

SCORE

BODY MEMORY

(2021)

Seven miniatures for
string quartet

by

Patrick Holcomb



Duration: c. 8'

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BODY MEMORY

Seven miniatures for string quartet
by Patrick Holcomb

- I. Invocation
- II. Sky Song
- III. Earth Song
- IV. The Mind Forgets
- V. Ocean Song
- VI. Sun Song
- VII. The Body Remembers

PROGRAM NOTE

Body Memory (2021) is a series of seven miniatures for string quartet, six of which were written during my stay at the Bowdoin International Music Festival in the summer of 2021. Throughout this time, I was interested in imagining old (or even ancient) music, the people who might have made it, and what could have inspired them to turn to song. I became fascinated by the idea that we contain traces of our ancestors, both recent and distant, in our instincts and our physical forms; in some fantastical sense, I felt that our bodies remember what our minds cannot. The work's title is also a nod to one of my favorite songs by Björk: in her "Body Memory," Björk describes allowing instinct to take over during times of stress. The fast pace of the Bowdoin Festival meant that I had to compose faster than ever before; this piece is the result of my attempt to let my instincts lead me through a piece from start to finish.

Body Memory is a loose theme and variations constructed in an arch form. The first movement, Invocation, presents the melody upon which the entire piece is based. Sky Song features the second violinist overtop an airy and fluttering trio accompaniment. The cello solo in Earth Song is performed entirely pizzicato and is set against a grainy background. In The Mind Forgets, the first movement theme dissolves. A rippling trio accompaniment is the backdrop for the subdued viola solo in Ocean Song. In Sun Song, the other players mimic the first violinist as the music transforms from faint to piercingly bright. The opening theme returns in its entirety in The Body Remembers, but it is obscured (or, at times, eclipsed) by reminiscences of the destinations visited along the way.



Movements I, II, III, V, VI, and VII of *Body Memory* were premiered on August 1, 2021 in Studzinski Recital Hall at Bowdoin College by Dawn Kim and Elise Haukenes, violins; Amelia Krinke, viola; and Nicholas Pascucci, cello.

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PERFORMANCE NOTES


- Pitch bends should last the full duration notated.
- Ricochets should be played ad lib.; the number of notes is not important.
- In the aleatoric sections of movement II, "Sky Song," and movement VI, "Sun Song," there need not be any coordination between the different instruments within each measure; however, the ensemble should always begin each measure together and move on to the next measure at the same time. A breath mark at the end of a measure indicates that the group should cut off together before moving on to the next measure.


- Arrows indicate gradual changes (between non vib. and molto vib., between different bow positions, etc.).
- Roman numerals are string designations.
- All col legno passages should be played with the wood of the bow only.
- White noise effect - Bow directly on the bridge on the indicated strings. There should be absolutely no pitch (mute the strings with the left hand if necessary).


-  - Indicate microtonal accidentals ascending and descending by quarter tones.

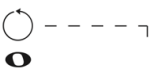
-  - Indicates a crescendo from silence.

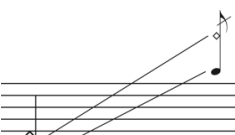
-  - Indicates a diminuendo into silence.


-  - Indicates a gradual acceleration. The exact number of notes in each figure is not important.

-  - Indicates a gradual deceleration. The exact number of notes in each figure is not important.

-  - Indicates a passage that should be played as fast as possible.

-  - Indicates circular bowing. Move the bow in a circular motion back and forth from the fingerboard to the bridge. The result should be airy noise and intermittent pitch.

-  - Indicates a reverse seagull effect. Expand the interval between your fingers as much as possible as you ascend.

-  - Indicates an irregular tremolo (a tremolo with slightly longer notes randomly interspersed, like fast Morse code). A sustained sound is desired; do not include any pauses.

BODY MEMORY

I. Invocation

Patrick Holcomb

$\text{♩} = c. 76$

declamatory; intensely lyrical

non vib. → vib. ord.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

f *mf* *f* *mp*

3 + 2

6

non vib. → vib. ord.

non vib. → vib. ord.

non vib. → vib. ord.

non vib. → vib. ord.

fz *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

fz *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

fz *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

fz *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

(no gliss.)

11

13 non vib. vib. ord.

mp *fz* *mf* *f* *mf*

mp *fz* *mf* *f* *mf*

mp *fz* *mf* *f* *mf*

mp *fz* *mf* *f* *mf*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 11 through 13. It consists of four staves. Measure 11 starts with a *mp* dynamic and a *fz* (forzando) accent. Measure 12 features a *mf* dynamic and a *f* dynamic with a *non vib.* (non-vibrato) marking. Measure 13 includes a *mf* dynamic and a *vib. ord.* (vibrato order) marking. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulations such as slurs and accents. A box around the number 13 indicates a specific measure.

2 + 2 + 3

15 IV

f *mf* *ff* *poco f* *f*

f *mf* *ff* *mf*

f *mf* *ff* *mf*

f *mf* *ff* *poco f* *mf*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 15 through 18. It consists of four staves. Measure 15 starts with a *f* dynamic and a *mf* dynamic. Measure 16 features a *ff* (fortissimo) dynamic and a *poco f* (poco fortissimo) dynamic. Measure 17 includes a *f* dynamic. Measure 18 ends with a *mf* dynamic. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulations such as slurs and accents. A box around the number 15 indicates a specific measure. A Roman numeral IV is placed above the staff in measure 16, and a dashed line indicates a section break.

II. Sky Song

Senza misura

1.5"

2.5"

Violin I
pizz., III
poco f

Violin II
pizz., III
poco f

Viola
II
V
molto sul tasto, flautando (very fast bow speed)

Cello
pizz. 8^{va}
poco f

repeat the boxed material freely
vary the duration ad lib. (add or subtract notes to each grouping as necessary)
breathless (as continuous a sound as possible); sempre molto legato

c. 2-3"

pp *mp*

2.5"

1.5"

arco, molto sul tasto, flautando (very fast bow speed)
repeat the boxed material freely (play mostly box A with occasional interjections of box B)
vary the duration ad lib. (add or subtract notes to each grouping as necessary)
breathless (as continuous a sound as possible); molto legato

A c. 2.5-3.5"

B

pp *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

mp *pp*

arco, molto sul tasto, flautando (very fast bow speed)
repeat the boxed material freely (play mostly box A with occasional interjections of box B)
vary the duration ad lib. (add or subtract notes to each grouping as necessary)
breathless (as continuous a sound as possible); molto legato

A c. 1.5-2.5"

B

pp *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

mp *pp*

5 ♩ = c. 92

solo, arco, poco sul tasto, flautando (moderately fast bow speed), sempre non vib.
very freely; sempre molto legato

pp *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

8 gradually phase out box B

p *mf* *p*

gradually phase out box B

III. Earth Song

♩ = c. 76

col legno tratto (ossia: arco ord., flautando), non vib.

col legno battuto
freely

Violin I

p

Violin II

col legno battuto, ricochet
(preferably lasting approximately the full duration marked)
allow the bow to accelerate naturally

ord. (col legno battuto)
freely

arco, circular bow (medium-slow bow speed; always speed up/slow down with
crescendi/diminuendi)

IV

Viola

pizz.

mf

Cello

solo, pizz.
very freely; always as
resonant as possible

non vib.

molto vib. (fast and wide)

mf *mp* *p* *mf* *pp* *mf* *poco f*

7 ricochet (col legno battuto)
(preferably lasting approximately the full duration marked)
allow the bow to accelerate naturally

4

5 3

mf

pp

mf ()

col legno tratto (ossia: arco ord., flautando), non vib.

3

p

col legno battuto, ricochet
(preferably lasting approximately the full duration marked)
allow the bow to accelerate naturally

pizz.

mf *mp* ()

III

non vib.

mf *p* *mp*

8

ord. (col legno battuto)
freely

3 5 3

mp *p* *poco f* *p* *mf*

col legno battuto
freely

3 5 3

pp *p* *poco f* *p*

arco, circular bow (medium-fast bow speed)

p

molto vib. (fast and wide) non vib. molto vib. (fast and wide)

poco f *mf* *f* *poco f*

10

3 + 2

3

pp

5 3

mf *pp*

mp

mf

IV. The Mind Forgets

♩ = c. 76

Violin I: arco, *f*, *mf*, non vib., (to molto sul tasto), *f*

Violin II: arco ord., *f*, *mf*, non vib., (to molto sul tasto), *f*

Viola: ord., *f*, *mf*, non vib., (to molto sul tasto), *f*

Cello: arco, *f*, *mf*, non vib., (to molto sul tasto), *f*

3 + 2

5 → molto sul tasto, *ppp*, pos. ord., vib. ord., *mf*

→ molto sul tasto, *ppp*, pos. ord., vib. ord., *mf*

→ molto sul tasto, *ppp*, pos. ord., vib. ord., *mf*

→ molto sul tasto, *ppp*, pos. ord., vib. ord., *mf*

*Parenthesized pitches are approximate and are used to show the accelerating rate of the glissandi. Do not linger on or emphasize these pitches.

8

non vib. II
f *mf*

non vib. III
f *mf*

non vib.
f *mf*

non vib.
f *mf*

(to molto sul tasto)

(to molto sul tasto)

(to molto sul tasto)

(to molto sul tasto)

13

11

molto sul tasto
ppp *mf* *f* *mp*

pos. ord., vib. ord. non vib. II
ppp *mf* *f* *mp*

molto sul tasto
ppp *mf* *f* *mp*

pos. ord., vib. ord. non vib. II
ppp *mf* *f* *mp*

molto sul tasto
ppp *mf* *f* *mp*

pos. ord., vib. ord. non vib. II
ppp *mf* *f* *mp*

V. Ocean Song

♩ = c. 69

con sord., sul tasto, non vib.
legato; echoing the viola

Violin I *p* *mp*

Violin II *p* *mp*

Viola *p* *mf*

Cello *mp* *mf*

arco, white noise effect (bow on the bridge)

IV

III II III II III II III II III

pizz.
II

6

pos. ord., II
vary tremolo speed and dynamics ad lib.

4

p *ppp* < *pp* >

molto sul tasto
very gentle

III

ppp

reverse seagull effect
(expand the interval between your fingers as much as possible as you ascend)

II III

p

pizz., sempre non vib.

II

p

7 (varying tremolo speed and dynamics ad lib.)

IV III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV

sola, pos. ord.
anguished; very freely
non vib. → vib. ord.

pp *ppp* *mp* *ppp*

poco rit. **a tempo**

10 (varying tremolo speed and dynamics ad lib.)

III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV III IV

pp *p* *pp* *mp*

VI. Sun Song

Senza misura

5"

3"

arco, sul tasto, alla punta
irregular tremolo

pizz.

trem. ord.
non arm.

Violin I

f *pp*

Violin II

behind the bridge

ord., sul tasto

f *pp*

Viola

senza sord.
behind the bridge

ord., sul tasto

f *pp*

Cello

ord., sul tasto,
ricochet

ord.

f *pp*

8"

5"

solo
repeat the boxed material freely and in any order (but begin with box A and return to frequently)
activity should be busy and almost constant; keep the space between consecutive events as brief as possible

A

trem. ord.
non arm.
c. 1-2"

behind the bridge

ricochet
c. 0.5"

behind the bridge

pizz.
c. 0.5"

pos. ord.

p *mp* *p*

p

p

p

mp

irregular tremolo

trem. ord.
pos. ord.

irregular tremolo

mp

irregular tremolo

trem. ord.
pos. ord.

irregular tremolo

trem. ord.
pos. ord.

mp

8" 5"

repeat the boxed material as before

pos. ord., ricochet δ^{va} -

5

A

c. 0.5" c. 1-2" c. 0.5"

mp *mf* *mp*

mf *mf*

sul pont. ,

behind the bridge

f *mf*

δ^{va} (•)

ord., pos. ord. vary dynamics between *p* and *mp* ad lib.

p *mp* *mf*

sul pont. ,

behind the bridge

f *mf*

δ^{va} (•)

ord., pos. ord. vary dynamics between *p* and *mp* ad lib.

p *mp* *mf*

sul pont. ,

pizz. (percussive; the pitch is not important)

δ^{va} (•)

arco, pos. ord. vary dynamics between *p* and *mp* ad lib.

f *p* *mp* *mf*

sul pont. ,

VII. The Body Remembers

♩ = c. 76

con sord., molto sul tasto, flautando, sempre non vib.
distant, ghostly

Violin I: *pp* (measures 1-2), *p* (measures 3-4). Includes a fermata in measure 3 and a triplet in measure 4.

Violin II: *mf* (measures 3-4). Includes a fermata in measure 3 and a white noise effect in measure 4.

Viola: *ppp* (measures 1-2), *pp* (measures 3-4). Includes a fermata in measure 3 and a white noise effect in measure 4.

Cello: *p* (measures 1-2), *pp* (measures 3-4). Includes a fermata in measure 3 and a white noise effect in measure 4. Includes a triplet in measure 4.

Annotations: "con sord., white noise effect (mute the strings with the left hand rather than playing on the bridge)" for Violin II; "con sord., circular bow (medium-slow bow speed; always speed up/slow down with crescendi/diminuendi)" for Viola; "arco, molto sul tasto, flautando molto legato" for Cello.

Violin I: *pp* (measures 5-6), *pp* (measures 7-8). Includes a fermata in measure 5 and a white noise effect in measure 6.

Violin II: *ppp* (measures 5-6), *pp* (measures 7-8). Includes a fermata in measure 5 and a white noise effect in measure 6.

Viola: *pp* (measures 5-6), *p* (measures 7-8), *pp* (measures 7-8), *p* (measures 7-8). Includes a fermata in measure 5 and a white noise effect in measure 6.

Cello: *p* (measures 5-6), *pp* (measures 7-8). Includes a fermata in measure 5 and a white noise effect in measure 6.

Annotations: "circular bow (medium-fast bow speed; always speed up/slow down with crescendi/diminuendi)" for Violin II; "ord., molto sul tasto, flautando, sempre non vib. distant, ghostly" for Viola; "pizz. (sempre non vib.)" for Cello; "arco, white noise effect (mute the strings with the left hand rather than bowing on the bridge)" for Cello.

Measure 5 contains a "3 + 2" annotation above the staff.

11

13

circular bow (medium-fast bow speed; always speed up/slow down with crescendi/diminuendi)

ord., molto sul tasto, flautando
molto legato

ppp — p

pp — p

pizz. p — pp

ord., molto sul tasto, flautando, sempre non vib.
distant, ghostly

pp — p — pp

arco, circular bow (medium-fast bow speed)

2 + 2 + 3

15

ord.
I II I II I II I II I II I II I II I II I

ppp — p

ppp — p

pp — p

pp — p

arco, irregular tremolo

pizz. p — pp

p — ppp