



DAVID DZUBAY

String Quartet

No. 2

"Oceanic"

(2018, rev. 2020)

PRO NOVA MUSIC

This piece was made possible by a grant from the Fromm Music Foundation.

String Quartet No. 2 - "Oceanic" (2018, rev. 2020) by David Dzubay

I	Bergy Bits and Growlers	6:10
II	Lost Boy Cave - Three Arch Rocks, Oregon	4:40
III	Riptide / Icebreaker	6:10

Duration: 17 minutes

Program Note:

This "oceanic" quartet was composed for the Pacifica Quartet with support from the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard. While my first quartet was subtitled "Astral" after dedicatee the Orion String Quartet, my second quartet takes its aquatic focus from the Pacifica Quartet, whom I have the good fortune to work with at the Jacobs School of Music.

The music is partly inspired by memories of time at the Oregon coast in my youth, especially an annual month spent at an isolated, unnamed beach south of Cape Meares with its famous lighthouse and "Octopus tree" and north of Oceanside and the offshore Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuge. This beach is one quarter of a mile long, bordered by high rocky bluffs, with a cliff in between facing the ocean; a rough road carved into the cliff face is the only means of accessing the beach except at a very low tide. The northern bluff is pierced by a Y-shaped tunnel called "Lost Boy Cave" that has openings to the beaches either side and the ocean in between. Depending on the shifting sand level and tide, it is sometimes possible to walk through to the neighboring beach, observing cave walls covered in starfish, mussels and barnacles, and tidepools with seaweed and sea anemones. Each summer for quite a few years, my family and another would rent a cabin above the cliff. While our working fathers were present mostly on weekends, the five kids and two mothers would spend a month at this unique and magical place. Playing at the edge of the great Pacific Ocean was an endless adventure: skimboarding and jumping waves in the frigid water, digging and designing elaborate games in the sand, building driftwood castles, climbing rocky faces and protrusions, exploring the windy forest atop the Northern bluff, finding agates, shells and if very lucky, Japanese glass floats in the surf, running the beach or even the log "highways" uphill from the layers of ocean, sand and surf-smoothed rockpile, and more. Everything seemed elemental, ancient, and a bit dangerous, with signs of life and death everywhere. As JFK said, "We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea, whether it is to sail or to watch it we are going back from whence we came."

The Oregon coast memories served as prompt for the central movement of the quartet. Unmentioned above are the sounds at the beach, hints of which might be heard in the movement: the usual coastal sounds of water, wind and seagulls, but also the gurgling cacophony of water and sea life near and inside the cave; perhaps even sea lions barking from nearby Three Arch Rocks. *Bergy Bits and Growlers* are chunks of glacial ice, smaller than an iceberg, but still dangerous to ships; in the first movement they appear as interruptions to a rather "pacific," easy-going flow. *Riptide / Icebreaker* begins and ends with a doomed soul gasping for air and then swimming against relentless currents. The center of the movement imagines a powerful ship pushing through ice, bending and splitting the frozen ocean to the breaking point from within or above. Above all when at the Oregon coast, we learned to respect nature...and never turn our back on the ocean.

David Dzubay, 2018/2020

Premiere: Pacifica Quartet, University of Chicago, Mandel Hall, April 12, 2019

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Dedicated to the Pacifica String Quartet

String Quartet 2

“Oceanic” (2019; revised 2020)

David Dzubay

(b. 1964)

I. Bergy Bits & Growlers

$\text{♩} = 84$ *pacifc...lapping waves with interruptions*

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

pp

5

p *mp*

mp

10

p

p

15

mp

p

mp

p

20 22

mf *p* *mf* *mp*

25

mf *p* *mf* *p* *n* *p* *n* *p*

31 *poco accel*..... 34 $\text{♩} = 88$

f *f* *p* *p* *ord.* *sul pont.* *ord.* *sul pont.*

37

f *f* *f* *pp* *ord.*

42

mp *mf*

mp *mf*

mp *pp* *ff*

ord. *mp* *mf*

48

p

p

pp *p*

p

52

f *ff*

f *ff*

f *pp* *fff*

f *ff*

56 *sul pont.* **58** *deeper waters...* *ord.*

pp *ff* *f*

sul pont. *ord.*

pp *ff* *f*

sul pont. *ord.*

pp *ff* *f*

sul pont. *ord.*

pp *ff* *f*

62

mf

mf

mf

mf

67

ff

ff

f

ff

72 $\text{♩} = 92$ *full speed on choppy water...*

sffz

sffz

sffz

sffz

77

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

82

ff *pp* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *p* *p* *ff* *ff* *p* *p*

86

89 whirlpool...
sul pont.

f *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp*

90

pp *ff* *f* *cresc. poco a poco* *s.p.* *ord. 6* *3* *s.p.* *ord. 3* *3* *s.p.* *ord. 6* *s.p.* *ord. 6* *s.p.*

93 *ord.* *s.p.* *ord.* *s.p.* *ord.* *s.p.* **95** *ff* *ff* *ff*

96

98 *♩ = 88* **99** *violent sloshing...* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

101 *gaining control...* *p* *p* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

122

sfz *mf* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz*

sfz *mf* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz*

sfz *mf* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz*

sfz *mf* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *sfz*

128

mf *sfz* *f* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

mf *sfz* *f* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

mf *sfz* *f* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

mf *sfz* *f* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

134

sfz *mf* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *sim.* *sfz* *sfz*

sfz *mf* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *sim.* *sfz* *sfz*

mf *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *sim.* *sfz*

mf *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *sim.* *sfz*

139

ritardando..... $\text{♩} = 76$

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *p* *ff pesante*

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *p* *ff pesante*

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *p* *ff pesante*

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *p* *ff pesante*

144 $\text{♩} = 88$ churning waters...

Musical score for measures 144-147. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 88. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music is characterized by a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. Dynamic markings include *f*, *sfz*, and *f* with accents. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

148

Musical score for measures 148-151. The score continues with the same four staves. The tempo remains quarter note = 88. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamic markings include *f* and *sfz*.

152

gradually calming...rit. to m. 169

Musical score for measures 152-155. The score continues with the same four staves. The tempo is gradually slowing down (ritardando) starting at measure 152. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamic markings include *mf sub.* and *f*.

156

(♩ = 84)

Musical score for measures 156-159. The score continues with the same four staves. The tempo is quarter note = 84. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamic markings include *mp sub.* and *sfz*.

159 **160**

p

163 **164** (♩ = 80)
flautando

pp flautando
pp flautando
pp flautando
pp

168 **169** ♩ = 72 steady tempo to the end...receding into the distance...

p
p
p
p

172 *a lighthouse flash*

mf
sul pont.
mf
ppp
ppp

II. Lost Boy Cave - Three Arch Rocks, Oregon (low tide)

sunrise...beams of light emerging through clouds...poignant memories...

♩ = 46 **accel.** ♩ = 72 **rit.** ♩ = 50

con sord. n.v. poco vib. n.v. sim. ♩ = 60 7

Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Violoncello

10 **rit.** **a tempo** **ritenuto** **a tempo**

20

"seagulls"

33 41

ppp p pp p pp p < mp pp p mf pp pp pp

ppp p pp p > pp p < mp pp p mf pp pp pp

ppp p pp p > pp p < mp pp p mf pp pp pp

ppp p n ppp p < mp pp p mf pp pp pp

42 47 contemplation at day's end...

rit. a tempo rit. a tempo

p mf f p < mp ff mp > pp mp > pp

p mf f p < mp ff mp > pp mp > pp

p mf f p < mp ff mp > pp mp > pp

mf f p mp ff mp > pp mp > pp

molto ritard... a tempo poco ritardando

sunset, rays disappearing higher and higher as sun sinks at horizon...

51 54

p ppp p > pp n

p ppp p < p > pp n

p ppp p < p pp n

p ppp p < p pp n

17 *swimming against the current, struggling...*

sul pont.
f mp
cresc. poco a poco

sul pont.
mp
cresc. poco a poco

arco
f
sul tasto on
mp
cresc. poco a poco

pizz.
mp
cresc. poco a poco

bobbing in the water...

23

26

f
ord.

f
ord.

f
ord.

f
arco

29

pp

pp

pp

pp

79

83

Musical score for measures 79-83. The score is for a string quartet, with four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass). The music is in 3/4 time and features a dynamic range from *f* to *ffp*. The first three measures (79-81) are marked *f*. The last two measures (82-83) are marked *ffp* and include the instruction "sul pont." (sul ponticello). The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests.

pushing through the ice...

Musical score for measures 85-95. The score is for a string quartet, with four staves. The music is in 3/4 time and features a dynamic range from *ffp* to *ff*. The first two measures (85-86) are marked *ffp* and *fff*. The next three measures (87-89) are marked *ffp* and *fff*. The last two measures (90-91) are marked *pp* and *ff*. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. The instruction "ord." (ordine) is used throughout, and "s.p." (sul ponticello) is used in measures 88-91. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests.

Musical score for measures 96-100. The score is for a string quartet, with four staves. The music is in 3/4 time and features a dynamic range from *pp* to *ff*. The first two measures (96-97) are marked *pp* and *ff*. The next three measures (98-100) are marked *pp* and *ff*. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. The instruction "ord." (ordine) is used throughout, and "s.p." (sul ponticello) is used in measures 98-100. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests.

134

141

144

148

156

184

ord. arco
mp pp p < mp mf > n p pp mp ff
c.l.b. sul tasto sul pont. ord. ord. c.l.b. arco
mf > n pp < mp p < mp p < mp mf > pp mf > pp ff
sul pont. ord. sul pont. ord. → s.p. arco
mp p mf > n mp pp < mf mp p mf ff
pizz. c.l.b. pizz. arco ord.
mf mp p mf > n mp p < mf p < mf ff

190

fp fp fp fp fp fp
fp fp fp fp fp fp
fp fp fp fp fp fp

fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp
fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp
fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp

fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp
fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp
fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp

206 *fp fp fp fp fp fp fp fp* *f*

211 *crescendo* *fff*

216 *p*

222 *fff* 16

227 228 Play 3 times

Musical score for measures 227-231. It features four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass) with complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings like 'f'.

(octaves!) Play 3 times

Musical score for measures 232-237. It features four staves with rapid sixteenth-note passages in octaves, marked with 'ff'.

(octaves!) 241

Musical score for measures 238-244. It features four staves with triplet patterns in octaves, marked with 'ff'.

245 *sinking...bubbles rising to surface...* *dim. poco a poco* *8va*

Musical score for measures 245-250. It features four staves with triplet patterns, dynamic markings 'dim. poco a poco', and an 8va marking.

250 *gliss.* *15^{ma}*

256 **twitch - still...**

gliss. *8^{va}* *n*

gliss. *8^{va}* *n*

gliss. *n*

gliss. *n*

fff pp *ff pp* *s.p. ord.* *s.p. ord.*

fff pp *ff pp* *s.p. ord.* *s.p. ord.*

fff pp *ff pp* *s.p. ord.* *s.p. ord.*

fff pp *ff pp* *s.p. ord.* *s.p. ord.*

fff pp *ff pp* *s.p. ord.* *s.p. ord.*

259 **ritardando poco a poco** **morendo.....**

f pp *mf pp* *p* *dim. poco a poco al niente*

f pp *mf pp* *p* *dim. poco a poco al niente*

f pp *mf pp* *p* *dim. poco a poco al niente*

f pp *mf pp* *p* *dim. poco a poco al niente*

f pp *mf pp* *p* *dim. poco a poco al niente*

f pp *mf pp* *p* *dim. poco a poco al niente*