Gwyneth Walker

Concerto for Bassoon and Strings

A Light Touch
A Moment of Peace
In Motion
Program Notes

The three movements of the *Concerto for Bassoon and Strings* focus on three distinct sets of characteristics often associated with the Bassoon: bouncy & light; lyrical & expressive; rhythmic & assertive.

The first movement, “A Light Touch,” is marked ‘with a joyous lilt’. The Bassoon enters, bouncing down the scale, and then jumping back up the octave. This diatonic theme is contrasted with sections that carry the tonal center far from the original D Minor, into the A Flat regions. The contrasting sections bring some dissonance and syncopation against the theme. But, all resolves quickly at the end. This movement is a rondo in form.

“A Moment of Peace” is established through slowly unfolding chords and lines. After introductory patterns in the strings, the Bassoon initiates a melody with the simple, stepwise motif of E-F-E-D (within a C Major-A Minor tonality). The delicacy of this theme is created through mordents, grace notes and other forms of ornamentation. This movement is structured as a theme and variations which rarely stray far from the home tonality, yet cover a wide range of dynamics, tempi and mood. The expressive high range of the Bassoon is explored particularly in the closing section.

“In Motion” can best be described as a “driven rondo-with-cadenza.” The pace of this movement is relentless, with the Bassoon as the most active player. A restlessness is felt with the shifting tonal centers of each new statement of the theme. The harmonic structures are spare, and the style is forceful. This is energetic music.

*Concerto for Bassoon and Strings* was composed especially for Bassoonist Janet Polk of the Vermont Symphony Orchestra. The composer has enjoyed her collaborations with Ms. Polk in the past, and wished to create something special to further the musical dialogue!

About the Composer

Dr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M. and D.M.A. Degrees in Music Composition. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, Dr. Walker resigned from academic employment in 1982 in order to pursue a career as a full-time composer. She now lives on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont.

Walker’s catalog includes over 130 commissioned works for orchestra, band, chorus and chamber ensembles. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E.C. Schirmer of Boston and MMB Music of St. Louis. Gwyneth Walker is a proud resident of Vermont. She is the recipient of the Year 2000 “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Vermont Arts Council.
I. A Light Touch

Bassoon

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Bass (optional)

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

\( q = 132 \)

\( \sum \)

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

(pizz.)

pizz.

(pizz.)

\( \text{mf with a joyous lilt} \)

\( \text{mf} \)
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch
A Light Touch

Duration: 3'45"
II. A Moment of Peace

Slowly \( \frac{3}{8} = 44 \) (\( \frac{3}{8} = 132 \)) (\( \frac{3}{8} = 44 \))

- Bassoon
- Violin I
- Violin II
- Viola
- Violoncello
- Bass (optional)

Con sord.

\( p \)

\( p \) con sord.
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
Quickly

molto rit. .................................. N \( \frac{d}{=} = 60 \) flowing

\[
\sum_{j} \text{f} \]

A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace
A Moment of Peace

Duration: 5’
III. In Motion

Bassoon

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Bass (optional)

\[ q = 144 \]

\[
\sum_{j} \]

\[ \text{Pizz.} \]

\[ \text{P} \]

\[ \text{P} \]

\[ \text{P} \]
In Motion
In Motion
In Motion
In Motion
In Motion
In Motion
In Motion
135
Bsn.

Slowly, freely \( \ll \) = c. 72

Bsn.

gradual cresc.

In Motion
In Motion
In Motion
In Motion

Duration: 4’30"
Total Duration: 14’
July 12, 2000 Braintree, Vermont