

A Quartet of Daydreams

For string quartet

Ian Percy

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Approximate Duration: 13-14 minutes

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2005/09
(Revised 2017)

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This single movement for string quartet was composed with primary pitch material flavoured by natural resonance theories and elements of the harmonic and sub-harmonic series during 2005/06. The piece was revised in 2009 and again during 2017 in preparation for performance of an abridged version. Initial work evolved from the planning for two entirely different pieces:

Melancholy Daydreams for solo piano (2004): A set of 4 movements subtitled: What, Where, When and Why. These generic questions (or daydreams) offer a variety of connotations. They can be perceived as interrogations or exclamations, passive or aggressive. This ambiguous extra-musical influence captured the imagination, inspiring conception of a meta-formula from which multiple pieces evolved.

Natural Resonance for string quartet (2004): A single movement dealing with the acoustic phenomenon of resonating natural resonance. Natural Resonance seems to describe the timbral characteristics of a string quartet quite accurately. It implies an organic phenomenon: acoustic vibration. It is as old as nature and is often discussed in relation to space and time, even the origins of the universe itself. It suggests the harmonic series, ancient organic resource and natural patterns. In literal terms, natural resonance refers to the additional sympathetic tones produced when sustained resonances vibrate against each other. These heterodyning frequencies can be produced above the pitches as combination tones (sum of the two frequencies), or as difference tones (the difference between the two).

Having allowed the idiomatic properties of the instrument to shape heterodyning frequencies and multiphonics within previous works, this quartet adopts a more considered and reproducible approach to the phenomenon of natural resonance as a compositional resource. The pitch of D is treated as the primary thought and all material is generated from and around it. The meta-formula for this quartet can be sub-divided into four forms:

1. Chromatic pitch wedge around D
2. Modal cells
3. Whole-tone scales and chords
4. Heterodyning frequencies relative to pitch of D

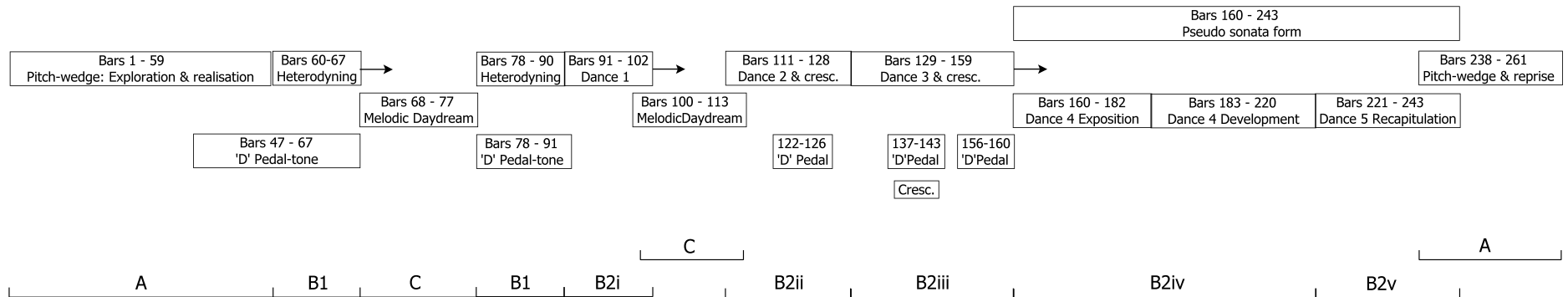
Although a seemingly complex movement, it can be divided into a handful of compositional units:

1. Pitch wedge
2. Ostinato/pedal tone
3. Motivic gestures and resonance theories
4. Dance adaptations (mini sonata form)
5. Melodic daydreams (transitional passages/lyrical interludes)

As a guiding extra-musical influence, the composer considered the definition of a daydream as 'a fantasy indulged in while one is awake' and through analogy and metaphor, allowed this to influence the atmosphere, character, interaction, pacing, texture and rhythm of the writing as one aimed to compose an acoustic interpretation of the natural thought process: a collection of daydreams.

Quartet of Daydreams Form

H **I** **J** **L** **M** **O** **R** **X** **BB** **GG** **II**



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♩ = 69 ... as if drifting into the subconscious ...

poco rit.

[♩ = 69]

Musical score for the first section of 'A Quartet of Daydreams', measures 1-10. The score is for a string quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello) in 4/4 time. The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' and the pulse is 69. The music features a variety of articulations including pizzicato (pizz.) and arco, and dynamic markings such as *pp*, *ppp*, *p*, and *mp*. Trills and triplets are used throughout. The first violin part begins with a pizzicato triplet, while the second violin and viola parts have arco and pizzicato passages. The cello part features a pizzicato triplet and arco passages.



A ♩ = 96 ... a discreet beginning: Two musical thoughts emerge in conversation ...

poco rit.

[♩ = 60]

Musical score for the second section of 'A Quartet of Daydreams', measures 11-19. The score is for a string quartet in 4/4 time. The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' and the pulse is 60. The music begins with a first violin part featuring a pizzicato triplet, with dynamics ranging from *p* to *ppp*. The second violin part has a long arco line. The viola and cello parts feature pizzicato triplets and arco passages, with dynamics ranging from *mp* to *ff*. The section concludes with a first violin pizzicato triplet and a cello arco passage.

20

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

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

Cello/Double Bass: *mf*, *mf*, *mf*, *f*, *sfz ppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*

Bass: *mp*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*, *mf sub ppp*



27

Violin I: *mf*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *mf*, *pp*, *pp*

Violin II: *p sub ppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*

Cello/Double Bass: *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*, *pppp*

Bass: *mf*, *p sub ppp*, *p sub ppp*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*

34 arco

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

pizz. *mp* *mf*

ppp *mp* *p* *mp*

mf *mp*

flageolet tone flageolet tones

41

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

pizz. *mp* *mf*

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

p *ppp* *p*

arco

4 **F** ♩ = 80 ... a related memory ...

poco accel.

48

arco *solo*

pizz. *arco*

p *mp* *mf*

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

pizz. *arco*

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

mp *p* *mp*



[♩ = 88] *poco rit.*

[♩ = 80] **G** ♩ = 96 ... an obstinate thought ...

poco accel.

[♩ = 104]

55

pizz. *legato* *solo*

f *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

f *ppp* *mf* *f*

mf *mf* *mf*

mf

H ♩ = 96 ... a persistent thread ...

rit.

60 arco *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf* *mp* *f* *mp* *p*

legato *legato* *pizz.* *f* *3* *3* *arco* *p*

vib. *vib.*

I ♩ = 60 ... a melancholy daydream ...

poco rit.

[♩ = 52]

68 *pp* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *pizz.* *pp* *pp* *pp*

solo *mf* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *pizz.* *pp* *pp*

flageolet tone *flageolet tone* *flageolet tone*

legato *legato* *pp* *pizz.* *pp* *pp*

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

6 **J** ♩ = 96 ... a recurring theme: A nagging concern ... poco accel. ----- [♩ = 104] poco rit. -----

78

Musical score for measures 78-84. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measure 78 starts with a tempo of ♩ = 96 and a dynamic of *mf*. The music features a recurring theme of eighth notes with slurs and accents. Measure 79 has a dynamic of *mf*. Measure 80 has dynamics of *mf* and *mp*. Measure 81 has a dynamic of *p*. Measure 82 has dynamics of *mf* and *p*. Measure 83 has a dynamic of *f*. Measure 84 has a dynamic of *f*. The score includes various articulations such as slurs, accents, and slurs over groups of notes. There are also dynamic markings like *arco* in the Bass 2 staff.

K ♩ = 92 ... resistance is futile: A persistent thought must be addressed ... poco accel. ----- [♩ = 100] poco rit. -----

85

Musical score for measures 85-91. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of four staves: Treble 1, Treble 2, Bass 1, and Bass 2. Measure 85 starts with a tempo of ♩ = 92 and a dynamic of *mf*. The music features a recurring theme of eighth notes with slurs and accents. Measure 86 has a dynamic of *f*. Measure 87 has a dynamic of *mp*. Measure 88 has a dynamic of *mf*. Measure 89 has a dynamic of *p*. Measure 90 has a dynamic of *f*. Measure 91 has a dynamic of *f*. The score includes various articulations such as slurs, accents, and slurs over groups of notes. There are also dynamic markings like *arco* in the Bass 2 staff.

L ♩ = 92 ... reason and resolution ...

poco accel.

[♩ = 96]

poco rit.

[♩ = 92]

91

f *mf* *mp* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf*

pizz. *arco*

||
poco rit.

... a subconscious transition ...

M ♩ = 84

poco rit.

97

lyrical *legato* *vib.*

p *mp* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

legato *vib.* *solo*

f *p*

103

Musical score for measures 103-108. The score is written for four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Cello/Double Bass, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' and the time signature is 3/4. The score features extensive triplet patterns and slurs. Dynamics include *p*, *ppp*, *p*, *mp*, *pp*, and *ppp*. Performance instructions include *legato* and *8va* (octave up).

111

Musical score for measures 111-116. The score is written for four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Cello/Double Bass, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' and the time signature is 3/4. The score features triplet patterns and slurs. Dynamics include *mp*, *f*, *mf*, *mf*, *mf*, and *ff*. Performance instructions include *legato*, *vib.* (vibrato), *pizz.* (pizzicato), *arco* (arco), and *tr* (trill).

Musical score for measures 119-125. The score is in 3/4 time and features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is characterized by complex rhythmic patterns, including numerous triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *ff* (fortissimo). The piece concludes with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) marking and a final *ff* dynamic.

Musical score for measures 126-132. The score continues with four staves, maintaining the complex rhythmic and dynamic language of the previous section. It features a mix of sustained notes and rhythmic patterns, with dynamics ranging from *f* to *ff*. The section ends with an *arco* (arco) marking and a final *ff* dynamic.

10 **S** ♩ = 100 ... with determination and aggression ...

poco accel.

[♩ = 108]

Musical score for measures 134-139. The score is written for four staves (treble and bass clefs). It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 100. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The piece concludes with a *f* marking. The notation includes various articulations like accents and slurs, and some notes are marked with 'tr' for trills.

T ♩ = 100 ... a dark daydream ...

poco accel.

Musical score for measures 140-145. The score is written for four staves (treble and bass clefs). It features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth-note runs and triplets. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 100. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The notation includes various articulations like accents and slurs, and some notes are marked with 'tr' for trills.

144

ff fff ff

ff fff ff

ff fff ff

ff fff ff

poco accel. ♩ = 96 poco accel. W ♩ = 100 ... a final release of negative thought ...

150

f mf f

f mf f

f mf f

f ff f

poco accel.

[♩ = 104] poco rit.

155



X ♩ = 96 ... with renewed optimism ... poco rit. [♩ = 92] ♩ = 96 poco rit. [♩ = 92] **Y** ♩ = 96 With positive energy ...

160

poco rit.

[♩ = 88] **Z** ♩ = 96

poco rit.

[♩ = 88] 13

Violin I: *mf*, *mf*, *ppp*, *p*, *f*, *f*, *mf*

Violin II: *mf*, *ppp*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *f*, *mf*

Viola: *mf*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *f*, *mf*

Cello/Double Bass: *pp*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *f*, *mf*



poco accel.

AA ♩ = 96 ... repetition and consideration ...

poco rit.

[♩ = 88]

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

Violin II: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *mf*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*

Viola: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *mf*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*

Cello/Double Bass: *pp*, *f*, *mf*, *mf*, *mp*, *mp*, *mp*

181 *lyrical*

Violin I: *lyrical*, *mf*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *pizz.*

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

Viola: *lyrical*, *p*, *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *arco*

Cello/Double Bass: *mp*, *mf*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, *pizz.*

188

Violin I: *arco*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, *mf*, *arco*, *p*, *mf*, *mf*

Violin II: *pizz.*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *pizz.*, *mf*, *mf*

Viola: *p*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, *pizz.*, *mf*, *mf*

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

Musical score for section DD, measures 194-200. The score consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) includes markings for *arco*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *mp*, and *pp*. The second staff (treble clef) includes *arco*, *f*, *mp*, and *p*. The third staff (bass clef) includes *arco*, *ff*, *mp*, and *lyrical*. The fourth staff (bass clef) includes *arco*, *ff*, *p*, and *mf f*. The score is characterized by frequent triplet patterns and slurs across measures.

EE ♩ = 88 ... a loss of concentration ...

poco accel.

[♩ = 92]

Musical score for section EE, measures 200-206. The score consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) includes markings for *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *p*, and *mp*. The second staff (treble clef) includes *pizz.*, *arco*, *mp*, *ppp*, *mp*, and *mf*. The third staff (bass clef) includes *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *ppp*, and *p*. The fourth staff (bass clef) includes *arco*, *p*, *pp*, *ppp*, *mp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *mp*, and *mf*. The score features complex rhythmic patterns with many triplets and slurs.

16 rit. [♩ = 76] poco rit. [♩ = 60] accel. ♩ = 88 poco rit.

206

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

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

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

p *pp* *p*

lyrical

FF ♩ = 84 ... a moment of clarity ... rit. [♩ = 60] ♩ = 84 poco accel. [♩ = 92] rit. [♩ = 76] ♩ = 92 poco accel.

213

ppp *mp* *mf*

ppp *mp*

pp *ppp* *mp* *mf*

pp *ppp* *pizz.* *mp* *mf* *arco* *mp* *f*

lyrical *lyrical*

GG

♩ = 96 ... recapitulation ...

poco accel.

[♩ = 100] poco rit.

17

221

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

Violin II: *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *mf*

Viola: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *mf*

Cello/Double Bass: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*

Performance instructions: *pizz.*, *arco*, accents.



♩ = 92 poco accel.

[♩ = 96] poco rit.

[♩ = 88] **HH** ♩ = 96

poco rit.

228

Violin I: *mp*

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

Viola: *p*, *pp*, *mf*, *mp*

Cello/Double Bass: *ppp*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, *mf*

Performance instructions: *pizz.*, *arco*, accents.

234

p
pp
ppp
mp



241

mp
pizz.
mf
mp
mf

248

arco

mp *mf* *mp* *mf* *f*

mp *mf* *f*

rit. [♩ = 72] LL ♩ = 92



poco rit. [♩ = 46]

255

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

poco rit. [♩ = 46]

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