

AMERICAN **VIOLA** SOCIETY

**SONATA
FOR SOLO VIOLA
“ENIGMA”**

Sven Helge Reher
(1911–1991)



AVS PUBLICATIONS 074

© 1979, Sven Helge Reher.

© 2022, Children of Sven Reher. All rights reserved.

This musical composition is licensed under a
[Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#).

For more information about the composer, his music, or the license under which this musical composition is released, email SvenReher-Legacy@4reher.org

Procured and prepared by Tanya Solomon, Chair of the Scores Committee for the American Viola Society.

About the Composer

Sven Helge Reher (born 1911 in Hamburg, Germany) came to Los Angeles with his family in 1914. His father, Wilhelm Reher, was a violinist who had performed under Nikisch, Mahler and others in the Hamburg Philharmonic. In the period 1914 to 1918 he was a member of the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra under Adolf Tandler. Frau Reher (née Callesen) was a pianist who had studied in Leipzig, Germany. After sundry continental and transoceanic peregrinations--during which Wilhelm reorganized the Houston Symphony and served among the first stands of the Cincinnati Symphony under Reiner--the Rehers settled permanently in Southern California.

Given his family's inclinations it was inevitable that Sven should become a musician; his first violin lessons were under the supervision of his father. Then, in the mid-nineteen twenties, both Sven and his younger brother Kurt studied at the prestigious Berliner Hochschule für Musik. Trading his violin for the heftier viola, Sven joined the ranks of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, then directed by Otto Klemperer, and served eight years (1934 to 1942).

After a stint in military intelligence in the European Theater, Reher returned to Los Angeles where he has ever since been an outstanding feature in the musical scene: as a member of the Hollywood String Quartet, as a regular performer on the Monday Evening Concerts, as a soloist with community orchestras, as a much-sought-after studio musician, and as an educator. He is the dedicatee of works by Walter Piston, Mario Castel-Nuovo-Tedesco, Ernst Kanitz and others; his recording of the Hindemith Sonata for Viola Unaccompanied was glowingly reviewed in the *New York Times*.

Tom Bertonneau *Biographical Narrative, Finding Aid for the Sven Reher Papers, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA*

A definitive autobiography of Mr. Reher can be found in a 1981 oral history completed for the *UCLA Center for Oral History Research* (link: [We Must Go Further Yet](#)). Additional physical materials pertaining to his life and career were donated posthumously to the *UCLA Library Department of Special Collections* (link: [Sven Reher Papers](#))

Compositions

- *Twelve Studies for Viola* (1978)
- *Sonata for Solo Viola: Enigma* (1979)
- *Cuenca – Rapsodia Para Flauta Y Viola* (1982)
- *Essay for Solo Viola and String Orchestra* (1983)
- *Christmas Music for Two Violas* (1984)
- *Twelve Studies for Intermediate Viola* (1986)
- *Music for Viola (In the First Position) With Piano Accompaniment, transcribed, arranged and edited by Sven Reher* (1988)

Selected Discography

- *Paul Hindemith Anthology, Volumes 2-4* (GSC Recordings 1972-1975; LoC # 74750800)
- *Leon Levitch: Quartet for Flute, Viola, Cello, and Piano* (Orion Records; LoC # 72750191)
- *Leon Levitch: Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 11* (Orion Records 1970; LoC # 75751579)
- *Eric Zeisl: Sonata for Viola and Piano in A minor* (Society for Performing Artists; 1950)

In addition to the above recordings, Mr. Reher performed in numerous commercial sound recordings. A partial list of those can be found on the [Discogs](#) web site.

Tribute

I would like to dedicate the digital conversion of these Viola music compositions to my father the composer, Sven Helge Reher (deceased January 1991). My father was a source of support and musical mentorship from my earliest years. When I was trying to learn the recorder as a young girl, he would sit with me and patiently guide me through the playing of duets. As I grew in life and in music, Sven invited me to join as a flutist in his recreational string quartet (in which he enjoyed playing First Violin). My dad and I later played a number of small concerts together along with a larger one in Los Angeles in which we performed the North American premiere of his work *Cuenca, Rhapsody for Flute and Viola*.

Listening to my father play his beautiful viola, or overhearing him teach his students, was always a source of learning for me; he was a fine and sensitive musician, and very supportive of his students. Toward the end of his life when he was suffering from the effects of a debilitating stroke, I once again learned from dad as I ministered to him with my Music Therapist hat on. I learned about the Spirit within, resonant behind our physical facades, and the power of music.

Sven, I dedicate this electronic modernization of your compositions to you! May your Spirit and contributions live on long past my time, helping to support present and future violists.

Acknowledgments

Many hands have been involved in this project, from seed to fruition. Violist Bruce Irschick gave initial encouragement for the digitization idea, providing assistance and opinions when needed. The final product would not have been possible without the technical initiative and skill of John Chapman, who completed all the tasks required to digitize the original manuscripts. The project piqued his interest, and his patience and dedication to the goal never waned. We, the family, are the benefactors of his generous time and effort in accomplishing the considerable amount of work required to bring the project to fruition.

I, Mary Reher (Sven's daughter), undertook the proofing of the digitized manuscripts and audio files, communicating corrections and editorial queries to John. Vincent Reher (Sven's son) was a collaborative supporter of the project, providing guidance and technical assistance in several areas including licensing and compiling biographical material. As with everything I undertake, my husband Andy Nowak has patiently offered advice when asked, as well as consistently being a solid base of support behind my back.

After his death, the physical copies of our father's music were distributed to many universities in different countries by David Reher (Sven's son). The current digitization project now brings Sven Reher's music into the modern world, where hopefully its life will continue with the benefit of this new and widely-accessible format.

Mary Reher
Pender Island, B.C. Canada
March 2022

Score Table of Contents

Movement I *	1
Movement II	3
Movement III	5
Movement IV	7

** A live recording of Movement 1 performed by the composer is available on the American Viola Society web site or can be obtained by contacting SvenReher-Legacy@4reher.org*

Dedicated to N. L. R.
Sonata for Solo Viola
"Enigma"
I*

Sven H. Reher

Adagio *Rubato - Expressivo*

The musical score is written for a solo viola in 12/8 time. It consists of nine staves of music, with measure numbers 6, 11, 16, 21, 27, 31, 36, and 41 marked at the beginning of their respective staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score includes various dynamic markings: *pp* (pianissimo) at the start, *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 6, *f* (forte) at measure 11, *p* (piano) at measure 16, *p* and *f* at measure 21, *ff* (fortissimo) at measure 27, *p* at measure 31, *poco cresc.* (poco crescendo) at measure 36, and *f* and *p* at measure 41. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and slurs. The score ends with a double bar line at the end of the ninth staff.

45 *mf* *mp*

50 *f* *ff*

54 *con anima* *mf*

59

63

67 *f* *mf* *p*

71 *ff* *sempre*

76 *pp*

82 *ff*

86 *f* *ff* *ff*

Allegro moderato

II

3

1 *p* *leggiere*

5

10 *cresc.* *f* *p*

14 *f*

18

22

26 *p* *cresc.*

30 **Molto adagio** *p* *f*

36 *p*

41

47 *p f p f p*

52 *p*

58 *Allegro moderato* *f p*

63

67

71 *f p*

75

79

83 *p*

87 *cresc.* *ff*

Andante - con sordino

1 *pp*

5

9

13 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

17

21 Melodia Semplice - Louise *poco rit.* *pp*

27 *p*

34

41

48

55 *p* *mf*

61 *f*

66 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

72

79 *Slowly*

84

88 *allargando* *Tempo Melodia Semplice* *p*

92

99 *pp* *poco*

Tempo I

107 *p*

111

115 *mf*

120 *pp* *mf* *molto rit.* *pp*

Molto vivace

1 *ff* *p*

4

6

8

10

12

14

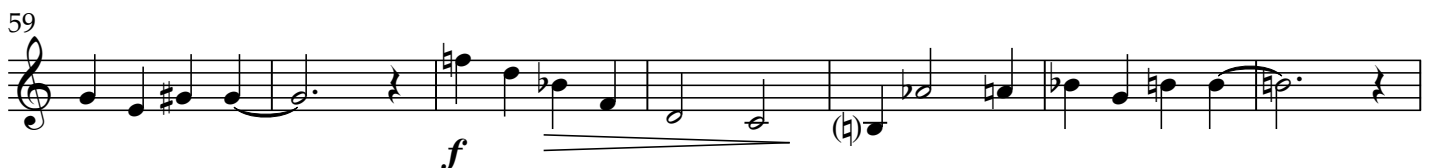
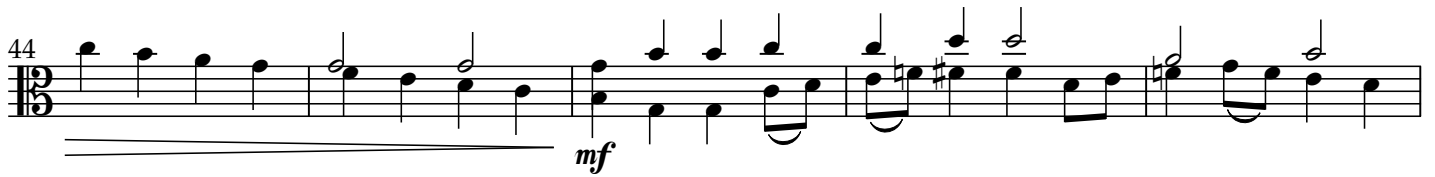
16

18

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a solo viola, measures 1 through 18. The tempo is marked 'Molto vivace'. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. Measures 1-15 are in bass clef, while measures 16-18 are in treble clef. The score begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a half-measure rest, followed by a piano (*p*) dynamic. The music consists of continuous eighth-note patterns with various accidentals (sharps, naturals, and flats) and some slurs. Measure 18 ends with a double bar line.



Adagio



66 **Andante sostenuto**

ff *molto dim.* *e rit.* *pp*

72 *cresc.*

79 *f*

86

93 *f* *ff*

100 *pp* *p* *mf*

106 *poco a poco accelerando*

109 **Tempo I** *pp*

111

113

115

117

119

121

123

125

127

129

131

133

135

ff

fine