ABSTRACT

Title of Document: STRING QUARTET NO. 2

David Bryant Arbury, D.M.A., 2006

Directed By: Professor Robert Gibson, School of Music

String Quartet, no. 2 is an original composition for standard string quartet that was completed in March 2006. While the piece is intended primarily as a stand-alone creative work, I approached it as something of a culmination of my compositional work to date as well as a look forward into the next phase of my career. As such, the quartet is something of a transitional work, combining elements from my own past technique with a more recent and unified sense of my own style.

The quartet is divided into four movements. During my time at the University of Maryland, a frequent topic in my lessons was that of sectionalism in music composition, which is to say the aesthetic of juxtaposition of different musical elements as opposed to composition using a unified texture or a gradual transformation between ideas. As a result of these discussions, one of my first choices in beginning work on this quartet was to choose a unified approach versus a sectional approach. The four movements are organized as follows: a thematic fast movement composed of short elemental themes, a slow movement centered around two canons (one atonal and one modal), a dance movement that uses the baroque menuet and trio
as a template, and a dramatic, texture-driven finale. In this way, the macro-structure
serves as a kind of homage to classical tradition, an appropriate approach since the
piece occasionally serves as an homage to older elements in my own style. However,
the classical model only applies to this macro-level of the composition. Most
elements within each movement depart significantly from traditional classical forms,
just as my own style has macro-elements of classical form and technique that
dissipate upon closer scrutiny.
STRING QUARTET NO. 2

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts 2006

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String Quartet no. 2

Energetic $j = 140$

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

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165

172

178

no cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

pizz.

poco a poco cresc.

mp
Serene $\frac{1}{2} = 60$

II
molto legato

mf

molto legato

mf
Rhythmic but distant

\[ \text{III} \]

Violin I

\[ \text{pp} \]

Violin II

\[ \text{pp} \]

Viola

\[ \text{pp} \]

Violoncello

\[ \text{pp} \]
as high as possible
sul ponticello

subito

pizz.

p
arco (sul ponticello)

modo ord.
as high as possible sul ponticello

sul II modo ord.

arco