

Mel Zhang

dew

for string trio



for The Knights Chamber Ensemble
art by Mel Zhang

Duration ~3:20min
Instrumentation 1 Violin, 1 Viola, 1 Cello

Program Notes My mother has always hated summer storms. In her childhood in mountainous China, rain meant flooding, which in a valley village meant death. Whenever it rains, she tells me horror stories of crushed houses, bloated bodies, and rumbling thunder. On the other hand, I developed a love for the rain during the pandemic. I loved skipping through puddles and listening to the drops tap against the glass. In “dew,” I reflect on the cycle of rain and the influence of generational trauma. The piece weaves innocence with pensive soundscapes, haunting tones with playful motifs. Though I’ll never have my mother’s fear of rain, I can’t help but feel melancholic at the sight of rolling clouds. How lucky am I, that she and I share blood without the gore?

Performance Notes The structure of music loosely follows the beginning, middle, and aftermath of an intense storm. It starts with dew, then the rain gets more intense as time goes on. The middle section of chords should be pensive, reflective—in some ways unexpected for the thunderstorm. If it helps, imagine seeing rolling lightning in the distance; looming gray clouds that flash intermittently.

dew was broadcast on WQXR in 2024 from September 2-8. <https://www.wqxr.org/story/new-york-philharmonics-very-young-composers-2024/>.

dew was performed for *The Knights’ Family Concert* at Gather NYC in the Museum of Arts and Design on November 24th, 2024.

Written for *The Knights*: played by Colin Jacobsen (Violin), Mario Gotoh (Viola), and Caitlin Sullivan (Cello).

Link to recording: <https://tinyurl.com/bdhfujjm>

dew

for *The Knights*

Mel Z

♩ = 115

Violin

Viola

Cello

dewy, springy

pizz.

mf

arco

mp

mf

7

arco

f

f

arco

f

12

3

humid

sub. *p*

mf

mp

mf

mp

mf

17

light sprinkles

mf

ff

sub. *p*

mp

ff

mf

pizz

pp

mp

arco

mp

mf

ff

23

Musical score for measures 23-26. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 3/4. The music features a melody in the treble staff and a bass line in the bass staff. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* (forte). The melody in measure 26 includes a crescendo leading to a forte dynamic.

27

light showers

Musical score for measures 27-30. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 3/4. The music features a melody in the treble staff and a bass line in the bass staff. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *f* (forte), *pp* (pianissimo), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The melody in measure 27 includes a crescendo leading to a forte dynamic. The bass line in measure 29 includes a trill (*tr*) and a crescendo leading to a mezzo-forte dynamic.

31

Musical score for measures 31-32. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 3/4. The music features a melody in the treble staff and a bass line in the bass staff. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The melody in measure 31 includes a crescendo leading to a mezzo-piano dynamic. The bass line in measure 32 includes a crescendo leading to a mezzo-forte dynamic.

33

Musical score for measures 33-36. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 3/4. The music features a melody in the treble staff and a bass line in the bass staff. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte). The melody in measure 33 includes a crescendo leading to a mezzo-forte dynamic. The bass line in measure 34 includes a trill (*tr*) and a crescendo leading to a mezzo-forte dynamic.

train of thought; pensive storm

37

sul pont.

ff *pp* *mp* *f*

sul pont.

sul pont.

47

p *mp* *mf* *f*

p *mp* *mf*

57

f *mf* *mp*

mp *mf* *mp*

glies. *pizz.* *arco*

66

f *sub. p*

f *sub. p*

f *sub. p*

74

sun through the clouds

petrichor

mf *f*

Musical score for measures 74-79. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is 74. The music features a melody in the treble staff and accompaniment in the alto and bass staves. Dynamics range from mezzo-forte (mf) to forte (f). The lyrics "sun through the clouds" and "petrichor" are written above the treble staff.

80

mf *mf* *p* *pizz.*

Musical score for measures 80-85. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is 80. The music features a melody in the treble staff and accompaniment in the alto and bass staves. Dynamics range from mezzo-forte (mf) to piano (p). The word "pizz." (pizzicato) is written above the treble staff in measure 84.

86

dew again

pizz.

Musical score for measures 86-91. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is 86. The music features a melody in the treble staff and accompaniment in the alto and bass staves. Dynamics range from mezzo-forte (mf) to piano (p). The word "pizz." (pizzicato) is written above the bass staff in measure 87.

92

pp *pp* *pp*

Musical score for measures 92-97. The score is in treble, alto, and bass staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is 92. The music features a melody in the treble staff and accompaniment in the alto and bass staves. Dynamics range from piano (p) to pianissimo (pp).