

for Noah Johnson

Premonitions,
Landscape at Twilight

for fixed media, op. 12

2017

Andres R. Luz

Premonitions, Landscape at Twilight for electronic fixed media is based upon Salvador Dali's pastoral, *Spider of the Evening* (1940). In this work we see the painter's signature depiction of misshapen figures: a stretched female nude, a molten cello, and a softened airplane; each of which have lost their familiar rigidity, existing beyond the boundaries of conscious reality. These are cast before long shadows in an arid landscape at sundown. Amidst the leafless olive tree, the weeping cherub, and the two lonesome figures dancing a dispirited Spanish *sardana*, we are witness to a scene that is both apocalyptic and tragic. Salvador Dali drew from French peasant folklore which claims that the sight of a spider in the evening was auspicious, a sign that must have filled the artist with the hope for a speedy end to armed conflict. However, history shows that the war was still to proceed for another five tumultuous years, the worst of the devastation yet to unfold.

In our time, the U.S. has been at war continuously for numerous years. Although much has been done to dominate and suppress our adversaries to preserve our way of life, much has also been spent in the cost to life, limb, peace of mind, and property for an incalculable many along the way. In our time, there is talk of endless war. In our time, there are those who wield great power and influence to profit from the pursuit of war at the expense of untold others. There are never any easy solutions to dire political conflicts, but there are arguably far fewer persuasive justifications for the scale of terror and destruction that affects innocent, vulnerable lives as a consequence of war.

The recorded cello samples featured in *Premonitions, Landscape at Twilight* were drawn from an improvisation by Noah Johnson at the Dancz Center of New Music, Hugh Hodgson School of Music, University of Georgia, Athens, on 08MAY17.

Duration: Approximately 13.5 minutes.

Note: It is recommended, but not required, to project an image of Salvador Dali's *Spider of the Evening* during playback of the work in a darkened hall.