

THE SHAPESHIFTERS

By Anthony Granata

INSTRUMENTATION

Full Score	1
Violin I.	8
Violin II.	8
Violin III (Viola tr)	5
Viola.	5
Cello.	5
String Bass.	5

Now all your sections can practice shifting into third position! Shapeshifters are mythological beings with the ability to change their physical form, and your kids will have to work hard and shift their fingers. Students and teachers will love this challenging programmatic work, reminiscent of the beautiful and harmonically dissonant works of Ives, Bartok, and Stravinsky. From the opening and elegant "Largo" to the jarring and frightening "Allegro," this piece, in the key of G minor, is an excellent technical teaching piece that utilizes both beautiful harmonic suspensions, frightening and abrupt chords, and an overplay of all themes. A great concert opener or closer, for sure!

PROGRAM NOTES

Shapeshifters... the mythological beings with the ability to change their physical form at will. They are the subject of ancient legends and folklore dating back thousands of years. Often misunderstood, they can at first appear beautiful and innocent until violently shifting into something otherworldly. In the gorgeous opening "Largo," which introduces our shapeshifters main theme, we are subtly introduced to a discordant melody that hints at the frightening transformation yet to come. As if out of nowhere, they've abruptly shifted form in the exciting and terrifying "Allegro"! While we never know exactly what they transform into, listen closely as these creatures of myth struggle between their two forms, ultimately succumbing to their fate at the conclusion.

Note from the Editor

In orchestral music, there are many editorial markings that are open for interpretation. In an effort to maintain consistency and clarity you may find some of these markings in this piece. In general, markings for fingerings, bowing patterns, and other items will only be marked with their initial appearance. For a more detailed explanation of our editorial markings, please download the free PDF at www.alfred.com/stringeditorial.

X
extended position

-
shift

'
bow lift/reset

(b), (#), (q)
high or low fingerings

▣▣ or V V
hooked bowings



NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

As our young musicians grow, shifting is a necessary part of their advancement on string instruments. This piece focuses solely on shifting into third position, giving each section of your orchestra opportunities to practice and master this technique. Purposely set in the key of G minor, *The Shapeshifters* builds fluency in shifting from third to first position and understanding the importance of finger placement. For example, in measures 18 and 19, 2nd violins, violas, and cellos play a G, B \flat , and A, and in the next measure a G, B \flat , and A \flat . Working through such subtle finger placements should be a vital component in teaching this piece.

Opportunities for 1st violins to be challenged further, such as in measure 49, where top violinists can practice $\frac{1}{2}$ position, and in measure 48, where cellos can practice lower 2nd position, can further challenge your students during rehearsals. As always, basses will shift the most ($\frac{1}{2}$, I, II, and III), so give them some extra attention.

As for style, the marcatos at measure 21 are abrupt, so work on differentiating them from the accents and legatos/tenutos. Melodically and harmonically, really let those dissonant chords stand out to make audiences jump. Finally, the three-note motif introduced in measure one—have students identify each time it returns and make sure it's heard!

Dedicated to my friend and mentor, Mrs. Michele Anderson,
Bedford Middle School Orchestra, Director

The Shapeshifters

FULL SCORE
Duration - 3:45

By Anthony Granata (ASCAP)

Largo ♩ = 70

Violins
I 3rd Pos. 1 3 -2
II 3rd Pos. 1 3 -3

Viola (Violin III)
3rd Pos. 1 3 -2

Cello
4th Pos. 1 4 3rd Pos. -1

String Bass
3rd Pos. 4 1

f

1 2 3 4

Vlns.
I -1
II -1

Vla. (Vln. III)
2 -3

Cello
-2 -1 -2 4 -1 -2

Str. Bass
1/2 Pos. -2 -4

ff

5 6 7 8



Vlns. I *mf* -1

Vlns. II *mf*

Vla. (Vln. III) *mf*

Cello *mf* -1 -4

Str. Bass *mf* -1 0

9 10 11 12

Vlns. I *f* -1

Vlns. II *f* 4

Vla. (Vln. III) *f* 2

Cello *f* x1 pizz.

Str. Bass *f* pizz.

13 14 15 16 17

div.

21 Allegro ♩ = 145

rit.

Vlns. I
Vlns. II
Vla. (Vln. III)
Cello
Str. Bass

p pizz. -1
p pizz. -1
p
p
p

ff marcato arco
ff marcato arco
ff marcato arco
ff marcato arco
ff marcato arco

4
-2
-4

18 19 20 21 22

Vlns. I
Vlns. II
Vla. (Vln. III)
Cello
Str. Bass

sfz
sfz
sfz
sim.
sim.

4
-1
-2
-1
-1

23 24 25 26

28

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

27 28 29 30

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

31 32 33 34

35

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

mp legato

mf legato

mf legato

mp legato

mp legato

2

2

-4

-1

-2

x1

1

35 36 37 38 39

43

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

mf

f

ff

mf

ff

mf

ff

div.

-1

-2

-4

-1

-4

40 41 42 43

Frightening!

Musical score for measures 44-47. The score includes parts for Violins I and II, Viola (Violin III), Cello, and String Bass. The key signature is B-flat major. The tempo/mood is 'Frightening!'. The dynamic is *ff*. The first violin part starts with a first position (*1st Pos.*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The second violin part also starts with a first position (*1st Pos.*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The viola part starts with a second position (*-2*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The cello part starts with a first position (*1st Pos.*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The string bass part starts with a first position (*0*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The score is marked with a large red watermark: 'Preview Only - Legal Use Requires Purchase'.

44

45

46

47

Musical score for measures 48-51. The score includes parts for Violins I and II, Viola (Violin III), Cello, and String Bass. The key signature is B-flat major. The tempo/mood is 'Frightening!'. The dynamic is *ff*. The first violin part starts with a first position (*1st Pos.*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The second violin part starts with a first position (*1st Pos.*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The viola part starts with a second position (*-2*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The cello part starts with a first position (*1st Pos.*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The string bass part starts with a first position (*0*) and includes a fermata over the first measure. The score is marked with a large red watermark: 'Preview Only - Legal Use Requires Purchase'.

49 *2nd Pos.*

div.

48

49

50

51

52 53 54 55

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

sfz

div.

non div.

decresc.

pp

pp

x1

-4

-2

-1

-3

-4

-2

-4

-2

56 57 58 59

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

pp

pizz.

p

pizz.

p

pizz.

p

pizz.

p

-1

-4

62

pizz. 2

p

pizz. 0 -2

p

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

60 61 62 63

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

64 65 66 67

arco

pp

69 Frightening! (Come prima)

Violins I and II, Viola (Vln. III), Cello, and String Bass parts for measures 68-71. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The first part of the system (measures 68-69) features a dynamic of *sub. f* and includes *arco* markings. The second part (measures 70-71) continues with *sub. f* dynamics and *arco* markings. A large red watermark 'Preview Only' is overlaid on the score.

Violins I and II, Viola (Vln. III), Cello, and String Bass parts for measures 72-75. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The first part of the system (measures 72-73) features a dynamic of *mf legato* and includes *arco* markings with fingerings (-1, -1, 4). The second part (measures 74-75) continues with *mf legato* dynamics. A large red watermark 'Preview Only' is overlaid on the score.

79

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

div. -4

cresc.

ff

-2

cresc.

ff

cresc.

ff

cresc.

-4

cresc.

76 77 78 79

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

-2

-1

div.

80 81 82 83

85

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

84 85 86 87

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

88 89 90 91

94

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

92 93 94 95 96

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

97 98 99 100 101

102

Vlns. I *ff* *cresc.*

Vlns. II *ff* *cresc.*

Vla. (Vln. III) *ff* *cresc.*

Cello *ff* *cresc.*

Str. Bass *ff* *cresc.*

102 103 104 105

Allargando rit. a tempo

Vlns. I *fff*

Vlns. II *fff*

Vla. (Vln. III) *fff*

Cello *fff* vigorously!

Str. Bass *fff* vigorously!

106 107 108 109 110

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