

*A Song and Two Dances for the Winter Solstice (1994)*  
*Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind*  
*Slow Dance for the Old Sun*  
*Happy Dance for the New Sun*

Charles Hoag

"*A Song and Two Dances for the Winter Solstice* is a sequel to my *Inventions on the Summer Solstice* written in 1979. Both were requested by the Verdehr Trio who played the earlier piece literally around the world.

This work is written in three adjoining movements. In the first movement, the violin plays the melody of Thomas Arne's song of the same name. The text from Shakespeare's *As You Like It* is included in the score for the benefit of the players only:

*Blow, blow thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude;  
Thy tooth is not so keen,  
Because thou are not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude...*

Since the first movement is a song not to be sung, it naturally follows that the two dance movements are not to be danced. The *Slow Dance* is like a tango built on an asymmetrical ostinato that is a bit too complex for the ballroom. Similarly, the *Happy Dance* might trip up the typical New Year's Eve dancer. Try dancing a two-step to music whose pulse alternates between a beat containing four sixteenth notes and one containing five. The result is metricized inebriation."

—Charles Hoag

The world premiere of *A Song and Two Dances for the Winter Solstice* was on July 6, 1995 in the Verdehr Trio Summer Chamber Music Concert Series at the Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

Charles Hoag, (born 1931, Chicago, Illinois) was raised in Davenport, Iowa. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Iowa, a Master of Music degree from Redlands University in California, and a Ph.D. in music composition at the University of Iowa.

Hoag is Emeritus Professor of Music, Theory and Composition at the University of Kansas and has played double bass throughout his career. He was principal bassist with the Seventh Army Symphony Orchestra and had his music played by that orchestra in France, Germany, and Greece. After leaving the service, he played two seasons in the New Orleans Philharmonic. From 1978–1993, he was conductor of the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra.

Hoag is a member of the College Music Society, ASCAP, the Society of Composers, Inc., and the International Society of Bassists. He has received a Composer Consortium Grant (1983) and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. He had residencies with the Millay Colony for the Arts, Austerlitz, New York (1989) and the MacDowell Colony (1990).

Awards for Hoag's compositions include the Charles Wakefield Cadman Scholarship to Redlands (1955), Aspen Award (1966), University of Kansas Composers Award (1971), Kansas Composer of the Year, and awards from ASCAP, the National Endowment for the Arts, and NEA. In 2011, he received the University of Texas at Austin Mary & Winton Green Commission to write a violin concerto for Brian Lewis. His music has been published by G. Schirmer, Theodore Presser, Neil A. Kjos, and others.