

*Sonata a Tre* (2005)

William Wallace

“It is an honor to write again for the Verdehrs, superb musicians who not only work together but belong together in a deep musical sense. Commissioned to write a work for the Chamber Music Society of Salt Lake City, I thought of the Verdehrs immediately, for they had for some time asked me for something new. Harmonically, *Sonata a Tre* is easy on the ears, with little dissonance. Its claim to this century lies in rhythm: irregular meters like 5/4, 5/8 and 7/8 abound. (Keith Lockhart, conductor of the Utah Symphony, is familiar with my fondness for these and likens them with ‘walking with one short leg,’ but to me they seem very natural.) The movements are laid out in the traditional fast–slow–fast scheme, but all, however, share the same primary theme: aggressive and serious in the first movement, slow and languid in the second (and very repetitive—a challenge to the players—I wish them luck), and presto in the third (where some simple arithmetic plays some tricks with the order of the notes).”

—William Wallace

The world premiere of *Sonata a Tre* was on March 15, 2006 in the Libby Gardner Concert Hall, Chamber Music Society of Salt Lake City, Salt Lake City, Utah.

William Wallace (1933–2017) was born in Salt Lake City, Utah and is not to be confused with his earlier Scottish namesake, the composer William Vincent Wallace (1860–1940), nor with the hero of *Braveheart*. This William Wallace was a man of our time, with strong associations with both the United States and Canada. (He held citizenships in both countries.)

Wallace earned a Ph.D. at the University of Utah in 1962 where he studied composition with Leroy Robertson. He also studied with Egon Wellesz and Edmund Rubbra at the University of Oxford. Wallace was on the music faculty of Rutgers University prior to moving to Canada in 1967, when he took up a position at McMaster University to teach music theory and composition, and eventually, music criticism in a master of arts program he helped found. He later taught at the University of Utah.

His music has been performed and broadcast extensively, and recorded commercially by the London Symphony Orchestra, the Warsaw Chamber Orchestra, the Slovak Radio Orchestra (Bratislava) and, with the Verdehrs, by both the Janacek and Martinu Philharmonic Orchestras (Czech Republic). His chamber output includes a *Trio Concertante* and *Sonata a tre*, commissioned by the Verdehr Trio.

In 1989, Wallace retired from full-time teaching to devote major time to composition. He moved to Wilson, Wyoming where he had had a summer home for many years. During his lifetime, he was an avid outdoorsman, passionate conservationist, and enthusiastic supporter of the Grand Teton Music Festival.