

***Ghosts for Six Violas* Program Note**

Ghosts for six violas was written for the studio of my colleague Helen Callus. It is an independent work, but can also be played simultaneously with my *Lament* for viola solo, creating what in effect is a concerto for solo viola accompanied by a consort of six violas called *Lament Amid Silence*.

Ghosts portrays an agitated and desperate set off my two lengthy quiet sections, the second a consolatory chorale. Anguished desperation is expressed through such instrumental techniques as playing very near the bridge, over-bowing, and quarter tones, evoking rage and despair contrasting with the chorale, which features soft, quiet, tonal chords.

Ghosts, like *Lament*, is characterized by low silences setting off isolated gestures, but here, the silences are even longer, and the short gestures less frequent: we hear the ghosts that are the background for the world of *Lament*. At the end, the descending figures are heard against an extended, low pedal point, eventually dying out one by one, ending with a single pizzicato note, then silence.