

### *Three Nocturnes* (2004)

Kevin Puts

“The title refers to the various evocations of night in the three nocturnes; only the third could be called a nocturne in the legitimate historical sense. The first features a busy, arpeggiated violin part and a soaring, long-breathed melody in the clarinet, perhaps reminiscent of Rachmaninoff’s seemingly endless melodies. The violin assumes the melodic role in the second, at least until the clarinet joins in imitation. The last is a piano nocturne in the tradition of Chopin, complete with a widely spaced accompaniment in the left hand. In answer to the constant motion of numbers one and two, the last nocturne is almost excessively slow and deliberate, finally achieving tonal stability in its final bars. *Three Nocturnes* was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University.”

—Kevin Puts

The world premiere of *Three Nocturnes* was on February 6, 2005 at the Music Room, The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.

Kevin Puts (born 1972, St. Louis, Missouri) received both his bachelor’s degree and his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Eastman School of Music and his master’s degree from Yale University. From 1999 to 2005, he taught composition at the University of Texas at Austin. He has served as composer-in-residence of Young Concert Artists, California Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival. Since 2006, he has been on the composition faculty at the Peabody Institute. He is also Director of the Minnesota Orchestra Composer’s Institute.

Puts’ orchestral catalog includes four symphonies, two operas, and several concertos. Commissions and performances have come from the Eastman School of Music, Opera Philadelphia, Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, Chamber Music Monterey Bay, the string sextet Concertante, Music Accord, University of Texas Wind Ensemble, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, LACO’s Sound Investment Program, St. Louis Symphony, Meet the Composer Magnum Opus Project, Institute for American Music, National Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, and American Composer Orchestra/BMI Foundation. Joint commissions have come from the Vermont Symphony with Ensemble Kobe (Japan); the University of Texas at Austin with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra; City Music Cleveland, ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, and the Naples Philharmonic; and the Baltimore Symphony with Carnegie Hall. Solo performers of Puts’ music include Yo-Yo Ma, Renee Fleming, Jeffrey Kahane, and Dame Evelyn Glennie.

Puts won a Pulitzer Prize in 2012 for his debut opera *Silent Night* which was commissioned and premiered by Minnesota Opera. Other awards and honors include a Charles Ives Scholarship, an Arts and Letters Award, and a Benjamin H. Danks Award for Excellence in Orchestral Composition, all from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; an Alfred I. DuPont Composer’s Award from the Delaware Symphony Orchestra; an Eddie Medora Kind Award for Composition by the University of Texas at Austin; a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship; a Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome; a Barlow International Prize for Orchestral Music; the William Schuman Prize from BMI; and several grants from BMI and ASCAP.

Puts has been critically acclaimed for his richly colored, harmonic, and freshly melodic musical voice. The *New York Times* has called his music “captivating from the start” and *The Baltimore Sun* wrote that he “never disappoints in terms of orchestral coloring...distinctive lyrical style...and passages of intense melodic fire.”

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