

The Laughing Crane's Lament

For String Quartet

Jonathan Wilson

Program Notes

The "Laughing Crane" is 1) an allusion to a character of the same name from a contemporary dance that dealt with the philosophical issues of the Earth's balance, and 2) a connection to the very dancer who played this role onstage. This dancer was someone I knew and went to school with many years ago. This piece is written, in part, in memory of this person, the very bird in flight that sadly took its own life at a young age. This work explores the aspects of such a dancer: the graceful and enchanting qualities that come into conflict with the underlying torments and bitter melancholy that may have plagued this gentle spirit.

Lay eyes morose upon the Laughing Crane,
Aloft in majesty—perdition foul!
Betaken, stolen by some curse profane,
She flies to Hades, wretched by the howls
Of Erinyes, betide her last lament
To Tyche, absent in her final prayer,
At her behest—she danced in her descent
To peril, poisoned by her sickness rare.
Live on, young memory! Her sweet perfumes,
Sincere benevolence—her past, her prime,
Her permanence in all who breathe her fumes
Forever mourn for penitence—her crime,
Alas! Her pangs of woe! Her laden soul
No longer lit, her heart no longer whole—
(Wilson, *Sonnet LVIII*)

Performance Directions


s.t. = sul tasto

a.s.t. = extreme sul tasto

s.p. = sul ponticello

a.s.p. = extreme sul ponticello

pochis. glissando = the slightest bit of glissando possible

( V) = change bowing direction as needed (for long sustained tones)

Portamento = glissando from note to note indicated in brackets

The Laughing Crane's Lament

In memory of the Laughing Crane

Jonathan Wilson

Andante ♩ = 69

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

II

p *mp* *poco f* *ppp*

p *f* *pizz.* *mf* *p* *f*

p *mf*

p *sfz* *col legno*

p *mf* *sfz* *p* *mp*

3 *pochis. gliss. (arco)*

mf *p* *poco mp*

pochis. gliss. (a.s.p.) *ord.* *7*

p *piu p*

arco *a.s.t.* *ord.* *Portamento 5*

p *fp*

(arco) *s.p.* *3* *3* *5* *ord.* *pizz.*

ppp *mp* *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *p* *f*

The Laughing Crane's Lament

5

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf *p* *pp* *mp* *fp*

p *mf* *pp* *mp* *mf* *p*

mp *p* *p* *mf* *p*

mf *p* *mp* *mf*

I II III IV III

pochis. gliss. *s.p.* *a.s.p.*

arco *gradual gliss.* *pizz.* *arco*

3 5

9

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf *f*

mp *mf* *f*

fp *mf* *p* *f*

III ord. III

pizz. *arco*

5 3 7

Musical score for measures 12-14, featuring Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. The score is divided into three measures with time signatures of 5/4, 5/4, and 4/4. Dynamics include *p*, *ff*, *pp*, *fp*, and *p*. Performance markings include a triplet of eighth notes in the Viola part and a five-measure rest in the Violin I part.

Musical score for measures 15-17, featuring Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. The score is divided into three measures with time signatures of 5/4, 5/4, and 4/4. Dynamics include *f dolce*, *sfz*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *pizz.*, *ord.*, and *f*. Performance markings include *pizz.* for Violin I and Viola, and *ord.* for Viola. A section marker 'A' is present above the first measure of the second system.

18

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *p* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp*

20

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *p* *cresc.*

24

Vln. I *mp* *fp* *mf* *pizz.* *mp*

Vln. II (pizz.) *mp* *mf* *mp*

Vla. *mp* *mf* *mp dolce*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp*

B sul A

27

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp* *mf* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp* *pizz.*

Vc. *p* *mp* *dolce* *mf*

arco

30

arco

p

mf

p *pp*

pizz.

mp *p* *mp* *mf*

rit. ----- *a tempo*

32

mp *p* *mf* *f* *p*

mf *mf* *f*

p *mp* *mf* *f*

C

Musical score for measures 39-40, featuring Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. Measure 39 includes dynamics *mp* and *fp*, and a *ord.* marking. Measure 40 includes dynamics *fp* and *f*. Fingerings 7, 10, and 5 are indicated. A *pizz.* marking is present for Violin II. A large slur spans across measures 39 and 40.

Musical score for measures 41-44, featuring Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. Measure 41 includes dynamics *mf* and *p*, and markings *arco* and *col legno*. Measure 42 includes dynamics *mp* and *pp*. Measure 43 includes dynamics *p*, *mp*, and *mf*. Measure 44 includes dynamics *p* and *fp*. Fingerings 7, 5, 3, and 5 are indicated. A *II* marking is present for Viola. A large slur spans across measures 41 and 42. Time signatures 3/4 and 4/4 are shown.

con sord.

D

Musical score for measures 43-46, featuring Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. The score includes dynamic markings such as *fp*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, *mp*, *pizz.*, and *sfz*. It also includes performance instructions like *ord. arco*, *con sord.*, and fingering numbers (IV, III, IV). A box labeled 'D' is present above the Vln. I staff. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 5/4 and back to 4/4.

Musical score for measures 47-50, featuring Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *mf*, and *mp*. It also includes performance instructions like *rit. ---* and fingering numbers (3). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4.

51 *a tempo* E

Vln. I *pp* (□V)

Vln. II *pp* con sord. II (□V)

Vla. *pp* con sord. II

Vc. *pp* arco con sord. IV

p < *mf* > *p* < *mp* < *mf*

mf < *f* > *mp* < *sfz*

fp < *mf* < *fp*

pp < *fp* < *fp*

54

Vln. I > *p* < *mp* < *mf* < *f*

Vln. II *p* < *sfz* < *p* < *mf* < *f*

Vla. *f* > *p* < *f* > *mp* < *f* > *mf* < *f*

Vc. *f fp* < *f fp* < *f fp* < *mf fp*

56

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *f* *sub. p* *fp*

mp *f* *sub. p* *pp*

mp *f* *sub. p* *fp*

mf *fp* *f* *sub. p* *fp*

7

5

3

3

5

a.s.p.

58

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f *p* *mf* *pp* *f* *p* *mp*

mp *f* *p* *mp*

mf *pp* *f* *p* *mp*

mf *pp* *f* *p* *mp*

ord.

ord.

senza vib.

5

3

3

3

rit. ---- *a tempo*

F

rit. --- a tempo

62

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf *p* *mf* *pizz.* *mp* *p*

mf *p* *mf* *pizz.* *mp* *pizz.* *p* *mp*

mf *p* *mf* *pizz.* *mp* *pizz.* *p* *mp*

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mp*

65

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f *p* *f* *arco* *mf* *pp* *mf*

mf *f* *mf* *f*

mf *f* *mf* *f*

mf *f* *mf* *f*

67 senza sord.

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. II *p* III (V)

Vla. *mf* *f* *p* II (V)

Vc. *mf* *f* *pp*

senza sord. senza sord. senza sord.

G Poco meno mosso ♩ = 63

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *ff* *fp* *f* 3

5/4 3/4 5/4 3/4

74

74

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p *f* *mp*

p *f* *mp*

3

3

3

Detailed description: This system covers measures 74, 75, and 76. The Vln. I and Vln. II staves feature a melodic line starting in measure 75 with a dynamic of *p*, rising to *f* by measure 75.5, and then decaying to *mp* by measure 76. The Vln. II staff includes a flat sign in measure 75. The Vla. staff is mostly silent, with a few notes in measure 76. The Vc. staff has a triplet in measure 74, followed by a melodic line with triplets in measures 75 and 76. Dynamics for the Vc. include *mf*, *p*, and *mf*. The time signature changes to 4/4 in measure 75.

77

77

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf *mp* *p*

mf *mp* *p*

mp *mf*

3

3

mf *p* *mf* *p*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 77, 78, and 79. The Vln. I and Vln. II staves play a sustained melodic line that starts at *mf* in measure 77 and gradually decays to *p* by measure 79. The Vln. II staff includes a sharp sign in measure 77. The Vla. staff is mostly silent, with a melodic line starting in measure 79. The Vc. staff has a triplet in measure 77, followed by a melodic line with triplets in measures 78 and 79. Dynamics for the Vc. include *mf*, *p*, *mf*, and *p*. The time signature changes to 4/4 in measure 78.

80 III *rit.* ----- *a tempo*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

3

p

7

mf

III

II (VI)

83 III

H **Piu mosso** ♩ = 72

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pizz. *pp* *p*

mp

mp

pizz.

s.t.

86

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pp *mp* *fp* *sfz*

cresc. *f* *mf*

ord.

88

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *mf*

pizz.

rit. ----- *a tempo*

3 3 3 3 5 5

90

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

92

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f *arco*

f

f *arco*

f *arco*

94

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp

mp

pizz.

mf

96

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

ff

mf

fp

f

mf

fp

f

mf

f

99

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

fp *f* *fp* *ff*

pizz. *p*

pizz. *p*

pizz. *p*

p *f* *p*

I

103

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

3 3 3

f *p*

109

109 110

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

cresc.

sfz

sfz

sfz

cresc.

sfz

cresc.

sfz

cresc.

sfz

Detailed description: This system contains measures 109 and 110. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. In measure 109, all instruments play a melodic line with a 'cresc.' marking. In measure 110, the strings play sustained chords with a 'sfz' (sforzando) marking. The Violin I part has a sharp sign above the final note in measure 110.

111

111 112

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

sfz

sfz

sfz

sfz

sfz

sfz

sfz

sfz

sfz

Detailed description: This system contains measures 111 and 112. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. In measure 111, the Violin I and Viola parts play melodic lines, while Violin II and Violoncello play sustained chords. In measure 112, all instruments play sustained chords with a 'sfz' (sforzando) marking. The Violin I part has a sharp sign above the final note in measure 112.

113

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p

mp

p

3 3 3

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 113 and 114. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. In measure 113, Vln. I plays a melodic line with eighth notes and a half note. Vln. II plays a chordal accompaniment. Vla. plays a melodic line with eighth notes. Vc. plays a bass line with quarter notes. Dynamic markings include *p* for Vln. I and Vln. II, *mp* for Vla., and *p* for Vc. In measure 114, Vln. I and Vln. II are silent. Vla. and Vc. play a triplet of eighth notes.

115

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

3 3 3

3

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 115 and 116. It features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. In measure 115, Vln. I and Vln. II are silent. Vla. and Vc. play a triplet of eighth notes. In measure 116, Vln. I and Vln. II are silent. Vla. and Vc. play a triplet of eighth notes.

122

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p \rightrightarrows *pp* *f* *f* *pizz.*

cresc. *f* *dim.*

3 3 7:8

Detailed description: This system contains measures 122, 123, and 124. Vln. I starts with a half note G4, then rests, then plays a series of eighth notes with a slur and a fermata. Vln. II plays a triplet of eighth notes, then rests, then plays a half note G4. Vla. plays a triplet of eighth notes, then rests, then plays a half note G4. Vc. plays a descending eighth-note scale. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, *f*, *pizz.*, *cresc.*, and *dim.*. A 7:8 ratio is indicated for the final eighth note in measure 124.

125

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *dim.* *p* *dim.* *pp* *fp* < *ff*

5/4 5/4 5/4 5/4

Detailed description: This system contains measures 125, 126, 127, and 128. Vln. I plays a half note G4, then rests, then plays a half note G4. Vln. II plays a half note G4, then rests, then plays a half note G4. Vla. plays a half note G4, then rests, then plays a half note G4. Vc. plays a descending eighth-note scale. Dynamics include *mp*, *dim.*, *p*, *dim.*, *pp*, *fp*, and *ff*. The time signature changes to 5/4 at the end of each measure.

K

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

125

126

127

128

129

130

arco

f

p

cresc.

pizz.

p

pizz.

f

p

cresc.

f

p

pizz.

cresc.

130

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

131

132

133

134

135

136

cresc.

f

f

f

cresc.

f

5

132 arco

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

fp *f* *p*

arco

gliss.

fp *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp*

arco

fp *mp* *p* *mf* *p*

arco

fp *fp* *f* *p*

($\square \nabla$)

a.s.p.

pochis. gliss.

135 ord.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *pp* *cresc.*

pp *pizz.* *cresc.*

pp *f* *pp* *cresc.*

pp *arco* *cresc.*

pp *arco* *cresc.*

pp *cresc.*

pp *pizz.* *arco*

pp *cresc.*

137

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

5

5

3

f

arco

f

f

f

L

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

ff *mf* *p* *pp*

ff *mf* *p* *ppp*

ff *mf* *p*

ff *mf* *p* *pp*

a tempo ♩ = 63

a.s.p. (□V)

a.s.p. (□V)

~4" (□V)

~4"

~6"

~8" →

144

ord. (□V)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p *ppp* *p* *ppp*

pp *p*

150

s.t.

rit. ----- a tempo rit. --

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p *mp* *p*

mp *p* *p*

a tempo *rit.* *a tempo*

8^{va}-----

154 9'07"

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

8^{va}-----

154 9'07"

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pp

pp

pp

pp

pizz.

pizz.

(V)

(V)

(V)