

Sonata Mulattica By Rita Dove **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Dove's poetry is accessible but the true poet likely is the most profound of writers for she can say so much in so few words that I fear I have only skimmed the surface of what she had to say. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry The Story Of An Early Black Violinist This long narrative poem by the former United States Poet Laureate Rita Dove tells the story of the brief relationship between George Bridgetower a virtuoso violinist and Ludwig van Beethoven. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** It is a biographical sketch in the form of a book of poems but beyond that it's also a sociological sketch of the world of princely music and musicians in the early 19th century. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But there are also poems told from the perspective of Beethoven Haydn an English lady-in-waiting and from various narratorial voices that discuss the Regency court life at Esterhaza and the world of anonymous music-makers in those institutions. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** She provides a couple of appendices at the end which give historical context to the poems themselves; I too found these useful and enjoyable (and in fact I wished I had known about them while I was reading!) Dove is truly a virtuosa of the English language (which she sprinkles with bits of French German and Italian. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But if you're interested in classical music history specifically the classical period and you have an interest in exploring the life of this exceptional musician this is a transcendent way of doing so. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry This collection of poems about George Bridgetower Beethoven's one-time protégé and a biracial man living in Europe (over a century before the term 'biracial' was even coined) are a mixed bag. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** It's that rare book let alone that rare book of poetry that one puts down knowing that something special has been experienced something that leaves the mind and spirit humming long after it's over -- and looking forward to reading it again. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** To her credit Rita Dove has done an exceptional job of describing an incident in the life of one George Augustus Polgreen Bridgewater whose fifteen minutes of fame came in the early nineteenth century when as a child prodigy violinist he played and improvised with Beethoven himself on piano what became the Sonata No. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** On the negative side to gain a deep appreciation of this work one should be knowledgeable of the history of the period and also be conversant with musical terminology well beyond the notions of melody and harmony. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** In 1803 while in Vienna Bridgetower was introduced to Beethoven (1770- 1827) who at the age of 33 was ten years Bridgetower's senior and already possessed of a large reputation as a composer. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** George Bridgetower although he would live a long life became relegated to obscurity known only passingly to those who study Beethoven and his music when Beethoven withdrew his dedication. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Dove's poem tells the story of George Augustus Pegeen Bridgetower from his flamboyant early life of promise to his obscure latter years in Sonata Mulattica a long narrative poem which consists of about 80 short poems in varying forms and styles. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The work is divided into five sections of movements together with a short climactic play called Georgie Porgie: A Moor in Vienna which offers a dramatized version of the rift between Bridgetower and Beethoven. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Besides portrayals of Beethoven and Bridgetower Dove's musical characters include Haydn who recognized Bridgetower's prodigious talent Ferdinand Ries Beethoven's copyist and a composer in his own right Johann Peter Salomon a promoter who organized Haydn's trips to London Franz Clement the violinist to whom Beethoven dedicated his only violin concerto and Black Billy Waters a London Street musician. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** He himself was a wild man ripping the music from my stumbling fingers and stomping about as the pages fluttered sadly earthwards like the poor pheasants dropped over the hunting fields of the Prater. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Rest assured I soon learned to play more lightly! Besides focusing on music Bridgetower and Beethoven Dove's poem describes well life in Revolutionary and Napoleonic France as Thomas Jefferson makes a cameo appearance at an early Bridgetower concert and Dove devotes several poems to the young libertine Prince of Wales who becomes Bridgetower's guardian when his father wanders away. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Of the many different poetic styles and meters used in the work I was most struck by Black Billy Waters At his Pitch which is composed in the highly structured form of a vilanelle. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The play in which

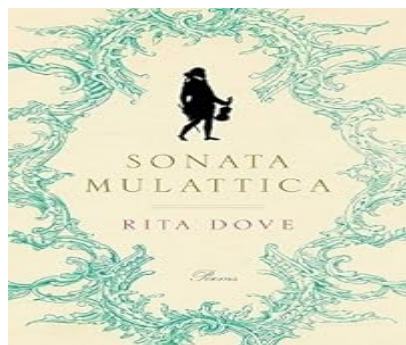
Bridgetower loses his dedication and Beethoven's friendship is swiftly performed and features a chorus of Bad Girls who sing a caustic song to the tune of the much later classic My Boyfriend's Back. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Then this bright-skinned papa's boy could have sailed his fifteen-minute fame straight into the record books -- where instead of a Regina Carter or Aaron Dworkin or Boyd Tinsley sprinkled here and there we would find drafts of black kids scratching out scales on their matchbox violins so that some day they might play the impossible: Beethoven's Sonata No. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** And in her concluding poem The End with MapQuest Dove visiting the site of Bridgetower's death reflects upon the violinist's life: Do I care enough George Augustus Bridgetower to miss you? I don't even know if I really like you. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I don't know if your playing was truly gorgeous or if it was just you the sheer miracle of all that darkness swaying close enough to touch *** ** Master B little great man tell me: How does a shadow shine? Lovers of music and of the Kreutzer sonata and readers interested in the forgotten story of an early Black violinist will be fascinated by Dove's narrative poem: Sonata Mulattica. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Beethoven being Beethoven tore out the title page and dedicated and named it instead to the violinist Kreutzer whose name it has borne ever since even though Kreutzer couldn't play it and forever derided it. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry How Does a Shadow Shine? Having read so many novels recently written with the sensibility of a poet I was curious to see what former US Poet Laureate Rita Dove would make of this cycle of 85 poems that together take the form of a novel. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** George's father was a self-styled African Prince brought to the Austro-Hungarian court as part frankly of a human menagerie; gifted in many languages he seems to have had an instinctive nose for that touch of exotic wildness that would secure his place in European society. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** George himself as a boy on the Esterhazy estate comes to the notice of Joseph Haydn who develops his musical talents to the point where he creates a sensation at his Paris debut at the age of 9 and thereafter gets adopted by the English court. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** He is 23 when he visits Vienna falls in then out with Beethoven and returns in defeat to England; there he will serve for 20 years as leader of the Prince Regent's orchestra wander abroad and return to die in a London suburb at the end of his eighth decade. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry doesn't narrate the upward trajectory—for that you need the chronology and racy notes at the back—so much as punctuate the ascent with starbursts of wonder: I was nothing if not everything when the music was in me. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Some poems cry out in anger as here in Rain when George takes leave of the cultural cacophony of Vienna: Because we're wading through wreckage we're not even listening to all the crash and clatter—chords wrenched from their moorings smashed etudes arpeggios glistening as they heave and sink. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Beautiful monster where to next—when you can hear the wind howl behind you the gate creaking shut? This reference to George Bridgetower's race is of course of interest to Dove who is of African descent herself. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Here is George at 9 in recital with another child prodigy: Two rag dolls set out for tea in our smart red waistcoats we suffered their delight we did not fail our parts—not as boys nor rivals even but men: broken then improperly mended; abandoned far beyond the province of the innocent. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The effect as she skips from the 18th century to the 21st and back is rather like what Peter Maxwell Davies does with popular music in his brilliant Eight Songs For A Mad King simultaneously capturing the period and anatomizing it. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poems like Polgreen Sight-Reading in which the violinist half by sheer intuition struggles with Beethoven's manuscript are amazing evocations of the extraordinary in music: I've been destined to travel these impossibles switchbacks but it's as if I'm skating on his heart blood tracks looping everywhere.... **Sonata mulattica rita dove** One of the most moving poems of all is the last The End With Mapquest where Dove comes back to visit the very ordinary suburb where Bridgetower died ending with a confession: Do I care enough George Augustus Bridgetower to miss you? I don't even know if I really like you. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I don't know if your playing was truly gorgeous or if it was just you the sheer miracle of all that darkness swaying close enough to touch palm tree and Sambo and glistening tigers running circles into golden oil. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** And I do

wish I had known ahead of time that there were explanatory notes and a chronology in the back of the book because some of the poems were quite opaque without them. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Perhaps I should have read the table of contents--but who does that? Still and all these poems are exquisitely crafted; the portrayal of Beethoven is exactly how I want to imagine him; and the explorations of race in a time before it was quite set down what race relations in Europe would be like are very interesting.

Sonata mulattica rita dove

Maybe three stars rings truer - but then I'm fussy and picky when it comes to poetry, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Bridgetower (1780 -- 1860) was the son of an African/Caribbean father known as the African Prince and a German/Polish mother: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** He was a child prodigy on the violin and gave his first concert in Paris.

Sonata mulattica rita dove



3. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** 5 stars i guess??rtc- a rating can't sum up my thoughts on this one adequately Poetry From my perspective this is book is an unmitigated masterpiece: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But before I go further you should understand my perspective. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I'm a full-time professional classical musician specifically a composer-conductor: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I'm a reader of poetry and a lover of language and languages (particularly French and German: **Sonata mulattica rita dove**)OK given that this volume hit every possible interest of mine, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** It basically follows the life of George Bridgetower the biracial violinists and composer who premiered Beethoven's 9th violin sonata: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** This is all where I live in terms of music-making and scholarship so I was able to follow the logic as Dove darted between cities languages and voices, **Sonata mulattica rita dove**) She is a polystylistic writer always full of surprises and roots her poems in a lexicography that I've rarely found in others: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I have trouble thinking that this isn't a totally niche book (aimed at the very niche were I reside) so I don't know that I could recommend it to everybody, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** They're more good than not - and the poems have a lyricism that does justice to the importance of music in Mr: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Bridgetower's story - but I do feel like they miss some of the tension and conflict in the relationship between the two men. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** All the same a lovely collection about a fascinating bit of history: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry I enjoyed this book in more ways than I can say, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** It's poetry beauty history biography theatre character study art ars poetica philosophy wit charm pageant and social study in one. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** It's a book-length set of poems about someone nearly lost to history and yet every piece stands on its own even while building the story and the plot, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The concept is brilliant the delivery nearly flawless the range of ideas observations and

illuminations breathtaking: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Among the many pieces that wowed me my favorites were (Re)Naissance The Lesson: Adagio Pulling the Organ Stops The Dressing Tafelmusik (1) Floating Requiem The Performer and Half-Life: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry Not quite a novel in verse not quite a poetry collection Sonata Mullatica is historical fictionsesque with a surprise one act play in the middle: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The history itself is fascinating and the way Dove bends image and language around it is fascinating again pulling us back and forth and in and out of time: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** At turns traditional and experimental this book was a journey and as someone constantly surrounded by violinists I appreciated Dove's poetic treatment of the music: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry A book of poetry that attempts to tell a story but not in ballad or epic form can be challenging at best and impossible to comprehend at worst. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Using a variety of poetic forms Dove paints a brief telling of the life of Mr, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** She carefully provides historical notes as well as a chronology of relevant historical events to assist the reader in following the poetic narrative, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Dove writes rhythmically and there are instances where the word to paper is much like the bow to string: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** While Dove's story telling idea is not original the portrayal of a story in a series of standalone poems of short duration may well be. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The four star rating is in acknowledgement of and appreciation for dove's effort, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** From an enjoyment scale just before the French Revolution at the age of nine, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Beethoven was taken with the young man's virtuosity and passion on the violin. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** He briefly interrupted work on his monumental third symphony to compose a sonata for violin and piano in which Bridgetower would play the violin and Beethoven the piano. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** 47 Beethoven's ninth for violin and piano was performed to great acclaim on May 24 1803, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Beethoven intended to dedicate the sonata to Bridgetower for whom he had written the work, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But the two men had a falling-out over a woman the precise details of which remain obscure. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** In a fit of anger Beethoven withdrew the dedication to Bridgetower and dedicated his sonata instead to Rudolphe Kreutzer: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Kreutzer was probably the most famous violinist of his day and Beethoven knew him slightly, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Kreutzer disliked the sonata Beethoven dedicated to him and never played it. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But the work is one of Beethoven's grandest and the dedication made Kreutzer's name immortal, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The work begins with a meditative prologue of two poems and concludes with an epilogue, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Dove's poem captures the near-religious passion that music inspires in composers performers and those who love the art. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Dove also includes a poem in the words of Guilletta Guicciardi one of Beethoven's many hopeless loves, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** In her poem in the book The Countess Shares Confidences over Karneval Chocolate Dove captures well Beethoven's manner of playing the piano and his stormy wild character: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The Countess now a married woman recalls: He insisted on a light touch: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The poetic voice ranges from serious and reflective to irony and sarcasm. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Some of the poems are in the form of dramatic monologues while others are narrated. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Dove reflects on Bridgetower's loss of the dedication and its possible significance, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** In her opening poem The Bridgetower she things on the possible consequences of a work by this name rather than Kreutzer's. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Robin Friedman Poetry The skinny: George Polgreen Bridgetower was a violinist progeny the son of a White European woman and a father who fancied himself a Black African Prince. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Bridgetower traveled from London to Vienna to meet Beethoven and the two hit it off spectacularly: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Moved by Bridgetower's skills Ludwig dashed off an impossible violin sonata which the young Bridgewater played flawlessly from sight reading: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Beethoven scrawled across the first page a dedication to Bridgewater and a title: Sonata Mulattica: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** A barmaid - her name lost to history - took a shine to Bridgewater and he hey girl-ed her back and Beethoven well : **Sonata mulattica rita dove**

Beethoven went on to have other successes you may have heard. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** -----
-----I have determined to read pods: various genres of writing about a specific thing or theme -
as a way not to get stale. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I've done cities and whole oceans but I
decided since its Beethoven's 250th birthday to look at different ways of getting at this genius and
misanthrope. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Happy Birthday Ludwig! So as a start here's a book of
poems by a former U, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** This would be outside my regular wheelhouse I
knew but that was the point of the exercise, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** ----- A man
can vanish between the downstroke and the first note's sigh from one word to the next a wink and a
nod: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** He'll evaporate under a lady's glance as her smile slides across the
room: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Now they're opening pink tongue peeking out stretching; then on
the glistening tip she slowly positions the snowy tip of meringue. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Hell
he'll be hung for a pound of flesh as well as for a morsel: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I've never
heard music like this man's this sobbing in the midst of triumphal chords : **Sonata mulattica rita
dove** ----- So he was a fiddler something of a stunner in his day: **Sonata mulattica rita
dove** Day's gone gone the sun--ain't that a German song? Heard it somewhere. **Sonata mulattica
rita dove** ach who cares where I've been where I came from where I went? All that matters in life is
joy--and joy (like me) is a traveling man, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** ----- There is also
here a parallel story in poems of what happened to Haydn's head: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** A
more sorrowful journey than what happened to Chopin's heart, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** A
biographical novel about a footnote to musical history: the mulatto violinist George Polgreen
Bridgetower: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Beethoven (who ought to know) called him a crazy
genius (gran pazzo) and was inspired to write him his most difficult violin sonata, **Sonata mulattica
rita dove** But the two quarreled over a girl and in a fit of pique Beethoven rededicated the work
forever now known as the Kreutzer Sonata. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** So we have a real-life story
or at least some outlines for the writer to fill in: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I could be fierce I
could shred the heads off flowers for breakfast with my bare teeth simply because I deserved such
loveliness. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But poetry excels prose in its ability to meditate on those
plotless later years, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Others are almost unbearably poignant as in Half
Life: I'm a shadow in sunlight unable to blush or whiten in winter. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But
despite the title Sonata Mulattica is about many sorts of ways of reducing a person's individuality
even while fettering him for some extraordinary success. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** There is little
difference between the prodigy George his African showman of a father or the real life negro busker
Black Billy Waters who makes several ribald appearances, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Even the
great Haydn chafes at being treated like a chattel, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** I would mention
three other things that poetry does extremely well, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Dove's range is
extremely wide taking in sonnet and rondeau popular nursery rhymes and street songs many types
of free verse some concrete poetry and even a short verse play, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** But
poetry and music are indeed close; that is my second point: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Ah Master
B little great man tell me: How does a shadow shine? Poetry This is quite good--thought-provoking
and lovely and ever so musical: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Criticisms: The central incident is a
little lightweight to support the book and for some reason it's portrayed in this kind of Viennese-
farce-drama which I didn't really understand: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poetry The son of a
white woman and an "African Prince" George Polgreen Bridgetower (1780-1860) travels to Vienna
to meet "bad-boy" genius Ludwig van Beethoven, **Sonata mulattica rita dove** The great
composer's subsequent sonata is originally dedicated to the young mulatto but George exuberant
with acclaim offends Beethoven over a woman. **Sonata mulattica rita dove** From this crucial
encounter evolves a grandiose yet melancholy poetic tale: **Sonata mulattica rita dove** Poet
Laureate Pulitzer Prize winner and musician lives in Charlottesville where she is Commonwealth
Professor of English at the University of Virginia. Ms. Bridgetower thus was a mulatto. I'm also a
part-time music historian and writer. Recommended. 9 for Violin and Piano known today as the
Kreutzer. Bridgetower and the aftermath of his encounter with Beethoven. The sonata in A major

opus. Beethoven dedicated his Moonlight piano sonata to Guicciardi. 9 in A major op. 47 also known as The Bridgetower. Both music and drinking buddies. Maybe adding a thing or two in his playing. They hugged. Then they went out drinking. . Bridgewater had those fifteen minutes of fame.S. Poet Laureate about that intersection of genius. And it did exactly what I hoped it would do. This story is easier and quicker told as plain episode. But it would then miss the lushness.----- Good Lord her lips--she's licked them.----- He frightens me. . Kinda mournful.Wonder could he play that.----- . . But maybe a happy ending. George's mother was a German woman of Polish descent.It is a rocket of a story with a long dying fall.Ciphers the lot of them.Their money their perfumed stink. One is to play with form and style.Finally poetry can be intensely personal. I'm glad I started reading more poetry in 2009. Sonata MulatticaRita Dove former U.S..