

Modney

EVERYTHING AROUND IT MOVES

string quartet and piano

for Gabriela Diaz, Kyle Armbrust, Mariel Roberts, and Cory Smythe

Premiere Recording:

Modney: *Ascending Primes*

Pyroclastic Records

May 3, 2024

First Performance:

December 9, 2022

Presented by International Contemporary Ensemble

Target Margin Theater, Brooklyn, NY

Modney & Gabriela Diaz, violins; Kyle Armbrust, viola; Mariel Roberts, cello; Cory Smythe, piano

Performance Notes

Pitch Notation:

Helmholtz-Ellis notation is employed throughout the score to indicate just intonation pitch relationships. Whole number ratios are indicated above the first instance of each sonority.

♯ ♭ Raise/lower by syntonic comma (approx. 1/8 tone)

♭ Lower by septimal comma (approx. 1/6 tone)

♯ Raise/lower by undecimal comma (approx. 1/4 tone)

Form and Improvisation:

While the majority of *Everything Around It Moves* is notated, improvisation is integral to the aesthetic approach and ethos of the piece, and there are several improvised sections. The pianist should be comfortable improvising over changes, which are indicated using chord symbols in the score. The string players should be comfortable with free improvisation and improvising rich textures that incorporate various bow techniques and complex timbres. Much of the notated material for the string quartet is derived from the composer's work as a solo violin improviser.

Sections B and B1 of the piece are modular, with different groupings playing different score pages that are not precisely coordinated with one another.

An overview of the form of the piece follows below:

Part I

- A — Quintet, fully notated
- B — Violins play fully notated duet, while viola, cello and piano improvise based on violin material.
- B1 — Viola, cello, and piano move on to B1 while violins continue playing section B. Viola and cello play notated material while the pianist improvises over the chord progression. Once violins conclude section B, they move to coordinated “rips”, leaving 2-3 seconds between each rip. The full ensemble joins the rips after concluding section B1.
- C — Quintet, fully notated until m. 53, when piano begins soloing over the strings chord progression. This transitions into a group improvisation, accompanied by a “ROLI Interlude” performed by the pianist. Part I concludes with the full ensemble moving to an improvised noise texture. Once this texture crescendos to fully saturated cacophony, hard cut to silence.

Part II

- D — Viola solo, accompanied by notated and improvised textures which are indicated in the score.
- E — Quintet, fully notated.
- F — Song. Quintet, fully notated.
- G — Quintet, fully notated.

Note regarding measure numbers: Because of the modularity of sections A through C, measure numbering in Part I restarts with each section. Measure numbers run continuously through Part II.

Strings:

Timbral Techniques:



“Rip” — RH: aggressive bowstroke near the bridge. LH: lightly touch the indicated place on the string with multiple fingers and gliss rapidly downward. This technique is only used at a loud dynamic, and should produce an aggressive, overtone-rich sound.

Thumbnail pizzicato behind bridge — The resultant sound should be strident and aggressive.

“Duck” — Overpressure behind bridge, on the winding of the string.

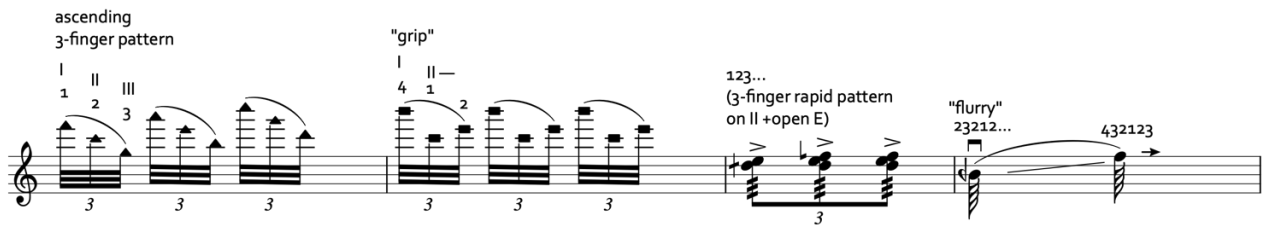
Circular Bowing — A rapid circular movement of the bow with light pressure producing a fluttering sound. For the unpitched version, lightly dampen the strings with the left hand.

“Scribbly Scrabbly Bow” (SSB) — Move the bow rapidly along multiple axes with irregular speed and pressure. This is like a noise/overtone improvisation over the indicated duration.

Bow position is indicated using the following abbreviations:

MSP — *molto sul ponticello*
SP — *sul ponticello*
ORD — *ordinario*
ST — *sul tasto*
MST — *molto sul tasto*

Finger Patterns:



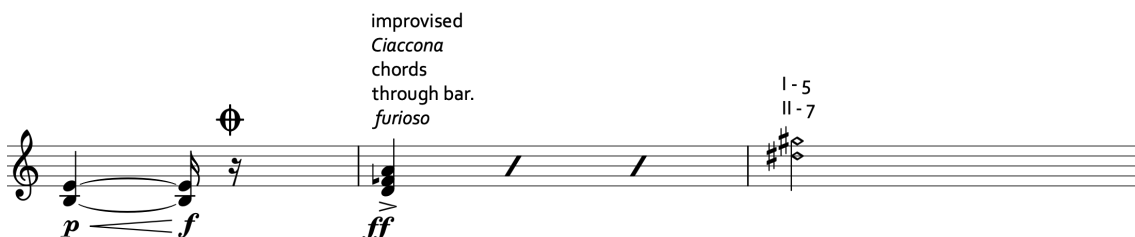
Ascending 3-finger pattern — Place the indicated fingers in the extreme high register and move the left hand upward with each rhythmic grouping.

“Grip” — Place the indicated fingers in a spread configuration on the indicated strings. The specific placement and resultant pitches are improvised. Once the hand position is placed, it should remain the same throughout the figure.

“123...” — rapid 3-finger figuration on the A string + open E. This should sound frenetic, with the fingers and bow moving as rapidly as possible.

“Flurry” — Move the left hand fingers as rapidly as possible. Begin in half-position, with the second finger on the indicated pitch. Glissando to second position with rapid improvised finger movement. The fingerings indicated in the score are given as an example.

Other String Techniques:



Dampening symbol — Abruptly dampen the resonance of the strings with the left hand while whipping the bow off the string.

Improvised *Ciaccona* chords — The opening sonority of the Bach *Ciaccona*, tuned as a septimal minor triad. Repeat this chord aggressively in irregular improvised fashion.

Harmonics notation — The string number and partial number are given for natural harmonics. For example, “II – 7” means “second string, seventh partial”.

Piano:

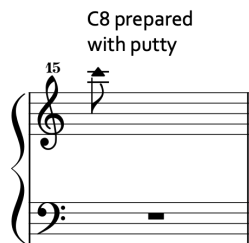
Piano Staff Arrangement:

The piano part is performed on a setup devised by Cory Smythe, and is notated on three staves. The bottom two staves represent the piano. The top staff represents the two auxiliary MIDI controller keyboards, indicated by “QT” (Quarter Tone) and “ROLI” (ROLI Seaboard Block). The auxiliary keyboards produce tone through a software patch which is routed to transducer speakers placed on the soundboard of the piano.

The QT keyboard produces Equal Tempered quarter tones. The sounding pitch is one quarter tone higher than the notated pitch.

The ROLI operates along a continuous pitch spectrum, and is notated at sounding pitch with Helmholtz-Ellis notation.

Piano Preparation:



Putty should be securely affixed to the highest note of the piano (C8), which will produce a percussive tapping sound when the key is struck.

Inside Piano Techniques:



“Rip” — Scrape a credit card along the lowest strings. This technique is only used at a loud dynamic, and should produce a rough, aggressive sound. It should match the character of the strings “rip” technique.

EVERYTHING AROUND IT MOVES

Modney

I.

A ♩ = 132

Score for V1, V2, VA, VC, and P.

Annotations for V1, V2, VA, VC:

- "rip" IV SP
- ORD
- * sim
- 7:3
- ST IV
- 14:9
- III MST
- MST
- II - 3
- III - 7
- I - 2
- II - 2

Annotations for P:

- "rip" credit card scrape on low strings
- ROLI

Boxed text: *Strings "rip" is always down bow and SP, and the following sonority is ORD unless otherwise indicated

9 22:15 Φ IV - 7 MST Φ

V1 $\leq f$ ff p $\leq f$ f p

V2 8:7 Φ f p f f f

VA III - 7 IV - 5 ff p f $\leq f$ p ST III

VC II - 2 Φ $\leq f$ $\leq f$ $\leq f$ IV - 7

P ROLI

16 22:15 l.v. ∞

V1 sfz f ff

V2 (ORD) p^3 f^3 p f mp f ff l.v. ∞

VA SP p^3 f^3 p f ff l.v. ∞

VC sfz f mp f ff l.v. ∞

P ROLI p mf 8

Poco meno mosso

22 7:3

V1 *ppp*

V2

IV MST

I 14:9

IV MST

VA ST III *ppp*

MST 0

MST 0 III

MST 0

7:3

VC II - 3 IV - 7 I - 2 II - 3 I - 2

ppp

P

A tempo

29 MST 0

V1 *mf*

11:5

V2 I 14:9 *mf*

fff

f

11:4

VA III *mf*

fff

ff

5:3

VC *mf*

ff

P *mf*

ff

34

ST

11:5

I - 4

Accelerando

22:11

$\text{♩} = 120$

V1

p

ff

p

f

mp

ff

V2

MST

p

f

mp

ff

9:5

VA

11:5

f

III - 3

IV - 2

mf

ff

VC

ST

p

ff

p

mf

ff

PIANO

ROLI

PIANO

I.v.

P

ff

p

mp

f

B DUO

♩ = ca 120

VIOLA, CELLO, and PIANO improvise based on violin materials (begin immediately, *fortissimo*).
Move on to section B1 on cue while violins continue with section B.

Violin 1 (V1) and Violin 2 (V2) score, Section B Duo. The score is written for two staves, V1 and V2, in 7/16 time. The tempo is marked as ca 120. The score is divided into four systems, each containing two staves. The first system (measures 1-4) features a 9:7:6 ratio and a 22:15 ratio. The second system (measures 5-8) includes a "flurry" (23212...) and a "grip" (432123). The third system (measures 9-12) includes a "duck" and a "scribbly scabbly bow" (SSB). The fourth system (measures 13-16) includes a "scribbly scabbly bow" (SSB) and a 6:6 ratio. The score includes various dynamics (ff, p, f, ff), articulation (pizz, ST), and performance instructions (scribbly scabbly bow, SSB). The score is marked with 3X and 2X repeat signs.

Violin 1 (V1) and Violin 2 (V2) score, Section B Duo. The score is written for two staves, V1 and V2, in 7/16 time. The tempo is marked as ca 120. The score is divided into four systems, each containing two staves. The first system (measures 1-4) features a 9:7:6 ratio and a 22:15 ratio. The second system (measures 5-8) includes a "flurry" (23212...) and a "grip" (432123). The third system (measures 9-12) includes a "duck" and a "scribbly scabbly bow" (SSB). The fourth system (measures 13-16) includes a "scribbly scabbly bow" (SSB) and a 6:6 ratio. The score includes various dynamics (ff, p, f, ff), articulation (pizz, ST), and performance instructions (scribbly scabbly bow, SSB). The score is marked with 3X and 2X repeat signs.

18

V1

ff

appassionato sul G

SSB

V

22:11

p $\rightarrow$ *ff*

SP -----> ORD

22:15

V2

ff

5

SSB

V

9:5

p $\rightarrow$ *ff*

SP -----> ORD

7:3

23

V1

III - 2

mf

V

16

3

3

3

pizz

ff

123...

11:5

SSB

V2

mf

16

3

3

3

f

"duck"

ff

123...

3

ff

SSB

30

V1

ST -----> SP

pp

ff

ORD

3

3

3

9:7:6

ff

V

I

II

III

3

3

3

3

V2

ST -----> SP

pp

ff

ORD

3

3

3

9:7:6

ff

V

I

II

III

3

3

3

3

35

V1

11:22

p $\rightarrow$ *ff*

3

3

3

7X

"flurry" 23212...

432123

ff

V "grip"

4

1

2

3

3

3

3

III - 2

mp

V2

9:5

p $\rightarrow$ *ff*

3

3

3

7X

"flurry" 23212...

432123

ff

V

3

3

3

3

ff

The musical score for two violas (V1 and V2) is presented in a single system. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/8. The score is divided into measures by bar lines. Measure numbers 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, and 46 are indicated at the top. The first staff (V1) and second staff (V2) both begin with a treble clef. The first staff (V1) has a dynamic marking of *ff* at the start of measure 39, followed by *mf* in measure 40. The second staff (V2) also has a dynamic marking of *ff* at the start of measure 39, followed by *mf* in measure 40. Both staves feature complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. In measure 41, the first staff (V1) has a *ff* dynamic marking and a *pizz* instruction. In measure 42, the first staff (V1) has a *ff* dynamic marking and a *"duck"* instruction. In measure 43, the first staff (V1) has a *ff* dynamic marking and a *SSB* instruction. In measure 44, the first staff (V1) has a *ff* dynamic marking and a *SSB* instruction. In measure 45, the first staff (V1) has a *ff* dynamic marking and a *SSB* instruction. In measure 46, the first staff (V1) has a *ff* dynamic marking and a *SSB* instruction. The second staff (V2) also has a *ff* dynamic marking at the end of measure 46. The score includes various performance instructions and dynamic markings throughout.

The image displays a page from a musical score for two violins, V1 and V2. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (ff, p, f). There are also performance instructions like 'appassionato sul G' and 'V' (Violino). The page number 46 is visible in the top left corner.

improvised
Ciaccona
chords
through bar.
furioso

52

V1

ff

improvised
Ciaccona
chords
through bar.
furioso

V2

ff

8

fff

123...

3

VIOLINS: Once viola, cello, and piano have established section B1, dissolve into a brief improvisation on section B material and then drop out. Rejoin with the "rips" described at the end of section B1.

B1 TRIO

VIOLA and CELLO enter while PIANO is still improvising and violins continue with section B. This entire form will be played twice. Sometime during the first cycle, PIANO begins soloing over the changes. VIOLINS rejoin with coordinated "rips" at the end of section B1.

$\text{♩} = \text{ca } 42-48$

4X
2X

VA

mf crescendo poco a poco throughout section B1

VC

IV - 7

mf crescendo poco a poco throughout section B1

4X
2X

QT

P

D7 Ab9 D7 Bb EM/m7 D7 Bb EM/m7 Ab Bm

5

VA

VC

P

D7 Ab Bmb4 F4-3 Em7 Bb9 F#b6 Bmb4 Ab Bb EM/m7

9

VA

VC

P

D7

B $\flat$ 9

F $\sharp$ 6

E $\flat$ m

C $\sharp$ 4-3

Gm6

3

TO END SECTION B1: VIOLINS begin coordinated "rips" near end of second cycle.
Once piano solo is done, VIOLA, CELLO, and PIANO join violins on coordinated rips.

coordinated "rips", on cue (first VIOLINS, then TUTTI)

12

V1

f

f

etc.

Rips out

$\text{♩} = 120$

Attacca section C
"Quintet"

C QUINTET

♪ = ca 120

C QUINTET

♩ = ca 120

9:7:6

V1

ff

V2

ff

VA

ff

VC

ff

P

ff

p *ff*

ff

p *ff*

mp *ff*

This musical score is for the 'The Firebird' by Igor Stravinsky, specifically the section from measures 15 to 18. The score is arranged for five parts: V1, V2, VA, VC, and P (Piano).

Staff V1: Features a melodic line with triplets and a 'flurry' section marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The 'flurry' section includes the notation '23212...' and '432123'. A 'grip' section is marked 'V 4' and 'grip'.

Staff V2: Features a melodic line with triplets and a 'flurry' section marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The 'flurry' section includes the notation '23212...' and '432123'. A 'grip' section is marked 'V' and 'grip'.

Staff VA: Features a melodic line with triplets and a 'flurry' section marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The 'flurry' section includes the notation '23212...' and '432123'. A 'grip' section is marked 'V 3' and 'grip'.

Staff VC: Features a melodic line with triplets and a 'flurry' section marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The 'flurry' section includes the notation '23212...' and '432123'. A 'grip' section is marked 'V 4' and 'grip'.

Staff P: Features a piano accompaniment with triplets and a 'flurry' section marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The 'flurry' section includes the notation '23212...' and '432123'. A 'grip' section is marked 'V' and 'grip'.

The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, dynamics (p, ff), and articulation marks (accents, slurs). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/8.

15

V1 *ff* SSB

V2 *ff* SSB *appassionato sul G* *ff* 5

VA 11:6 SSB *ff* 6 extremely high improvised pitch

VC *ff* SSB *ff* 6 extremely high improvised pitch

P *ff* *mf* *ff* 8

19

V1 SSB 3 3 3 22:11 SP -----> ORD 22:15 *p* < *ff* III - 2 *mf*

V2 SSB 3 3 3 9:5 SP -----> ORD 7:3 *p* < *ff* *mf*

VA SSB 3 3 3 SP ST *p* < *ff*

VC SSB IV - 7 cello: improvised C-string harmonics *p* < *ff*

P 8 15 *ff* *ff* *mf* 15 *mf* warmly

24

V1

V2

VA

VC

P

p *f* *ff* *ff* *ff*

pizz *"duck"* *123...* *11:5* *SSB*

III SP V *IV - 5* *II V*

15

f *ff* *ff*

30

V1

V2

VA

VC

P

pp *ff* *p* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

ST -----> SP *ORD* *9:7:6* *V* *I* *II* *III*

pizz *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

ROLI *PIANO* *15*

mp *ff*

22:11

35

V1

p *ff*

V2

9:5

p *ff*

VA

p *ff*

VC

p *ff*

9X

3

"flurry" 23212... 432123

V "grip"

III - 2

mp

9X

3

"flurry" 23212... 432123

V "grip"

III - 4

ff

9X

3

"flurry" 23212... 432123

V "grip"

II - 2

mp

9X

3

play first 6x only] pizz

ff

9X

3

top staff: first 5x
bottom staff: last 4x

f

P

15

espr.
fff

39

V1

ff *mf*

V2

ff *mf*

VA

ff *pp*

VC

ff *pp*

9X

3

pizz

V

123...

ff

"duck"

IV II III

IV - 5

II V

ff

123...

123...

ff

P

mp 3

3

3

3

3

3

15

ff *mf*

ff

51

V

I II III

3 3 3

improvised Ciaccona chords through bar. furioso

ff

rall... 123... **fff**

Broadly ♩ = ca. 104 laser-like

V1

V2

VA

VC

SP

ORD

P

15

begin soloing

mf **ff**

B $\flat$ Am (or D7) G E $\flat$

59 **Solos** **Group improvisation**

V1

V2

VA

VC

STRINGS: When "ROLI Interlude" begins, go to sparser texture. Once ROLI reaches final fermata, transition to a noise wall that grows to maximum intensity. Hard cut to finish.

P

15

B $\flat$ Am (or D7) G E $\flat$

PIANO: Transition to "ROLI Interlude" when it feels right, as string improvisation continues

ROLI INTERLUDE

Slowly, out of time, exploratory

64 **ROLI**

P

79

P

gliss

PIANO

Transition to inside piano noise techniques. Build to maximum intensity, hard cut to finish.

ATTACCA
PART II

II.

D SOLO

Flexible

♩ = 48-56

Notes: Each measure like a breath (inhalation, exhalation).

Flexibility and soloistic expressive liberties are welcome throughout.

VA

p with warmth

connect to next measure with fluttery sounds, ad lib

III - 3

IV

VA

6

Flowing ♩ = ca. 40

Measured ♩ = ca. 48

pp *p* *mp* *p sub.* *pp*

molto rall. espr. III

MST

Tempo I - with a bit more motion

VA

10

ORD

mp

(G#)

VA

14

bell-like, ringing harmonics (fast bow)

bell-like

mp

warm, supportive, follow viola

mp

Red. ---->

II III II IV - 7

IV

III - 7

I IV I IV

IV I IV MST

VA

18

(MST)

ORD rall., espr. III

pp tremolo speed fast -----> slow

mf

p sub.

*linger here as if playing m. 9, and then flow into tempo on the E

mp

a tempo

poco rall.

a tempo

molto rall.

P

(l.v.)

Suspended

♩ = ca. 48

Building intensity throughout (metered, but still with flexibility)

♩ = ca. 54

22

IV ST, fragile MST IV - 5

V1 *ppp*

V2 *ppp*

VA *pp espr.* MST -> ORD 11:5 (Bb)

VC *ppp* III - 2 MST

mf + resonant *poco a poco cresc* to m. 31

Violins: improvised circular bowing and fluttering responding to viola, occasionally incorporating high harmonics

Cello: improvised circular bowing and fluttering responding to viola, occasionally incorporating high harmonics

incorporate "bell" pitch collections ad lib

subtle comping underneath viola

Dbm Bb

P

26

V1

V2

VA *V* [3+4+4+5]

VC

P

Dbm C

28

V1

V2

VA

VC

P

$[3+5+4+4]$

V

(F#)

3

(G#)

11:5

(G#)

(A#)

3

D $\flat$ m

C

D $\flat$ m

B $\flat$

30

V1

V2

VA

VC

P

(G#)

(B)

(B $\flat$)

III - 3

IV - 2

I.v.

ff

I.v.

D $\flat$ m

B $\flat$

E Senza misura

34

V1

V2

VA

VC

P

III - 3
IV - 2

I.v.

pizz

MST

ppp

f

ff

f

ff

f

ff

Red.

15

15

40

V1

V2

VA

VC

P

MST

ppp

pizz

III - 2

I.v.

III - 2
IV - 3

I.v.

I.v.

I.v.

MST

sotto voce
ppp

f

ff

f

f

f

f

Red.

15

15

cantabile

mp

I.v.

F SONG

♩ = ca. 46

46 solo. introspective, flexible

P

mp with warmth

poco rit *a tempo*

p *poco cresc.*

8 (loco)

Violins: the slight overlap notated in m. 56 should continue throughout this section

Violins: the Ds in m. 62 are roughly the same pitch

V1

V2

P

mp with warmth

mp with warmth

Piano: play 2x only

ppp *pp*

8

V1

V2

VA

P

mf *mf*

poco f *poco f*

poco a poco cresc

8

Gradual Crescendo until end

94 22:11

V1

V2

VA

VC

P

f

ff

poco a poco cresc

f

(cello gliss continues)

Cello: begin slow gliss from top of IV string down to open, accessing high overtones