

Luke Cissell (b. 1980):
Streichquintett

Composing for strings is, for me, a supreme joy. I find something especially attractive in the viola quintet formation (two violins, two violas, violoncello)—a strange alchemy at work in its peculiar density of sound and the unlikely ability to retain the intimate qualities associated with string quartet literature, even as the addition of the extra viola allows for an almost symphonic richness of colour. An organic symmetry emerged as I worked on this piece, with the two outer movements anchoring a span of shorter movements. The ebullient energy of the opening movement undergoes a series of transformations and sublimations and resurfaces in the finale: a treatment (of sorts) of a traditional bluegrass form, the breakdown.

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