

**Death of Seneca**  
for String Quartet

full score

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Arizona

Death of Seneca  
For string quartet in one movement

On Gerrit van Honthorst's painting: *Death of Seneca* (c. 1625)  
Phoenix Art Museum

ca. 7 minutes  
Premiered at the Atlantic Music Festival 2021

Notes to the performers:

This piece was written for the Phoenix Art Museum on the painting, *Death of Seneca*, by Dutch painter Gerrit van Honthorst. It is a huge oil painting (about 70 inches tall), warm-toned, giving out a calm and serene atmosphere while depicting a morbid scene - the death of the Roman stoic philosopher, Seneca. This string quartet was planned to be played in the reverberant gallery hall of the Phoenix Art Museum near the painting, before the social distancing policies were applied. The performance was suspended due to the global pandemic. It was written with that specific performance set-up in mind.

# Death of Seneca

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Adagio tranquilo  $\text{♩} = 52$

Musical score for Adagio tranquilo, measures 1-4. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is Adagio tranquilo with a metronome marking of 52 quarter notes per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes dynamic markings (f, p, mf) and performance instructions such as 'con sord. non vib.' and '(to molto vib.) poco a poco'.

## A Più mosso $\text{♩} = 56$

Musical score for Più mosso, measures 5-8. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is Più mosso with a metronome marking of 56 quarter notes per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes dynamic markings (f, p, mf, ppp) and performance instructions such as 'molto vib.' and 'senza sord.'.

12

Vln. I non vib. sul pont. *ppp* *p* *ppp*

Vln. II non vib. sul pont. ord. *ppp* *p* *ppp* *f*

Vla. non vib. sul pont. ord. *p* *ppp* *f*

Vc. non vib. sul pont. *ppp*

17

accel. ord. *f* sub. *fff*

Vln. I *f* sub. *fff*

Vln. II *fff*

Vla. *fff*

Vc. ord. *f* *fff*

**B** A tempo (♩ = 56)

21 con sord. *p* tranquillo *p*

Vln. I con sord. *p* tranquillo *p*

Vln. II con sord. *p* tranquillo *p* *f*

Vla. con sord. *p* tranquillo

Vc. con sord. *p* tranquillo

**C** Più mosso ♩ = 60

27

Vln. I: *f* > *p* *f*

Vln. II: *p*

Vla.: senza sord. *p* *mf* cantabile

Vc.: *f* *p*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 27 to 32. Vln. I starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic, followed by a piano (*p*) dynamic, and then returns to forte (*f*). Vln. II plays a piano (*p*) line. The Viola part is marked 'senza sord.' and features a piano (*p*) dynamic that transitions to mezzo-forte (*mf*) and is labeled 'cantabile'. The Violoncello part begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and then moves to piano (*p*).

33

Vln. I: *p* *f* > *p*

Vln. II: *p*

Vla.: *f* > *p* < *f* *p*

Vc.: *f* *p*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 33 to 37. Vln. I has a piano (*p*) dynamic followed by a forte (*f*) dynamic and then a piano (*p*) dynamic. Vln. II remains at piano (*p*). The Viola part features a dynamic contour of *f* > *p* < *f* followed by a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Violoncello part starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and then moves to piano (*p*).

38 (b)

Vln. I: *f* *p*

Vln. II: *mf*

Vla.: *f* *p* *f*

Vc.: *p* *f* > *p* < *f*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 38 to 42. Vln. I starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and then moves to piano (*p*). Vln. II plays at mezzo-forte (*mf*). The Viola part has a dynamic contour of *f* > *p* < *f*. The Violoncello part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and then features a dynamic contour of *f* > *p* < *f*.

**D**

43

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *f* *p* *f*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p* *f* *p*

47

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *p* *f* 3 3

Vla. *f* 3

Vc. *f*

49

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *ff in rilievo*

Vc.

50

Vln. I *ff in rilievo*

Vln. II *ff in rilievo*

Vla. *p*

Vc.

(to sul pont.)  
*poco a poco*

52

Vln. I

Vln. II (to sul pont.)  
*poco a poco*

Vla. (to sul pont.)  
*poco a poco*

Vc. *ff in rilievo*

54

Vln. I sul pont. **E** *Meno mosso* ♩ = 52 ord. *f*

Vln. II sul pont. ord. *p* *f*

Vla. sul pont. ord. *mf* *p*

Vc. sul pont. ord. *p* *f sub.*

58

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

63

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*p* *fff* *fp* *pp*

*f* *fff* *p*

*p* *pp*

*p* *mf*

*in rilievo*

sul tasto

sul tasto

sul tasto

67

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*p* *mf in rilievo* *p*

*pp* *ord.* *p*

*p* *ord.*

*p*

*ord.*

*F*



71

Vln. I *p* *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 71 through 74. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 71 starts with a treble clef and a key signature change to one flat. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). A hairpin crescendo is shown over measures 72-74. A slur covers the first two notes of the cello part in measure 71.

75

**accel.**

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 75 through 77. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has one flat. Measure 75 starts with a treble clef. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). An **accel.** (accelerando) marking is present above the first staff. Slurs are used in the violin and viola parts. The cello part has a slur under the first two notes of measure 75.

78

$\text{♩} = 60$

Vln. I *ff* *pizz.* *arco.*

Vln. II *ff*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *ff*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 78 through 81. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has one flat. Measure 78 starts with a treble clef and a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 60$ . Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo). Performance markings include *pizz.* (pizzicato) and *arco.* (arco). Slurs are used in the violin and viola parts. The cello part has a slur under the first two notes of measure 78.

**poco accel.**

80

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 80 and 81. It features four staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music is in a minor key with a key signature of one flat. The tempo is marked 'poco accel.'. The Vln. I staff has a treble clef and a 7/8 time signature. The Vln. II staff has a treble clef. The Vla. staff has an alto clef. The Vc. staff has a bass clef. The music consists of complex rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, often beamed together. There are several accents and slurs throughout the passage.

82

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 82, 83, 84, and 85. It features the same four staves as the previous system: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music continues with similar complex rhythmic patterns. In measure 84, there are triplets in the Vln. I and Vc. staves, indicated by a '3' above the notes. The Vln. I staff has a treble clef. The Vln. II staff has a treble clef. The Vla. staff has an alto clef. The Vc. staff has a bass clef. The music is characterized by dense sixteenth-note passages and frequent accents.

♩ = 68

84

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*fff*

85

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*p sub.*

*fff*

86

Vln. I *fff*

Vln. II *fff*

Vla. *fff*

Vc. *f* *fff*

*J* = 63

88 **G** Subito meno mosso *J* = 56

Vln. I *p* tranquilo

Vln. II *p* tranquilo *mf*

Vla. *p* tranquilo *p* *f* *p*

Vc. *p* sub. tranquilo *f* *rit.*

92

Vln. I *f* *p* *pp* *ppp*

Vln. II *p* *f* *p* *pp* *ppp*

Vla. *f* *p* *pp* *ppp*

Vc. *p* *f* *p* *pp* *ppp*