

Whorl (2002)

David Lipten

“When I began to write *Whorl*, I had recently finished working on my string quartet, *Ictus*. One of the most inviting sounds a quartet makes comes from the ability of all four instruments to sound like one, giant whole. I had a hard time getting that sound world out of my ears. The heterogeneous sound made by a group consisting of a clarinet, violin, and piano then posed a number of interesting challenges. One of my solutions was to use a technique called ‘hocket,’ wherein one musical line or thought is broken up and shared among the different instruments.

In *Whorl*, a line of music is often begun by one of the instruments, perhaps accompanied by another, and is then taken over and completed by the third. It is like a family discussion in which each member is talking at once and with each of the participants finishing each other’s sentences.

I would like to thank the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University for commissioning this piece. I would also like to thank the Trio for their musicianship, time, and commitment.”

—David Lipten

The world premiere of *Whorl* was on July 22, 2004 at the Saugatuck Women’s Club Chamber Music Festival, Saugatuck, Michigan.

David Lipten (born 1961) holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in jazz piano performance and composition from Hampshire College, a Master of Arts degree in composition from the Copland Conservatory of Music at Queens College/CUNY, and a PhD in composition from Duke University. His principal composition teachers have included Lewis Spratlin, Thea Musgrave, and Scott Lindroth. He has taught composition and theory at UNC-Chapel Hill, Michigan State University, and Grand Valley State University. He was recently appointed to the composition faculty at Florida State University.

A former colleague of David Lipten’s has attributed a “strong and sophisticated ear for advanced harmonic progression, coupled with an equally subtle appreciation of the multi-dimensionality of advanced rhythmic practice” to his music that results in “a strength and integrity of architectural trajectory along with a deep yet intellectually rigorous musical lyricism.”

Lipten’s compositions are routinely performed and recorded by some of the country’s most accomplished ensembles, including the Verdehr Trio, the New York New Music Ensemble, and the Chester Quartet. Recent performances of his works include the premieres of *Ever Since* and *Best Served Cold* for piano; *Time’s Dream* for chorus; *Stunt Double*, a concerto for sextet; *Ictus* for string quartet; and *Slipstream* for flute, guitar, and mallet percussion. His works have been performed at the June in Buffalo Composers Conference, the Oregon Bach Festival, and the California State University Summer Arts Festival. His first CD, *Best Served Cold*, was released on Ablaze Records in 2012. Another CD, *Requiem for the Innocent: Contemporary Choral Works, Vol. 1*, was released in 2016. His music is published by Subito Music Corporation.

Lipten has received a number of other commissions including those from the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard University; Duo46, a violin and guitar duo; and NOISE of San Diego New Music, a mixed chamber ensemble. He has also received a number of honors, including awards from the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM)/Miami Section, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, ASCAP, St. Paul’s Chamber Music, Music + Culture, The Portland Chamber Music Festival, and Duke University. He has received fellowships for residencies at both the MacDowell and Yaddo colonies and at the Aspen Music Festival.

Additional information is available at www.dlipten.com.