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# String Quartet

No. 1

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Jake Berran

(2023)



## Program Notes

Around the time this string quartet was written, I found it difficult to feel a connection to my work because of the unhealthy workload I had lined up for myself. In an attempt to get over this and speak on American work culture in general, I decided to use the "4-7-8" breathing technique as the impetus for this piece, since deep breathing is one of the most basic ways to resist overexertion and its negative effects. To start, the first measure—a "stressor"—is followed by a literal orchestration of "4-7-8" breathing. Early on, the numbers 4-7-8 are also used motivically as pitch classes. Throughout the piece, a couple other goals I had were to overcome my aversion to triple meters (it worked!) and to create a language of semantic relationships—such as the the "instigating" jeté technique—and use this language in service of narrative and dramatic tension. The ending brings together many different ideas from the piece, attempting to make sense of it all as one entity. While the work may have strayed from its initial inspiration, I hope there's still a kernel in there that some can find relatable.

Duration: 12 minutes

## Performance Notes

- Glissandi between two notes should begin immediately on the first note. Portamenti should begin near the end of the first note.
- When possible, staccati should be played off the string, and generally very short.
- Notes marked jeté (☘) should last as long as possible, but no longer than the given rhythmic value.
- The marking "ord." only cancels "sul pont." and "sul tasto" or variants thereof. It does not cancel other playing techniques like "jeté."
- The cellist is asked to tune the C string down to B in mm. 198-203, and back up to C in mm. 243-248. Suggestions for how to perform the changes are given, but the cellist may do whatever is most convenient at whichever dynamic is most helpful.

# String Quartet

## No. 1

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$\text{♩} = 140$

**A**  $\text{♩} = 80$

Violin 1  
*fff*

Violin 2  
*fff*

Viola  
*fff*

Violoncello  
*fff*

*ppp*  $\leftarrow$  *p*

sul G  
molto sul pont. (m.s.p.)

*ppp*  $\leftarrow$  *p*

sul G  
molto sul pont. (m.s.p.)

*ppp*  $\leftarrow$  *p*

sul D  
molto sul pont. (m.s.p.)

*ppp*  $\leftarrow$  *p*

6

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

sempre sul G, sim. bowing  
m.s.p.

sempre sul G, sim. bowing  
m.s.p.

sempre sul G, sim. bowing  
m.s.p.

sempre sul D, sim. bowing  
m.s.p.

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

ord. *p*  $\leftarrow$  *ppp*

12

m.s.p. sul G

ord.

*p* > *pp*      *ppp* < *p*      *p* < *ppp*

m.s.p. sul G

ord.

*p* > *pp*      *ppp* < *p*      *p* < *ppp*

m.s.p. sul G

ord.

*p* > *pp*      *ppp* < *p*      *p* < *ppp*

m.s.p. sul D

ord.

*p* > *pp*      *ppp* < *p*      *p* < *ppp*

**B** ♩ = 90 - slightly faster

19

ord. sul pont.

*p* < *mf*      *f*

ord. sul pont.

*p* < *mf*      *f*

ord. ord.

*p* < *mf*      *p* sul pont.

ord. sul G ord. sul D sul A

*p* < *mf*      *f*

26

ord. sul pont.

*pp*

sul pont.

*p*      *p*      *pp*

*p*

♩ = 140

C ♩ = ♩

31

m.s.p. *pp* *gliss.*

ord. *fff*

3 3

*pp* *fff* *p*

m.s.p. *pp*

ord. *fff*

3 3

m.s.p. *pp*

ord. *fff*

3 3

m.s.p. *pp*

ord. *fff*

3 3

rit..... ♩ = 120

34

*p*

*p*

sul G *p*

*p*

37

*p*

*p*

*pizz.* *p > pp* *p > sim.* *p >*

*p*

40

Musical score for measures 40-42. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The time signature changes from 15/8 to 9/8 and back to 15/8. The music features various dynamics including *pp*, *p*, and *p > pp*. There are also markings for *arco* and *pizz.* in the bass line.

43

**D** flowing

Musical score for measures 43-46. The score is written for four staves. The time signature changes from 9/8 to 12/8 and then to 2/2. A box labeled 'D' is placed above the first staff in measure 45. The music includes dynamics such as *f*, *pp*, and *p*. Performance instructions include *flowing*, *arco*, and *pizz.*

47

Musical score for measures 47-50. The score is written for four staves. The time signature is 2/2. The music includes dynamics such as *p*. Performance instructions include *with bite; sneaking in* and triplets in the bass line.

51

Violin I: *mp*, *p*, *mp*

Violin II: *mp*, *p*, *mp*

Cello/Double Bass: *mp*, *p*, *mp*

55

**E**

Violin I: *mf*, *mf*, *mf*

Violin II: *mf*, *mf*, *mf*

Cello/Double Bass: *mp*, *mf*, *mf* *p*, *mf* *sim.*

Performance instructions: *jeté*, *sim.*

58

Violin I: *mp*, *pp*, *p*

Violin II: *mp*, *pp*, *p*

Cello/Double Bass: *mp*, *pp*, *p*

Performance instructions: *sul pont.*, *ord.*, *arco sul pont.*

61

Musical score for measures 61-63. The score is in 12/8 time and consists of four staves. Measure 61 (12/8) has dynamics *mp* and *mf*. Measure 62 (9/8) has dynamics *mf* and *mf*. Measure 63 (15/8) has dynamics *mf* and *f*. The bass line in measure 63 includes the instruction *arco* and a dynamic of *p*.

**F** (feel in 1)

Musical score for section F, measures 64-68. The score is in 3/8 time and consists of four staves. Measures 64-68 feature a melody in the upper staves with dynamics *f* and *f*. The bass line includes triplets and quartets with dynamics *mf* and *p*.

**G**

Musical score for section G, measures 69-71. The score is in 3/8 time and consists of four staves. Measures 69-71 feature a melody in the upper staves with dynamics *pp* and *p*. The bass line includes quartets with dynamics *pp* and *p*. Measure 71 includes the instruction *pizz.* and a dynamic of *p*.



72 H

Musical score for measures 72-74. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in 15/8 time and changes to 9/8 and then 3/2 time. Dynamics include *pp*, *p*, *f*, and *arco*. A box labeled 'H' is in the top right.

75

Musical score for measures 75-78. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in 3/2 time. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, *mp*, and *mf*. There are triplets and a 7-measure rest in the bass staff.

79 I

Musical score for measures 79-82. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in 3/2 time. Dynamics include *pp*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, and *arco*. A box labeled 'I' is in the top right.

Musical score for measures 84-89. The score is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. It features a variety of articulations including accents (>) and slurs. Fingering numbers (3, 4, 5) are indicated throughout the piece.

Musical score for measures 90-95. This section includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, *sfz*, and *pp*. Performance instructions include "intense", "port", "pizz.", and "arco". The score contains slurs, accents, and fingering numbers (3, 4, 5).

J ♩ = 50

Musical score for measures 96-100. This section features dynamic markings such as *fff*, *pp*, *n*, and *mf solo*. Performance instructions include "sul pont.", "sul A", and "sul D". The score includes slurs and a glissando marking ("gliss.").

("touch 4" gliss.)

gliss.

3

♩ = 60 - slightly faster

103

ord. jeté (sustain until bow stroke finishes)

*p* > *pp* < *mp* > *pp*      *mf*      *mf*

ord. jeté (sustain until bow stroke finishes)

*p* > *pp* < *mp* > *pp*      *mf*      *mp*      *mf*

ord. jeté (sustain until bow stroke finishes)

*pp*      *mf*      *p*      *mf*

ord. jeté (sustain until bow stroke finishes)

*f*      *pp*      *mf*

109

*mf*      *mf*      *mf*      *p*

*pp* < *p* > *pp*      *pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *p* > *pp*      *pp* < *mp* > *pp*

113

*mf*      *pp*      *ppp*      *ppp*

sul tasto - exact polyrhythm unimportant

sul tasto - exact polyrhythm unimportant

sul tasto

*ppp*

sul tasto

*ppp*

10 ♩ = 140

**K**

*fff*

**L** ♩ = 132 - slightly slower

*f* *p* *f* *pizz.* *arco*

124

*p* *mp* *mf* *f* *p* *pizz.* *arco*

129

arco

*p* *f*

*f*

*ff* pizz.

*ff* pizz.

*ff*

*ff* pizz.

M

133

*f*

arco

*p*

*f* pizz.

arco

arco

*p*

*f* pizz.

*f* pizz.

*f* pizz.

137

*f*

arco

*f*

*f* gliss.

*f* gliss.

*f* pizz.

12

*pizz.*

*arco* *gliss.*

*p*

*p* *f*

*p* *f*

145

*f*

*ff*

*ff*

*p* *f* *ff*

*p* *ff*

150

154 *sul A*

gliss. *>* gliss. *>* gliss. *>*

gliss. *>* gliss. *>* gliss. *>* gliss. *>*

gliss. *>* gliss. *>* gliss. *>* gliss. *>*

gliss. *>* gliss. *>* gliss. *>* gliss. *>*

♩ = 90

to ord. → ord. (+ vib.)

*sul pont.*

*p sub. < f* *p sub. < f* *p < f* *p sub.* *f*

*sul pont.* to ord. → ord. (+ vib.)

*p sub. < f* *p sub. < f* *p < f* *p sub.* *f*

*sul pont.* to ord. → ord. (+ vib.)

*p sub. < f* *p sub. < f* *p < f* *p sub.* *f*

*sul pont.* to ord. → ord. (+ vib.)

*p sub. < f* *p sub. < f* *p < f* *p sub.* *f*

**P**

*p*

*pizz.* *arco*

*p < mp > p* *p* *mf*

*p < mp > p* *ppp* *3* *p* *3* *ppp*

*p < mp > p* *ppp* *3* *p* *3* *ppp*

170

pizz. *p*

arco *f*

pizz. *f*

arco sul pont. *p*

pizz. *f*

pizz. *f*

174

*mf* > *p*

arco

*p* < *mf* > *p*

ord. *p*

ord. *pp*

arco

*p* < *mf* > *p*

Q ♩ = 50

*p* < *mf* > *p*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

sul D

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*

*pp* < *mp* > *pp*



♩ = 60 - slightly faster

183

m.s.p. ord.

*f* *p* *mf* *f* *p*

m.s.p. ord.

*f* *p* *mf* *f* *p*

m.s.p. ord.

*f* *p* *mf* *f* *p*

m.s.p. ord.

*f* *p* *mf* *f* *p*

190

ord.

*mf* *p* *pp*

ord.

*mf* *p* *pp*

m.s.p. ord.

*p* *mf* *pp* *p*

m.s.p. ord.

*p* *pp* *p*

*pp* *mp* *p*

*pp* *mp* *p*

196

*pp* *mf* *p*

*pp* *mf* *p*

*pp* *mf* *p*

*pp* *mf* *p*

gliss. *p*

Tune C string down to B (ad lib.); fine tune others as needed; try to be smooth

(bounce into slur)

sul D

mf f fp f

(bounce into slur)

sul G

mf f fp f

p mf p mf fp f

mf

S

sul G

f mf mp

f mf mp

f mf mp

f mf mp

legato, quasi freely

p

legato, quasi freely

p

legato, quasi freely

p

legato, quasi freely

p

p solo

2

213

4 *mp* *pp solo*

4 *mp* *pp*

4 *mp* *pp*

4 *mp* *pp*

2 *port*

217

*p solo sul A* *pp*

*p* *pp* *ppp*

*pizz.* *pp*

*p* *pp*

harm. gliss. (approx. destination)  
sul B

pizz. (sounding pitches)

*f as possible* *p* *pp*

221

*ppp* *pp*

*p solo arco* *pp*

*pizz.* *p*

*f as possible*

T ♩ = ♩

musical score for measures 225-234. Includes staves for guitar and bass. Annotations include *gliss.*, *sul G*, *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *8va*, *sul D*, *f*, *7:6*, *arco sul B*, *f*, *8:6*, *arco*, and *mf*.

musical score for measures 229-234. Includes staves for guitar and bass. Annotations include *p*, *pp*, *p solo*, *f*, and *f*.

musical score for measures 235-240. Includes staves for guitar and bass. Annotations include *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *pp solo*, *sul D*, and *mf*.

239

sul A

*p*

*p solo*

*mf*

*p*

pizz.

*p*

243

sul pont.

*f*

*p*

ord.

*p*

*gliss.*

*p*

sul G

*gliss.*

Tune B back to C (ad lib.); fine tune others as needed; pierce into the texture a bit...

arco

*gliss.*

*p cresc. as ensemble energizes*

$\text{♩} = 80$  - faster

accel.....  $\text{♩} = 112$  accel.....

247

sul G

*mf*

*gliss.*

sul G

*mf*

*gliss.*

*mf*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*p*

20 ♩ = 140

U

250

Musical score for measures 20-250. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (top two) and two bass clefs (bottom two). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/8. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 140. The score includes dynamic markings *f* and *ff*, and glissando markings *gliss.*. A box labeled 'U' is positioned above the first staff. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes and rests.

254

Musical score for measures 254-256. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (top two) and two bass clefs (bottom two). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/8. The music continues with complex rhythmic patterns and beamed notes.

257

Musical score for measures 257-260. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (top two) and two bass clefs (bottom two). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/8. The music includes a *rit.* (ritardando) marking above the first staff in the final measure. The score continues with complex rhythmic patterns and beamed notes.

V ♩. = 120

Musical score for measures 263-267. The score is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte), along with accents and slurs. The Cello/Double Bass part features triplet patterns.

Musical score for measures 268-272. The score is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte), *ff* (fortissimo), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). A 'W' marking is present above the Violin I staff in measure 271. The Cello/Double Bass part includes 'pizz.' (pizzicato) and 'arco' (arco) markings.

Musical score for measures 273-277. The score is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music includes a *p* (piano) dynamic marking. The texture is dense with many sixteenth notes across all staves.

X

278

Musical score for measures 278-281. The score consists of four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in 4/4 time and consists of continuous eighth-note patterns. A box labeled 'X' is positioned above the first measure. Dynamics include accents (>) and mezzo-forte (mf).

♩ = 60

♩ = 120

♩ = 60

282

Musical score for measures 282-285. The score consists of four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in 4/4 time and includes various dynamics such as mezzo-forte (mf) and piano (p).

♩ = 132 - slightly faster

286

Musical score for measures 286-289. The score consists of four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is in 9/8 time and consists of eighth-note patterns. Dynamics include pianissimo (pp).



accel.

$\text{♩} = 140$

290

Y  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

$\text{♩} = 60$

297

7

sul pont. - ugly

Z all on open strings  
molto sul pont.

302

Musical score for measures 302-305. The score is written for four staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves are marked "ord." and contain chords with slurs. The fourth staff contains a bass line with slurs and accents. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 to 4/4. The key signature has one flat. The word "gliss." is written above several notes in the second, third, and fourth staves.

306

Musical score for measures 306-310. The score is written for four staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves contain triplets of eighth notes, marked with "mf" and "p" dynamics. The fourth staff contains a bass line with slurs and accents. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 to 3/4 to 2/4. The key signature has one flat. The words "m.s.t." and "m.s.p." are written above notes in the second, third, and fourth staves. The word "gliss." is written above several notes in the second, third, and fourth staves. The word "ord." is written above notes in the second, third, and fourth staves.

311

Musical score for measures 311-314. The score is written for four staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second and third staves contain triplets of eighth notes, marked with "f" and "p" dynamics. The fourth staff contains a bass line with slurs and accents. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4 to 3/4 to 2/4. The key signature has one flat. The word "gliss." is written above several notes in the first, second, third, and fourth staves. The word "pp" is written below notes in the first staff.

♩ = 80 - slightly faster

314

*pp* *f*

*pp* *f*

*pp* *f*

*pp* *f*

♩ = 140

318

*sffz* > *p* *fff*

*sffz* > *p* *fff*

*sffz* > *p* *fff*

*sffz* > *p* *fff*

321

*fff* as possible

*fff* as possible

*fff* as possible

*fff* as possible

*fff* as possible