

BUTTONWOOD

GREGORY SPEARS
2010

BUTTONWOOD

(String Quartet no. 1)

*Commissioned by the JACK Quartet and underwritten by
the American Composers Forum with funds from the Jerome Foundation.*

In the winter of 2010 I was invited by Dr. Morris Schimmel to complete a six-week artist residency at the Buttonwood Psychiatric Unit in Burlington County, NJ. Twice a week I brought music to the unit, performed for and with patients and observed the remarkable staff interact with the residents. *Buttonwood* (2010) is a musical meditation on this unique artist residency project and is dedicated to the staff and patients I encountered at the hospital. The starting material for the piece was a short anthem I wrote for the patients during the residency (“O Buttonwood”). In the string quartet I stretched the melodic and harmonic materials of this song into a twenty-three minute adagio in an effort to evoke the feeling of quiet struggle and intense introspection that permeated the halls of the unit.

-Performance Notes-

- ‘N’ – placed over a note indicates scratch-tone produced by excessive bow pressure. The scratch-tone should sound as expressive as possible - a sort of languorous straining. The player should try to retain as much of the original pitch as possible when producing this timbre.
- ‘SP’ – placed over a note indicates *sul ponticello* playing.
- ‘O’ – placed over a note indicates bowing with ordinary bow position and bow pressure.
- ‘→’ – indicates a gradual and seamless transition from one type of timbre to another, producing the effect of a tone distorted by noise but never broken by any sudden changes in timbre or pitch (i.e. **O→SP→N→O**).
- ‘non vib.’ indicates that the player use a minimal amount of vibrato and an early baroque bowing and phrasing style.
- ‘vib’ or ‘ord.’ – cancels a *non vib.* marking.
- All grace notes should be played before the beat.

c.a. 23’

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Lontano ♩ = 48

for the JACK Quartet

Measures 1-5:

- violin I:** *con sord.*, *p* *poco* *pp*, *8va* *dolce e cantabile* (with a soloistic tone), *ppp*
- violin II:** *dolce e cantabile con sord.*, *pp*, *8va* *(dolce)* *SP* *O*, *ppp*
- viola:** *con sord.*, *ppp*, *ppp*
- cello:** *con sord.*, *ppp*, *ppp*

Measures 6-11:

- vln.I:** *pp*, *8va*, *3*, *non vib.*
- vln.II:** *pp*, *8va*, *3*, *O* *SP* *O*
- vla.:** *non vib.*, *pp*, *pp*
- vc.:** *ppp*, *pp*

Measures 12-15:

- vln.I:** *ord.*, *ppp*, *pp*, *ppp*
- vln.II:** *pp*, *ppp*, *sul pont.*, *pp*, *ppp*
- vla.:** *pp*, *ppp*, *sul pont.*, *pp*
- vc.:** *pp*, *ppp*, *pp*

Section Marker: A

pp

 $\leq mp$

[illegible]

44

Violin I: *molto espress. e rubato*
mf *mp*

Violin II: *(sempre non vib.)*
mf *mp*

Viola: *molto espress. e rubato*
mf *mp*

Violoncello: *pizz. arco*
mf *mp*

49 D

vln.I *mf* *mp*

vln.II *mf* *mp*

vla. *mf* *mp*

vc. *mf* *mp* pizz. arco

(dolce)

N SP

54

vln.I *mf* *mp* *mf*

vln.II *mf* *mp* *mf*

vla. *mf* *mp* *mf*

vc. *mf* *mp* *mf*

SP

O

59 E

vln.I *mp* *mf* *mp*

vln.II *mp* *mf* *mp*

vla. *mp* *mf* *mp*

vc. *mp* *mf* *mp*

N

63 *un poco pesante*

vln.I *mf sub.* *10:6*

vln.II *mf sub.* *10:6*

vla. *mf sub.*

vc. *mf sub.*

SP → N → O

67 *un poco pesante* **F** *non vib.*

vln.I *10:6*

vln.II *senza sord.* *f* *sfz* *3*

vla. *f* *sfz* *3* *non vib.*

vc. *f*

SP → O

71 *senza sord.* *sfz* *3*

vln.I *sfz* *3*

vln.II *sfz* *3*

vla. *sfz* *3*

vc. *pizz. arco*

SP → N → SP

76

G

O → SP → N → SP → O

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

pizz. arco

sfz

81

H ♩ = 56

N → SP

O → N

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

fp *mf* *mp*

sfz

senza sord.

vib. espress.

mf

(sord.)

fp

85

N → O

O → N → SP

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

mf *mp*

mp *mf* *mp*

un poco pesante

ord.

sfz

mp

10:6

88

vln.I

mf

O

N

vln.II

f

O

N

SP

8

vla.

sfz

3

un poco pesante

10:6

ord.

vc.

90

vln.I

O

N

I

O

vln.II

mp

O

N

mf

vla.

sim.

10

3

sfz

vc.

cant.

f dolce

92

vln.I

O

N

O

N

vln.II

O

N

O

N

mp

f

vla.

3

sfz

3

sfz

10:6

f

3

vc.

103

vln.I *fp* *sul pont.* *3*

vln.II

vla. *sfz* *3*

vc. *fp* *3*

106

vln.I *f* *ff* *3*

vln.II *sul pont.* *f*

vla. *sul pont.* *f*

vc. *f* *3*

$\text{♩} = 60$ **K**

109

vln.I *fp* *molto* *f* *p* *f* *mp* *p*

vln.II *ord. vib.* *mf* *p* *molto* *f*

vla. *ord.* *3* *f* *sfz* *un poco pesante* *10:6*

vc. *(non vib.) senza sord.* *ord.* *gamba-like* *mf* *3*

113

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

L

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

p *f* *p*

ord. *un poco pesante* *ord.* *sim.*

10:6 *10:6*

3 *3*

116

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

p *f* *mp* *p*

f *mp*

10:6 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *10:6*

3

8va - -

(8^{va})

119

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

(8^{va})

122

M

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

ppp

pp

ppp

pp

ppp

pp

ppp

pp

128 **G.P.** $\text{♩} = 100$ *rit.* ----- $\text{♩} = 74$ **N**

vln.I *con sord.* *vib.* *mp* *O* *SP*

vln.II *con sord.* *vib.* *mf* *O* *SP*

vla. *con sord.* *non vib.* *p* *O* *SP* *sul G* *O*

vc. *senza sord.* *molto legato* *vib.* *sul G* *O* *SP* *sul G* *O*

mf dolce *p* *f dolce molto legato*

137

vln.I *sim.* *O* *SP* *O* *SP*

vln.II *O* *SP* *O* *SP*

vla. *sim.*

vc. *ff*

O *pizz.* *8va - molto cant. arco*

142 *mf* *n* *pp*

vln.I *mf* *n* *pp*

vln.II *p*

vla. *sul G* *ppp* *con sord.*

vc. *con sord.*

ppp * Nearly imperceptible; like a distant airplane. Change bows only when necessary.

147 *8va* P *8va*

vln.I *pp* *non vib.* *p* *p* *pp*

vln.II

vla. *vib. cant.* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

vc. *pp* *ppp*

153 *(8va)*

vln.I *ppp*

vln.II

vla. *cant.* *pp* *pp* *ppp*

vc. *cant.* *pp* *pp* *ppp*

** Nearly imperceptible; like a distant airplane. Change bows only when necessary.*

160 Q

vln.I *ppp* *p* *sim.*

vln.II *mp* *non vib.* *SP* *O*

vla. *ppp* *p* *sim.*

vc. *ppp* *p dolce molto legato*

165

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

SP

O

SP

pizz.

mp

pp

cant. vib.

pp

p

cant.

pp

p

178 (8va) senza sord.

vln.I *mf p*

vln.II *mf p*

vla. *p* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*

vc. *p* *pp* *mp* *pp* *p* *pp*

184

T

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

senza sord.

mf

ff

fff

furiously

fff (multiple bows)

fff

192

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

(multiple bows)

N

O

N

O

non vib.

p

pp

fff furiously

ff

pp

SP

N

O

O

N

O

(multiple bows)

fff furiously

lontano sul D

pp

200 *con sord.* *pp* *vib.* *ppp* *poco pppp*

con sord. *cant.* *mp* *p* *ppp*

sul D *sul G* *con sord.* *mp < mf* *ppp*

(8^{va}) *ppp* *vib.* *ppp*

o *SP* *o*

ppp

ppp

(8^{va}) *W* *p* *p* *pp* *pp* *pp*

p > *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

pp *p* *pp*

♩ = 66 **SP** (somewhat tentative) **O** molto espress. e rubato (gaining momentum)

217

vln.I *mp*

vln.II *ppp* *mp*

vla. *pp* (somewhat tentative) *mp* (gaining momentum)

vc. *pp* *mp* *pizz. arco*

223 **X**

vln.I *mf* *mp*

vln.II (dolce) *mf* *mp* *N* *SP* *N*

vla. *mf* *mp*

vc. *mf* *mp* *pizz. arco*

229

vln.I

mf

mp

mf

vln.II

mf

mp

mf

vla.

mf

mp

mf

vc.

mf

mp

mf

234

vln.I

mp

mf

mp

vln.II

mp

mf

mp

vla.

mp

mf

mp

vc.

mp

mf

mp

238

Y ♩ = 48

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

SP

N

ff

fp

molto

f

mp

ff

p

senza sord. espress.

f

non vib.

sfz

f

242

vln.I

vln.II

vla.

vc.

p

ff

mp

p

molto

ff

mp

p

ff

p

un poco pesante

ord.

10:6

3

un poco pesante

ord.

10:6

3

245

vln.I *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *8^{va} - -*

vln.II *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *mp*

vla. *sim.* *10:6* *10:6* *3* *3* *3* *3* *10:6*

vc. *3* *3* *3* *3*

Z

(8^{va})

249

vln.I *decresc. poco a poco al niente*

vln.II *decresc. poco a poco al niente*

vla. *decresc. poco a poco al niente* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *10:6*

vc. *decresc. poco a poco al niente* *3* *3* *3*

253

vln.I

ppp

n

pp

p

lontano

O

SP

O

SP

O

vln.II

ppp

n

pp

pp

p

lontano

O

SP

O

SP

O

SP

vla.

3

10:6

ppp

n

pp

vc.

ppp

n

pp

pp

[illegible]