

Trio (1985)

William O. Smith

“From the time that I heard Bartok’s *Contrasts* as a youth, I have been attracted to the combination of clarinet, violin, and piano. It seems to me that these instruments complement each other in a marvelous manner. When I heard the Verdehr Trio for the first time, I was struck by the beauty of the sound. It was with pleasure that I agreed to write this *Trio* for them.

The *Trio* begins with a slow section which occurs again later between each of the three longer movements and at the end. With each appearance, it is considerably transformed. The first main movement, *Moderato*, is energetic and rhythmic. The next (expressive) is predominantly quiet and lyric. The last main movement (fast) is lively and percussive.

The *Trio* was composed in Seattle, Washington in 1985 and is dedicated to the Verdehr Trio.”

—William O. Smith

The world premiere of *Trio* was on March 31, 1986 at the American Center, Karachi, Pakistan.

William O. Smith (born 1926, Sacramento, California) is a clarinetist and composer who has worked extensively in modern classical music, Third Stream, and jazz. From the 1940s to the early 2000s, he performed and recorded with the Dave Brubeck Quartet and Octet under the name Bill Smith.

Smith began his formal education at the Juilliard School and completed bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied composition with Roger Sessions. He took additional study at Mills College with Darius Milhaud. Upon winning the *Prix de Paris*, he was afforded two years study at the Paris Conservatory.

Smith has investigated and cataloged a wide range of extended techniques on the clarinet, and he is a pioneer in the exploration of multiphonics. His numerous compositions for clarinet feature many of these techniques.

Smith has received numerous awards including the *Prix de Rome*, two Guggenheim fellowships, a Fromm Players fellowship, a National Academy of Arts and Letters award, and a BMI Jazz Pioneer award.

Smith had a thirty-year career at the University of Washington, School of Music in Seattle where he taught composition and performance and co-founded the Contemporary Group ensemble.