

Three Monologues for String Quartet

Instrumentation: String Quartet

Duration: 13'30"

Completed: 2011

Premiered: February 15, 2012 by the S.E.M. Ensemble's string quartet:
Pauline Kim Harris, violin, Lynn Bechtold, violin, David Gold,
viola, Brian Snow, cello, in Brooklyn, NY

I have always been fascinated by the ability of many actors to portray contrasting emotions at the drop of a hat. Those with many years of experience and a full control of their bodies are able to switch seamlessly between tearful sobbing and stupefying laughter. Often, when called to audition, they are required to recite short monologues showcasing their abilities.

In this spirit I wrote Three Monologues for string quartet. Surge, Cantabile, and Expletivo portray a wide range of human emotions, from conflicting, dissonant, and aggressive, through delicate, fragile, and innocent. The harmonic language of the piece oscillates between Schoenbergian post-tonalism, quartal jazz sonorities, and, at times, hard rock riffs.