

An Archive of the musical compositions by Herb Bielawa

Composition: **Double Think** – flute, clarinet, violin, cello, soprano, harpsichord

Date: 2009

Duration: 11:55

Recording by Sounds New – Deborah Schmidt, flute; Richard Mathias, clarinet; Brooke Aird, violin; Cathy Allen Aird, cello; Anna Carol Dudley, soprano; Miles Graber, harpsichord

Program Note:

Double Think was composed in 2009 for the Sounds New Ensemble specifically for their annual concert. Levity was my starting point and my favorite poet of humorous verse is Jeannie Pool, a Southern California poet/composer/female activist. I had already set eight of her *Rants*, the collection which also contains “Double Think.” This is a discourse probably between a man and a woman who bat back and forth what they suppose each is thinking about the other. As I worked on the piece it gradually took on the shape of a cantata in the Bach manner so I simply let it continue on that path with arias, recitatives and traditional cadences. Rather than trying to match the harmonic language of Bach, however, I naturally used my own.

Text:

Double Think

I think about that sometimes, he said. I think you think you are smarter than me, he said.

I said, why do you think that, I mean, I said, well, Why do you think that I think that? I mean, why do you think I think that I am smarter than you?

I don't know, but that's what I think; I think you think you are smarter than me.

Oh, yeah, well who are you, to say aloud what you think I might think, particularly if it is that you think I think I am smarter than you are? I mean really, that is something else. What makes you think that I think I am smarter than you are? The nerve of you to think that about what I might think! How in the hell do you think you think you know what I might think about which one of us is smarter than the other, and what does it matter to you what I think anyway?

Well, I do think about it sometimes. And I do think that you think you are smarter than I am and, well, I guess it bothers me; Yeah, that is what I think. You know, it does bother me that you would think that you are smarter than me. It really does bother me.

Well, I think it's you—it's you who thinks that I am smarter than you and that's why you think I think I'm smarter than you. Well, I don't think that at all—that's what you think so you think I must think that, too.
I don't think so.

Well, it bothers me that you could think that I think that. Well, I mean, how can you think you might know what I might be thinking? What makes you think you are so smart that you could even guess what I might be thinking—that I might be thinking that I think I am smarter than you?

Well, now that you mention it, I do think that I might be smarter than you, I mean in this relationship, I think. But I also think that it shouldn't make any difference to you what I think about what you think, or even about what I think for that matter.

Well, I think we should change the subject. What do you think?

-Jeannie Pool