

THE INDIANAPOLIS QUARTET

ROBERT PATERSON • STRING QUARTETS 1-3



Program Notes

String Quartet No. 1

My original intent with this work was to write a set of four independent miniatures. After writing the first maximally-sized one, I decided to change course: these four “miniatures” are now my String Quartet No. 1.

Although these four movements are designed to be independent, small amounts of material are used interchangeably between each movement. Most notably, material from the first two movements is used in the third, and material from the third movement is used in the fourth.

The most prominent aural feature of the first movement, *Fast and Sprightly*, is the recurring “clarion” motive. This motive evolves into various thematic gestures and also reappears in the next two movements. Another prominent feature of the first movement is the use of jazz references. The string quartet is required to “swing,” a style of playing usually only utilized by jazz musicians and big bands.

The second movement, *Logy*, begins by parodying North American, southern-style country waltzes. While composing this movement, I had visions of my mother interrupting “Three good ol’ boys fiddlin’ on a porch in Rabun Gap, GA,” quipping at them to stop. The quipping is represented by the first violinist interjecting the “Rob–ert” theme. This strange, surrealistic daydream probably originates from memories of my mother calling my name from the other side of the bedroom door when I was a boy.

A section called “Andrew Lloyd Webber Disease” occurs in the middle of the second movement. This section is a schizophrenic alternation of a sick, dissonant, violin duo with an Andrew Lloyd Webber-sounding viola and cello duo. By the end of the movement, my mother joins the “Good ol’ boys” for a final song, after they have all become sick from eating too many boiled peanuts.

The third movement, *Sad, Luscious Adagio*, uses material from the first and second movements, but at a much slower tempo. Each player has a featured solo in this movement: the cellist

plays a solo in double-stops and the violinist plays one made up of almost entirely artificial harmonics. The second violin and viola solos are intended to highlight the instruments’ singing qualities and the performers’ lyrical abilities. As with *Logy*, I use material recycled from previous movements.

Although the fourth movement, *Energetic Polka*, is not a strict polka, it has a polka-like beginning. It also contains a few short “quotes,” the most notable one being the appropriation of the melodic line from the theme song from the television show *The Love Boat*.

Material from other movements is also used in *Energetic Polka*, particularly by the cello. The cellist never has a chance to play the “Pseudo-fugato” theme in *Logy*, so the cellist “aggressively” reintroduces it in this movement. *Energetic Polka* ends with a section entitled “Hyperfast shimmy and shake.”

String Quartet No. 2

In some ways, *String Quartet No. 2* is similar to my *String Quartet No. 1*: the five movements are stylistically diverse, I use a few snippets of pre-existing music, and the music, while idiomatic, is technically demanding. As with my first quartet, this work explores technical and aesthetic ideas I didn’t have a chance to explore in other works.

The first movement, *Colored Fields*, is inspired by abstract expressionist painters such as Mark Rothko, Kenneth Noland, and Barnett Newman, but also pointillist painters such as Georges Seurat and Paul Signac. There are textures that emerge and submerge using articulations that gradually shift from soft to loud, or short to long, and there are a few transitions that utilize a technique I call pitch phasing or phase modulation, as opposed to tempo phasing. In these transitions, two or more instruments gradually modulate (raise or lower) notes, motives, or phrases by gradual, very refined, microtonal, non-chromatic increments, settling on new pitch areas that directly reflect the previous areas, just modulated up or down. The movement ends softly with a virtual desaturation of the rhythmic material. I remove notes, one by one, until there’s nothing left.

The second movement, *Rigor Mortis*, is inspired by a comic strip by David Lynch that newspapers ran for many years. In this strip, Lynch sketched a stressed-out, pitch-black dog, looking very mean and almost buzzing with anger; it looked like it was about to explode. Every strip began with an accompanying paragraph that read, “The dog who is so angry he cannot move. He cannot eat. He cannot sleep. He can just barely growl. Bound so tightly with tension and anger, he approaches the state of rigor mortis.” This made me envision musicians playing with such ferocity and tension that the music seems to eventually cancel itself out, anger imploding in on itself. The movement begins with loud barking, represented by scratch tones on the strings. It then moves to a section representing the insane, growling dog running in circles. Next, there is a section inspired by some of the philosophical sentences Lynch used in this comic strip series. Then we hear the dog barking again, but he hears a familiar theme reminding him of his long-lost love, so he simmers down for a bit. However, he soon remembers his predicament and becomes angry again. The movement ends with more furious barking: he is overcome by distilled tension, imploding inward with a final, loud, buzzing unison tremolo.

The third movement, *Dolente*, is sad, lush, and mournful. The only request I had when writing this quartet was to incorporate a Norwegian fiddle tune or theme by Edvard Grieg, so I chose themes from Grieg’s *String Quartet No. 1*. The form of this movement mimics the form of a song by Edvard Grieg’s entitled *Spillemaend* (Minstrels, or Fiddlers). The poem that Grieg set in 1876 as the first of *Six Ibsen Songs* (Op. 25) is based on the Norwegian folktale of the fossegrim, a male water spirit who could teach the art of violin-playing, but often at the price of personal happiness. In some versions of the story, the poor violinist drowns in the end. Like the song, and echoing the second movement, this movement beginning with the protagonist’s longing, his desire for the beloved. Next, he encounters the fossegrim, who promises that becoming a master of music will allow the protagonist to become master of his beloved. In the final stanza, the protagonist becomes a master fiddler, but he is now a cursed, wandering musician deprived of earthly

love, so he drowns himself. As in Grieg’s work, the fossegrim is represented by tremolos, chromatic descents, unexpected dynamic contrasts, and dissonant harmonies such as fully-diminished seventh chords and augmented chords.

The humorous fourth movement, *Scherzando*, capitalizes on effects that at times, often make the string players sound inebriated. I make use of copious glissandi and tempos that fluctuate between 3/4 and 6/8, giving a sense of unease.

The final movement, *Collage*, is similar to the first movement in that it is inspired by the visual arts, and specifically, collage painting and works by surrealists. Many themes from the first four movements are brought together in this odd-metered movement.

String Quartet No. 2 commissioned by J. K. Billman and is written for and dedicated to the Euclid Quartet.

String Quartet No. 3

String Quartet No. 3 consists of five movements that explore “other voices,” either literally or figuratively. In a literal sense, this could mean speaking or singing in a way that is not considered normal or even out of one’s control. It could also mean speaking differently for a desired effect. Figuratively, “other voices” could mean a voice that is not one’s own. All five movements touch on these definitions in one way or another.

The first movement, *Twist and Shout*, uses musical patterns that sound like stuttering or someone who has a severe form of Tourette’s Syndrome. I use these sounds as a technical point of departure, incorporating jagged rhythms, erratic melodic patterns, and sudden volume shifts throughout the movement.

The second movement is entitled *Poet Voice*, and uses this style of reciting poems as a point of departure. In particular, this movement is based on a video of Louise Glück reading her poem “The Wild Iris,” which is included in a book of poems of the same name for which Glück won the Pulitzer Prize. Glück’s poem compares human suffering and finding a voice to the growth of a wild iris that makes a “passage from the other world” underground, despite the difficulty of breaking through. In the image of the wild iris, the explosion of color symbolizes

new life. In this movement, I mimic Glück's speech patterns and structure the movement around the sound of her voice and the content of her poem, essentially giving new life to her poetic reading.

The third movement, *Auction Chant*, is inspired by North American auctioneering, which is a rapid-fire, rhythmic repetition of numbers and “filler words” spoken by auctioneers in the process of conducting an auction. This movement is also inspired by country fiddle music, which is a type of music often played in areas where auctioneering takes place.

In the fourth movement, *Effects Pedal*, I mimic sounds made by electronic effects pedals—and in particular, a vocal effects pedal, but without the use of actual electronic effects on the stringed instruments. I also use musical effects that sound somewhat like swallowing helium, which raises your voice when you inhale it, or sulfur hexafluoride, which lowers it.

The final movement is entitled *Anthem*. In this patriotic-sounding, yet slightly humorous movement, I weave together various sports themes and state songs from around the United States that are used to rile up fans at sports games.

String Quartet No. 3 was commissioned by The Indianapolis Quartet with the generous funding of the DeHaan Family Foundation.

Biographies

Described by the press as “a modern-day master” (*AXS.com*) and the “highlight of the program” (*The New York Times*), **Robert Paterson** has won numerous awards for his music in virtually every classical genre. The Classical Recording Foundation at Carnegie's Weill Hall named Paterson *Composer of The Year* in 2011, and his music has been on the Grammy ballot for the past six seasons. His works have



appeared on National Public Radio's *Best of the Year* lists for classical music and regularly appear on radio playlists across the United States.

Paterson's music has been commissioned and performed by over one hundred outstanding ensembles, including Nashville Opera, Opera Memphis, Minnesota Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Delaware Symphony, Austin Symphony, Albany Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, American Modern Ensemble, Eastman Wind Ensemble, Imani Winds, The Indianapolis String Quartet, Euclid Quartet, and the Chamber Choir of Europe.

Paterson's awards include the A.I. duPont Composer's Award from the Delaware Symphony, a three-year *Music Alive* grant from the League of American Orchestras and New Music USA, the American Composers Forum Jerome Composers Commissioning Program, and fellowships to Yaddo, the MacDowell Colony, Aspen Music Festival, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, and the Copland House.

In 2005, Paterson founded the American Modern Ensemble (AME), which spotlights contemporary music via lively thematic programming. He serves as artistic director for AME as well as house composer, frequently contributing new pieces to the ensemble. In 2018, Paterson co-founded the Mostly Modern Festival (MMF), an annual, three-week summer music festival that highlights contemporary music, which takes place at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY. He also founded American Modern Recordings (AMR), an affiliated record label distributed by NAXOS. Paterson's recordings are also featured on the Capstone, Centaur, Summit, and RiAx labels.

Born in 1970, Paterson was raised in Buffalo, New York, the son of a sculptor and a painter. Although his first love was percussion, he soon discovered a passion for composition, writing his first piece at age thirteen. While an undergraduate student, Paterson pioneered the development of a six-mallet marimba technique, and released the first-ever album of six-mallet music, *Six Mallet Marimba* in 2012 (AMR) to a sold-out crowd at the Rubin Museum in Chelsea, NYC.

Paterson holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Indiana University, and Cornell University, and gives master classes at numerous colleges and universities, most recently at the Curtis Institute of Music, Aspen Music School & Festival, New York University, and the Cleveland Institute of Music. He resides in New York City and Saratoga Springs, NY with his wife, Victoria, and son, Dylan. For more information, visit robertpaterson.com.



The Indianapolis Quartet, founded in 2016, currently serves as quartet-in-residence at the University of Indianapolis. Praised for “its energetic, often kinetic, enthusiasm, and each player’s individual virtuosity and flexibility” (*New York Concert Review*), the members’ palpable rapport and interpretive skills bring about performances of a unique emotional style that have earned the group critical acclaim and audience adoration.

The Indianapolis Quartet garnered accolades for its Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall debut in March 2020, premiering Robert Paterson’s String Quartet No. 3 “in a tour de force of tight ensemble and interplay” (*New York Classical Review*), along with works by Debussy, Schumann, and Frank Felice.

The ensemble has performed at Lutkin Hall at Northwestern University in Chicago, Indiana Landmarks Center, Tippecanoe Chamber Music Society in Lafayette, Indiana, Illinois Wesleyan

University, St. Francis@4 series in Cincinnati, and the Duckwall Artist Series at Butler University, among other engagements. They have also served as ensemble-in-residence at the Taconic Music Festival in Manchester, Vermont, Sonoran Chamber Music Festival at Arizona State University and at Indiana State University’s 53rd annual Contemporary Music Festival.

They have also given numerous live performances on Vermont Public Radio, WBAA Classical 101.3 FM in West Lafayette, Indiana, and on WISH-TV in Indianapolis.

Guest artist collaborations on their home series at the Christel DeHaan Fine Arts Center in Indianapolis and on tour have included acclaimed performances with renowned concert artists Mark Kosower, Todd Palmer, Atar Arad, Eric Kim, Drew Petersen, Soyeon Kate Lee, Carrie Dennis, Nick Canellakis, and Orli Shaham. “The quartet and Shaham fashioned a reading of great tenderness and variety, serious as all get-out when it needed to be, exuberantly driven when appropriate, and fully responsive to that summit of Brahmsiness, the *Allegro non troppo*.” (*Jay Harvey Upstage*).

In addition to their extensive repertoire of classical, romantic and 20th-century works, The Indianapolis Quartet has commissioned and performed new works by Robert Paterson, Frank Felice, Matthew Bridgham, and John Berners. The ensemble can be heard on composer Frank Felice’s monograph recording *Reflections and Whimsies: Chamber Music for Strings and Voice*.

Violinist **Zachary DePue** has established himself in concert venues around the world delivering virtuosic high-energy performances. He demonstrates command as a leader, soloist, collaborator, and improvisational artist reaching across a diverse landscape of music.

DePue became one of the youngest concertmasters in the country when he was appointed to the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra (ISO) in 2007. He served the orchestra as a dedicated leader for more than a decade. He came to Indianapolis from

the Philadelphia Orchestra where he performed in the first violin section for five years.

DePue rose to international prominence as a founding member of Time for Three. During his 15-year tenure with the category-defying trio, he made numerous tours and gave high-profile appearances including a performance on ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*. They were also the ISO's first ensemble-in-residence. DePue recorded four albums of original music and arrangements with Time for Three. Their 2014 release features collaborations with ukulele phenom Jake Shimabukuro, saxophonist Branford Marsalis, cellist Alisa Weilerstein, and singer-songwriter Joshua Radin. The trio members were active creative partners in the commissioning of new pieces. Composers Jennifer Higdon, William Bolcom, and Chris Brubeck each contributed substantial works leading the trio to performances with orchestras across the country including the Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Chicago Symphony Orchestra, among many others. The Trio also recorded Higdon's *Concerto 4-3* with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra.

DePue's earliest introduction to the stage came through performances with his family. He is the youngest of four brothers—all violinists—who make up The DePue Brothers Band, an eclectic ensemble that blends bluegrass, classical, jazz, blues, and rock.

A founding member of The Indianapolis Quartet, DePue also serves as concertmaster of the Carmel Symphony Orchestra and he performs as a member of the Mainly Mozart All-Star Orchestra in San Diego, California.

He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied with Ida Kavafian and Jaime Laredo. He performs on a violin made by Giuseppe Rocca of Turin, Italy, in 1846.

Bulgarian-born violinist **Joana Genova** has built a diverse career as a chamber and orchestral musician, soloist, and pedagogue. She is assistant professor and director of chamber music activities at the University of Indianapolis,

and co-artistic director of Taconic Music in Manchester, Vermont. She joined The Indianapolis Quartet in 2017.

Genova performs regularly at the Faculty Artist Concert Series at the University of Indianapolis, concertizes with Williams and Taconic Chamber Players, and appears as a frequent guest at festivals and concert series. She has performed internationally in Bulgaria, Holland, Germany, Italy, and Bosnia-Herzegovina and has enjoyed collaborations with the Shanghai Quartet, Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, Horszowski Trio, Enso Quartet, Toby Appel, Andrés Cárdenes, Carmit Zori, Nathaniel Rosen, Michael Haber, Danwen Jiang, Austin Hartman, Renee Jolles, Michael Rudiakov, Tom Landschoot, Sophie Shao, Jon Kliftonoff, Ruth Laredo, Davide Cabassi, David Krakauer, Deborah Buck and Drew Petersen.

Her recordings include *Chamber Music of Vittorio Giannini* (MSR Classics), *Vision: Music of the 20th and 21st Centuries* (Eroica Classical Recordings) and *Four Seasons x2: Piazzolla and Vivaldi* (Manchester Music Festival).

As soloist, Genova has been featured with the Metropolitan, Rockaway, Danbury, and Berkshire symphonies, Adelphi Chamber Orchestra, Harlem Chamber Players, Manchester Festival Orchestra, Yonkers Philharmonic, and under the baton of Raymond Leppard with the University of Indianapolis Gala Orchestra. She was concertmaster of the Amsterdam Bach Consort and a member of Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Brooklyn Philharmonic and New Haven Symphony Orchestra. Currently Genova holds positions as artist associate at Williams College, principal second violin of the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra in Massachusetts, and associate concertmaster of the Carmel Symphony in Indiana.

Genova made her solo debut at age 12 with the Plovdiv Chamber Orchestra and is a top prizewinner of the Svetoslav Obretenov National Competition in Bulgaria. She earned her bachelor's degree at the Conservatory of Amsterdam and her master's in chamber music at the Rotterdam Conservatory. Her teachers include Boyanka Shopova, Alexander Spirov, Peter Brunt, Ilya Grubert, and Samuel Thaviu. Genova performs on a Johannes Cuyper's violin made in The Hague in 1786.

Violist **Michael Isaac Strauss** has performed around the world as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, and in symphonic settings on concert series, live radio broadcasts, and festivals across Europe, North America, and Japan and China.

He made his solo debut with the Minnesota Orchestra and has since appeared as soloist with the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Orchestra 2001, Charleston Symphony, Harrisburg Symphony, and Camerata Chicago, among others. During his 20-year tenure as principal violist of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Strauss was featured as a soloist nearly every season.

Strauss is a founding member of The Indianapolis Quartet. He is also a member of the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Columbus, Ohio and is the principal violist of the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra.

A former member of the Fine Arts Quartet, Strauss made several European and domestic tours with the ensemble as well as a critically acclaimed recording of Mozart's complete viola quintets on the Lyrinx label.

Numerous recordings with Strauss as soloist or in chamber ensembles can be heard on the labels of *I Virtuosi* (debut of Jennifer Higdon's Viola Sonata), *CRI* (David Finko Viola Concerto, 20th-century chamber works with the Philadelphia-based Orchestra 2001), *Centaur* (Stamitz Viola Concerto with Camerata Chicago, reissue of Finko Viola Concerto), and on Oberlin Music/Naxos (*Wordless Verses*, featuring works inspired by poetry for oboe, viola, and piano with the Jackson Trio). He is also the featured artist on the Suzuki® Viola School Volumes 8 and 9.

A dedicated teacher, Strauss serves on the faculty of Youngstown State University, University of Indianapolis, Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, and Berkshire High Peaks Festival. He previously taught at Oberlin Conservatory, Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, University of the Arts, and Swarthmore College.

Strauss's mentors include William Preucil, Sr., John Graham, and Karen Tuttle. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of

Music and performs on a viola attributed to Matteo Albani of Bolzano, Italy in 1704.

Austin Huntington has served as principal cellist of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra since 2015 and is currently one of the youngest principal musicians of any major American orchestra. He also performs as a member of the Mainly Mozart All-Star Orchestra in San Diego, California. He is on the faculty of the University of Indianapolis and is the cellist of The Indianapolis Quartet, the university's quartet-in-residence.

Huntington's rise was set in motion with top prizes at the 2011 Stulberg International String Competition and the 2012 Irving M. Klein International String Competition. Since making his orchestral solo debut at age 10, Huntington has appeared as guest soloist with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Marin Symphony, Salomon Chamber Orchestra, Peninsula Symphony, Santa Cruz Symphony, South Bend Symphony, San Jose Chamber Orchestra, and the Northwest Symphony Orchestra.

An accomplished chamber music collaborator, he has performed with violinists Itzhak Perlman, Gil Shaham, Renaud Capuçon, Augustin Hadelich, and Anne Akiko Meyers; violist Cynthia Phelps; cellist Robert DeMaine; pianists Wu Han, Garrick Ohlsson, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet; and bassist Edgar Meyer.

Huntington earned a bachelor's degree at the Colburn School Conservatory of Music, where he was a protégé of Ronald Leonard. He completed a master's degree at Indiana University, where he studied with Eric Kim. His previous teachers include Richard Hirschl, Brinton Smith, Paul Katz, David Finckel, and Richard Aaron. He plays on an Italian cello made in Florence, circa 1740.

THE INDIANAPOLIS QUARTET

ROBERT PATERSON • STRING QUARTETS 1-3

String Quartet No. 1

- 1 I. Fast and Sprightly 3'54"
- 2 II. Logy 5'08"
- 3 III. Sad, Luscious Adagio 6'58"
- 4 IV. Energetic Polka 5'52"

String Quartet No. 2

- 5 I. Colored Fields 6'21"
- 6 II. Rigor Mortis 6'45"
- 7 III. Dolente 8'06"
- 8 IV. Scherzando 4'44"
- 9 V. Collage 4'59"

String Quartet No. 3

- 10 I. Twist and Shout 4'16"
- 11 II. Poet Voice 4'30"
- 12 III. Auction Chant 5'59"
- 13 IV. Effects Pedal 4'17"
- 14 V. Anthem 4'39"

TOTAL TIME : 76'37"

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