

# Countdown

Lucas Buterbaugh

for  
STRING ORCHESTRA

**Full Score**

## Instrumentation

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1 Full Score  
12 Violin 1  
4 Violin 2  
(Viola Treble Clef)  
5 Viola  
5 Violoncello  
5 Double Bass

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## About the Composer

An Arizona native, **Lucas Buterbaugh** studied cello at both Northwestern University and Arizona State University, receiving bachelor's and master's degrees in string performance, as well as a certificate in arts administration. After earning a post-baccalaureate teaching certification from Rio Salado Community College, Lucas now serves as the orchestra director and performing arts department chair at Fremont Junior High School, as well as the assistant orchestra director at Red Mountain High School.

In addition, he is the principal cellist of the Scottsdale Philharmonic, a section cellist with the MusicaNova Orchestra, a cellist with Sweetwater Strings, and a published composer. Previously, Lucas held an adjunct cello instructor position at Scottsdale Community College, was a section cellist with the West Valley Symphony, performed with the Arizona Bach Festival and Arizona Opera, served as an instructor at the annual Arizona String Teachers Association Cellobration, and acted as an adjudicator for both the Arizona Cello Society Solo Competition and the Arizona Music Educators Association High School Regional and All-State Festival cello auditions.

In his free time, Lucas enjoys spending time with his wife and dog, as well as running, hiking, mountain biking, and binge-watching all things *Star Wars*.

## Program Notes

*Countdown* is the musical embodiment of anticipation—an eerie sense that something is approaching, and it's probably not good. Through suspenseful techniques like tonic drones and accompaniments emphasizing beats 4 and 1, the piece steadily builds tension, layer by layer, until it erupts in a climactic explosion of sound. Every section of the orchestra is actively involved, with opportunities to play both melody and harmony, keeping all students fully engaged from start to finish.

The piece offers rich musical and technical challenges, including precise eighth-note rhythms, accented notes, wide dynamic contrasts, and careful balance between interwoven melodic and harmonic lines. Special performance considerations—such as an optional violin II part that doubles the viola line in treble clef and fully doubled cello/contrabass parts—ensure that ensembles lacking violas or contrabasses can still perform the piece in its entirety. Start the countdown... and get ready for your students to have a thrilling and rewarding musical experience!

## Editor's Note

Orchestral bowings and fingerings can be highly subjective and personal. The choices a string editor makes are designed to be pedagogically appropriate for specific grade levels while facilitating student musicality and honoring composer intent. The editorial additions in the following composition will provide guidance “right out of the box” for the non-string player and suggest some options for the advanced string specialist. Enjoy!

J. Cameron Law, String Editor

# Countdown

Lucas Buterbaugh

♩ = 120

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

8

9

15

17

L2

L2

3

0

mf

mf

f

f

