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Contemporary Music Score Collection

Title

Potters Field

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Potters Field

Four movements for
String Quartet and
Soprano

2015

Potters Field

For string quartet and soprano

Movement I- Off the shores of an asylum

Movement II- Pine Box

Movement III- Hart Island

Movement IV- A Field for Strangers

The Story-

Potter's field or common grave is a term for a place for the burial of unknown or indigent people. The expression derives from the Bible, referring to a field used for the extraction of potter's clay, which was useless for agriculture but could be used as a burial site.

This piece focus's on New York's Potters Field called Hart Island. Hart Island is a small island in New York City at the western end of Long Island Sound. At various times during its history, Hart Island has had a workhouse, a hospital, prisons, a Civil War internment camp, a reformatory, a missile base and the largest tax-funded cemetery in the world.

Burials of unknowns were in single plots and identified adults and children were buried in mass graves. In 1913, adults and children under five were buried in separate mass graves. Unknowns are mostly adults. They are frequently disinterred when families are able to locate their relatives through photographs and fingerprints kept on file at the Office of the Medical Examiner. Adults are buried in trenches with three sections of 48 individuals to make disinterment easier. Children, mostly infants, are rarely disinterred and are buried in trenches of 1,000. One third of over 280,000 buried there are infants and stillborn babies.

The dead are buried in trenches. Babies are placed in coffins of various sizes, and are stacked five coffins high and usually twenty coffins across. Adults are placed in larger pine boxes placed according to size and are stacked three coffins high and two coffins across. The potter's field is also used to dispose of amputated body parts, which are placed in boxes labeled "limbs".

Those interred on Hart Island are not necessarily homeless or indigent, as hearsay has it, but people who could either not afford the expenses of private funerals or who were unclaimed by relatives who are frequently not notified within a two-week period.

Movement I- Off the Shores of an Asylum-

Imagine being placed in an internment camp? A large detention center created for political opponents, enemy aliens, people with mental illness, members of specific ethnic or religious groups, civilian inhabitants of a critical war-zone, or other groups of people, usually during a war.

And all you hear in the distance is a foghorn, waves crashing, fog rolling in.

Please note the double stops! Each one has purposefully has on open string, right next to the string being played, should make double stops fairly easy.

Anytime a c note is played do give it a bit of emphasis, as it's the pitch of the foghorn.

Movement II-Pine Box

For: percussive breathing, voice and cello

Place effects on vocals if possible, large spacey reverb and a 5.1 delay. When the middle c note is sung, use the syllable (bum) like a bell tone

Please note all string players to make a tapping sound like nails into a coffin, could be tapping any part of instrument, stand, floor etc. Please all choose different rhythms, not necessarily in time, but not distracting.

Also if played with no vocalist, the vocal part can be played with violin, and if your feeling adventurous, violin 2, and viola play same part in a round, starting a quarter note later, do decrease the volume as if a surround delay pedal and fading.

Percussive breathing is defined in this piece with (+) for in and (o) for out. No pitch required, although interesting use of the voice is encouraged. Use a mic if possible.

Movement III- Hart Island- no special instructions

Movement IV- A Field for Strangers- violin 1 or one of the violin 1's could be electric, and connected to a delay pedal, there are marked passages when to apply the effect. This effect may be excluded for performance reason

Video- A video is available to be shown behind the Quartet, live. This is optional

Potters Field
I.
Off the Shores of an Asylum

Composer
Dom Aiken

F = 50

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The score consists of four staves. Violin I starts with a sustained note followed by sixteenth-note patterns with dynamics *mf*, *slight vib.*, and *slight vib.*. Violin II, Viola, and Cello provide harmonic support with sustained notes and eighth-note patterns. The Cello part includes a dynamic instruction *legato-like a fog horn*.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

legato-like a fog horn

Musical score for vln 1, vln 2, vla, and vc. The score consists of four staves. vln 1 plays a melodic line with *slight vib.* markings. vln 2, vla, and vc provide harmonic support with sustained notes and eighth-note patterns. The vc staff features a dynamic instruction *mp* and a series of crescendo marks (>).

vln 1

vln 2

vla

vc

mp

Potters Field

I

♩ = 100

11

vln 1 port.

vln 2

vla Legato

11

vc mf

11

vln 1 mp

vln 2

vla mf

11

vc > >

11

vln 1 >

vln 2

vla >

vc mf

8va

16

vln 1

vln 2

vla port.

16

vln 1

vln 2

vla 8va

16

vc >

16

vln 1

vln 2

vla 8va

16

vc > >

16

vln 1

vln 2

vla >

16

vc >

= 80

Potters Field

I

B double stops, use open strings

sul ponticello

21

vln 1

vln 2

vla

vc

21

B double stops, use open strings

sul ponticello

p

III

p

21

B

p

21

B

f

26

crec.

accel

accel

vln 1

vln 2

26

crec.

accel

accel

Sul Ponticello

vln 2

vla

26

mp

accel

accel

Sul Ponticello

vla

vc

26

mp

accel

Potters Field

I

8va

31 A Tempo >

vln 1 *crec.* *mp* *p* *mf*

vln 2 *crec.* *mp* *p* *mf*

vla *crec.* *mf*

vc *mf* *mp* *mf*

(8^{va})

36

vln 1

vln 2

vla

vc

Potters Field

I

41

vln 1

vln 2

vla

vc

C

C

C

>

>

>

46

vln 1

vln 2

vla

vc

rit.

p

rit.

p

rit.

p

p

rit.

Potters Field: II

Potters field

III Hart Island

Score

Dom Aiken

freely-range $\text{♩} = 60$

Musical score for strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello) in 4/4 time, key signature of one flat. The score consists of four staves. Violin I has a single note followed by a rest. Violin II has a single note followed by a rest. Viola has sustained notes with fermatas. Cello has a single note followed by a rest. Dynamics include *p* and *mp*. A performance instruction "legato-like a fog horn" is written above the Viola staff.

Musical score for strings (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.) in 6/8 time, key signature of one flat. The score consists of four staves. Vln. I has sixteenth-note patterns. Vln. II has eighth-note patterns with dynamics *mf*, arco, *mp*, and *mp*. Vla. has sustained notes with fermatas. Vc. has sustained notes with dynamics *legato* and *mp*.

Potters field

III

Musical score for strings (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.) in 11th measure. The key signature is one flat. Measure 11 starts with a dynamic of *mf*. The first two measures show eighth-note patterns with slurs and grace notes. In the third measure, the violins play eighth-note pairs with a 3:2 count ratio, indicated by a bracket and the number '3'. The fourth measure begins with a dynamic of *mp*, followed by eighth-note pairs. The violins play eighth-note pairs in the fifth measure, starting with *mf*. The viola and cello provide harmonic support with sustained notes.

Musical score for strings (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.) in 16th measure. The key signature is one flat. Measure 16 starts with a dynamic of *mf* and a portamento (port.) over sixteenth notes. The violins play eighth-note pairs with a 3:2 count ratio. The viola and cello provide harmonic support with sustained notes. The dynamic changes to *legato* in the second half of the measure. The violins play eighth-note pairs with a 3:2 count ratio again in the next measure, starting with *mf* and *legato*.

Potters field

III

3

21

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

26

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Potters field
III

31

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f

f

f

f

36

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf

mf

mf

mf

p

p

p

p

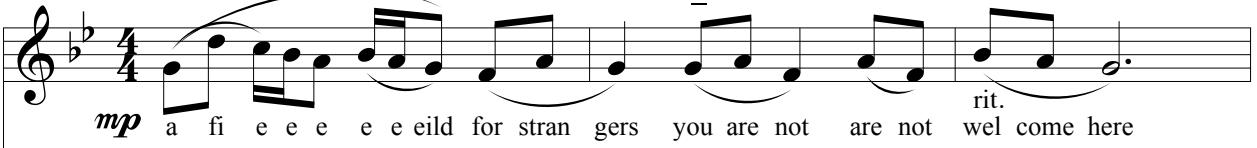
Potters Field

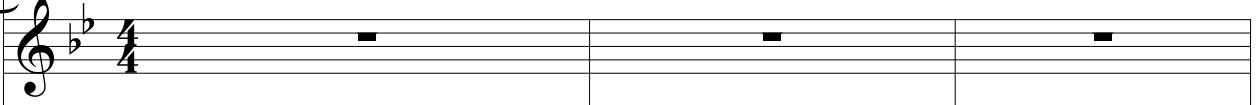
Score

IV- A field for Strangers

Dom Aiken

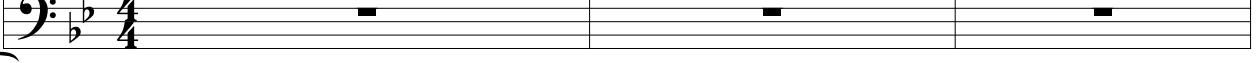
freely

soprano 

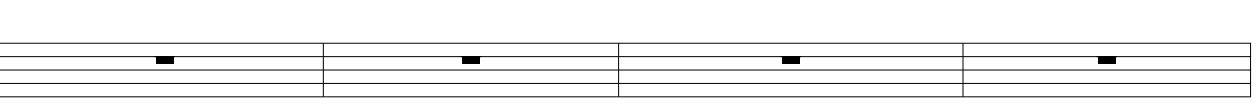
Violin I 

Violin II 

Viola 

Cello 

$\text{♩} = 100$

sop. 

Vln. I 

Vln. II 

Vla. 

Vc. 

Potters Field IV

2

sop. *mp* ah - cresc. cresc.

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

13

sop.

Vln. I 8va decrec 3 port crec ff f

Vln. II decrec 3 port ff f

Vla. decrec 3 port ff f

Vc. decrec 3 port ff f

Potters Field IV

3

18

sop.

Vln. I delay pedal

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

 $\text{♩}=100$

23

sop.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp It's Been so long since I've seen your face

end delay

mp

mp

mp

mp

Potters Field IV

4

29

sop. felt your breath The sun it sets a - cross the lake see you wait for death for

29

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

35

sop. me our love was meant to be - close your eyes i'll be here wait-ing

35

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Potters Field IV

5

41

sop. on the oth - er side we'll be for all e - ter - ne - ty

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

47

sop. *mf* ah - - - - - *cresc.* *f* - - - - - 3

Vln. I 8^{va} - - - - - *cresc.* *f* - - - - - 3

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

cresc. *f* - - - - - >

Potters Field IV

6

52

sop.

sf

(8^{va})

3

Vln. I

sf delay pedal

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Vln. II

sf

3 3 3 3

Vla.

sf

3 3 3 3

Vc.

sf

3 3

55

sop.

78^{va})

3

Vln. I

cresc.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

f

Vln. II

cresc.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

f

Vla.

cresc.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Vc.

cresc.

f

Potters Field IV

7

60

sop. - - - lay to rest in be with

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

66

sop. me in lay to rest in be with me in pot ters field

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

rit.

Fine