

Triple Concerto (1999)

Glenn Buhr

“This concerto is a set of variations on a song entitled *I’m in Love with Sleep* which I composed in 1997. The song is in five sections, and the structure of this concerto reflects that five-part form. The first major section is based on the fifth section of the song. It is stretched to a full three minutes so the harmony moves very slowly though the tempo is very fast. The second section is based on the fourth and fifth sections of the song; the third section is based on the third, fourth, and fifth sections of the song; the fourth section is based on the second, third, fourth, and fifth sections of the song; and finally the last section is a pointillistic setting of the complete song.

In general, the style of the work progresses from the abstract and unusual to the concrete and more familiar. The post-minimalist opening variation features all of the soloists playing the same rapid-fire music, then there is a section in which the individual soloists perform in turn with the orchestra, each in a contrasting style, first piano, then violin, then clarinet. (Those who know Frederic Rzewski’s music might recognize a quotation from *Coming Together* during the solo section for the violin.) Finally, the soloists play together and in alternation with the orchestra as the work decelerates into the closing variations.

The work was composed for and is dedicated to the Verdehr Trio.”

—Glenn Buhr

The world premiere of *Triple Concerto* was on June 13, 1999 at the Vancouver Playhouse, Vancouver New Music and CBC Radio Two, Vancouver, Canada with the CBC Vancouver Orchestra conducted by Owen Underhill.

Glenn Buhr (b. 1954, Winnipeg, Canada) is a composer, pianist/guitarist, music curator, producer, song writer, and band leader. He received a Bachelor of Music degree in 1979 from the University of Manitoba, a Master of Music degree in 1981 from the University of British Columbia, and a DMA in 1984 from the University of Michigan. His principal teachers included Casey Sokol, Lawrence Ritchey, William Benjamin, Stephen Chatman, Leslie Bassett, William Albright, and William Bolcom. Buhr became well known in Canada in the 1980s when the Toronto and Montreal Symphonies first championed his work, and when he co-founded the Winnipeg New Music Festival where he served as Composer-in-Residence, Curator, and later, as Artist Laureate.

Buhr has received several composition awards including first prize in the prestigious Italian Pro Loco Corciano Competition for *Epigrams*, a work for wind orchestra. He also won the Performing Rights Organization Canada Prize, a prize in the CBC Young Composer’s Competition, and first prize in the American Harp Society Composers Competition.

He has received a large number of commissions from important performers and ensembles including the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Penderecki String Quartet, pianist Louis Lortie and the Detroit Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, pianist Janina Fialkowska, and the Toronto Children’s Chorus. Additionally, his music has been performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony, Nexus Percussion Ensemble, and the National Arts Centre Orchestra.

Three compact discs feature his music exclusively. *Glen Buhr: Songs* is a compilation of his vocal, choral, and chamber music; *Akasha (Sky)* is a collection of his orchestral music composed in 1987–1989; *Broken Songs* is a collaborative disc with poet Margaret Sweatman. A recording of his *Piano Concerto* was released on CBC records in 1995. Buhr’s recordings have earned three Juno nominations and the Prairie Music Award for Outstanding Classical Recording of the Year in 2000.

Buhr is active as a conductor and jazz pianist. He is Professor of Music Composition and Improvisation in the Contemporary Music Program at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. In 1998, he was named University Research Professor, the first creative artist to ever receive that honor. In addition to his academic position, Buhr has served as Music Director of the St. Norbert Arts and Cultural Centre, as the founding Artistic Director of the Music in the Ruins Festival in Manitoba, and as Artistic Director for the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony's New Orchestra Series.

Additional information is available at www.glennbuhr.com.