

Music Centre Serenade (1984)

On its website, the Canadian Music Centre boasts that “Since 1959, we’ve been proudly supporting, preserving and promoting the works of Canadian composers.” The CMC was created after the Canadian League of Composers—founded in 1951 by Weinzweig, Harry Somers, and Murray Adaskin, among others—put forth a report to the Canada Council explaining the need for the CMC. To celebrate the great work of the Canadian Music Centre, including an extensive music library and record label, Weinzweig composed a brief serenade for the occasion of its 25th birthday.

Weinzweig begins with a fast seven-measure passage in which the flute plays short, chromatic sixteenth-note motives above a homorhythmic staccato accompaniment in the horn, viola, and cello. This passage returns four times, in between which Weinzweig inserts a cadenza for each instrument, starting with the lowest instrument (i.e., cello) and moving upwards until the highest instrument (i.e., flute). Though Weinzweig includes a tempo marking for each cadenza, the lack of accompaniment allows each player flexibility.

Music Centre Serenade returns to the recurring passage in its final moments, but is truncated to only two measures. The work closes with a final measure in which the four instruments simultaneously play a motive from their respective cadenza.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn