

# **dopamine**

**a string quartet**

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**(2007)**

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# dopamine

## Program notes

*Dopamine* was written for the JACK Quartet out of friendship and mutual enthusiasm for contemporary music. The title refers to a hormone and neurotransmitter which occurs in humans and some mammals. Dopamine is typically associated with the pleasure system; people with higher dopamine levels tend to seek out more pleasurable activities and vice versa. Dopamine is also associated with creativity and the generation of new ideas. I used dopamine as a metaphor for this string quartet because it was written within a short span of a few days in an unprecedented creative fervor. My motivation came from both the creative experience and from the music itself, which gave me great pleasure to listen to. Perhaps my own level of dopamine was very high as I wrote this music. I suppose I will never know.

## Performance instructions

Accidentals carry through the bar.

Amplification is optional. Without amplification the piece will have a delicate character. With some sound reinforcement, the music will be heard better and magnify the rhythmic attacks. Increases in volume will augment the latent aggressive character of the music. There is no absolute desired level of amplification, so feel free to make it as loud or soft as desired. Reverb may be used as desired.

All of the instruments have retuned strings, observe the following:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Violin 1:   | <b>E</b> tuned up to <b>F 1/6 tone flat</b> ('cello's G string, 7 <sup>th</sup> harmonic)<br><b>A</b> tuned down to <b>Ab about 1/6 tone sharp</b><br><b>D</b> tuned up to an <b>Eb</b><br><b>G</b> -           |
| Violin 2:   | <b>E</b> tuned to 'cello 5 <sup>th</sup> harmonic (slightly flat)<br><b>A</b> -<br><b>D</b> tuned down to <b>C#</b><br><b>G</b> tuned down to <b>F 1/4 tone sharp</b> ('cello low C, 11 <sup>th</sup> harmonic) |
| Viola       | <b>A</b> tuned down to <b>F# about 1/6 tone sharp</b><br><b>D</b> -<br><b>G</b> tuned down to <b>E</b><br><b>C</b> tuned down to <b>B</b> (natural)   |
| Violoncello | <b>A</b> tuned up to <b>Bb 1/6 tone flat</b> (tune 2 <sup>nd</sup> harmonic to low C, 7 <sup>th</sup> harmonic)<br><b>D</b> tuned down to <b>C</b><br><b>G</b> -<br><b>C</b> -                                  |

**Duration: 12'**

# dopamine

Violin I *scordatura*

Violin II *scordatura*

Viola *scordatura*

Violoncello *scordatura* II *p*

4

8

12

16 *poco a poco non vibrato* III IV *sim.*

Violin: *p*

Viola: *ppp*

Cello/Bass: *p*

20 *cantabile ed espr. port. ad libitum*

Violin: *mp*, *mf*

Viola: *ppp*

Cello/Bass: *f*, *p*

24 (IV) (tune with 'cello harmonic)

Violin: *mf*

Viola: *p*

Cello/Bass: *f*, *p*

29

Violin: *p*

Viola: *p*

Cello/Bass: *p*, *f*

*poco a poco cresc.*

33 (IV) III

mf II *sim.* III II *sim.* III II *sim.* p

IV → III

37 IV *cantabile ed espr. port. ad libitum*

mf p mf p

*as before* *as before*

II p f mf f

41 IV

p p p mf

*as before*

p II f

45

mf fz p f

*cantabile ed espr. port. ad libitum*

III *sim.* IV





87

mf

92

f

mp

mf

99

f

106

f

p



112

112

I II I

III

IV III II

I II I II

III

*p*

III

IV

*f*

III

IV

*p*

118

118

I II I II

*f*

III

IV

*p*

IV

*f*

III

IV

*f*

IV

III

IV

IV

III *sim.*

III

125

125

I

*f*

IV

*f*

III

IV

II

III

IV

*mp*

III

*mp*

*f*

136

136

III

*f*

IV

*mf*

II

*f*

*mf*

IV → *cant. ed espr. port. ad lib.*

*mf*

II → *cant. ed espr. port. ad lib.*

*mf*

*mf*

143

III  
IV

*p*

*mf*

146

II  
III

*f* *mp*

*fz*

III

*f* *mp*

III  
IV

*f*

150

*mp*

*mf*

*f*

*p* *f* *p*

154

*mp*

*mp*

*f*

IV

*sim.*

*mp*

III

(I)

II

III

(IV)

*sim.*