

# Conversations

for clarinet, viola and cello

Robert Davidson

## Program Note

*Conversations* was composed for Perihelion shortly after returning from seven months of travel, focusing on musical study in South India and spending time in Europe and the USA. Perhaps as a result of the stimulus of this period, I found myself approaching the composition with a sense of openness, changing from my usual concern for the unity which results from reduced material. While the use of material is reduced, it stems from a wide range of sources, playfully combined. Hymns from my Methodist upbringing, Bach counterpoint, Sibelius harmony, Beatle tunes, rhythms of Kerala and countless other musics went into forming, in varying degrees, my musical intuition as it was in 1993. I attempted to allow this intuition full rein, believing that music is most successful when it accurately reflects its composer and his or her background.

Rational structures serve to organise the intuitive material of the three movements. The first and third movements are simple ground-bass canons. I am attracted to this form by its neat combination of repetition and variation, simultaneously defying and satisfying expectations, and by the way the instruments copy each other and get beyond their individual concerns. In the second movement a process of ever-diminishing time intervals articulates a handful of stretched-out chords, which accompany free pattern-melodies, swapped between the instruments in conversational fashion. Surrounding the first and second movements, and in the postlude, is music of quiet simplicity. Here there is less concern for rational structure than for communication of emotion, though not without a certain distance.

# Conversations

for clarinet, viola and cello

*for Perihelion*

Robert Davidson  
composed November 1993

## I Allegro $\text{d} = 132$

bright, forward

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Viola

Cello

$p$

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

$pp$

A Piu mosso  $\text{d} = 144$

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

$mf$

$p$

22

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

esp.

$mf$

$mp$

$mf$

$mp$

$piu f$

4

B♭ Cl.

32

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

32

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

41

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

49

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

56

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

64

Vla.

Vc.

**B**  
esp.

**C**

**D**

B♭ Cl.      71      calmly legato, sost.  
*f*      *p* subito  
 Vla.      71      legato, sost.  
 Vc.      71      *f*      *p* subito

**E** a little bolder

B♭ Cl.      82      *mf*  
 Vla.      82      *fp*  
 Vc.      82      *fp*

B♭ Cl.      92      *mf*

Vla.      92      *mf*

Vc.      92      *mf*

**F**

accomp.

B♭ Cl.      101      *p*      *fp*      bold but calm  
 Vla.      101      *mf*  
 Vc.      101      *fp*      *mf*      *mp*

B♭ Cl.      109      *mf*

Vla.      109      *mf*

Vc.      109      *mf*

G

B♭ Cl. 116

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl. 123

Vla.

Vc.

poco rit.

H

**Tempo I** ♩ = 132

B♭ Cl. 131

Vla. 131

Vc.

B♭ Cl. 139

Vla. 139

Vc.

B♭ Cl. 147

Vla. 147

Vc.

mf

**II Andante rubato**  $\text{♩} = 72$

7

B♭ Cl.      Vla.      Vc.

poco stringendo

154      Solo      pp      p

154      p      mp      p      mp      esp.      p

p      pp      mp      > p

a tempo      precise durations \* ——————

poco rit.

163      B♭ Cl.      mf      p

163      Vla.      mf      p

Vc.      mf      p

short pause      a tempo      poco rit.      | a tempo

172      B♭ Cl.      f dim.      p      pp

172      Vla.      (end of solo)      p      pp

Vc.      f dim.      Solo      p      mp > p

180      B♭ Cl.      mf      p

180      Vla.      esp.      p      mf      p

Vc.      p      mf      p

poco meno mosso      J

186      B♭ Cl.      ff      mf      mp > p      < mp > p      > pp      f p

186      Vla.      ff      mf      mp > p      < mp > p      > pp      f > p

Vc.      ff      > mf      dim.      > pp      f > p

8

**Piu mosso** ♩ = 96

buoyant

194 B♭ Cl. > f p > f p

194 Vla. > f p > f p

Vc. > f p > f p

K Tempo I ♩ = 72

201 B♭ Cl. > pp f p

201 Vla. > pp f p p sempre

Vc. > pp f p mp

207 B♭ Cl. > mp f p

207 Vla. > f p

Vc. > f p p

211 B♭ Cl. - c - m<sup>3</sup>f f

211 Vla. > mp fp

Vc. > mp

L

215 B♭ Cl. f p > > >

215 Vla. f p > > > mf

Vc. f p > > > p sempre

220 elegantly

B♭ Cl. *mf*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *f* *p*

220

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *f* *p*

224

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vla. *f* *p* *mf*

Vc. *p*

229 M mysteriously

B♭ Cl. *mf* *ff* *p*

Vla. *mf* *ff* *p* *pp*

Vc. *ff* *p* *pp*

233

B♭ Cl. *fp*

Vla. *c*

Vc. *c*

233

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

239

B♭ Cl. *f*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

10 N

B♭ Cl. 244 *f p* legato *mp*

Vla. 244 *f p* *mf*

Vc. 244 *accomp.* *f p pp*

B♭ Cl. 250 *mf* *mf*

Vla. 250 *mf* *mf*

Vc. 250 *mf*

B♭ Cl. 255 *pp* *f p mp* *accomp.*

Vla. 255 *pp* *f p pp*

Vc. 255 *p*

B♭ Cl. 261 *3* *>* *>*

Vla. 261

Vc. 261 *p* *mp* *<>*

B♭ Cl. 267 *3* *>*

Vla. 267

Vc. 267 *3*

273 P **Piu mosso**  $\text{♩} = 96^{11}$   
 B♭ Cl.  $\text{F} \text{ p } \text{F} \text{ p }$   
 esp.  
 Vla.  $\text{f} \text{ p } \text{p}$   
 Vc.  $\text{f} \text{ p }$   
 273  
 Vc.  $\text{f} \text{ p }$   
 280 Q **Tempo I**  $\text{♩} = 72$   
 B♭ Cl.  $\text{pp} <>$   
 Vla.  $\text{mp}$   
 Solo esp.  
 Vc.  $\text{pp} <>$   
 287  
 B♭ Cl.  $\text{mf}$   
 Vla.  $\text{mf}$   
 Vc.  $\text{mf}$   
 296 **rall.** **molto rit.** **a tempo** **poco rit.**  
 B♭ Cl.  $\text{dim. poco a poco}$   
 Vla.  $\text{dim. poco a poco}$   
 Vc.  $\text{dim. poco a poco}$   
 303 **a tempo** R **Piu mosso**  $\text{♩} = 96$  **rit.**  
 B♭ Cl.  $\text{pp}$   
 Vla.  $\text{pp}$   
 Vc.  $\text{pp}$

12

III Energetic  $\text{♩} = 152$ 

310

B♭ Cl.

Vla. marcato  
*f*  
marcato

Vc.

317

B♭ Cl. marcato  
*f*

Vla.

Vc.

323

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *sffz f*

Vc.

329

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *sffz f*

Vc.

334

B♭ Cl. ben marcato

Vla. ben marcato

Vc.

T

B♭ Cl. 338 

Vla. 338 

Vc. 338 

B♭ Cl. 344 

Vla. 344 

Vc. 344 

B♭ Cl. 351 

Vla. 351 

Vc. 351 

B♭ Cl. 358 

Vla. 358 

Vc. 358 

B♭ Cl. 363 

Vla. 363 

Vc. 363 

14

B♭ Cl.      V  
369 tenuto      very calm, but in strict tempo  
Vla.      legato, sost.  
Vc.

369 tenuto      p      0 pp  
Vla.      pp  
Vc.      legato, sost.

377  
B♭ Cl.      p  
Vla.      p legato, sost.  
Vc.

386  
B♭ Cl.      mf  
Vla.      accomp. pizz.  
Vc.      p

393  
B♭ Cl.      <> tr      accomp.  
Vla.      arco pp buoyant, joyful  
Vc.      mf

399  
B♭ Cl.  
Vla.  
Vc.

405 X

B♭ Cl.      savagely

Vla.      >*p*      *fff*

Vc.      *ff*

ritmico, marcato, energico

411 Y

B♭ Cl.

Vla.      ritmico, marcato, energico

Vc.      *ff*

417

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

423 Z

B♭ Cl.      sotto voce

Vla.      off the string      *pp*

Vc.      *p*      Solo esp., dolce, legato      *mp*

431

B♭ Cl.      *pp*

Vla.      *mp*      *pp*

Vc.      *mf*      *p*

AA

confidently joyful

438

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

438

savagely  
*fff* subito

445

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

451

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

BB

ben marcato

457

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

462

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

467 CC

B♭ Cl. *p* pizz.

Vla. *p* pizz.

Vc.

467 DD

B♭ Cl. *pp* <*mp* <*mf* <*f* *pp*

Vla. arco *pp* <*mp* <*mf* <*f* *pp*

Vc. arco *pp* <*mp* <*mf* <*f* *pp*

484 IV Andante  $\text{♩} = 104$

B♭ Cl.  $\frac{3}{4}$  -  $\frac{4}{4}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  -  $\frac{5}{4}$  -  $\frac{5}{4}$  -  $\frac{4}{4}$  -

Vla. semplice con sord. 0 *p* semplice con sord.

Vc. *p*

484 EE

B♭ Cl. -  $\frac{3}{4}$  -  $\frac{4}{4}$  -  $\frac{5}{4}$  -  $\frac{4}{4}$  - *pp* *ppp*,

Vla. *mp* *mf* *p* *ppp*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *p* *ppp*

493 FF semplice

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

501 GG

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

poco allarg. a tempo

510

B♭ Cl. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

518

B♭ Cl. *p*

Vla. *intense* *sul. II*

Vc. *intense*

523

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

526

Vla.

Vc.

529

B♭ Cl.

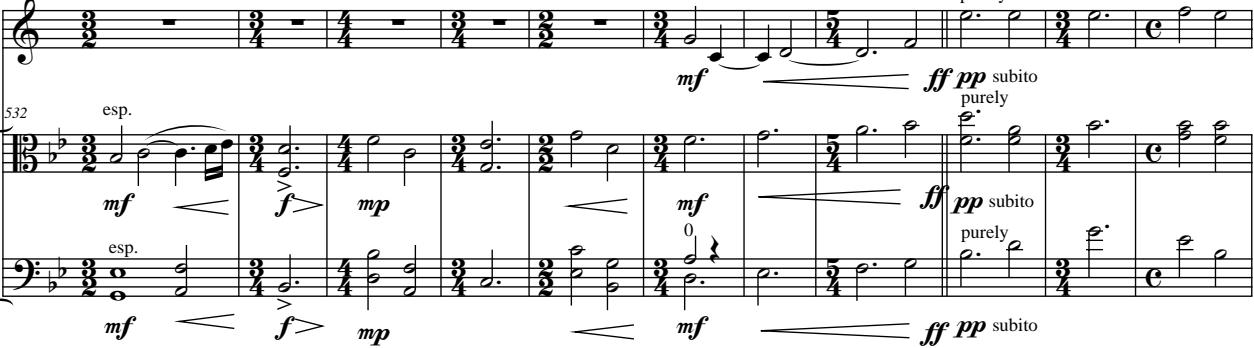
Vla. *f*

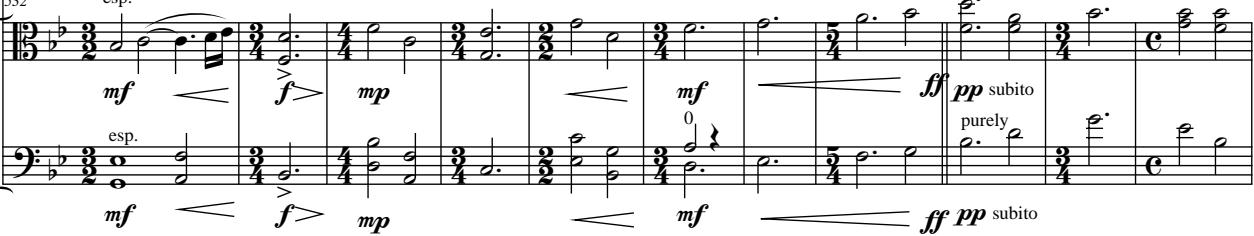
Vc. *f*

532 HH

poco allarg. a tempo poco allarg. JJ **Piu mosso**  $\text{d} = 76$  19

poco allarg. purely

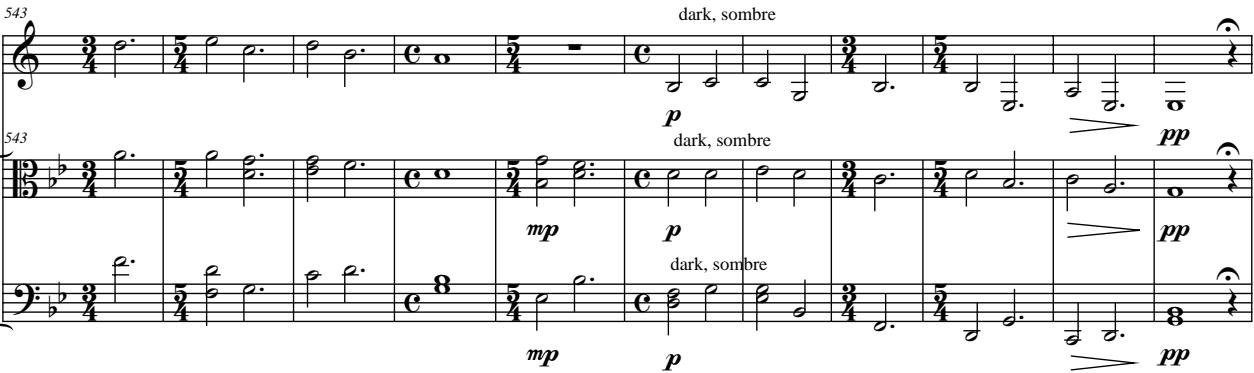
B♭ Cl. 

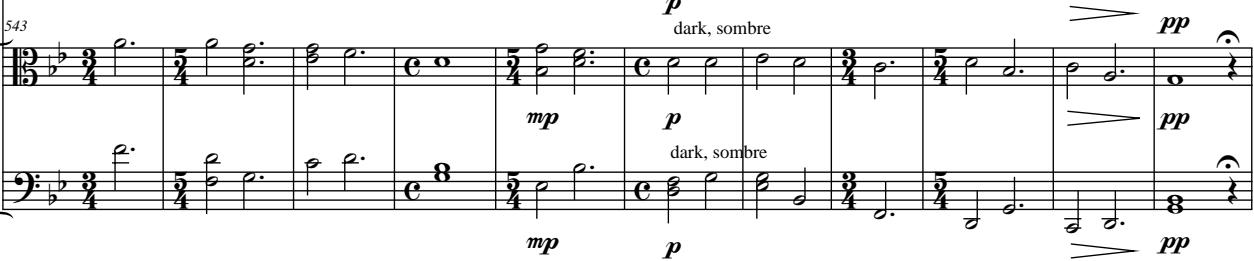
Vla. 

Vc. 

543

dark, sombre

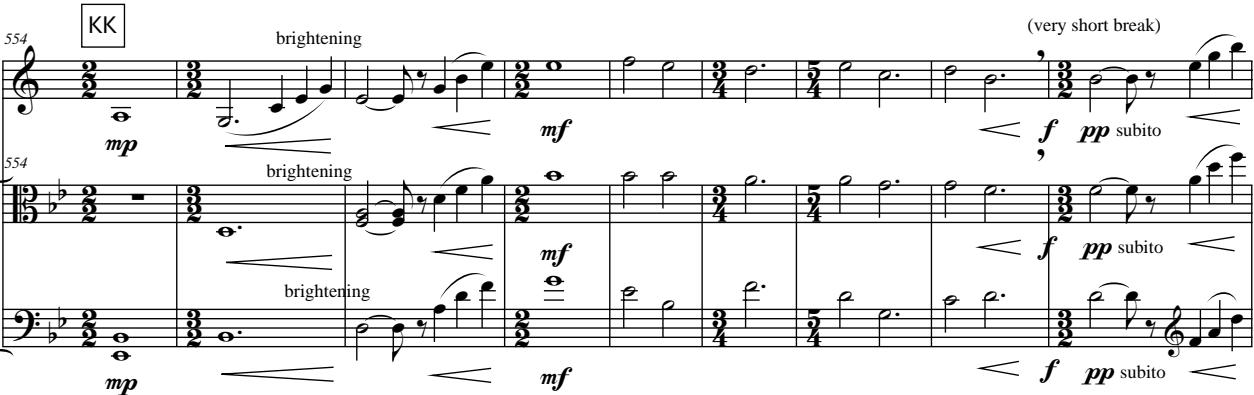
B♭ Cl. 

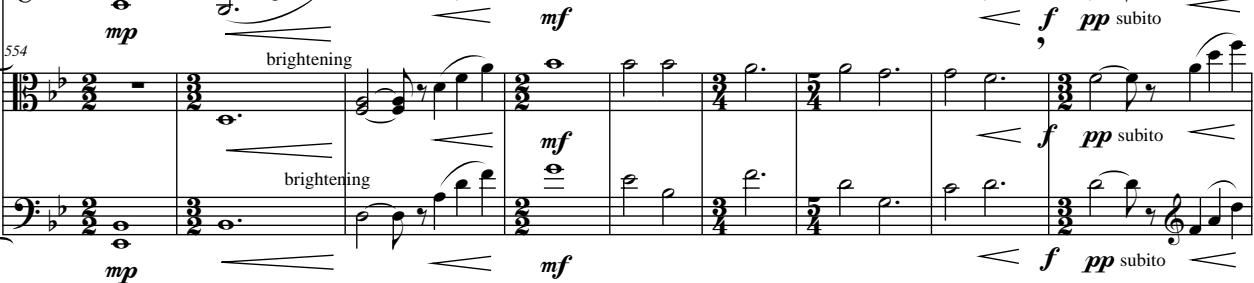
Vla. 

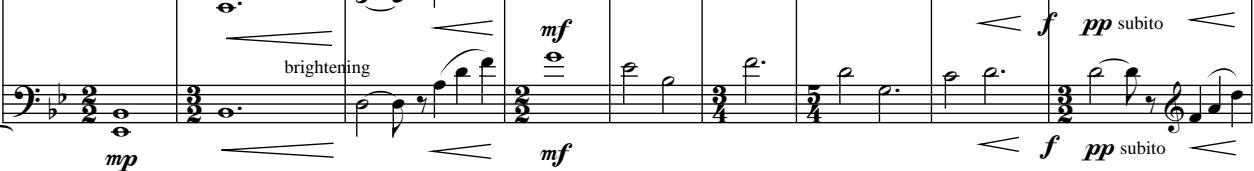
Vc. 

554 KK

brightening (very short break)

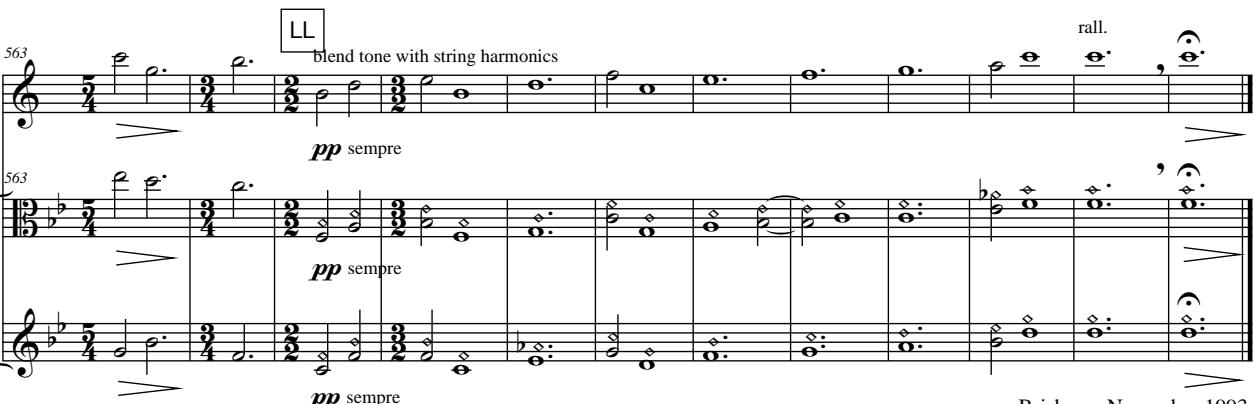
B♭ Cl. 

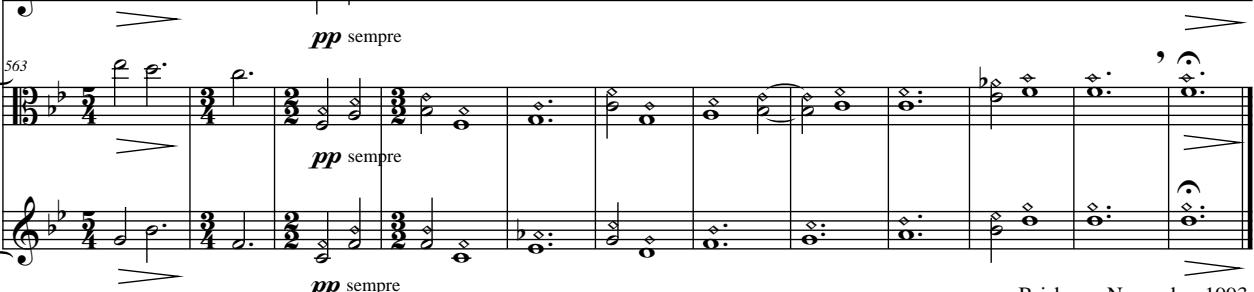
Vla. 

Vc. 

563 LL

blend tone with string harmonics rall.

B♭ Cl. 

Vla. 

Vc. 