



Lawrence Rose

STRING QUARTETS

Volume Two

Tippett Quartet



Tracklist

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String Quartet No. 2: Op. 18

1	i	allegretto - andante - allegretto - andante	7.31
2	ii	allegro	3.25
3	iii	largo	7.46
4	iv	vivace	5.01
5	v	moderato - adagietto - allegro	8.32

String Quartet No. 3: Op. 22

6	i	allegro	5.30
7	ii	lento - adagietto - grave - adagietto - lento - grave	10.19
8	iii	allegro	2.00
9	iv	adagio - allegro - largo	6.50
10	v	allegro - poco piu mosso - allegro	5.32
11	vi	grave	2.44

Total Running Time 65.10

Programme Note

Lawrence Rose composed his second string quartet during 2013/14, two years of tragic turbulence. It was revised in 2025, mainly by way of extension of the last movement.

Among many disturbing events were the deaths and injuries inflicted during the Boston (USA) Marathon, storm Haiyan wreaking havoc in the Philippines, a horrific factory collapse in Bangladesh causing multiple fatalities, the rise of Islamic terrorism in Africa, sarin gas being used in the Syrian civil war, the death of Nelson Mandela, the spread of the Ebola virus, unrest in Ukraine and Israel, the emergence of ISIS and the ongoing mysterious disappearance of a Malaysian Airlines passenger plane.

And yet life had to go on, always with hope in the ultimate triumph of humanity.

String quartet No. 2: Op. 18

Formally, this quartet follows the Bartókian model of a five-movement arch: mainly moderate; scherzo; slow; scherzo; mainly moderate.

i allegretto – andante – allegretto –

andante The whole is underpinned by two motifs or cells; the one comprising oscillating intervals, the other a three-note pizzicato (mainly rising in pitch) giving the movement an interesting cohesiveness. These cells are evident from the outset in a nine bar introduction which heralds episodes comprising themes with motivic underpinnings and partial restatements of the introduction in new keys. A transformative development leads into an andante featuring new, closely related themes but frequently including oscillations as before. The

Programme Note

return of the allegretto is effectively a recapitulation followed by the andante, truncated, forming a coda of touching gentleness.

ii allegro This ternary form scherzo emphasizes rhythmic drive in the first section with some abrasive scurrying mainly for violins seemingly emulating angry insects. This merges suddenly into a more lyrical central section with a further sudden return to a variant of the opening section, this time with a quieter beginning.

iii largo This dreamlike, lyrical elegy commences with a long outpouring of melody leading back to a more intense statement of the opening bars. A new grief-laden passage heralds an angry outburst. Quiet mourning then leads to a

duet between the violins seemingly flying high on thermals. The opening measures return with the whole ending unresolved.

iv vivace This is a second scherzo again in ternary form but different in character from the first, often featuring pairs of instruments playing in unison. There are however some moments of agitated insect-like sounds. The quieter central section also features some unison playing but a period of agitation interrupts the flow until the return of the first section in varied form. Eventually the insects gather and swarm into a sudden conclusion.

v moderato – adagietto – allegro

This is a set of seven variations on a theme which is sometimes truncated, sometimes elongated, sometimes

Programme Note

fragmented. The theme is stated by the first violin with minimal accompaniment and thereafter each variation takes on a different character. The sixth variation is the longest, treating the first four bars of the theme as a fugue which then evolves into the final variation which serves as a development section and finally a lengthy coda. The sharp-eared listener will recognize elements in this final movement which derive from earlier movement characteristics.

Rose's third string quartet was composed during 2017, yet another year of tragic turbulence including Myanmar's ethnic cleansing campaign waged against the Rohingya, further evidence of global warming especially indicated by the dramatic meltings in the Arctic and Antarctic and by wildfires and hurricanes,

North Korea fast becoming a nuclear power and growing tensions between China and USA. Yet again humanity was being called upon and tested.

String quartet No. 3 Op. 22

This quartet to a certain extent follows a Bartókian six-movement arch pattern but this time basically quick; slow; quick; slow; quick; slow, although the final movement really acts as a coda to the whole work which runs more or less continuously.

i allegro This opens with little in the way of melody, concentrating rather on jagged, rhythmic phrases and angry outbursts couched in extremes of dynamic contrast and often acerbic harmonies until a second episode of calm arises in which the second

Programme Note

violin expounds a theme punctuated by triple-stop pizzicati in the viola and cello alternatively. This becomes more agitated as the first violin takes the theme over. All four instruments then extend this to a return of the mood of the opening but this time all playing pizzicato and in a combined irregular rhythm. The cello then adopts the theme but it is clouded by scurryings elsewhere. There follows a transition to a new group of angular themes culminating in an angry outburst. The main theme returns and merges into a coda both quiet and hesitant ending unambiguously in C major.

ii lento – adagietto – grave – adagietto – lento – grave After the energy and drive of the first movement the second offers, in the main, balm and peace. It is cast in five sections. The first is

a theme and variations, each ending in a restful cadence. The adagietto combines strange rhythms and pizzicati; a somewhat unsettling interlude. The opening theme returns but with new variations. This is interrupted by the briefest recollection from the adagietto followed by extended calm and peace via the opening section restored through to the end.

iii allegro This brief scherzo is set in ternary form, the first part (muted) resembling a manic dance with the middle more relaxed until rhythmic drive (unmuted) returns in conclusion.

iv adagio – allegro – largo To describe this movement as a theme and variations tells only half the story. It is certainly true of the opening adagio in which the

theme on solo cello is followed by four variations. But from the allegro onwards the variations are derived from only the first part of the theme. There are eight of them but they merge in such a way that they appear to be a single process providing even greater contrasts than the first four. The final largo reverts to varying the full theme just twice in closure.

v allegro – poco piu mosso – allegro

The opening section, in multiple time signatures, is a jaunty allegro basically in two parts until the slight increase in tempo introduces an introspective, sad waltz soon enlivened by all instruments playing pizzicato for a while until the initial introspection returns. The opening allegro restarts with the cello playing solo in pizzicato until joined by the other three combining in a development of the first allegro.

vi grave As previously stated, this is really a coda to the whole work which acts like a plea for peace after the many moments of earlier turbulence and angst. “Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, grant us thy peace.”

While the composer is not claiming that these quartets were composed as a direct response to the geopolitical and other events set out above it is highly likely that they had a subconscious or subliminal bearing on the nature of the music which he produced in the years in question. He does acknowledge that the spirits of Beethoven or Bartók respectively were probably hovering over his shoulder at times.

Biographies

Lawrence Rose born in England, 1943.

Notwithstanding violin studies from an early age, Rose pursued a career in law while at the same time maintaining a constant interest in composition, playing, listening and relevant reading. He left the law in 2001 and took up composition apace, mostly after emigrating to Chicago in 2005. He has now completed thirty-six works including symphonies, concertos, a body of chamber music and some choral pieces. Performances of some of his chamber music have taken place in England.

Rose's music has received many plaudits including the following examples: "It's no small compliment to say that in this recording, the Rose Cello Sonata justifies its place alongside the

Shostakovich"; "an attractive and original contribution to the fantasia genre"; "his own individual voice always shines through with total commitment"; "a master of unconventional form"; "a richly wrought and fascinating addition to the piano trio repertoire"; "there's a good deal of scrupulous craftsmanship at work"; "The work is a triumph of traditionalism without a trace of tiredness or routine"; "Both compositions show a keen understanding of writing for strings and the sense of community and dialogue so essential in the best quartet writing"; "What strikes me is his own strong, personal voice and a melodic gift"; "This is fine music indeed, unhurried, even transcendent at times".

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Biographies

The **Tippett Quartet** have performed and broadcast throughout the UK, Europe, Canada and Mexico, and their broad and diverse repertoire highlights the ensemble's unique versatility. They have an impressive catalogue of recordings and have given numerous world and UK premieres.

In 2011 the quartet celebrated the anniversary of the iconic film composer Bernard Herrmann with a series of concerts and radio broad-casts, and can be heard as featured artists on the film *Knives Out* and *Glass Onion*.

In 2023 they celebrated their 25th anniversary with the release of the complete *Korngold Quartets* to great acclaim. It was Chamber CD of the Month in BBC Music Magazine and also included in The Times and The Sunday Times Top 10 Classical Recordings of the Year.

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STRING QUARTETS
Volume Two

Tippett Quartet

John Mills (Violin 1) **Jeremy Isaac** (Violin 2)
Vicci Wardman (Viola) **Bozidar Vukotic** (Cello)

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