

**DANIEL DORFF**

# Sonata

**(Spirit of the Hudson)**

*for Bass Flute and Piano*

I. Sprawling, burbling

II. Sparkling, glistening

III. Under Winter

IV. Spring Spirits



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## Sonata (Spirit of the Hudson) *for Bass Flute and Piano*

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### PROGRAM NOTE BY THE COMPOSER

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When Peter Sheridan commissioned me to write a piece for bass flute and piano, his only requests were a sonata-like multi-movement work, and some kind of reference to New York, where we both grew up. Just the thought of a bass flute, with its broad and mighty airstream, already reminded me of the mighty Hudson River: from the dense woods of upstate New York, through the beautiful landscapes of New Paltz and Poughkeepsie, down through the celebrated Manhattan waterway.

As I daydreamed how to build a sonata inspired by the Hudson, I thought of its deep primal nature carved by the Ice Age, and the life within the river and on its shores long before humans arrived. I thought of how the river's magnetism drew Native Americans who honored and built their lives around it. I thought of beautiful trees and wildlife, the annual cycles of ecosystems, and the natural symbiosis between the river itself, the life within, and the life on land spawned by the river's resources.

I wondered what if Thoreau had sat by the Hudson rather than by Walden Pond; I wondered what if Hesse had set Siddhartha in the Hudson Valley with this river as his metaphor for the flow of life and time.

I wondered whether the sonata should flow from north to south, or have chronological references. I wondered if I should allude to the many poets and painters who have drawn inspiration from the mighty Hudson. Every thought led to the river's essence, its own spirit and life — flowing through raw nature, from skinny trickles to mightiness spawning cities; supporting subtle life, and becoming a central commons for human societies.

The subtitle *Spirit of the Hudson* brings it all together.

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The sonata is built in 4 movements, with formal inspiration from the Baroque: A slow Mvt. 1 “Sprawling, burbling” leads directly to the rapid Mvt. 2 “Sparkling, glistening,” followed by another slow-fast pair: Mvt. 3 “Under Winter” which leads directly into Mvt. 4 “Spring Spirits.” In addition to performances of the complete sonata, either pair of movements may be performed on its own for a shorter concert segment.

SONATA (SPIRIT OF THE HUDSON) was premiered at the International Low Flutes Festival in April 2018 by its commissioner, bass flutist Peter Sheridan, with Hyeun Hahm as pianist.

# Sonata (Spirit of the Hudson) for Bass Flute and Piano

DANIEL DORFF

Duration: c. 14'

## I. Sprawling, burbling

**quasi recit.**

(freely calling through the woods)

**Flowing grandly** (♩ = c. 54)

13

And.

8va. *And. sempre*

15

(And.) ---

\* And.

19

ten. freely

And.

22 *in tempo*

*f cantabile*

And.

*And. sempre (until m.28)*

Scorrevole (♩. = 120)

II. Sparkling, glistening

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-6. The piece is in 3/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Scorrevole' with a quarter note equal to 120 beats per minute. The first system consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part is marked 'mp sempre' and includes a first ending bracket marked with an asterisk (\*) at the end of measure 6. The vocal line has a first ending bracket marked with a double red squiggle (Red.) at the end of measure 6.

Musical score for the second system, measures 7-10. The piano part continues with a first ending bracket marked with an asterisk (\*) at the end of measure 10. The vocal line has a first ending bracket marked with a double red squiggle (Red.) at the end of measure 10. The piano part includes a 'Sva...' marking above the staff in measure 8. The vocal line is marked 'mf scherzando' at the end of measure 10.

Musical score for the third system, measures 11-15. The piano part includes a first ending bracket marked with an asterisk (\*) at the end of measure 15. The vocal line has a first ending bracket marked with a double red squiggle (Red.) at the end of measure 15. The piano part includes a 'Sva<sub>1</sub>' marking above the staff in measure 11. The vocal line has a first ending bracket marked with a double red squiggle (Red.) at the end of measure 15. The piano part includes '(dry)' and '(sim.)' markings in measures 14 and 15 respectively. A box containing the number '14' is positioned above the vocal line in measure 14.

Musical score for the fourth system, measures 16-20. The piano part includes a first ending bracket marked with an asterisk (\*) at the end of measure 20. The vocal line has a first ending bracket marked with a double red squiggle (Red.) at the end of measure 20. The piano part includes a 'Sva.....' marking above the staff in measure 19.

21

8va.....

Ped. Ped.

26

31

33

(mf)

8va<sub>1</sub>.....

8va.....

35

f

mf

8va.....

8va.....

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

\*

### III. Under Winter

Lontano (♩ = c. 40)

poco rit.

4

a tempo

*pp*  
*ppp (echo)*  
*pp*  
Red. sempre \* Red. sempre (through m. 29)

6

9

*poco ten.*  
*ppp echo* *pp* *mp cantabile*  
8va.-----  
pp ticking numbly  
--- (Red. sempre) --->

12

15

*mp* *p*  
8va.-----  
pp  
--- (Red. sempre) --->

18

19

*mp*  
8va.----- 8va.----- 8va.-----  
(loco)  
--- (Red. sempre) --->

# IV. Spring Spirits

Freely, quasi ♩ = c. 72

Awakening ♩ = c. 84

poco rit.

**13**  
**Bubbling** ♩ = c. 112  
*(Giddy, but not rushing)*



17

19

*mp*

*mf*

*Red.*

20

*mf*

*Red.*

23

*mf*

*mp*

*p sub.*

*Red. sempre (through m.29)*

27

---(Red.)---

29

*f*

*mp*

---(Red.)---

32

35

*mf*

*p sub.*

*f*

Red.

36

40

*f*

*mp*

Red.

41

8va.....

*mf*

Red.

\* Red.

\* Red. sempre ---