

PEACE DANCER

FOR WIND ENSEMBLE

JODIE BLACKSHAW

INSTRUMENTATION

PICCOLO	TRUMPET 1 IN B ^b
FLUTE 1	TRUMPET 2 IN B ^b
FLUTE 2	TRUMPET 3 IN B ^b
OBOE	
	1 ST HORN IN F
CLARINET 1 IN B ^b	2 ND HORN IN F
CLARINET 2 IN B ^b	3 RD HORN IN F
CLARINET 3 IN B ^b	
CLARINET 4 IN B ^b	TROMBONE 1
BASS CLARINET IN B ^b	TROMBONE 2
	BASS TROMBONE
SOPRANO SAXOPHONE	EUPHONIUM
ALTO SAXOPHONE	TUBA
TENOR SAXOPHONE	STRING BASS
BARITONE SAXOPHONE	
BASSOON	VIBRAPHONE 1 & ORCHESTRAL BELLS
	VIBRAPHONE 2
	TIMPANI & SUSPENDED CYMBAL

* REHEARSAL NOTES *

A special note from the composer...

This is a gentle, humble work. It is based on the book *Peace Dancer* by Roy Henry Vickers and Robert Budd (see notes over the page for more information). It is imperative that you purchase this text and share with your students. On page 28 there is a realization: “We have really lost our way. We have not taught our children love and respect”. This statement and illustration governs the entire piece. Discuss with your students what it means to play with humility and how this may effect ensemble tone, balance and overall expression? How can they best represent each emotional stage as individuals, as an ensemble and what effect does this have on the conductor’s gesture? To truly achieve this work, emotional attachment and the willingness to be vulnerable is paramount. Take a deep breath, be brave and be ready to find where you perhaps have lost your way through the realization of *Peace Dancer*.

“What makes you vulnerable, makes you beautiful”.

Brené Brown

Jodie Blackshaw

Baranduda, Victoria, 2017

Measure 1-7:

Emotional context: *weary, somber, absorbed*.

(All players in the ensemble should be aware of this context and if not playing, remain motionless and in the moment.)

- Harmon mutes: please ensure all trumpet players use the same mute. Bubble harmons are preferred.
- Carefully tune trumpet players with mutes in *and* mutes out to ensure they set the right pitch for the rest of the ensemble from measure 1.
- m. 3 & 5: pause is a short pause – like a moment in time.
- m. 7: Trombone/Bassoon entry should have a breathy attack – like a ‘cello. Not sudden, but simply carefully emerging from the colour that is dissipating.

Measure 8-15:

Emotional context: *weary, somber, mournful*.

(All players in the ensemble should be aware of this context and if not playing, remain motionless and in the moment.)

- m. 8: Soprano Saxophone sets the mood here – a little rubato and vibrato is encouraged.
- m. 8: Horn 3: Slightly emphasize entry then fade away. A little like a knolling bell (as for Trombone 2, m. 12).
- m. 9-10: Alto Saxophone is in conversation with Sop. Sax. Balance dynamics & stylistic interpretation.
- m. 12-13: Clarinet chord in a new harmonic voice that overlaps and takes the listener to a new place. Ensure clarinets are confident with this and create a harmonious, far away warmth in their tone.
- m. 14: Horn 1 entry is vulnerable so do not hold back the tempo too much in here.

Measure 16-26:

Emotional context: *with a little hope*.

(All players in the ensemble should be aware of this context and if not playing, remain motionless and in the moment.)

- Flute 1 is a shadow to the Horn and should gently dance around the Horn line. Vibrato is strongly encouraged.
- Clarinets should carefully articulate their passages and create a clear, moving homogenous colour beneath the soloists. They represent the beginning of the realization and are encouraged to move a little as they play, to represent the stirring of the spirit.
- Horn 1 part is cued in both Trombone 1 and Euphonium. Whilst Horn is preferred, please change instrumentation should your ensemble have a stronger Trombone or Euphonium player who can comfortably play in this range.

Measure 27-38:

Emotional context: *wistful, with anticipation, unsettled (as if something unknown is about to happen)*

(All players in the ensemble should be aware of this context and if not playing, remain in the moment.)

- m. 26: Alto Sax/Euphonium line should use a breathy attack – almost string like to inhale the current sound. Alto is to grow and sail over the top of all other lines. A little vibrato is encouraged.
- m. 28 : Lower Brass should be aware of the sonorities set by the ensemble and match their dynamic and accordingly. Blend – blend – blend! Horn 2 – as a knolling bell.
- m. 33 Più Mosso: A little more strength in tone and fullness in ensemble timbre here – a little rubato and tempo swell around m. 35-36 will enable moving lines to flourish and heighten anticipation.

Measure 39-55:

Emotional context: *anxious intensity that leads to a release of emotion at 53.*

- m. 39: the tango-esque flavor set in Bari-Sax/Bassoon/String Bass should set a new feel here – taking the audience into another timbral colour. Saxes should be a little ‘bitey’ (West-Cost, Steely Dan kind of bitey) ☺
- m. 44: hold back the tempo ever so slightly here and allow the Trumpet 1/Oboe line to resonate.
- m. 46 – 49: constantly building, initially set by Oboe/Sop Sax/Trumpet 1. If it doesn’t feel right in the moment to pull back the dynamic at 46 then don’t. Dynamic markings are there to allow the Oboe/Sop Sax/Trumpet 1 to freely fly over the top of the ensemble – use your judgement. Upper winds match the energy of this line at 48 and head towards the accented note on the end of 1 in m. 49. Timpani should not hold back and take the ensemble through to a full and dramatic forte at 50.
- m. 50-52: Bell tones in all brass (except B. Tbn and Tuba). Be mindful of melodic lines in upper winds and balance with care. Ensure the ensemble still has somewhere to go dynamically and don’t peak too soon.
- m. 52-54: Louden is a direction to the whole ensemble to “intensify towards the change” (to quote my colleague Dale Lonis: <https://www.mmiachieve.com/>). The goal being to create intensity to the release on the C major chord at 53 – not simply play louder. Consider balance, timpani and the upper winds flourishes to achieve this.

Measure 56-66:

Emotional context: *relieved but with a little sadness, humble, feeling a little sorry.*

- A delicate section governed by Flute and Oboe. Intricate lines in all other parts should be played with clarity – moving parts = meaningful lines; play as such!
- Hold back tempo a little at 61 then *dance* a little in the 3/8. Rit. commences at the very end of this 3/8 section and commences the entry to the final, reflective moments.

Measure 66-end:

Emotional context: *reflection, contemplation.*

- Alternate brass parts should carefully weave in-between each other – imagine waves in the ocean.
- m. 73: this is a very achievable vocalization. All parts are written in concert pitch and please ensure that these exact pitches are sung – no lower octaves. Rehearse this way:
 - a. Have everyone sing the 4-quaver/eighth note line (with the Vibraphone) and hold the ‘B’ – like this:



- b. Students decide which note they wish to hold (i.e. E – G – D or B). Make sure it is balanced. Try each part then build. Fully notated, the result is this:

- c. Ensure ‘mmm’ sound sits at the base of the throat and not in the nose.

LEARN MORE ABOUT PEACE DANCER and ROY HENRY VICKERS

See a YouTube clip of Roy Henry Vickers talking about this story:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XH5M_epq0c

To learn more about Roy Henry Vickers, please visit his website:

<http://www.royhenryvickers.com/>

MORAL RIGHTS and WHERE TO PURCHASE THE BOOK

This work is based on the text “Peace Dancer”, written by Roy Henry Vickers and Robert Budd with spectacular illustrations also by Roy Henry Vickers. Published by Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, BC, Canada. You can purchase the book directly from the publisher here:

<http://www.harbourpublishing.com/title/PeaceDancer>

I am proud to state that moral rights have been granted from the author and the publisher to link this composition with this beautiful book aimed at children of a Yr. 5-9 reading age.

Other texts by Roy Henry Vickers have been listed in the Authentic First Peoples Resources (K-9) as put together by the First Nations Education Steering Committee, and I am certain this will be added to the list (only published in 2016).

To obtain a free download of this list of texts, please go here:

<http://www.fnesc.ca/k-7/>

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

Principles of learning focused on during the creation of this work are as follows:

- Learning involves recognising the consequences of one’s actions
- Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations

COMMISSION

Commissioned by the University of British Columbia Conducting Symposium Consortium hosted by Dr. Robert Taylor, Director of Bands:

- ❖ W.J. Mouat Secondary School, Janet Wade (Abbotsford, British Columbia)
- ❖ American Community School, Christopher Ward (Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- ❖ Mulgrave Schools, Mark Steffens (West Vancouver, British Columbia)
- ❖ Seaquam Secondary School, Jill Sparrow-Ng (Delta, British Columbia)
- ❖ Seycove Secondary School, Risa Mcdonell (North Vancouver, British Columbia)
- ❖ Tristan Roush, Kent, WA

Special thanks to Janet Wade of W.J. Mouat Secondary School for driving this project.

*** PROGRAMME NOTES ***

‘Peace Dancer’ is inspired by the First Nations text of the same name by Roy Henry Vickers (Squamish Nation). In the words of the author:

“The story Peace Dancer is about a song and dance that is thousands of years old originating from the time of the flood. Songs have been composed for different Chiefs up and down the Pacific northwest coast. The Chief who is chosen to do this sacred dance is recognized as a healer in each community and the songs and dances are a reminder of the great flood and how the people lost their way and their love for all things in creation. During the dance there is a time when the dancer shakes eagle down from their headdress to remind people of the flood.”

Whilst this text afforded many music making opportunities, the composer chose to focus on one moment..

“We have really lost our way, we have not taught our children love and respect”.

This is achieved by dividing this short piece into ‘moments’: meditation – awakening – realization – humility. It takes you, the audience on an emotional journey, similar to realizing you have been in the wrong; maybe you have been unkind or acted in a way that does not become you? Once you realize the consequence of your actions, remorse and the understanding that there is a need to move forward with humility and grace follows. Thus is the lesson of ‘Peace Dancer’.

*** ABOUT THE COMPOSER ***

Have you ever played a ‘Blackshaw’ with your wind ensemble? If you have, then you know that a work by this Australian composer-educator is different from the norm. You will also know that it takes you, the Director, on an alternate educational pathway that for some, is a little uncomfortable at first. That said you would also know that it is a surprise package, an audience favourite and presents you the director with interesting conducting challenges.

Such is the work of Jodie Blackshaw.

Through her teaching, conducting and composing, Blackshaw has passionately searched for a compositional approach to band that offers Directors a product that centres on musical elements other than melody and harmony. In 2006 Jodie won the inaugural Frank Ticheli Composition Contest with her work ‘Whirlwind’ and since then has travelled throughout Australia, the United States, Canada and the UAE as a guest composer and creative music teaching clinician.

In 2016 Jodie launched her ‘Off the Podium’ professional development webinar series, connecting like-minded, creative band directors throughout the world. She is currently studying a PhD in Composition at the Australian National University.

To find out more about Jodie and her works please go to: www.jodieblackshaw.com

This work is dedicated to Craig Kirchhoff.

*A true Peace Dancer who reminds
us how it is important to walk this life with
integrity, humility and grace.*