

Samuel J Maughan

Unification

for String Quartet
(March 2023)

About

Unification is a piece which moves from **dynamicity to stasis**. The final chord of the piece is the destination from which all material is derived and is driven towards, achieving **unification, stability, and stasis**.

Dynamicity → Stasis

Performance Instructions

Notation

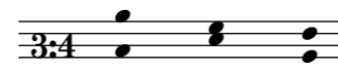
- Players are all to read from **identical scores**, which will need to be rotated according to instrument.
- Each player is to read from their correspondingly labelled “triangular wedge”, from **bottom to top**.

Tempo

- A constant pulse of around **120 bpm** is to be maintained throughout the piece, with each line lasting four beats.
 - A **conductor** or **silent metronome** is highly recommended for performance.

Structure

- There are **eight lines** in total, each corresponding to a different **metric subdivision**.
 - For example, the following line should be played as a **triplet** (3 double-stops against the 4 beat pulse):



- Each line is to be repeated a **suggested** number of times denoted above the corresponding line.
 - Players have different numbers of repeats for each line, and so do not always change lines at the same time.
 - The repeats are guidelines used to achieve a blurred and continuous polyrhythmic structure.
- When a player reaches the final line, it should be held. Players will reach this line at **different times**.
- Once all players reach the final line, they should hold the resulting chord for at least a further 4 beats before concluding the piece.

Dynamics

- Players should begin softly and crescendo throughout the piece until the final chord, which should be strong and **organ-like** in quality.

Expression

- Players should play **expressively** with musicality, in contrast to the mathematical, metronomic character of the piece.

Articulation

- The piece is to be played **arco**, with a recommended articulation of **detaché**.

The score is divided into two sections by a vertical line labeled "stasis".

Left Section (Violin II / Violoncello):

- Violin II: 8:4 (10 times), 7:4 (9 times), 6:4 (9 times), 5:4 (12 times), 4:4 (15 times), 4:4 (9 times), 3:4 (12 times), 2:4 (16 times), 8:4 (7 times)
- Violoncello: 8:4 (10 times), 7:4 (9 times), 6:4 (9 times), 5:4 (12 times), 4:4 (15 times), 4:4 (9 times), 3:4 (12 times), 2:4 (16 times), 8:4 (7 times)

Right Section (Violin I / Viola):

- Violin I: 8:4 (4 times), 7:4 (12 times), 6:4 (6 times), 5:4 (9 times), 4:4 (9 times), 5:4 (9 times), 6:4 (15 times), 7:4 (12 times), 8:4 (13 times)
- Viola: 8:4 (4 times), 7:4 (12 times), 6:4 (6 times), 5:4 (9 times), 4:4 (9 times), 5:4 (9 times), 6:4 (15 times), 7:4 (12 times), 8:4 (13 times)

Dynamic markings: "dynamicity" (top left and bottom right), "stasis" (top center and bottom center), "hold" (top left and bottom right).