

Quartet for Piano and Strings [2016] by Professor Jan Krzywicki

*Your editor attempts, with greater or lesser success, to keep abreast of what his colleagues across the University are up to. One of those greater successes was the pleasure it gave me to attend the premier performance of *Quartet for Piano and Strings [2016]* by Professor Jan Krzywicki (BCMD) on Sunday, May 15, 2016. This work was commissioned by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and beautifully performed by the Clarosa Quartet. I have neither the standing nor the skill to write a review, but I can say informally that I found it to be a stunning and engaging piece of chamber music. Following are the program notes written by Jan describing some aspects of the composition.*

"Quartet for piano and strings is a four-movement work consisting of character pieces that lasts about twenty-three minutes. The opening Scherzo, a playful yet restlessly serious movement that gains in weight, is followed by a restful Pastorale that was inspired by the quiet and majesty of Yellowstone Park in winter. The ensuing Toccata, in effect a second scherzo, is a whirlwind of driving, biting motion that proceeds without pause to a Fantasia which reworks materials from the preceding three movements, forming a culmination and resolution.

Throughout the work the pianist is called upon to produce various sounds inside the instrument: "stopped" notes (a note muted with a finger that produces a blocked or pizzicato-like sound), plucked notes (with finger or plectrum), and notes strummed in a glissando-like manner.

Quartet was commissioned by the Philadelphia Chamber Music society for premiere by the Clarosa Quartet as part of its 30th Anniversary season. Over the years I have been fortunate to have heard several of my works on PCMS programs; I am very grateful for their support and to the Clarosa Quartet for their very dedicated performance of the Quartet."

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