

HELGI R. INGVARSSON

STRING QUARTET NO.1:

ÉVARISTE

(2013)

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ÉVARISTE

CHAMBER OPERA SUITE

The quartet was originally commissioned by cellist Guðný Jónasdóttir on behalf of the Bartholdy Quartet for the Chamber Music Festival at Salurinn-music hall, Kópavogur, Iceland. It was premiered August 7th, 2013, then titled *Évariste: Mutter Music Suite*.

Many of the original melodies are so called speech melodies, created from analysing recordings of spoken words and mutters. Hence the subtitle of the quartet's 1st version: *mutter music*. These motives can now be found in the 1st movement of the *Chamber Opera Suite*.

The title *Évariste* derives from *Évariste Chamber Opera*, also by Helgi R. Ingvarsson, which was commissioned by the Courtauld Gallery and the Guildhall School, London in September 2012. The *Mutter Music Suite* functioned as a developmental ground for the material which was then used as basis the music drama *Évariste Chamber Opera* for 5 singers, actor, flute and string quintet was finished in August 2014 and premiered at the Courtauld Gallery, Somerset House, London July 12th, 2015.

The *Mutter Music Suite* quartet was written during January – July 2013, then transformed into the *Chamber Opera* July 2013-August 2014 which then led to the revising of the quartet as *Chamber Opera Suite* during May 5th-6th, 2015.

Duration is approx. 9 minutes.

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OPERA SUMMARY AND SYNOPSIS

Évariste Chamber Opera is based on the true story of 20 year old Évariste Galois who was a hot-headed, prodigy mathematician in 19th century France. Frustrated with an illogical world, Évariste will embrace early death as long as he is able to complete his ground-braking theorem where the only remaining beauty resides.

SCENE 1 – MAY 10, 1832, 4AM – PARIS, FRANCE

Évariste Galois, a hot-headed 21-year-old mathematical genius, is sitting at a desk in his room, feverishly writing. His two great passions, maths and politics, have been sabotaged by his first crushing experience of love. Now, he is more fervent than ever about being understood, being important, being accepted. As Évariste searches through his papers, a pistol falls from the paper mess to the floor. Évariste tries to retrieve it, but fumbles and it clatters to the floor again. He starts a goodbye letter to his friend, Auguste, explaining his work and his grave situation.

SCENE 2 – 1ST MEMORY – 1829

A sparse examination room in Polytechnique with one long table, behind which sit three examiners in their 50s-60s. Évariste, an 18-year-old student finishes an equation on the board, tosses the chalk on the table and stands with confidence. He does not want to explain his answer and ends up by throwing the sponge at the professors and they fail him.

SCENE 3 – 2ND MEMORY – 1829

A sparse hospital room. Évariste is sitting up in bed, taking notes on paper. He's deep in thought on group theory. Stephanie enters, dressed in nursing accoutrements. The air is electric with their desire for each other. The love between them has blossomed in only a week, but over the course of the next two weeks Stephanie's passion fades due to Évariste's obsession with his work and she leaves him.

SCENE 4 – MAY 10, 1832, 4:30PM

Évariste's room. Évariste is stuck in his memory of Stephanie until Auguste Chevalier pulls open a heavy curtain to reveal daylight. Auguste tries to reassure Évariste. The past events, both the examination and his time with Stephanie, harass him until he's at a breaking point. Auguste gives up and leaves.

SCENE 5 – 4:50PM

Évariste sits at his desk. He reviews his equations and is satisfied. He takes a quill pen and writes more in his letter to Auguste. Clock tower strikes 5pm. Évariste folds the letter and picks up the pistol, ready to leave. Stephanie rushes in and tries to convince him not to go to the duel (imagination or real?).

Évariste leaves for the duel and is killed.

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Short programme notes:

Évariste Galois (25 October 1811 – 31 May 1832) was a French mathematician and political activist who lived a short, and equally troubled and beautiful life. The string quartet travels between and offers a musical interpretation of some the most significant events of Évariste's life, from his seemingly mad mathematical scribbles, to his romantic obsession with Stéphanie du Motel, and finally his death by duel.



Nikolai Rostropovich

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ÉVARISTE

Chamber Opera Suite

for string quartet

Helgi R. Ingvarsson

Prologue

The Pen

Rapidly alternating between tasto and ponticello.
T /// P

♩ = 120

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

port.

Fully muffle the open A string w/ LH. No audible pitch.

Sul D

ord.

6

T /// P

T /// P

T /// P

T /// P

IV

IV

IV

IV

III

II

I

Fully muffle the open A string w/ LH. No audible pitch.

I

0

I The Theorem

1 $\text{♩} = 60-70$ 12 $\text{♩} = 92$ sul pont.

p *mf* *f* *p* *ord.* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *pp*
sul pont. 3

p *mf* *p* *pp*
sul pont.

p *f* *mf* *p* *pp*
sul pont.

p *f* *p* *f* *mf* *p* *pp*

14 17

ff *f* *pp*
sul pont.

ff *p*

ff *batt.* *arco sul pont.* *batt.* *arco sul pont.*
pp *f* *f* *p*

21 (8)

p *pp*
sul tasto *tr*

f *pp* *p* *pp*
sul tasto *tr*

batt. *ord.* *batt.* *ord.* *batt.* *ord.* *batt.*
ff *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

batt. *pizz.* *pizz. trem.* *pizz. ord.*
ff *f* *mf* *p*

35 40 slide up on note (scoop) *Sul G*

pp *ord.* *f* *p* *pp* *f* *p* *pp*
ord. *pp* *ord.* *pp* *ord.* *pp* *ord.* *pp*
sul pont.

ord. *tremolo* *ord.* *solo* *solo*
p *pp* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

ord. *harm.* *ord.* *ord.* *ord.* *ord.*
p *pp* *f* *p* *p* *mp* *pp*

84 *mf* > *p* *port.* *IV* *♩ = 92* *sul tasto* *tr* *ord.*

mf > *p* *port.* *sul tasto* *ord.*

fp > *pp* *fp* > *pp* *mf*

p *f* *fp* > *pp* *p* < *mf*

sul tasto *ord.*

fp > *pp*

97 *Meno mosso*

95 *f* *♩ = 80* *ord.*

f *p* *solo* *f* *p* *ord.*

sul tasto *solo* *subito* *ord.*

p *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p* *p* *p*

Only a quick pause.
Go straight into
2nd mov.

104 *f* *p* *p* *mf* *ff* *p* *rit.*

p *mf* *ff* *p*

solo *f* *p* *mf* *ff* *p*

mp *pp* *mf* *ff* *p*

II Love Equation

♩ = 80
sul pont. solo

11

p *pp* *p*

19

26

p *pp* *f*

34

40 rit.

ord.

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

48

52 ♩ = 92

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

61 64 71 *Meno mosso*

Violin I: *mf* > *p*, *mf* > *p*, *mf* > *p*, *mf*

Violin II: *mf* > *p*, *mf* > *p*, *mf* > *p*, *pp*

Viola: *mf* > *p*, *mf* > *p*, *mf* > *p*, *pp*

Cello/Double Bass: *f*, *mf* > *p*, *mf* > *p*, *pp*

5

72 77 $\text{♩} = 50$ 82 $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

Violin I: *f*, *ff*, *p*

Violin II: *f*, *ff*, *p*

Viola: *f*, *ff*, *p*

Cello/Double Bass: *f*, *ff*, *sub p*

83 88 $\text{♩} = 60$

Violin I: *f*, *f*

Violin II: *f*, *f*

Viola: *f*, *f*

Cello/Double Bass: *f*, *f*, dolce e cantabile

90

Violin I: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *p*

Violin II: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *f*

Viola: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *f*

Cello/Double Bass: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*

96 103

Violin I: *mf* *p* *pp*

Violin II: *f* *mf* *pp*

Cello/Double Bass: *p* *mf* *pp* *espressivo* *p sul tasto*

Accents: *fp* *mf* *pp*

112 118 ♩ = 80

Violin I: *pp* *p*

Violin II: *pp* *p*

Cello/Double Bass: *ord.* *free bowing* *p*

124 128 ♩ = 53 (feels like ♩ = 80)

Violin I: *mf* *f*

Violin II: *f*

Cello/Double Bass: *mf* *mf*

130 132 ♩ = 70

Violin I: *f*

Violin II: *f*

Cello/Double Bass: *subf*

