

"Ye Banks and Braes O'Bonnie Doon"

Traditional Scottish Folk Song

Transcribed and arranged by Percy Aldridge Grainger

1936



Broad Description

- 32 Measure AABA in 16 measure stanzas.
- Ballad for Winds, String Bass and optional Organ or Harmonium
- No percussion parts
- Great opportunity to work on balance and blend between individual members of sections because the cross scoring creates rich sonorities of blended sounds.



Percy Aldridge Grainger (July 8, 1882 - February 20, 1961)

A native of Australia, Grainger led a revival of British folk music, collecting recordings of folk songs on Edison's wax cylinder recording device and transcribing the works for various instruments and ensembles. His musical training came through the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, Germany and he later resided in London. In 1914, he settled in upstate New York. After a brief stint as an Army Bandsman, he dedicated himself to educational work.

"Ye Banks and Braes O'Bonnie Doon" is a Scottish lullaby by Robert Burns that was set to a traditional Scottish melody in one of his more soulful moods describing a love-lost girl as she wanders

by the banks of the river Doon in Ayrshire. Recordings with lyrics are almost felt in a three pattern as opposed to the more flowing 6/8 time signature present in the Grainger interpretation. The 6/8 time signature leads to a more flowing interpretation, reminiscent of the ebb and flow of the river in relation to the young woman's heart.

*Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care!
Thou'll break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn!
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed, never to return.*

*Aft hae I rov'd by bonnie Doon
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And fondly sae did I o' mine;
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree!
And my fause luver stole my rose -
But, ah! he left the thorn wi' me.*

Analysis

Instrument Groupings (experiment with seating in this arrangement too)

- I. Piccolo, Flute (in 8va), Oboe 1, Clarinet 1, Cornet 1
- II. Oboe 2, Clarinet 2, Alto Sax 1, Cornet 2
- III. Clarinet 3, Alto Sax 2, Horn 1, Cornet 3
- IV. Clarinet 4, Tenor Sax 1, Horn 2, Trombone 1
- V. Bassoon 1, Tenor Sax 2, Trombone 2, Euphonium
- VI. Bassoon 2, Bass Clarinet, Bari Sax 2, Tuba, String Bass

Two repetitions of an AABA form, with subtle variations in counter melodic and harmonic material throughout.

A Theme

Melody in Part 2

Harmonized Melody in Part 3

Countermelody in Part 1 (only in 2nd stanza)

Sustained Harmony in Parts 4, 5 & 6

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Ye Banks and Braes O' Bonnie Doon" by William Rank 2. The score is for a woodwind and brass ensemble and is set in 6/8 time with a tempo of 104. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 1 through 4, and the second system covers measures 5 through 8. The instruments are listed on the left: Flute (1), Oboe (2), Clarinet (3), Trombone (4), Trombone (5), Trombone (6), and Tuba (6). The Flute part (1) has a dynamic marking of *mp* starting in measure 2. The Oboe (2) and Clarinet (3) parts have a dynamic marking of *mf* starting in measure 2. The Trombone (4) part has a dynamic marking of *mp* starting in measure 2. The Trombone (5) and Trombone (6) parts have a dynamic marking of *p* starting in measure 2. The Tuba (6) part has a dynamic marking of *p* starting in measure 2. The score is titled "A Materials" at the top. The tempo is indicated as $\text{♩} = 104$. The time signature is 6/8. The key signature is one flat. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 1 through 4, and the second system covers measures 5 through 8. The instruments are listed on the left: Flute (1), Oboe (2), Clarinet (3), Trombone (4), Trombone (5), Trombone (6), and Tuba (6). The Flute part (1) has a dynamic marking of *mp* starting in measure 2. The Oboe (2) and Clarinet (3) parts have a dynamic marking of *mf* starting in measure 2. The Trombone (4) part has a dynamic marking of *mp* starting in measure 2. The Trombone (5) and Trombone (6) parts have a dynamic marking of *p* starting in measure 2. The Tuba (6) part has a dynamic marking of *p* starting in measure 2. The score is titled "A Materials" at the top. The tempo is indicated as $\text{♩} = 104$. The time signature is 6/8. The key signature is one flat.

B Theme

Melody in Part 2

Countermelody #1 in Part 3

Countermelody #2 in Part 1 (2nd stanza)

Sustained Harmony in Parts 4, 5 & 6

B Materials

The musical score is for the B Theme of 'Ye Banks and Braes O' Bonnie Doon'. It features seven staves: Flute (Fl), Oboe (Ob), Clarinet (Cl), and three Trombones/Tuba (Tb, Tb, Tuba). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins with a rest for the first staff. The Oboe part starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Clarinet, first Trombone, and Tuba parts start with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The Flute part has a melodic line with a long slur. The Oboe part has a counter-melody with slurs. The Clarinet part has a counter-melody with slurs. The first Trombone part has a counter-melody with slurs. The second Trombone part has a counter-melody with slurs. The Tuba part has a sustained harmonic accompaniment with slurs. The score ends with a double bar line.

M.	Form	Melody	Rhythm	Harmony	Timbre	Texture	Expression
1-5	A	II. Four measure phrase - Lyrical ends on Re, suggesting leading into the next section III. Harmonized a third below the melody	Primarily flowing 8th notes and quarter notes. Except for the Scottish at the end of the 3rd measure in each phrase.	Sus. Harm. in VI & V Open 5th with the major 3rd in IV lilting up to the 4th and back down.	Reedy quality of Oboe 2 and English Horn is paired with the darker sound of cornets in II and III groupings.	Full homophonic Texture throughout	mf. Legato. Stretch anacrusis and emphasize quarter note (long note=strong note). Shape the phrase based on the melody.
6-9	A'	II. 4 measure phrase - Exact repetition of first four measures, with the exception of the last note. III. Harmonized a third below the melody	A little rhythmic nuance in part with the 5-1 and 8va jumps. Adds ebb and flow, creates subtle tension.	Sustained Harmony in parts VI & V. Open 5ths with the major third/ suspended fourth providing the ebb and flow of the river.	Same timbre as before. Blend of oboe and cornet is key.		Dynamic shape.
10-13	B	II. Descending one measure motive with repetition of c in measure 12. III. Countermelody	Quarter eighth rhythm in IV, V and VI	Change in chord progression, emphasizes IV m11.			Slightly faster then slacken. dynamic is forte. These might be reflective of the text "Thou'll break my heart, thou warbling bird".
14-17	A'	Exact repetition of melody and harmonized melody in parts II & III from measure 6-9	Sustained note over measure over m16-17 creates a slowing effect.	Sustained pedal in VI through fermata and phrase connects the two stanzas.			End of first statement of melody. Shape and short fermata? You remind me of joys never to return?
18-21	A	II. Melody (p) III. Harmonized Melody I. Countermelody (nice shape)	Quarter eighth dotted quarter in voices IV & V create a longing forward motion	Inner voices shift places (rose and woodbine twine)	Adds Countermelody in I. Because these are the highest voices in the ensemble, the tone becomes brighter with the pairing of picc, flute, oboe and clarinet in the higher registers.		Dynamics are back to piano, allowing for the shape to develop with the melodic contour.

M.	Form	Melody	Rhythm	Harmony	Timbre	Texture	Expression
22-25	A'	I. Countermelody has a beautiful descending line which gives the effect of antecedent/ consequence from measures 18-21 to 22-25.	Slower harmonic rhythm than in A statements and previous stanza	Harmonic structure is the same as first statement of the A section, with the slower harmonic rhythm. Relates to text?			Continued melodic contour of A section starting in measure 18.
26-29	B	Melody is hidden between the overlapping 8th note motion.	Consistent overlapping 8th notes in low brass create drive leading to final statement of the A theme.		Trumpets, Euph, Tuba and String Bass are added, filling out the ensemble but changing from the darker cornet sound to a brighter trumpet sound as the ensemble crescendos.		Huge crescendo from $p < fff$ Melody must be heard throughout, even with two countermelodies and overlapping 8th notes.
30-33	A'	Final Statement of melody. Countermelody in I performs the strongest role as it's doubled in octaves.	Lingeringly 84 bpm and slowing to 40 bpm.		Last chord should be balanced according to harmonic balance instead of melodic balance.	Lush and full.	Why is the final A section the loudest section of the work, when in the first statement it was the B section? Text? Why my false lover stole my rose but left the thorn with me. Interpretation: Stole my virginity but left me with a child (thorn). Marcato separation emphasizes anger and frustration.

Heart Statement

The heart of Grainger's interpretation of "Ye Banks and Braes O' Bonnie Doon" is the ebb and flow of the melody that reflects the emotional highs and lows of unrequited love.

BRAINSTORMING?

Ebb and Flow of the river in relation to girls lost love and her feelings of emotion?

Break my heart at m. 10. Forte and faster?

Harmonium. Grainger heard the color of the harmonium and the timbre choices?

Reedy but Mellow?

Full sustain on anacrusis and ends of phrases?

What is woodbine? a. Honeysuckle. Why does Grainger use English tempo markings instead of Italian?

Affective Outcome: Students will explore the poetic and modern cultural context of unrequited love.

Strategies

- Pre-Reading Questions
 - What do you think that this poem might be about just based on the title?
- Read and interpret poem
 - Look up interpretation of non-English words
 - Discussion on what poem might mean
 - First notion might be that its a love story
- Listen to several different interpretations
 - Which version expresses the emotional conviction of the young lover the best?
- Journaling:
 - Have you ever felt that there were times when you loved someone, and they didn't even act like you existed?
 - How did that make you feel?
 - What other instances of the Jilted Lover or Unrequited Love themes are present in popular culture? Film? Music?
 - Black - Pearl Jam
 - Dido - White Flag (YouTube Video)
 - New Order - Bizarre Love Triangle (You Tube Video)
 - Every Rose Has It's Thorn - Poison (Do not show music video)
 - You're Beautiful - James Blunt
 - Every Soap Opera on TV

Assessments

- Pre-reading Inferences based on Title
- Classroom Discussions
- Journaling

Skill Outcome: Students will perform with proper melodic and harmonic Balance and Blend (vertical and linear)

Strategies

Physical Balance

- Team Building - Pyramid drill how fast can you build a people pyramid with 10 people -
- Harmonic Balance (Kinesthetic)
- Balance Bucket - Students sit with their backs on the ground and their feet in the air. On top of their shoes they are to balance a bucket. The idea is for each of the students to take off their shoes, without letting the contents of the bucket spill (the activity suggests water, although I would prefer ping-pong balls). This activity is to support melodic balance, as each part is important.

Harmonic Balance

- Warm-up Chorales (Aural)
- Balance pyramid (Visual/Aural)

Melodic Balance

- Melody/harmonized melody/countermelody worksheets - part worksheets (Aural/Visual)
- Perform parts in small ensembles/choirs (Aural)
- Notate for percussion ensemble (Aural)
- Re-Seating: Based on instrument groupings? Sitting next to someone who has a completely different part? Sitting next to like instruments that are playing different parts? (Aural)
- Re-Scoring: Using Noteflight to copy and paste different lines to different instruments (exploring the concept of blend). Exploring the timbre choices and the blended sounds that Grainger settles on. Why does Grainger settle on the instrument groupings he uses in this composition? (Visual)

Assessments

- Ensemble Recordings
- IGSM Rubric and Socratic Assessment
- Rescoring Assignment

Knowledge Outcome: Students will understand phrasing and breathing, within the context of the poem and applying that interpretation to our performance.

Strategies

- Listening and comparing to vocal and instrumental arrangements that differ in interpretation (Aural)
 - Choral Arrangement
 - John McCormack
 - Mac Morin - Violin/Piano Instrumental
 - Eddi Redder (You Tube)
 - Holly Tomas (You Tube)
 - Contrabass Saxophone Don Stevens (You Tube) - Funny looking & sounding!

- Stretch... Movement in the Music
 - Dalcroze movement to the music (Kinesthetic)
 - Lilt on Beat 1
 - Melded beats 1 & 2
 - Full sustain on the ends of phrases
 - Ebb and flow of the river = speed and slowing of the ensemble

- Sing vocal arrangement with proper phrase shape and inflection
- Mark in phrase marks and dynamic shape (Visual)
- Reverse syncopation on the Scottish Snap (Lombard Rhythm)

Assessment

- Discussion of vocal arrangements and instrumental interpretations
- Part Markings