String Quartet #4: QI

3 movements

by
Evan Ziporyn

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String Quartet #4 by Evan Ziporyn
Total length @22’
- Lucid Flight (6’)
- Garden (8’45”)
- Transport (7’)

Program notes by the composer:

The string quartet always makes me think in elemental terms - perhaps the combination of the repertoire, the instruments themselves, and the intense intimacy with which groups like Brooklyn Rider work together. So while many of my pieces have programmatic titles and/or narrative content, my string quartets tend to focus on forces of nature: water (Eel Bone), breath (Breathing Space), and now qi, the traditional Chinese character for life-force, a concept as ubiquitous and difficult to precisely define as analogous principles in all cultures and religions. Gaining awareness of and control over qi is a central, lifelong pursuit in many meditative and martial practices, including tai chi and qi gong. In my own experience, it seems that even in everyday life there are certain heightened states in which all of us become aware of qi flow - dreams of flying, repose with nature, and those rare moments in which intense engagement with something or someone allows us to briefly 'break on through to the other side.' The three movements of Qi - Lucid Flight, Natural Light, and Transport - are inspired by these moments.

Qi was commissioned by Mike Kong and Christine Bulawa and is dedicated to the members of Brooklyn Rider.