

# Sparks Fly Upward

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Duration: ca. 13 minutes

string quartet

The phrase “sparks fly upward” comes from the book of Job in the Old Testament. In context, this expression essentially means that hardship is a part of life just as naturally as sparks fly upward from a flame. Job is a man who endures incredible loss and suffering. His friends insist he must have done something to offend God and is being punished for it, but Job knows he is innocent and does not understand why he is going through such hardship. This piece wrestles with the frustration of suffering that seems meaningless and undeserved. It also attempts to capture the conversation between Job and his friends, which is often adversarial, as well as the final dialogue between Job and God.

*Sparks Fly Upward* was composed for the Altius Quartet and premiered in Grusin Music Hall in Boulder, CO on April 12, 2017.