

Dinos Constantinides

My Three Friends

for string quartet

LRC 243



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Duration: ca. 15 minutes

Program notes

1) *Elegy for D.* employs a Byzantine chant (a Christmas song since the piece was composed at Christmas time). It uses several effects including humming by the performers. The entire work is based on seven pitches. The same pitches were used in different ways in the composer's *Second Symphony*.

“...getting married? you must have found a saint!” D. P.

2) *Elegy for G.* is a very evocative piece. It uses a great deal of counterpoint and chromatic passages. The music portrays images of the past, lost voices and grandiose pronouncements. It is passionate and rather complex in ideas.

“...finally friendship remains the ultimate bond.” G. P.

3) *Elegy for K.* begins with a simple and lyrical melody followed by a frenzied Greek dance. The melody returns at the end leaving a trace of sadness.

“...let us go to hear Mitropoulos again.” K. S.

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The music of Dinos Constantinides has been performed throughout the world. He is the recipient of many grants, commissions and awards, including first prizes in the 1981 Brooklyn College International Chamber Competition, the 1985 First Midwest Chamber Opera Conference, and the 1997 Delius Composition Contest Grand Prize. He also received the 1985 American New Music Consortium Distinguished Service Award, the 1989 Glen Award of l'Ensemble of New York, several Meet the Composer grants and numerous ASCAP Standard Awards. In 1994 he was honored with a Distinguished Teacher White House Commission on Presidential Scholars.

AS A PROLOGUE

This work, long overdue, was completed on New Year's Day of 2009 at the urging of Giorgos Demertzis of the New Hellenic Quartet for the premiere on April 6, 2009 in Athens. It includes portraits of my three late friends, Dimitris Polemis, Giorgos Poubourides and Kostas Sarafianos. All of them were music lovers and very dear and important to my own life.

I met Dimitris Polemis in New York in the late 50's when we were students, at Columbia University and Juilliard School respectively. Our friendship lasted throughout the following years. Dimitris, a Ph. D. recipient in Byzantine history, spent most of his life on his native island Andros working on books on its history and that on the Hellenic culture in general, specializing in its Byzantine era.

Giorgos Poubourides and I were both members of the Athens State Orchestra during the early 50s and remained very close friends until his passing.

Kostas Sarafianos, (or Kostaros, as we called him), was a continuous friend of mine since our teen age years in Greece and later in America. Kostas, an eye doctor by profession, was a music lover from birth.

All three friends and I were bound by our love of music. We used to get together frequently, when I was in Athens and through telephone calls and correspondence, to discuss all the matters of life from art, to politics, history, philosophy, and life in general. All three friends had different personalities. Polemis with his tendency to examine historical events also had an irresistible wry sense of humor. Poubourides tended to be philosophical with weighty pronouncements. Sarafianos was always jubilant and eager to share any artistic experience.

All three were great persons and all are very much missed by me.

I dedicate this work to their memory and their great friendship.

D. C.

Baton Rouge, LA