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THE DOVE

and Other Songs of Peace

Duration: 15 minutes

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Program Notes

The Dove is a set of five short pieces for string quartet, with the common theme of peace. The first four movements are based on traditional American folksongs and spirituals. The last movement is original.

I've Got Peace Like a River presents several verses, with interludes interspersed. The players start in unison with the theme. After expansion during the variations, the parts merge back to a peaceful closeness at the end.

The Dove, She Is a Pretty Bird is an English song (known alternatively as *The Cuckoo*) which has been adopted into the American folk repertoire. This new arrangement opens with "wings" motives in the violins. The melody is introduced in the cello, followed by the viola, while the "wings" float above. The final stanza, marked "plaintively," is presented by the upper strings in a high register. The cello, perhaps a "trembling dove," descends beneath. At the end, the dove flies away.

From the Hills I Gather Courage is based on the familiar American song *Peace, I Ask of Thee, O River*. A middle section, marked "flowing," combines descending (river flowing) lines in the lower strings with "feathery light" (waves) touches in the upper strings. These countermotives frame the theme, with the final lightness fading out.

The viola is the lead voice in *Study War No More*. This movement is an arrangement of the spiritual *Down by the Riverside*. The introductory free section for viola may be heard to express the lyrics "Gonna lay down my burden." The descending lines are emphatic! The other instruments join in this music, which is joyous and celebratory. Swing rhythm is featured. Near the end, the theme returns in "Grand March" style. The viola has a particularly triumphant cadenza near the end.

The last movement, *In the Spirit of Peace*, was inspired by the peace songs of the previous movements. Set in the "gentle, string-friendly" key of A major, the opening section may be heard as a quiet prayer. The music then grows in tempi and dynamics, leading to a strong and intense statement. Upward leaps of octaves are gestures of hope. The ending is once again serene.

Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947)

For biographical information visit:
www.gwynethwalker.com

The Dove

and Other Songs of Peace

for String Quartet

Gwyneth Walker

1. I've Got Peace Like a River

Very peacefully $\text{♩} = 60$

*"I've got peace like a riv - er..."

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

p

6

A

11

mf

(p)

(p)

(p)

(p)

*Lyrics from the original song are inserted to indicate their association with the musical phrase.

A version for string orchestra is also available: 1.3543

B Slightly faster $\text{♩} = 69$

16 *poco accel.* *rolled pizz.*

21 *rolled pizz.*

26 **C** *arco* *mf*

31 **D**

2. The Dove, She Is a Pretty Bird

Freely, slowly, as an introduction
"wings" motive

A
Gently flowing ♩ = 120

Violin I
arco
p

Violin II
arco
p

Viola

Violoncello

Solo **The* *arco* *dove* *she* *is* *a* *pret - ty* *bird,*
mf *sempre*

7

p

p

she *sings* *as* *she* *flies,* *she* *brings* *us* *glad*

14

p

p
pizz.

arco

p
tid - ings *and* *tells* *us* *no* *lies."*

mf

*Lyrics from the original song are inserted to indicate their association with the musical phrase.

B

20

(p)

p

(p)

p

27

p

p

34

C

rolled pizz.

cresc.

rolled pizz.

cresc.

arco

cresc.

arco

cresc.

rolled pizz.

p

rolled pizz.

p

40

(cresc.)

arco

D

mf

arco

mf

mf

mf

(cresc.)

(cresc.)

(cresc.)

(cresc.)

mf

mf

3. From the Hills I Gather Courage

Moderate tempo ♩ = 88

*"Peace, I ask of thee, O riv - er, peace, peace, peace. When I learn to live se -

Violin I *p peacefully*

Violin II *p peacefully*

Viola *p peacefully*

Violoncello *p peacefully*

6 rene - ly, cares will cease." **A**

mp

mp

mp

mp

11

*Lyrics from the original song are inserted to indicate their association with the musical phrase.

15 *poco rit.* **B** *a tempo* (♩ = 88)

mf

19 *accel. poco a poco* **Flowing** ♩ = 120

p

24 **C** *feathery light*

p

28 *feathery light*

p

simile

simile

4. Study War No More

Slowly, freely
as an introduction

Viola

f

5

tap body of Viola emphatically

arco

tap

arco

rit.

pizz.

p

Joyfully ♩ = 120, swing eighths

9

Vln. I

p

Vln. II

p

Vla.

arco

mf

Vc.

p

A VERSE 1

13

pizz.

mf

pizz.

mf

arco

mf

pizz.

arco

B

18

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

arco

23 *arco* *v*

28 [C] REFRAIN *p*

32 *f*

[D] 37 *f*

5. In the Spirit of Peace (We Stand Together)

Serenely $\text{♩} = 72$

p gently

poco rit.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

A *a tempo* ($\text{♩} = 72$)

5 "In the spir - it of peace we stand to - geth - - - er."

(p)

8

mp

mp

mp

12 *poco rit.* **B** *a tempo* (♩ = 72)

mp *mf* *mf* *mf*

16 *pizz.* *pizz.*

19 *arco* *arco* *on the string* *on the string* *on the string* *on the string*

22 *molto rit.* **C** *Faster* (♩ = 108, with motion) *p* *p* *p* *p*