

## Wilderness House Literary Review 11/2

*David P. Miller*

### **Violin And String Quartet And Two Windows**

Five strings: violin with violin and violin and viola and cello. One hour fifty-seven minutes of evolving stasis. One window faces back yard maples, catalpa, July afternoon. Second window faces breeze.

pianissimo always moving  
Morton Feldman's composed exhalations  
pulse in ebb  
ebb to silences  
return to ebb

One diagonal nod to left – trees bow –  
July greens – trees righted again

Recycling truck out of view  
air gasps grabs  
slushes clatters + thacks  
plastic bins smacked back down  
groans on to next bin next houses  
distant clatter slush slam

She naps with second window breeze at her back  
+ handheld fan at her face  
diagonal across the futon

clusters of overtones call each other  
in sustained exhalations

Downy woodpecker self-pops up  
skinny maples smooth gray bark –  
stab-stabs

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solo violin – sighs between  
two notes  
two notes  
two notes  
or three notes –  
pulled out of the cloud –  
two-or-three point object

green catalpa hearts  
notebook page wavers  
small branches  
slide right across the frame  
maple leaf hands

remember Yoko Ono's films  
five minutes to watch a match flame appear, flare, burn out  
one eyeblink in thirty-five seconds  
a new event: *Listen to paint dry*

squirrel rests in a crook  
where a trunk splits in three –  
its crows'-nest, black  
rodent eyes tend toward  
closing, then widen  
closing then widen  
+ its head jerk  
+ its stare then droop  
closing then jerk alert  
eyes closing sleepy squirrel

its crows'-nest waves a few degrees  
as the two notes rock for  
twenty minutes  
or three notes  
over quartet cloud formations

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squirrel again its back to me  
holds something, what,  
at its working jaws –  
discards maple seed double wing

violin single high note  
pulses above cirrus formations  
its single note and  
the quartet calling from a distance –  
remember Yves Tanguy landscape,  
single buffered figure  
body-form group  
against steel sky

blue jay lets itself fall  
from above the frame to  
one two three branches  
jerks beak back forth  
exits left  
rapid diagonal dash low right high left  
its cry three times the rate of quartet's blood

two note phrase  
an unemergency vehicle siren –  
shadowed in listening depth by a second phrase  
heaven siren call

music shifts like a barrier island's refill.  
remember the barberpole lighthouse drifted inland  
while no one was listening.  
the light breath of your love asleep  
the living breath of his love in coma  
hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhh

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two sparrows rocket in. shake their  
tailfeathers. three sparrows rocket in.  
four. five.  
three rocket out. four.  
one sparrow probes its tail + breast.  
stutter cheeps, rockets right.

five string players fall into strata.  
build, rebuild in layers of bow on string.

twitching shadow bird is a dry leaf

long succession of string monoliths  
set in a desert of pause.  
each marked with new vibration runes.

beak + tail female cardinal  
modest red orange backlit body  
shielded by a spur of trunk.  
a few seconds, gone.

strings narrow to a thickened band of distant sirens

the leaves are never still

violin pizzicato at one hour forty-five minutes  
each pluck acupuncture to  
an inner ear's synapse –  
set against the monuments  
still a long train of monuments

a single note plucked alone –  
starlight for the ears.

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eyes rest in light + shadow

skin awakens to cool air from second window

+ another bird falls