

***Refrains for Contrabass and Piano* (1977)**

With the support of the Ontario Arts Council, *Refrains* was commissioned by bassist Joel Quarrington, who premiered the work on April 29, 1978. Weinzwieg's affinity to jazz and blues permeates the work, including a call-and-response pattern, alternating major/minor modalities, rhythmic vitality, and swing rhythms. During the 1970s, Weinzwieg began challenging timbral conventions, particularly through extended technique. In *Refrains*, the bassist taps the bass, plays behind the bridge, and uses fists, knuckles, and fingernails to draw out the instrument's varied timbres.

Refrains follows a rondo structure (A B A C A D A E). Each section of the rondo is self-contained, with a one second pause between each. The lyrical solo refrain A is repeated without variation between the contrasting "episodes." The work ends with a "Last Refrain" in which the two instruments engage in a call-and-response dialogue. Dialogic textures are common in Weinzwieg's works, and are present throughout *Refrains*; in the Last Refrain, this texture and the pitch content are reminiscent of the blues. The bassist hums along with himself, reinforcing the section's connection to blues singing.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn