

## *Pathways* (1999)

David Alpher

"*Pathways* is nominally in three movements, to be played without pause. But really it is tighter than that, so much so that I have put 'I,' 'II,' and 'III' in parentheses in the score. It is almost one large movement with three clearly-defined sections. The first (in a flexible sonata form) and third both operate within a pervasive romanticism. The second explores other directions, other paths: atop a continuous alternation of 4/8 and 5/8 measures, the music is at times insistently rhythmic, boisterous, *furioso*, march-like, even satirically romantic. Yet even here, in the middle of this raucous section, lyricism climbs back in for a time, and when the third section begins, joined to the second by a held note in the piano, it is clear that the heart has won out (as I think it always has and always will). I composed *Pathways* in the summer and fall of 1999, completing it at The MacDowell Colony. *Pathways* was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University. It is dedicated with gratitude to the Verdehr Trio."

—David Alpher

The world premiere was on July 11, 2000 in the Verdehr Trio Summer Chamber Music Concert Series at the Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

A native of Washington, D.C., David Alpher graduated with High Distinction from the Indiana University School of Music in 1968 where he was a student of the celebrated Menahem Pressler, pianist of the Beaux Arts Trio. He has been a resident fellow at The MacDowell Colony and at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

Alpher's compositions show the diverse influences of the classical tradition, jazz, American folk music, theater music, and more. His most-performed work, *Las Meninas: Variations*, has had thirty performances worldwide. This multimedia composition is a set of musical variations that parallels the visual variations painted by Picasso on Velazquez. Alpher's *Land of the Farther Suns*, using poems of Stephen Crane, is available on the CD *Flute Force: Eyewitness*, and is narrated by Garrison Keillor and performed by Flute Force. The CD *American Reflections: David Alpher Chamber Music* contains five other of his works. Two ensemble pieces, *The Walrus and the Carpenter*, a jazz-influenced setting of the Lewis Carroll poem, and *Land of the Farther Suns* were finalists in the National Flute Association's 1996 Newly Published Music Competition.

Outstanding artists who have commissioned or performed Alpher's music include the Manhattan String Quartet, An die Musik, New Jersey Chamber Music Society, Voices of Change, New York Vocal Arts Ensemble, Scarborough Chamber Players, Janet Packer, and D'Anna Fortunato.

Alpher has also been prominent as a pianist. On the Angel CD *American Dreamer: Songs of Stephen Foster*, he collaborated as pianist and co-arranger with Thomas Hampson, Jay Ungar and Molly Mason. This ensemble performed at Tanglewood; at Great Performers at Lincoln Center; in a nationally-telecast PBS concert with Marilyn Horne, Dawn Upshaw, Jerry Hadley and Harolyn Blackwell; and on German television.

Alpher has been the Artistic Director of the Chamber Arts Festival of Marbletown in New York's Hudson Valley. He also founded and for ten years co-directed the Rockport Chamber Music Festival in Massachusetts. He is a member of ASCAP.

Alpher is an accompanist at Vassar College, and he enjoys a lively cabaret career with his wife, vocalist/lyricist Jennie Litt. They are both on the faculty of Summerkeys in Lubec, Maine.

Additional information is available at [www.davidalpher.com](http://www.davidalpher.com).