

*Harri Wessman*

**THREE CAPRICES**  
**for Konstantin Weitz**

**FOR VIOLIN SOLO**

(1994)



FENNICA GEHRMAN

## Harri Wessman: Three Caprices for Konstantin Weitz (1994)

*Three Caprices for Konstantin Weitz*, which are in fact a concentrated, short Solo Sonata, were composed 1994 during the Finns Chamber Music event in Espoo, Finland. I performed it in one of the festival's concerts. We had the honour to have Harri Wessman as composer-in-residence.

Vivace is a kind of prelude with elements of the solo compositions for violin by J. S. Bach. At first glance, bars five to nine are somewhat tricky to play: if you play the chords on the E, A and D strings, which are in fact characteristic of the violin, with conventional fingerings going back and forth to the bass note, you will find the entire thing much easier to play. In order to achieve an elastic legato, I would recommend starting all bars from bar 5 on to the end of the first part in the upbow.

Larghetto comes with a melody that will also be used in the third movement linking the two movements in a leitmotiv-like way. If one plays the resting notes in bars 13 and 15 in the third position and the accompaniments on the A- and E- string, one gets a good polyphonic effect thanks to the contrasting colours.

Allegro is a movement of energetic character, which on account of its melody and its clusters of chords, often in fourths, is reminiscent of compositions by Bartók for violin or viola. The movement requires a special ricochet in terms of bowing and colour. In fact, today's generation of virtuosi is more likely to play Paganini's Fifth Caprice with this type of bowing technique. This was not the case when it was premièred in 1994. Other prominent examples of its use are the Rondo by Bazzini and the Caprice *Le Sautillé* in the *Ecole Moderne* by Wieniawski.

To recall the well-known advice on the execution of this type of bowing technique: if one does not repeatedly throw / bounce the bow but keeps the ricochet flat with a push from the side, then one avoids disturbing accents or noises. The two groups with ricochet in 4 notes instead of 3+1, e.g. in bar 2, correspond to the dynamic progression of the theme. These variations can also be used to achieve the necessary upbow in bars 28, 38. In general, the playing techniques can be varied, e.g. beginning bar 30 with spiccato and moving on to ricochet.

I hope you feel the same as I do: I found great pleasure in performing the three caprices on three different accounts: because of the sound, their ideas and emotions, as well as the sheer fun of dealing with the violinistic and musical challenges, not to mention the effect they had on the audience.

Konstantin Weitz

Translated from German by Peter Kislinger

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Violin solo

# THREE CAPRICES

Tre kapriser

*I*

Vivace

Harri Wessman 1994

$\text{♩} = \text{ca } 112$

The musical score is written for a violin solo in 9/8 time. It begins with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and a tempo marking of *Vivace* with a metronome indication of  $\text{♩} = \text{ca } 112$ . The first staff shows a melodic line starting with a half note followed by eighth notes, marked with a *cresc.* (crescendo). The second staff continues the melody, reaching a dynamic of *f* (forte). The third and fourth staves show a more complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed eighth notes. The fifth staff begins with a *p* marking and a *cresc.* marking. The sixth and final staff ends with a *mf* (mezzo-forte) marking. A large orange watermark with the word "SAMPLE" is overlaid diagonally across the entire score.

# III

**Allegro**

♩ = ca 120

The musical score consists of seven staves of music in 3/4 time. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns. The second staff includes a *cresc.* marking. The third staff is marked *mf* and contains a trill. The fourth staff also features a trill. The fifth staff begins with a *cresc.* marking and contains a trill. The sixth staff is marked *f* and contains a trill. The seventh staff is marked *ff* and contains a trill. The score is overlaid with a large orange watermark that reads "SAMPLE".