

DAVID AMRAM

Three Lost Loves

for Violin, Alto Saxophone, and Piano

Commissioned by the founders of the AMRAM ENSEMBLE:
Violinist Elmira Darvarova, and Saxophonist Ken Radnofsky.
Premiered October 3, 2016 at the
Center for Arts and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe, Germany.

Recording: *David Amram: So In America* (Afetto Records AF1801)

Score

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THREE LOST LOVES is based on stories which took place in the novels of three authors: Willa Cather, Zora Neale Hurston and Jack Kerouac. The work was commissioned by the founders of the AMRAM ENSEMBLE violin virtuoso Elmira Darvarova and master classical saxophonist Ken Radnofsky and premiered October 3, 2016 at the Center for Arts and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe, Germany. Darvarova and Radnofsky were joined in the USA by the third member of the Ensemble, the brilliant young pianist and composer Thomas Weaver. I want to thank Elmira Darvarova and Ken Radnofsky for making it possible for me to write this piece for them, and to thank Dr. Audrey Sprenger for helping me to find two of the three stories for this piece by suggesting the stories by Willa Cather and Zora Neale Hurston.

The first movement, *Jim and Antonia* was inspired by the love affair described by Willa Cather in her novel *My Antonia*, published in 1918. As the most enduring book of her Prairie Trilogy, *My Antonia* chronicles the fond memories and new challenges of the immigrants from Europe, called Bohemians, who settled in the rural countryside of Nebraska, always longing for the comforts of the old country as they adapted to the New World. The music reflects both the nostalgia of the past and the vitality of the harsh prairies, where two young people share their dreams as they struggle to find their own identity and happiness together.

The second movement, *Janie and Teacake* recounts a passionate romance which ended tragically in Zora Neale Hurston's classic novel *Their Eyes were watching God*, published in 1937. Like the character of Antonia, Janie was a proud and independent woman who demanded respect as well as affection. The music for this movement was inspired by the genius of the rich tapestry of African-American music, drawn from the timeless hymns and chants of the sanctified church as well as the gift of the blues, jazz and all the sounds of nature still heard late at night in parts of Florida and the deep South where Zora Neale Hurston spent most of her life.

The third movement, *Sal and Terry, the Mexican Girl* is a classic tale of two young people who fell in love, and the publication in the Paris Review of this story from *On the Road* made it possible for author Jack Kerouac to have his entire novel finally published in 1957, after years of rejection. Like the richness of the prose of Willa Cather and the poetic dialogue of Zora Neale Hurston, Kerouac's story telling was always honest and always musical.

At the end of 19th century, the great Czech composer Dvorak said in a letter that the enduring beauty of African-American and Native American indigenous musics, combined with the treasures of the folkloric musics and classical treasures of the old world brought here to these shores could provide composers of the future with endless new ways to create music to enhance the repertoire.

That's what Willa Cather, Zora Neale Hurston and Jack Kerouac did in their writings which always reflected their lives in a unique and moving way.

This is what I hope that *Three Lost Loves* can do to contribute to our musical legacy.

Three Lost Loves



Jim and Antonia

from Willa Cather's *My Antonia*

David Amram

Allegro con brio (♩ = 144-152)

Violin

Alto
Sax
(Eb)

Allegro con brio (♩ = 144-152)

in 6 (felt on 2)