

Por Una Cabeza

by

Alfredo Le Pera / Carlos Gardel

arranged by

David Scott

Complete String Orchestra Instrumentation

1 - Full Score

1 - Violin Solo & Violin I

1 - Violin Solo

10 - Violin I

10 - Violin II

1 - Viola Solo & Viola

1 - Viola Solo

8 - Viola

8 - Cello

6 - Contrabass

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ABOUT THE MUSIC:

For most listeners, Por Una Cabeza is THE iconic tango. It has been used in at least eight movies, including *Scent of a Woman*, *Schindler's List*, and *Titanic*. It was written in 1935 by Carlos Gardel and Alfredo Le Pera, both of whom died tragically in a plane crash later that same year. The song is the lament of a man who lost all his money betting on a horse race (*por una cabeza* means “by a head,” the amount his horse lost by), and also lost the woman he loves.

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

This tango gets its power from the almost schizophrenic contrast between the sweetness of the major section and the fiery passion of the minor. Emphasize this difference as much as possible by changing the vibrato, bow contact point, and bow pressure to create different tone colors.

Let the pizzicatos in the lower strings ring, like a harp or chorus of guitars.

Don't be afraid to slide between notes in the melody when it seems appropriate. For example, a juicy slide between the B flat and the D in measure 13 would be very tasty.

The conductor or concertmaster should choose where the slides should be, so that there is some uniformity throughout the violins – the music should sound free and effortless, but it takes tight ensemble to make that happen.

The violin solo (m. 32) should sound free and improvisatory. Use lots of rubato, a give-and-take feeling in the rhythm.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER:

David Scott has been composing and playing the violin since before he can remember. As a four-year-old he began violin studies in the Suzuki method, a tradition which his own children have continued. He attended Indiana University and Northwestern University, where in addition to his studies on violin, he composed “classical” music, a musical, and countless pop songs with his friends. Now a professional violinist in the Denver area, his compositions have been played by the Colorado Symphony, the Colorado Chamber Players, and in nearly one hundred schools around the area by the Up Close and Musical ensemble.

Por Una Cabeza

for String Orchestra

Full Score

Alfredo Le Pera
Carlos Gardel
arr. by David Scott

Moderato con rubato
♩=108 *dolce*

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Double Bass

This is a song about a man who has lost everything at the horse track ("by a head" or "por una cabeza") and also lost the woman he loves. It should have an almost schizophrenic contrast between the sweetness of the major section and the fire of the minor.

5

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

10

Vln. I *f mf*

Vln. II *f mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Db. *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 10 through 14. It features five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measures 10 and 11 show the strings playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. In measure 12, there is a dynamic shift from *f* to *mf* in the violins and *mf* in the lower strings. A hairpin crescendo is visible in the violin parts. A fermata is placed over the first note of measure 13 in the violin parts. The system concludes with a double bar line in measure 14.

15

Piu mosso, con passione

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *ff* *f*

Vc. *ff* *f*

Db. *ff* *f*

arco

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 15 through 19. It features the same five staves as the previous system. The tempo and mood change to "Piu mosso, con passione". Measures 15 and 16 continue with the string patterns, with dynamics of *ff* in the violins and *f* in the lower strings. In measure 17, the dynamics shift to *ff* for the violins and *f* for the lower strings. The Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass parts are marked "arco" and feature triplet markings (indicated by a "3" over a bracket) in measures 17 and 19. A hairpin crescendo is present in the violin parts. The system concludes with a double bar line in measure 19.

20

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

f 3

This system contains measures 20 through 24. The first violin part (Vln. I) begins with a fermata on a whole note, followed by a triplet of eighth notes starting in measure 21. The second violin (Vln. II) and viola (Vla.) parts feature continuous eighth-note patterns. The cello (Vc.) and double bass (Db.) parts play a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include a forte (*f*) marking in measure 21.

25

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.

3 3 3

This system contains measures 25 through 29. The first violin part (Vln. I) starts with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 25. The second violin (Vln. II) continues with eighth-note patterns, including a triplet in measure 27. The viola (Vla.) part has a fermata in measure 25. The cello (Vc.) and double bass (Db.) parts maintain their eighth-note accompaniment. A watermark for TRN Music Publisher, Inc. is overlaid across the score.

poco rall.

29

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

32

Vln. solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Tempo primo

sol = 108

dolcissimo

p *mf*

gli altri *dolce*

p *dolce*

pizz.

p *pizz.*

p *pizz.*

36

Vln. solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

40

Vln. solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

44

Vln. solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

f *mf* *f* *mf* *mf* *mf*

46

Vln. solo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

unis.

ff *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

arco

arco

arco

ff *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

Più mosso, con passione

49 *div.*

Vln. I *f* *3*

Vln. II *3*

Vla. solo *solo*

Vla. *gli altri* *f* *ff* *3*

Vc. *f*

Db. *f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 49 through 53. The first violin part (Vln. I) features a melodic line with a 'div.' (divisi) instruction and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second violin part (Vln. II) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets. The viola solo part (Vla. solo) has a 'solo' marking. The other violas (Vla.), violas (Vc.), and double basses (Db.) provide harmonic support with various dynamics including *f* and *ff*. A large red watermark 'TRM MUSIC PUBLISHER, INC.' is overlaid on the score.

54

Vln. I *f* *3*

Vln. II *3*

Vla. solo *3*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Db. *f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 54 through 58. The first violin part (Vln. I) continues with a melodic line. The second violin part (Vln. II) maintains its rhythmic accompaniment. The viola solo part (Vla. solo) features a triplet. The other violas (Vla.), violas (Vc.), and double basses (Db.) continue their harmonic support. A large red watermark 'TRM MUSIC PUBLISHER, INC.' is overlaid on the score.

59

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. solo

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

62

molto rall.

unis.

mp

p

f

$\text{♩} = 116$

A tempo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. solo

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

mp

p

f

mp

p

f

mp

p

f