Kierkegaard, Walking

for flute, clarinet, violin, and cello

by Kyle Gann
2007
Kierkegaard, Walking (2007)

While Kierkegaard’s books had a potent, if subtle, impact on my early intellectual life, I admit that when I began Kierkegaard, Walking, I didn’t have him in mind. But I was thinking about walking, and I had an upcoming trip to Copenhagen on the horizon, with the intention of retracing Kierkegaard’s steps. I was trying to think up images that had to do with meandering through mental or spiritual fields, while reading Joakim Garff’s excellent biography of the philosopher, and it finally dawned on me that Kierkegaard wandering endlessly through Copenhagen, talking to everyone he met and working out his dialectic with or without an accompanying audience, was the image I needed. There are even passages where the aesthetic (or time-based) is contrasted with the eternal (repetitive), as in Either/Or. But it would be stretching things to connect Kierkegaard, Walking too closely with the content of the philosopher’s writing: it is more the biographical image, the peripatetic philosopher in constant motion while musing sub specie aeternitatis, “from the standpoint of eternity.” I managed to complete the first draft in Copenhagen, then tinkered with it a little more in Amsterdam.

Despite the piece’s simplicity, a tendency to hurry must be resisted. Any performance faster than \( q = 84 \) is not a performance of this piece, and will not be approved by the composer.

Kyle Gann

Duration: 15 1/2 minutes
to Elena Dubinets:
for the Seattle Chamber Players

Kierkegaard, Walking

Andante, naturally; unhurried and with a certain gravitas

\[ \begin{align*}
q &= 84, \\
\text{and not a hair faster}
\end{align*} \]

\( j = 84 \)

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Kierkegaard, Walking
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.

with growing intensity

Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.

mp
mf

p

Kierkegaard, Walking
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Kierkegaard, Walking
Kierkegaard, Walking
expressive, some freedom in the pacing

Kierkegaard, Walking
don't hurry! still \( \frac{3}{4} \) = 84 \( \text{pizz.} \)
Kierkegaard, Walking
Kierkegaard, Walking