

# Kyrie

for String Quartet

**Ian Percy**

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2017

(Arranged for String Quartet: May 2020)

## **Kyrie**

For string quartet

As the title suggests, this is a setting of a short Latin text taken from the Catholic Mass composed for four solo voices (SATB). The text contains three short lines (with one repeated) and only three words; it reads as a simple vertical palindrome:

### **Kyrie**

Kyrie eleison;  
Christe eleison;  
Kyrie eleison

This score evolved from a pedagogical study conceived with the hope of demonstrating how one could follow conventions of plainchant within tonal stasis (without accidentals or modulations), but maintain internal motion through the linear interaction of modality (instead of species counterpoint) and hopefully produce contemporary music that sounds timeless instead of being overtly modernistic or retrospective.

The opening plainchant is written in Phrygian mode and the subtle presence of a grace note contemporises the rhythmic (and modal) character of the phrase. The compound-interval in the bass for the first chorus is another contemporising influence, along with the use of fourth-based harmony and the linear use of whole-tones. One was not aiming to 'reinvent the world' here! Subtle 'smudges' (for this piece at least) ...

The movement was arranged for string quartet in May 2020.

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$\text{♩} = 50$  ... a solemn vow ... rit. . . . . [ $\text{♩} = 40$ ]

**A**

$\text{♩} = 50$  rit. . . . .  $\text{♩} = 40$

**B**

$\text{♩} = 52$  ... an eternal prayer (for forgiveness) ...

*poco rubato, molto espress.*

... in plainsong (in plain sight) ...

rit. . . . .

**C**

$\text{♩} = 40$  ... from the heart (no strings attached) ...

**D**

$\text{♩} = 50$

rit. . . . . [ $\text{♩} = 40$ ]

**E**

$\text{♩} = 50$  rit. . . . .  $\text{♩} = 40$



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