

## *Ebbrovery* (1991)

David Ott

“The title *Ebbrovery* is an invented word created from the colors of each instrument of the Verdehr Trio: ebony (clarinet), brown (violin), and ivory (piano). Conceived in three movements, the piece is based on traditional elements in approach to structure and, to large measure, style. While constructed in sonata form, the first movement evidences much freedom in its treatment of sonata elements. The opening theme, given first to the violin, is immediately repeated by the clarinet. It is somewhat spiky, motivic, and undergoes much development later. The subordinate theme is extremely lyrical and is set over rich harmonies. Following a rather extended development which houses the climactic peak, the recapitulation follows but with the order of the two themes reversed because so little of the *cantabile* material seemed appropriate for development and hence received little attention there. It is in the reprise where the piano is finally given the principal theme. The ending is quickly paced and *bravura* in spirit. The second movement is based on a sustained lyricism throughout and accomplished through a good deal of conversation among the three instruments. The pent up energy of the second movement is finally set free in the finale. The rhythmic impetus is carried by the piano virtually throughout. Some rather sharp, incisive dissonances add impact to the driving character.”

—David Ott

The world premiere of *Ebbrovery* was on March 26, 1992 in the Small Hall, Cairo Opera House, Cairo, Egypt.

David Ott (born 1947, Crystal Falls, Michigan), is a composer, conductor, author, and educator. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin at Platteville in 1969. He earned a Master of Music in piano performance at Indiana University in 1971 and received a Doctor of Musical Arts in music theory and composition at the University of Kentucky in 1982.

Ott’s young music career had immediate impact, and he was named Outstanding Alumnus of the University of Wisconsin at Platteville in 1987 and was inducted into its Hall of Fame in 2007. In 1996, he was named Outstanding Alumnus of the University of Kentucky, College of Fine Arts.

Ott has served on the faculties of Houghton College (New York), Pfeiffer College (North Carolina), and DePauw University (Indiana) where he was Composer-in-Residence and held an endowed chair as the Seigusmund Professor of Music. He was honored as Outstanding Professor at two of these institutions. In 1991, he was named Composer-in-Residence of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and retained that position until 1997.

From 1999 to 2002, Ott was Music Director/Conductor of the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra. In 2001, he founded the Philharmonic of Northwest Florida and served as its Music Director/Conductor until 2008. Concurrently, he held the appointment of Pace Eminent Scholar and Composer-in-Residence at the University of West Florida. As Director of Music Ministries and organist at Christ the King Episcopal Church in Santa Rosa Beach, he created a series of programs called Concerts at Christ the King. In 2016, became conductor of the Panama City Pops Orchestra, and embarked on a new experience as conductor of the Northwest Florida Ballet Symphony Orchestra.

Ott has composed a large portfolio of compositions in every genre of music ranging from his five symphonies to an opera to various pieces of children’s music. Ranking at the top of American composers born after World War II, his works are among the most frequently performed of any American composer of the era. They have been performed by over a dozen major orchestras in the United States and at festivals throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Ott has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Music four times, first in 1988 for the *Concerto for Two Cellos and Orchestra*, a work commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. and premiered at the Kennedy Center under the baton of Mstislav Rostropovich. He has also received two nominations for a Grammy award. In 2003, he was honored with the Music Alive Award, a prestigious national award co-sponsored by the American Symphony Orchestra League and Meet the Composer.

The success of the *Concerto for Two Cellos* premiere led to a commission for *DodecaCelli*, a work for the twelve cellists of the National Symphony to perform during the World Cello Congress at the University of Maryland, and for *Three Brass and Orchestra* also for the National Symphony. Both works were premiered with Rostropovich conducting. Other commissions include one from the Indianapolis Ballet Theatre, a viola concerto for Paul Neubauer, principal violist of the New York Philharmonic; the orchestral work *Music of the Canvas* for the Indianapolis Museum of Art; and *Celebration at Vanderburgh* for the one hundred seventy-fifth anniversary of the Evansville (Indiana) Symphony Orchestra. Ott's *Symphony No. 2* and *Symphony No. 3* were commissioned by the Grand Rapids (Michigan) Symphony, Catherine Comet, conductor. *Symphony No. 5* was written for the Reston (Virginia) Community Orchestra, and Ott's opera *The Widow's Lantern* was premiered by Pensacola (Florida) Opera.

Ott is the author of two books on composers, and he created a thirteen-part television series distributed through Florida Education television that ties together American history and symphonic music.