



LINCOLN  
TRIO

TRIOS FROM  
CONTEMPORARY  
CHICAGO

**CEVILLE**  
b

# LINCOLN TRIO

## TRIOS FROM CONTEMPORARY CHICAGO

**SHAWN E. OKPEHOLO** (b. 1981)

*city beautiful\** (11:18)

- 1 I. aqua (3:21)
- 2 II. prairie (4:43)
- 3 III. burnham (3:09)

**AUGUSTA READ THOMAS** (b. 1964)

*...a circle around the sun...* (5:10)

- 4 I. Elegant and spacious (1:54)
- 5 II. Dance-like, playful, and lyrical (3:15)

**SHULAMIT RAN** (b. 1949)

- 6 Soliloquy (8:29)

**MISCHA ZUPKO** (b. 1971)

- 7 *Fanfare 80\** (2:55)

**STACY GARROP** (b. 1969)

*Sanctuary\** (23:31)

- 8 I. Without (15:31)
- 9 II. Within (8:00)

TT: (52:00)

\*WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

*This recording is made possible in part by generous support from Bonnie McGrath and Bruce Oltman*

# PROGRAM NOTES

BY THE COMPOSERS

## CITY BEAUTIFUL

The City Beautiful movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, so formative for Chicago, was a philosophy aimed at beautifying world cities, believing that it would, in part, stimulate human flourishing, quality of life, and civic integrity. *city beautiful* is a triptych that celebrates Chicago's matchless architecture and an artistic salute to three Chicago architects, their styles and, in each case, a related structure.

The first movement, *aqua*, is a musical depiction of Aqua Tower, an 82-story downtown skyscraper designed by Jeanne Gang, an imaginative architect who also holds the record for the two tallest buildings designed by women. This modern structure, completed in 2009, is irregular, primarily concrete, graceful, and aesthetically evokes water. These attributes provide the musical foundation of this movement.

It is impossible to explore Chicago architecture and not reference the artistry of Frank Lloyd Wright. The second movement, *prairie*, is my musical interpretation of his unique contribution to the Prairie School architecture style. This movement is a chaconne that I associate with the Frederick C. Robie House in the Chicago neighborhood of Hyde Park, one of Wright's most iconic Prairie-style designs. To me, this structure is about space, symmetry, simple complexity, and style.

The last movement is named after architect Daniel Burnham, a staple of the Beaux-Arts architecture movement. Burnham designed Chicago's Union Station, a monumental structure that is an amalgam of neoclassicism and modernism. This movement is my artistic expression of those styles propelled by the century-old hustle and bustle that still, to this day, fills the halls of Union Station.

—SHAWN E. OKPEBHOLO  
[www.shawnokpebholo.com](http://www.shawnokpebholo.com)

*Special thanks to Alexandra C. Nichols, who commissioned city beautiful.*

## ...A CIRCLE AROUND THE SUN...

...*a circle around the sun...* was commissioned in 2000 by The Children's Memorial Foundation in honor of George D. Kennedy for the Amelia Piano Trio. The work received its premiere performance at a private party celebrating Mr. Kennedy in thanks for his generous contributions to and support of Children's Hospital of Chicago. The very short work is in two sections, slow then fast, and is multi-colored and vibrant in its harmonic fields and instrumental colors. The work starts with the note G in reference to the first letter of Mr. Kennedy's name, George. That note is used as the axis point around which other notes and sound actions gravitate.

The resonance, warmth, and role of each instrument are clearly defined. Generally, the piano provides most of the attacks, and the string instruments the warm reverberation. The piano is

often the protagonist, the center or musical sun, around which the other two instruments orbit as though in a circle. At special moments, however, each string player serves as a protagonist as well as a fulcrum point on and around which the other players' musical force-fields rotate, bloom, and proliferate.

—AUGUSTA READ THOMAS  
[www.augustareadthomas.com](http://www.augustareadthomas.com)

## SOLILOQUY

*Soliloquy*, a single-movement work of approximately eight minutes, owes its inspiration in no small part to the experience of being preoccupied over a period of some three years (between 1995 and 1997) with the creation of my first opera, *Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk)*, based on S. Ansky's famous Yiddish play by the same name. In 1995, I composed *Yearning* for violin and string orchestra for violinist Edna Michell, based on a fragment of the opera, then in progress. *Soliloquy* is a recasting of this work, adapted in 1997 for the Peabody Trio.

My compositional point of departure was a musical line that begins the opening soliloquy of Khonnon, the play's (and opera's) protagonist, where his yearning and desire for his beloved Leya is first revealed. In *The Dybbuk*, Khonnon dies when it becomes clear that his love is to remain unrequited. Whereas most similar tales would end right there, Khonnon's death is only the first step in the journey to fulfill the great longing of the doomed would-be lovers.

While the aforementioned phrase (originally a tenor line, played here on the cello) served as the compositional “trigger” for me in *Soliloquy*, its placement in this work differs from its operatic analog in that it appears as the answer (consequent phrase) to *Soliloquy*'s principal theme, a newly-composed violin line. This legato line is loosely based on a whole-tone configuration, a different melodic permutation of which is associated throughout the opera with Khonnon's desire, and which I have come to think of as the opera's “lust motif.”

The title refers not only to Khonnon's soliloquy, but also to the fact that, although written for a standard piano trio combination, it is, in fact, the violin that serves as the carrier, the “voice” of the piece and its emotional center.

—SHULAMIT RAN

<https://music.uchicago.edu/people/shulamit-ran>

## FANFARE 80

I wrote *Fanfare 80* to celebrate the Music Institute of Chicago's 80 years of service to aspiring musicians in the Chicagoland area. The work's opening has all the hallmarks of a classic fanfare, including repeated-note gestures and antiphonal volleys among the instruments. However, it is set in a jaunty alternation of 7- and 11-beat measures that give it an off-kilter feel, interrupted at several points by a savage dance-like element introduced in the piano. This alternation of the celebratory and the savage, like the personas of Jeckle and Hyde, persist until they merge about halfway through the piece into what could only be characterized as a savage celebration.

This music continues to rise in intensity, and at its apex, the opening gesture returns unexpectedly before a final flurry to the finish. Commissioned to be premiered by the resident ensembles at the Music Institute of Chicago, *Fanfare 80* exists as an orchestral work and in versions for woodwind quintet and piano trio. I made the woodwind quintet version for Quintet Attaca and the trio version for the Lincoln Trio.

—MISCHA ZUPKO

[www.mischazupko.com](http://www.mischazupko.com)

## SANCTUARY

In 2011, my mother, Barbara Garrop, commissioned me to write a piano trio in memory of Norman Garrop, my father, who passed away about 30 years ago. When I started brainstorming about topics for the piece, I found it difficult to recall many moments of my early life involving my father. Too many years had passed, and the memories that I could summon were of a child looking up to her father, not an adult relating to an equal. However, while collecting stories of my father from various family members, along with discovering a number of objects that had once belonged to him and that I had stored away in boxes decades ago, I began to realize that this piece wasn't so much about my father as it was about my re-discovering the man that he was: a loving husband and dad who cared deeply about his family and his passions (which included bike riding, collecting coins, strumming our guitar, playing baseball, watching football games, entertaining people, helping to run local theater and puppet productions, and carving objects out of

wood); an accountant who dreamed of a better future; a treasurer of our local synagogue; an early advocate for computers (we owned an Apple II+); and a prankster with a great sense of humor. Ultimately, I decided to tell musically the story of my search for these memories.

In the first movement (“Without”), a child calls out in a sing-song voice, searching for her lost parent. This search intensifies over the course of the movement through a series of themes, including a “stepping” motif in which a two-note progression steadily climbs higher, a pseudo-Jewish folksong, and a passionate “longing” theme. The child’s search becomes increasingly intense throughout the movement, calling out fervently and repeatedly to the parent; the movement ends in a moment of great tension and uncertainty. The second movement (“Within”) opens quietly with the lost parent finally answering, represented by a solo cello; the child, now personified by the violin, has found the parent within the sanctuary of her own heart. This movement highlights the joy and solemnity of this beautiful discovery.

—STACY GARROP  
[www.garrop.com](http://www.garrop.com)

## LINCOLN TRIO

Hailed by *The Strad* as “Sensational” and “Bewitching,” and by *Gramophone* as “Models of vibrancy and control,” the celebrated, Grammy-nominated, Chicago-based Lincoln Trio — Desirée Ruhstrat, violin; David Cunliffe, cello; and Marta Aznavoorian, piano — takes its name from its home, the heartland of the United States, the land of Lincoln. Formed in 2003, the trio has been praised for its polished presentations of well-known chamber works and its ability to forge new paths with contemporary repertoire. The group’s reputation as a first-rate ensemble draws an eclectic audience of sophisticated music lovers, young admirers of contemporary programs, and students discovering chamber music for the first time. Bringing together performing experience spanning the globe, each member is an artist of international renown. Violinist Desirée Ruhstrat has performed throughout the U.S. and Europe, appearing at the White House and performing on a live radio broadcast heard around the world with the Berlin Radio Orchestra; cellist David Cunliffe has performed with the BBC and Royal Scottish orchestras as well as touring as a member of the Balanescu Quartet; pianist Marta Aznavoorian has

garnered critical acclaim for her engagements with orchestras and at concert halls worldwide including Chicago’s Symphony Center, the John F. Kennedy Center, and the Sydney Opera House.



Photo by Mike Grittani

The trio has performed throughout the United States, including appearances at New York's Alice Tully Hall and Carnegie's Weill Hall, the Bryant Park Festival, Ravinia Festival, Green Center, Barge Music, Le Poisson Rouge, Indianapolis Symphony Beethoven Chamber Music Series, University of Chicago, Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series and, in Springfield, Illinois, where the trio was chosen to celebrate the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial celebration with President Barack Obama. International engagements include performances throughout Europe, Asia, and South America. Champions of new music, the Lincoln Trio has performed numerous compositions written especially for them, including premieres of seven trios by members of the Chicago Composers Consortium, an award-winning work dedicated to the trio by young ASCAP winner Conrad Tao, a Chamber Music America Award commission by composer Laura Elise Schwendinger, and works by Cedille Records-affiliated composers Stacy Garrop and Mischa Zupko, among many others.

The Trio's extensive discography for Cedille Records includes their Grammy-nominated *Trios From Our Homelands*; the complete works for multiple strings and piano by Joaquin Turina; and their debut album, *Notable Women*, which features Grammy and Pulitzer prize-winning composer Jennifer Higdon, Joan Tower, Lera Auerbach, Stacy Garrop, Augusta Read Thomas, and Laura Schwendinger. The Trio has also appeared on the Cedille releases *Composers in the Loft*, *In Eleanor's Words: Music of Stacy Garrop*, and *The Billy Collins Suite*, plus the Grammy-nominated Naxos release, *Annelies*, based on *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Staunch proponents of music education, the Lincoln Trio has had residencies at the Music Institute of Chicago, San Francisco State University, the University of Wisconsin - Madison, and SUNY Fredonia, and is currently Artist-In-Residence at Chicago's Merit School of Music.

[www.lincolntrio.com](http://www.lincolntrio.com)

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