Pamela J. Marshall

Black Bear Dance

horn quartet or horn choir with drums

sponsored by members of the Spindrift Commissioning Guild Green Mountain Horn Club - Alan Parshley, Director Charles Learoyd Anonymous



Black Bear Dance

music by Pamela J. Marshall

Black Bear Dance was written for the annual concert of the Esprit de Cor ensemble of Lexington, MA. Ms. Marshall has written several pieces for Esprit de Cor over the years and plays in their annual concert. In 2006, she wanted to indulge her love of drumming and mix that with the horns. The result is a jazzy, lighthearted piece that is a lot of fun to play.

After writing the music there was the problem of a name. The composer writes: "The rehearsals for my choral piece *Weaving the World* in March with the Assabet Valley Mastersingers gave me the name for the horn piece. There's a line in Janisse Ray's text that reads 'and black bears roam the woods unseen'. The choral director rehearsed it a lot, looking for a natural declamation and in-tune intervals. As I thought about a name for the emphatic, dance-like horns-and-drums music, I couldn't get the image of black bears out of my mind, so I decided it must be the right title. I worried that the name might imply an American Indian musical style, which the music is not. Then on the Internet I found the Bear Dance painting of William Holbrook Beard. Aside from the fact that he was mocking stock-market bears, the image was just right."

Drum parts

The drum part is meant to be played by a group of drummers using hand drums. The drum part is written with the African djembe in mind, but the players can use any selection of drums that is available. Some amount of improvising is OK too, as long as the rhythms stay synchronized between the horns and drums and the drums don't overwhelm with too much volume. Drumming groups tend to get faster and faster, while horns often drag, so a conductor is probably necessary to keep both groups together.

Spindrift Commissioning Guild

Black Bear Dance is one of the projects for 2006 of the Spindrift Commissioning Guild. The composer thanks heartily the Guild members sponsoring Black Bear Dance:

- Green Mountain Horn Club, Alan Parshley, Director
- Charles Learoyd, who inspired the clarinet choir version of this piece
- Anonymous

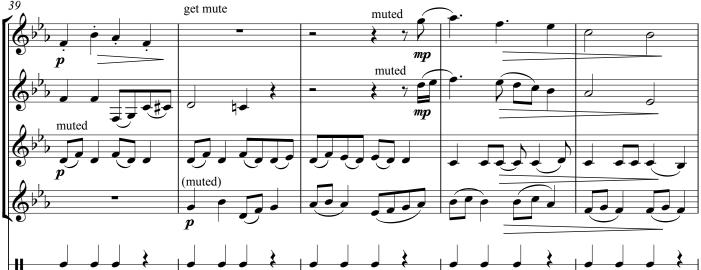
For information about the Guild, visit http://www.spindrift.com.

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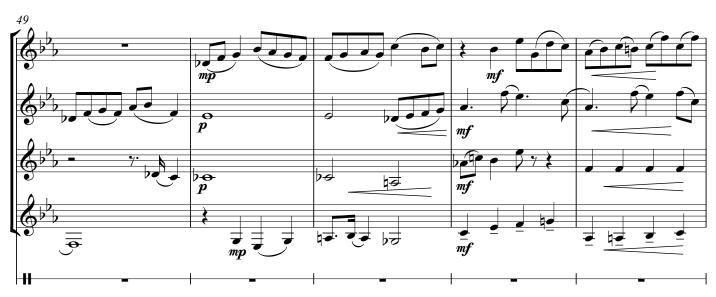


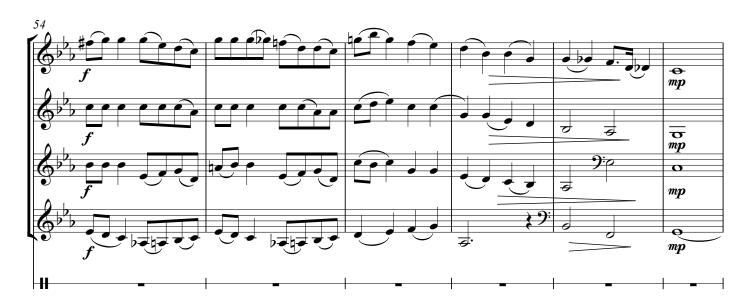






















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Selected Music by Pamela J. Marshall

Orchestra

Through the Mist (2222-2220, harp, 3pc, timp, strings) in 3 mvts A chill wind in autumn (solo voice, 2222-4221-3pc, strings) Traditional Christmas (treble chorus or soloist, 2222-4221, harp, 3pc, timp, strings) Three Appalachian Carols (2222-4231, harp, 2pc, timp, strings)

Keyboard

Suite for harpsichord or piano Daydream for piano Wordless Prayer for piano organ or SATB acapella Imagine That Time Stops for piano Stomp for piano

Strings

Arcanum for solo violin Soliloquy for solo cello Elusive Sleep for cello and piano Pascal's Theorems for cello and doublebass Triptoe Suite for intermediate violinist and piano Truth Becoming for string quartet

Woodwinds

Weaving the World for SATB chorus, oboe, piano Enchanted for oboe and chamber orchestra or piano Communing with Birds for flute Through the Mist for flute, violin, guitar Elements for woodwind quintet Poetry-Inspired Solos for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn

Brass

Waves and Fountains for oboe, horn, piano
Never Say Nevermore for horn and piano
Colored Leaves for solo horn
Black Bear Dance for horn quartet or choir and drums
"wild horn whose voice the woodland fills" for 8 horns
Star in the East (traditional carol) for 8 horns
The Future of Life for SATB chorus, trombone, piano
Wanderer for brass quintet
Among Friends for trumpet, 2 horns, euphonium or trombone

Recordings

Noises, Sounds & Strange Airs (Clique Track): Soliloquy and Sky's Mirror Mandolin X 4 (Plucked String Inc.): Mandolin Night for mandolin performed by Neil Gladd Enigmatica (Uncommon Strings): Blue-Gold Variations from Loosely Blue for mandolin ens. Holidays of the New Era (ERMMedia): Windshine for SATB and cello Just In Time Now and Then (Living Artists): Elusive Sleep for cello and piano