

## Program Note for "*Viola Concerto*"

Musicologists and critics have often written that my musical language sounds American and, while I don't know exactly how to define that, I am sure that they are right. Since the lead commissioner of this work is the Library of Congress, and the co-commissioners are all American institutions of learning and performance (The Curtis Institute of Music, The Aspen Music Festival, and The Nashville Symphony), it seemed natural that an American sound would be the basic fabric. With this in mind, and inspired by the one of the world's best violists, Roberto Diaz, the process of creating a new concerto for this instrument came naturally. I have always loved the viola...my first sonata was written for this expressive instrument. It is my privilege to add to the repertoire of an instrument that has moved from being imbedded within ensembles to playing a prominent role at the front of the stage.

Jennifer Higdon

Commissioned by The Library of Congress, in honor of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge on the occasion of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Library's concert series. This commission was made possible with the generous support of the Baird Family in honor of Jane and Cameron Baird, and John J. Medveckis. As well as the co-commissioners, The Curtis Institute of Music (with support from the Musical Fund Society), The Aspen Music Festival and School (Robert Spano, Music Director), and Nashville Symphony (Giancarlo Guerrero, Music Director).