

***Affirmations** for flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano* by Richard Wilson

My beleaguered friends, all too aware of a downcast and woebegone outlook, will appreciate the struggle involved for me in writing a piece entitled Affirmations. This is the music of someone whose chromatic style runs counter to current trends, who is approaching the age of fifty certain that mental and physical decline wait just around that corner, who lost his father--only remaining parent--in the course of writing the piece and thus became, overnight, the older generation. What is there, amidst this graying obscurity, to affirm?

I am as enchanted with non-tonal sonorities as when I first heard Boulez's music thirty years ago. Unlike Boulez, however, I believe that the differentiation of thematic material and its recurrence, modified to varying degrees, provide necessary interest and coherence. I affirm a kind of music that one can follow and remember. And I want it to have line and pulse--the proverbial song and dance.

In the present case, the first movement is declamatory; the second, ironic; the third, wistful. I have sought to bring the disparate timbres together in an uneasy rapport.

--RW

Richard Wilson's Affirmations was commissioned for the Da Capo Chamber Players by Chamber Music America