

## PREFACE

In early 2010, the ARC Ensemble's artistic director, Simon Wynberg, invited me to look at an unfinished work by Felix Mendelssohn. The piece was to feature in the ensemble's Music in Exile series, included in a program that examined National Socialism's aversion to the composer, and the dispersal of his works during the regime's control. Scored for piano and violin, this undated, single-movement "Sonata" is part of the Mendelssohn-Archiv in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (MWV Q 18). It is thought that the piece was composed in 1825-26, when Mendelssohn was fifteen or sixteen years old, and it consists of 366 measures of unbroken content. So its performance is possible, although it lacks a conclusion, sputtering out with the iconic rhythmic motif that begins Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, here stated *pianissimo*.

Mendelssohn's fragment has promising musical potential and contains several striking melodic and harmonic ideas. It is possible to append an ending, as violinist Benjamin Bowman and I did in our first performance, but it still lacks a cohesive sonata-form structure (its title notwithstanding) and the writing, particularly for the violin, is occasionally sketchy or incomplete; deficiencies uncharacteristic of Mendelssohn's finished works, with their sophisticated craftsmanship and mastery of classical architecture.

A year after my introduction to the piece I decided to undertake a complete reconstruction. I cut the fragment into smaller parts, and, using the technique of collage, organized them so they constituted a classical sonata movement. I wanted to avoid the introduction of a foreign compositional style so I preserved, in some form or another, all of the material contained in the fragment, including large sections in their entirety. The opening *Adagio* introduction was retained virtually in its original form. Mendelssohn's extended passages modulating into distant tonalities (E minor, C minor, and F-sharp major) were also preserved, with a few small alterations, and were incorporated into the development section of my reconstruction. Any resulting lacunae (the second theme in the exposition and the final coda were notably lacking) were filled using newly-composed material that expanded on Mendelssohn's thematic ideas. The original common-time signature of Mendelssohn's *Allegro molto* has been amended to cut-time and some measures have been expanded, with occasional redistribution or transposition of material. Figurations that could amplify the texture were culled from other works by the composer, including the Double Concerto for Piano and Violin. In the recapitulation of my reconstruction, listeners may recognize the melodic peroration of the second theme as a borrowing from Mendelssohn's E minor Violin Concerto.

Since 2011, Benjamin Bowman and I have performed my completed version of the Mendelssohn Violin Sonata in D minor (a fragment no longer) a number of times in ARC Ensemble concerts, notably at the Concertgebouw and Wigmore Hall. These live concert performances have helped to further refine the work and its reception has been both illuminating and rewarding. A recording, produced by David Frost and released in 2016, represents the culmination of this process.

Mendelssohn must have had ample reason to set aside this sonata and leave it unfinished. Perhaps his attention was diverted by one of a myriad of other musical projects that date from the same time — songs, the third piano quartet, the string octet? Or perhaps he was slightly embarrassed by how much his idolization of Beethoven had influenced this particular effort, especially since Beethoven was the most famous composer of the day. Today Beethoven's influence on Mendelssohn's prodigious and precocious talent can be unashamedly acknowledged, an influence that I have played up in my reconstruction of this sonata.

I wish to thank Simon Wynberg, Benjamin Bowman, Florence Minz, and Dr. Peter Simon for their generous advice and encouragement.

DAVID LOUIE (Toronto, 2016)

# SONATA

FELIX MENDELSSOHN  
completed from a manuscript fragment\* by  
David Louie

Violin

Adagio

*p* *sostenuto* *pp*

Piano

*sostenuto* *p* *Leo.* *pp*

*espress.*

*poco rit.* *Leo.*

*espress.*

*cresc.* *f* *riten.* *p*

*cresc.* *f* *riten.* *p*

*Leo.* \*

# SONATA

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

## Violin

completed from a manuscript fragment\* by  
David Louie

**Adagio**

*p sostenuto* *pp* *espress.*

12 *espress.*

22 *cresc.* *f riten.* *p*

30 *cresc.* *f* *p* *a piacere*

38 *perdendosi* *pp* **Allegro molto**

45 *ff* *p* *cresc.*

52 *f* *cresc.* *ff* *f* *f dim.* *p* *pp* *ten.* *f marcato*

63 *ff* *sf* *p* *cresc.*

70 *f* *cresc.* *ff* *sf* *sf* *f* *agitato*

78 *ff*

87

93 *ff* **4**

105 *p* *espress.*

Musical staff 105-117: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with various intervals and slurs. The dynamic marking is *p* and the articulation is *espress.*

118 *espress.*

Musical staff 118-127: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and triplet markings. The dynamic marking is *espress.*

128

Musical staff 128-141: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals.

142 *sempre pp*

Musical staff 142-148: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals. The dynamic marking is *sempre pp*.

149 *pp* *molto cresc.* *ff*

Musical staff 149-154: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals. The dynamic markings are *pp*, *molto cresc.*, and *ff*. A first ending bracket is present.

155 *cresc.*

Musical staff 155-162: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals. The dynamic marking is *cresc.*. A second ending bracket is present.

163 *tr* *sf*

Musical staff 163-169: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals, including trills marked *tr*. The dynamic marking is *sf*.

170 *f*

Musical staff 170-178: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals. The dynamic marking is *f*.

179

Musical staff 179-185: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals.

186

Musical staff 186-191: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals.

192 *ff*

Musical staff 192-198: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals. The dynamic marking is *ff*.

199 *sf*

Musical staff 199-204: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals. The dynamic marking is *sf*.

205 *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Musical staff 205-211: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with slurs and various intervals. The dynamic marking is *sf*.

212 *sf* *sfz* 5 5

216 *sfp* *cresc.* *ff* *f* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *ff*

225 10 *sf* *sf* *sf* *pp* *espress.*

242

254 2 2 *pp* *pp*

263

268

275

281

290

298 *p* *poco a poco cresc.*

307 *f* *sempre cresc.*

316 *ff marcato*

324 3

4  
336 *f* *f* *agitato* *f* *con fuoco*

345 *cresc.*

356 *ff* **Adagio** *sostenuto* *espress.*

367 *dim.* *cresc.* *riten.* *ff* *a piacere*

375 **Allegro molto** *p* *cresc.*

381 *f* *cresc.* *ff* *sf* *sf* *sffz* *p* 4

392

404 3 3 *espress.*

412 *cresc.*

420 *f marcato* *dim.* 2

430 *pizz.* *pp* 2 *pizz.* *cresc.* *f* *leggiere* *arco*

438 *espress.* *dim.* 11

455 *sempre ff* *agitato* *sf*

464 *sf* *sempre ff*

472 *sf* *sf*

479 *sf* *sf* *sempre cresc.*

484 *ff*