

for the Lafayette String Quartet

# String Quartet No. 5

Nicola LeFanu

Serene ♩ = c. 80

Violin I: *pp dolce*, IV, *pp*, *pp*

Violin II: *pp dolce*, IV, *pp*, *pp*

Viola: *pp dolce*, III, *pp*, *pp*

Cello: *pp*, *pp*

Tempo: Serene ♩ = c. 80

Più mosso

(♩ = c. 96)

Violin I: *fp*, *f*, *f*, *mp*, *p*

Violin II: *f martellato*, *f*, *f*, *mp*, *p*

Viola: *fp*, *f*, *f*, *mp*, *p*

Cello: *sfp*, *espress.*, *f*, *f*, *mp*, *p*

Tempo: Più mosso (♩ = c. 96)

*rit.*

12

*mf* *mp* *p*

**Meno Mosso**

14 (♩ = c. 80)

*mp* *p* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *p* *pp*

**Very fast**  
(♩ = c. 152)

19

*p* *mp* *ppp* *p* *pp*

## PROGRAMME NOTE

My fifth string quartet was composed in early 2022 and is dedicated to the Lafayette String Quartet, who commissioned it through the B K Weigel Fund.

It is in one continuous span, underpinned by a traditional structure of 'fast/slow/fast' tempi, concluded by a gentle coda. It lasts about 15 minutes.

When I began composing it, I had in mind the metaphor of a journey, single-minded in its direction. However, it didn't turn out like that. What emerged was a restless, volatile music, the flow interrupted by questions or challenges. Moments of affirmation may be followed by reflection or hesitation. Part way through, microtones begin to creep into the music: the harmony now has shadows.

The four players are equal partners, each seeking the way forward in their own characteristic timbre. They 'sing' as individual, lyric voices and they share in unfolding the music's path. The quiet opening of the piece glimpses a possible destination, a safe haven at which the music does finally arrive in its coda and cadence. Perhaps, since I was composing in a still-continuing pandemic and in the onset of a European war, I should have anticipated that my music's journey could not be a simple one.

Nicola LeFanu, 2022

*Commissioned by the Lafayette String Quartet  
as a series of eight commissioned works in 2020 through the B K Weigel Fund.*

*First performed on March 23, 2023 at the Phillip T Young Recital Hall of the  
University of Victoria, Canada, by the Lafayette String Quartet.*