

Linear Construction (No. 5)  
for Cello

Alex Groves



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Instrumentation

Cello

Duration

5'

Notes

*Linear Construction (No. 5)* borrows its title from a series of sculptures by Naum Gabo - intricate pieces made from clear plastic shapes with nylon thread woven around them. I'm drawn to the way their complex, fluid appearance is created from a very simple construction, creating an ephemeral and weightless form that constantly evolves as you circle it.

This piece isn't an attempt to directly translate any of the works into sound. Instead, it tries to mirror that dialogue between simplicity and complexity. A four bar cell acts as the sole musical material for the piece - four chords, a constant pulse. The material, however, is in constant flux. Moving from point to point, it undergoes timbral and dynamic transformations that create a feeling of simultaneous stasis and motion.



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Steady and unerring (c. ♩ = 75)

Violoncello

*pp* *mf*

**A**

Vc. 5

sub. *pp*

small increase in bow pressure,  
just starting to distort

nat. -----> sul pont.

Vc. 9

*mp* *f*

**B**

Vc. 13 nat.

sub. *pp*

Vc. 17

Vc. 21

*mp*

gradually increase bow pressure to a sustained, distorted sound

nat. -----> sul pont.

Vc. 25

*f* *ff*



29 sul tasto

Vc. *sub. pp*

sul tasto ----->

33 nat.

Vc.

37

Vc. *p*

41

Vc. *mp*

gradually increase bow pressure

45

Vc. *mf*

lightly distorted sound

49 nat. ----->

Vc.

continue to increase bow pressure

53 poco sul pont. ----->

Vc. *f*

poco sul pont.

sustained, distorted sound

57 final increase in bow pressure to a fully distorted, glitchy sound

sul pont. -----> molto sul pont. *fff*

Vc. *ff*