

*Quattuor Verba*  
String Quartet No. 1

CAROLINA NOGUERA PALAU

*Quattuor Verba*

String Quartet No. 1

**2006**

CAROLINA NOGUERA PALAU

# QUATTUOR VERBA

For String Quartet

- I. De profundis clamavi
- II. Pleni sunt caeli et terra tua
- III. Pax
- IV. Sine Deo

Duration: 13 minutes.

## About *Quattuor Verba*

The four movements that conform this work reflect certain religious concerns: Movements I and IV evocate the absence of the deity whereas movements II and III its presence. *De profundis* illustrates the deepness and darkness of a confined place through the use of the over-pressured bow while the high register *pizzicato* constitutes the scream, the claim that, being unanswered, leads us back towards the descent. The second movement is an example of plenitude and purity as it is saturated all along with natural harmonics atmospheres. It prepares the third movement with the interlinking of quiet and peaceful melodies that will bring a sense of ritual as they are built upon modal sonorities and interrupted by bell effects. In *Sine Deo*, the last movement, the god is suddenly abandoned in a sort of Dionysian and carnival enjoyment with equivocal dancing airs.

## About *Quattuor verba*

Made upon a religious character, *Quattuor verba* ('Four Words') is composed in four movements: *De profundis clamavi* ('From the Deepness I Beg You'), *Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua* ('Sky and Earth are Plenty of your Mercy'), *Pax* ('Peace') and *Sine Deo* as ('Without God'). The central part of the quartet (second and third movements) represents a luminous God whose absence brings deep sadness and anguish to the first movement and chaotic and joyful madness to the forth. This piece is a journal between darkness and light, as it shows a strong contrast between percussive, non-tonal, dissonant, and noisy sounds and melodic, harmonic (from natural harmonic series), consonant and very pure sounds, as a parallel between the presence and the absence of God.

The first movement is a development of a short material exposed on bar 1. This is a procedure highly similar to the theme and variations form. The main material (motive, or theme) consists on a long, low and noisy sound (the deepness) followed by a triplet in an out of tune pizzicato (the begging scream) that returns to the "dark-land", the triplet in col legno. The first element is developed and orchestrated from bar 3 to 9, 11 to 14, 15 to 32, 37 to 44. The "scream" section occurs on bar 10 and 14, the free section and bar 45 to the end. The third element works as a fusion between the two first elements; it is low as the first one and short and percussive as the second one. Its development occurs on bars 4, 11, 14, 28, 30, 32 and 45 to the end.

The second and the third movements contain tonal relationships. The second one is based on the natural harmonic series and the third one makes a clear reference to tradition; it is constructed upon the Aeolian F and upon its plagal mode during the middle of the piece (bars 20 to 25). However, an atonal and noisy element appears in both cases: on the second movement the melody in violin I and cello is not tonal during bars 10 to 20, and in the third movement the cadence gestures on violin I and II are dissonant and strange in relation to the F mode. They resemble a small bell, creating some sort of ritual or ceremonial effect.

The fourth movement has a distortional tonality, it is not modal or tonal but it is not completely atonal either. It recreates a *Bambuco*, a typical dance from Colombia that alternates 3/4 and 6/8 meters. I use a procedure to modify that figuration with acceleration making the meter 5/8 and 2/4 and dissolving its rhythmic contour as in the wobbling section. It intends to express a carnival and grotesque character through the presence of a distortional modal and rhythmic scheme from a popular and festive dance.

# I. De profundis clamavi

**Lugubrious** ♩ = 60

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

10

Vln. I

Vln. II

S.Vla.

S.Vcl.

\* With lots of pressure on the bow.

\*\* Make I and II strings close together and play pizzicato in both strings in any pitch. The result is going to be a fifth non in tune (Cowbell sound).

*Quattuor verba I. De profundis clamavi*

22

Vln. I

Vln. II

S.Vla.

S.Vlc.

pizz.

gliss.

Sul ponticello

Irregular but free: 8 seconds approximately

32

Vln. I

Vln. II

Poco a poco tremolo

S.Vla.

Poco a poco tremolo

S.Vlc.

pizz.

fffff possible

fffff possible

fffff possible

Keep dynamic proportions.

**A tempo**

34

Vln. I      scratch      *pizz.*      scratch      *Sul ponticello alla punta*

Vln. II      *f*      *mp*      *mf*      *f*

S.Vla.      scratch      *mf*      *mp*      scratch

S.Vlc.      *Col legno*      *mf*      *pp*      *mf*      *f*      *sfz*      *sfz*      *sfz*      *sfz*      *sfz*      *mf*      *fff*

41

Vln. I      *ff*      scratch      *sempre Col legno*      6      6      scratch

Vln. II      *ff*      scratch      *ff sempre*      \*\*\*      5      scratch

S.Vla.      *ff*      scratch      *pizz.*      3      3      3      *Col legno*      scratch

S.Vlc.      *Becoming with pressure*      *Sul ponticello*      *nasty sound*      *ff sempre*      7      7      *ff sempre*      *ff sempre*

\* Make I and II strings close together and play pizzicato in both strings in any pitch. The result is going to be a fifth non in tune (Cowbell sound).

\*\* Stroke on the body of the instrument, playing with the knuckle of the fingers close to the bridge.

\*\*\* Stroke on the body of the instrument, playing with the knuckle of the fingers close to the fingerboard.

\*\*\*\* Play with the bow with lots of pressure below the bridge.

*Quattuor verba I. De profundis clamavi*

47

Vln. I      Col legno      scratch      ricochet      pizz.      arco

Vln. II      7      5      5      3      3      arco ord.

S.Vla.      3      3      scratch      pizz.      arco ord.

S.Vlc.      ricochet      Col legno      7      arco ord.      Col legno      ricochet      pizz.

7

50

Vln. I      sfz      gliss.

Vln. II      sfz      fff

S.Vla.      scratch      gliss.      gliss.      gliss.      gliss.

S.Vlc.      nasty sound      Sul tasto      Col legno      ricochet      Col legno      ricochet

f      fff

Becoming with pressure

*Quattuor verba I. De profundis clamavi*

Musical score for string quartet (Vln. I, Vln. II, S.Vla., S.Vlc.) showing measures 57-58.

**Measure 57:** Vln. I and Vln. II play glissandi (gliss.). S.Vla. and S.Vlc. play eighth-note patterns. The S.Vla. part includes a "scratch" instruction with a 3 measure bracket. The S.Vlc. part includes "Becoming with more pressure".

**Measure 58:** Vln. I and Vln. II continue glissandi. S.Vla. and S.Vlc. play eighth-note patterns. The S.Vla. part includes a "scratch" instruction. The S.Vlc. part includes "ponticello", "Sul tasto", "Becoming with less pressure", and "normale". Dynamics: *mf* and *ff*.

## II. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua

Calmo  $\text{♩} = 60$   
*sempre Sul tasto*

Violin I  
*ppp*

Violin II  
*—*

Viola  
*sempre sul ponticello*  
*p*

Cello  
*\* white noise*  
*pp*      *mp*      *p*      *p*      *f*

*15<sup>ma</sup>* *Natural harmonics sul A*  
*pp*

*sul ponticello*  
*gliss.*      *mf*      *pp*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

Vln. I  
*Molto legato e cantabile*  
*Sul tasto*

Vln. II  
*ppp*

Vla.  
*gliss.*  
*mf*      *pp*      *f*      *p*

*15<sup>ma</sup>* *Natural harmonics sul C*  
*ppp*

Vc.  
*p*      *mf*

*Molto legato e cantabile*  
*arco normale*

\* Press the string with left hand very softly, as if producing a harmonic sound, but in a place where no particular pitch is produced.

\*\* The notes given serve as a guide only.

\*\*\* Change bow where necessary.

*Quattuor Verba II. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua*

*sempre Sul tasto*

**16**

Vln. I      *Natural harmonics sul E*

Vln. II      *pp*

Vla.

Vc.      *mf*      *mp*

**25**

Vln. I      *Sul tasto*

Vln. II      *Natural harmonics sul A*

Vla.

Vc.

Natural harmonics sul E      \*\*      \*\*\*

15<sup>ma</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - - 15<sup>ma</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - -

*ff* s e m p r e c r e s c .

Natural harmonics sul C

15<sup>ma</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - - 15<sup>ma</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - -

*ff* s e m p r e c r e s c .

Natural harmonics sul A

15<sup>ma</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - - 15<sup>ma</sup> - - - 8<sup>va</sup> - - -

*ff* s e m p r e c r e s c .

\*\* The notes given serve as a guide only.  
\*\*\* Change bow where necessary.

*Quattuor Verba II. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua*

Musical score for string quartet (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.) showing measures 32-33.

Measure 32 (32 measures):

- Vln. I: *fff possible*,  $15^{ma}$ ,  $8^{va}$ ,  $15^{ma}$ ,  $8^{va}$ .
- Vln. II: *fff possible*,  $8^{va}$ , *sub pp*.
- Vla.: *fff possible*,  $15^{ma}$ ,  $8^{va}$ ,  $15^{ma}$ ,  $8^{va}$ .
- Vc.: *fff possible*.

Measure 33:

- Natural harmonics sul D.
- $15^{ma}$ .
- \*\*\*

### III. Pax

**Lento religioso** ♩ = 60

Violin I

Violin II

Come una meditazione  
Non legato ma molto cantabile e espressivo

Viola

Cello

*flautando*

**p**

*pizz.*

**p**

*flautando*

**p**

*pizz.*

**p**

**p**

**ppp**

**pp**

**ppp**

**pp**

12

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

simile

simile

p

pp

Cuasi bordone  
Sul ponticello

mf

pp

23

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mp*

*p*

*pp*

*Sul tasto*

*mp*

*p*

32

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mf*

*mf*

*mp*

*p*

*ff*

*p*

## **IV. Sine Deo**

Alla burlesca  $\text{♩} = 80$

*sempre ♩ = ♩*

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Musical score for orchestra, page 39, measures 39-40. The score includes parts for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. Various performance techniques are indicated, such as pizz., ff, mf, f, gliss., arco, ricochet, scratch, and col legno. The instrumentation changes frequently between measures 39 and 40.



Musical score for orchestra, page 84, measures 1-10. The score includes parts for Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. The music features various rhythmic patterns, dynamics (e.g., *ff*, *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *pizz.*), and performance techniques (e.g., *gloss.*, *Col legno*, *scratch*, *arco*). The instrumentation changes frequently, with different groups of instruments playing at different times. The score is written on five staves, with each staff containing multiple measures of music.

95

Vln. I      arco ord.

Vln. II      arco ord.

Vla.      *mf*  
Col legno

Vc.      *mf*

sempre *f*

sempre *f* arco ord.

105

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*hs.*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

sim.

120

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*ff*

*arco*

*gliss.*

*f*

*Col legno*

*arco ord.*

*mf*

*arco*

*fp*

*pp*

*Col legno*

*pizz.*

*mp*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*fz*

*arco ord.*

*fz*

*arco*

*sffz*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

*fz*

*sffz*

*ff*

*mfp*

*fp*

*mf*

*fz*

*sffz*