

JOEL M. BALDWIN

LIFE PILES UP

for string quartet

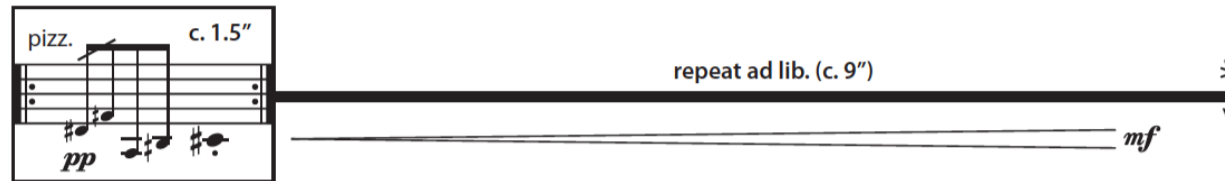
2021

Life Piles Up was first performed and recorded by Villiers Quartet over two sessions at the Faculty of Music, University of Oxford on 30 January 2018 and 29 May 2021

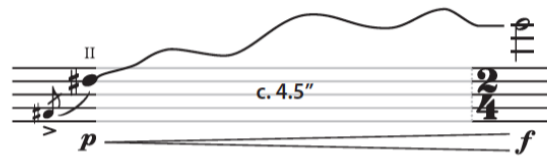
Duration: c. 4 minutes

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Boxed Notation: All boxed notation is 'senza tempo'. The material in the box should be performed freely, repeating the material roughly at indicated intervals for the duration of the thick black line until the arrow cue.



The above example ends at the staccato accent in the part below. If the cue appears in a non-adjacent part (not directly above or below in the score), the part name will be written in brackets for clarification.



Time/Pitch-Space Glissandi: The lighter staff represents a time-spaced section (the example above should last roughly 4.5 seconds from the start of D-sharp to the start of the high E) in which the pitch should slide roughly up or down according to the shape of the pattern (usually 'rising mounds') given. Some glissandi are more angular, but most should be performed as smoothly as possible.



Exaggerated Vibrato: The above symbol does not indicate a variation in pitch equal to its peaks and troughs on the staff, but simply means a wide, exaggerated vibrato for the duration of the note it follows.

The validity of accidentals lasts for one bar and is limited to those notes that lie on the same line or space respectively, but natural signs and extra accidentals have been included in places for clarity.

All trills are diatonic unless otherwise indicated.

PROGRAMME NOTE

Life Piles Up takes its title from the diary entry of Virginia Woolf below.

The piece is an attempt to take the shape of a short text and its textures ('rising mound[s]', 'reflections', etc.) and translate it into a musical text.

Wednesday, March 19th

Life piles up so fast that I have no time to write out the equally fast rising mound of reflections, which I always mark down as they rise to be inserted here. I meant to write about the Barnetts and the peculiar repulsiveness of those who dabble their fingers self approvingly in the stuff of others' souls. The Barnetts were at any rate plunged to the elbow; red handed if ever philanthropists were, which makes them good examples; and then, unquestioning and unspeculative as they were, they give themselves away almost to the undoing of my critical faculty. Is it chiefly intellectual snobbery that makes me dislike them? Is it snobbery to feel outraged when she says "Then I came close to the Great Gates"—or reflects that God = good, devil = evil. Has this coarseness of grain any necessary connection with labour for one's kind? And then the smug vigour of

10

A WRITER'S DIARY

their self-satisfaction! Never a question as to the right of what they do—always a kind of insensate forging ahead until, naturally, their undertakings are all of colossal size and portentous prosperity. Moreover, could any woman of humour or insight quote such paeans to her own genius? Perhaps the root of it all lies in the adulation of the uneducated, and the easy mastery of the will over the poor. And more and more I come to loathe any dominion of one over another; any leadership, any imposition of the will. Finally, my literary taste is outraged by the smooth way in which the tale is made to unfold into fullblown success, like some profuse peony. But I only scratch the surface of what I feel about these two stout volumes.*

Life Piles Up

Joel M. Baldwin

$\text{♩} = 40$ with restrained aggression

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

pp

mf

p

f

3

c. 4.5"

II

pizz. c. 1.5"

repeat ad lib. (c. 9")

mf

ppp

p

f

c. 3"

c. 4.5"

mf

p

f

p

4

p

arco

mp

III

c. 3.5"

repeat ad lib. (c. 13")

c. 9"

5

c. 3"

repeat ad lib. (c. 12")

p

f

p

III

3

c. 4.5"

p

f

pp

mp

8

III

mf

c. 9"

ff

3

3

5

fp

mf

p

mf

ff

III

c. 3.5"

repeat ad lib. (c. 13")

p

f

c. 2"

repeat ad lib. (c. 7")

mf

mp

fp

mf

12

gradually becoming more agitated

pizz. (glissando)

II

c. 9"

ff

mp

f

mf

ff

mp

f

mp

f

c. 9"

col legno batt., jeté (controlled two-note bounce)

(vln. I)

f

ord.

sul pont.

c. 7"

ord.

sul pont.

c. 7"

ricochet (bounce bow freely)

(vln. I)

f

3

Violin I: *mf* *p* *f* *mp* *ppp* *c. 7.5"*

Violin II: *ff* *repeat ad lib. (c. 8"), dim. al niente*

Viola: *ff* *ord.* *c. 3.5"* *mf* *mp* *pp*

Violoncello/Double Bass: *f* *repeat ad lib. (c. 7")* *mp* *pp* *fp* (vln. I)

♩ = 72 with more control

Violin I: *fp* *f* *mp* *pp* *fp* *f* *p* *mf*

Violin II: *fp* *f* *mp* *pp* *fp* *f* *p* *mf*

Viola: *fp* *f* *mp* *pp* *fp* *f* *p* *mf* *p*

Violoncello/Double Bass: *f* *mp* *pp* *fp* *f* *p* *mf* *p* *fp*

Violin I: *fp* *f* *mp* *pp* *fp* *f* *p* *fp* *f* *mp*

Violin II: *fp* *f* *pp* *fp* *f* *pp* *fp* *f* *mp*

Viola: *ord.* *pp* *f* *arco* *fp* *f* *p* *mf* *p* *fp* *f* *mp*

Violoncello/Double Bass: *f* *pp* *fp* *f* *fp* *f* *fp* *f* *fp*

33

held back
sul tasto

fp — *f* *fp* — *ff* *pp subito* *p*

(tr) *fp* — *f* *fp* — *ff* *pp subito* *p*

pizz. *arco* *fp* — *f* *fp* — *mf* *fp* — *ff* *pp subito* *p*

f *fp* — *ff* *p* *mp*

40

sweetly, with a sense of relief
ord.

mf

ord. *p sempre*

ord. *mf*

f *mf*

45

molto sul pont. ord.

p *mf* *dim. al niente*

fp *f* *f*

50

mf sempre

mf sempre

espressivo con molto vibrato

p *mf* *f* *mf*

molto sul pont. 7:6 7:6 ord.

molto sul pont. ord. 5:4 3

55

mp

ord. sul pont.

p

molto sul pont. 3 3

ord. sul pont.

p

60

mf *cresc. poco a poco*

mp *cresc. poco a poco*

mp *cresc. poco a poco*

mp *cresc. poco a poco*

66 (8)

5:3

sul pont. ----- ord.

ff

5:4 3

ff

sul pont. ----- ord.

ff

♩ = 90

73 (8)

mf

ff — f

5:4 5:4

8va

mf

ff — p f

mp

mf

ff — p

mf

ff — p

79 (8)

5:4 5:4

ff — pp

5:4

ff — pp

5:4 5:4

f

ff — fff

f

ff — pp