

“When asked to write a piece for the Verdehr Trio, my first thought was to write a set of three dances like Bartok's *Contrasts*, a work of the same instrumentation. Conducting sets of dances this past year including Dvorak's *Slavonic Dances* and Lutoslawski's *Mala Suite* strengthened my resolve to forge ahead with the idea. Lately I've been intrigued by Neoclassicism, particularly in the works of Stravinsky. All of these influences play a role in the piece. Another important element is the number three. All of the meters in the piece are either triple or compound (or both), there are three movements, there are three players, and third relations in keys are present, especially between C and A, C and E-flat.

I. *Freunuet and (Verdehr) Trio*: A quirky tribute to western art music's favorite dance form. It's full of quotes and was inspired by Stravinsky's *Second Suite for Orchestra*.

II. *Pastorale*: Walter Verdehr requested a tune for the piece and one shows up in this movement. At first the tune slowly unfolds in a languishing 9/8, but later comes to the fore over a 9/8 ostinato that is divided into groups of 4 and 5 sixteenth notes.

III. *Tarantelly*: A tarantella in honor of all the spiders living in my new house. This is the most involved work of the three movements taking the mixed meter theme on a wild ride through swing gestures, ominous rumblings, triumphant climaxes, and flashy runs.”

—Stefan Freund

The world premiere of *Triodances* was on February 16, 2007 in the Performing Arts Series, The Jewel Box Series, Recital Hall, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois.

Stefan Freund (born 1974, Memphis, Tennessee) received the Bachelor of Music degree with High Distinction from Indiana University and the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the Eastman School of Music. He studied cello with Steven Doane, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, and Peter Spurbeck among others. His primary composition teachers included Pulitzer Prize winners Christopher Rouse and Joseph Schwantner, as well as Augusta Read Thomas, Frederick Fox, and his father, Don Freund, who was one of the very first to compose a work for the Verdehr Trio.

Freund is the recipient of two William Schuman Prizes, the Boudleaux Bryant Prize from BMI, five ASCAP Morton Gould Grants, ten ASCAP Plus Awards, a Music Merit Award from the National Society of Arts and Letters, and the Howard Hanson Prize. He was selected as the 2004 Music Teachers National Association-Shepherd Distinguished Composer of the Year. In 2006, he was awarded the University of Missouri Provost's Outstanding Junior Faculty Research and Creative Activity Award.

Freund has received commissions from the Carnegie Hall Corporation, the Phoenix Symphony, the New York Youth Symphony, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Seattle Town Hall, the Louisville String Quartet, the Prism Brass Quintet, and SCI/ASCAP. His music has been performed at such venues as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Weill Recital Hall, NPR's St. Paul Sunday Morning, the National Gallery of Art, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Art Institute of Chicago. International performances include the International Performing Arts Center (Moscow), Glinka Hall (St. Petersburg), Queen's Hall (Denmark), Tivoli Theater (Denmark), and the Bank of Ireland Arts Centre. His works have been recorded on the Innova, Crystal, and Centaur labels.

Freund is Associate Professor of Composition and Music Theory at the University of Missouri. Previously he was Assistant Professor of Composition at the Eastman School of Music. Active as a performer and producer of new music, Freund is the cellist of the new music ensemble *Alarm Will*

*Sound* and serves on its production board. In addition, Freund is music director and principal conductor of the Columbia Civic Orchestra and the Artistic Director of the Mizzou New Music Initiative.