

Some notes on ‘for string quartet playing on a beach while the crescent moon is setting’

This piece came about because of an email that Kallie Sugatski sent me. Kallie very kindly programmed a piece of mine at a concert in 2021. After asking about some details for the program, Kallie sent me the following email:

Unrelated follow up question—do you have works that are under 10’ and would be particularly good for string quartet playing on a beach while the full moon is rising?

To which I responded:

I loved your last email. I had a look and I didn’t have anything “for a string quartet playing on a beach while the full moon is rising” (and under 10 minutes). But I thought it was a *great* question!

So I decided to write a piece.

I send the first draft of the piece to Kallie with that email. The concert ended up being when a *crescent* moon was *setting* and the piece was adjusted to accommodate this.

In some sense this piece was inspired by Oulipo and other constraint-based literature. I tried to write something in a day or two that engaged with being on the beach and the moon phase. Like many of my scores, I did not have a particularly clear idea of what it would sound like. The score is more a set of limitations to explore within.

The piece could easily be played on a different phase of the moon (and retitled as necessary) by adjusting which order the moon phases are faded out.