

Tonic 1.5
For Electric Guitar Quartet
(2010)

Brent Miller

10-11 minutes

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Tonic 1.5 is the result of several “Tonic” experiments that I did in the summer of 2010. At the time I was playing regularly with two other friends that played guitar, and we brought in small pieces to read every week. This laboratory was an invaluable tool for expanding my comfort zone, as I could take a chance and get instant feedback, whether it was unusual forms of notation or aleatoric structures. Slowly but surely, the failures disappeared, leaving a series of pieces for three electric guitars. **Tonic 1.5** develops ideas that were explored in Tonics #1 and #2.

Brent Miller (b. 1978) is a composer and a performer based in San Francisco, CA. He studied composition at the University of Arkansas with Robert Mueller (undergraduate) and University of Missouri-Kansas City with James Mobberley and Paul Rudy (masters). Recent projects include works for violinist Eric km Clark, Dither Electric Guitar Quartet, and the Navitas Ensemble. Brent is a founding member of The Collected, a group of nationally active composers committed to advancing the publicity of recent music produced by living musicians.

Tonic 1.5

for four electric guitars

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Score

Electric Guitar 1

Electric Guitar 2

Electric Guitar 3

Electric Guitar 4

1 Clean tone

all guitars

2 Light Overdrive

3 Heavy Overdrive, Distortion, or Fuzz

The musical score consists of four staves. The first staff uses scordatura notation with diamond-shaped notes. The second staff uses standard notation with diamond-shaped notes. The third staff uses standard notation with diamond-shaped notes. The fourth staff uses standard notation with diamond-shaped notes. The score is divided into six measures. The first measure is divided by parts. The second measure is divided by parts. The third measure is divided by parts. The fourth measure is divided by parts. The fifth measure is divided by parts. The sixth measure is divided by parts.

All guitars should be tuned D-A-D-G-B-D. Score is in scordatura notation. The first measure is divided by parts. After the first measure, all material is performed once, left to right, as follows:

Players should perform all of the material in each numbered section before moving on to the next section. Players may move from staff to staff at any moment, as long as all of the material is performed without repetition by each player. The duration of the whole notes for the first two sections should be as long as the guitar can sustain without feedback. The third section will produce quite a bit of feedback, which is desirable. Players should use their discretion when deciding when to move on to the next pitch selection. Eighth notes with a filled in note head represents a short note, while the empty note heads should be performed in the same manner as the whole notes.

The dynamics are controlled through the tone of the guitar. As the tone becomes dirtier, the dynamic level should become louder.

This piece was written for the Dither Electric Guitar Quartet.