

Four Essays

String Quartet

Hannes Taljaard

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Four Essays for String Quartet

The four movements should be performed in sequence when the whole work is performed. Any three movements can be performed together, and movements can be performed in pairs or separately. If three or less movements are performed, the performers can decide on the order of the movements.

First Movement: *Serioso*

TEMPO: The very fast tempo is an ideal.

The tempo changes are abrupt, unless indicated otherwise.

TRILLS: All trills involve semitones, usually the semitone above the notated tone.

Sometimes the second tone of the trill is notated as an accidental (in parenthesis).

BOWING: Only some bowing marks are indicated. This should provide sufficient information to the performers for further decisions.

- Measure 10 — 12: a glissando is executed from the first note into the slurred second note. The slurred second note is not sounded independently.
- Measure 16 — 18: the shorter note values are played as ornamentation, not as separate tones.
- Measure 51 — 58 & 13 — 137, 159, 161: *punta d'arco battutte*. The strings are hit softly with the hair close to the tip of the bow, as part of an up bow or a down bow. This should not give a percussive sound.
- Measure 140-152: the texture consists of one melody with a drone. The shorter notes values should be played as ornamentation.

Second Movement: *Intermezzo*

TEMPO: The tempo should not be thought of as fast.

The semiquaver is not the beat: one beat mostly equals a measure.

The short note values in the violins are to be played as one movement, one idea or one gesture. If these notes are simply too fast, the tempo may be reduced somewhat.

punta d'arco battutte (p.d'a batt.): See notes to the first movement.

mezza voce: the bow is drawn over the strings quicker than usual, but with less pressure on the strings. This should produce a sound somewhat like a whisper.

- Measure 41, 43, 51 — 58: the glissandi are very fast and over a small interval — about a quarter tone in the direction indicated by the small line attached to the note head.
- Measure 69 & 71: the small notes are played as part of the ornamentation starting with the trill.

Third Movement: Scherzo

TEMPO: The fast tempo is an ideal. It may be reduced somewhat, and the tempo of the *meno mosso* sections accordingly. *Meno mosso* should, however, not become too slow.

- Measure 77-94: the texture consists of one melody with a drone. The shorter note values should be played as ornamentation. When printed smaller, these notes should be played somewhat softer than the melody tones, as if they occur inside the melody tones.

Fourth Movement: Lyrico

Notes that are printed smaller should be played as ornaments. They should still be clearly audible, except when marked *pp*.

mezza voce: see notes to the second movement.

- Short note values (32nd notes) should form one idea and should be played very smoothly.
- Measure 38 — 47: the slurred movement in semiquavers in the violins should form a single idea every time they occur.
- Measure 79 — 90: notes joined with a dotted phrase mark should be played as one gesture, but may be played with bow changes.

The pauses between the movements are essential to the work, and may be rather long. The total duration of the work will be about 26 minutes.

The work was written for the RUBIO String Quartet from Belgium who gave the first performance on 22 September 2004 in Potchefstroom and another performance — which was recorded — on 26 September 2004 in Pretoria. The fourth essay (*Lyrico*) was subsequently rewritten. RUBIO consisted of Dirk van de Velde (Violin I), Dirk van den Hauwe (Violin II), Esther van Strahlen (Viola) and Peter Devos (Cello). Their tour was supported by the Government of Flanders.

Hannes Taljaard 2001-2005

Four Essays

String Quartet

1. *Serioso*

Mosso (♩ = 140-148)

Musical score for the first system of '1. Serioso'. It consists of four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass). The music is in 4/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and accents. Dynamics range from *f* to *fff*. Performance instructions include *pizz.*, *arco*, *sul pont.*, *ord.*, *gliss.*, and *trem.*. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 0, 4, and 0.

Musical score for the second system of '1. Serioso'. It continues the four-staff arrangement. Dynamics include *ff*, *mp*, *p*, and *fff*. Performance instructions include *sul pont.*, *ord.*, *gliss.*, and *pizz.*. The music features various articulations and dynamic shifts.

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Musical score for the third system of '1. Serioso'. It continues the four-staff arrangement. Dynamics include *fff*, *mp*, and *mf*. Performance instructions include *ord.*, *sul pont.*, *pizz.*, and *arco*. The music features various articulations and dynamic shifts.

Musical score for the fourth system of '1. Serioso'. It continues the four-staff arrangement. Dynamics include *mp* and *mp³*. Performance instructions include *pizz.*, *gliss.*, and *arco*. The music features various articulations and dynamic shifts.

Musical score for the fifth system of '1. Serioso'. It continues the four-staff arrangement. Dynamics include *pp*, *ppp*, and *pp³*. Performance instructions include *sul pont.*, *pizz.*, and *arco*. The music features various articulations and dynamic shifts.

34

37 *gliss.* *mf*

40 **D** *f* *mf* *decesc.* *gliss.*

ord. *f* *gliss. sul pont.* *mf* *decesc.*

40 *ord.* *f* *gliss. sul pont.* *mf* *decesc.*

f *mf* *decesc.* *gliss.*

43 **E** *sul pont.* *mf*

mf *mp* *p* *mf*

43 *mp* *p* *mf*

sul pont. *mf*

46

49 *rit.*

rit.

49 *rit.*

rit.

Meno mosso (♩ = 128)

51 **F** *punta d'arco battute* *pp*

pizz. *p* *arco* *3* *punta d'arco battute*

51 *punta d'arco battute* *pp*

pizz. *p* *arco* *3* *punta d'arco battute*

53

55

Meno mosso (♩ = 120)

58

60

63

Piu mosso (♩ = 132)

65

67 *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*
mf *mf* *mf*

74

69 *gliss.* *mf* *fff* *mf* *mp*
mf *fff* *mf* *mp*
f *fff* *mf* *mp*

J **Meno mosso** (♩ = 120)
rit. *p* *pp*
rit. *p*
rit. *Molto espressivo* *mp*
rit. *pp*

I **Meno mosso** (♩ = 128)
mp *p* *ord.*
mp *p* *ord.*
mp *p* *ord.*
mp *p* *ord.*

80 *pizz.* *p* *mp* *mf* *mezza voce*
pizz. *p*
mp *mf*
mezza voce *mp*

83 *arco* *mp* *mf*

pizz *mp*

85

87 *espressivo* *mf*

espressivo *mf*

89 *mf*

pizz *mf*

92

95 *accel.* *a tempo* *p*

accel. *a tempo* *p*

accel. *a tempo* *p*

97 *sul pont.* *p*

mezza voce *p*

97 *mezza voce* *p* *pizz. (ord.)* *pp*

sul pont. *p*

100 *mp*

100 *arco* *mp* 3

103

103

106 *(sul pont.)* *ord.* *sul pont.* *ord.* *L*

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

106 *sul pont.* *ord.* *sul pont.* *ord.* *sul pont.* *pp*

(sul pont.) *ord.* *sul pont.* *ord.* *sul pont.* *ord.* *p* 3 3

109 *arco* 3

109

112 3

112 *ord.* *pizz.* *arco*

112 *ord.* *pizz.* *arco*

3 3 3 3

130

tr

133

tr

sul pont.

136

pp

139

L'istesso Tempo

sul pont.

p

mp

mp

Molto espressivo sul pont.

143

mp

mp

mf

Molto espressivo sul pont.

mf

147

mf

sul pont.

ord.

mf

mf

mf

150

150

mp *mf*

152

tr *b* *pp* *p*

Accelerando

mp *p*

155

pizz. *p* *arco*

p *p*

159

sul pont. *arco* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

p *pp*

162

p *p*

Tempo Primo (♩ = 140-148)

164

pizz. *gliss.* *p* *ppp*

sul pont. *pizz.* *gliss.* *p* *ppp*

sul pont. *pizz.* *gliss.* *p* *ppp*

p *ppp* *p* *ppp*

167 *arco sul pont.* *pp*

arco sul pont. *pp*

167 *arco sul pont.* *pp*

arco sul pont. *pp*

170 *pizz.* *mf*

tr *pp* *mp*

tr *pp* *mp*

mp *3*

* = sixth harmonic on g-string

174 *ord.* *fff* *gliss.*

ord. *fff*

174 *ord.* *fff* *gliss.*

ord. *fff*

178 *gliss.* *mp*

mp

178 *mp*

mp

180 *fff* *pp* *ff*

mezza voce *ord.* *pp* *ff*

180 *mezza voce* *ord.* *pp* *ff* *3*

fff *pp* *fff* *3*

184 *fff* *mp* *fff* *sul pont.*

fff *mp* *fff* *sul pont.* *gliss.*

184 *fff* *mp* *fff* *sul pont.* *gliss.*

fff *mp* *fff* *sul pont.*

47

2. Intermezzo

Con moto (♩ = c. 200)

Violin I
mp
legato
con sordino
pizz. (nail)

Violin II
p
con sordino

Viola
con sordino

Cello
p
con sordino

pizz. (nail)
p

arco legato
mp

mezza voce
pp
p

ppp
mp
sul pont.

pizz. (nail) *arco* *mezza voce*
p

mp
sul pont.
legato *mezza voce*
mp

legato
mp

ord.

ord.

ord.

mp

mp

mezza voce
ord.
mp

mp

19

25

B
Meno mosso (= c.160)

21

28

23

C

30

97

34 *tr* *mp*

tr *mp* ³

34 *mp*

mp

38 *sul pont.* *p.d'a batt.* *tratto* *p* **D** *sul pont.* *p*

sul pont. *ord.* *mp* *p* *gliss. about a quarter tone* *sul pont.* *p*

38 *ord.* *tr* *p* *mp* *sul pont.* *p*

tratto *ord.* *mp* *sul pont.* *p*

gliss. about a quarter tone

35

35 *+*

42

42 *gliss. about a quarter tone*

36 *ppp*

ppp

36 *+* *sul pont.* *ppp*

sul pont. *p.d'a batt.*

44

44 *tr*

46

46

f *mf* *mp*

sul pont.

f *mf* *mp*

f *mp*

56

56

mf *mp*

sul pont.

50

50

mp *mp* *mp* *mp*

sul pont.

gliss. about a quarter tone

mp

58

58

mp

sul pont.

53

53

mp

sul pont.

59

59

mp

sul pont.

b7

3. Scherzo

Mosso (♩ c.152)

A

Musical score for measures 1-4. Dynamics: *mf*, *ff*, *f*, *ff*, *f*. A box labeled 'A' is placed above the first measure.

B

punta d'arco

Musical score for measures 5-8. Dynamics: *mf*, *p*, *ff*. A box labeled 'B' is placed above the first measure of this section, with 'punta d'arco' written above it.

C

al tallone

Musical score for measures 9-12. Dynamics: *mf*, *ff*, *f*, *mp*. A box labeled 'C' is placed above the first measure of this section, with 'al tallone' written above it.

Musical score for measures 13-16. Dynamics: *non cresc.*, *ff*, *f*, *mp*. A box labeled 'D' is placed above the first measure of this section.

D

Musical score for measures 17-20. Dynamics: *mf* *decresc.*, *mp*, *sfz*. A box labeled 'D' is placed above the first measure of this section.

Musical score for measures 21-24. Dynamics: *mp* *cresc.*, *mf*. A box labeled 'D' is placed above the first measure of this section.

50

E Meno mosso (♩ = 126-132)

mf f decres. p pizz. arco mf arco
mf f decres. p pizz. arco mf
mf f decres. p sfz pizz. mp
mf f decres. p sfz (pizz.) mp

mf mp mf 3 f
mf mp mf 3 mp f 5
mp
mp

F

f 5 mf (arco) f
mp f 5 mf pizz. mp
mp mf arco pizz. mp 3 3 3
mp arco pizz. mp 3 3 3

f³ f 5 5 mp pizz. mezza voce arco pizz.
mf³ f 5 5 mp mezza voce pizz.
mf³ 3 3 mp (pizz.) mezza voce arco
mf³ 3 3 mp (pizz.)

G

p ord. punta d'arco mp sfz
p ord. punta d'arco f
p ord. punta d'arco p pizz. mp
p ord. punta d'arco mp pizz. sfz

mf f arco 5 p pizz. arco 5 ff mp
f 3 f 5 f 5 ff mp
mf sfz sfz f ff mp
mf f ff mp

Mezza voce: like a whisper.
Use lots of bow with little pressure.

44 H
mezza voce
p
pizz.
p
arco mezza voce
p

46
(ord.) punta d'arco
p
arco jété
(ord.) punta d'arco
p
mezza voce 5 ord.
(arco) jété
(ord.) punta d'arco
arcos
(ord.) punta d'arco
p

49
ritardando
p
ritardando
p
ritardando
p
ritardando
p

51
a tempo
pp
a tempo
pp
a tempo
pp
a tempo
pp

55
Tempo Primo (♩ = 152)
mp cresc.
f
ff
mp cresc.
f
ff
mp cresc.
mf
ff
mp cresc.
mf
ff

58
f
ff
f
f
ff
f
ff
f
ff
f

50 J *punta d'arco* *ord.*

mf *p cresc.* *mp cresc.*

mf *p cresc.* *mp cresc.*

60 *punta d'arco* *ord.*

mf *p cresc.* *mp cresc.*

mf *p cresc.* *mp cresc.*

63 *mf*

mf

63 *mf*

mf

65 *ff* *mf*

ff *mf*

65 *ff* *mf*

ff *mf*

67 *mf* *ff* *ff* K

mf *ff* *ff*

67 *mf* *ff* *ff*

mf *ff* *ff*

punta d'arco

71 *mf* *decresc.*

punta d'arco

mf *decresc.*

71 *punta d'arco*

f *mf* *decresc.*

L *Meno mosso* ($\text{♩} = c. 120$) *arco 3*

75 *pizz.* *non rit.* *mp* *decresc.* *p*

pizz. *non rit.* *mp* *decresc.* *Meno mosso* ($\text{♩} = c. 120$) *arco 3* *p*

75 *pizz.* *non rit.* *mp* *decresc.* *Meno mosso* ($\text{♩} = c. 120$) *arco 3* *p*

pizz. *non rit.* *mp* *decresc.* *Meno mosso* ($\text{♩} = c. 120$) *arco* *p* *gliss.*

79 *mp* *p* *mp* 3 3 5

mp *p* *pp* *mp* 0

79 *mp* *p* *mp* 0

mp 3 3 *mp*

84 *p* *mp* 5 3 3

mp 3

84 *p* 5

mp 3 *gliss.*

88 *mp* *mp* 3

f 5 3

88 *mp* *mf*

f 3

92 *p* 3

p 6 3

92 *p* 3

p 3 *gliss.* 3

94 *pp* 5 3 *Accelerando* *pp* *N*

pp 3

94 *pp*

pp

96 *cresc.*

cresc.

96 *cresc.*

cresc.

Groups of smaller notes should be played as one gesture, one idea.

Tempo Primo (♩. 152)

98 *mp cresc.* *ff* *f*

98 *mp cresc.* *ff* *f* *f*

98 *mp cresc.* *ff* *f* *f*

98 *mp cresc.* *ff* *f* *f*

100 *f* *ff* *f* *spiccato*

100 *f* *ff* *f* *spiccato*

100 *f* *ff* *f* *spiccato*

100 *f* *ff* *f* *spiccato*

103 *ff* *ff*

103 *ff* *ff*

103 *ff* *ff*

103 *ff* *ff*

105 *ff* *mf mp*

105 *ff* *mf mp*

105 *ff* *mf mp*

105 *ff* *mf mp*

108 *p*

108 *p*

108 *p*

108 *p*

112 *ritardando* *mf* *mf* *ff* *A Tempo*

112 *ritardando* *mf* *mf* *ff* *A Tempo*

112 *ritardando* *mf* *mf* *ff* *A Tempo*

112 *ritardando* *mf* *mf* *ff* *A Tempo*

Duration: c. 4'30"

4. Lyrico

Tranquillo (♩ = c. 92)

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello

con sordino
sul tasto

ff > pp f ff > pp p

con sordino
punta d'arco

ff > pp f ff > pp p

con sordino
punta d'arco

ff > pp f ff > pp p

con sordino
sul tasto

ff > pp f ff > pp p

5

3

3

3

p

Molto espressivo
ord.
(con sord.)
mp

9

(sul tasto)
p

sul tasto
p

sul tasto
p

3 5

3

13

p

3

13

Molto espressivo
ord.
mp

pp

16

3

3

senza sord.

30 *f* *ff* *pp* *p*

33 *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p*

jété *s*

36 *punta d'arco batt.* *sul pont. mezza voce* *ord.*

pp *p* *pp* *p*

punta d'arco batt. *s* *pp* *p*

punta d'arco batt. *s* *pp* *p*

punta d'arco batt. *s* *pp* *p*

39 *pp* *p* *pp*

sul pont. mezza voce *ord.* *sul pont. mezza voce*

41 *pp* *p* *pp*

gliss. *gliss.* *gliss.*

ord. *sul pont. mezza voce*

44 *sul pont. mezza voce* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*

47 *ord.*
p *s* *s* *s* *s*
ord. *s* *s* *s*
gliss. *p* *s* *s* *s* *s*
p *s* *s* *s*

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

49 *sul pont.* *ord.*
pp
sul pont. *ord.*
pp
sul pont. *ord.*
pp
sul pont. *ord.*
pp

54 *Molto espressivo*
ord.
mp
mezza voce
p
mezza voce
p
pp
Molto espressivo (ord.)
mp
mezza voce
p
pp

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

58 *3*
3
3
3

59

G Poco piu mosso

62 *p* 5 5 5 *p* leggiero

62 *p* 5 5 5 *p* leggiero

62 *p* 5 5 5 *p* leggiero

62 *p* 5 5 5 *p* leggiero

64 *cresc.*

64 *cresc.*

64 *cresc.*

64 *cresc.*

66 *mf* *mp* *cresc.* *f*

66 *mf* *mp* *cresc.* *f*

66 *mf* *mp* *cresc.* *f*

66 *mf* *mp* *cresc.* *f*

68 *mf* *cresc.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *sf*

68 *mf* *cresc.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *sf*

68 *mf* *cresc.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *sf*

68 *mf* *cresc.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *sf*

70 *sf* *f*

70 *sf* *f*

70 *sf* *f*

70 *sf* *f*

H *al talone*

73 *ff* *ord.* *ff*

73 *sf* *ff* *f*

73 *sf* *ff* *f*

73 *sf* *ff* *f*

76 *al talone* *mf* *ord.* *ff* *p* *mp*

ord. *ff* *p* *p* *sul pont.*

76 *ord.* *ff* *p* *sul pont.* *p*

al talone *mf* *ff* *p*

89 *ord.* *mp* *mez. voc.* *ord.* *mezza voce*

mez. voc. *ord.* *mezza voce*

89 *ord.* *mez. voc.* *mezza voce*

ord. *mez. voc.* *mezza voce* *p*

80 *ord.* *mp* *mp (echo)* *p*

ord. *p*

80 *mezza voce* *p*

93 *ord.* *mezza voce* *Tempo primo* *sul tasto* *p*

ord. *sul tasto* *p*

93 *ord.* *sul pont.*

ord. *p*

85 *mezza voce* *ord.* *mezza voce* *ord.* *mez. voc.* *ord.*

mezza voce *ord.* *mezza voce* *ord.* *mez. voc.* *ord.*

85 *mezza voce* *ord.* *mezza voce* *ord.* *mez. voc.* *ord.*

mezza voce *ord.* *mezza voce* *ord.* *mez. voc.* *ord.*

97 *punta d'arco batt.*

sul tasto *punta d'arco batt.*

97 *sul tasto* *p* *punta d'arco batt.*

sul tasto *p*

99 I

ord. mezza voce
p

ord. mezza voce
p

Molto espressivo
ord.
mp

108

p leggiero

p leggiero

p leggiero

p leggiero

102 *Espressivo*

mp

mp

111

p leggiero

p leggiero

p leggiero

p leggiero

J

105 *jété*

p

jété

p

jété

p

jété

p

K

114 *mezza voce*

mezza voce

p

mezza voce

p

ord.
Molto espressivo

Molto espressivo
(arco)

mp

118

Molto espressivo
ord.

mp

118 mezza voce

p

121

121

124

124

con sordino

128

gliss.

pizz.

ppp

mp

Espressivo arco

128

pp

sul pont.

ppp

mp

Espressivo arco

gliss.

132

3

pizz.

mp

Espressivo

mp

132

Espressivo

mp

pizz.

mp

135

arco sul pont.

mp

pizz. in rilievo

mf

mf

0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0

5

5

+

+

quarter tone sharp

quarter tone flat

135

sul pont. arco

mp

Duration c. 8 min.

63