

My Three Little Piano Pieces were written at the request of Mrs. Ann Basart, the noted music bibliographer and author at the University of California, long a strong advocate for contemporary music. The writing in all three pieces is above all linear and contrapuntal. The first piece begins in a stately manner, but rapidly becomes fantastical, and just as rapidly transforms into a brooding, elegiac conclusion. It maintains three independent voices throughout in a texture that recalls certain pieces from the keyboard suites of J.S. Bach. The second piece is a scherzo whose tentative beginning coalesces into a soaring and angular melodic line heard against a rapid, sinuous, running ostinato. The ostinato erupts in a rising figure, colliding with the melodic material descending to meet it, suspending the music's energy in an atmosphere of enigma. The final piece is lyric, arioso, almost songlike in character and structure, simple and direct in its mood and affect, even in the elaborate melodic figures of its interior. It is the longest and most complex of the three pieces, with a fully elaborated three-part form and coda, and a strong current of lyricism throughout.