

***Symphonic Ode* (1958)**

Symphonic Ode was commissioned by the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, and it displays the particular instrumentation of this ensemble, specifically, an absence of horns and the presence of two alto saxophones; his 1961 revision made some significant instrumentation changes, namely, the addition of four horns and the omission of the saxophones. Weinzweig wrote this work during a period of decreased compositional activity due to his increasing advocacy for and leadership in the Canadian music scene. In the previous year, Weinzweig and John Beckwith had co-founded the Canadian Music Centre; in 1959, Weinzweig would begin his second term as president of the Canadian League of Composers.

Weinzweig concentrates on sparse textures, with brief motives, unison and octave doublings, and small instrument groupings. The texture opens as a dialogue, as these groupings alternate their melodic fragments. *Symphonic Ode* highlights the woodwind section with four solos: clarinet, flute, oboe, and flute and piccolo in unison. Weinzweig compliments their higher tessitura with accents in the lower strings, bassoons, and tuba. Weinzweig contrasts the *Symphonic Ode's* overall terseness with two sections— the middle and the final section—that invoke a Stravinskian approach to the full orchestra.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn