

La Quinta del Sordo

for chamber ensemble: 1(picc), 1.2(Ebcl:bcl), 1/1.1.1.1.0/1perc[Crotales, Sizzle Cymbal, Glockenspiel, Suspended Cymbal, Bass Drum, Vibes, Claves, Triangle, Gong, Maracas, 2 Tom-toms, Brake Drum]/pf(=cel)/str(1.1.1.1.1)

- I. With an Edge
- II. Wispy
- III. Expansive
- IV. Obsessively

17 minutes

Brooke Joyce (1998)

Premiered by the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, Montreal, Quebec, November 1998

Winner, Joseph Berns Prize, 1999

Winner, ASCAP Young Composers Competition, 1999

Program Note:

“La Quinta del Sordo” is the name of the house outside Madrid where the Spanish painter Goya lived during the last years of his life. His last great works, often called the black paintings, were painted in this house directly onto the plaster walls. During a trip to Spain in 1997, I visited the Prado, where the black paintings are on permanent display. I was completely mesmerized by the captivating originality and emotional power of the imagery. The music that resulted from my experience of seeing these paintings in person is not meant to convey specific ideas or pictures (à la Musorgsky), but rather, the music is my own response to what I saw. In particular, Goya’s sense of blurred perception and memory suggested to me a kind of music in which allusion and reference exists both internally and externally in a dream-like landscape. Goya was completely deaf during the latter part of his life; I have often speculated on what, if anything, he might have heard inside his head while he painted these bleak masterpieces.