

NOCTUARY

FOR TWO STRING QUARTETS

CARL SCHIMMEL

COMPOSED 2014

COMMISSIONED BY THE CIOMPI QUARTET

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PERFORMANCE NOTES

- For simplicity and ease of notation, all natural harmonics (including octave harmonics) are indicated as a diamond notehead at the fingered pitch.
- Slashed beams indicate that the beamed notes should be played as fast, or nearly as fast, as possible.
- Gestures in box notation should be repeated until the end of the arrow which follows. Note that the gesture may or may not be slurred. After m. 187 (“Just before the dawn”) all notes in boxed notation, including the harmonic glissandi, are slurred.

PROGRAM NOTES

For some time now, I have been interested in exploring some variations on composer Henri Dutilleux’s ideas (borrowed from Marcel Proust) about the concept of memory as applied to music. How is a musical idea the same or not the same as, related or not related to, another musical idea, remembered from earlier in the piece? And, in a less narrow – and more personal – sense, to what extent do musical ideas from my own past compositions re-emerge and manifest themselves in my new compositions? This latter question pertains essentially to style, and it also is relevant to Dutilleux’s own approach to composition, which often relied upon the reuse of materials. Dutilleux’s masterful string quartet *Ainsi la nuit* (“*Thus the night*”), constructed primarily from a set of ideas introduced at the opening of the piece, is an excellent example of a composition in which change takes place via development of a small number of ideas – and their identities are clarified through variation. It is because of *Ainsi la nuit* that I was inspired to choose the title *Noctuary* for this piece – a “noctuary” is a record of what passes in the night. In this work, I drew upon my own stylistic markers, my own “compositional memory,” and developed them spontaneously, rather than planning out the work in detail as is my usual practice. In composing in a way that is less structured, and yet more clearly rooted in aspects of my personal musical style, in *Noctuary* I have attempted to more deeply probe my own musical subconscious. *Noctuary* was commissioned by the Ciompi Quartet, for first performance by the Ciompi Quartet and Amernet String Quartet.

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Caliginous (♩ = ca. 48)

Violin I: $n < ppp > n$, $n < pp > n$, $n < p > n$, n

Violin II: $n < n >$, $n < pp > n$, $n < pp > n$, $n < mp >$

Viola: n , $pp > n$

Cello: n , $pp > n$

Violin I: $n < ppp > n$, $n < pp > n$, $n < mp >$

Violin II: $n < pp > n$, $n < pp >$

Viola: n

Cello: n

Annotations: *sul pont.*, *ord.*

Violin I: $mf > p$, *this passage like a cadenza*, pp , *cantabile* 5

Violin I (sul A): ppp , pp sul D & A

Violin I (sul A & E): ppp , pp sul A & E

Violin II: n , pp sul A & E

Violin II (sul A): ppp , pp

Violin II (sul D): ppp , pp

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I

p 6 *pp* *p* *pp*

sul D & A
sul G & D

II

sul C & G
sul C & G

I

accelerando

3 3 3 5

sul D & A
sul C & G

mp *fff* *pp*

B

II

accelerando

sul D & A

B

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26

5

3

3

I

begin legato, shift to separate bows

fff

begin legato, shift to separate bows

f

begin legato, shift to separate bows

mp

p

pp

begin legato, shift to separate bows

fff

A conclamation (♩ = ca. 144)

molto ritard.

28

I

fff

fff

n

A conclamation (♩ = ca. 144)

molto ritard.

II

fff

fff

fff

n

4
C Melancholic (Half Tempo; ♩ = ca. 72)

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I

n
ppp
ppp play slowly, randomly, any order
ppp play slowly, randomly, any order

C Melancholic (Half Tempo; ♩ = ca. 72)
poco sul tasto

II

pp dolce
pp dolce
ppp play slowly, randomly, any order
pp

I

42

n *p* *n* *pp* *n* *ppp* *n*
n *p* *n* *pp* *n* *ppp* *n* *pizz. let ring*
ritardando

II

n *ord.* *p* *n* *pp* *n* *ppp* *n*
n *ord.* *p* *n* *pp* *n* *ppp* *n*
ritardando

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♩ = ca. 60

D Quickening (Twice as Fast; ♩ = ca. 120)

49

pp *n* *pp* *pizz.* *con sord.* *arco* *p*

pp *n* *pp* *pizz.* *con sord.* *arco sul pont.* *ord.* *p*

pp *n* *pp* *con sord.* *arco sul pont.* *mf* *ord.* *p*

pp *n* *pp* *con sord.* *arco sul pont.* *mf* *pp* *p*

♩ = ca. 60

D Quickening (Twice as Fast; ♩ = ca. 120)

50

pp *n* *pp* *pizz.* *con sord.* *arco* *p*

pp *n* *pp* *pizz.* *con sord.* *arco* *p*

pp *n* *pp* *pizz.* *con sord.* *arco sul pont.* *ord.* *p*

pp *n* *pp* *pizz.* *con sord.* *arco sul pont.* *ord.* *p*

57

51

mf *> p* *ord.* *p* *< mf* *> p* *p* *> pp*

mf *> p* *sul pont.* *p* *< mf* *p* *ord.* *p* *< mf* *> p* *p* *> pp*

mf *> p* *pp* *< mf* *> pp* *ord.* *p* *< mf* *> p* *p* *> pp*

mf *> p* *sul pont.* *p* *< mf* *ord.* *p* *< mf* *> p* *p* *> pp*

mf *> p* *sul pont.* *p* *< mf* *ord.* *p* *< mf* *> p* *p* *> pp*

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allargando

E Agitated (♩ = ca. 92)

64

I

senza sord. sul pont. *mf f* *f dolce mp* *mf p*

senza sord. sul pont. *p f* *f dolce mp* *mf p*

senza sord. sul pont. *pp f* *f dolce mp* *mf p*

II

allargando

E Agitated (♩ = ca. 92)

senza sord. sul pont. *f* *f dolce mp* *mf p*

senza sord. sul pont. *mf f* *f dolce mp* *mf p*

senza sord. sul pont. *mf f* *f dolce mp* *mf p*

70

I

molto accelerando *a tempo* *molto accelerando* *a tempo* *accelerando*

molto accelerando *a tempo* *molto accelerando* *a tempo* *accelerando*

senza sord. sul pont. *f* *ff* *f dolce mp* *ff ppp*

senza sord. sul pont. *f* *ff* *f dolce mp* *ff ppp*

senza sord. sul pont. *f* *ff* *f dolce mp* *ff ppp*

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a tempo *poco accel.* *a tempo (or slower)* *accelerando*

76

I

II

fffp *mp* *f* *p* *fff*

a tempo *poco accel.* *a tempo (or slower)* *accelerando*

fff *p* *mf* *f* *>mf* *fff*

fffp *fff* *fff* *fff*

fffp *fff* *fff*

[F] Paroxysmal (♩ = ca. 120)

accelerando

I

f *fff*

[F] Paroxysmal (♩ = ca. 120)

accelerando

II

f *ff*

83

I

II

ff

ff *fff*

Berserk (♩ = ca. 144)

85

I

II

ff

fff

ff *fff*

ff

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

pizz. arco

fff

fff

fff

fff

fff

fff

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87

I

II

fff

pizz. arco

90

I

II

allargando

pizz. arco

3

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G Moonstruck (♩ = ca. 132)

ritardando

I

Part I of the score for 'Moonstruck' consists of four staves in 4/4 time. The music features a melodic line with a wide intervallic leap and a sustained, atmospheric accompaniment. The tempo is marked as 'ca. 132' and the performance instruction is 'ritardando'.

G Moonstruck (♩ = ca. 132)

ritardando

repeated patterns should not slow down

repeated patterns should not slow down

repeated patterns should not slow down

II

Part II of the score for 'Moonstruck' consists of four staves in 4/4 time. The upper staves feature a complex, rhythmic melodic line with sixteenth-note patterns and sixteenth-note chords. The lower staves provide a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords. The tempo is 'ca. 132' and the instruction is 'ritardando'. Several repeated melodic patterns are boxed and annotated with the instruction 'repeated patterns should not slow down'.

Ignescent (♩ = ca. 92)

accelerando

I

Part I of the score for 'Ignescent' consists of four staves in 6/4 time. The music features a melodic line with a wide intervallic leap and a sustained, atmospheric accompaniment. The tempo is marked as 'ca. 92' and the performance instruction is 'accelerando'. The dynamics range from *mf* to *f*. The score includes triplet markings and a crescendo leading to a *ff* dynamic.

Ignescent (♩ = ca. 92)

accelerando

II

Part II of the score for 'Ignescent' consists of four staves in 6/4 time. The upper staves feature a melodic line with a wide intervallic leap and a sustained, atmospheric accompaniment. The lower staves provide a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords. The tempo is 'ca. 92' and the instruction is 'accelerando'. The dynamics range from *p* to *f*. Several repeated melodic patterns are boxed and annotated with the instruction 'repeated patterns should not slow down'.

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H Evantion (♩ = ca. 120)
ritardando

A cloak, falling (♩ = ca. 92)
like a cadenza (follow Quartet I Violin I)

I

100

fff *mf* *p*

fff *ppp* *mp* *ppp* arco sul D

fff *ppp* arco

fff *ppp*

H Evantion (♩ = ca. 120)
ritardando

A cloak, falling (♩ = ca. 92)
like a cadenza (follow Quartet I Violin I)

II

fff *n* *p > n* *ppp*

fff sul pont. *ppp* *mf* *n* *ppp* ord. sul A

fff *ppp* *ppp*

fff *ppp*

I

106

p *ppp*

sul G

poco accel. *poco rit.* I *a tempo*

II

p *ppp*

poco accel. *poco rit.* I *a tempo*

ppp

116

I

II

127

I

II

(IV, III, II, I, II, III)

avoid bow changes
gesture should not be too rapid

p *pp*

(IV, III, II, III)

avoid bow changes
gesture should not be too rapid

p *pp*

(IV, III, II, I, II, III)

avoid bow changes
gesture should not be too rapid

p *n* *p*

(IV, III, II, I, II, III)

avoid bow changes
gesture should not be too rapid

p *pp*

(IV, III, II, I, II, III)

avoid bow changes
gesture should not be too rapid

p *pp*

(IV, III, II, I, II, III)

avoid bow changes
gesture should not be too rapid

p *pp*

(gradually slow rate of change)

(gradually slow rate of change)

sul C & G

J

J

Detailed description: This page contains musical notation for two systems, I and II, of a piece titled 'Noctuary'. System I (measures 116-126) features a melody in the upper voice and a bass line. The upper voice has a long note with a slur and a fermata, with fingerings (IV, III, II, I, II, III) indicated. The bass line has a similar long note with a slur and a fermata, also with fingerings (IV, III, II, I, II, III). Performance instructions include 'avoid bow changes gesture should not be too rapid' and dynamic markings *p* and *pp*. System II (measures 127-136) continues the melody and bass line. The upper voice has a long note with a slur and a fermata, with fingerings (IV, III, II, I, II, III) indicated. The bass line has a similar long note with a slur and a fermata, also with fingerings (IV, III, II, I, II, III). Performance instructions include 'avoid bow changes gesture should not be too rapid' and dynamic markings *p* and *pp*. The piece concludes with a 'sul C & G' instruction and a final note.

NOCTURNY

136

(gradually slow rate of change)

sul A & E

K

IV III II I
play any of these 12 harmonics in any order, relatively slowly *(gradually slow rate of change)*

(IV, III, II, I)
play any of these 4 harmonics in any order, relatively slowly *(gradually slow rate of change)*

sul D & A

pp

K

IV III II I
play any of these 12 harmonics in any order, relatively slowly

(gradually slow rate of change)

n p

145

sul D & A

ppp

sul C

sul C & G

ppp *mf*

n

mf

p *mf*

NOCTURNY

L Emerging, gathering (♩ = ca. 120)

154

mp *n* *ppp* *ppp* *ord.* *ppp* *ord.*

n *ppp*

L Emerging, gathering (♩ = ca. 120)

n *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

n *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

n *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

n *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *fp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

163

sul pont. *ord.* *sul pont.*

n *ppp* *ord.* *pp* *ff* *n*

sul pont. *ppp* *ord.* *pp* *ff* *n*

sul pont. *ppp* *ord.* *pp* *ff* *n*

fp *ff* *ppp* *ord.* *ppp* *ord.*

ppp *ord.* *ppp* *ord.*

ppp *ord.* *ppp* *ord.*

ppp *ord.* *ppp* *ord.*

168

I

M ord.

ff

II

M *ff* ord.

p

pp

p

pp

171

I

sul pont. *ppp* ord.

ff *mf*

pp

II

sul pont. *mf* ord.

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

mf *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf*

174

I

II

ff *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *fff*

ffmf *ffmf* *ffmf* *ffmf*

180

I

II

ff *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *fff*

ffmf *ffmf* *ffmf* *ffmf*

ff *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *fff*

ffmf *ffmf* *ffmf* *ffmf*

ff *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *fff*

ffmf *ffmf* *ffmf* *ffmf*

ff *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *fff*

ffmf *ffmf* *ffmf* *ffmf*

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183

ritardando

I

poco sul pont. *f* *ff* *fff* ord. 3

poco sul pont. *f* *ff* *fff* ord. 3

II

poco sul pont. *f* *ff* *fff* ord. 3

poco sul pont. *f* *ff* *fff* ord. 3

ritardando

Just before the dawn ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$)

186

I

f *mf* *f*

II

Just before the dawn ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$)

glissando here to 3 pitches

sul A 15^{ma} (glissando)

190

I

mf

mf

O

n

sul D

8^{va}

(glissando)

mp

f

O

f

3

mf

3

II

mf

sul A

15^{ma}

(glissando)

sul G

(glissando)

p

198

I

ppp

ppp

ppp

pp

p

II

p

ppp

ppp

mp

NOCTURNY

P

sul E

I

P

ppp

sul D

p

ppp

ppp

15^{ma}

15^{ma}

15^{ma}

15^{ma}

15^{ma}

15^{ma}

15^{ma}

pizz. let all ring

p

II

211

I

II