

*for Jack Stulz, Executive Director
What's Next? Ensemble*

SCRIM

solo viola

Alexander Elliott Miller

PROGRAM NOTE

In theatre, “scrim” is a familiar lightweight curtain that does not absorb light. Depending upon the placement and type of lighting, a number of visual effects on or through the curtain can be achieved, such as silhouettes, foggy effects, images projected in front of the actors, complete opacity or transparency.

In my composition, *Scrim*, similar musical motives recur throughout the work, but played with a different “effect” nearly each time. An exposed chorale played *ordinario* will return later as a simple melody in harmonic glissandos with a sparse left-hand *pizz.* accompaniment, like a mere “silhouette” of its original version. Such recurrences of various ideas performed with different playing techniques happen throughout the work.

There are other influences at work in *Scrim*: many of the louder, virtuosic passages near the work's conclusion recall electric guitar solos, particularly those of Eddie Van Halen, whom I grew up listening to, a guitarist who didn't just play the notes, but played “noise” in between the notes such as string scrapes, pick glissandi, harmonics and whammy bar “dive-bombs.” Many of the extended viola techniques in this work are done in a similar spirit.

Scrim was commissioned by the What's Next? Ensemble (www.whatsnextensemble.com) and premiered by Jack Stulz, the group's Executive Director, on April 3rd, 2011 in South Pasadena, California.

BIO

Alexander Elliott Miller is a composer, guitarist and educator currently residing in California. His music has been performed by such artists as the Grammy-nominated Los Angeles Percussion Quartet, Earplay New Chamber Music, soprano Tony Arnold (a member of the International Contemporary Ensemble), Brave New Works, the Definiens Project, the Quintet Attacca, pianists Herb Bielawa and Vincent Craig and violist Dominic DeStefano.

His work has also been performed by the What's Next? Ensemble, an LA-based new music ensemble with which he is currently a co-director. He has received honors and awards from the American Composers Forum and the MacDowell Colony, and his work *Scrim*, for viola, was the winner of the 2012 Earplay Donald Aird Memorial Competition.

A dedicated teacher, Miller is currently an Instructor of Music Theory & Composition at Chapman University in Orange, California. He previously served on the faculties of Illinois State University, the University of Southern California, West Chester University of Pennsylvania and California Lutheran University.

Miller holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition from the University of Southern California, a Master of Music in Composition from the Eastman School of Music, and Bachelor of Music degrees in Composition & Guitar Performance from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

His works are published by HoneyRock Publishing and VP Music Media. For more information, please visit www.alexanderemiller.com.

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for Jack Stulz, Executive Director
What's Next? Ensemble

8 minutes

SCRIM

solo viola

Alexander Elliott Miller

b. 1982

$\text{♩} = 92$

(harmonics w/both fingers during trills)

p (8th partial) *sf* *mfz* *jete*

p *mfz* *p* *ricochet*

jete

fp *fz* *fp* *f* *p* *ff* *p* *ff*

fp

f *p* *f*

fp *f* *p* *f* *fp*

f *mp*

f *fp* *fz* *p* *ord.* *pont.* *fz* *f*

36 *fp* \triangleleft *f*

38

41 *ff* \triangleleft *ffp* \triangleleft *fz* *mp* \triangleleft *p*

46 *pp* *p* *mf*

rit.

50 *p* *mp*

53 *pp*

poco rit. (slow gliss.)

57 *p* *p*

a tempo rubato *poco rit.*

Slower $\text{♩} = 80$

60 *f* *mp* *fz* *mp sub.* *f* *mp*

62

64 *fz* *f* \triangleleft *p* \triangleleft *ff* \triangleleft *p* \triangleleft *f*

67 *fz mp* + *fz p* *pp* *p*

70 *pp* *p* *ppp* *p* IV (T = tap harmonic nod) T T III

74 *pp*

79 *pp* *p* pizz. arco II

84 *pp* pizz. arco II

89 *p* = 66 mute strings (minimal pitch) (bow noise) 3

94 rit. a tempo *p* pizz. w/fingernail 3

96 behind bridge arco (bounce bow) III 3

99 *pizz. w/fingernail* arco bounce bow vertically 3 3 6

102 *mp* I II 3 3 3

104 *pizz.* *arco*

106 *pizz.* *arco* *muted strings, vertical bow, battuto* *fz*

108 *batt.*

109 *batt.* *I* *III*

110 *pp* *mf* *ppp* *p* *pont.* *ord.*

112 *batt.* *pont.*

114 *ord.* *pizz.* *arco* *pont.* *pp* *mf* *ord.* *batt. (until m. 126)* *p* *poco cresc. (build towards m. 126)*

117

119 *poco cresc.* *fz* *fz* *fp*

123 *fz* *fp* *fp*

Fast ♩ = 92

126 *ff ffp* *ff* *poco accel.* *jete*

129 *ff* *ff* *a tempo*

131 *ff* *mp* *ff*

134 *ffp* *ff* *ffp* *ff*

137

140 *ffp* *fz* *ff* *pizz.* *arco*

143 *fz* *fz* *p*

145 *ff* *(off-string)* *(muffled string gliss.)*

147

150 *scratchy - heavy bow pressure* *ord.*

152 *scratchy* *ord.* *(off-string)* *fz*

154 *f*

157 *fff* *f* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *I* *II*

160 *scratchy* *ord.*

162 *scratchy* *3*

164 *3* *II* *III* *scratchy* *ord.* *(any high, loud harmonics)* *II* *III* *scratchy* *fff* *f* *fff* *f*

167 *scratchy* *ord.* *3* *scratchy* *ord.* *3* *fff* *fz*

170 *II* *III* *scratchy* *(any high, loud harmonics)* *8va* *fff*

172 *(8va)* *f* *3* *6* *6* *fff* *3*

174 *(8va)* *scratchy* *ord.* *pizz.* *fffz*