

***Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1941)**

Weinzweig was in the thick of composing radio scores for the CBC, under strict deadlines and recording concerns, when he decided to write the Sonata for Violin and Piano. The sonata includes a motive from the radio program “Russia” in the series *New Homes for Old*. He confesses that “it took [him] four to five weeks of mental adjustment in order to shake off the psychological habits of the background music activity—to change over to a different kind of creative activity where you don’t accept easy solutions.”

The abandonment of the Classical three-movement sonata in favour of a one-movement form demonstrates Weinzweig’s flexibility, which he then employs in his application of serial technique. Weinzweig applies the 12-tone set with varying rigour, focusing on melodic needs and allowing certain intervallic relationships to emerge. The instruments are equals, but the violin shines in its extended cadenza in the latter part of the work.

Udo Kasemets praised the sonata in his 1960 article on Weinzweig in the *Canadian Music Journal*: “The melodic, harmonic and rhythmic ideas, stated at the beginning of the work, form a basis for a continuous chain of variations. There are no repeats of patterns, no recapitulations, no contrasting theme.”

Written by Alexa Woloshyn