

Primary Colors (1995)

Cindy Cox

“Envisioned as a ‘fun’ piece for the three instruments, *Primary Colors* freely comprises elements of the twentieth-century American popular music idiom. The first movement begins with a straightforward swinging introduction in the violin, followed by a playful, but bold melody in the clarinet. The piano offers a punctuated rhythmic accompaniment, and the movement draws to a ‘cool’ close. The second movement utilizes soft harmonics in the violin, a slow expressive line in the clarinet with a delicate, sparkling piano figure which eventually erupts into a quasi-cadenza out of which the violin emerges with an expressive, blues-like melody. Finally, a driving, rhythmic, accentuated third movement which builds to a great climax, only to be followed by a retrospective, perhaps tongue-in-cheek coda.”

—Cindy Cox

Primary Colors was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University. The world premiere was on November 22, 1995 at the Thailand Regent Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

Cindy Cox (born 1961, Houston, Texas) began playing piano at an early age. She obtained a Bachelor of Music in piano performance at Texas Christian University as a Nordan Scholar, studying for four years with Madame Lili Kraus. Her interests later turned to composition, and she completed a master’s degree and doctorate at Indiana University studying with Harvey Solberger, Eugene O’Brien, John Eaton, and Donald Erb. She also studied with John Harbison at the Tanglewood Music Center and with Bernard Rands and Jacob Druckman at the Aspen Music Festival.

Cox’s output includes works for orchestra, chamber ensemble, solo pieces, and works with technology. Her newer, texted works have evolved through collaboration with her husband, poet John Campion.

Cox’s music has been performed by notable ensembles and soloists in South America and throughout Europe as well as at Carnegie Hall, the National Gallery, the Kennedy Center, and by the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Her scores are published by World a Tuning Fork Press; recordings are available on the Naxos and Arpaviva labels.

Cox’s awards include an ASCAP Foundation Grant to Young Composers for her chamber orchestra work *Woven Rains*, a second prize from Composers, Inc. for her piano and percussion work *Four Studies of Light and Dark*, and an honorable mention from NACUSA for her trio *Coriolis*. Other awards and commissions include those from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Fromm Foundation, Guggenheim Foundation, Mellon Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer, and International Competition for Women Composers. In addition to Tanglewood and Aspen, she has been a fellow at the MacDowell Colony and the Civitella Ranieri and William Walton Foundations in Italy. She held a Fulbright Senior Professorship in American Culture in The Netherlands, hosted by the Amsterdam Conservatory and the Utrecht School for the Arts.

Cox is Professor and Chair of the Music Department at the University of California at Berkeley. She remains active as a pianist and has recorded many of her compositions.

Additional information is available at www.cacox.com.