

Jacob Bancks

# *STRING THEORY*

for string quartet, bass, and harp



*JB Music Press*

2015

## About the Composer



Praised as “invitingly lyrical, colorfully orchestrated” (*The New York Times*) and “highly caffeinated” (*The Boston Globe*), the music of composer Jacob Bancks (b. 1982, Fairmont, Minnesota) has distinguished him as an emerging voice in American music. His many performances and commissions include works for the American Modern Ensemble, the United States Marine Band, Tanglewood, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, eighth blackbird, Pacifica Quartet, Soli Deo Gloria, and the Quad City Symphony. Recordings of his music are available from American Modern Recordings, and have been broadcast on BBC 3 Radio and American Public Media’s *Performance Today*. He has received prizes and fellowships from from the

American Academy of Arts and Letters, BMI, and the U.S. Department of Education. For more information, visit <http://jbancks.com>.

DURATION: 7' 30"

for The American Modern Ensemble, with support from Augustana College

# STRING THEORY

Jacob Bancks (2015)

Kinetic, vigorous ♩ = 92 (♩ = ♩ sempre)

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Harp

bring out

background

background sul A

*mf*

*mp*

*p*

*f*

*mp espr.*

1 2 3



Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Hp.

background

bring out

*f*

*p*

*fp*

*f*

*p*

*mf*

*mp*

*fp*

*mp*

*f*

fast gliss.

4 5 6

D<sup>b</sup> C<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> / E<sup>b</sup> F<sup>b</sup> G<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup>  
6

(2+2+3)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Hp.

bring out

*fp*

*f*

*mp*

*f*

*mp*

*mf*

*sfz*

*f*

*sfz*

*mf*

*f*

*sfz*

*mf*

*mp*

*secco*

*mp*

7 8 9

(3+3+3)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Hp.

11

*f*

*ff*

*mf*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*mf*

*fp*

*f*

*ff*

*p*

*mf*

*mf*

*ff*

*mp*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*mf*

*ff*

*mf*

*ff*

*mf*

*mp*

*sul tasto*

*sul pont. tr. (b.)*

*ord.*

*sul G*

10 11 12

Vln. 1: *tr*, *fp*, *(p)*, *mf*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*  
 Vln. 2: *ord.*, *fp*, *(p)*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*  
 Vla.: *tr*, *fp*, *(p)*, *mf*, *sul G*, *fp*, *(p)*  
 Vc.: *mp*, *p*  
 D.B.: *mf*, *> mp*  
 Hp.: *f*

13

14

15

Vln. 1: *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *sul A*, *fp*  
 Vln. 2: *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *fp*, *mf*  
 Vla.: *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *bring out*, *mf espr.*  
 Vc.: *mf*, *f*, *mp*  
 D.B.: *arco*, *mp*, *mf*, *mp*  
 Hp.: *mf*

16

17

18

Vln. 1: *mf* (measures 19-20), *p* *pp* (measure 20), *p* (measure 21)  
 Vln. 2: *p* (measure 19), *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* (measure 20), *mp* *p* (measure 20), *mp* *bring out* *f* (measure 21)  
 Vla.: *f* (measure 19), *p* (measure 20), *background* *mp* *p* (measure 20), *bring out* *f* (measure 21)  
 Vc.: *p* (measure 19), *f* (measure 20), *ff* *mf* (measure 21)  
 D.B.: *pizz.* *f* (measure 19), *arco* (measure 20), *pizz.* *f* (measure 21)  
 Hp.: *mp* (measure 21)

Vln. 1: *bring out* *f* (measure 22), *sfz* (measure 24)  
 Vln. 2: *f* (measure 22), *sfz* (measure 24)  
 Vla.: *mf* (measure 22), *f* (measure 23), *sfz* (measure 24)  
 Vc.: *f* (measure 22), *ff* (measure 23), *sfz* (measure 24)  
 D.B.: *arco* *(f)* (measure 22), *ff* (measure 23), *pizz.* *f* (measure 24)  
 Hp.: *sfz* (measure 24)

from far away

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Hp.

25 26 27

bring out, crystal clear

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Hp.

28 29 30

32

Vln. 1 *f* *mf espr.* *mp* *mf*

Vln. 2 *mf* *pizz. f* *ff*

Vla. *mf* *pizz. f* *ff*

Vc. *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf*

D.B. *mp* *arco pizz. f*

Hp. (loco) *mp* *f*

31

32

33

Vln. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

Vln. 2 *mf* *sfz* *mf* *ff* *arco* *pizz. f* *mf*

Vla. *mf* *sfz* *mf* *ff* *pizz. f* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *fp* *f* *mf espr.*

D.B. *arco fp* *pizz. mf*

Hp.

34

35

36



38

Vln. 1 *mf* *mp* *p* sul pont. *tr* *pp* *n* *p*

Vln. 2 *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

D.B. *mp*

Hp. *f* *ffz* *f* *ff*

bring out

37 38 39

42

Vln. 1 *mp* *pp* *mp* *mf* *ff* *fp* *ord.*

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc. *bring out* *mp* *f molto espr.*

D.B.

Hp. *f* *ff* *mf* *f* *sfz*

40 41 42

tr. *fp* *f* *mp* *pp*

Vln. 1 *fp* *f* *mp* *pp*

Vln. 2 *p* *f* *mp* *ff* *f*

Vla. *p* *f* *mp* *ff* *f*

Vc. *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

D.B. *mf* *f* *mp*

Hp. *f* *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

43 44 45

Vln. 1 *mp* *mf* *f*

Vln. 2 *mp* *mf* *f*

Vla. *mp* *mf* *f*

Vc. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *f*

D.B. *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

Hp. *ff* *f* *ff* *ff*

46 47 48

Vln. 1 *ff* *fp* *mf* *fp* *mf* *p* *mp*  
 Vln. 2 *ff* *fp* *mf* *fp* *mf* *fp* *fp* *mp*  
 Vla. *ff* *fp* *mf* *fp* *mf* (*mf*)  
 Vc. *p* *mp* *mf*  
 D.B. *mp sub.* *mf* *f*  
 Hp.

49

50

51

Vln. 1 *mf* *f* *ff* *fff* full force any random, very high pitches *ff* *tr.*  
 Vln. 2 *mf* *f* *ff* *fff* full force any random, very high pitches *pizz.* *sfz*  
 Vla. *f* *ff* *fff* full force any random, very high pitches *ff* *tr.*  
 Vc. *f* *ff* *fff* full force  
 D.B. *ff* *pp* *molto*  
 Hp. *ff* fast gliss. *fast gliss. ad lib.* *secco* *Stick slide \** *sfz* *sfz*

D: C# B: / E: F# G: A:

52

53

54

\* pluck string firmly and slide a triangle beater or tuning key to bend pitch upward

Vln. 1 *p* *ff* *f* *ff* *p* *ff*  
 Vln. 2 *arco* *ff* *f* *ff* *p* *ff*  
 Vla. *p* *sfz* *p* *ff*  
 Vc. *(arco)* *ff* *f* *ff*  
 D.B. *(arco)* *ff* *f* *ff* *p*  
 Hp. "Xylophonic" *ff* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *secco* *secco* *secco*

55

56

57

(dampen strings with one hand PDLT while plucking in center of string)

Vln. 1 *(ff)*  
 Vln. 2  
 Vla.  
 Vc. *pizz.* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*  
 D.B. *pizz.* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*  
 Hp. "Boom" *sfz* *sfz*

58

59

60

strike lowest strings once and l.v.

Musical score for measures 61-63. The score includes parts for Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), and Harp (Hp.).

- Measures 61-62:** Vln. 1 plays a melodic line with dynamics *f*, *ff*, and *f*. Vln. 2 and Vla. play sustained notes with dynamics *f* and *p*. D.B. plays a triplet of eighth notes with dynamics *f* and *ff*. Hp. plays chords with dynamics *mf*, *f*, *sfz*, and *ffz*. A "Fingernails" instruction is present above the Hp. part.
- Measure 63:** Vln. 1 has dynamics *p* and *ff*. Vln. 2 and Vla. have dynamics *p* and *ff*. Hp. has dynamics *f*, *sfz*, and *ffz*.

Musical score for measures 64-66. The score includes parts for Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), and Harp (Hp.).

- Measures 64-65:** Vln. 1 and Vln. 2 play melodic lines with dynamics *mf*, *ff*, *f*, and *fff*. Vc. and D.B. play sustained notes with dynamics *f*, *sfz*, and *f*. Hp. is silent.
- Measure 66:** Vln. 1 has dynamics *f* and *fff*. Vln. 2 has dynamics *f* and *fff*. Vla. plays a pizzicato note with dynamics *sfz*. Vc. and D.B. have dynamics *sfz* and *fffz*. Hp. plays a triplet of eighth notes with dynamics *ff* and *f*, labeled "Xylo."

tr. (⊕)

Vln. 1 *pp* — *mp* — *fff*

Vln. 2 pizz. *sfz* *mf* *f* *sfz*

Vla. arco tr. (⊕) *pp* — *mp* — *fff*

Vc.

D.B. semitone trill while slowly sliding upward *ff* — *pp*

Hp. *ff* Stick slides *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

67 68 69

Vln. 1 as before *fff* — *f* **72** *fff* *pp*

Vln. 2 as before arco *fff* — *f* *fff* *pp*

Vla. as before *fff* — *f* *fff* *pp*

Vc. as before *fff* — *f* *fff* *pp*

D.B. *fff* Solo, funky\* pizz. *f* *sfz*

Hp.

70 71 72

\* mm. 72-91, bass may play as written or improvise solo in a similar style, using primarily the E whole-half diminished scale (E, F $\sharp$ , G, A, B $\flat$ , C, C $\sharp$ , D).

Vln. 1 *mp* *f* *fff*  
 Vln. 2 *mp* *f* *fff*  
 Vla. *mp* *f* *fff* *fp* *f*  
 Vc. *mp* *f* *fff* *fp* *f*  
 D.B. *mf* *f* *mf* *sfz* *f*  
 Hp. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

semitone trill sliding upward  
*tr*

73

74

75

Vln. 1 *f* *p* *ff* *mp* *ff*  
 Vln. 2 *f* *f* *mf* *ff*  
 Vla. *fp* *pp* *f* *p* *ff* *mp* *ff*  
 Vc. *fp* *pp* *f* *p* *ff* *mp* *ff*  
 D.B. *ff* *f* *sfz* *f* *sfz* *mf* *f* *mf*  
 Hp. *sfz* *slow slide*

76

77

78

Vln. 1: *mf* to *ff*  
 Vln. 2: *mf* to *ff*  
 Vla.: *pizz.*, *sfz*, *f*, *sfz*, *f*, *sfz*  
 Vc.: *mf*, *f*  
 D.B.: *f*, *mf*, *mp*, *sfz*  
 Hp.: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*

79 80 81

Vln. 1: *f*, *mf*, *ff*  
 Vln. 2: *f*, *mf*, *ff*  
 Vla.:  
 Vc.: *sfz*, *sfz*  
 D.B.: *sfz*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*  
 Hp.:

82 83 84



Vln. 1 *fp* *mp* *ff* *mp* *f*  
*sub.*

Vln. 2 *arco* *fp* *mp* *ff*

Vla. *fp* *mp* *ff*

Vc.

D.B. *f* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *mf* *f* *mf*

Hp. *Fingernails* *mp* *f* *sfz*

85 86 87

Vln. 1 *mp* *ff* *mp* *mf* *ff*  
*sub.* *sub.*

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc. *pizz.* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

D.B. *sfz* *mf* *sfz* *mf* *f* *mf*

Hp. *sfz*

88 89 90

5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4

92 Same tempo (♩ = 92)

Vln. 1 *pp* sotto voce

Vln. 2

Vla. bring out - dark, mysterious *pp* *mp* *mf* poco espr.

Vc. *sfz* *smfz* *sfz* *mp* *p*

D.B. arco *n*

Hp. *mf* *p*

91 92 93

Vln. 1 *mp* *pp* (sotto voce) *ppp* sotto voce

Vln. 2 (sotto voce) *n* *p* *n* *ppp* sotto voce

Vla. *p* *mf* espr. *pp*

Vc. (sotto voce) *n* *p* *n*

D.B. *p* *n*

Hp. Fingertips *p* sotto voce *mp* *pp* l.v.

94 95 96

Vln. 1 *pp*  
 Vln. 2 *f*  
 Vla. (bring out) *mp* *f* *molto espr.* *p* *mf*  
 Vc. *mp* *p*  
 D.B. (arco) *mp* *p*  
 Hp. "Xylo." *p*

97 98 99

Vln. 1 *pp* *mp* *ppp*  
 Vln. 2 *pp* *mp* *ppp*  
 Vla. *p* *p poco espr.*  
 Vc. *pp* *mp* *ppp*  
 D.B. *pp* *mp* *ppp*  
 Hp. Stick slides *mp* *mp*

100 101 102

♩ = 63, dark, lonely

105

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Hp.

103 104 105 106

*poco accel.*  
(2+2+3)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Hp.

107 108 109 110

111  $\text{♩} = 69$

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

Vc.

D.B.

Hp. PDLT *mp* *mf* *mp* *mp*

111 112 113 114



Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. *(mf)* *f* *mf*

Vc.

D.B.

Hp. *ord.* *f* *mf* *f* *(f)* *mp*

115 116 117

*poco accel.*  
(2+2+3)

Vln. 1 *pp* *sotto voce*

Vln. 2

Vla. *f* *mf* *f* *mp*

Vc.

D.B.

Hp. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *mp* *mf* *p*

119  $\text{♩} = 76$  (*sotto voce*)

PDLT

118 119 120

Vln. 1 *pp* *p* *poco* *poco* *mp dolce*

Vln. 2

Vla. *mf*

Vc.

D.B.

Hp. *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *mp*

ord. *8va* *5* PDLT

121 122 123

*poco accel.*

Musical score for measures 124-126. The score includes parts for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., D.B., and Hp. The key signature is D major (one sharp). The time signature is 4/4. Measure 124 starts with a *pp* dynamic for Vln. 1 and *mp* for Vla. Measure 125 features a *f* dynamic for Vla. and a *p* dynamic for Hp. Measure 126 includes a *fp* dynamic for Vln. 1 and 2, and a *mf* dynamic for Hp. A *light gliss. ad lib.* is indicated for the Hp. in measure 125. A chord sequence *D♯ C♯ B♭ / E♭ F♯ G♯ A♯* is written above the Hp. staff in measure 125. A *fast gliss.* is indicated for the Hp. in measure 126. A *(2+2+3)* fingering is shown for Vln. 1 in measure 126. A double bar line with repeat dots is at the end of the system.

Musical score for measures 127-128. The score includes parts for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., D.B., and Hp. The key signature is D major (one sharp). The time signature is 4/4. Measure 127 starts with a *mf* dynamic for Vln. 1 and 2, and a *p* dynamic for Vla. Measure 128 features a *fp* dynamic for Vln. 1 and 2, and a *f* dynamic for Hp. A *Swe* (Sustained Woodblock) effect is indicated for the Hp. in measure 128. A tempo marking *♩ = 84* is shown at the beginning of measure 127. A double bar line with repeat dots is at the end of the system.

Vln. 1 *pizz.* *mf* *arco* *ff*  
 Vln. 2 *pizz.* *mp* *arco* *ff*  
 Vla. *p* *mf* *sul D* *fp* *ff*  
 Vc.  
 D.B.  
 Hp. *mp sub.* *f*

129 130



Vln. 1 *p sub.*  
 Vln. 2 *p sub.* *mp*  
 Vla. *f* *sfz* *mp*  
 Vc.  
 D.B.  
 Hp. *mp sub.* *mf*

131 132



*poco accel.*  
(2+2+3)

Vln. 1 *p* *mp* *mf*

Vln. 2 *p* *mf*

Vla. *f* *sfz* *fp* *ff*

Vc.

D.B.

Hp. *f* *ff* *mf* *ff* *gliss. ad lib.*

D# C# B# / Eb F# G# A#

133

134

135  $\text{♩} = 92$  (Tempo I)

Vln. 1 *sfz* *mp dolce* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf dolce*

Vln. 2 *sfz* *mp dolce* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf dolce*

Vla. *sfz* *mp dolce* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf dolce*

Vc.

D.B. *pizz.* *f* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Hp.

135

136

137

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vc.  
D.B.  
Hp.

*fp* (*p*) *mp* *mf* *fp* *mf* *p*

*f* *mp* *f*

138 139 140 141

*poco accel.* 143  $\text{♩} = 100$

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vc.  
D.B.  
Hp.

*mp dolce fp* *f mp* *fp mf fp*

*mp dolce fp* *f mp* *fp mf fp*

*mp dolce fp* *f mp* *fp mf fp*

*f* *bring out* *ff* *fff*

*arco fp* *pizz. mf* *f*

142 143 144

Musical score for measures 145-147. The score includes parts for Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, and Harp. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Dynamics include *f*, *mp dolce*, *f*, *p*, and *mf*. The Harp part is silent throughout these measures.

145

146

147

Musical score for measures 148-150. The score includes parts for Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, and Harp. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Dynamics include *mp*, *f*, *fp*, *f*, *mp sub.*, *tr*, and *arco*. An *accel.* marking is present above the first measure of measure 149. A *Sua* marking is present above the first measure of measure 150. The Harp part is silent throughout these measures.

148

149

150

151  $\text{♩} = 116$  *accel. sempre* (S<sup>ma</sup>)

Vln. 1 *ff mp ff sub.*

Vln. 2 *ff mp mf ff sub.*

Vla. *ff mp mf ff sub.*

Vc. *ff mp mf ff sub.*

D.B. *ff* pizz. port.

Hp.

151

152

(*accel.*)

Vln. 1 *mf f mf*

Vln. 2 *sfz sfz sfz sfz mf f mf*

Vla. *sfz sfz sfz sfz mf f mf*

Vc. *tr mf f mf*

D.B. *f ff f sfz*

Hp. *ff*

S<sup>ma</sup>

D<sup>♯</sup> C B<sup>♭</sup> / E<sup>♯</sup> F<sup>♯</sup> G<sup>♯</sup> A<sup>♯</sup>

153

154

Vln. 1  
 Vln. 2  
 Vla.  
 Vc.  
 D.B.  
 Hp.

*ff* *sfz* *sfz* *p sub.*

*ff* *sfz* *sfz* *p sub.*

*ff* *sfz* *sfz* *p sub.*

*ff* *sfz* *sfz* *p sub.*

*sfz* *sfz* *p sub.*

*sfz* *sfz* *p*

155 156



(accel.)

Vln. 1  
 Vln. 2  
 Vla.  
 Vc.  
 D.B.  
 Hp.

*mf* *sfz* *f*

*mf* *sfz* *f*

*mf* *sfz* *f*

*mf* *sfz* *f*

*mf* *sfz* *f*

*mf* *f* *ff*

157 158

*fast gliss.*

D# C# B# / E# F# G# A#

159 ♩ = 168 or faster

The score consists of six staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., D.B., and Hp. Each staff contains rhythmic patterns with accents. The Hp. staff includes a 15<sup>ma</sup> (fifteenth measure) marking with a dashed line and a circled cross symbol.

Instrument	Measure 159	Measure 160	Measure 161	Measure 162
Vln. 1	<i>fff</i>	<i>pp possible</i>	<i>fff full force</i>	<i>fff full force</i>
Vln. 2	<i>fff</i>	<i>pp possible</i>	<i>fff full force</i>	<i>fff full force</i>
Vla.	<i>fff</i>	<i>pp possible</i>	<i>fff full force</i>	<i>fff full force</i>
Vc.	<i>fff</i>	<i>pp possible</i>	<i>fff full force</i>	<i>fff full force</i>
D.B.	<i>fff</i>	<i>pp possible</i>	<i>fff full force</i>	<i>fff full force</i>
Hp.	<i>fff</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>fff full force</i>	<i>fff full force</i>

159                      160                      161                      162