

ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

for flute solo

Lo Ting-cheung

2013

First Performance:

Diondre McKinney

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Atlantic Music Festival 2013

Lorimer Chapel, Colby College, Maine, US

Performance Notes

Breathy, with clearly defined pitch

Very breathy, with more breath than pitch

Key slap with defined pitch

Tongue slap

Natural harmonics

Inhaling

Fluttertonguing

Vary size of vibrato

With all the movements for playing the pitch, but without any exhalation (without sounds)

As low as possible, breath only

Quarter sharp

Quarter flat

Pause (ca. 3")

Long pause (ca. 6")

Sforzando attack. Blow through the mouth piece, with no defined pitch but breathy noises (sound similar to "Muraiki" technique from the shakuhaci, Japanese bamboo flute)

"Turtle-dove" effect. Slowly bend down the A while trilling with both C-sharp and D-sharp trill keys; a falling tritone-tremolo effect is thereby produced.

- Accidentals apply to all the notes within the same bar. Natural signs are used when there is a need to avoid confusion.
- All metronomic indications are approximate and may vary slightly, depending on the acoustical properties of the hall.
- "Speak-flute": Whisper the indicated words over the mouthpiece of the instrument so that both the words and the flute pitches project distinctly.
- The notation of harmonics shows both the fingered notes and the desired actual pitches.

Programme Note

The piece was inspired by a centuries-old poem, *Hearing a Flute in Luoyang on a Spring Night*, by *Li Bai* (ca. 701-762) who is one of the best-known Chinese poets of all centuries. *Li's* poem, freely translated, reads like this,

The sound of a solitary flute comes soaring in the evening gloom.
Borne on the wings of the spring breeze, it soon fills the night air everywhere
with its drifting tune.
It's a sad song to the sojourner's ear, bringing back memories of parting scenes.
I can't but begin to think of home, but I'm not the only one missing home in this
city tonight.

The theme of the poem is one of homesickness. Although it was set in an ancient Chinese city, the emotion contained therein transcends time and place. As a foreign student in an unfamiliar land, I have experienced inevitable bouts of homesickness. Amazingly, I find in this poem echoes of my nostalgic feelings. It also gives me the poetic impulse to seek musical analogues.

The flute solo is not intended to echo the narrative flow of the original poem. What it tries to do is to capture the mood and emotion contained in the Chinese poem and to express them musically in a contemporary context. The flute, the western counterpart of *dizi* (Chinese flute), has the same extraordinary ability of sounding intimate and distant. But at the same time, it can be bold and powerful. So the flute in this piece is both intimately lyrical and vigorously virtuosic, with the developing dramaturgy ranging from the quietest contemplative moment to the most extreme outburst of emotion. The musical shape is relatively free, mapping the contours of our emotions which are often much more strongly and overtly displayed today than in the times of the Chinese poet.

The work also represents my attempt to explore the expressive potential of the flute as an instrument with an enormous range of dynamics and timbres. In order to enhance its expressivity, I have introduced in this piece some special ways of playing the instrument (e.g. the elements of breath and noise), manifold harmonics /multiphonics, and changes in articulations and registers, creating a kind of polyphonic and multi-layered effect.

ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

for flute solo

Daniel LO Ting-cheung
2013

Very freely, as from afar

ca. 60

Musical staff 1: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. It starts with a *sf* dynamic, followed by a *ppp* dynamic with a triplet of eighth notes. The dynamics then shift to *sfp*, *mf*, *p*, *sff*, *ppp*, *ff*, and *pp*. The staff concludes with a wavy line indicating a trill, a triplet of eighth notes, and a long pause.

Musical staff 2: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. It starts with a *ppp* dynamic, followed by *mf*, *sff*, *mf*, *sff*, *ff*, and *p*. The staff concludes with a triplet of eighth notes, a sextuplet of eighth notes, and a long pause.

Musical staff 3: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. It starts with a *sff* dynamic, followed by *ppp*, *sf*, *p*, *mp*, *sff*, *pp*, and *ff*. The staff concludes with a wavy line indicating a trill, a triplet of eighth notes, a sextuplet of eighth notes, and a long pause.

Musical staff 4: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. It starts with a *mf* dynamic, followed by *mf*, *pp*, *pp*, and *ff*. The staff concludes with a triplet of eighth notes and a long pause.

ca. 48

Musical staff 5: Treble clef, key signature of one flat. The staff contains a melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. It starts with a *sfppp* dynamic, followed by *f*, *ppp*, *ff*, *sffz*, and *sffz*. The staff concludes with a triplet of eighth notes and a long pause.

ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

2 ♩ ca. 48

(play) *sff* p f *sf* pp mf p mf

(sing) p f *sf* pp mf p mf

rit.

Ethereal, distant ♩ ca. 40

(long pause) (long pause)

(put down the flute and turn slowly sideways through an approximately 90-degree angle)

(put down the flute and turn back to the original position)

♩ ca. 60

♩ ca. 48

♩ ca. 60

♩ ca. 48

4 X sfz f ff sfpppp mp sfz mp f sfpppp

4 X mp ppp ppp p f mp pp

rit.

(play) pp mp mf pp mp fff

(sing) pp mf p

ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

Ethereal, distant ♩ ca. 40 (long pause) (long pause) ³

(put down the flute and turn slowly sideways through an approximately 90-degree angle) (put down the flute and turn back to the original position)

Lento ♩ ca. 40 (speak-flute) Molto e calmo ♩ ca. 48 (long pause)

Hea - ring the flu - (te) (no sound)

Lento ♩ ca. 40 (long pause) Molto e calmo ♩ ca. 52 (long pause)

On the wings of the spring bree(ze) (no sound) mp

(sing) *p*

Lento ♩ ca. 40 (long pause) Molto e calmo ♩ ca. 52 (long pause)

Fills the night air e - very - where (no sound) mp

poco accel. ♩ ca. 56

mf pp mp sf sf sfpp sf pp

(play)

(sing) *sfp ff p p mf f pp*

f pp

ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

4

poco rall. . . ca. 52

ff 7 sfff > < sf > mf (no sound) 3 X 3 X

poco accel.

sfp < sf sf pp < sfpp < sff > p < sfp (sing) p

ca. 56

poco accel.

f pp < f sfz sfz sfz pp sffz sffz sfp < mp

ca. 60

sffz sff pp < sffmp < sff pp < fff

rit. Ethereal, distant ca. 40

(play) sffpp < f ppp < ff f > p p 3 3 3 pp ppp (sing) pp < f

ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

ca. 60 (play) ca. 40

pp mp mp mp pp

(sing) pp mp mp

ca. 60 (play) ca. 40 (very long pause)

pp mp mp mp

(sing) pp mp mp

ca. 52

sffz sff pp ppp mf pp mp

ca. 60 (sing)

p ppp mp f p ppp

(sing) mp f ppp

rit. . .

pp mp ppp mp f p

ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

ca. 48

Musical notation for ca. 48. The staff shows a series of notes with dynamic markings: *mp*, *pp mp*, *p*, *mf*, *p*, and *mp*. Above the notes are fingerings: 6, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, and 5. There are also some '+' signs above the first few notes.

ca. 60

Musical notation for ca. 60. The staff shows notes with dynamic markings: *mp*, *mf*, *sf*, *mp*, *f*, *sff*, *ppp*, and *mp*. There are also some '+' signs above the notes. Below the staff, there is a section labeled "(sing)" with notes and dynamic markings: *pp*, *p*, and *mf*. To the right, there is another section with notes and dynamic markings: *ppp* and *mp*.

rall. .

ca. 48

(put down the flute and turn slowly sideways through an approximately 90-degree angle) (very long pause)

Musical notation for *rall.* ca. 48. The staff shows notes with dynamic markings: *ppp*, *mp*, (nearly no sound), *pp*, *ppp*, *pp*, *ppp*, and *pppp*. There are also some '+' signs above the notes. Above the staff, there are markings: "3 X", "3 X", "3", "3", "3", and "3". There are also some asterisks above the notes.