

## **ROLNICK, N.: Economic Engine (The) / Hammer and Hair / Uptown Jump / Real Time**

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Kraig Lamper

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*Hammer & Hair* is Neil Rolnick's conversation for violin and piano. It travels through several musical areas, including a jazzy section, a fugue, and a waltz, over the course of its 20 minutes.

Having repeatedly heard that China was the "economic engine of the 21st Century", Rolnick has created a four-movement suite for four traditional Chinese instruments (erhu, yangqin, guzheng, and pipa) and a typical western string quartet. The instrumentation presents a wondrous atmosphere that leaves the listener in a liminal space between two cultures. The two groups battle for dominance occasionally, but it is clear that the culture and beauty in the Chinese instruments have assimilated the industrious and multifaceted European instruments. '*Farm to Factory*', the second of the four movements, includes digital manipulation in the forms of bitcrushing and reverb. The piece becomes chaotic sometimes, as competing ideals meet head-on.

*Uptown Jump*, a light-hearted work using syncopated melodies shared between the flute and harp, and *Real Time*, a 17-minute composition that balances a synthesizer with a big band feel, conclude the program.