

Program Notes:

Steps was inspired by the adventure of mountain climbing. One starts at the base, looking up in wonderment. Then comes the climb, the ascent. The summit is reached, and the glory of the journey brings a special closeness to the natural world – a time to listen to the earth.

These duets employ a variety of Cello techniques, enjoying possibilities which include *rolled pizz*, tapping on strings, and *tremoli* up and down the body of the Cello. In the “Summit” movement, one Cello plays arching patterns of harmonics, “suggestive of mountain peaks.” The wide range of the Cello allows for dramatic **steps**!

Steps

for Violoncello Duet

Gwyneth Walker

1. Wonderment (looking up from the base)

Slowly (♩ = ca. 66)

Two Celli: as one, yet distinct

Violoncello I

Violoncello II

p

pizz.

arco

pizz.

p

4

I

II

arco

(arco)

8

I

II

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

12

I

II

mf

mf

15

pizz. *rit. arco*

p *mf*

pizz. *arco*

p *mf*

18

a tempo, with more energy *lightly, rhythmic*

p *p*

B

21

mf *mf*

23

25

27

I

II

29

f

f

32

pizz.

p

pizz.

p

arco

f

arco

f

35

dim. to end

dim. to end

37

rit.

(dim.)

(dim.)

pp

pp

C

2. Ascent

[connector from previous]

Slowly ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$)

First system of music (measures 1-4). It consists of two staves, I and II, in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. Both staves begin with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *sost.* (sostenuto) marking. Staff I has three upward-pointing 'v' marks above measures 2, 3, and 4. Staff II also has three upward-pointing 'v' marks above measures 2, 3, and 4. The music features a slow, ascending melodic line in both parts.

Second system of music (measures 5-8). It begins with a measure rest in both staves, followed by a *rit.* (ritardando) marking. A boxed section labeled 'A' covers measures 6 and 7, with the tempo marking 'With motion ($\text{♩} = 120$)'. In measure 5, staff I has a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic and the instruction 'barely, audible'. In measure 6, staff II has a *p* (piano) dynamic. A text annotation '“ascent” motive lightly rhythmic' is placed between the staves for measures 6 and 7. The system ends with a *pp* dynamic in staff I.

Third system of music (measures 9-12). It begins with a measure rest in both staves. The music continues with a steady, rhythmic ascending pattern in both staves. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#).

Fourth system of music (measures 13-15). It begins with a measure rest in both staves. A boxed section labeled 'B' covers measures 14 and 15. The music features a more complex, flowing ascending line. Dynamics of *mf* (mezzo-forte) are indicated in both staves for measures 14 and 15.

Fifth system of music (measures 16-19). It begins with a measure rest in both staves. The music continues with a rapid, flowing ascending pattern in both staves, characterized by many beamed sixteenth notes.

20 C

I

II

24

I

II

28 D

I

II

p

p

31

I

II

34

I

II

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

37 E

I *f*

II *f*

40

I

II

43

I

II

46

I *dim. poco a poco*

II *dim. poco a poco*

50

I *p* (*p*) *simile*

II *p*

54 **F**

(p)

58

62 **G**

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

66

(cresc.)

(cresc.)

69 **H**

f

f

72

I

II

75

I

II

I

dim. poco a poco

dim. poco a poco

79

I

II

(dim.)

p

put bow down

(dim.)

p

82

J

I

II

tap/pat strings

(p)

85

I

II

take bow

88

rapidly, unmeasured blur

I

II

(arco)

(p) 3 3 3 3

91

rapidly, unmeasured blur

I

II

3:00

3. Summit

(harmonics arching pattern)
suggestive of mountain peaks
 [change bow slowly]

Moderate tempo (♩ = 120)

I

II

pizz.

pp unobtrusive

p

A

arco

(p) cantabile

B

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

*Cello I continues the "mountain peaks" harmonics pattern throughout this movement (as a quiet background)

34 C

I 12/8 (pp) *pizz.*

II

39 D

I 12/8 (pp) *pizz.*

II *arco* *simile* *poco cresc.* *mp*

alternate between regular and harmonic (on same pitch) *ad lib.*
as if traveling a high mountain ridge

44

I 12/8 (pp) *pizz.*

II *arco* *simile* *poco cresc.* *mp*

(alternate reg. and harm. *ad lib.*) *ord.*

50 E

I 12/8 (pp) *pizz.*

II *arco* *simile* *poco cresc.* *mp*

(alternate) *ord.*

57

I 12/8 (pp) *pizz.*

II *arco* *simile* *poco cresc.* *mp*

(alternate) *ord.*

64 F

I 12/8 (pp) *pizz.*

II *arco* *simile* *poco cresc.* *mp*

(alternate) *ord.* *pizz.*

12

70

I 13 b (pp) (cresc. (col II)) $(\text{alternate reg. and harm. ad lib.})$ arco poco cresc.

II b

75

75

I 13 b (cresc. (col II)) mf ord.

II b mf

81

81

I 13 b (cresc. (col II)) (alternate) ord.

II b

87

87

I 13 b (cresc. (col II)) (alternate) ord.

II b

93

93

I 13 b (cresc. (col II)) (alternate) ord.

II b

99

99

I 13 b (cresc. (col II)) (alternate) ord. pizz.

II b

105

I

(pp)

(alternate reg. and harm. *ad lib.*)
arco

II

110

I

II

cresc. (col II)

cresc.

f

ord.

f

[illegible]

122 K

I *pizz.* *(alternate arco)*

II

129 *rit. to end*

I

II

dim. to end

dim. to end

134

I

(dim.)

ord.

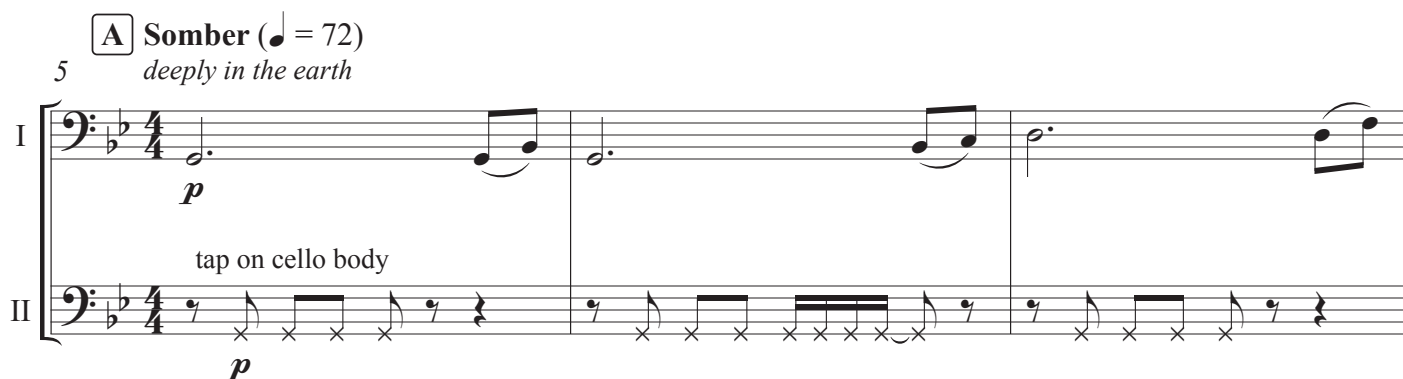
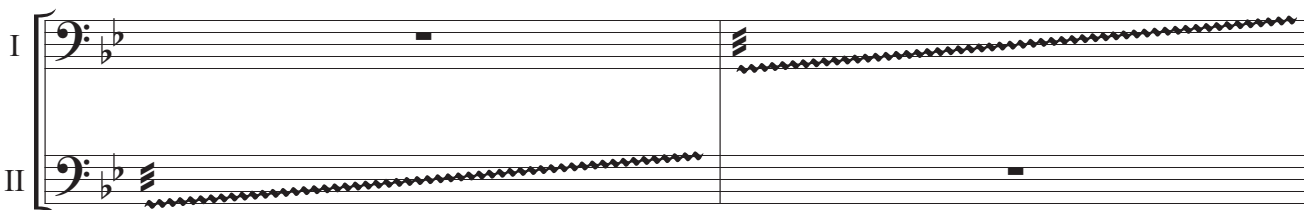
II

(dim.)

4. Listening to the Earth

Both players tremolo on the body of their instrument using the flesh of the tip of two fingers (rising and moving down towards the floor) *to suggest tapping sounds of the earth.*

circa 4 seconds per measure



11

I

II

poco cresc.

B

mf

pat strings

mf

14

I

II

take bow

17

I

II

C

p

arco

19

I

II

cresc.

cresc.

21

I

II

D

f

f

23

I

II

25

I

II

27

I

II

29

I

II

31

I

II

E

p

p

The musical score is written for two staves, I and II, in 12/8 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 23, 25, 27, 29, and 31 indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. Staff I contains various musical notations, including triplets (marked with '3'), slurs, and dynamic markings like *p* (piano). Staff II contains similar notations, including triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like *p* (piano). A section marked 'E' (Emphasis) is indicated above the staff at measure 29. The score concludes with a final measure at measure 31.

33 *cresc.* *pizz.* *arco*

35 **F** *f*

37

39

41

LH finger tremolo
towards bottom of Cello
(similar to beginning)