

SAM NICHOLS

*Wreck*

for violin and piano  
(2010–11)

Duration: ca. 9 minutes

None of the tempo markings are absolutes; they can all be adjusted slightly if the hall is especially dry, or resonant.

The pedal markings are only suggestions. The stopped notes in mm. 234–37 can be substituted with regular notes if necessary (possibly with the *una corda* pedal depressed ).

c.l.b. = col legno battuto

c.l.t. = col legno tratto

Shungo Mise, violin, and Kaori Ohsuga, piano, premiered *Wrack* in Tokyo on September 29, 2011 as part of mmm...’s “Circle of Friends” project. Ben Kreith and Ann Yi gave the US premiere on October 28, 2011, in San Francisco.

#### *Wrack* program note

When I wrote this piece I was trying to make something that started out very simply and prettily, but which then, gradually, fell apart. Once I started to write it, this idea mutated, and the piece took some unexpected detours, some unplanned side trips. I tried to treat the piano and violin as more or less equal partners; but the moments when they are cooperating are maybe outnumbered by those times when one is ignoring, or even actively undermining, the other. *Wrack* is dedicated to my friend Pablo Ortiz.

dedicated to Pablo Ortiz

# Wreck

for violin and piano

Sam Nichols

2010-11

**Calm, but not too slow** ♩ = ca. 66-72

The score is written for violin and piano in 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music, each with a violin staff on top and a piano staff on the bottom. The piano part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many triplets and slurs. The violin part is more melodic and expressive, often using slurs and triplets. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *mf*. Performance instructions include 'with an introspective intensity; expressive, but delicate, and not (at first) loud or dramatic' and 'fluid; not rigid or mechanical'. The score ends with a 4/4 time signature.

*p* <sup>3</sup> with an introspective intensity; expressive, but delicate, and not (at first) loud or dramatic

*p* fluid; not rigid or mechanical

*pp* *p*

*ppp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*

*p* *mf*

*mp* <sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup>

*mf* *p*

*p*

8

growing more assertive

*p* *f* *p*

*mp* *pp*

10

tugging, a bit insistent

*mp* *f* *ff*

12

deliberately

*mp* *f*

*pp* *p*

14 *calmer*  
*f*  
*mf*  
*mp*  
*pp*  
*ppp*

16  
*p*  
*p*

Gently fidgety ♩. = ca. 58-66

18  
*p*  
*pp*  
*pp*

22

Musical score for measures 22-26. The piece is in 2/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with triplets and slurs. The left hand provides harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

Still slow, but less calm ♩ = ca. 66-72



27

Musical score for measures 27-30. The time signature changes from 2/4 to 3/4. The right hand continues with melodic lines and triplets. The left hand features a dense chordal texture. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo).

31

Musical score for measures 31-34. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. The right hand has melodic lines with triplets and a quintuplet. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *ff* (fortissimo).

34

*mf* *ff* *fff*

36

*mf* *mp*

38

*f* *mp*

40

*p*

3

**Faster but not fast** ♩ = ca. 88

42

*quasi n*

*mf*

3

3

3

trying to sing, but a bit ungainly

45

*p*

3

3

3

3

50

*sim.*

*mp* *ff*

Measures 50-52. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line and a fermata over the first measure. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with triplets and dynamic markings.

53

*p*

*mf* *f*

Measures 53-56. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line and a fermata over the first measure. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with triplets and dynamic markings.

57

*poco accel.*

*p* *mp* *pp*

Measures 57-60. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line and a fermata over the first measure. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with triplets and dynamic markings.

Hushed, murmuring ♩ = ca. 120

Delicate, distant (but not slow) ♩ = ca. 108

61

ppp pppp n

pp pppp

8<sup>va</sup> quietly obsessed; not too jagged

mp p mp p

ppp pppp

66

(8<sup>va</sup>)

mp p mp p mp pp

71

8<sup>va</sup>

p (poco) mp pp subito p (poco) p

77

Musical score for measures 77-81. The score is written for a grand piano with three staves: a vocal line (8va) and two piano staves. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 2/4. The piano part features complex textures with sixths, triplets, and dynamic markings: *mp*, *f*, *pp*, *ppp*, and *p*. The vocal line is mostly silent in this section.

82

Musical score for measures 82-86. The score is written for a grand piano with three staves: a vocal line (8va) and two piano staves. The key signature is three flats and the time signature is 2/4. The piano part features complex textures with triplets, sixths, and dynamic markings: *f* and *mf*. The vocal line (8va) is active, with dynamic markings *f* and *mf*.

87

Musical score for measures 87-91. The score is written for a grand piano with three staves: a vocal line (8va) and two piano staves. The key signature is three flats and the time signature is 2/4. The piano part features complex textures with triplets, sixths, and dynamic markings: *mp*, *pp*, *f*, and *pp*. The vocal line (8va) is active, with dynamic markings *mp*, *pp*, and *f*. Performance instructions include "tentative" and "bold, pushing forward".



→ poco vib.

105 poco sul pont.

*pppp* *pp* *p*

109 ord.

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

*mp* *mf*

*mp*

114 accel.

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

*mp* *p*

*mp* *p*

Briefly quite fast ♩ = ca. 160

Suddenly slower, but steady ♩ = ca. 96

121

mf pp mf ord.

pp mf 5 5

pp

127

p f p

p f p

131

Faster, but calm ♩ = ca. 120

f p mf 3 3 3

f p mf 5 5 5 5

Sparkly and unstable ♩ = ca. 96

134

pp

139

scrambling ahead

ff mp f

sffz

half-pedalled; let it bleed and blur together

143

5 6



**Rushing forward** ♩ = ca. 120

147

*p* *mf*

*the notes bleeding together; gently disruptive*

*p* *pp* *mp* *p* *pp*

151

*mf* *p* *mf*

**(Slower)**

jeté (each note a thrown bow)

155

*p* *mf*

159 *ord.*

*f*

*f* *p*

163

*as if suddenly waking up*

*f*

3

166

*ff*

*ff*

168

*p* *mf* *sim.*

171

*p* *mf* *pp*

**Trying to flow** ♩ = ca. 96  
*sul tasto; a bit overwrought and expressive*  
 The *tenuti* shouldn't overpower the prevailing *p* dynamic.

**Faster** ♩ = ca. 120  
*sul pont., harsh non vib.*

173

*p* *pp* *p > pp* *p < pp* *p > pp* *p < pp* *ff*

*p* *f*

♩ = ca. 96  
sul tasto, espressivo  
ord. (vib.)

♩ = ca. 120

179

*p* *pp* *ff*

*p* *mf* *f*

184

*p* *mf*

*mf* *f*

*8va* *loco*

190

*f*

*f*

*8va*

*molto espressivo*  
*sul tasto, molto vibrato*

196

*f* *p* *ppp*

*loco*

201

*pp* *pppp* *f* *p*

*ord.* *molto sul tasto*

206

*mf* *p* *f*

*ord.*

210

(8va)

*mp*

213 **Gently rocking** ♩ = ca. 69

sul pont.

*p* *sim.*

*loco*

*ppp* *bleeding together* *p* *mp*

*mp* *ppp*

216

*p* *mp* *p*

*pp* *mp* *pp*

*molto sul pont.*

219

*mp*

*pp* *mp* *pp* *mp*

222

*pp* *mp*

224

*pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* 8vb

Furtive ♩ = ca. 108

227

jeté c.l.b. ord. c.l.b. ord.

*pp* sempre

stopped

*mp*

(half muted w/ LH, inside the piano)

*mf* *pp*

(8vb)

Held back ♩ = ca. 54

236

jeté jeté c.l.t. c.l.b. jeté c.l.t. c.l.b.

pizz. + jeté arco

c.l.t. pont. ord., espr.

*p* *mp* *mp*

*pp* steady and subdued

*p* *sim.*

(8vb)

[catch resonance with pedal, just after the LH note (through m. 246)]

A bit faster; pushing forward ♩ = ca. 63

241

*mf* *espr.* *mf*

(8vb)

Quietly flowing ♩ = ca. 96-100

246

*p*

*mp* *pp* *loco* *mf*

(8vb)-----

249

*pp* *mp*

*mf*

252

*mf*

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

256

*mf* *p* *pp*

260

*sim.* *f* *5* *mp*

**Unstable** ♩ = ca. 108  
*spiky, nervous*

*ppp*

266

*heavy, ponderous, violent*

*ff* *ff* *fff*

269

*f*

*hammering*

*ff*

*fff*

5

3

273

*f*

*f*

*f*

*ff*

3

3

278

*f*

*f*

*mf*

*ff*

*ff*

5

3

8va

[left blank for page turn]

Faster, turbulent ♩ = ca. 132

(8<sup>va</sup>)

283

*f*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

286

*mf* *f* *mp*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

289

*mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

292

*mp* *p* drifting away

3

(8<sup>va</sup>)

296

*p* *pp* *ppp* rit.

(8<sup>va</sup>)

301

*pp* *n*

3

8<sup>vb</sup>





