hope this finds you well in these strange times (Vol. 1)*. It was nominated for an Ivor Novello Composer Award in the Solo Composition category in 2021, and the live première was given by Louise McMonagle of Riot Ensemble at The Barber Institute of Fine Arts on Wednesday 23rd February, 2022.

Linear Construction (No. 5)

for Cello

Alex Groves

Steady and unerring (c. ♩ = 75)

Violoncello

pp *mf*

A

Vc. 5

sub. *pp*

small increase in bow pressure,
just starting to distort

nat. -----> sul pont.

Vc. 9

mp *f*

B

Vc. 13 nat.

sub. *pp*

Vc. 17

Vc. 21

mp

gradually increase bow pressure to a sustained, distorted sound

nat. -----> sul pont.

Vc. 25

f *ff*



29 sul tasto

Vc.

sub. *pp*

sul tasto ----->

33 nat.

Vc.

37

Vc.

p

41

Vc.

mp

gradually increase bow pressure

45

Vc.

mf

lightly distorted sound

49

Vc.

nat. ----->

continue to increase bow pressure

poco sul pont.

53

Vc.

f

poco sul pont. ----->

sustained, distorted sound

sul pont.

57

Vc.

ff

final increase in bow pressure to a fully distorted, glitchy sound

sul pont. -----> molto sul pont. *fff*