

Unit Study

Three Ayres from Gloucester by Hugh M. Stuart

Composer

Hugh Mead Stuart, born October 5, 1917, and passed away January 31, 2006. Stuart was an American composer of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Stuart studied the clarinet and received his bachelor of music from Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Oberlin, Ohio in 1940. Stuart also studied at Columbia Teachers College, Rutgers University, New Jersey Teachers College, and the University of Michigan. Stuart wrote over 100 compositions, arrangements, solos, method books, and orchestral collections. Stuart dedicated 33 years of his life to teaching instrumental music in the Maryland and New Jersey areas.

Composition

Three Ayres from Gloucester was completed by Hugh M. Stuart in the year 1969. The composer had a distinct passion for 10th century couplets. "*Three Ayres from Gloucester* came into being as a result of my fascination with an old 10th century couplet "There's no one quite so comely As the Jolly Earl of Chamondeley." the resulting three compositions are in early English folk song style and are designed to capture the mood of the peasants and their life on the fiefs of Wembley castle." - Stuart

Historical Perspective

Three Ayres from Gloucester was intended and specifically written to emulate the early styles of the English folk song. The work Ayres derives from a French word meaning "air de cour" translation being air courtyard. Now put into perspective, the piece is about the three courtyards from Gloucester. It is uncertain if this is the definition that Stuart intended, because he could have intended the more common use of the term which was a solo song that was through composed, and a light, merry tune. There are many composers, especially from Stuart's time that referenced, or used as a muse in their compositions folk tunes, and songs for lute.

Technical Considerations

Scoring

Flute 1-2 divisi	Oboe	Bassoon
Clarinet 1-3	Alto Clarinet	Bass Clarinet
Alto Saxophone 1-2	Tenor Saxophone	Baritone Saxophone
Cornet 1-3	Horn 1-4	Trombone 1-3
Baritone	Tuba	
Percussion (Snare drum, Bass drum, Triangle)		

The keys found in this piece are Eb Major, D minor, Bb Major, and F Major. The ranges are moderate for the instrumentation.

The first movement is marked *alla breve* at half note equals 96 in cut time. There are not many “funky rhythms” in this piece. There are many dotted quarter and dotted half notes though. Along with some rhythms continuing over the bar line, so the students music be aware of the tempo and maintain strong in their counting.

The second movement is at tempo quarter note equals 63 in 3/4 time. There are again, many dotted rhythms which may or may not be easier for the students as it is an easier meter to execute dotted rhythms with accuracy. There are a couple of times in this movement where the flute part gets higher in its range which may come as a challenge for the flutists. Students must make sure to roll the lip out so they can get the quicker airstream to achieve the higher notes.

The third movement is marked at dotted quarter note equals 108 in 6/8 time. While this movement has dotted rhythms, once the students make the connection of what the dot added to a single note it should begin to click. The articulation will be something that may come as a challenge to the students because it changes frequently.

Stylistic Considerations

The first movement is light and playful. This movement should not in any way seem harsh or heavy. There are many staccato markings through the movement. Students will most likely want to extend those staccato notes and lengthen them to give it more of a whole sound which is not what the composer intends.

The second movement is more lyrical than the first. It is more of a ballad compared to the first. This movement shouldn't have too many stylistic problems, other than the counter melody and the accompaniment parts covering up the melodic line.

The third movement is a dance. This should feel more like a waltz. While the movement is light like the first, the movement's notes should get a more full and round sound without blowing the roof off.

Musical Elements

Melody

The melodies all stem from English folk song feel. It is light and lyrical. The melody is passed around and should not be hard to distinguish from the rest of the ensemble. The main thematic melody in each movement is diatonic. The largest skips that the students have throughout the piece is a perfect fifth.

Harmony

The texture of the harmony is diatonic, like the melody, and bounces around the root, third, and fifth of the chords.

Something that will be beneficial for the students to warm up with would be scales and arpeggios especially in Bb Major, Eb Major, F Major, and D minor.

Rhythm

There are a lot of dotted rhythms. Mostly dotted quarter notes within all three movements. The easier of the dotted rhythms to be played will be those in the last movement in the 6/8. There are a couple of difficult licks in different instruments. The one that sticks out the most would be the one that the cornets have in measures 20 through 54 where there are a lot of tied over the bar line.

Timbre

The timbre is in a comfortable range and registers for the players. The percussion adds nice color in the first and third movements. The percussion is tacet in the second movement which makes way for the wind instruments to be more lyrical and melodic.

Form and Structure

The form of the first movement is ABBCBBA. The form of the second movement is ABAA. The form of the third movement is ABA'. Each of these are possible to be performed separately as short filler pieces, it is best if they are performed together as the set.

Section	Measure	Event and Scoring
The Jolly Earl of Cholmondeley		
Theme A	1-8	Theme found in cornet part (F Major)
Theme B	9-24	Theme is in clarinet solo, also the second theme is found in the flute, oboe, clarinet, and cornet
Theme C	25-42	Theme in flute 9D minor) Theme repeated and doubled by oboe.
Theme B	43-58	Theme in cornet again (F Major) Repeat 43-46
Theme A	59-66	Theme in cornet just as beginning
Ayre for Eventide		
Theme A	67-82	Found in horn Bb Major
Theme B	83-118	Modified theme,. Flute, oboe, clarinet, cornet
Codetta	119-128	Horn, solo flute, solo horn
The Fiefs of Wembley		
Theme A	133-148	Tutti intro (D minor)
Theme B	149-166	Theme in cornet. Drone in brass and saxophone
Theme A	167-182	Repeat of the theme in the beginning. With drone in brass and low woodwinds

Codetta

183-186