

## ***Suite for Piano No. 2* (1950)**

1. Conversation Piece
2. Berceuse
3. Toccata Dance

Suite for Piano No. 2 was written near the end of Weinzwieg's tenure with the CBC, writing scores for radio dramas, and shortly after his Olympic medal for Divertimento No. 1. Weinzwieg was embarking on his career as a full-time professional composer. Also during this period, Weinzwieg began his long-suffering advocacy for Canadian composers and their music. In 1949, the *Toronto Jewish Folk Choir* bulletin published an article entitled "Composer Meets Box Office" in which Weinzwieg criticizes the reluctance of symphony orchestras to program Canadian composers, particularly anything new.

Though the Suite for Piano No. 2 is overall quite dissonant, recurring motives and tonal centres create a sense of familiarity for the listener. "Conversation Piece" centres on G-sharp with C-sharp as a substitute dominant; the motive C-sharp-B-B-flat-C recurs throughout the movement, with subtle expansions and transformations. The "conversation" occurs between the left and right hands, who only occasionally "speak" simultaneously.

"Berceuse" emphasizes G as a tonal centre, with substantial emphasis also on A-flat and F-sharp. The left hand's repeating pattern establishes a rocking feel over which a legato melody sings out. The final movement, "Toccata Dance," marked *Presto, Marcatissimo*, is a lively and aggressive conclusion to the work. E-flat is a clear tonal centre, particularly emphasized in a long octave unison passage. The momentum builds through a gradual crescendo, which reaches a climax at a *fortissimo sforzando* on E-flat. A momentary pause is quickly abandoned in the final *prestissimo* rush to the closing *fortississimo sforzando* chord.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn