

# *Pulsation*

for Piano Quartet

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The title *Pulsation* is a literal description of what happens in this single-movement work for piano quartet, but it also alludes to a famous passage from William Blake:

For in this Period the Poets work is done: and all the Great  
Events of Time start forth & are conceivd in such a Period  
Within a Moment: a Pulsation of the Artery.

(*Milton*, 29: 1-3)

The basis of the music is virtually unbroken eighth-note pulsation in the strings at the heartbeat tempo of quarter note = 72; departures from the pulsating texture are highly marked. The piano plays both with and against this pattern, which it continually varies and transforms and ultimately draws into a state in which time slows and even, for a moment, seems to stop. A further layer of pulsation is added by the repetition of whole segments at irregular intervals throughout. The string tessitura is deliberately restricted, the upper strings in particular being kept largely away from their higher registers. The aim is to create a complex, acoustically rich musical space in which listeners, led by the piano (which in a sense speaks for their listening as a form of imagination), can become wholly absorbed and perhaps catch an echo of the fundamental pulsebeat in which Blake located the origin of creative energy.

Duration: 16 minutes.

# Pulsation

$\text{♩} = 72$  (no slower!)

Lawrence Kramer

Violin

Viola

Cello

Piano

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

## Pulsation

10

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Pno. *p*

1.

2.

1.

2.

mp

mp

mp

10

1.

2.

mp

14

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vlc. *mf*

14

Pno. *mf*

## Pulsation

5

18

Vln.   
Vla.   
Vlc. 

Pno. 

22

Vln.   
Vla.   
Vlc. 

Pno. 

## Pulsation

26

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

ff

ff

ff

26

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

1. 2.

ff

29

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

f

ff

f

ff

29

f

ff

8vb

## Pulsation

7

33

Vln. Vla. Vlc.

Pno.

*loco*

$8^{vb}$

*f*      *loco*      *loco*      *f*

$8^{vb}$        $8^{vb}$        $8^{vb}$

*fp*      *fp*      *fp*

37

Vln. Vla. Vlc.

Pno.

*fp*      *pp*      *fp*

*fp*      *pp*      *fp*

*fp*      *pp*      *fp*

*f*

*p*

*fp*

## Pulsation

41

Vln.      Vla.      Vlc.

Pno.

*pp*      *f*

*pp*      *f*

*pp*      *f*

42

*f*

*f*

*f*

46

Vln.      Vla.      Vlc.

*f*

*f*

*f*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

Pno.

*f*

*f*

*f*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

47

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

## Pulsation

9

50

Vln. Vla. Vlc.

Pno.

1. 2. 1. 2.

*p*

54

Vln. Vla. Vlc.

Pno.

*p* *f* *ff*

*p* *f* *ff*

*p* *f* *ff*

*mf* *f* *ff*

*s* *s* *s* *s*

## Pulsation

59

Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

Pno. 

59



63

Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

Pno. 

63



## Pulsation

11

67

Vln. *fp* *pp* *mp*

Vla. *fp* *pp* *mp*

Vlc. *fp* *pp* *mp*

Pno. *pp* *pp* *mp*

This section shows four measures of pulsation. The strings play eighth-note patterns in measures 67-68, followed by sixteenth-note patterns in measure 69, and eighth-note patterns again in measure 70. The piano provides harmonic support with sustained notes and chords.

71

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

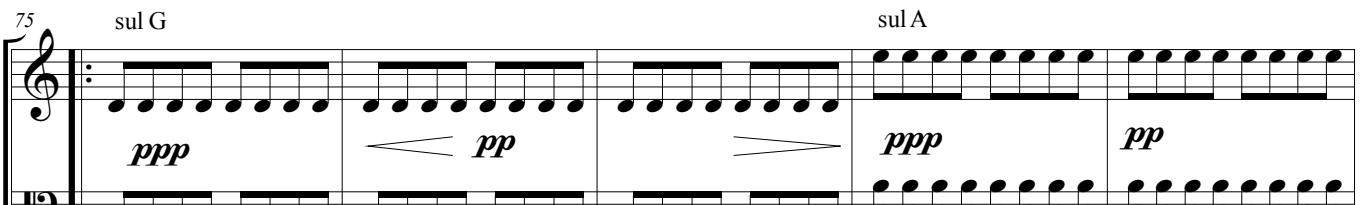
Pno. *p*

This section shows four measures of pulsation. The strings play eighth-note patterns in measures 71-72, followed by sixteenth-note patterns in measure 73, and eighth-note patterns again in measure 74. The piano provides harmonic support with sustained notes and chords.

## Pulsation

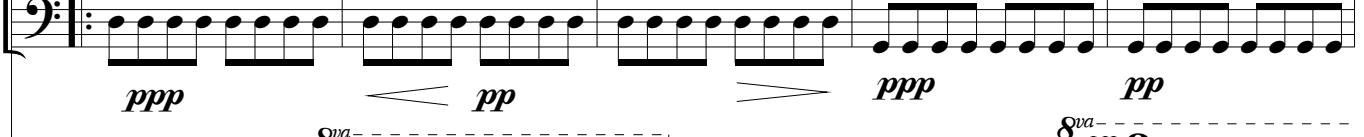
75

sul G    sul A

Vln. : 

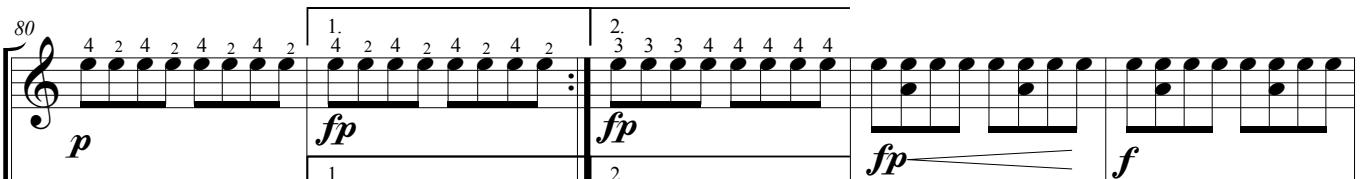
Vla. : 

Vlc. : 

Pno. : 

Attack chord here on repeat. **p**

80

Vln. : 

Vla. : 

Vlc. : 

Pno. : 

(8va) -

80

**fp**    **fp**                                  **fp**                                  **fp**                                  **f**

**fp**    **fp**                                  **fp**                                  **fp**                                  **f**

**fp**    **fp**                                  **fp**                                  **fp**                                  **f**

## Pulsation

13

85

Vln. Vla. Vlc. Pno.

fp <f ff sfz p  
fp <f ff sfz p  
fp <f ff sfz p  
fp <f ff sfz p

This section shows four measures of music for string quartet (Violin, Viola, Cello) and piano. The strings play eighth-note patterns with dynamic markings: *fp*, *<f*, *ff*, *sfz*, and *p*. The piano part is mostly silent or has eighth-note chords. Measures 86-87 show a transition with eighth-note patterns and dynamic changes (*fp*, *<f*, *ff*, *sfz*, *p*). Measures 88-89 show sustained notes on the piano with eighth-note patterns on the strings. Measure 90 begins with eighth-note patterns on the strings followed by sustained notes on the piano.

90

Vln. Vla. Vlc. Pno.

pp pp pp pp  
1. mf  
1. mf 1. mf  
pp pp pp pp  
1. mf

90

Vln. Vla. Vlc. Pno.

$\text{Bassoon 1}$   $\text{Bassoon 2}$   $\text{Double Bass}$   $\text{Double Bass}$

pp pp pp pp  
1. mf

This section continues the pulsation pattern. It includes measures 90-91 for strings and piano, followed by measures 92-93 where the bassoon and double bass join in eighth-note patterns. Measures 94-95 show sustained notes on the piano with eighth-note patterns on the strings.

## Pulsation

94 2.

Vln. The score shows four measures for strings (Violin, Viola, Cello) and one measure for Piano. The strings play eighth-note patterns with dynamics *mf*, *fp*, *f*, and *p*. The piano plays eighth-note chords with dynamics *mf*, *f*, *p*, *fp*, *pizz.*, and *arco*.

Pno. { The piano continues with eighth-note chords at *mf* and *f* dynamics. A fermata is placed over the first note of the next measure.

98 The score shows four measures for strings and one measure for Piano. The strings play eighth-note patterns with dynamics *f*, *sf*, *sf*, *fp*, *f*, *sf*, *fp*, and *arco*. The piano plays eighth-note chords with dynamics *fp*, *mf*, *f*, *sf*, *fp*, and *arco*. The piano part includes dynamic markings *8va-----* and *8va-----*.

## Pulsation

15

102

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

102

106

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

106

## Pulsation

*III*

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

*115*

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

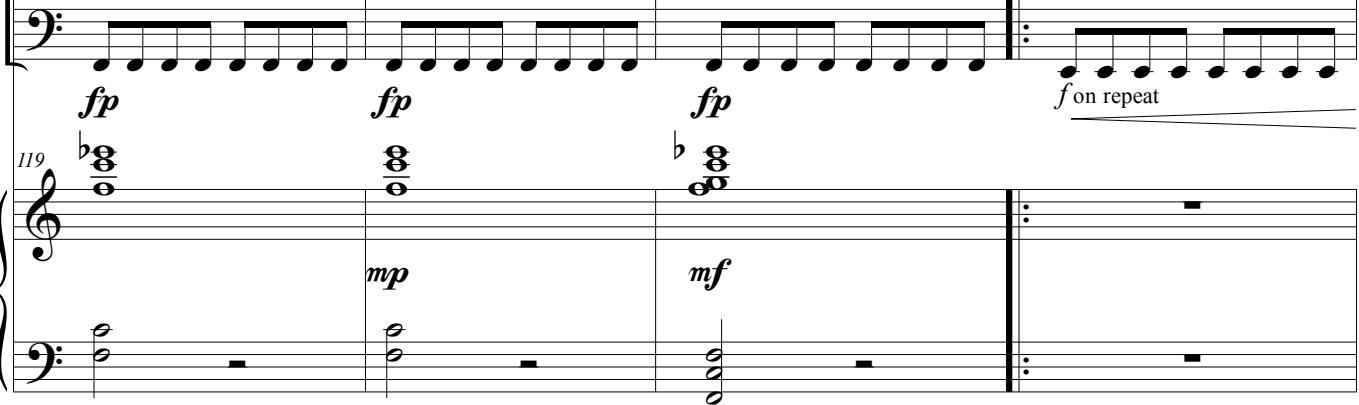
Pno.

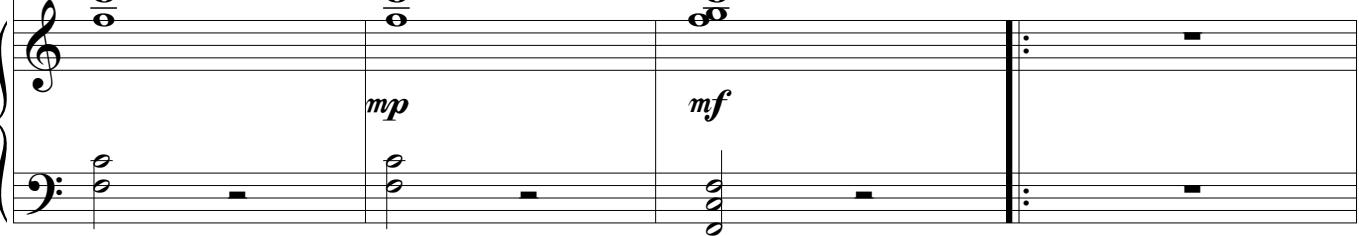
*Rcd.*

*I19*

Vln. 

Vla. 

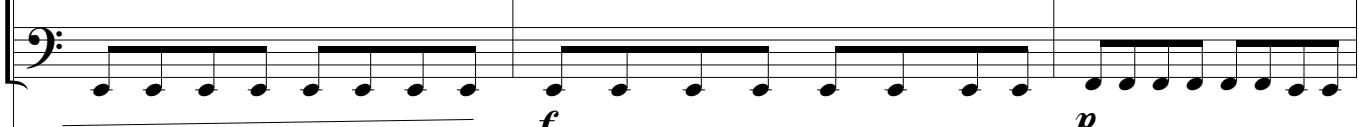
Vlc. 

Pno. 

*I23*

Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

Pno. 

## Pulsation

126

Vln. 1. *f* 2. *f* - pizz.

Vla. 1. *f* 2. *f* spicc. pizz.

Vlc. 1. *f* 2. *f* *p* pizz.

Pno. 1. *p* 2. *f* *p*

130

Vln. -

Vla. -

Vlc. -

Pno. - *f* *p* *mp* *f* *p*

## Pulsation

19

133

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

*f p*      *mp f p*

*f*      *fp*

*arco*

137

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

*arco*

*p arco*

*sul pont.*

*p ordin.*

*sul pont.*

*sul pont.*

*p*

*sf*

*sf*

141

Vln. ordin.

Vla. ordin.

Vlc. ordin.

Pno.

141

Vln. *mf* 1. *f* 2. *f* *ff*

Vla. *mf* 1. *f* 2. *f* *ff*

Vlc. *mf* *f* *f* *ff*

Pno. 1. *8va* 2. *8va* *ff*

149

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

149

f f f

This section shows four staves. The first three staves (Vln., Vla., Vlc.) play eighth-note patterns. The fourth staff (Pno.) plays eighth-note chords. Measure 149 ends with dynamic markings *f*, *f*, and *f*.

152

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

152

*ff* *f* *ff*

*ff* *f* *ff*

*ff* *f* *ff*

*ff* *f* *ff*

This section shows four staves. The first three staves (Vln., Vla., Vlc.) play eighth-note patterns. The fourth staff (Pno.) plays eighth-note chords. Measure 152 ends with dynamic markings *ff*, *f*, and *ff*.

## Pulsation

155

Vln. *rit.*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p* *pp*

Pno. *p* *pp*

155

159

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Pno. *pp* *p* *mp*

159

164

Vln.

Vla.

Vcl.

Pno.

164

Vln.

Vla.

Vcl.

Pno.

rit.

*a tempo*  
don't drag!

168

Vln.

Vla.

Vcl.

Pno.

168

Vln.

Vla.

Vcl.

Pno.

## Pulsation

173

Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

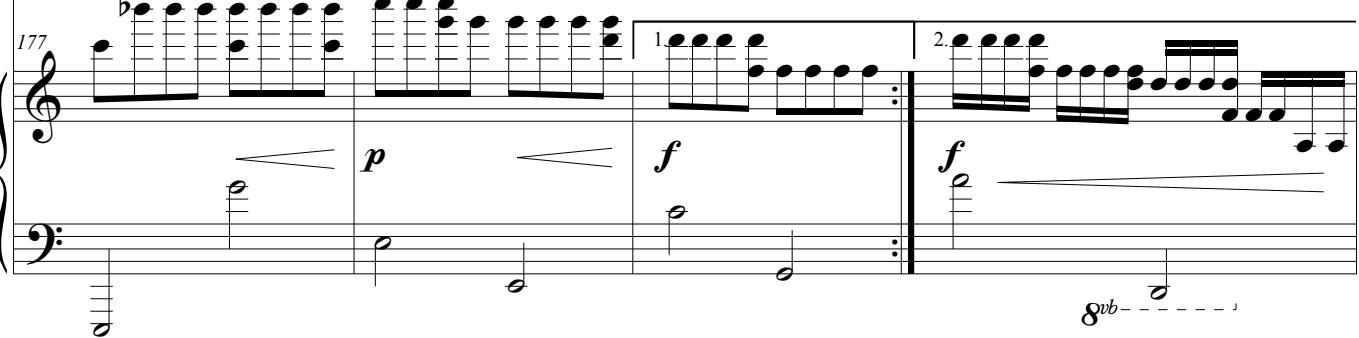
Pno. 

177

Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

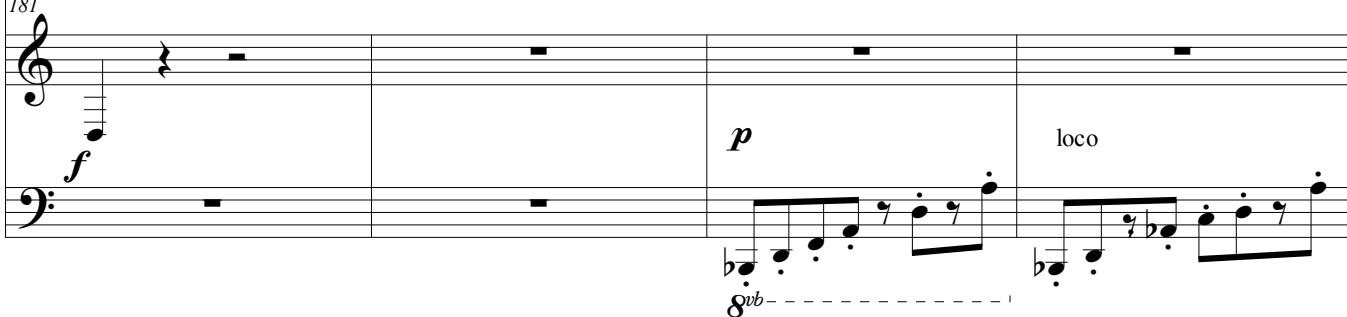
Pno. 

181

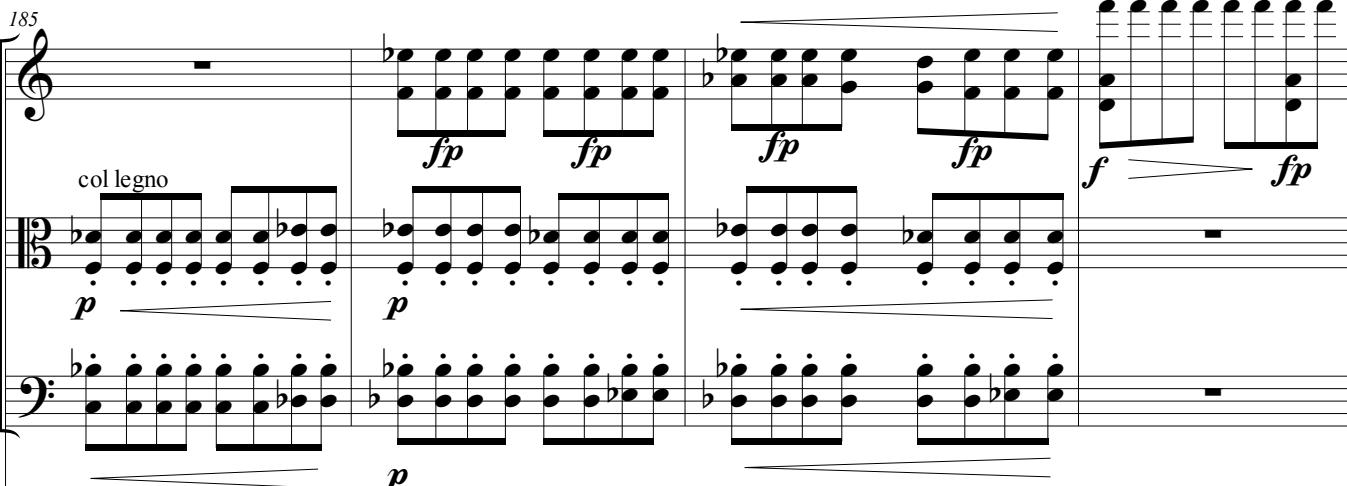
Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

Pno. 

185

Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

Pno. 

189

Vln.      simile - - - - -

Vla.      arco ordin.

Vlc.      pizz.

Pno.      arco ordin.

p

189

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno. mp

193

Vln. 1. 2.

Vla. 1pp 2pp

Vlc. pp pp

Pno. 1. 2.

193 1. 2.

p p

197

Vln. rit.

Vla. a tempo

Vlc.

Pno.

197

Pno. *p* *f*

rit.

Vln. *p* *f*

Vla. *p* *f*

Vlc. *p* *f*

Molto Adagio

Pno. *mf* *f* *cresc.* *ff*

Long

Tempo I

206

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

207

sul tasto

211

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

212

## Pulsation

29

216

Vln.      sul A      -      sul A      sul A

Vla.      -      sul tasto      -      -

Vlc.      -      -      -      -

Pno.      -      mp p      mp p      mp p

220      ordin.

Vln.      -      -      -      -

Vla.      pp      -      -      -

Vlc.      -      -      arco      -

Pno.      -      p      -      -

220      mp p

## Pulsation

224

Vln. *sul tasto*

Vla. Finger without bowing

Vlc. Finger without bowing

Vln. no vibrato

Vla. arco

Pno. 224 *8va* *pp*

Vln. *ppp*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *mp*

Vln. *p*

Vla. Finger without bowing

Vlc. *p*

Pno. 228 *ppp*

Vln. *8vb*

Vla. *8vb*

Vlc. *8vb*