

**Both**  
(1998)

*for solo viola*

**John Kennedy**

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## **Both** *for solo viola*

**Both** was originally composed as one of the instrumental interludes in my chamber cantata *One Body*, and was slightly expanded to be a solo on its own.

*One Body* is composed for a singer who uses both their baritone and countertenor voices, and the viola solo serves as the introduction of the section “Neither Male nor Female”. The text for this passage is by St. Augustine, describing humanity as a larger body of which we are parts, as well as generously embracing the spectrum of gender.

*If we are all members of one body, then in that one body  
there is neither male nor female;  
or rather, there is both:  
it is an androgynous or hermaphroditic body,  
containing both sexes.*

– St. Augustine

**Both** explores this ambiguity through the small differences of a half-step and its expansion into different registers. Glissandi and asymmetrical meters serve what is a kind of internal self-exploration but also a proud declaration of two-spirit identity. The player should feel very free with the structure and time of the piece, and the commas at barlines are almost fermati. The piece is a kind of internal question/answer which the viola answers with assurance.

And among other relatives among us, plants in the *viola* family grow close to the earth, often with heart-shaped leaves.

– John Kennedy  
Brooklyn, 1998

# Both

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♩ = 60 *Free and unsettled*, slower, *a tempo, with rubato*

*p* *p* *p* *poco a poco cresc.* *mp* *mf*

10, slower, *a tempo, as before*

*p* *p* *p* *p* *poco*

18

*poco a poco cresc.* *mp* *mf* *p*

25 *not fast, as if seeking*

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

29

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

33 *poco gliss.*

*mp* *mf* 5 5

37 *poco rit.*

*mp* *poco rit.*

41 *p* *mp*

45 *f* *molto accelerando* 6 *slower, a tempo* *molto accelerando* 6

48 *p* *dolce* *exuberant* *mf* *mf*

52 *f* *poco gliss.* *mp*

56 *poco a poco cresc. and accell.*

60 *mf* *f* *mp* *slower, a tempo*

64 *mp* *p* *p* *pp* *poco rit. slower* *slower yet*