String Quartet No. 2 "Distance"

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Bickerstaff and Sons MUSIC PUBLISHERS String Quartet No. 2, "Distance" was written during the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic of 2020—as I write these words, the pandemic is ongoing, without a clear end in sight—and it was written in such a way that it can be performed remotely, i.e. via video chat. In a live performance, setting the players at different areas on the stage or within the performance space—with at least six feet between each player, which is the recommendation for social distancing—is strongly recommended.

Performance Instructions

- 1. The boxed numbers at the top of most bars indicate the amount of time that that bar should be played. For example, "1:30" indicates one minute and thirty seconds, while ":45" indicates forty-five seconds, and so on. If no timing is provided, the players should exercise their best judgment.
- 2. Where repeat signs occur, those bars should be repeated as many times as necessary to fill up the indicated time. Arrows following repeated bars indicate a continuation (or continued repetition) of those bars.
- 3. Technical and expressive instructions—crescendi and decrescendi, ritardandi and accelarandi, etc.—should take place gradually within the indicated time. For instance, if a decrescendo appears on a bar that is repeated for forty-five seconds, the decrescendo should take approximately forty-five seconds.
- 4. Stems without noteheads or with x-shaped noteheads indicate general rhythms and/or "note areas." Similarly, noteheads without stems indicate pitches alone, and if any rhythms are indicated, they are general at best.
- 5. Jagged or wavy lines indicate a general pitch-shape of a musical idea. These may be followed as general concepts, but players should not feel beholden to them.
- 6. When notes or figures that appear in a box followed by an arrow, those notes and/or musical ideas should be used as the basis for quasi-free improvisation that may use the notes provided as a starting point.
- 7. Where the words "all together" appear, the players should arrive at those points at basically the same time.
- 8. All players should play from the full score. Page turns may be accomplished in whatever way works.
- 9. If all timing instructions are followed, the duration of the piece is approximately 30 minutes. Timings may be freely altered in order to facilitate a shorter (or longer) performance.

Caveats

- 1. All tempi, timing indications, and rhythms are approximations and should be treated as such. Players should not be at identical tempi, and while players should advance to bars/fragments at <u>roughly</u> the same time, they need not do so at <u>precisely</u> the same time. (The exception is when the words "all together" appear, as indicated above.) For example, while the notes and rhythms in mm. 1 and 2 are identical, the tempi and "downbeats" should not be. In other words, the players should not be playing the same musical figure in unison.
- 2. If, at any time, the notation seems unclear, illogical, unreasonable, or even impossible, the players should feel free to trust and follow their best judgment.

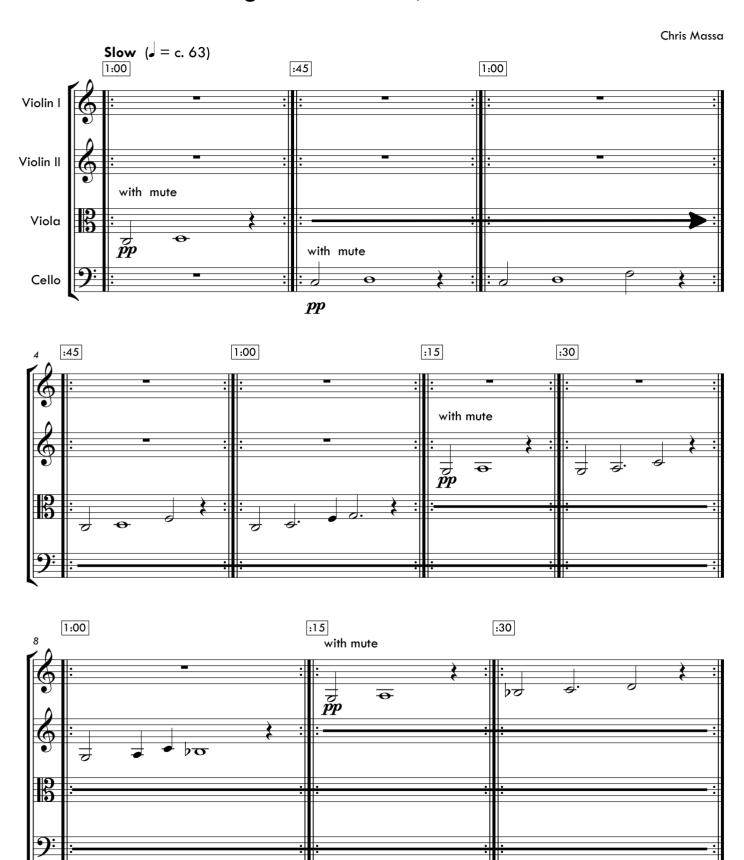
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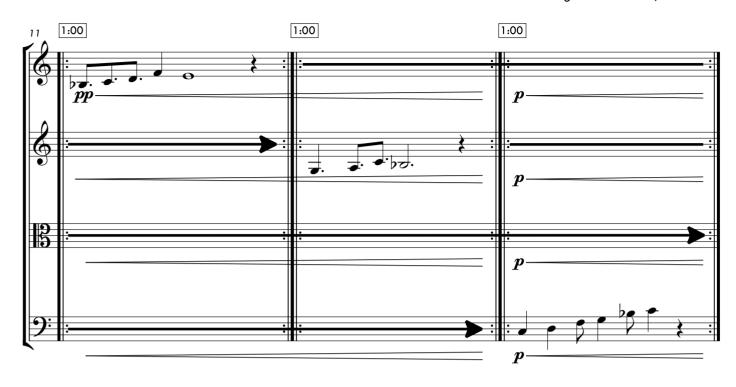
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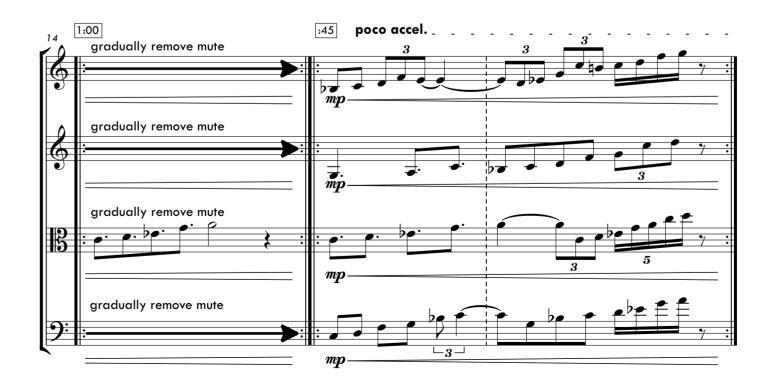
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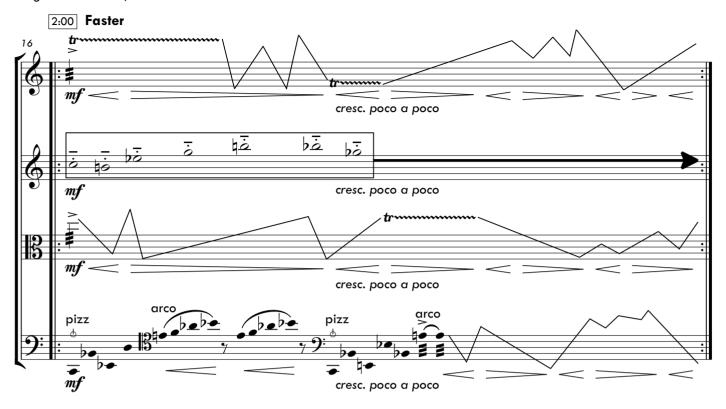
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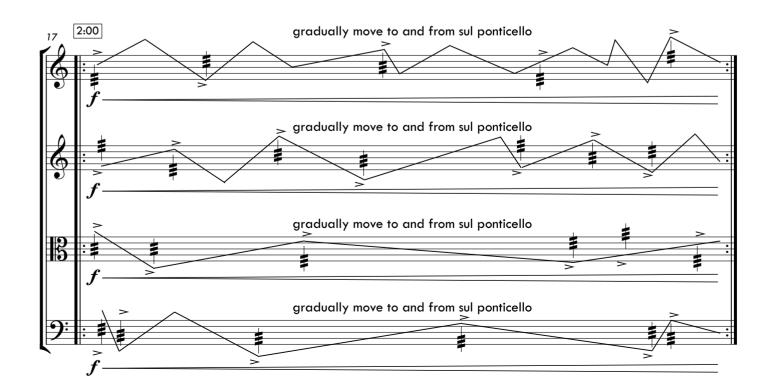
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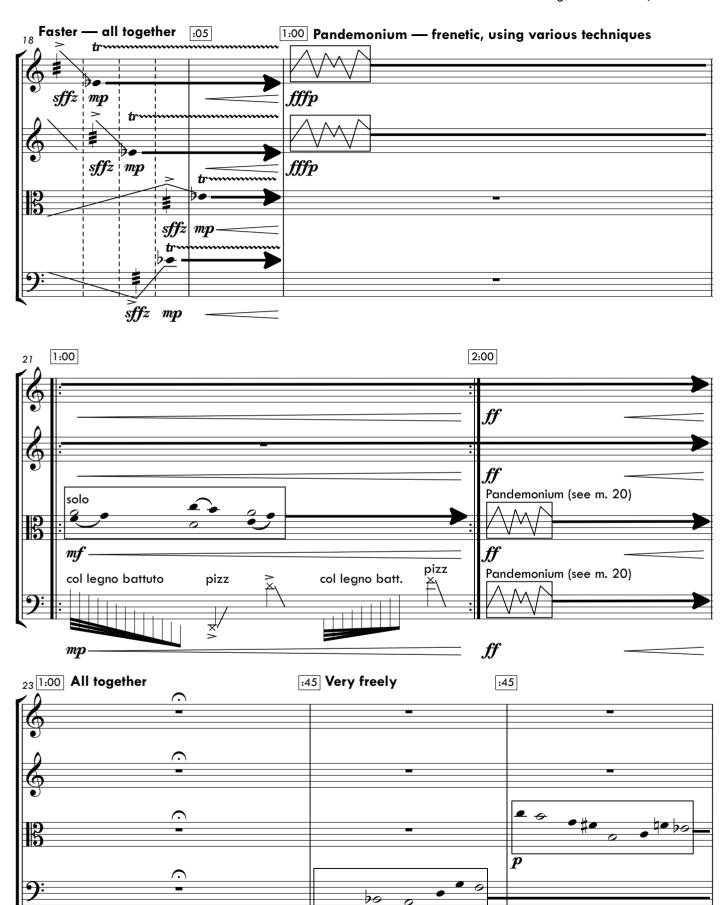












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