

# A Quartet of Daydreams

For String Quartet

Ian Percy

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ca. 13-14 minutes

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This single movement, approximately 13-14 minutes in length, was composed within material coloured by natural resonance theories and elements of the harmonic and sub-harmonic series. Initial work evolved from the planning for two entirely different pieces:

*Melancholy Daydreams* for solo piano: A set of four movements subtitled: What, Where, Why and When. 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 my imagination, inspiring me to conceive a meta-formula from which multiple pieces evolved.

*Natural Resonance* for string quartet: 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.

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, harmonics 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 a 'primary thought' from the moment it opens the piece and all material is generated from and around it.

The meta-formula for this quartet can be subdivided into four forms:

- i] Chromatic pitch wedge around D
- ii] Modal cells
- iii] Whole-tone scales and chords
- iv] Heterodyning frequencies relative to the pitch of D

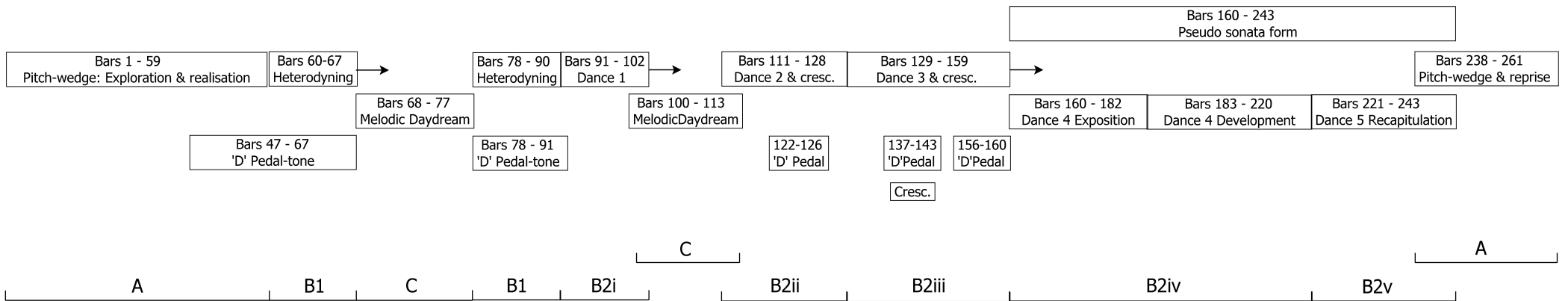
Although a complex movement at first glance, it can be subdivided into a handful of compositional units:

- 1] Exploration of pitch wedge
- 2] Ostinato/Pedal tone
- 3] Motivic gestures and natural resonance material
- 4] Dance adaptations (mini sonata form)
- 5] Melodic daydreams (transitional lyrical interludes)

As a guiding extra-musical influence, I 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 character, atmosphere, pacing, texture, rhythm and interaction of the writing as I 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'. 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 tempo indicator is ♩ = 69. The section begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The music features a variety of articulations including pizzicato (pizz.) and arco, and dynamic markings such as ppp, pp, p, and mp. There are several triplet markings (3) and a quintuplet (5) in the Violin I part. The score is written on four staves.

**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', starting at measure 11. The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' and the tempo indicator is ♩ = 60. The section begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The music features a variety of articulations including pizzicato (pizz.) and arco, and dynamic markings such as p, mp, mf, f, and ff. There are several triplet markings (3) and a quintuplet (5) in the Violin I part. The score is written on four staves.

20

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

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

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

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



27

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

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

Cello/Double Bass: *ppp*, *pppp*, *a niente*

Bass: *pppp*, *mf*, *p sub ppp*, *a niente*, *mp*

**D** ♩ = 96 A communal debate within one mind...

poco rit. . . . . 3

34 arco

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

pizz. *mp* *mf*

*ppp* *mp* *p* *mp*

*mf* *mp*

[♩ = 60] **E** ♩ = 92 Agreeing to disagree...

poco rit. . . . .

41

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

pizz. *mp* *mf*

*p* *a niente* *mp* *mf* *f* *mp*

*ppp* *p*

4 **F** ♩ = 80 A related memory...

*poco accel.*

48

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

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

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

Bass: *mp*, *p*, *mp*

[♩ = 88] *poco rit.*

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

*poco accel.*

[♩ = 104]

55

Violin I: *pizz.*, *f*, *mf*, *f*

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

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

Bass: *mf*, *f*



**H** ♩ = 96 A persistent thread...

rit. -----

8<sup>va</sup>-----|

60 arco

This musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is for the violin, starting with a dynamic of *mf* and featuring triplets and a *vib.* (vibrato) section. The second staff is for the viola, with dynamics ranging from *mp* to *mf*. The third staff is for the cello, starting with *f* and ending with *p*, including a *pizz.* (pizzicato) section. The bottom staff is for the double bass, with dynamics from *mf* to *p* and complex rhythmic patterns including triplets, quintuplets, and sextuplets. The piece concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking.

**I** ♩ = 60 A melancholy daydream...

poco rit. -----

[♩ = 52]

8<sup>va</sup>-----|

68

This musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is for the violin, marked *pp* and featuring a *flageolet tone*. The second staff is for the viola, marked *mf* and *solo*, with a *legato* section. The third staff is for the cello, marked *pp* and *solo*, with a *flageolet tone* section. The bottom staff is for the double bass, marked *pp* and *solo*, with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) section. The piece concludes with a *poco rit.* (poco ritardando) marking.

6 **J** ♩ = 96 A recurring theme: A nagging concern...

poco accel.

[♩ = 104] poco rit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**K** ♩ = 92 Resistance is futile: A persistent thought must be addressed...

poco accel.

[♩ = 100] poco rit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**L** ♩ = 92 Reason & resolution...

*poco accel.*

♩ = 96

*poco rit.*

♩ = 92

91

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

*pizz.* *arco*

**M** ♩ = 84 A subconscious transition... *poco rit.*

97

*lyrical* *legato* *vib.* *vib.* *solo*

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

poco rit.

[♩ = 56]

accel.

103 *legato*  
*p*  
*ppp* *p* *a niente*  
*pp* *p* *pp* *ppp*  
*legato*  
*p*  
*pp* *ppp*

**O** All things considered: A dark possibility emerges...

♩ = 84

poco rit.

[♩ = 72]

♩ = 84 poco accel.

111 *legato*  
*mp*  
*mp*  
*mp*  
*mf*  
*mf*  
*f*  
*f*  
*ff*  
*vib.*  
*pizz.*  
*arco* *tr*  
*tr*

**P** ♩ = 96 Exploring the imagined improbable... poco accel.

[♩ = 104]<sup>9</sup>

Musical score for measures 119-125. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (top two) and two bass clefs (bottom two). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked ♩ = 96. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *f* to *ff*. The piece concludes with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) marking and a final *ff* dynamic.

**Q** ♩ = 96 A deliberate interruption to negative momentum...

**R** An uneasy compromise: An awkward dance between unwilling partners...

poco accel.

Musical score for measures 126-132. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (top two) and two bass clefs (bottom two). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked ♩ = 96. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *f* to *ff*. The piece concludes with an *arco* (arco) marking and a final *ff* dynamic.

Musical score for section S, measures 134-143. The score is written for four staves (treble and bass clefs). It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Dynamics range from *f* to *mf*. The tempo is marked as *poco accel.* and the metronome marking is ♩ = 100. The score includes various articulations such as accents and slurs.

Musical score for section T, measures 140-143. The score is written for four staves (treble and bass clefs). It features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth notes and triplets. The tempo is marked as *poco accel.* and the metronome marking is ♩ = 100. The score includes various articulations such as accents and slurs.

144

ff fff ff ff fff ff

poco accel. ♩ = 96 poco accel. [W] ♩ = 100 A final release of negative thought...

150

f mf f mf f f f f

poco accel.

[♩ = 104] poco rit.

155

Violin I: *ff*, *f*, *mf*, *ff*, *f*, *f*, *f*, *f*

Violin II: *ff*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *f*, *f*, *f*, *f*

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

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

Performance instructions: *pizz.*, *arco*



X ♩ = 96 With renewed optimism...

poco rit.

[♩ = 92]

♩ = 96

poco rit.

[♩ = 92]

Y ♩ = 96 With positive energy...

160

Violin I: *ff*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *f*, *f*, *f*, *f*

Violin II: *ff*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *f*, *f*, *f*, *f*

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

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

Performance instructions: *arco*, *pizz.*



poco rit.

[♩ = 88] **Z** ♩ = 96

poco rit.

[♩ = 88] 13

Musical score for measures 167-173. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Cello, and Bass. Measure 167 starts with a *mf* dynamic. Measures 168-170 feature a *ppp* dynamic for the Violin II staff. Measure 171 has a *f* dynamic for the Cello staff. Measure 172 has a *f* dynamic for the Bass staff. Measure 173 has a *mf* dynamic for the Cello staff. The score includes various articulations such as *pizz.* and *arco*, and triplets in all staves.



poco accel.

**AA** ♩ = 96 Repetition & consideration...

poco rit.

[♩ = 88]

Musical score for measures 174-179. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Cello, and Bass. Measure 174 starts with a *pp* dynamic. Measure 175 has a *p* dynamic. Measure 176 has a *mf* dynamic. Measure 177 has a *mp* dynamic. Measure 178 has a *mp* dynamic. Measure 179 has a *p* dynamic. The score includes various articulations such as *arco*, *pizz.*, and *lyrical*, and triplets in all staves.

181 *lyrical.*

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

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

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

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

188 ♩ = 96 poco accel. [♩ = 100] ♩ = 96 poco accel.

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

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

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

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

194

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

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

Viola: *ff*, *mp*

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

200

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

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

Viola: *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *p*

Cello/Double Bass: *p*, *pp*, *ppp*, *mp*, *mf*, *ppp*, *mp*, *mf*

rit.

[♩ = 76] poco rit.

[♩ = 60]

accel.

♩ = 88

poco rit.

206

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

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

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

*p* *pp* *p*

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

213

*ppp* *mp* *mf* *lyrical* *lyrical*

*ppp* *mp* *mf* *lyrical* *lyrical*

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

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

221

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

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

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

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

Performance instructions: *pizz.*, *arco*

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*

234

This musical system covers measures 234 to 240. It consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) begins with a triplet of eighth notes marked *p*. The second staff (treble clef) features a triplet of eighth notes marked *pp*. The third staff (bass clef) has a triplet of eighth notes marked *p*. The fourth staff (bass clef) has a triplet of eighth notes marked *mp*. Dynamics change throughout: the first staff goes from *p* to *pp* to *ppp*; the second staff from *p* to *pp* to *ppp* to *mp*; the third staff from *p* to *pp* to *ppp* to *mp*; and the fourth staff from *mp* to *mp*. There are also some *ppp* markings in the second and third staves.

**JJ** ♩ = 88 One final consideration... poco rit. . . . . [♩ = 66]

241

This musical system covers measures 241 to 247. It consists of four staves. The first staff (treble clef) starts with a triplet of eighth notes marked *mp*. The second staff (treble clef) has a triplet of eighth notes marked *mf* and includes a *pizz.* marking. The third staff (bass clef) has a triplet of eighth notes marked *mf*. The fourth staff (bass clef) has a triplet of eighth notes marked *mf*. Dynamics include *mp* in the first staff, *mf* in the second and third staves, and *mp* in the second staff of this system. There are also some *ppp* markings in the second and third staves.

248

arco

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

*mp* *mf* *f*



poco rit. . . . .

[♩ = 46]

255

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

# A Quartet of Daydreams

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