

Name: _____

Kevin Volans, *String Quartet No. 2, Hunting: Gathering*, I, reh. A–F

The attached score and accompanying audio excerpt represent reh. A–F of the first “expedition” (movement) of Kevin Volans second string quartet *Hunting: Gathering* (subtitled “Journey through a Landscape”). The first movement consists roughly of nine tunes that succeed one another as if stages on a journey. The first tune at Reh. A is from Ethiopia, but not all of the borrowed material is African in origin; there are also reminiscences of Western music. Answer the following questions about this excerpt.

Western elements:

There are six identifiable motives in reh. A to F, if you include the opening repeated chord. How do the opening motives form a kind of “first theme group”? What do you hear as the tonal center of this group?

Where do you hear a second subject group enter?

African elements:

The quarter-note beat holds steady through the end of reh. C, but Reh. D articulates an eighth-note rhythm. Explain in your own words how this section resembles the African music we discussed (you may talk about rhythm, meter, pitch, or articulation).

The beat is subdivided at reh. E. How many beats will the listener hear in each bar in mm. 50–51?

Reh. F returns us briefly to an eighth-note pulse before the beat is subdivided again in m. 65, which sounds more like an interruption than a new section, especially when imitative melodies enter at m. 75. Which part plays the role of a “bell pattern” in mm. 73–77?

The mbira tune *Nymaropa* appears somewhere in this section (one transcription is included below, and another version is streaming on Playlist 6). Can you find where it's located?

There is obviously much repetition in this section. Locate three of the other qualities Christine Lucia identified with Volans' music in this passage (interlocking; asymmetrical phrase structure based on an 8th-note pulse; asymmetrical patterning; "soft" writing, dovetailing sound; harmonics and open strings).

The image displays two musical transcriptions, labeled III and IV, of the mbira tune *Nymaropa*. Each transcription consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music is written in a style characteristic of mbira, featuring a steady 8th-note pulse in the bass line and a more complex, often interlocking melody in the treble line. The notation includes various rhythmic markings such as accents and slurs, and some notes are marked with circled 'x' symbols, possibly indicating specific performance techniques or harmonics. The two fragments, III and IV, show similar rhythmic and melodic patterns, illustrating the repetitive nature of the piece.

EXAMPLE 5: TWO FRAGMENTS OF *NYAMAROPA*,
PERFORMED BY GWANZURA GWENZI, 1960s
(TRANSCRIPTION: A. TRACEY 1970, 16-7)