

score  
in C

# STRING QUARTET Nº 2 (2022) "soundnoisemusic"

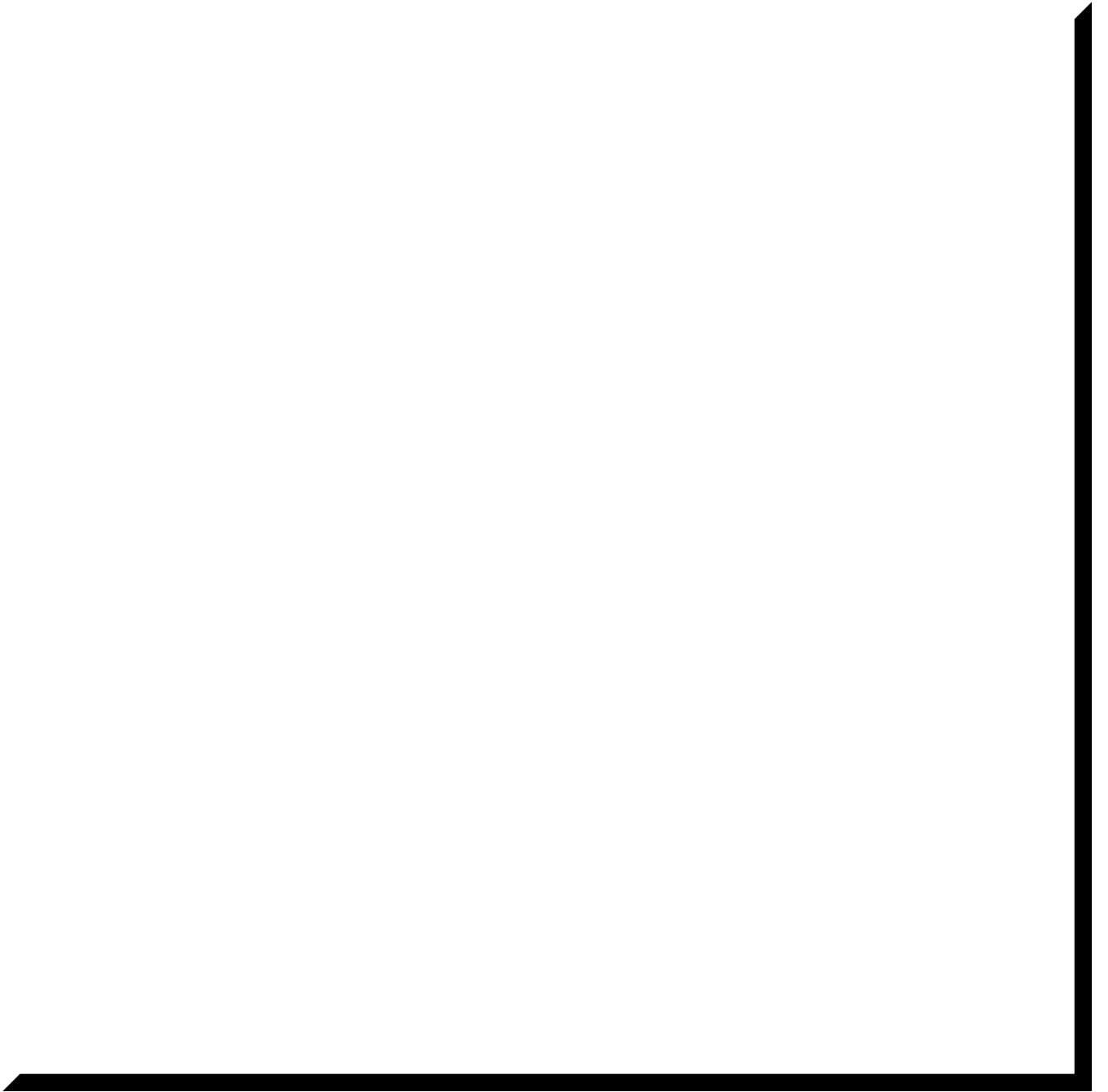
*sebastian suarez-solis*

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**score**  
*in C*

{ WRITTEN FOR PARKER QUARTET, PREMIERED AT THE PEABODY CONSERVATORY SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 }

**STRING QUARTET**

**Nº 2 (2022)**

**"soundnoisemusic"**

{ PERFORMANCE TIME VARIES, 10 TO 12 MINUTES SUGGESTED, 15 MINUTE MAXIMUM }

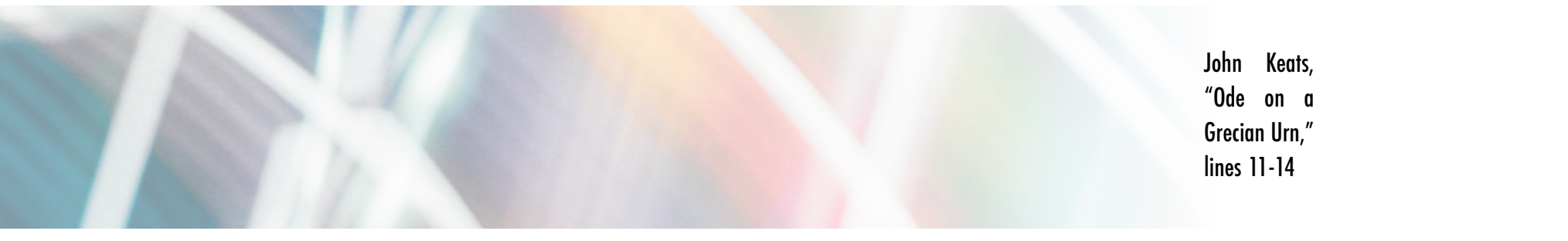
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John Keats,  
"Ode on a  
Grecian Urn,"  
lines 11-14



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"Ode on a  
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Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:

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# PERFORMANCE NOTES

This score and parts heavily utilize graphic notation, with specialized playing techniques delineated on this page. Here is what you should know:

## REGARDING TIMING

### The Time Track

– This staff allows for clear communication of the duration of bars in seconds (all timings are approximate, to be performed without stopwatches). It is presented as a part, labeled “Time”, or Tm. for short. Players are given the freedom in these sections to play measures at their leisure, so long as it is within the allotted time frame. In sections where it is not needed (traditionally measured sections) it is hidden entirely.

### Tempo and Timing

– Tempo markings are given for traditionally notated material as well as graphic material. In these sections, tempo markings have been given for character and speed of improvisation. It is a general mindset and soundworld, less so an indication of pulse. That is to say, the improvisation between Adagio and Prestissimo sections should be palpable, as such an accelerando between both tempi.

– In graphic sections, notes are temporally organized proportionally; the proportions between their measures correspond directly to their timing. Thus, during these sections, performers should be very attune to each others’ playing, as that will cue them both improvisationally and metrically (to ensure that their part comes in correctly in relation to every other part).

– IMPORTANT: during bars 16-30, some rests are hidden to allow for graphic notation or other symbols to take its place (e.g. in bar 28, there are glissandi that start at the beginning of the bar that go beyond that bar). These bars still add up to 4/4.

### Tempo and Timing

–Because of the proportional nature of this work, there are no separate parts; all performers read from their own copies of the score.

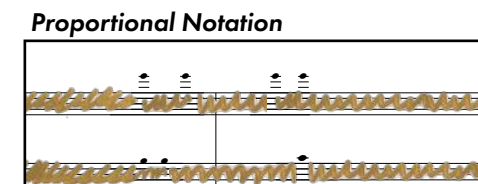
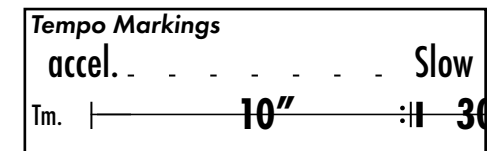
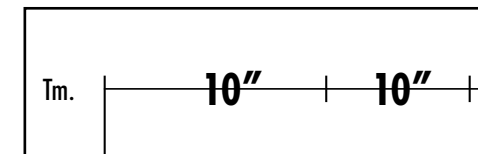
## REGARDING INTONATION

### Violin Intonation

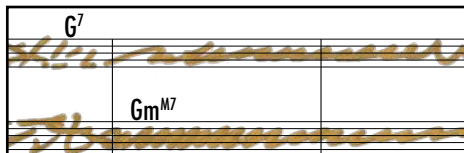
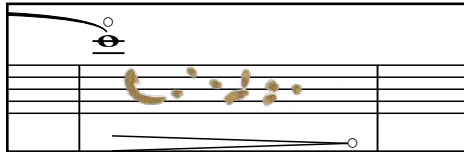
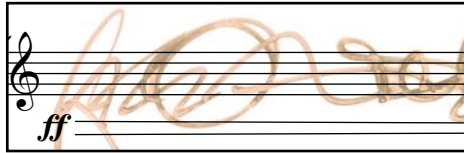
– Throughout this piece, both violins are tuned to  $a'=428$ ; viola and cello are tuned to 440. The violin staves are therefore transposing, such that an a on the staff produces an a quarter flat.

### Vibrato

– This piece should be played without vibrato. If it inhibits improvisation, players may be forgiven for any momentarily lapses in tone production, but should nonetheless try to play without vibrato at all times.



## REGARDING CHARACTER AND INTERPRETATION



### On Noise

– Noise should not have a discernable pitch between the four players, whether players decide to create it through pitched or non-pitched material. Instead (generally), noise sections are more of a field of sound, with notes as individual vectors, pushing the group in one way or another.

– Gold brush indications are a direction to improvise. They are to be treated a graphic notation, and gradations of color may be interpreted further as change in tone color. It is up to performers to interpret what they see as either discrete noise, abject sound, or stylized music. Below is a guide on how to do so.

### Noise Continuum

1. There are times where this noise should be like static, background noise, filler. These look like little squiggles, like a big vibrato marking. These are often at a lower dynamic, like *mp*.
2. Other times, players may see a fuller, more frenzied line; this is still like static, but more full-bodied and brash.
3. There are also little tiny markings, little dots and dashes, which should be a little more precious. These are intimate moments meant to blur the lines between noise and sound.
4. Largest of the noise directions are the big bold symbols and arrows. They are bigger than the staff and are full of lines, markings, dots, and arrows. These are the still noise-like, but definitely may also be classified as sound or music. Players are to use these directions to improvise.
5. Some noise directions are paired with chord symbols. These should be inherently pitched and musical, but may still have a hint of noise to them.

– These noise indications comprise a continuum and as such, these descriptions are mere fixed points; it could be that you encounter an indication to make noise that is mostly like the second type with qualities like the third type.

### Improvisation

– Players should improvise in such a way that is subconsciously driven (think “automatic creation”) so that they may be wholly within the music they are playing and immediately reactive to other players.

– While there are many times that players are given freedom to time actions on their own, it may be helpful for certain sections to view time as a pooled resource (as something tangible between players), as something that exists wholly outside of the players, on center stage, which they all contribute to. This may help with a shared sense of time.



## SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS & NOTATION

### Lighting

- This piece should be played in the dark, with stand lights (or on tablets). This is very highly encouraged; changes to lighting are notated on the time staff.

### Mandatory Silence

- This section should not be skipped. The piece should start with 30 seconds of silence.

### Half-tone

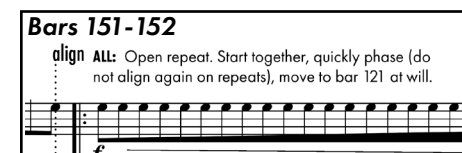
- In bars 17 and 39, performers should let go of their left hand pressure before they finish bowing, to let out overtones and generally corrupt the sound of the note.
- In bars 109-119, performers should play harmonics with a varying left hand pressure to settle in and out of the harmonic at will, and may also incorporate a bit of vibrato (notated as poch. vib.).

### Sforzando + Crescendo from Niente – Acoustic Crossfades

- In bars 21-23, performers should play their note as they would a regular sforzando. They should let the note sustain for about a second or so, and then (before the sound decays) come back in with written material without being perceived, and then crescendo-ing (an acoustic cross-fade). This occurs again at bar 108.

### Bars 37-40

- **VIOLINS:** During bars 37 and 38, the violins should begin shifting their intonation (while under the cover of glissandi) with the goal of being in tune with the viola and cello by the fermata.
- **ALL:** The actions at the fermata in bar 39 (and later also at bar 40) constitute a sort of musical dipthong, with many actions being melded into one fluid phoneme.
  - As the note is sustained during the fermata, gracefully lessen left hand pressure (as if playing a harmonic) while you finish bowing, allowing the sound to shift right at the moment of decay. Then begin whispers of improvised sotto voce sounds.
  - Performers should be very careful to improvise at bar 39 and 40 on any other string than the one they utilized to play the fermata, so as to keep that string from being re-attacked.



### The Final Gesture – Unsynchronized Noise to Pitch Feathered Beams

Bars 151-155 make up a short coda in which players are directed to phase and align their musical actions:

- Players should arrive at bar 151 on their own, and align at the end of the bar (where it is marked with a line).
- Bar 152 and 153 should be done at the players' leisure (not synced), and they should take bar 154 as a time to align their bowstrokes before bar 155.
- As marked with the "a tempo" indication, while players arrive at bar 153 independently, their individual tempi should be as slow as start of the previous bar. That is to say, bar 152 accelerates to its original tempo – like an exponential rebound – which then again speeds up in bar 153.



### The Final Gesture, ct'd

- Bar 155 is cued by the cello.
- Bars 152 and 153 have directions which ask the performer to play as high as possible, marked by the instruction “extreme end of range.”

### Tremolo

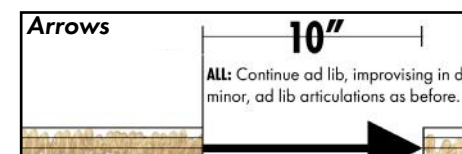
- In section 5, various amounts of tremolo marks are used to adorn notes:
  - 2-3 slashes: both unmeasured, otherwise as traditionally notated
  - 1 slash: every so often, bow rapidly once and break contact with the string. Return to previous bowing surreptitiously.

The variations in tremolo aim to create a terraced – or stepped – gradation of bow speed.



### Arrows

- Arrows are a transitory indication to continue a certain action, and implies improvisation and a greater allowance of choice for the performer, though importance should always be placed towards an organic and continuous transition.



## PROGRAM NOTES

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:

John Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” lines 11-14

*Every other performance, this piece is entirely improvised. Every other performance, the performers follow the through-composed score. Every other other performance, this piece is played at 80% intent and 50% resentment. Every other other other performance, the members of this piece trade parts. Every 10 performances, the members of the ensemble are playing a cruel joke on the composer and the audience. Every 12, the 5<sup>th</sup> page of every part is swapped for a page from one of J.S. Bach’s Sonatas or Partitas for Violin. On any performance where it is the ensemble’s second time performing that day, the music is to be read in retrograde inversion. Every performance indoors must be done at double tempo. In the event that performers were not fed prior to performing, they may play noise whenever they may choose. If [REDACTED], the piece should be played in near-complete darkness.*

*If you cannot tell the difference if you cannot beat ‘em join ‘em then does it even matter?*



# STRING QUARTET

## N° 2 (2022)

### "soundnoisemusic"

sebastian suarez-solis

**Silenzio mandatorio**

**LIGHTS FADE OUT** 30" 8"

Time

ALL: As if ready to play

! This instrument is transposed. An A<sub>4</sub> on this staff will sound at 428hz.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

ALL: Fingerboard presses

ppp pp

ppp pp

ppp pp

ppp pp

1 2

**Vivace, tinny, cold and industrial**

ALL: Sempre senza vibrato

30"

Tm.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

ff

ff

ff

ff



**1 Adagio, a wailing despondency**

IV

III

graphics *p*, notes *mp*

4 5 6 7

This musical system covers measures 4 through 7. It features four staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). All staves are in 4/4 time. The Violin I staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a tempo marking of 'Adagio'. The Viola and Violoncello staves have a key signature of one flat (Bb). The music is characterized by dense, wavy, brown-colored graphic notation overlaid on the staves. Specific musical notations include a 's' (sustained) symbol above a note in measure 4, a 'tr' (trill) symbol above a note in measure 6, and various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and note heads (circles, dots) interspersed within the graphic texture. Measure numbers 4, 5, 6, and 7 are printed below the staves.

III

IV

II

8 9 10

This musical system covers measures 8 through 10. It continues with the same four staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The graphic notation (brown wavy lines) remains dense and consistent. Specific musical notations include a 'tr' (trill) symbol above a note in measure 8, a 'w' (wavy line) symbol above a note in measure 9, and various accidentals and note heads. Measure numbers 8, 9, and 10 are printed below the staves.

Handwritten musical score for measures 11 through 14, featuring four staves: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc.

**Measure 11:** Vln. I has a whole note with a flat (B $\flat$ ). Vln. II has a whole note. Vla. has a whole note with a flat (B $\flat$ ). Vc. has a whole note with a sharp (F $\sharp$ ).

**Measure 12:** Vln. I has a whole note. Vln. II has a whole note. Vla. has a whole note with a flat (B $\flat$ ). Vc. has a whole note with a sharp (F $\sharp$ ).

**Measure 13:** Vln. I has a whole note. Vln. II has a whole note. Vla. has a whole note. Vc. has a whole note.

**Measure 14:** Vln. I has a whole note. Vln. II has a whole note. Vla. has a whole note. Vc. has a whole note.

Handwritten musical score for measures 15 through 16, featuring four staves: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc.

**Measure 15:** Vln. I has a whole note with a triple accent (triple bar over the note). Vln. II has a whole note. Vla. has a whole note. Vc. has a whole note.

**Measure 16:** Vln. I has a whole note. Vln. II has a whole note. Vla. has a whole note with a sharp (F $\sharp$ ). Vc. has a whole note.

# 2 Poco piu energetico

ALL MINUS VC.: Lessen left hand pressure to  
catch stray harmonics as you get quieter

ALL: Sneak back in as sound reverberates

Score for measures 17-23, featuring Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc.

Measure 17: Vln. I, II, and Vla. start with *sfz* and *p*. Vc. starts with *ff* and *p*. A "Small pause" is indicated for Vc. at the beginning.

Measure 18: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *ff*. Vc. continues with *ff*.

Measure 19: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *mf* and *f*. Vc. continues with *mf* and *f*.

Measure 20: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *sfz*. Vc. continues with *sfz*.

Measure 21: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *pp*. Vc. continues with *pp*.

Measure 22: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *pp*. Vc. continues with *pp*.

Measure 23: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *pp*. Vc. continues with *pp*.

Score for measures 24-31, featuring Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc.

Measure 24: Vln. I, II, and Vla. start with *mf* and *f*. Vc. starts with *mf* and *f*.

Measure 25: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *mf* and *f*. Vc. continues with *mf* and *f*.

Measure 26: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *mp*. Vc. continues with *mp*.

Measure 27: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *mp*. Vc. continues with *mp*.

Measure 28: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *p f p*. Vc. continues with *p f p*.

Measure 29: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *mp f*. Vc. continues with *mp f*.

Measure 30: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *mp*. Vc. continues with *mp*.

Measure 31: Vln. I, II, and Vla. continue with *mp*. Vc. continues with *mp*.



**Vln I/II:** Before fermata, adjust your gliss to fit Vla. and Vlc. intonation (so as to be in tune for the fermata).

**FERMATA:** Lessen left hand pressure to catch stray harmonics as you (slightly) push in volume. Let ring, then break out into noise (sotto voce)

Short

32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40

**3 Allegro**

30"

41 42 43 44 45 46



10"

Tm.

Vln. I  $G\#^{\circ 7}$   $G^7$   $C^7$   $C^{M7}$

Vln. II  $G\#^{\circ 7}$   $G^7$   $C^7$

Vla.  $A^7$   $Dm$   $G\#^{\circ 7}$   $G^7$

Vc.  $A^7$   $Dm$   $G\#^{\circ 7}$

*mf*

58 59 60 61 62 63

8"

Tm.

Vln. I  $D\#^{\circ 7}$   $B^7$

Vln. II  $C^{M7}$   $D\#^{\circ 7}$   $B^7$

Vla.  $C^7$   $C^{M7}$   $D\#^{\circ 7}$

Vc.  $G^7$   $C^7$

64 65 66 67 68



5"

Em B°

f f

Em B Em B°

f C<sup>M7</sup> D#<sup>°7</sup> B<sup>7</sup> Em B°

69 70 71 72 73

45" 25" 2" 2" 4"

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup> Am<sup>M7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> Gm<sup>M7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup> Am<sup>M7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> Gm<sup>M7</sup> A<sup>7</sup> ff

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup> Am<sup>M7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> Gm<sup>M7</sup> A<sup>7</sup> ff

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup> Am<sup>M7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> Gm<sup>M7</sup> A<sup>7</sup> ff

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup> Am<sup>M7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> Gm<sup>M7</sup> A<sup>7</sup> ff

74 75 76 77 78

4 Più energetico e un po' più pesante

15"

Tm.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mp*

Dm

A<sup>7</sup>

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

Dm

A<sup>7</sup>

Dm

A<sup>7</sup>

Dm

A<sup>7</sup>

Dm

79

80

81

82

83

10"

Tm.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

G<sup>7</sup>

Cm

A<sup>7</sup>

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

G<sup>7</sup>

Cm

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

G<sup>7</sup>

Cm

84

85

86

87

88

10"

Tm.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

89

90

91

92

93

Chords: Dm, G#<sup>°7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>M7</sup>, A<sup>7</sup>, Dm, G#<sup>°7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>7</sup>, Cm, A<sup>7</sup>, Dm, G#<sup>°7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, Cm, A<sup>7</sup>, Dm, G#<sup>°7</sup>

5"

Tm.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

94

95

96

97

98

Chords: D#<sup>°7</sup>, B<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>M7</sup>, D#<sup>°7</sup>, B<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>M7</sup>, D#<sup>°7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>7</sup>



5"

Tm.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Em

B<sup>°</sup>

Em

B<sup>°</sup>

B

Em

B<sup>°</sup>

C<sup>M7</sup>

D#<sup>°7</sup>

B<sup>7</sup>

Em

B<sup>°</sup>

f

f

f

f

99

100

101

102

103

ALL: At caesura, let sound reverberate, but come back in before it fades (acoustic crossfade) //

5"

Tm.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup>

Am<sup>M7</sup>

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

A<sup>7</sup>

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup>

Am<sup>M7</sup>

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

A<sup>7</sup>

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup>

Am<sup>M7</sup>

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

A<sup>7</sup>

A<sup>sus4(M7)</sup>

Am<sup>M7</sup>

D<sup>7</sup>

Gm<sup>M7</sup>

A<sup>7</sup>

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

104

105

106

107

108

5

*pp*



**G.P.**

**6** Grave, wailing once again

**ALL, BARS 121-131:** (Once again senza vib.) Play noise at given dynamic, play any dynamic for note heads. Improvise passing tones at will with any articulation (arco, pizz., col legno battuto o trato, harmonic, left hand pizz., etc...)

Vln. I  
graphics *mp*, notes *mf*

Vln. II  
graphics *mp*, notes *mf*

Vla.  
graphics *mp*, notes *mf*

Vc.  
graphics *mp*, notes *mf*

121 122 123 124 125

Tm. 10" 2"

**ALL:** Continue ad lib, improvising in d minor, ad lib articulations as before.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.  
IV

Vc.

126 127 128 129 130 131

**Vivace, glass-like** 7 *rit.*

**6"** **10"** **15"**

**ALL:** Only play harmonics  
Glissando from note to note

**Only notes F, G, C, or Ab** **ALL:** To any dynamic

*pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *at least mf* *at least mf* *at least mf* *at least mf*

132 133 134 135 136 137

**Maestoso, indulgent**

**Ab<sup>7</sup>** **G<sup>7</sup>** **Noise**

**<60"** **5"**

*mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

138 139 140 141 142 143



8 Allegro con fuoco e con urgenzia

1. 2.

**open** **5"**

**ALL:** Any performer plays an improvised noise solo at any dynamic, against the group texture. Performers may repeat this section at will as an open solo section.

As soloist finishes, they join the group in texture and dynamic

As last soloist finishes, they join the group in texture and dynamic

Vln. I *p to mp*

Vln. II *p to mp*

Vla. *p to mp*

Vc. *p to mp*

144 145 146

**20"**

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

147 148 149 150

accel. **open** **LIGHTS FADE IN VERY SLOWLY** **align ALL:** Open repeat. Start together, quickly phase (do not align again on repeats), move to bar 121 at will. **ALL:** Extreme end of range

Tm.

Vln. I *fff* *f*

Vln. II *fff* *f*

Vla. *fff* *f*

Vc. *fff* *f*

151 152

**a tempo** accel. **15"** **moderato** **<20"**

**ALL:** Extreme end of range **ALL:** Align during bar 154 **ALL:** To Bar 155 on on vc. cue **ALL:** End with bow on string, motionless, as if ready to play

Tm.

Vln. I *mf* *mp*

Vln. II *mf* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

153 154 155