Four Pieces
for
Wind Quartet

1960

Charles Shere
In 1960, approaching my 25th birthday, I was working as a clerk at the post office in Berkeley, where I fell in with a serious, intelligent, good-humored fellow also named Charles Watson. Like me, he played the recorder, and before long we’d put together a little recorder ensemble — three or four of us playing soprano, alto, tenor, and bass recorders.

Charles was an engaging man with connections in the community, ranging from the African Methodist Episcopal Church to a louche bar called The Chicken Box, and before long he suggested our ensemble should work up a little concert. He got us into the AME Church somehow, and we played a short program of mostly arrangements from Baroque masters.

For the concert I composed two or three little suites. I was still under the twelve-tone spell, as you can see. Repetition was my only clue to extended structure. I’m surprised, now, though, to hear the affinity of these pieces, now set for the standard wind quartet, with the writing in my little opera *Ladies Voices*, which came along a quarter-century later.

—Charles Shere
Healdsburg, August 2016
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Allegro ma non troppo quasi andantino

Charles Shere