

**Brett Dean (b.1961)**

String Quartet No. 2 "And once I played Ophelia"

I.

Get thee to a nunnery, a nunnery!  
Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners?  
Very proud, revengeful, ambitious.  
Wise men know well enough what monsters  
you make of them.

Get thee to a nunnery, a nunnery.  
Though shalt not escape.  
You jig and amble and you lisp;  
your wantoness!

Get thee to a nunnery, to a nunnery go.  
Go thy ways to a nunnery,  
Get thee to a nunnery.

And I that sucked the honey  
of his musicked vows,  
Now see what noble reason like sweet bells  
Jangled out of time,  
Sweet bells jangled out of time and harsh.  
Blasted with ecstasy.

II.

Doubt thou the stars are fire,  
Doubt that the sun doth move,  
Doubt truth to be a liar,  
But never doubt I love.

I did love you once. I did love you once.  
Ay, truly, I did love you once.  
I loved you not.  
Woe, woe, woe,  
T'have seen, seen what I have seen.

O Rose of May, of May.  
To the celestial, and my soul's idol,  
Doubt though the stars are fire,  
Doubt that the sun doth move,  
Doubt truth to be a liar, but never doubt,  
My most dear lady, thine ever more,  
O most best believe it.

Never, never, never doubt I love.  
I love thee best, believe it.  
My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
Remembrances of yours that I have  
longed long to redeliver.  
My lord, I pray you now receive them.

III.

This is the very ecstasy of love,  
Whose violent property fordoes itself  
And leads the will, to desperate undertakings  
As oft as any, as of as any passion  
As any passion under heaven.  
This is the very ecstasy of love.

Fear it, fear it.  
Best safety lies in fear.  
Fear it, fear it.  
Hold it a fashion this trifling of his favour,  
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute, no  
more.

Green girl, fear it.  
Do not believe his vows.

These blazes give more light than heat  
and extinct in both.  
Tender yourself more dearly,  
or you tender me a fool, green girl.  
Green girl. Green girl.  
Do not believe, do not believe his vows,  
Do not believe, do not believe his vows.

I shall obey, my lord.

IV.

There is a willow, a willow,  
grows askant the brook,  
His hoary leaves, there  
with fantastic garlands,  
There, there on pendant boughs...

V.

Good night ladies, sweet ladies,  
good night, good night.  
Sweet ladies, good night.  
Come, come my coach, come my coach.  
Good night.