



Le Jardin Sec

For String Quartet

Violoncello

Music by Nigel Morgan

Words by Margaret Morgan

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For String Quartet

Nigel Morgan

About the music

Le Jardin Sec is taken from a sequence of twelve short works for string quartet celebrating The Garden and its relationship to the elements that give it life: sun, water and shade. The music in its duration, character and intent offers something a little different for string players and their audience. The writing for quartet contains very particular characteristics: gentleness, the ornamental, attention to group articulation, a lightness that comes from a velocity of bowing action, playing as 'one body of sound', the employment of a limited pitch compass. Above all, the music is conceived to provide plenty of interpretative space and opportunity. This extends to encouraging the player to explore octave transpositions and the use of timbral effects (*sul ponticello*, *sul tastiera*, *glissando*, *portamento* and *tremolando*).

The music is imagined as four walks around a garden. The musical material is a collection of phrases, some long, some very short. During each 'walk' the musical material undergoes a metamorphosis passing from a unison orchestration of the phrase collection with ornamental embellishments to an exploration of octave displacement and the intervention of silences through discrete pauses; to a play of articulation (using an extended notation for *staccato*), effects of varying proximity, and finally moments of stillness and repose in sustained chords and harmonic textures.

Movement 1	<i>Allegramente</i>	<i>mp</i>
Movement 2	<i>Disonvolto</i>	<i>mf</i>
Movement 3	<i>Chiaro</i>	<i>p</i>
Movement 4	<i>Con garbo e sonora</i>	<i>mp</i>

The dynamic marking indicated for each movement should be regarded as a mean from which all further expressive terms, accents and signs are measured.

Additive metric time-signatures such as 3/8, 5/8 and 7/8 used in this piece suggest a group of even 1/8th beats with a slight emphasis on the first beat of the group. Thus 2/4 followed by 3/8 will be:



Le Jardin Sec

Bees scorch
Round the red bosses
Of Rosa Moyseii,
Buzz like train sets.

Apples thunder
Like gorilla gangs
Crushing their way
To the jungle floor.

Butterfly pumps
Her faded wings,
No more stained glass
But worn tapestries.

White currants in cells
In pitiless sun
Sweat oval beads.
Poppies roll drums.

Cross brown grass
Under cube-cut trees,
An avenue of golden
Propped boxes,

And the vista races
Towards us, an actor
Late for his cue,
Cloaked in flames.

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Le Jardin Sec

allegramente $\text{♩} = 75$

Cello

mp *

pizz.

arco

* see introductory note on dynamics.

5

9

A Vn.I

15

pizz.

arco

19

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

23

B Va.

27

32

pizz.

arco

37

pizz. arco

42

disonvolto ♩ = 75
Va.
attacca *mf* *mf*

47

51

56

con bravura
lontano

60

poco rall ... con bravura

65

meno

69

con bravura
meno

73

sotto voce
Vn.I

79 (Vn.I) *bravura* *(eco)* *sostenuto*

83

88 *chiaro* $\text{♩} = 75$ Vn.II *attacca* *p* *intimo* *p*

93

98 **E** *bravura* *en dehors*

103 *intimo*

109 **F** *subito bravura*

114 *intimo*

119

125 *(eco)* *lontano*

131 *intimo* *con garbo e sonora* $\text{♩} = 75$

137

142 **G** *molto* *meno*

148 *intimo*

153 **H**

158 *(eco)* *lontano*

164 *poco intimo*

170

175