

COMPLEXUS

SHIRL JAE ATWELL

For STRING ORCHESTRA

Full Score

Instrumentation

1 Full Score
8 Violin 1
8 Violin 2
5 Viola
5 Violoncello
5 Double Bass

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About the Composer

Shirl Jae Atwell earned her Bachelors from Kansas State Teachers college and a Master of Music Theory/Composition degree at the University of Louisville. She also completed four years of post-graduate work in composition at the university of South Carolina.

In 1984, Ms. Atwell won the Clifford Shaw Memorial Award for Kentucky Composers; was commissioned to write *Fear Not, Little Flock* for the 175th anniversary of the Little Flock Baptist Church; and saw the New York City debut of her first opera, *Sagegrass*. In 1991, another of her operas, *Esta Hargis*, was premiered at Emporia State University in Kansas, followed shortly by the 1992 debut of *Handelian*, a work for string orchestra premiered by the Jefferson County All-Country Middle School Orchestra. The Southern Baptist Seminary Orchestra in Louisville premiered her *Movements Four South*, an orchestral suite, in 1993. That year also saw the placement of six Shirl Jae Atwell scores in the permanent collection of the Paris Bibliothèque Internationale de Musique Contemporaine at the invitation of the Contemporary Music International Information Service.

Ms. Atwell was named the 1996 winner of the National School Orchestra Association composition contest with her string orchestra piece *Modus á Four*. She is also the 1997 winner of the Texas Orchestra Directors Association contest with a string orchestra piece entitled *Driften*.

Lucy, the ballet, with music by Ms. Atwell and choreography by Alun Jones, was premiered by the Louisville Ballet in January 1999. *Lucy* was inspired by the discovery of a 3.2 million year old skeleton, and was the subject of a Kentucky Education Television documentary that was aired on November 10, 1999.

In June 2000, the televised production of *Lucy* was awarded the Arts & Culture Emmy by the Ohio Valley Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences; in July, a Certificate of Merit was awarded to *Lucy* by Unda-USA, the National Catholic Association for Communicators; and in January 2001, *Lucy* was awarded 2nd place by the National Education Television Association for program performance. In 2002, The Greensboro Symphony Orchestra of North Carolina recorded the music to the ballet *Lucy*, which is now available on Albany Records. The compact disc also includes the orchestral suite *Movements Four South*, and three string orchestra works, *Pulsar*, *Meander*, and *Driften*.

Ms. Atwell has been commissioned to write works for the McEachern High School String Orchestra of Powder Springs, Georgia; the Oceanfront String Orchestra of Virginia Beach, Virginia; and a full orchestra piece for the 2007 Kentucky All-State Orchestra. In the fall of 2008, Ms. Atwell was commissioned to write a full orchestra work in honor of Lincoln's Bicentennial, which was premiered by the Louisville Orchestra in February 2009. She has also completed work on her second ballet suite, entitled *Evoquer*.

An active composer with many commissions and publications to her credit, Ms. Atwell recently retired from full-time string teaching with the Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky. She is looking forward to spending more time composing, conducting, arranging, and presenting. Ms. Atwell maintains active memberships in ASCAP, Music Educators National conference, ASTA with NSOA, Texas Orchestra Directors Association, and the Kentucky Music Educators Association.

Program Notes

Recurring asymmetric ostinato figures drive this hypnotic piece, punctuated by harmonically lush cadences. Works well either as an opener or pre-intermission cliffhanger. It is also a fun way to warm up those fingers and counting skills in rehearsal!

Complexus

Shirl Jae Atwell

Gaily ♩ = 120

Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Violoncello
Double Bass

7 10 14 18

mf *f* *mp*
mf *f* *f*
mf *f* *mp*
mf *f* *mp*
mf *f* *mp*