

Résonances

for viola and small ensemble (clarinet, violin, cello & piano)

The title reflects two aspects of this work. Written in 1999, it is a development or amplification of an earlier composition for viola and piano (*Conséquents*) which itself grew out of a solo violin piece dating from 1969, when the composer was a student in Paris. *Résonances* also refers to the way in which the instruments - the viola, which has the dominating role, clarinet, violin, cello and piano - interact.

The basic material is presented in the first few moments, consisting principally of tremolo passages, short rapid flourishes and staccato chords. These elements are then used not only as material which is developed but also, and perhaps to a greater degree, to create echoes and reactions, particularly by the accompanying instruments to the viola which is heard virtually throughout without a break.

Structurally, five distinct sections may be identified:

- I the opening presentation of material, ending with a short passage where the strings slowly change notes 'portamento';
- II a first 'development' section, where the emphasis is on short durations, including in particular the use of pizzicato;
- III a series of repeated chords, separated by silences except for sounds which resonate as the piano's sustaining pedal is held down;
- IV a second 'development' section, this time with more sustained sounds; and after another brief 'portamento' passage
- V a coda which has some elements in common with the opening section although nothing is actually repeated.