

Sara Cubarsi (2026)

FORMULA
AMORIS IN PERPETUUM

for Viola d'Amore and Tape

To Annegret & Hildegard

Performance Notes

1. Timing & Tape:

Time-units/gestures are divided by tick bar lines.

The timing of the units gets faster as the piece progresses, the speed from the opening to the last part is approximately doubled: from *Sequentia I* where the "bar" or "step" takes ca. 10-12 seconds, to *Sequentia VII* where it takes ca. 4-6 seconds.

The tape is ideally amplified through a transducer attached to the back of the viola d'amore. Alternatively, it can be otherwise amplified as convenient.

There are 4 easy tape triggers to be done with the foot on Q-Lab. If this is not convenient, one could make a one tape track, and play the first page with a timer, or have someone else trigger.

2. Rhythm:

Except for the last part, *Consummatio*, the piece is rhythmically *ad libitum*, following the tape, with approximate note-lengths, allowing the performer to expressively find their own flow. The notation is as follows:

/ = short break, anything between a breath and ca. 2 seconds

// = medium break, anything between ca. 3 seconds and ca. 6 seconds

/// = long break, anything more than ca. 6 seconds

Breve = drone for the whole section, until net semibrive appears

Whole note = long tone sustained until a break (/, //, ///) appears, usually 4-10 seconds

Half note-head = something shorter than a whole, something like 2-4 seconds

Black note-head = around 1-2 seconds

Small black note-head = passing note, somewhat ornamental

Grace note = pizz. and arpeggiated chords are notated as grace-notes

l.v. = mini ties are reminders that the previous tone continues past the ticked bar-unit

Consummatio is rhythmically notated as normally, but can be interpreted also *poco ad libitum*.

The time of each microtonal step on the viola d'amore, starting from *Sequentia I* until *VII*, becomes shorter as the "tempo flow" increases, so the duration of these noteheads become also faster proportionally to the step-flow. Follow the tape which leads the pace, by ear.

3. Microtonal notation:

The piece is written with the extended HEJI scientific pitch notation.

Accidentals apply to the bar unit.

4. Viola d'amore:

The tuning of the open strings are the notes of the first chord. It is 3-5-7-9-11-13-15 of the overtone series of C.

The microtonal steps should move seamlessly to the next one, *quasi poco gliss.* and always as legato as possible.

One may use one wood pin on the left side of the bridge as a mute, depending on balance and how strenuous it feels for the voice. The viola should sound balanced with the sine-waves, and the voice should feel the resistance of the chords/sound. Adjust as necessary. The viola and sinewaves should never overpower the voice.

The colour of the tone moves from a quiet *flautato sul tasto* to a loud(er) more intense sound near or *sul pont.*. Adjust the indications freely according to this progression, always fitting with the voice and tape balance.

5. Voice:

Always *un pochissimo gliss.* Where *gliss.* is written, over do it and show the *glissando*.

One can play a bit with the vowels to reinforce more or less overtones, more closed or open Os, or Es, or slightly U-ing the O when transitioning to M. One may be creative with this or add ornaments if desired.

About

FORMULA AMORIS IN PERPETUUM is a spell for a singing viola d'amore performer with tape, written for Annegret Mayer-Lindenberg.

It calls the names of various deities, asking for an everlasting love and desire. Inspiration is drawn from the Greek Magical Papyri and from various religious quotations, placing it in an ambiguous spiritual space. As in medieval graphic notation, the overall form, as well as the length and content of each sequential section in the original score, was designed as a rhombus containing a heart. A rhombus figure made out of a formulaic sequence of letters is also found in a spell from the Greek Magical Papyri, PGM XVIIa.1–25. In the ancient Coptic text, it appears to be an erotic and cosmological symbol, associated with female desire and with the summoning of Sophia (wisdom) through submission to longing. The papyrus comes with the conjuration and a magic formula of letters.

The vocal line, sung by the violist, emerges from within the instrumental gesture. It progresses from sounds that echo the well-known primordial sound, OM or AUM, to vowel sequences that begin to form latinized words and names of Egyptian gods such as Anubis or Osiris, the Greek god Eros, with a call of an eroticized dog (*canis eroticus*), as well as various ancient names and ritualistic sounds that stand for God: IAE, IAO, ELIA. One may wonder if it is closer to nonsense or, realize it is at the other extreme, to complete ancestral sense. The piece concludes with the effectuation of the original ancient spell, with increased consonants and rhythmic flow—ABLATANALBA...—in a palindromic structure, as in the papyrus.

The musical material is based on a never-ending glissando, *in moto perpetuo*, stretching from the lowest to the highest possible pitch of the instrument, guided by the internal axes of the retuned open strings. The viola's seven strings are tuned according to odd harmonics from the series of C—from the 3rd to the 15th overtone (3–5–7–9–11–13–15)—creating an open-string accord that resonates with an unsettling consonance. Just intonation is a medium to experience the sensuality of vertical sound/harmony itself, and the vessel where the formula gestates and emerges in the melodic horizontal axis.

Sara Cubarsi, Köln, 26h of February 2026

Lyrics

Introitus:

Um, um, oum, uom.

Sequentiae:

I

Oum, aoum, muoum, m, om, mu oa, auom,
aummorum, moui, muoan, morin.

II

Aui, muo aon;
aui, uo monin.
Iao o anubi, iae o enoui, iana imao uinum;
oumuo, ia, ei, Anubis.

III

Neli e amor est, eoeroe;
cani eroticun, cani lascivu, libidinou noue;
noe i loi, ole i loa, eli aoa, elioha...

IV

In ae, aeternum, hae, aeternum;
o heüa, e le haia, halelüIA!
Maeternum, in paeternum, perpetuum...

V

Canis eroticus, canis lascivus,
libidinosus ui, jini, lii jini, lini, loi, nüi!

VI

Iae, iao, iae, Osirie!
Iao, iae, iao, Himereeros! Hemeriaio!

VII

He oooe, oooe, ooe;
hi ooe, hie...

Consummatio:

Oail, oail, oail:

A, A

BA, AK,

LBA, AKR,

ALBA, AKRA,

NALBA, AKRAM,

ANALBA, AKRAMM,

THANALBA, AKRAMMA,

ATHANALBA, AKRAMMACH,

NATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHA,

ANATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHAM,

LANATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHAMA,

BLANATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHAMAR,

ABLANATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHAMARI,

BLANATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHAMAR,

LANATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHAMA,

ANATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHAM,

NATHANALBA, AKRAMMACHA,

ATHANALBA, AKRAMMACH,

THANALBA, AKRAMMA,

ANALBA, AKRAMM,

NALBA, AKRAM,

ALBA, AKRA,

LBA, AKR,

BA, AK,

A, A.*

LNm,

h.

FORMULA

AMORIS IN PERPETUUM

Sara Cubarsi

Introitus

7" 7" 11" 11"

Voice: 15/13/11/9/7/5/3 pizz. subito! + pizz. U→m, ppp possibile u→m,

Viola d'Amore: ff ff arco flautato sul tasto ppp ppp

Tape: sinewave 15^{ma} pp

13" 13"

Voice: breathe if needed o→ um, u→ om.

Viola d'Amore: pochissimo crescendo pp

Tape: Tape triger #2

Sequentia I

O→u→m, a→o→u→m, m→u→o→um, m, o→m, m→u o→a,

2/1* 23/12 15/8 9/5 7/4 12/7 5/3 8/5

sul tasto +74** +38 +71 +49 +36 +49 +71

pp subito ppp

sempre legatissimo possibile
hereon sempre con poco gliss. al nuovo tono

pp

* Harmonic ratio of the viola d'amore moving pitch against the drone-tone (later an open string).
 ** Size of the finger step in Cents from the previous tone. One may organize these mentally in 3 kinds of steps: tiny (30-40 cents), small (40-60 cents), less small (60-80 cents) and notate it in the score, if desired, with these symbols:

a → u → o → m, aum - mo - rum, mo → ui, mu → o → an, mo - rin.

14/9 3/2 16/11 7/5 11/8 4/3 9/7 5/4 6/5

+49 *subito pp* +63 +53 +66 +31 +53 +63 +49 +71 *p*

#3 ↓

Sequentia II

#4 A - u - i, m - u - o a - on; a - u - i, u - o mo - nin.

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

poco sul tasto 11/8 4/3 9/7 5/4 11/9

sempre legato +31 +53 +63 +49 +39

Ia - o o a - nu bi, ia - e o e - nou i, ia - na i - ma - o ui - num, ou - muo, i - a, e - i, A - nu - bis.

p *mp* *p* *p* *mp*

6/5 7/6 8/7 10/9 14/13 23/27 1/1

+32 +49 +36 +49 +54 +65 +63

* prolong the "s" after the niente

Sequentia III

#5

Se li e a - mor est, eoe - ro - e; ca - ni e - ro - ti - cun, ca - ni la - sci - vu,

mf *p* *mp* *mp*

9/7 pochissimo sul tasto 5/4 11/9 6/5 7/6

mf +49 *mp* +39 +32 +49

mp

li bi - di - no u nou - e no - e i lo - i, o - le i lo - a, e - li a - o - a, e - li - o - ha...

mf *f*

8/7 9/8 12/11 16/15 32/31 1/1 *sempre attacca!*

+36 +49 +32 +39 +58.5 +53 *f*

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc. *f*

sempre attacca!

Sequentia IV

(#F) *tr* *only trill with the vowels *tr* --> *tr* slower *tr* --> *tr* slower

In a/e, a/e - te/er* - nu/um (h)a/e tern um, o he - ü - a, e le ha - i - a, Ha - le - lü - IA!

f *mf* *f*

11/9 ordinario 6/5 7/6 8/7 9/8 12/11

f +32 +49 +36 +49 +32

f

Sequentia V

Ma - e - te/er - nu/um, i/i(n) pa/e - ter num, per_ pe - tu - um... Ca - nis e ro - ti - cus, ca - nis - la - sci - vus, li - bi - di -

ff

16/15 33/32 1/1 13/11 8/7 10/9

ordinario (arco)

+39 +58.5 +53 +58 +49

ff

Sequentia VI

no_ sus_ ui, ji - ni, li - i, ji_ ni, li_ ni, lo - i, nū - i! *ff* la - e, ia - o, ia - e, O_ si - ri - e!

ff

12/11 16/15 32/31 1/1 15/13 10/9

poco sul pont. (arco)
subito!>

+32 +39 +58.5 +53 +65

> mf *ff*

Sequentia VII

vocal tremolo, like a sheep

Ia - o, ia - e, ia - o, Hi - me - re - e - ros! He - me - ri - a - o! *fff* He o - o - o - e, o - o - o - e, o - o - e, hi o - o - e, hi - e

poco sul pont.

16/15 32/31 1/1 0/2 1/3 (beating) 1/1

+71 +58.5 +53 +53 +50

fff

ff

(Fade in echo "Chorus")

Consummatio

*as high as possible,
like a scream or animal call

A tempo, ♩=ca.80

poco ad. lib, uncoordinated with track

mp

sul pont. -->ord.

ad. lib! *molto rubato!*

sfz *mf*

(Tape vocals *cresc.*)

19
17
15
13
11
9
7
5
3
1

2 uncoordinated voices at slightly different tempi

A - BLA- NA- THA NAL- BA, AK RAM- MA - **H!** MA- RI
A -THA -NAL-BA, AK - RAM - **H!** NA -THAN-AL -BA,

" **H!** " = loud breathe-in sound, without hyperventilating

AK - R, AL - BA, AK - RA, NAL - BA, AK - RAM, A - NAL-BA,

mp

17
15
13
11
9
7
5
3
1

Pitch effect on tape voices, glissando al' unisono: B-♭

BLA - NA - THA -NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!** - MAR, LA NA - THA NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!** - MA,
AK - RAM - MA - **H!**, A - NA - THA -NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!**, LA - NA - THA -NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!** -

AK-RAMM, THA-NAL BA, AK-RAMM - A, A - THA-NAL BA, AK RAM - **H!**, NA-THAN

ord. ----- *sul pont.*

pp

15
13
11
9
7
5
3
1

A - NA - THA NAL BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!**, NA -THAN- AL - BA, AK- RAM- MA - **H!**, A - THA NAL - BA,
MA, BLA - NA - THA -NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!** MAR, A - BLA - NA - THA -NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!** - MA - RI

AL- BA, AK-RAM-MA - **H!**, A - NA - THA-NAL-BA, AK-RAM-MA **H!**, LA - NA - THA-NAL-BA, AK-RAM-

gliss.

pp

13
11
9
7
5
3
1

pp

AK - RAM - MACH, THA- NAL- BA, AK - RAMM, A - NAL - BA
 BLA - NA - THA - NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - CHA - MAR, LA - NA - THA - NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - CHA - MA,

MA **H!**- MA, BLA-NA - THA-NAL-BA, AK-RAM-MA - **H!**- MAR, A - BLA-NA-THA-NAL-BA, AK-RAM-MA- **H!** -

gliss.

11
9
7
5
3
1

AK - RAMM, NAL - BA, AK - RAM, AL - BA,
 A - NA - THA - NAL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!**, NA - THAN - AL - BA, AK - RAM - MA - **H!**, A - THA - NAL - BA,

MA - RI, BLA-NA - THA-NAL-BA, AK-RAM - MA- **H!**- MAR, LA - NA - THA-NAL-BA, AK-RAM-MA -

gliss.

9
7
5
3
1

AK - RAM - RA, L - BA, AK - R, BAK,
 AK - RAM - **H!**, THA - NAL - BA, AK - RAMM - - - A - NAL - BA

H! - MA, A - NA - THA-NAL- BA, AK-RAM - MA *H!*, NA-THAN-AL - BA, AK-RAM-MA- *H!*, A - THA -

gliss.

ppp

AK RAMM, L-N-M NAL - BA, AK - RAM, AL - BA,

NAL- BA, AK-RAM *H!*, THA-NAL- BA, AK-RAMM, A NAL- BA, AK-RAMM, NAL - BA, AK-RAM, AL -

ppp

AK - RA, L - BA, AK - R, BAK, A, L-N-M

until end *ppp*

ad lib.

BA, AK- RA, L- BA, AK- R, BAK, A, L-N-M

ppp

60"