

The Arethusa

For String Orchestra & Percussion
arr. Deborah Baker Monday
Kjos Music Company SO217F • Grade 2.5

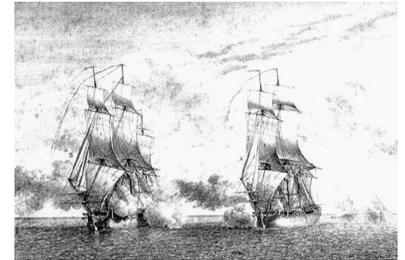
ANALYSIS

Broad Description Arrangement for string orchestra/percussion of an 18th century opera air

Background Information

The *Arethusa* (named after the water nymph of Greek mythology) was an English war ship, originally built in France in 1757 during the Seven Year's War and captured by the British Royal Navy. On June 17, 1778, she fought a famous battle with the French ship *Belle Poule* (literally "Pretty Chicken" but figuratively, "Lovely Lass").

Belle Poule already had a storied history: earlier that year, in January 1778, she had been chosen to transport Benjamin Franklin back to America from France. France was not yet fighting in the American Revolution. The ship was intercepted by British forces who demanded to inspect her. Though the British forces clearly outnumbered the French fleet, the captain of the



The H.M.S. Arethusa and the Belle Poule

Belle Poule, Charles de Bernard de Marigny famously replied: *I am the Belle Poule, frigate of the King of France; I sail from sea and I sail to sea. Vessels of the King, my master, never allow inspections.*

For some reason, the English backed down, apologized and let the ship sail through. Bad weather, though, forced the *Belle Poule* back after 36 days at sea, and Ben Franklin was forced to sail home later, via the *Sensible*.

When war broke out, *Belle Poule* was on a reconnaissance



mission with three other French ships. They met a British squadron, including *The Arethusa*, which chased them until a furious battle commenced. The *Belle Poule* lost 30 men and her second captain, but escaped along with the other French frigates. The *Arethusa* however, lost her main mast and was forced to withdraw from the fight altogether.

The French celebrated the famous battle as a victory. Women of the French court even wore a newly invented hairstyle called the "À la Belle Poule," a grand pile of powdered and curled hair stretched over a wooden frame and attached to the woman's head. The hair was decorated with a model of the ship, complete with flags and sails.



The song, usually called “The Saucy Arethusa,” has a complicated history. The melody was composed in 1725 by Turlough O’Carolan, the Irish harper (1670-1738), and was originally known as “Miss MacDermott” or “Princess Royal.” It was possibly composed for Mary O’ Rourke, the eldest daughter of MacDermott, Prince of Coolavin. The text of *The Arethusa* was originally a poem, written (of course) by an Englishman, Prince Hoare (1755-1834) to commemorate the battle (and put a decidedly pro-British spin on it). It was this text and this melody that were combined by another Englishman, William Shield, for his small opera of 1796, *The Lock and Key*, which reflected the strong anti-French feeling of the day. The opera is forgotten today, but the song has lived on, both as a fiddle tune, and as a movement in Sir Henry Wood’s *Fantasia on British Sea Songs*, a traditional piece at that most British of music events, the Last Night of the Proms.

Elements of Music

Melody

- Two styles are evoked simultaneously:
 - Natural minor creates “Gilligan’s Island” sea chanty feel (especially the La-Sol-La cadence notes)
 - Elegant AABA form, octave leaps, and  melismas in original vocal version give it an 18th century English opera aria feel
- “A” phrase is martial in style with a fairly narrow pitch range; “B” phrase is built from ascending and descending scales and a dramatic octave leap, and is more legato in character (more like a heroic song).
- The descending scale of the “B” phrase generates huge energy and a feeling of confidence and swagger.
- Each “A” phrase is subtly different from the others, mostly in the cadence formulas.

Rhythm

- The most important element
- Arranger has focused on rhythm as the heart of the piece, generating introduction, interludes, and accompaniment figures from the original melody, especially  |  and 
- Organizing motif is  |  or  | 
- The most common rhythm patterns are those of a military drum.
- Rhythmic energy is constant: there is hardly a beat without  in some part or another.
- Hocket is an important feature of the arrangement: although there is no real counterpoint, the interlocking rhythms of the various parts create a rhythmic excitement. This is especially useful in the lower strings, who have very independent parts—challenging and interesting to play. (The arranger is a bass player.)
- Each interlude and accompaniment uses successively more complex rhythmic figures.
- Rhythm conveys a martial feeling: confidence, military strength, and pride.

Harmony

- E minor (natural) throughout—no modulation, although the B phrase is essentially in G major.
- Lowered 7th (D natural) gives piece an almost Dorian, or English folk-tune quality
- Basically a 3 chord song, which contributes to its feeling of being a folk song or an 18th century aria
- B phrase (3rd phrase) is harmonized in major, which gives the piece some “lift” and hopeful, forward energy
- Pedal point on V in coda (61-63) generates tension and signals ending.

Timbre

- Besides rhythm, the most important element
- Traditional use of strings is imaginative, plus some extended techniques (knocking, *col legno*)

- Percussion is mostly military in style, but with a variety of colors that keep shifting—all contribute to creating a unique “sound world” for this piece.
- Opens with percussion alone, as if to say “at attention!” to the ear.
- “Knocking” section raises interesting questions not explained by composer: is it battle sounds, work sounds, sailors dancing, or something less concrete and more mysterious?
- Silence—though obviously for practical reasons—has a slightly unnerving effect in 24. It would be interesting to experiment with ways to eliminate it (having half of violas set up 1 bar earlier), and discuss effect. (More tension or less? Better effect or worse?)

Texture

- Another important feature of the piece—the basic material of the piece (melody) is not developed, so interest is created by changes in texture.
- Introduction & Verse 1 have scherzo-like quality: lightly scored, pizzicatos, and triangle contribute
- Textures generally thicken in the B section with more legato bow styles, longer note values
- Overall texture thickens as piece progresses mm.1-24. Knocking interlude releases tension, then growth commences again to 44, where the tension drops and begins to rise again. After a “set-up” in 50 (fermata) the piece explodes with its thickest textures and most rhythmic layering and complexity.
- Interesting effect in coda of layering motif over pedal point (61-63)—a new texture that signals “end!”

Form

Original melody is in a song form: ABBA

1. Percussion intro [1-2]
2. String intro, based on motif [3-7]
3. Verse 1: A (cello) A (Vn 1) B (Vn 2, Vla, cello) A (Vn 1) [7-24]
4. Knocking Interlude [25-30]
5. String Introduction (rescored) [31-35]
6. Verse 2: A (Vn 1/cello) B (Vn 1)—here the piece gains urgency by jumping to the B [35-44]
7. String Intro (functioning as interlude, rescored) [44-48]
8. Dramatic legato statement of A (Vn 2/Vla) [48-52]
9. Verse 3: A (Vn 1/cello, identical to 35) B (Vn 1); climax; interrupted by coda
10. Coda [61-64]

Heart Statement

The heart of *The Arethusa* is its confident, swaggering, military feeling, created through rhythmic flourishes, snaps, and percussive effects.

Skill Outcome

Students will play with rhythmic integrity and steady internal time.

Strategies

- **Introducing the Concept**

After any of these strategies, discuss with students the difference between “correct rhythm” and “good internal time-keeping.” Share with them your experiences (if any) with bad time or bad rhythm. Help them understand the importance of being able to not only follow a conductor, but keep a steady tempo themselves, and discuss the importance of self-evaluation and progress in this area of musicianship.

Introduce the various ways musicians talk about this: “good time,” “internal rhythm,” “rushing/dragging,” “good pulse,” “subdividing,” etc.

Teach students to distinguish between “beat” and “rhythm” and to use the terms properly. Play or sing or tap an example of each at random times during the rehearsal.

- **Rhythm Scales/Hocket Scales**



Using this rhythm as a warm-up, vary it in these ways over successive rehearsals:

1. Scales (everyone)
2. Scales in two groups (Group 1 plays a/b, Group 2 plays c/d)
3. Leave out b and d (tutti and in 2 groups)
4. Eyes closed
5. Knocking on instrument
6. Any combination of the above

- **Internal Time Keeping**

Have students click tongues or create some other short percussive sound on assigned numbers in an eight count sequence, *without a conductor*.

Ex. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 X X X X

Remove 5. Then 4. Then 8.

After trying it several times, have students analyze why it's getting easier (or not).

Gradually remove their "crutches." (tapping feet, eyes open)

Help them hear each other breathe to stay together. Then take away the upbeat breaths, too.

Invite students to practice with their watches. Have them study their second hand for a few seconds and then look away and see if they can count to 8 and "line up" with their watch. Once they have internalized being able to do 8 counts, challenge them to do 16 counts. Have students analyze if their internal clock tends to rush or drag.

- **The Metronome**

Show students an old-fashioned pendulum metronome and have them identify it by name and its 2 different uses (give tempo indications and keep a steady beat). Review brief history of the metronome. *Why was it invented? By whom?* This could be an Internet research homework project. The letters MM, stand for Mälzel's Metronome—Johann Mälzel (1772–1838) who made in 1816 the type of metronome in general use right up until the present, when electronic metronomes took over. (He did not invent it, though—merely stole the idea and manufactured it.) Discuss how a metronome could be used to help a student practice for better time keeping.

- **Dalcroze Activities**

Teach students the three Dalcroze beat divisions (hip=main beat; hop=twice as slow, heep=twice as fast). Using recorded music (funk, pop, or otherwise very rhythmic) have them put the beat divisions in various places on their body, while seated (e.g. feet hip/hands heep, or feet hop/LH heep/RH hop in a big circular gesture).

If space permits, have them do it in full body motion on the floor or in the gym. In groups of 6-8 (or more, if necessary) have them pass tennis balls, seated with knees touching, while teacher calls out hip, hop, or heep.

- **Subdividing**

Play the B section of *The Arethusa* all in sixteenth notes, to practice subdividing. Every note gets divided into its constituent sixteenths, all played in down/up bows, beginning down. Have students listen for

note lengths and whether they're staying together. Divide the orchestra in half (or by stand) and play it both as written and with subdivisions.

- **Rhythm Machine**

Divide students into teams of 5-6. Each team will choose a team leader. The youngest person in the group will choose a steady beat. Each member of the team must provide a visual “part” of the rhythm machine and a sound to go with it, at a different subdivision or rhythm of the beat. No one may lose their balance or get hurt. They must be able to perform 16 repetitions of their beat at a steady tempo.

- **The Physics of Beat-Keeping**

Ask students to speculate about why string players might have a more difficult time keeping a steady tempo. (Hint: bow speeds are constantly changing, even in the middle of a note, although the tempo might be staying the same. This makes it very hard to internalize a tempo, when your physical movements are constantly slowing down or speeding up.) Invite students to devise ways to counteract this, and encourage them to be creative in their personal strategies and to share them with the group.

- **Breaking It Down**

Play sections of *The Arethusia* without the melody (which usually holds it together) and have the melody players listen for examples of good time (or rushing/dragging). Upper strings vs. bass at 7 is a good place for this.

- **Student Conductor**

Have various students conduct sections of the piece (or the rhythm warm-up) to demonstrate their own steady pulse. Their conducting gesture is not as important as their ability to hold a steady beat. Have the group evaluate—charitably—each conductor’s internal time.

Assessment

Most of these strategies can be used for informal or formal assessment. Have students work with a partner to evaluate (with a metronome or time keeping device that only the evaluator can see/hear) their internal rhythm while playing a section of the piece. Do this several times throughout the learning process, to gauge progress in internal time keeping.

Knowledge Outcome

Students will identify and interpret arranging techniques.

Strategies

- **Composer vs. Arranger**

Ask students to decide “who wrote this piece.” Discuss with students the difference between the work of a composer vs. an arranger. Do a Venn diagram or two column list of features of the piece that are properly the work of the composer and those of the arranger. Discuss who is most important in this piece: the composer or the arranger.

- **Analyze the Form**

As students are learning to play each section of the piece, assign it a formal name [introduction, ABBA 1st verse, interlude, etc.] Review these sections throughout the rehearsal period and refer to the sections as rehearsal markers. Help them discover who has the melody in each section, and what the other sections are doing.

Divide students into quartets/quintets and have them fill out an analysis sheet to determine who has the melody and what other features of each section are prominent.

- **Motif**

Share with students a personal example of use of motif in interior decorating (e.g. a bathroom motif like ducks, fish, seashells, or Sponge Bob). *Why do we do this?* [it brings unity to disparate elements of a bathroom]. Discuss the similarities with musical motifs (small, unifying element used throughout). Have students decide what the motif of *The Arethusa* is, and find examples of where it comes from originally (in the song) and how Deborah Baker Monday used it in her accompaniment figures to unify the piece.

- **Orchestration**

Ask students to speculate on aspects of Deborah Baker Monday's orchestration choices:

- a) Why cellos introduce the melody? (perhaps to simulate men's voices)
- b) Why the particular percussion choices?
- c) Why the "knocking" section? What does it mean?

- **Same Tune, Different Arrangement**

Have students listen to the Sir Henry Wood piece "The Saucy Arethusa," traditionally played in London on the Last Night of the Proms. Have them jot down as many differences and similarities as they can discover by listening. Use a Venn diagram to collect ideas.

Assessment

1. Have students recreate a diagram of the form of the piece.
2. As a final project, have students choose a melody (folk song, hymn, pop song, etc.) to arrange. If their skills are adequate, they can actually create an arrangement. For most students, a prose description will convey their plan. Encourage them to consider structure and orchestration.

Affective Outcome

Students will explore how music can be political, or used to shape opinion.

Strategies

- ***The Arethusa* In Context**

Share with students the historical facts of the *Arethusa* naval battle and compare to the song. Discuss the idea of "spin" and how songs can make us believe a different version of the actual story.

- **Yankee Doodle**

Review with students "Yankee Doodle" and discuss how this insulting song was turned on its head and appropriated by American soldiers during the Revolutionary War. Explain that a doodle was a fop, riding on a pony was silly (real soldiers rode horses), and that "macaroni" was a fashionable style of Italian dress in the late 18th century. Compare to the lyrics of the southern Confederate version. Discuss.

- **The Iraq War**

Put this date on the board: March 19, 2003. *Does anyone remember what they were doing on that date? This was the date that the invasion of Iraq began. Five days before this, Fox News went to composer Bob Israel and asked him to compose music for their war coverage, since a war was expected. What do you think they told him?*

Share sound clips from the Deaville article and have students respond with their reactions. Guide the discussion with questions.

Assessment

Have students bring in an example of music being used to shape opinion or make them believe or buy something. Encourage them to look beyond advertising (selling a product). Have them write a paragraph about the piece: the composer's techniques, the text, the "spin" in the music/text, etc.

The Music of War

The best summary essay of this topic, related to the 2003 invasion of Iraq (includes sound clips):

Selling War: Television News Music and the Shaping of American Public Opinion

By James Deaville, Carleton University

<http://www.echo.ucla.edu/Volume8-Issue1/roundtable/deaville.html>

Baer, Adam. "The Sounds of War — Rating the New Networks' Theme Music," *Slate*, Thursday, April 17, 2003. <<http://slate.msn.com/id/2081608>>

Baum, Matthew A. "Sex, Lies, and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to the Inattentive Public," in *American Political Science Review*, 92/1 (March, 2002), pp. 91-109.

Cook, Nicholas. *Music: A Very Short Introduction*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Dobrin, Peter. "Media's War Music Carries a Message," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sunday, March 30, 2003.

Engstrom, Nicholas. "The Soundtrack for War," *Columbia Journalism Review* 42/1 (March, 2003), pp. 45-47.

Freyman-Weyr, Jeffrey. "NPR's Special Coverage Theme Music."

<<http://www.npr.org/news/specials/iraq2003/theme.html>>

Gorbman, Claudia. *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987.

Munshi, Shoma. "Television in the United States from 9/11 and the US's Continuing 'War on Terror': Single Theme, Multiple Media Issues," in *Media, War, and Terrorism: Responses from the Middle East and Asia*. Ed. by Peter van der Veer and Shoma Munshi. London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 46-60.

von Rhein, John. "U.S.A. Networks' Theme Music Sanitizes Wars' Darkest Realities," *Chicago Tribune*, Saturday, April 6, 2003.

Bibliography & Resources

1. Recording of male voices singing: <http://www.archeosousmarine.net/arethusa.html>
2. Wikipedia articles on "Belle Poule" and "HMS Arethusa."
3. Turlough O'Carolan: here you can hear the original tune Miss MacDermott
<http://www.contemplator.com/carolan/carol2.html>
4. Detailed history of the song: <http://www.mustrad.org.uk/enth45.htm>

YANKEE DOODLE

1. Yankee Doodle had a mind
To whip the Southern "traitors,"
Because they didn't choose to live
On codfish and potatoes.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
And so to keep his courage up
He took a drink of brandy.

2. Yankee Doodle made a speech;
'Twas very full of feeling:
I fear, says he, I cannot fight,
But I am good at stealing.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
Hurrah for Lincoln, he's the boy
To take a drop of brandy.

3. Yankee Doodle drew his sword,
And practiced all the passes;
Come boys, we'll take another drink
When we get to Manassas.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
They never reached Manassas plain,
And never got the brandy.

4. Yankee Doodle soon found out
That Bull Run was no trifle;
For if the North knew how to steal,
The South knew how to rifle.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
'Tis very clear I took too much
Of that infernal brandy.

6. Yankee Doodle wheeled about,
And scampered off at full run,
And such a race was never seen
As that he made at Bull Run.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
I haven't time to stop just now
To take a drop of brandy.

7. Yankee Doodle, Oh! For shame,
You're always intermeddling;
Let guns alone, they're dangerous things;
You'd better stick to peddling.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
When next I go to Bully Run
I'll throw away the brandy!

8. Yankee Doodle, Oh! For shame,
You're always intermeddling;
Let guns alone, they're dangerous things;
You'd better stick to peddling.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
When next I go to Bully Run
I'll throw away the brandy!

9. Yankee Doodle, you had ought
To be a little smarter;
Instead of catching wooly heads
I vow you've caught a tartar.
Yankee Doodle, doodle-doo,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
Go to hum, you've had enough
Of Rebels and of brandy!

Rhythm Machine

Find the oldest person in your group—they will be your team leader. The youngest person in the group will choose the steady beat each time (or count off, to get you started)

As a group, you will create an interesting looking and sounding Rhythm Machine.

Each member of the team must provide a visual “part” of the rhythm machine and a sound to go with it, with a different rhythm or subdivision of the beat. You can layer on your rhythms one by one, or activate them in groups, or all together.

The rules: No one may lose their balance or get hurt.

You must be able to perform 16 repetitions of your rhythm machine “groove” at a steady tempo, without rushing or dragging.

Take 5-7 minutes to create. When you’re ready to perform, come back and join the group.

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