

# Music for the Birds

*harp (or piano) and clarinet (Bb, A, and Eb)*

I The Providing Coast

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*The Greater Yellowlegs*

*Pelicans on Patrol*

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V Music for the Birds

Commissioned by  
The Austin Chamber Ensemble

Dedicated to  
Dr. and Mrs. George J. Merriman, Jr.

Composed by  
J. Todd Frazier

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## Program Notes

Music for the Birds, for harp or piano and clarinet, was inspired by the Texas Gulf Coast and its indigenous water fowl. These musical character sketches offer interpretations from the peculiar and comical to the mystical and majestic qualities of Gulf Coast birds and their habitat. My interest in birds goes back to the childhood car trips I took with my grandparents from Houston to Corpus Christi to visit my great grandparents, George J. and Gem Merriman. One of the things we would do in the car was look for birds, especially Cranes and Herons, and we would often stop and get out at our favorite sighting spots for a better look. Through these memorable experiences I came to embrace and respect the fascinating and colorful world of the Texas Coast and felt that the many unique sights, sounds and colors I experienced would translate wonderfully into a musical response. Music for the Birds was commissioned by the Austin Chamber Ensemble and is dedicated to my grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. George J. Merriman, Jr. This work is intended to be used for both concert performances and environmental education and outreach programs.

## Descriptions of Individual Movements:

The Providing Coast is an impression of the soothing coastline in early morning.

The Sandpiper's Delight is about a handsome, nervous, and sometimes perplexed Sandpiper searching for a meal.

The Great Egret is a reverent tribute to this thoughtful and majestic bird. When I began writing this movement a storm had recently left Houston. Displaced by the storm, a Great Egret landed in my backyard! The bird was majestic and magical and time seemed to stand still as I watched it in the late hours of the night. The Egret studied its surroundings and gracefully toured the yard. I was struck by its large size, as I was very close to it. I knew that no one would believe this story, so after I admired the bird for a while I searched the house for a camera, but when I returned, the bird had vanished into the night. Needless to say, this event made a strong and stirring impression on me and inspired this movement. The Great Egret's dramatic departure is represented by the final measures of the harp.

Water Ballet on Mustang Island is a series of miniatures or "snapshots" inspired by the birds on Mustang Island. I only stood on the island for about fifteen minutes, but tried to be acutely aware of my surroundings. I soon realized I was the audience for a delightful island ballet. It was a lively performance in which the Gulls endlessly searched for food, squabbling amongst themselves, while the Pelicans passed overhead, patrolling the coast and ignoring their hungry friends. The Pelicans and Gulls provided a colorful chorus to the main dancers, the Blue Heron and gentle Greater Yellowlegs. The Heron, preferring to be admired at a distance, made the greatest impression on me and provided the inspiration for the reverent centerpiece of this movement.

Music for the Birds is a concluding response that fully explores the breadth of emotions associated with this meaningful and personal composition project.

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# Music for the Birds

for harp (or piano) and clarinet (Bb, Eb, A)

## The Providing Coast

Harp (or Piano) and Clarinet in Bb

Jefferson Todd Frazier

1  $\bullet = 48$  Reflective, L.V. throughout

poco rit.

$\bullet = 48$  Reflective, L.V. throughout

8va

poco rit.

expressive *mp*

*pp*

*mp*

5 a tempo

a tempo

8va

*pp*

*pp*

*mp*

*mp*

9

rit.

8va

rit.

8va

*f*

*mp*

12

molto a tempo

pp mp

(8va)

molto a tempo

*ff*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*ff*

*p*

15 rit. molto a tempo expressive

*p* *pp*

rit. molto a tempo

expressive *pp*

18 rit.

*f* *mp* *p*

rit.

*mf* *mp*

21 a tempo rit.

*pp*

a tempo rit.

*p*

# The Sandpipers Delight

Harp and Clarinet in Eb

♩=96-100 *extatic, joyous*

1

Musical score for measures 1-4. The top staff is for the Clarinet in Eb, and the bottom staff is for the Harp. The time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked as ♩=96-100 *extatic, joyous*. The harp part begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes two natural harmonics marked with a diamond and a plus sign (+). The harp part transitions to a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and is marked as *rolling*. The clarinet part is silent in these measures.

5

Musical score for measures 5-8. The harp part continues with a forte (*f*) dynamic in measure 5, then a piano (*p*) dynamic in measure 6, and remains silent in measures 7 and 8. The clarinet part is silent in measures 5 and 6, then plays a series of eighth notes in measure 7, and a series of eighth notes with a *pp* dynamic in measure 8.

9

Musical score for measures 9-12. The harp part plays a series of eighth notes in measure 9, then a series of eighth notes with a forte (*f*) dynamic in measure 10, and remains silent in measures 11 and 12. The clarinet part is silent in measures 9 and 10, then plays a series of eighth notes in measure 11, and a series of eighth notes with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic in measure 12.

13

*f*

*f* *p*

17

*pp*

*f*

21

*f*

*molto*

3

25

*mp* *f*

This system contains measures 25 through 28. The upper staff features a melodic line starting with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth notes ascending to G5. The lower staff provides accompaniment with eighth notes in the bass and chords in the treble. Dynamics range from *mp* to *f*.

29

building in intensity

*pp* *mp*

building in intensity

This system contains measures 29 through 32. The upper staff has a melodic line of eighth notes ascending from G4 to G5, with a fermata over the final G5. The lower staff has a similar eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics range from *pp* to *mp*. The phrase "building in intensity" is written above the staff in two locations.

33

brilliant

*p* *f*

*f* *mf* *f* brilliant

This system contains measures 33 through 35. The upper staff features a melodic line of eighth notes ascending from G4 to G5, with a fermata over the final G5. The lower staff has a similar eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics range from *p* to *f*. The word "brilliant" is written above the staff at the end of the system.



37

Musical score for measures 37-40. The top staff is a single melodic line with a long slur. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves with chords and moving lines. Dynamics include accents and a piano (*p*) marking.

41

Musical score for measures 41-44. The top staff has a melodic line with a slur and a piano (*pp*) dynamic. The piano accompaniment has a strong (*f*) dynamic in the bass line.

45

Musical score for measures 45-48. The top staff has a melodic line with a slur and dynamics of forte (*f*) and mezzo-piano (*mp*). The piano accompaniment has a forte (*f*) dynamic in the bass line.

49

*f*

*f* *p*

53

*pp*

*f*

57

*f*

*molto*

3

61

*mp* *f*

65

*pp* *pp* *mp*

69 building in intensity

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

building in intensity

73 brilliant

*f* *mp* *f*

brilliant

77

*p*

81

*pp* *f*

85

*f*

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

89

*p* *f*

*8va*

*mp* *f* *mp* *f*

92

accel.

accel.

*8va*

*mp* *f*

95

(8va)

*ff*

*ff*

+

# The Great Egret

Harp and Clarinet in A

1  $\bullet = 46$  (dolce) expressive *p*

expressive *f* L.V. *p*

4 rit. a tempo rit. *f* 3 a tempo rit. *f*

6 a tempo rit. *p* a tempo rit. *pp*

8 a tempo

a tempo

10 rit.

rit.

*f* *p* *ff*

12 accel.

accel.

a tempo

accel.

a tempo



rit.

a tempo rit.

15

Musical score for measures 15-16. The system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The time signature is 4/4. Measure 15 features a piano (*p*) melody in the top staff and a forte (*f*) accompaniment in the grand staff. Measure 16 includes a *rit.* marking, a piano (*p*) melody in the top staff, and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) accompaniment in the grand staff. A *take time* instruction is placed above the grand staff in measure 16. The system concludes with a 5/4 time signature change.

17

a tempo rit.

♩ = 40  
slower

rit.

Musical score for measures 17-18. The system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The time signature is 5/4. Measure 17 features a piano (*p*) melody in the top staff and a piano-piano (*pp*) to mezzo-piano (*mp*) accompaniment in the grand staff. Measure 18 includes a *rit.* marking, a piano (*p*) melody in the top staff, and a mezzo-piano (*mp*) accompaniment in the grand staff. A tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 40$  slower is present above the grand staff in measure 18. The system concludes with a 3/4 time signature change.

19

timeless  
expressive

♩ = 46

take time

L.V.

♩ = 46

Musical score for measures 19-20. The system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The time signature is 2/4. Measure 19 features a melodic line in the top staff with a *timeless expressive* marking and a triplet of eighth notes. A tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 46$  is present above the grand staff. Measure 20 includes a *take time* instruction above the grand staff and a *L.V.* (Larghetto Vivace) marking below the grand staff. The system concludes with a 2/4 time signature change.

22 *pp* accel. (fastest) rit.

25 *f* a tempo

28 *pp* accel. (fastest) rit.

31 *mf* a tempo *p*

34 rit. *pp* *ppp*

37 a tempo rit.

a tempo rit.

39 a tempo rit.

a tempo rit.

*p* *f* *ff*

7 6

8vb

42 a tempo

accel.

*p* *ff* *f* L.V.

gliss.

8va

(8vb) (white notes)

# Water Ballet on Mustang Island

Harp and Clarinet in Bb

## The Greater Yellowlegs

$\bullet = 72$   
(observant, stimulated and curious, yet shy)

1

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

take time

Detailed description: This is a single-staff musical score for a Clarinet in Bb. It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 72. The piece is in 3/4 time and consists of 10 measures. The first measure is marked with a first ending bracket. The dynamics start at mezzo-piano (mp), increase to mezzo-forte (mf) at measure 4, decrease to piano (p) at measure 6, return to mezzo-piano (mp) at measure 8, and finally reach pianissimo (pp) at measure 10. There are two triplet markings over measures 4 and 6. A 'take time' instruction is placed above measure 9. The score ends with a repeat sign and a final 2/4 time signature.

## Pelicans on Patrol

$\bullet = 88$   
(peculiarly rigid, loafing and comical)

7

*mp*

7

*mp*

12

12

16

16

*p* *pp*

Detailed description: This is a two-staff musical score for Harp and Clarinet in Bb. The piece is in 2/4 time and consists of 16 measures. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 88. The dynamics are mezzo-piano (mp) throughout most of the piece. There are two sixteenth-note triplet markings over measures 10 and 12. The score is divided into four systems. The first system (measures 7-10) features a melodic line in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The second system (measures 11-14) continues this texture. The third system (measures 15-16) shows the upper staff ending with a fermata and the lower staff ending with a fermata. The dynamics decrease to piano (p) at measure 15 and pianissimo (pp) at measure 16. The piece concludes with a repeat sign and a fermata.

# The Blue Heron

♩=52

(majestic, refined and timeless)

Musical score for measures 18-20. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measure 18 features a piano introduction with a *pp* dynamic. Measure 19 has a *p* dynamic. Measure 20 has a *f* dynamic. The piano accompaniment includes a *f* dynamic in measure 18 and a *p* dynamic in measure 19. A grace note marked with an asterisk (\*) is present in measure 19.

Musical score for measures 21-23. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measure 21 has a *mp* dynamic. Measure 22 has a *f* dynamic. Measure 23 has a *p* dynamic. The piano accompaniment includes a *f* dynamic in measure 23 and a *p* dynamic in measure 24.

Musical score for measures 24-26. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measure 24 has a *f* dynamic. Measure 25 has a *pp* dynamic. Measure 26 has a *pp* dynamic. The piano accompaniment includes a *f* dynamic in measure 24 and a *mp* dynamic in measure 25. A "take time" instruction is present in measure 25. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a "3" in measure 26.

\* take time with grace notes, as part of the melodic line

# The Seagulls and a squable for food

♩=92

(skwalking musically)

27

*mp* *f* *p*

*p* *f*

31

*pp* *p* *pp*

35

*pp* *f*

39

take time

a tempo

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

# Pelicans on Patrol

*now a distant presence*

♩=88

42 (as before, but from a distance)

The musical score is written in 2/4 time. The first system (measures 42-45) features a treble clef staff with the following notes and dynamics: measure 42 (quarter rest), measure 43 (quarter note G4, quarter note F4), measure 44 (quarter note E4, quarter note D4), measure 45 (quarter note C4, quarter note B3). Dynamics are *p*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp* respectively. The second system (measures 46-49) features a grand staff. The piano part (treble clef) has rests in measures 46-48 and a half note G4 in measure 49. The bass part (bass clef) has rests in measures 46-47, quarter notes G3 and F3 in measure 48, quarter notes E3 and D3 in measure 49, and quarter notes C3 and B2 in measure 50. Dynamics are *p*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp* respectively. Both systems end with a fermata over a whole note G4 in the treble staff.

# Music for the Birds

Harp (or Piano) and Clarinet in Bb

1  $\bullet = 72$  *animated*

1  $\bullet = 72$

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

5

5 *mf* *p* *f*

5 *p*

9

9 *mp* *f*

9 *f*



13

*p*

17

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

21

*poco rit.* *a tempo* *p*

24

*f*

*f*

28

*pp*

*pp*

31

*f* *pp* *f* *mp*

*f* *pp*

34

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

38

*mp* *f*

41

*p*

45

*mf* *p* *mf* *p*

*mf* *p*

L.V.

49

52

*mf* *p*

*mf* *mp*

55

*f*

*f*

expressive

58

58

61

*mp*

61

*mp*

64

Musical score for measures 64-66. The system consists of three staves: a single treble staff at the top and a grand staff (treble and bass) below. Measure 64 features a treble staff with a melodic line containing a triplet of eighth notes and a grand staff with a bass line. Measure 65 continues the melodic line in the treble and has a bass line with a fermata. Measure 66 shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a grand staff with a bass line. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*.

67

Musical score for measures 67-69. The system consists of three staves: a single treble staff at the top and a grand staff (treble and bass) below. Measure 67 features a treble staff with a melodic line and a grand staff with a bass line. Measure 68 features a treble staff with a melodic line and a grand staff with a bass line. Measure 69 features a treble staff with a melodic line and a grand staff with a bass line. Dynamics include *f*, *mp*, and *f*.

70

Musical score for measures 70-71. The system consists of three staves: a single treble staff at the top and a grand staff (treble and bass) below. Measure 70 features a treble staff with a melodic line and a grand staff with a bass line. Measure 71 features a treble staff with a melodic line and a grand staff with a bass line. Dynamics include *mf*.

73

73

*p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

*mf*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 73 to 76. The top staff features a melodic line with dynamic markings *p*, *mf*, *p*, *mf*, and *p*. The middle and bottom staves provide harmonic support with chords and bass lines. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 75.

77

77

*p* *mf*

*mp* *p*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 77 to 80. The top staff has a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mf*. The middle staff has dynamics *mp* and *p*. The bottom staff features a steady bass line with eighth notes.

81

81

*f* *mp*

*f*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 81 to 84. The top staff has a melodic line with dynamics *f* and *mp*. The middle staff has dynamics *f* and *mp*. The bottom staff features a steady bass line with eighth notes.

84

*f* *p*

88

*mf* *p*

92

*mp* *p* *mp* *p* *rit.*



96  $\bullet = 60$  expressive

*mp* *f*

100 *rit.*  $\bullet = 52$

*rit.*  $\bullet = 52$

104 *rit. molto* *a tempo* *rit. molto* *a tempo*

104 *rit. molto* *a tempo* *rit. molto* *a tempo*

108 *rit.*

108 *p* *rit.* *p*

108 *p* *mf* *p*

112  $\bullet = 48$

112 *pp*  $\bullet = 48$

112 *pp* *mp*

114 *poco rit.*

114 *mp* *poco rit.* *pp*

114 *pp* *mp* *poco rit.* *pp*

8va

117  $\bullet = \bullet$ . *accel.*  $\bullet = 72$

*p* *f*

120

*p*

124

*p*

128

128

*pp*

131

131

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

♩ = 88

131

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

135

135

♩ = 108

*ff*

(loudest key "clack")

135

*pp* *ff*

8vb