

TRIO



... SWEETGRASS ...

for the new arts trio

1982

C. CURTIS-SMITH



C. Curtis-Smith (Curtis O.B. Curtis-Smith), b. 1941 in Walla Walla, Washington, studied at Whitman College with David Burge; Northwestern University; the University of Illinois with Ken Gaburo; and at Tanglewood with Bruno Maderna. He has taught composition at the University of Michigan and is currently Professor of Music at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo.

In 1994, Leon Fleisher performed his Concerto for Left Hand and Orchestra both on the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's subscription series, with Neemi Jarvi conducting, and again in Tokyo on the New Japan Philharmonic's subscription series, Chosei Komatsu conducting. Dennis Russell Davies will conduct the work in 1995 with the American Composers Orchestra in Carnegie Hall, Leon Fleisher, piano.

Dennis Russell Davies has performed his Great American Symphony (GAS!) on the "Great Performers Series" with the American Composers Orchestra, and also with the Stuttgart Opera Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony and the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra.

He has received some 75 grants, awards, and commissions, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, an award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the Koussevitzky Prize at Tanglewood, the Medaglia d'Oro from the Concorso Internazionale di Musica e Danza, the Prix du Salabert, and various awards from ASCAP, the NEA, the Arts Foundation of Michigan, as well as the Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award from Western Michigan University.

As a pianist, C. Curtis-Smith has presented recitals at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., and Carnegie Recital Hall. Orchestra appearances include performances with the Indianapolis Symphony, the Spokane Symphony, and the Kalamazoo Symphony.

His music is published by Edward B. Marks Music Company, Editions Salabert, and Theodore Presser.

SWEETGRASS TRIO (1982)

- I. Andante con moto
- II. Allegretto Scherzando
- III. Pesante

The Sweetgrass Trio alludes to various vernacular American idioms--from fiddle hoedowns to "laid-back" blues to rock. My intention was not the creation of a collage or pastiche on popular styles, but rather an organically expanding form, invigorated and renewed by contact with the vernacular--even the vulgar.

In the second movement, where scherzo = joke, the cello plays a "spoiler" role, akin to Charles Ives' "Rollo". Here, at every opportunity, the cello indulges in an insipid, leisurely turn, always centered around A 440, trying in vain to get the other players to join him on this note. Eventually the others do momentarily humor him in a light A major ragtime-y repast, only to return with a vengeance to an out-of-kilter chicken-dance, complete with mock funeral march (cf. "The Chicken Speaks" in the coda of the March movement, The Great American Symphony.)

As in other works from this period, such as The Great American Symphony (GAS!), I have combined rock-like bass lines and harmonies with the Baroque passacaglia and chaconne. The bass at the beginning of the last movement is a derivation, not a quotation, from a well-known Beatles song. This passacaglia figure gradually moves into the soprano register, there to become the melodic basis for the hoedown and blues variations, which are transformations of earlier thematic material.

The Sweetgrass Trio was commissioned by, and is dedicated to the New Arts Trio, who premiered the work at the Eastman School of Music in 1983.

SWEETGRASS TRIO

C. Curtis-Smith
(1982)

Andante con moto
(♩ = 72-76)

I.

Violin

Cello

Piano

Violin: *ppp*

Cello: *ppp*

Piano: *sf*, *fff*, *fffz*

8va [ped] *Andante Sostenuto* (♩ = 52-56) (4) } (becomes gradually (*ppp*) audible)

Andante Sostenuto (♩ = 52-56) (4) *pppp* gradual pedal release (clear gradually!)

This is a handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of three systems of music. Each system contains a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate line for an 8va (octave) part, indicated by dashed lines and '8va' markings.

- System 1:**
 - Staff 1 (Treble): Starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 4/4. Dynamics include *ppolo*, *mp*, and *pp*. Features a triplet of eighth notes and a 5-measure rest.
 - Staff 2 (Bass): Starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 4/4. Dynamics include *mf* and *pp*. Features a triplet of eighth notes.
 - 8va line: Contains a triplet of eighth notes and a 5-measure rest.
- System 2:**
 - Staff 1 (Treble): Starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 4/4. Dynamics include *mp* and *pp*. Features a triplet of eighth notes and a 4-measure rest.
 - Staff 2 (Bass): Starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 4/4. Dynamics include *mf* and *pp*. Features a triplet of eighth notes.
 - 8va line: Contains a triplet of eighth notes and a 4-measure rest.
- System 3:**
 - Staff 1 (Treble): Starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 4/4. Dynamics include *pp*. Features a triplet of eighth notes and a 4-measure rest. Includes the marking *espressivo*.
 - Staff 2 (Bass): Starts with a 3/4 time signature, then changes to 4/4. Dynamics include *ppp*, *mp*, and *pp*. Features a triplet of eighth notes.
 - 8va line: Contains a triplet of eighth notes and a 4-measure rest.

Additional markings include circled numbers '10' and various accidentals (flats, naturals) throughout the score.

This is a handwritten musical score for a string quartet, consisting of four systems of staves. The notation includes various musical symbols, dynamics, and performance instructions.

- System 1:** Features a circled number '13' at the top. The first staff has a dynamic of *mf* and a *pp* marking. The second staff has a dynamic of *mf* and a *mp* marking. There are notes with accidentals (flats and naturals) and a *puco* marking.
- System 2:** The first staff has a dynamic of *mp*. The second staff has a dynamic of *mf*. There are notes with accidentals and a *pp* marking.
- System 3:** The first staff has a dynamic of *mp*. The second staff has a dynamic of *mp*. There are notes with accidentals and a *pp* marking.
- System 4:** The first staff has a dynamic of *mp*. The second staff has a dynamic of *mp*. The third staff has a dynamic of *mp*. The fourth staff has a dynamic of *f* and a *trill* marking. There are notes with accidentals and a *pp* marking.

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, beams, slurs, and dynamic markings. There are also some handwritten annotations like '8va' and 'trill'. The time signature is 4/4, and there are some additional markings like '2 3 4+8' and '4 4'.

Ritard = - - - - -

(16) (17) →

Pizz. dim- (hesitant !!) (ad lib)

mp PP

Ritard accel - - -

mf (ad lib)

(hesitant !!) accel - - -

mp dim - - - - - (8va) PP

A Tempo (18)

arco

A Tempo mp f

(accel - - - - -)

mf f

(laco) sfz

8va - - - - - f

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of four staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains notes with slurs and dynamics *sfz* and *mp*. The second staff is in bass clef with notes and dynamics *f!*. The third and fourth staves are grouped by a brace on the left and contain bass clef notes with dynamics *mp* and *mf*. There are also numerical annotations '3', '5', and '10' above some notes, and '4' and '4' written vertically on the right side of the second and third staves respectively.

Handwritten musical score for the second system, starting with a circled '20'. It consists of four staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, containing notes with slurs and dynamics *f*. The second staff is in bass clef with notes and dynamics *f*. The third and fourth staves are grouped by a brace on the left and contain bass clef notes with dynamics *f* and *pp*. There are 'Ritard' markings with dashed lines above the top and third staves. Numerical annotations '4', '9', and '3' are present above notes on the third and fourth staves. The bottom staff has a circled '8va.' at the beginning and notes with dynamics *f* and *pp*.