

"The *Michigan Trio* is a suite of five short pieces for clarinet, violin, and piano. It is curious for me to have a desire to write in this very concentrated form, a rather old idea, since a large part of my work necessitates the full length of a concert (as well as grand effects and/or a sophisticated array of electronic equipment). The question of brevity of expression is for me somewhat like the one asked on the other side of the looking glass. Evidently one thinks immediately of Webern—despite the calm which naturally succeeded the infatuation with his works—whose ideas, it seems to me, deserve a new and careful examination. It is certainly not more comfortable to express oneself in a different manner that one has to go directly to the essential, omitting all superficial developments, etc. I simply think: 'It is a way of speaking' that in this case one expresses different things, events which could not have happened in a larger context because they don't possess in themselves a development of any kind, nor do they give birth to this or that process. The secret resides, probably, in the choice and the morphology of the materials presented, which must offer many focal points and necessitates neither insistence nor commentary in order to be 'understood.' The five movements are as follows:

I. A play on stability and instability interspersed with brief flashes of lightning. Here the piano's resonant element serves to prolong the sonority of the clarinet.

II. A very brief ostinato in which the three instruments find a common ground of expression.

III. Solo of the clarinet amplified by the harmonics of the piano from which the violin part emerges.

IV. A very slow movement articulated around the resonances of the piano which seem to prolong the echo of the preceding movements.

V. A very mechanical movement in which the three instruments emerge in different registers. The clarinet sets out in very sustained figures; the violin is conceived like a percussive cadence with grand chords, and the piano's systematic brief figure at the beginning of the movement, together with a series of fourths, brings the trio to a close like the fateful tolling of a bell.

The *Michigan Trio* was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio to whom the work is dedicated."

—Phillippe Manoury

The world premiere of *Michigan Trio* was on January 20, 1993 in a Concert of Contemporary Music in Roberts Halls at Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

Phillippe Manoury (born 1952, Tulle, France) began his piano studies with Pierre Sancan and his composition studies with Gerard Conde and Max Deutsch at the Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris. He continued to study composition with Michel Philippot, Ivo Malec, and Claude Ballif at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris. Beginning in 1975, he undertook studies in computer-assisted composition with Pierre Barbaud. In 1980, he was engaged at IRCAM as a composer and electronic music researcher. He has come to be regarded as one of the most important French composers and a researcher and forerunner in the field of live electronics.

Manoury has written music for a variety of genre including opera, orchestral and chamber music, piano, vocal, and electronic. He is particularly well known for his cycle of interactive pieces *Sonus ex machina* which focuses on the real time interaction between acoustic instruments and computer-generated sounds, a topic that continues to influence his artistic work and theoretical texts. His 1988 piece *Pluton* was the first ever composition to use the groundbreaking software MaxMSP. Manoury's works are published by Universal/Edition Durand.

Manoury has received numerous awards and recognition for his work. In 2001, his opera, *K*, premiered at Opéra Bastille, won the Prix de la Critique Musicale. In 2014, he was named Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture, and a year later, he was elected as a member of the Berlin Akademie der Künste. He also serves on the honorary committee of the French-German fund for contemporary music/Impuls Neue Musik.

Manoury has held various teaching and artistic positions including the Ensemble intercontemporain, Conservatoire de Lyon, Orchestre de Paris, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Scene nationale d'Orléans and Acanthes. He is Professor Emeritus of the University of California San Diego where he taught composition, electronic music, and analysis in the graduate program.

Upon returning to his native France in 2013, Manoury was named Professor of Composition at the Academie Supérieure de la Haute Ecole des Arts du Rhin in Strasbourg. Since 2015, he has held his own academy of composition as part of the festival Musica in Strasbourg. Following an invitation from Collège de France, he is guest lecturer at the Chaire Annuelle de Création Artistique.

Additional information and a collection of texts by and about the composer can be found at [www.philippemanoury.com](http://www.philippemanoury.com).