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What is a Viola?

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What is a Viola?

Abstract

A viola is a string instrument similar to a violin but larger in size, producing a deeper sound to compliment the arrangement.

Two curled holes, allowing some light inside
the hallowed body, just delicate enough to float,
perched under the chin of its commander. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

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Comments

Winner of the Marion Zulauf Poetry Prize 2020.

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Madison Sidle

What is a Viola?

A viola is a string instrument similar to a violin but larger in size,
producing a deeper sound to compliment the arrangement.

Two curled holes, allowing some light inside
the hallowed body, just delicate enough to float,
perched under the chin of its commander.

It is a creative contraption that can produce multiple sounds.

A finger may pull and release a string
creating a brief musical note to traverse the air.

The pressure will leave a dent on the skin,
tips soon hardened to conform to the touch
of metal wires digging their way inside.

The second method requires a bow.
Similar to the way a wizard uses a wand,
the musician moves their forearm to conjure the music
of a continuous note that can drift up and down.

The tool is powered by rosin,
a dark amber substance that powders the horsehair,
allowing the bow to slide across the metal

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as a skater glides across the ice.

Four strings coil around four pegs.

Two dancers on each side,

twirling to tighten the ropes that bind them.

Pitch alters as they twist and turn

until the metal is in the precise spot to deliver perfection.

The instrument is lifted into the blinding spotlights,

pointing towards the rafters of the auditorium.

It is to be played by a crowd of men and women in black and white,

enjoyed by an audience of people and cameras

that flash to capture detached faces as they wait to raise their bows.

The conductor lifts his hands until every musician can see

the swift strike of his baton slicing through the air.

Sound erupts and echoes off the walls,

encasing the audience in a feast of melodies.

A grand festival just for the ears,

performed by artists who work with swift precision

to create feelings of despair and feelings of hope

in the hearts of a silent audience.