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# OF A FLEETING FLOWER

*for two violins, cello, and double bass*

JACOB BERANEK

## PROGRAM NOTE

During the summer of 2018, I received a fellowship at the Talis Festival & Academy, situated in the beautiful Alps of Saas-Fee, Switzerland. As part of the eleven-day fellowship, I was expected to supervise rehearsals for a world premiere and attend seminars, readings, other rehearsals, and performances, on top of composing two entirely new pieces, including this one.

Given the short timespan, *Of a Fleeting Flower* was composed in six days, and consists of an unorthodox string quartet instrumentation which was assigned to me during composition. This instrumentation, however, is particularly rich, and felt extremely well-suited for the emotional ideas I was exploring in the work: the sensation of time moving too quickly and yet remarkably slowly, timeless moments in which we're still desperately aware of the seconds ticking, eternal instants which we spend with something (or someone) beautiful but know it will not last. These thoughts are reflected in the music by the interplay of different melodies, the constant modification of the tempo, and an intentional control of rhythmic complexity—at first still, then gradually more involved, then backing off, then delving in densely, and finally transparently longing. The title references a short poem I composed at the same time as the music:

*For the sweet joy of a fleeting flower:  
embraced briefly, released reluctantly,  
never spurned, ever felt,  
yet awaiting.*

—Jacob Beranek

### FIRST PERFORMANCES

#### PRIVATE

July 24, 2018, Hotel Dom, Saas-Fee, Switzerland,  
Nathalie Schmalhofer (violin I), Ming-Feng Hsin (violin II),  
Seth Russell (cello), Rosie Salvucci (double bass)

#### PUBLIC

October 9, 2018, Blair School of Music, Nashville, TN,  
Juliet Kim (violin I), Whit FitzGerald (violin II),  
Mattie Brister (cello), J.J. Butler (double bass)

# Of a Fleeting Flower

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Faraway, with stillness (♩ = c. 58) poco rit.

Violin I *p cantabile*  
sul tasto

Violin II *pp*

Cello *pp*  
sul tasto

Double Bass

## 6 Tenderly, rubato (♩ = c. 58-66)

Violin I *p*

Violin II *pp*

Cello *pp*

Double Bass *pp*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

mel.-----

9

(mel.)-----

*mf*

*pp*

*mf*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*mf*

*pp*

*mf*

*pp*

pizz.

arco

*mf*

*pp*

*p*

16 Moving forward (♩ = c. 66)

13 accomp. -----

Violin I: *mp*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*

Violin II (mel.): *mf*, *p*, *pp*, *p*

Viola: *mf*, *p*, *mp*

Cello/Double Bass: *mf*, *pp*

8va

b.o.

17 accomp. -----

Violin I: *f*, *p*

Violin II (mel.): *f*, *mp*, *mf*

Viola: *mf*, *p*

Cello/Double Bass: *mf*, *pp*, *mp*

pizz.

21 (accomp.) -----

Violin I: *pp*, *mf*, *f*

Violin II (mel.): *mp*, *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*

Viola: *mf*, *p*

Cello/Double Bass: *mf*, *p*, *f*, *p*

arco

III

port.

segue