

Trio No. 2, Op. 69 (2001)

Vazgen Muradian

"The *Trio*, commissioned in 2001 by the Verdehr Trio, is written, like all of Muradian's major works, in classical sonata form. The *Trio* is a technically demanding piece in which Muradian has characteristically allowed the unique color, personality, and charm of each instrument to come through without sacrificing the musical unity of work as a whole. The range and technical capabilities of each instrument are amply presented, but Muradian does not favor one instrument at the expense of another. All three are equal partners in the enterprise throughout, with each accorded its own melodic line as those lines pass seamlessly from one instrument to another. Finally, it is thru Muradian's sublime melodies that the *Trio* soars into the heart."

—Armen Muradian, son of the composer

The world premiere of *Trio No. 2, Op. 69* was on September 30, 2001 at Music at St. Lorenz Church, Frankenmuth, Michigan.

Vazgen Muradian (1921–2018) was born in Ashtarak, Armenia and began his formal musical studies as a violinist at the Spendirian Professional School of Music in Yerevan. After World War II, he attended the Benedetto Marcello State Conservatory of Music where he studied composition with Gabriele Bianchi, violin with Luigi Ferro, and viola d'amore with Renzo Sabatini.

After his graduation in 1948, Muradian began teaching at the Armenian College of Murat Raphael in Venice. He emigrated to the United States in 1950 and played viola in several orchestras including the Wagner Opera Company of New York and the New Orleans Symphony Orchestra. He became an American citizen in 1955 and settled in New York where he withdrew from orchestral playing to concentrate on composing.

Muradian is one of Armenia's most accomplished composers of classical music, and perhaps the nation's most prolific composer in the symphonic genre. He is the only composer in the history of music known to have written a concerto for every classical instrument. Additionally, he brought non-traditional instruments, such as the banjo, saxophone, harmonica, and several other more exotic and unusual instruments into the classical repertory, many for the first time.

He wrote over two hundred sixty-five works, including sixty-nine concertos for thirty-five instruments; fifty-seven symphonies; twelve suites and ten other works for orchestra; thirty sonatas; sixty-four songs in six languages for voice, chorus, and orchestra; and thirty chamber works for various combinations of instruments. Muradian was a neo-classical melodist whose works have been compared with those of Bach, Mozart, Vivaldi, Beethoven, and Schubert.

Muradian's compositions have been performed by such ensembles as the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Chicago Chamber Orchestra, the Little Orchestra Society of New York, and the Viola d'amore Society of America. Concerts exclusively of his music have been presented in New York, Chicago, Yerevan, Armenia, and elsewhere.

In 1962, Muradian was the winner of the Tekeyan Prize of Beirut, Lebanon for cultural achievement. In the 1990s, he received the Mesrop Mashtots Medal for lifelong musical accomplishment, and he was also recognized for lifetime achievement by both the Armenian Catholicos of Great House of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon, and the Viola d'Amore Society of America.