

PROGRAM NOTES: “To the Point”

“To The Point” is a work derived from Jennifer Higdon’s 4th string quartet, “Impressions”. That work was commissioned to be a compositional response to the Debussy and Ravel string quartets. This particular movement is a response to their second movements, which both imitate the Gamelan heard by the composers at the 1889 World Exposition. This movement uses extensive pizzicato and other string colorings (as a reflection of the Gamelan ensemble’s colorful percussion instruments). Each instrument has its own theme (as would a Gamelan instrumentalist) and there is no development of those themes (following Debussy and Ravel’s lead). In addition, the word “point” in the title refers to the pointillistic technique in Impressionist painting (from the composers’ time period).

--Jennifer Higdon