

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.

Bassoon

I. A Light Touch

Gwyneth Walker

♩ = 120

A

mf with a joyous lilt

8

p *mf* *p*

B

mf *p* *mf*

17

f *p*

C

f *mf* *f*

25

p *f*

D

28

p *mf*

33

p *mf*

Bassoon

4

81 **J**

mf

Musical staff 81-84: Bassoon part in bass clef, key of B-flat major. Measures 81-84 feature a melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic is *mf*. A hairpin crescendo is shown at the end of the staff.

85

mf

Musical staff 85-88: Bassoon part in bass clef. Measures 85-88 continue the melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic is *mf*. A hairpin crescendo is shown at the end of the staff.

89 **K**

Musical staff 89-92: Bassoon part in bass clef. Measures 89-92 feature a melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic is *mf*.

93

mf

Musical staff 93-98: Bassoon part in bass clef. Measures 93-98 feature a melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic is *mf*. A hairpin crescendo is shown at the end of the staff.

99 **L**

f

Musical staff 99-102: Bassoon part in bass clef. Measures 99-102 feature a melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic is *f*. A hairpin crescendo is shown at the end of the staff.

103

Musical staff 103-107: Bassoon part in bass clef. Measures 103-107 feature a melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic is *f*.

108

p \leftarrow *f*

Musical staff 108-112: Bassoon part in bass clef. Measures 108-112 feature a melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic starts at *p* and increases to *f*. A hairpin crescendo is shown at the end of the staff.

113

Musical staff 113-116: Bassoon part in bass clef. Measures 113-116 feature a melodic line with slurs and accents, including several triplet markings. The dynamic is *f*.

II. A Moment of Peace

$\text{♩} = 44$
Slowly

($\text{♩} = 132$) ($\text{♩} = 44$)

A

3 5 12

mp cantabile

26

(upper note)

B

33

grace notes precede the beat

light staccato, delicately

40

47

C

55

D

63

E

69

playfully, as a waterfall

75

Bassoon

140 **K**
f

154 *tr* **L**

160

165

169 **M**
p

175 *poco accel.* **4**

Quickly *molto rit.* **N** *♩. = 60 flowing*
f *p*

Bassoon

8

194 **3**
f

202 **0** (♩. = 60)
start slowly, accel. **P**

209 **Q**
f *p*

215 **Q**
f *p*

220 **R**
f *p*

225 **S** ♩. = 90 ♩. = 60
f *p*

229 **5** *free tempo*
p *mp*

237 *mf*

239 *rit.*
f *pp*

III. In Motion

$\text{♩} = 144$ 8 [A]

mf

12

17 [B] *p*

f *p* *f* *p*

21 *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

26 [C] 7 [D] (upper note) *f*

38 *p* *f* [E]

44 7 [F] *mf* *sim.*

54

58 [G]

62

65 [H] 9

135 **R** *f*

136 **S** Slowly, freely ♩ = c. 72 *p* *gradual cresc.*

137 **T** [Conducted] ♩ = c. 120 *gradual accel. to* **U**

141

145 **U** Quickly ♩ = 144 *f*

150 *f*

155

161 *p* *f*