

STRING QUARTET by David Avshalomov

[Note by the composer]

Though written in 1972/73 (and revised several times since), the lyrical three-movement *String Quartet* sounds more “modern” than my later, and particularly most recent, works. While fundamentally still tonal, it contains thematic passages whose chromatic bent and economy of pitch usage suggests a brief episodic flirtation with melodic serialism (a path I never pursued). The whiffs of Bartok, Britten, Prokofieff, and Walton are inevitable; the forms, emotions, and procedures are my own.

I. **Masks, Roles, Humors** - The opening movement, while related to sonata form in such elements as a full return of opening materials, is highly exploratory in its use of several recurring thematic segments. After a dreamy opening, it reveals a more rhythmic, dancelike character, with several varied episodes, and a slowed coda that begins with big statement but then dissolves in a complex, bitter harmony.

II. **Scherzo** (Rondetto) - The scherzo, which I wrote last, and very quickly, is a brief, ironic, whimsical rondo—but with increasingly distorted returns of the rondo subject which almost threaten to break the form. It is over almost before you know it.

III. **The Dream** - The slow, intense finale, starting out of the highest, quietest sounds, reflects a long, troubled dream sequence, full of anxiety, ancient childish resentments, and ultimately, sadness, ending in a grey, bleak dawn.