

**Robert Russell Bennett**  
Chamber Music



**String Quartet**  
(1956)

**Janet Schlein Somers and Paul Mack Somers, editors**



*Maurice River Press*

Mauricetown, NJ  
Copyright © 2017

# Robert Russell Bennett

## Chamber Music

---

### STRING QUARTET

(1956)

#### Program Notes

The *String Quartet* (1956) was dedicated “to the memory of Hugo Grunwald”, a founding board member and treasurer of “The Bohemians” (the New York Musicians Club) founded in 1907. After several years, their admirable goal became “the amelioration of the condition of professional musicians who had been overtaken by misfortune.”

In 1937 Bennett became a member of the Bohemians, within a month a board member, and not long after, the vice-president, finally becoming president for several years. This strong, serious string quartet with its exquisite slow movement in memory of Grunwald is a testament to that man’s high reputation and Bennett’s deep appreciation for his decades in the service of music.

The work was premiered by the Guilet String Quartet on 13 December 1956 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. The members of the Quartet – all-stars of their time – were Daniel Guilet, violin 1, who already was a founding member of the famed Beaux Arts Trio; David Sackson, violin 2, who became an advocate of Henry Cowell’s violin music; Emanuel Vardi, viola, who, simply put, is considered to be one of the greatest violists of the 20th century; and Benar Heifetz, violoncello, principal with the Philadelphia Orchestra and a member of the highly regarded Coolidge String Quartet. Bennett’s Quartet was performed by them after Mozart’s Quartet in F, K. 590, to close the first half of the program, with the Ravel Quartet in F after the intermission.

#### Editors’ notes

The manuscript available for editing this work is an Ozalid in mirror image. It was transcribed by holding each page to a bright light, usually the sun, and reading through it.

Movement 3, measures 227 and 229: the violins 1 and 2 and ‘cello parts had simple double-stop half notes in the staff with a harmonics indication (°) over the double-stop. The editors, in consultation with Bennett scholar George Ferencz, who realized that Bennett was showing finger placement, not final heard pitches, have used the notation devised by engraver Nicholas Hopkins. Much thanks to both.

---

#### The Maurice River Press Robert Russell Bennett Project

This series is devoted to Bennett’s unpublished works, undertaken with the permission of his estate, administered by his grandson, Kean MacDonald. We are grateful for the always supportive and cheerfully given aid of the Bennett scholar George Ferencz of the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater, and to the music librarian Gregory MacAyeal of the Music Library at Northwestern University, who at all times carefully and expertly aided in the procuring of the various Bennett manuscripts, some from the 1920s needing restoration before being turned over to us.

#### The Editors

**Janet Schlein Somers** graduated with a Bachelors in Music performance (flute) from San Francisco State University and with a Masters in Library Science from California State University at Berkeley. She subsequently was a music cataloger at Cornell University’s Olin Library, was the head cataloger at the Juilliard School, consultant in setting up the music library at the Hebrew Arts School of the Kaufman Center in New York, and Luce Cataloger at the Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton. She also earned a M.A. in Music from Montclair State University in New Jersey. For many years she was a freelance flutist in North Jersey. She now plays with the Bay Atlantic Symphony.

**Paul Mack Somers** (b. 1942) studied composition with Warren Benson and George Andrix at Ithaca College Conservatory, and participated in master classes with Norman Dello Joio under a Ford Foundation Grant. Somers has composed theatric, vocal, choral, chamber, and orchestral music. His music has been performed in Lincoln Center, Weill Hall in Carnegie Hall, and Ars Vitalis.

Commissioners include Palisades Virtuosi, Brett Deubner, Ellen Hassman, Ron Levy, Michiko Otaki, and the Jacques Cousteau Center for Estuarine Research for a young audience work related to the ecology of the Delaware Bay. He has also composed various solo instrumental works over the years, available on the CD “Sonatas and More” by Maurice River Press (MRP1502). He and his wife Janet live along the Maurice River near Mauricetown, New Jersey.

# String Quartet

## (1956)

Duration: c. 19'05"

I.

ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT  
(1894-1981)

*Edited by Paul M. Somers  
and Janet S. Somers*

**Con brio, moderato in tempo** ♩ = 108

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

11

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

## Leggiero, ma in ritmo giusto

18

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*p*

22

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*8va*

*espressivo*

*loco*

26

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

30

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*p*

*espr.*

*espr.*

*p*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is divided into four systems, each containing four staves (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.).  
System 1 (Measures 18-21): Measures 18-21. Vln. I starts with a rest in measure 18, then enters with a sixteenth-note pattern. Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. all enter in measure 18 with similar sixteenth-note patterns. Dynamics include *p* (piano) in measures 18, 19, and 20.  
System 2 (Measures 22-25): Measures 22-25. Vln. I has a melodic line with a *8va* (octave) marking in measure 22 and *loco* (loco) marking in measure 23. Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. continue with rhythmic patterns. Dynamics include *espressivo* in measure 22.  
System 3 (Measures 26-29): Measures 26-29. Vln. I has a melodic line. Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. continue with rhythmic patterns. Dynamics include *p* (piano) in measure 26.  
System 4 (Measures 30-33): Measures 30-33. Vln. I has a melodic line. Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. continue with rhythmic patterns. Dynamics include *p* (piano) in measure 30 and *espr.* (espressivo) in measures 31 and 32.

34

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*pp*

38

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*p*

42

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

8va-

46

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

8va-

*loco*

*dolce*

*dolce*

*dolce*

Detailed description: This page contains four systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system (measures 34-37) features a rapid sixteenth-note pattern in the Violin I and Viola parts, with the Violoncello providing a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo). The second system (measures 38-41) continues the patterns, with the Violin II part becoming more active. Dynamics include *p* (piano). The third system (measures 42-45) shows the Violin I and II parts playing sustained notes, while the Viola and Violoncello continue their rhythmic patterns. An *8va-* marking indicates an octave shift for the Violin II part. The fourth system (measures 46-49) features a *loco* marking for the Violin II part and *dolce* (dolce) markings for the Violin I, Violin II, and Viola parts, indicating a softer, more lyrical playing style.

## II.

## Andante alla serenata ♩ = 92

Violin I *p* *mfp*

Violin II *p* *mfp*

Viola *p* *mfp*

Violoncello *p* *mfp*

5

Vln. I *p* *tranquillo*

Vln. II *pizz.* *pp*

Vla. *pizz.* *pp* *tranquillo*

Vc. *pizz.* *G string* *C string* *pp* *misterioso, non arpeggiato*

10 (sulla tastiera, ad lib.)

Vln. I *ppp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vla. *p con tenerezza*

Vc. *pp*

14

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

arco

arco

18

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*come sopra*

*ppp*

*pizz.*

*pp*

*dolce*

*pizz.*

*pp*

21

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

24

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.





## III.

Rondo: Allegro con ritmo  $\text{♩} = 112$ 

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

5

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

10

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

15

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

20

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

25

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

31

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*pizz. marc.*

*più f*

Detailed description: This page contains a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The score is divided into four systems, each starting with a measure number (15, 20, 25, and 31). The first system (measures 15-19) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system (measures 20-24) includes a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The third system (measures 25-30) features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking. The fourth system (measures 31-35) includes a *pizz. marc.* (pizzicato marcato) instruction and a *più f* (further fortissimo) marking. The score is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature.

36

Vln. I

Vln. II (pizz.)

Vla.

Vc.

41

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f* arco

Vla. *f*

Vc.

*molto dim.*

46

Vln. I *ppp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

Vln. II *ppp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

Vla. *ppp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

Vc. *ppp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

51

Vln. I *fpp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

Vln. II *fpp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

Vla. *fpp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*

Vc. *fpp* *fpp* *fpp* *fpp*