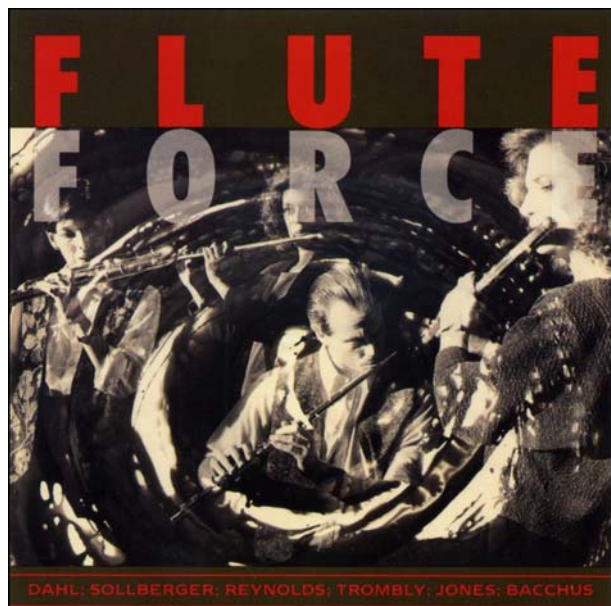


# NWCR581

## Flute Force



Ingolf Dahl (1912–1970)

- Serenade for Four Flutes* (1961) ..... (10:56)
1. I. Alla marcia ..... (2:34)
  2. II. Cadenza ..... (1:39)
  3. III. Canon ..... (2:11)
  4. IV. Pas de quatre ..... (2:28)
  5. V. Alla marcia ..... (1:52)
- Three flutes and flute doubling on piccolo

Harvey Sollberger (b. 1938)

6. *Grand Quartet for Flutes* (1961) ..... (8:26)
- In Memoriam: Friedrich Kuhlau, Four flutes

Roger Reynolds (b 1934)

- Four Etudes* (1961) ..... (6:36)
7. I. Allegro ..... (1:19)
  8. II. Adagio ..... (2:10)
  9. III. Quarter note = mm 112 ..... (2:02)
  10. IV. Presto ..... (0:55)
- Flute, flute doubling on piccolo, piccolo and alto flute

Preston Trombly (b 1945)

11. *Cantilena* (1975) ..... (7:17)
- Flute, piccolo, alto flute and bass flute

David Evan Jones (b. 1946)

12. *Tibiae (Solo for Four)* (1983) ..... (9:12)
- Two flutes, alto flute and flute doubling on alto flute and bells

Peter Bacchus (b 1954)

- Quartet for Diverse Flutes* (1985) ..... (15:23)
13. I. Andante molto rubato con espressione .. (5:06)
  14. II. Allegro Molto ..... (2:25)
  15. III. Cadenza ..... (4:41)
  16. IV. Finale ..... (3:08)
- Flute, flute doubling on piccolo, flute doubling on alto flute, and flute doubling on bass flute

Flute Force: Wendy Stern, flute; Rie Schmidt, flute, piccolo, and bass flute; Gretchen Pusch, flute and alto flute; Peter Bacchus, flute and piccolo

Total playing time: 58:15

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## Notes

The fact that Flute Force, a professional flute quartet, exists today reflects the different light in which the flute has come to be viewed during the last thirty-five years. The worldwide popularity of the instrument has grown enormously as a result of the concerts and recordings of Jean-Pierre Rampal, James Galway, and others. Rampal has called our present era “the second golden age” of the flute. The first golden age was the eighteenth century during which time a great body of repertoire was composed for the flute as solo instrument and in numerous combinations with other instruments. What distinguishes our current golden age from its predecessor is the influence of both modern technology and of “non-Western” styles of music on those who write for the flute. For example, composers in this era have begun to ask flutists to produce sounds on the instrument whose inspiration comes from the sounds heard in electronic music. Also, the availability of recordings of flute music from diverse cultures, such as the Japanese shakuhachi and the Cuna flute of South America, has equally stimulated the imaginations of composers. The confluence of these factors presents new challenges for those who perform the works as well as for those who enjoy listening to them.

Our contemporary revolution in flute composition can be traced to pieces such as *Density 21.5* (1936) by Edgard Varèse, and *Sequenza* (1958) by Luciano Berio, which pointed the way toward a completely new way of regarding the flute. For Varèse and Berio, the flute became an instrument capable of extreme contrasts in range, dynamics and attack. In addition, both pieces introduced “extended techniques” such as key clicks which allowed the flute to make a more percussive sound, and multi-phonics, a technique of producing two or more notes at the same time much like a double- or triple-stop on the violin. During the 1950s and 1960s, players such as Severino Gazzeloni (for whom *Sequenza* was composed) and Harvey Sollberger (who was influenced to become a new music composer/performer because of Gazzeloni’s performance of *Sequenza*) helped to develop these techniques and ways of writing for the instrument even further. Many of these techniques were codified in published treatises by Bruno Bartoluzzi, Thomas Howell, and later Robert Dick; thus ensuring their wide dissemination among composers and performers alike.

The rise in the flute's popularity and in its expressive possibilities has led contemporary composers to regard the flute quartet as not just an occasional diversion for players, but as an excellent vehicle for the composition of chamber works. This recording appropriately commences with the *Serenade* for four flutes (1960) by **Ingolf Dahl** which is "affectionately dedicated" to Doriot Anthony Dwyer, the former principal flutist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Dahl and Dwyer became good friends at Tanglewood during the 1950s, and according to Dwyer, Dahl wrote *Serenade* at her request because of the dearth of good flute quartet literature available at the time. The piece is scored for four "C" flutes with the first player switching to piccolo in the final movement. Dahl creates contrast with the four like instruments by having the flutists play with different articulations, slurrings, attacks and dynamics simultaneously. *Serenade* for four flutes is a clear example of Dahl's meticulous attention to form and detail as a composer. This piece was included on Flute Force's first concert in 1981 and was the first contemporary work to become a part of the group's repertoire.

Proceeding chronologically, **Harvey Sollberger's** *Grand Quartet* for four flutes comes next. Sollberger picks up on and develops some of the ideas and techniques introduced in the Varèse and Berio solo works which, he has said, influenced him deeply. The dynamic and registral contrasts are extreme and extended use of flutter tonguing, percussive key-clicks and some pitch bending is called for. Sollberger writes:

My *Grand Quartet* for flutes was written in the summer and fall of 1961. It began as a project to compose a brief, 'occasional' piece to play with friends, taking as its model the Grand Quartet of the nineteenth-century Danish composer, Friedrich Kuhlau (renowned among flutists as the author of many amiable flute ensemble pieces). In the course of being composed, *Grand Quartet* took on a life of its own, and, while retaining its inscription to Kuhlau (the score is headed: 'In memoriam: Friedrich Kuhlau'), it became more fire-breathing than amiable. What strikes me today, close to thirty years later, is how 'performable' the piece has become. Current performers, such as those in Flute Force, take it in stride, while at the time of its first performance it was seen as extremely difficult, unperformable, in fact, without a conductor. Performances today are numerous in comparison with those of earlier years, and are as often as not done by student groups!

*Grand Quartet* is one of the first pieces in which I hit my stride as a composer. For that reason, as well as for others concerning things that my twenty-three-year-old self did in that score that my fifty-one year-old self still finds interesting, I have looked forward to this recording.

**Roger Reynolds's** *Four Etudes* for flute quartet, like the Sollberger, makes use of the extreme contrasts of dynamics and register and requires the players to flutter tongue and use key clicks. Reynolds indicates that in performance the players are to be spaced widely before the audience to create an antiphonal effect. In addition, he uses an alto flute and piccolos to expand the range. As in the Dahl work, both the Sollberger and Reynolds pieces call for controlled use of vibrato, including indications for no vibrato and minimal vibrato. Reynolds writes of his piece:

The *Four Etudes* for flute quartet were composed in Ann Arbor, in response to the high level of interest in new music performance that was aroused by the now notorious ONCE Festivals. The basic instrumentation of

piccolo, two "C" flutes and alto is shifted upwards in the final etude, when the first flute converts to second piccolo. The opening etude, a brisk *allegro*, concentrates on individual and pyramiding articulative patterns. The second, an *adagio*, concerns itself with breath control and ensemble balance, with spatial displacement complementing a subtle tendency towards *klangfarbenmelodie*. The third is more gesturally interactive and aggressive, but incorporates an accompanimental whirl of tremolos, trills and runs, which remains at the close. The final etude is a *presto* that comprises four linked outbursts of accumulating intensity.

**Preston Trombly** composed *Cantilena* at the request of Harvey Sollberger for his Flute Farm, a summer workshop held in the mid-1970s for the intensive study of contemporary performance techniques. Trombly decided to write for a quartet of piccolo, flute, alto flute, and bass flute, knowing that all the flutes would be available. Following its premiere performance, *Cantilena* lay dormant for a number of years until the composer made revisions for Flute Force's premiere of the revised version of 1986. He writes:

The idea for using different sized flutes came to me as a logical extension of the string quartet concept. The music alternates between seemingly complex rhythmic figures and rhythmic unisons, interspersed with short solos for each of the four flutes. Each of these solos was conceived as a song or, more aptly, to be played in a song-like manner—hence the title.

The complex rhythmic sections sound like some of the ensemble flute sections in Stravinsky's *Agon* or his later *Variations for Orchestra*, and even the opening of *The Rite of Spring*. Also, Debussy's dense orchestral textures come to mind. These complex sections are, however, deceptively simple. The harmonic content in each is static so the total effect is an articulated tremolo on a single chord. In spite of its rhythmic complexity, the work has a relaxed song-like quality.

**David Evan Jones** wrote *Tibiae (Solo for Four)* for the Tibiae Quartet of Holland. In this work, Jones makes the greatest use of extended techniques of all the pieces presented on this recording. Multiphonics, percussive sounds and vocal sounds are used to great effect throughout the piece, in addition to a kind of simultaneous and free rubato related to the free notation employed by Ingolf Dahl. Jones's principal composition teacher was Roger Reynolds, whose ideas influenced him in the composition of this piece, as did the treatises published by Bartoluzzi and Howell. *Tibiae* was given its United States premiere by Flute Force in 1985. Jones writes of the work:

I compose mostly chamber music. My interest in the genre arises in part out of my background in jazz: I take great delight in interacting—as a performer or in conversation—with members of a small group. My composer's ear also finds the chamber 'sound' to be more colorful and more intense than any symphony orchestra.

In planning the composition *Tibiae (Solo for Four)* I focused from the outset on the relationships among the players. I challenged myself to reinterpret, in as many ways as I could, the subtitle 'solo for four.' In what ways can a quartet be said to play a solo? By continually passing the lead from voice to voice? By playing soloistically in rubatos? By playing in rhythmic unison? By weaving lines together in a single rope of sound? I

undertook to structure these and other possibilities—into a coherent, if rather organic, form. Like many solos, *Tibiae* is a virtuoso piece. It requires not only a mastery of traditional flute technique, but also a variety of extended techniques all of which must be carefully controlled and coordinated.

The final piece in this set of six is my *Quartet for Diverse Flutes* which was premiered by Flute Force in 1987. When this piece was written, I had already played with Flute Force for four years, and consequently, I had developed a keen sense for the capabilities of each instrument and player. As did Trombly in *Cantilena*, I make use of piccolo, flute, alto flute and bass flute, but the players are also called upon to switch back and forth between instruments. Although *Quartet for Diverse Flutes* is written in a more tonal style compared to the other works on this recording, my approach to the flute was influenced by Sollberger, with whom I studied contemporary repertoire and techniques during the 1970s. In addition, the compositional style of John Corigliano influenced me. I was a student of his at the time I wrote the piece and while Corigliano was writing his *Pied Piper Fantasy* for James Galway years previous to that, I was the player with whom Corigliano tried his ideas for that piece. The writing in the second movement of my piece, with its endless stream of fast notes was probably influenced by the same type of writing in the *Pied Piper Fantasy*.

— Peter Bacchus

**Flute Force** has established itself as the leading ensemble of its type in the United States. Winner of the Artists International Competition, Flute Force was presented in its critically acclaimed Weill Recital Hall debut in 1985. Since then, Flute Force has performed throughout the U.S. with its repertoire for piccolo, standard “C”, alto, bass, and Baroque flutes which spans the centuries from the Renaissance to the present.

The quartet has performed extensively in the Northeast and the Midwest. Highlights have included performances featuring guest artists Julius Baker and Paula Robison, and concerts at Dartmouth College, Yale University, and Carnegie Recital Hall. Flute Force has been in residence at Macalester College, St. Paul; and the University of Iowa, Iowa City. Noted flutist, teacher, and scholar Betty Bang Mather compared the ensemble to “a fine string quartet” and described their performance as “a real work of art.” The ensemble has been heard nationwide on National Public Radio and on recordings with the Newport Classic label. A pioneer in innovative programming, Flute Force has commissioned and premiered many new works for flute quartet and has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, Meet the Composer/Readers Digest Commissioning Program, Manhattan Community Arts Fund, and Chamber Music America.

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## Production Notes

Produced by Malcolm Addey.

Recorded at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, NYC, September 28 & 29 and October 8, 1989

Dahl: *Serenade for Four Flutes* published by Boosey & Hawkes (ASCAP)

Sollberger: *Grand Quartet for Flutes* published by McGinnis & Marx (BMI)

Reynolds: *Four Etudes* published by C.F. Peters (BMI)

Trombly: *Cantilena* published by ACA (BMI)

Jones: *Tibiae (Solo for Four)* published by BMI

Bacchus: *Quartet for Diverse Flutes* published by BMI

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Instruments used on this recording: flutes made by Verne Q. Powell; piccolos and alto flutes made by William S. Haynes; bass flute made by Armstrong Flutes