



Sonata for Flute and Piano by Brian Raphael Nabors (2015, Revised 2020, 18 minutes)

Reviewed by BJ Nicoletti

An edited version of this review can be found in the Spring, 2023 issue of [NFA Quarterly](#).

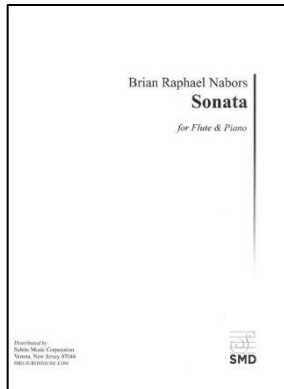
[Brian Raphael Nabors](#) (1991) is an American composer, pianist, and assistant professor of composition at the Louisiana State University School of Music. He is described as having an “eclectic musical palate and crafty compositional technique to match... and draws from combinations of Jazz Funk, R&B, and Gospel with the modern flair of contemporary classical music.” (source: <https://www.briannabors.com/biography>)



Here is a link to more information on the Sonata for Flute and Piano, the score, and a recording by Portland-based flutist Adam Eccleston - [YouTube Link Performance by Adam Eccleston](#). Read on to learn more about the piece.

His [works for flute](#) include the Sonata for Flute and Piano; [Theme and Variations for Alto flute](#); [Energie for Flute and Electronics](#); and, [Lucid Dreams for Wind Quartet and Harp](#). A complete list of his works can be [found here](#) at Subito Music.

- **Listen to Nabor's Compositions** - I enjoyed listening to a range of Brian's music on his website - <https://www.briannabors.com/watch-listen>.
- **Other Flute Pieces** - Remember too, you can listen to a performance of Nabor's piece for alto flute and his other for flute and electronics at flutist Timothy Hagen's website - <https://www.timothyhagen.com/media.html>



This flute sonata debut is engaging and beautiful. In three movements, it projects an affection for and knowledge of the whole instrument – Con Moto, Tranquil, and Agitato. While making very minor use of modern techniques for flute (flutter tonguing here and there), he is all over the flute in joyous, original ways; there is never a moment of cliché or any sense of familiar treatment. His “semi-dissonant” style of composition shows itself.

This piece is accessible to play yet for the early advanced through professional level flutist.

Suitable for concerts, college repertoire, and as a competition piece with simple meter changes and uses the full range of the flute throughout, there is an opportunity for the flutist to show off color changes and mood contrasts.



The first movement is open, bright, and joyful with lots of motion, with a dance-like feel before becoming more contemplative.

The second movement begins with a tranquil, soft, color nuanced, lower register elongated phrases that rise to middle register and flutter-tongued movement to upper register after which it delivers a happy, walking, bouncy walking pace (with a very

slight jazz feel). Very color nuanced, it has angularity, but somehow remains gentle, happy sounding, and never jagged or dark anywhere. **The third movement** is more agitated, and technically challenging thanks to a faster tempo, continued meter changes, more varied rhythmic figures, and more use of the top register (top octave D). It includes technically accessible sequential, scalar passages.

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