

Jeffery Cotton

# Elegy

For string orchestra

*A memorial to the victims of September 11*

2001

duration ca. 4' 30"

## Program Notes for *Elegy*

The *Elegy* was composed between September 14 and 20, 2001 as a tribute to all those who perished in the attacks of September 11.

My own office lies directly across Liberty Street from the South Tower and was so severely damaged that we will likely never be able to reenter it.\* So, like most Americans, I spent much of the following week glued to the television, and searching for some meaning.

I live in Jersey City, New Jersey, the waterfront of which became an enormous staging area for the rescue people coming from the west. They were shuttled back and forth across the Hudson River on ferries, private boats, anything that floated, really. The people who live here became an impressive back-up force, forming long bucket brigades to unload trucks of food, water and clothing.

As long as I live I will never forget the look on the faces of the rescue workers coming back to Jersey City after a twelve or fourteen hour shift at Ground Zero. We would all stop what we were doing to applaud and cheer for them, but their dark, anguished expressions told us that our worst fears were true.

After a couple of days of this, my emotions were running so high that I could not even look at the New York skyline without breaking down, and so I stayed home. It seemed to me that there was still something I could do, however. I knew that the Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, with whom I am composer-in-residence, had decided to go ahead with their concert on September 28<sup>th</sup>, just two weeks after the attack. After a brief conversation with Scott Yoo, the ensemble's music director, I started improvising the *Elegy* at the keyboard.

I had hoped working on this piece would be cathartic for me, at least something other than the smoking New York skyline to focus on. But ultimately composing the *Elegy* only pulled me in closer, made the disaster more real, and I've since decided that was a good thing. Still, how do we find a way to mourn that even begins to approach the scale of the loss? It's not possible. We take part in bucket brigades, we applaud our heroes. It's a start, at least.

Jeffery Cotton  
September 21, 2001

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\* July 10, 2003: The Deutsche Bank headquarters, which almost two years later is still unoccupied and stands sheathed in plastic.

The composer asks that applause be withheld at all performances of this work in perpetuity

to the victims of September 11

# Elegy

for string orchestra

Jeffery Cotton  
(2001)

Largo e Rubato

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Contrabass. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of 12 measures. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The dynamics range from *pp* to *mf*. The Viola part includes a triplet marked "3 div." in measures 10-11. The Cello and Contrabass parts have a *pp* dynamic in measure 10.

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Contrabass, starting at section A. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of 12 measures. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The dynamics range from *mf* to *pp*. The Viola part is marked "unis." in measure 10. The Cello and Contrabass parts have a *pp* dynamic in measure 10. A box labeled "A" is positioned above the first measure.

8

*solo*

*mp*

gli tutti altri  
*(non cresc.)*

*soli*  
*mp*

3

8

B

*unis.*

*solo*

*pp*

*solo*

*pp*

*solo*

*pp*

*mp*

*solo*

*pp*

12

Musical score for measures 18-21. The score is for five instruments: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Contrabasso (Cb.). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4. Dynamics include *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *mf espr.*. The Viola part includes a *solo* marking. The Cello and Contrabasso parts have *mf espr.* markings. The score ends with a fermata on the final note of the Viola part.

18

C

Musical score for measures 22-25, marked with a 'C' in a box. The score is for five instruments: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Contrabasso (Cb.). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4. Dynamics include *pp!*, *p*, *mp*, and *pp! < mp*. The Viola part includes a *divisi* marking. The Cello and Contrabasso parts have *tutti* markings. The score ends with a fermata on the final note of the Viola part.

22

*grand détaché*

**D**

Musical score for measures 27-30. The score includes five staves: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vcl., and Cb. The music is in 3/4 time and features various dynamics and articulations.   
 - Vln. I: *ff espr. grand détaché* (measures 27-28), *div.* (measures 29-30).   
 - Vln. II: *ff espr. grand détaché* (measures 27-28), *ff* (measures 29-30).   
 - Vla.: *ff* (measures 29-30).   
 - Vcl.: *ff* (measures 29-30).   
 - Cb.: *ff* (measures 29-30).   
 - Additional markings: *unis.* (unison) and *div.* (divisi) are present in measures 29 and 30.

*rallentando*-----

**E** Tempo I°

Musical score for measures 31-34. The score includes five staves: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vcl., and Cb. The music is in 3/4 time and features various dynamics and articulations.   
 - Vln. I: *pp* (measures 31-32), *pp* (measures 33-34), *unis.* (unison) in measure 34.   
 - Vln. II: *pp* (measures 31-32), *p ten.* (measures 33-34), *tutti* (measures 33-34).   
 - Vla.: *pp* (measures 31-32), *p solo* (measures 33-34), *tutti* (measures 33-34).   
 - Vcl.: *pp* (measures 31-32), *p solo* (measures 33-34), *tutti* (measures 33-34).   
 - Cb.: *pp* (measures 31-32), *p* (measures 33-34), *tutti* (measures 33-34).   
 - Additional markings: *p*, *mf*, *f*, *p ten.*, *divisi*, and *tutti div.* are present throughout the section.

F

con sord.

Vln. I *ff* *pp*

Vln. II *ff* solo, con sord. tutti, con sord. *pp* con sord.

Vla. *ff* solo (senza sord.) *pp* *pp* (solo) *pochiss.*

Vcl. *ff* *pp* 2 soli, con sord. gli tutti altri, con sord. *pp*

Cb. *ff* *pp*

36

G Tempo I°

rallentando -----

Vln. I solo *caloroso* *ppp*

Vln. II gli altri *ppp* *mf*

Vla. *ppp* *mf*

Vcl. (solo con sord.) *ppp* *mf* tutti unis. con sord.

Cb. *ppp* *mf*

41

45 *f* *sost.* *ppp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Cb.

*f* *sost.* *ppp*

*f* *sost.* *ppp*

*f* *sost.* *ppp*

*f* *sost.* *ppp*

*f* *sost.* *ppp*

Jersey City  
September 20, 2001

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for a string ensemble. It features five staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Contrabasso (Cb.). The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure is marked with a measure number '45' and a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). The second measure is marked with *sost.* (sostenuto), indicating a sustained note. The third measure contains a whole rest. The fourth measure is marked with *ppp* (pianissimo), indicating a very soft dynamic. The fifth and sixth measures continue the *ppp* dynamic. The seventh measure concludes with a final chord. The score includes various musical notations such as stems, beams, and slurs. Performance markings like *f*, *sost.*, and *ppp* are placed below the staves. The page number '6' is in the top left corner. The text 'Jersey City September 20, 2001' is in the bottom right corner.