



dolorem ipsum

for quartet

Ryan Carter

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Instrumentation:

Soprano voice (also plays shaker)

Soprano saxophone (also plays two sandblocks)

Percussion:

glockenspiel

vibraphone

medium woodblock

kick drum (muted to sound very dry)

Piano (with cloth or rubber material to add as mute)

The score is NOT in C
(the saxophone is written in B_♭)

Program notes:

I love the sound of the voice, and I love words; still I find it exceptionally challenging to compose vocal music. In the context of chamber music, I prefer for each member of an ensemble to be on equal footing. I know, however, that many listeners will view a work for voice and three instruments as a song with accompaniment. I also love sound at least as much as words, and I prefer a text setting that does not subordinate each musical gesture to whatever word is being sung at the time.

My first idea for this piece was to set the "lorem ipsum," a gibberish Latin text used for centuries as a placeholder when words are required but no semantic content is desired. A vocal setting of "lorem ipsum" would focus attention entirely on the beauty of the voice without incorporating any further meaning. But after learning that the text was derived by jumbling a passage from Cicero's *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, and after reading this fascinating treatise on ethics, the piece changed course. I decided to set an intact passage from Cicero's work. Of course, only listeners who understand Latin will be able to identify this text as meaningful (and the "lorem ipsum" as gibberish). But under the surface, the piece derives its structure entirely from one sentence of Cicero's prose.

Text:

[S]ed tamen non gravissimum est testimonium multitudinis. In omni enim arte vel studio vel quavis scientia, vel in ipsa virtute, optimum quidque rarissimum est.

Translation:

[S]till, the testimony of the multitude is not of the greatest possible weight; for in every art, or study, or science, as in virtue itself, whatever is most excellent is also most rare.

dolorem ipsum is a companion piece to *Competing Demands*, a work for solo piano. The two compositions may be performed separately or together, in which case *Competing Demands* is performed first and the opening note of *dolorem ipsum* should emerge from the resonance of the final chord in *Competing Demands*. When the pair of works is performed together, the sostenuto pedal should be held from the end of *Competing Demands* until all sound decays.

Commissioned by the Color Field Ensemble

Performance notes:

Meter:

This piece includes truncated triplets, which result in so-called "irrational" meters. This is notated with an arrow pointing right. The rhythmic value of the underlying subdivision remains the same but the beat is effectively shortened.

is equivalent to:

Voice:

m, n: hum only (no vowel)

Saxophone:

Fingerings for multiphonics:

= timbral trill (with and without variation in pitch)

Pedaling:

- = depress pedal and release
- = depress pedal and hold
- = continue holding pedal (which is already depressed)
- = without pedal

Percussion:

= glockenspiel
= vibraphone
= medium woodblock
= kick drum (muted)

Mallet guide:

- = medium hard yarn mallet (for vibraphone)
- = medium soft yarn mallet (for glockenspiel, with an intentionally obscured attack and a soft resonance)
- = hard rubber mallet (for woodblock and conventional glockenspiel sound)
- = rattan or light wooden stick (for vibraphone, with a light, crisp attack, but very little resonance)

Piano:

= depress sostenuto pedal so that pitches with open noteheads will resonate
= pitches with open notes are sustained by the sostenuto pedal
= muted (by laying cloth or rubber material on the strings to remove most of the resonance, leaving a soft, dry attack)
* = NO accent (pertains to passages in which accents are significantly louder than surrounding material)

dolorem ipsum

for the Color Field Ensemble

Ryan Carter

A1 Resonantly ♩ = c. 80 (or half-tempo from *Competing Demands*, if performing the works together)

Soprano Sax.

7

S. Sax.

Perc.

vibraphone (leftmost mallet is for glockenspiel)

13

23

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

A2 (still $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 80$)

33 *mf*

Vox

[S]ed

S. Sx.

pp *f*

Perc.

p *p* *f*

Pno.

f *pp* *f pp* *pp* *f* *pp* *f*

(sost.) -----

(sost.) -----

37 *mf*

Vox

ta - - - - -

S. Sx.

pp

Perc.

p

Pno.

sfz *pp* *f* *f* *pp*

(sost.) -----

(sost.) -----

41

Vox

men

S. Sx.

f

Perc.

f *mp* *p*

Pno.

mp *f* *pp sim.* *f* *ppp* *p* *mp*

(sost.)

(accents should always be much louder than surrounding material)

(sost.)

45

Vox

no - - - - - (o) - - - - -

S. Sx.

f *mp* *f*

glockenspiel

Perc.

p *mp*

Pno.

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

(sost.)

p

pp (sost.)

mp

48

Vox

o - n

S. Sx.

pp

sim. (no pedal unless indicated)

Perc.

p

p

f

Pno.

pp

f

p

ff

ppp

p

p (sost.)

p (sost.)

52

Vox

f

mp

gra - - - - - vis - - - - -

S. Sx.

f

p

pp

Perc.

p

pp

pp

p

Pno.

pp

pp

pp

sfz

pp

pp

sfz

pp

(sost.)

(sost.)

56 *mf*

Vox

si

S. Sx.

f *p* *pp*

Perc.

pp

pp *ff*

Pno.

pp *sfz* *pp* *f* *p* *p* *5*

(sost.)

(sost.)

59 *sfz*

Vox

mum

S. Sx.

f *p*

Perc.

f *p* *f* *p*

Pno.

ff *pp* *pp* *5* *pp* *sfz* *pp*

(sost.)

(sost.)

(sost.)

A3 (still ♩ = c. 80)

63 *p* *pp* *f*

Vox
est - - - - - tes - - - - -

S. Sx.
pp *f*

Perc.
f *p* *pp* *pp*

Pno.
p *p* *sfz* *p* *sfz* *f* *p* *sfz*

(sost.) (sost.) *p* (sost.)

67 *mf* *mp*

Vox
- ti - - - - - (i) - - - - - mo - - - - -

S. Sx.
mp

Perc.
fp *f* *ff* *p* *pp*

Pno.
f *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

(sost.) (sost.) (sost.)