

## **partial [dist]res[s]toration**

The story told by Felder in his seven-movement sextet is as elusive (and allusive) as its title. The composer explains: “Numerous materials are brought together in this composition: both newly composed fragments and those rescued from older sketch pad – all are subjected to both ‘restoration’ (making the older appear refreshed), and ‘distressing’ (newer materials are treated to ‘age’ them). And the word ‘partial’ refers both to incomplete presentation, and to the harmonic series, which serves overtly to harmonize different things.”

Like the “partials” that sound above any given pitch as part of its overtones or harmonic series, the fragmentary components of *partial [dist]res[s]toration* sometimes run together and sometimes remain discrete, as their titles suggest:

1. a puro sol escribo... (I write in the pure sun...), Pablo Neruda
2. I remember, I remember Memory the great pretender, Robert Creeley
- 3.a. I sing...
- 3.b. because I sing...
- 3.c. and because I sing..., Pablo Neruda
4. Ris de ton nom... (laugh at the sound of your name), Rene Daumal
5. Die Felder sind grau... (The fields are grey), anonymous

Commissioned by Harvard University’s Fromm Foundation for the New York New Music Ensemble, *partial [dist]res[s]toration* invites one to listen for layers of sound and meaning: fragmentary bits of song; timbres ranging from the brilliance of “pure sun” to the “grey” of fields in winter; an array of textures wholly original, yet reminiscent of Stravinsky’s neoclassicism, Webern’s lucid expression, and Renaissance polyphony. The work even contains some “textural washes” that Felder initially composed for the American Dance Festival in 1982. The old is hidden within the new, the new is altered as if through recollection – “Memory the great pretender.”