This paper explores musical challenges and the external influences that inspired my original composition for piano trio, Monet’s Water Triptych. The creation of this piece was based on two formative experiences that occurred in my life last year: 1) my own performance of Franz Liszt’s Sposalizio and 2) my viewing of Claude Monet’s paintings Water Lilies (Apaganthus) at an exhibition. In this paper I give a glimpse of how the composers Liszt, Modest Mussorgsky and Nell-Shaw Cohen drew inspiration for their compositions from paintings, as well as an overview of how WWI affected Monet’s paintings.

Just as Monet reacted to WWI in his paintings, and as Mussorgsky wanted his music to contain a criticism of important events of his day, I also wish to give a statement about our society’s attitude towards water and climate change by writing a piece that celebrates the theme of water. I therefore found a musical interpretation of four aspects found in Monet’s painting: a) shapes, b) direction, c) texture and d) contrast. Furthermore, in order to mature as a composer, I challenged myself to write a longer piece than I had written before, to employ sonata form in a contemporary work, to achieve a good balance among the three instruments, and to use repeated motives to add cohesiveness to my piece.