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# James MATHESON

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## Spin

*for String Quartet*



THEODORE  
**PRESSER**  
COMPANY

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## Spin

*for String Quartet*

SPIN was composed in early 1998. Each of the work's three movements assumes the task of exploring a different meaning of the title.

The first movement, **Gyre** (as in gyroscope), has the character of a whimsically spinning object in a sort of arena – spinning and bouncing off the walls (like a spinning penny, which bounces off of an object unpredictably and with somewhat explosive force). The primary musical idea consists of high harmonics in the violins set against a rocking pulse in the lower strings. This basic texture is explored in various guises as the movement progresses.

**Web** is essentially a slow movement. It explores a nearly static, sinewy texture comprised of slowly undulating chords. Snippets of melody emerge from the notes held while the chords disappear. The music intensifies, leading to an expected climax (or anti-climax) of pizzicatos, before returning to the opening material and winding gently to a close.

Like *Gyre*, the third movement, **Spiral**, explores a kinetic notion of spinning, this time in the form of rapidly rising scales. The formal idea of this movement, however, has the character of a spiral, with its tendency toward implosion.

SPIN was written for violinist Baird Dodge.

Duration: c. 12'

Commissioned by Baird Dodge

# SPIN

String Quartet

I. Gyre

JAMES MATHESON  
(1998)

Bright and Energetic (♩=130)

Slightly Slower (♩=120)

Violin I *8va* ..... *loco*  
*sffp* *ff* *fff* *f > p* *f > p* *f > p* *(sul E)* *(sul E)*

Violin II *ff* *sffp* *ff* *fff* *(sul E)* *sharply articulated* *f > p* *f > p* *f > p* *f >*

Viola *ff* *pp* *pizz.* *gently rocking*

Cello *ff*

6  
Vn. I *sim.* *f non dim.*

Vn. II *p* *sim.*

Vla.

Cel.

10  
Vn. I *ffpp* *ff*

Vn. II *f non dim.* *ffpp* *ff*

Vla. *p* *ff*

Cel. *arco* *p* *ff*

♩=130

14  $\text{♩} = 120$

Vn. I *sfzp* < *sfzp* < *fff* *f* > *f* > *f* > *f* > *f* >

Vn. II *sfzp* < *ff* *f* < *fff* *f* > *f* > *f* > *f* > *f* >

Vla. *f* < *fff pp* *arco* *f* > *f* >

Cel. *fff* *pp*

19 *f* > *sim.* *f* > *sim.* *f* > *sim.* *f* > *p*

Vn. I *f* > *sim.*

Vn. II *f* > *sim.*

Vla. *f* > *sim.*

Cel.

23 *f* *f* > *p* *f* *p*

Vn. I *f* *f* > *p* *f* *p*

Vn. II *f* *f* > *p* *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *f* > *p* *f* *p*

Cel. *p*

4/4

Vn. I *sfpp* *f p* *ff* *ff*

Vn. II *p* *f sfpp* *ff* *ff*

Vla. *sfpp* *f p* *ff* *ff*

Cel. *f sfpp* *ff*

Dynamic markings: *sfpp*, *f p*, *ff*, *p*, *f sfpp*.

31

Vn. I *fff* *f* strong, in a groove

Vn. II *fff* *f* strong, in a groove

Vla. *fff p sub.* *poco* *p sub.* *poco espr.* *pizz.*

Cel. *fff* *p* *mf*

Dynamic markings: *fff*, *f*, *p*, *mf*, *sub.*, *poco*, *poco espr.*, *pizz.*. Performance instruction: *strong, in a groove*.

36

Vn. I *f* *f* *f* *f*

Vn. II *f* *f* *f*

Vla.

Cel.

Dynamic markings: *f*.

## II. Web

Cool, Sustained (♩=50)

Violin I senza vib. poco vib.

Violin II senza vib. poco vib. senza vib.

Viola senza vib. poco vib.

Cello senza vib. poco vib. senza vib.

Measures 1-5 of the 'Cool, Sustained' section. The tempo is marked as ♩=50. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 to 4/4 to 5/4. Dynamics include ppp, p, mf, and pp. Performance instructions include 'senza vib.' and 'poco vib.'.

Vn. I senza vib. (senza vib.) → vib. ord. sul G

Vn. II (senza vib.) (senza vib.) → vib. ord.

Vla. senza vib. (senza vib.) → vib. ord.

Cel. (senza vib.) (senza vib.) → vib. ord.

Measures 6-12 of the 'Cool, Sustained' section. The score continues for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. Dynamics include pp, mf, p, f, and p < f. Performance instructions include 'senza vib.', '(senza vib.)', 'vib. ord.', and 'sul G'.

Warmer, Slightly Faster (♩=54)

Tempo I (♩=50)

Vn. I (vib. ord.) senza vib. vib. ord.

Vn. II (vib. ord.) senza vib. vib. ord.

Vla. (vib. ord.) senza vib. vib. ord.

Cel. (vib. ord.) senza vib. vib. ord.

Measures 13-17 of the 'Warmer, Slightly Faster' section. The tempo is marked as ♩=54. The score continues for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. Dynamics include p, mf, pp, p < f, ppp, and f. Performance instructions include '(vib. ord.)', 'senza vib.', and 'vib. ord.'.





## 37 Intensifying

Vn. I *f* *p* *mf* *gliss.* *sfpp* *gliss.* *sfpp*  
 Vn. II *p* *pp* *f* *p*  
 Vla. *arco* *sfp* *pizz.* *f* *p* *p*  
 Cel. *arco* *p* *f* *f* *p* *pp* *poco espr.* *arco* *p*

41  
 Vn. I *pizz.* *ffpp* *ff* *ff* *pp* *f* *p* *ppp* *pp*  
 Vn. II *ff* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *l.h. pizz./arco*  
 Vla. *pizz.* *ffpp* *ff* *ff* *pp* *mf* *p* *sffz* *f*  
 Cel. *pizz.* *ffpp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ppp* *pp*

46  
 Vn. I *senza vib.* *pp* *vib. ord.* *mf* *p*  
 Vn. II *ppp* *p* *pp* *mf* *vib. ord.* *p*  
 Vla. *ppp* *p* *pp* *mf* *vib. ord.* *p*  
 Cel. *ppp* *p* *pp* *mf* *vib. ord.* *p*



Fluid, increasingly explosive

## III. Spiral

(♩. = 76)

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

sul pont.

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

sul pont.

(sul pont.)

ord.

*mp*

Vn. I

Vn. II

Vla.

Cel.

ord.

*mf*

ord.

sul pont.

(sul pont.)

(ord.)

*mf*

ord.

*mf*

*mp* < *mf*

*mp*

*mf*

*mp*

(sul pont.)

ord.

sul pont.

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

Vn. I

Vn. II

Vla.

Cel.

con sord., senza vib., distant

0

*p*

con sord., senza vib., distant

0

*p*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

10

Vn. I

Vn. II

Vla.

Cel.

*mp*

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*mf*

*(p)*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

13

Vn. I

Vn. II

Vla.

Cel.

senza sord.

*f*

*mf*

*f*

*p*

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*f*

16

Vn. I

Vn. II

Vla.

Cel.

*p*

*fp*

*f*

*mf*

*fp*

*f*

*f*

*p*

*fp*

*f*

*p*

*fp*

*f*

*pp*

16

19

Vn. I

*f* > *p*

Vn. II

*p*

Vla.

*pp* <

Cel.

*pp*

*pp* < *mp pp*

22

Vn. I

*f* *p* *f* *p*

Vn. II

*f* *p* *f* *p*

Vla.

*f* *p* *f*

Cel.

*pp* *f* *p* *f*

25

Vn. I

*f* *p* *ffpp* *ff* *f* *ffpp* *ff*

Vn. II

*f* *p* *ff* *f* *ffpp* *ff* *f*

Vla.

*mf* *f* *mf* *ff* *f* *ff* *f*

Cel.

*mf* *f* *f* *ff* *f* *ff* *f*

28

Vn. I

*ff* *ffpp* *ff*

Vn. II

*ff* *ffpp* *ff*

Vla.

*ff* *ffpp* *ff*

Cel.

*ff* *ffpp* *ff* *f* *p*

30

Vn. I

*mf*

Vn. II

*f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Vla.

*fp* *fp* *fp*

Cel.

*mf*

8va

33

Vn. I

*f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Vn. II

*f* *p* *fp* *fp*

Vla.

*f* *p* *fp* *fp*

Cel.