

AROUND THE YEAR by David Avshalomov

The four miniatures of *Around the Year* create moods that briefly evoke the four seasons of the year. They can be performed singly or in sets, and in normal or reverse order (unlike the real seasons). The images listed after the movement titles came to me well after I had started or completed each piece. Listeners can close their eyes and imagine whatever scene or weather they like for each.

*Winter Mood* evokes snow on the mountains: Slow, sonorous, euphonious.

*Autumn Walk* on a brisk leaf-blown day in a park. The sections are moderate/lively/moderate; there are nice oboe and horn solos.

*Summer Dream* is set in a hot Southern night, with slow, aching beauty, echoes of Gershwin and Stephen Foster, and languorous flute solos.

*Spring Games* echos children on a grassy hillside: an exuberant fling with playful melodies, a brave "Pirate" horn solo, and a cheery flip ending

*Winter Mood* and *Autumn Walk* were written in 1966 when the young composer was an undergraduate at Harvard College. (*Winter Mood* was, in turn, an ensemble expansion of a solo piano piece written in 1964.) They were first played by a student quintet there at a concert of the Harvard-Radcliffe Music Club, and then premiered professionally by the Westwood Wind Quintet in 1967. Many groups have played them since, including the USAF Band Wind Quintet in DC and the Amici D'Amelia Wind Quintet. To complete the set, *Summer Dream* and *Spring Games* were commissioned by Aaron Neustadt and Amelia Russo Neustadt in 2002. I had an old sketch as a start for *Spring Games*, but abandoned another for *Summer* and wrote it from the blank page. It was great fun trying, at 36 years' remove, to match the style, spirit and melos of my youthful writing. All are entirely tonal in nature, focused on euphony, in ABA forms.

[Note by the composer]