Composure
for four electric guitars

by Kyle Gann
2007–8
In an article in the October 13, 1985 *New York Times Book Review*, called "Writers and the Nostalgic Fallacy," novelist Marilynne Robinson once wrote:

> The literature of expostulation, of Catastrophe, is taken to be very serious. But among people carried along in a canoe toward a waterfall, the one who stands up and screams is not the one with the keenest sense of the situation. We are in a place so difficult that perhaps alarm is an indulgence, and a harder thing - composure - is required of us.

I was so impressed with this thought, which succinctly distilled my own reasons for turning away from what one might call the 20th-century Music of Catastrophe, that I typed it onto an index card and kept it above my desk for years. Many of my pieces have aimed to express composure - this is the first one to use the word as a title.

The piece was commissioned by guitarist Tim Brady, to whom I am extremely grateful, for the April, 2008, "Voyages: Montreal-New York" festival.

Duration: \(13 \frac{1}{2}\) minutes
Composure

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Electric Guitar 1

Electric Guitar 2

Electric Guitar 3

Electric Guitar 4 (Drop-D tuning)
Composure
Composure
Composure
Composure
Composure
Composure
very slight ritard.