

Hongwei Cai

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# String Quartet No.2

*"poppies bursting into bloom in the wind and rain"*  
(2020)



## Program Note

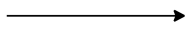
Poppies, tied deeply to sleep, peace, and death, has long been a symbol to fallen soldiers. My second string quartet, ***“poppies bursting into bloom in the wind and rain”***, is a response to Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae’s war poem *In Flanders Fields*. May the world be at peace forever and may you and my heart be at peace forever. The work is dedicated to those spirits who have suffered from war.

The piece received its first performance by the JACK Quartet at Merkin Concert Hall, NYC, on Mar.18, 2021.

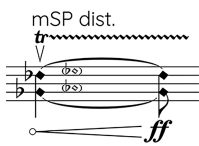
Duration: ca. 10 min

## Performance Notes

(m)SP = (molto) sul ponticello  
 ST = sul tasto  
 ord. = ordinary bow position  
 c.l.b. = col legno battuto  
 ric. = ricochet  
 mVib. = molto vibrato  
 nVib. = non vibrato



Change gradually from one sound or one way of playing (etc.) to another.



Play around the area of the 4th - 9th harmonic and seek double layers of overtones, with distortion.



1/4-tone sharp  
 3/4-tone sharp  
 1/4-tone flat

# String Quartet No.2

"poppies bursting into bloom in the wind and rain"

♩ = ca. 66-70

Hongwei Cai

The musical score is for a string quartet in 4/4 time, with a tempo of approximately 66-70 beats per minute. It consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-4) features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment in the lower strings (Viola and Violoncello) marked *pp* and *con sordino sul ponticello w/ flautando*. The upper strings (Violin I and Violin II) are silent. The second system (measures 5-8) introduces more complex textures. The Violoncello continues the eighth-note pattern. The Viola and Violin II parts feature triplets and dynamic markings like *ff*, *mf*, and *f*. The Violin I part has a triplet marked *f*. The third system (measures 9-14) continues the eighth-note accompaniment. The upper strings play sustained notes and triplets, with dynamic markings like *pp*, *mp*, and *f*. The score includes various performance instructions such as *pizz.* (pizzicato), *ord.* (ordine), *ric.* (ritardando), *arco* (arco), *mSP* (messa di voce), and *gliss.* (glissando).

Musical score for measures 7-8. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measures 7-8 are marked with a 7/7 time signature. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo), *ff* (fortissimo), and *p* (piano). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 5, 6, and 7. A wavy line labeled "mSP distort" is present above the Treble 1 staff in measure 8. A trill (tr) is marked above the Treble 1 staff in measure 8.

Musical score for measures 9-10. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measures 9-10 are marked with a 7/7 time signature. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo), *ff* (fortissimo), *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 5, 6, and 7. A wavy line labeled "mSP dist." is present above the Treble 1 staff in measure 9. A trill (tr) is marked above the Treble 1 staff in measure 9. A wavy line labeled "SP w/ flautando" is present above the Treble 2 staff in measure 10.

Musical score for measures 11-12. The score is written for four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measures 11-12 are marked with a 7/7 time signature. Dynamics include *f* (forte), *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 5, 6, and 7.

15

mSP dist. tr 3 3 3

*pp* *ff* *pp* 3

mSP dist. tr 3 3 3

*pp* *ff* *pp* 3

mSP dist. tr 5 5 5

*pp* *ff* *pp* 5

mSP dist. tr 5 5 5

*pp* *ff* *pp* 5

[illegible]

19

pp — mf

pp — mf

f — mf

f — mf

mp

pp

mp

mp

mp

21

tr gliss. mSP

p — f mf

ad lib.

mSP

f

f

pp

p

p

p

23

SP w/ flautando

pp

pp

mp

f

SP w/ flautando

pp

mp

mf

f

mp

mf

f

mp

mf

f



27

(15)

*mf*

*f sempre*

(15)

*mf*

*f sempre*

gliss.  
III  
IV

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

5

III gliss.  
IV

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

5

29

(15)

(15)

(1) gliss. / free bowing

*pp* *ff* 7 7 *p* 7

(1) gliss. / free bowing

*ff* 7 7 *p* 7 *ff* 6

senza sordino

senza sordino

*f* *p* *mf* *mp* *ff* *pp*

*f* *p* *mf* 5 *mp* 5 *ff* *pp*

This musical score is for a string quartet, spanning measures 31 to 36. It is written for four staves: Violin I (top), Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass (bottom). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves.

**Measure 31:** Violin I and II play rapid sixteenth-note passages with first and second endings. Dynamics range from *ff* to *f*. Viola and Cello/Double Bass play sustained notes with glissando or free bowing, marked *ffp*.

**Measure 32:** Violin I and II continue their passages. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. Viola and Cello/Double Bass play sustained notes with glissando or free bowing, marked *ff*.

**Measure 33:** Violin I and II play rapid sixteenth-note passages. Dynamics range from *mf* to *ff*. Viola and Cello/Double Bass play sustained notes with glissando or free bowing, marked *mp* and *ff*.

**Measure 34:** Violin I and II continue their passages. Dynamics include *f* and *mf*. Viola and Cello/Double Bass play sustained notes with glissando or free bowing, marked *mp* and *ff*.

**Measure 35:** Violin I and II play rapid sixteenth-note passages. Dynamics range from *p* to *f*. Viola and Cello/Double Bass play sustained notes with glissando or free bowing, marked *mp* and *f*.

**Measure 36:** Violin I and II continue their passages. Dynamics include *f* and *mf*. Viola and Cello/Double Bass play sustained notes with glissando or free bowing, marked *mp* and *f*.

37

(8)

mf p

mp ff p f

(8)

p mp ff p f mp

(8)

f mp ff pp f

mf p 5 mf 6 f 5 p 5 f 5 mp

loco

39

(8)

mp ff pp p ppp

(8)

ff pp p ppp

p mp f pp

p ppp

f pp

p ppp

rall. . . . .

♩ = ca. 42-48

41

pp f ff /p mf /f

pp f ff /p mf /f

pp f ff /p mf /f

pp f ff /p mf /f

2 x 3

mSP dist. tr

mSP dist. tr

mSP dist. tr

mSP dist. tr

49

$(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$   $(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$   $(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$   $(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$   $(2 \times \frac{3}{4})$   $(2 \times \frac{3}{4})$

*pp* *f* *pp* *ff* *mp* *pp* *f* *p* *mf*

### Senza Misura

56

$(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$   $(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$   $(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$   $(4 \times \frac{5}{4})$

*pp* *f* *p* *f* *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp* *p* *ppp*

ca. 5s ca. 5s ca. 5s ca. 5s

SP

*gliss.* *gliss.* *0* *ca. 7s* *mp* *pp* *ord.*

*gliss.* *gliss.* *0* *ca. 6s* *mf* *pp* *ord.*

*gliss.* *gliss.* *0* *ca. 7s* *mp* *pp* *ord.*

*gliss.* *gliss.* *0* *ca. 6s* *mf* *pp* *ord.*

*gliss.* *gliss.* *0* *ca. 7s* *mp* *pp* *ord.*

*gliss.* *gliss.* *0* *ca. 6s* *mf* *pp* *ord.*

Four staves of musical notation, each labeled "ca. 12s" and "mSP". The notation includes glissando markings and dynamic markings *f* and *p*. Each staff has a "ord." label with an arrow pointing right.

Measures 59-61. Measure 59 is marked with a tempo of 72. The notation includes various techniques like SP, c.l.b., ord. nVib., and mSP, with dynamic markings ranging from *pp* to *ff*.

Measures 62-64. The notation includes various techniques like SP, c.l.b., ric., mSP, and mVib., with dynamic markings ranging from *mf* to *ff*.



76

c.l.b.  
ric.

f

7

ric.  
....

3

mSP

tr

f

f

6

pp

mp

5

mSP

b

tr

f

mp

ppp

3

SP

ff

pp

ric.

....

f

(tr)

c.l.b.

f

mf

3

3

mp

ppp

f

mSP

b

tr

f

3

ric.

3

f

mf

7

f

pp

f/p

SP

p

ff

5

3

c.l.b.

mf

83

Violin I: *pp*  $\rightarrow$  *mp* (5)

Violin II: *p*  $\rightarrow$  *ff* (3 SP, 5)

Viola: *pp* (c.l.b.), *mf* (c.l.b. ric., 7), *ff*  $\rightarrow$  *pp* (3 SP), *p*  $\rightarrow$  *ff* (5), *f* (SP tr)

Cello/Double Bass: *mp*  $\rightarrow$  *mf* (6), *pp*  $\rightarrow$  *mp* (5), *mf* (c.l.b.), *mf* (c.l.b. ric., 7)

Measures 84 and 85 continue the musical themes with various dynamics and articulations.

[illegible]



102

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *mf*

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

(*tr* *ad lib.*) SP → ord. → ST

*pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

107

SP → ord.

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp*

SP → ord.

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*

SP → ord.

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*

mSP dist. *tr* *ord.* *ord.* *ord.*

*ff* *p* *mf* *pp* *ff* *pp* *mp* *p* *ff* *pp*

111

ST

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

ST

*pp*

ST

*pp*

mSP dist. *tr* *ord.*

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

115

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *mf*

ord. → ST

*pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp* *pp*

ord. → ST

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

ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

mSP dist. *tr* *gliss.*

*pp* *p*

119

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

SP → ord. → ST

*ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp* *pp*

*ff* *fff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp* *pp*

### Senza Misura, as fast as possible, like raindrops

124

pizzicati lasciate vibrare

*mf*

*p-mf* unsynchronized with others

pizzicati lasciate vibrare

*pp*

*p-mf* unsynchronized with others

pizzicati lasciate vibrare

*pp*

*p-mf* unsynchronized with others

pizzicati lasciate vibrare

*pp*

*p-mf* unsynchronized with others

← ca. 30s →  
indefinite repeat

← ca. 30s →  
indefinite repeat

← ca. 30s →  
indefinite repeat

← ca. 30s →  
indefinite repeat

Four empty musical staves, each with a tempo marking: *poco ritardando fino a* followed by a quarter note and a tempo number. The markings are: *poco ritardando fino a*  $\text{♩} = \text{ca.} 58$ , *poco ritardando fino a*  $\text{♩} = \text{ca.} 67$ , *poco ritardando fino a*  $\text{♩} = \text{ca.} 50$ , and *poco ritardando fino a*  $\text{♩} = \text{ca.} 83$ .

Musical score for measures 126-131. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 50$ . The score is in 3/8 time. The first staff (treble clef) has a *p-mf* dynamic and a 7:6 ratio. The second staff (treble clef) has a *p-mf* dynamic and a 4:3 ratio. The third staff (bass clef) has a *p-mf* dynamic and a 5:3 ratio. The fourth staff (bass clef) has a *p-mf* dynamic and a 5:3 ratio. The measures are grouped by brackets with the ratios 7:6, 4:3, and 5:3.

Musical score for measures 132-136. The tempo is marked *Poco ritardando al fine*. The score is in 3/8 time. The first staff (treble clef) has a 7:6 ratio. The second staff (treble clef) has a 4:3 ratio. The third staff (bass clef) has a 5:3 ratio. The fourth staff (bass clef) has a 5:3 ratio. The measures are grouped by brackets with the ratios 7:6, 4:3, and 5:3. The text *al niente* is written below the first three staves in measures 132-134. The word **FINE** is written vertically on the right side of the page.