

NICKY SOHN

BURNING

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FOR STRING QUARTET

(2021)

# Instrumentation

Violin I  
Violin II  
Viola  
Cello

Duration - ca. 8 minutes 30 seconds

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Inspiration can hardly be predicted nor deliberate. It could be from opening a packet of hot sauce, watching a flame slowly flicker to an ember, saying a forever farewell, missing someone—these were my sources of inspiration for “Burning”, for string quartet. Winter of 2020 was a strange time for me—I am sure for many, 2020 was odd, never turning the way you’d think.

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All the four events I’ve mentioned above somehow to me gave the sensation of burning. To get through the obvious, eating hot sauce and watching a fire is easily connected to burning—your tongue, desert fire.

Often I feel as if I’m a person immune to goodbyes, as if I’ve been trained since birth to be a stoic. But when I haven’t primed myself for it, if I have the uncertainty, or rather the certainty, of the goodbye being the last one, there’s nothing like it. The sensation of heartache it feels physical, that tearing and searing feeling. Then missing someone, crying, feeling small in this world, hopelessness, it burns.

Works presented at the special exhibition, “Wild Life of Elizabeth Murray and Jessi Reaves”, also have this spark of energy and color that to me felt like burning. My ideas often tend to be scattered and my inspiration may seem chaotic, but the burst of energy and ideas has resulted in a dynamic and lively work. This piece bends several adjectives that resemble a fire, and the process of burning: luminous, flaring, glowing, sparkling. “Burning” cites the changing sensation, from rapture to grief, every sound to deep, unending silence.

for Musiqa  
**Burning**

Nicky Sohn

fire - driving ♩ = 96

**System 1:** Violin I and II, Viola, and Cello. Dynamics range from *p* to *ff*. Includes *sul pont.*, *pizz.*, and *arco* markings.

**System 2 (Measures 5-8):** Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. Dynamics range from *p* to *ff*. Includes *arco* marking.

**System 3 (Measures 9-12):** Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. Dynamics range from *p* to *f*. Includes a section marker **A** above measure 10.

12

Vln. I *p* *f* *p* *fff*

Vln. II *p* *f* *p* *fff*

Vla. *p* *f* *p* *fff*

Vc. *p* *f* *p* *fff*

**B** luminous - leggiero, dance-like

15

Vln. I *p* *f*

Vln. II *p* *f*

Vla. *p* *f*

Vc. *p* *f* *ff* pizz.

18

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *ff* pizz. arco *f*

Vla. *sfz* pizz. arco *f*

Vc. *sfz* arco *f*