

# Kurt Mortensen

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## *Americana*

For String Quartet

*Full Score*

## *Americana*

Duration: ca. 8½ minutes

First performance:  
March 29, 1998  
at Northern Illinois University  
by the Avalon Quartet

Blaise Magnière - violin  
Mary Wang - violin  
Anthea Kreston - viola  
Katie Schlaikjer - violoncello

Second performance:  
November 3, 1999  
at Northern Illinois University  
by the Lipatti Quartet

Calin Lupanu - violin  
Monica Boboc - violin  
Chloe Kline - viola  
Radu Nagy - violoncello

for more information about Kurt Mortensen's music visit:  
<http://www.kurtmortensen.org>

## **Program Notes By The Composer**

*Americana* emerged out of a melody I had written in the mid-90s, which languished in the back of my mind for some time. This basic tune, as well as the recurring connecting interlude, has a very American folk-like character. Before starting the work in late 1997, I had decided that I wanted to use variation technique and began to investigate possible existing themes which I could use. It then occurred to me that I already had an original tune with which I had done nothing. Most of this short piece for string quartet is derived in some way from this folk-like tune and its interlude, resulting in something resembling a theme and variations, but certainly not in the “classical” sense. At a few points, these two melodic ideas are combined to form new “variations.” *Americana* is a rather simple piece, composed with a conservative, but tried-and-true harmonic language, which is exactly what I felt that the tune on which it is based really deserved. In this quartet, my goal was to capture the American spirit in a similar way that composers like Aaron Copland and William Schuman had done earlier in the twentieth century. I have also arranged *Americana* for string orchestra.

# Americana

for String Quartet

Kurt Mortensen  
1997-1998

♩ = 100

Musical score for measures 1-7 of Americana for String Quartet. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features four staves: 1st Violin, 2nd Violin, Viola, and Violoncello. The dynamics for all parts are: *p* (measures 1-2), *mf* (measures 3-4), *mp* (measure 5), *f* (measure 6), and *mf* (measure 7). There are accents (v) and hairpins (trapezoids) indicating the dynamic changes. Measure numbers 1 through 7 are printed below the staves.

Musical score for measures 8-13 of Americana for String Quartet. The score continues with four staves: 1st VI., 2nd VI., Vla., and Vc. Measures 8-11 show a steady rhythmic pattern. In measure 12, the 1st and 2nd Violins reach a dynamic of *f*. In measure 13, the 1st and 2nd Violins continue with *f*, while the Viola and Violoncello play a more active rhythmic pattern. Measure numbers 8 through 13 are printed below the staves.

Musical score for measures 14-17 of Americana for String Quartet. The score continues with four staves: 1st VI., 2nd VI., Vla., and Vc. Measures 14-17 feature a consistent *mf* dynamic across all parts. The 1st and 2nd Violins play a melodic line with eighth notes, while the Viola and Violoncello provide a rhythmic accompaniment. Measure numbers 14 through 17 are printed below the staves.

1st VI. *f* *mf*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

18 19 20 21

1st VI.

2nd VI. *mp*

Vla.

Vc.

22 23 24 25 26

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

27 28 29 30 31

1st VI. *f* *mf*

2nd VI. *f* *mf*

Vla. *f* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf*

32 33 34 35

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

36 37 38 39 40 41

1st VI. *f* *p*

2nd VI. *f*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

42 43 44 45 46 47

1st VI. *pizzicato* *mf* *arco*

2nd VI. *pizzicato* *mf* *arco*

Vla. *mf* *pizzicato* *arco*

Vc. *mf* *pizzicato* *arco*

48 49 50 51 52

hocket between violins

1st VI. *pizzicato* *f* *mf*

2nd VI. *pizzicato* *f* *mf*

Vla. *arco*

Vc.

53 54 55 56

1st VI. *arco*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

57 58 59 60 61

1st VI. *f*

2nd VI.

Vla. *f*

Vc.

62 63 64 65 66

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI. *arco*

Vla. *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Vc.

67 68 69 70 71

1st VI. *f* *mf* *p* *mf*

2nd VI. *mf* *p* *mf*

Vla. *pizzicato* *arco* *p* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *p* *mf*

72 73 74 75 76 77

1st VI. *p* *mf* *mp*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc. *p* *mf* *mp* *mf*

78 79 80 81 82 83

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc.

84 85 86 87 88

1st VI. *f* *mf*

2nd VI. *f* *mf*

Vla. *f* *arco* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf*

89 90 91 92 93

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

94 95 96 97 98

*f*

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

99 100 101 102

*f* *mp* *mp*

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

103 104 105 106

*f* *mf* *f* *mf*

1st VI. *mp* *mf* *mp*

2nd VI. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *mp*

107 108 109 110 111 112

1st VI. *f* *mp*

2nd VI. *f* *mp* *mf*

Vla. *f* *mf* *mp*

Vc. *f* *mp*

113 114 115 116 117 118

1st VI. *mf* *mp* *mf*

2nd VI. *mp* *mf*

Vla. *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *mp* *mf*

119 120 121 122 123 124

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

125 126 127 128 129

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

130 131 132 133 134

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

*f* *mf* *mp*

135 136 137 138 139 140

*piu mosso*

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

141 142 143 144 145 *mf* 146 147

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

148 149 150 *mf* 151 152 153

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

154 155 156 157 158

1st VI. *mf* *f*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

159 160 161 162 163

1st VI. *f*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

164 165 166 167

*mf*

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI. *mf* arco

Vla. *mf*

Vc.

168 169 170 171

1st VI. *rit.* *mp* *Tempo I* *mf*

2nd VI. *mp* *mf*

Vla. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp*

172 173 174 175

1st VI. *mf*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

176 177 178 179

1st VI. *f* *mf*

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

180 181 182 183

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

184 185 186 187 188

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

189 190 191 192 193

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

194 195 196 197

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla. *arco*  
*mf*

Vc.

198 199 200 201

*rit. to m. 206*

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

202 203 204 205

$\text{♩} = 90$

1st VI.

2nd VI.

Vla.

Vc.

*mp* *mf* *mp*

*mp* *mf* *mp*

*mp* *mf* *mp*

206 207 208 209

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