

A PRAIRIE TRIBUTE

Complete Three-Movement Score

**For SA Choir (with divisi),
Clarinet in B Flat and Piano**

John Burge

A Prairie Tribute – by John Burge

Texts: [All movement titles are taken from novels written by the great Canadian novelist, W.O. Mitchell (1914-1998) in which the landscape of the prairies features prominently.]

I. *The Vanishing Point*

[A wordless soundscape]

II. *How I Spent My Summer Holidays*

[Compiled by John Burge from comments provided by members of the Cantaré Children's Choir, Calgary, Alberta.]

Summer time on the prairies is for:

Camping and swimming and family and friends,
Hiking and playing and setting up tents,
Running and biking and just having fun,
Getting up early and watching the sun.

These are the things I like to do on the prairies in summer holidays.

Picnics and popsicles, watermelon too,
Campfires and marshmallows, there's so much to do.
Climbing on hay bales and feeding the hens,
Chasing the farm cats and taming their kittens while watching for grandmother's rooster.

Picking the peas, carrots, strawberries too,
Lettuce and cabbage and big ripe tomatoes,
The plentifulness of the vegetable patch is amazing.

These are the things I like to do in summer holidays.

Run through the sprinkler again and again,
Swing on a rope, dropping into the creek,
Raft down the river as slow as you can,
Building a tree fort, no adults allowed up, unless they are bringing you treats.

Lying in tall wheat and watching the clouds.
Run across open fields, my body just soaring away.
Riding on horses, the wind in your hair,
Making them go just as fast as you dare,
Breathing in deeply the cool morning air.

Staying up late and then sleeping 'til noon.
The only regret, summer's over too soon,
For there's so much to do on the prairies in summer time
That you'll never get everything done,
Before you must go back again to school.

These are just some of the things you can do in summer time on the prairies.

III. Who has Seen the Wind

[Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)]

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you.
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I.
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

Complete Duration: Approximately 19 minutes

About the Work:

A Prairie Tribute was commissioned by the Cantaré Children's Choir of Calgary, Alberta, Catherine Glaser-Climie, Artistic Director, to mark the choir's 10th anniversary in 2008. Having grown up in Calgary, Canadian composer John Burge was keen to accept this commission. Coincidentally, 2008 also marked the 10th anniversary of the passing of novelist W.O. Mitchell, a longtime resident of Calgary. The idea took shape to pay tribute to both the author and the prairies by using the titles of three of Mitchell's novels in which the prairie landscape features prominently as springboards for the composition. The entire set is dedicated to John's mother, Beth Sheppard, who has always loved the writing of W.O. Mitchell.

Scored for SA choir, clarinet and piano, the work is in three contrasting movements. The first movement, *The Vanishing Point*, is a wordless soundscape that captures the vastness and sense of mystery that one feels standing on the prairie terrain. The choir divides into multiple parts to create clouds of chordal sonorities that repeatedly fade into silence while the opening clarinet melody returns in different guises as a kind of unifying thematic gesture. The text for the second movement, *How I Spent My Summer Holidays*, was compiled by John Burge from comments provided by the choir members themselves about things that they like to do on the prairies in the summer. In this movement, the music reflects the carefree quality of the words with an emphasis on syncopated rhythms and an energetically independent clarinet part. The final movement, *Who has Seen the Wind*, is a setting of a poem of the same title by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894). The slow, hymn-like quality of this movement reflects the sacred implications of the text. The choir actually sings the same music for both verses but the differing dynamics and instrumental accompaniment obscures the obviousness of the repetition somewhat. The movement ends by returning to the overlapping chordal texture heard in the choir at the beginning of the work.

About the Composer:

John Burge was born in Dryden, Ontario in 1961. He also holds degrees in Composition and Theory from the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia. Since 1987 he has been teaching at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario where he currently holds the position of Full Professor and is Director of the School of Music. A passionate advocate of Canadian music, he was a member of the executive council of the Canadian League of Composers for fourteen years, serving as President from 1998-2006.

John Burge has written a large body of vocal, chamber, and orchestral compositions. He is particularly well known though, for his choral music, which has been performed by such choirs as The Elmer Iseler Singers, The BBC Singers, The Amabile Youth Choir, The Toronto Children's Chorus and The St. Louis Symphony Children's Choir. Many of these choral works have been published by the American firm, Boosey and Hawkes. His composition, *Angels' Voices*, for choir and orchestra, received the 2006 Outstanding New Choral Composition Award from the Association of Canadian Choral Conductors and was performed in New York City's Carnegie Hall in 2005.

A Prairie Tribute

I. The Vanishing Point

Slowly and with much freedom ♩ = 50

Music and text: John Burge (b. 1961)

div. a 3 p distant (no vib.)

Soprano

Alto

Clarinet in B \flat

molto espr. *accel.* *rall.* *a tempo*

p *mf* *p*

Slowly and with much freedom ♩ = 50

[Please play the clarinet part with the R.H. if a clarinet is not available.]

Piano

mp *mf* *p*

[Top note of rolled chord is placed on the beat.]

6

n. *p*

n. *p*

ah *ah*

[simile: accel.] *rall.* *a tempo*

p (sub.) *f* *p*

mp *f* *p* *p*

11 *n.*

mf *fp* *f*

[*G is played again after R.H.]

mf *f*

[Bottom note of L.H. rhythmically matches R.H.]

16 *p* (no cresc.) *mf* > *p* *mf* > *p*

ah ah ah

p (no cresc.) *mf* > *p* *mf* > *p*

ah ah ah

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

p

21

n.

mf

f

26

p (no cresc.)

ah _____

p (no cresc.)

ah _____

ff

ff

30

mf > *p* *mf* > *p* *mf* > *p*

ah ah ah

mf > *p* *mf* > *p* *mf* > *p*

ah ah ah

p *mf* *p*

mf *n.*

pesante
mp *f* *p* (sub.)

(non-arp.)

p cresc. *p cresc.*

34

mf *n.*

pesante
mp *f* *p* (sub.)

(non-arp.)

p cresc. *p cresc.*

39

f *ff* > *mf* *ff* >

ah ah

f *ff* > *mf* *ff* >

ah ah

f 3 3 3 3

(non-arp.)

(8vb)

43

mf *ff* > *mf* *ff* > *mf*

ah ah

mf *ff* > *mf* *ff* > *mf*

ah ah

3 3 3 3 *ff* (no dim.) *f*

mf *ff* > *mf* *ff* > *mf* *f* *mf*

48

[*accel.* *mp* *rall.* *f* *a tempo*]

one solo voice

ah

mp *p* *mp* *mf*

54

tutti (div. a 2)

ah

ah

mf *p*

p *p (sub.)* *mp*

(*non-arp.*)

mf *p* *p* *p (sub.)* *mp*

59

pp

ah
pp

ah

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

mf

p

p

mp

Alternate ending for an upright piano

65

n.

n.

n.

n.

(depress notes silently)

(depress notes silently)

(Strum strings inside the piano with flesh of finger)

f

ff

mf

(no pedal)

mf

f

mp

(no pedal)

8vb

[5' 30"]

II. How I Spent My Summer Holidays

With energy and excitement ♩ = 126

SA Choir

Clarinet in B \flat

Piano

p cresc.

mp

[Clarinet cues for rehearsal only]

4

f

p (sub.) cresc.

ff

9

p cresc.

Sum - mer time__ on the prai - ries, sum - mer time__ on the prai - ries,

p cresc.

mp

p cresc.

12

sum - mer time on the prai - ries, sum - mer - ime on the prai - ries

14

f *mp* *p dolce*

is for: Camp - ing and

f *p*

18

mp *p*

swim - ming and fam - 'ly and friends, Hik - ing and play - ing and

mp *p*

23 *mp* *p* *mp*

set - ting up tents, Run - ning and

p *mp*

mp *p* *mp*

27 *mf* *mp*

bik - ing and just hav - ing fun, Get - ting up

mf *mp* *p* *mp*

(no cresc.)

31 *p* *mf* *mp* *mf*

ear - ly and watch - ing the sun. These are the things

mf *mp* *mf*

mf *mp* *mf* *p*

36 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

I like to do on the prai - - - ries in sum -

mp *mf* *mp* *f*

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

41 *mf*

- - mer hol - i - days.

mf *p*

mp *mf*

46 *p* *mp* *p*

Pic - nics and pop - si - cles, wa - ter - me - lon too, Camp - fires and

p *mp* *p*

p *mp* *p*

51 *mp* *p* *mp*

marsh - mal - lows, there's so much to do. _____ Climb - ing _____ on

mp *p*

mp *p* *mp*

56 *mf* *mp*

hay bales _____ and feed - ing _____ the hens, Chas - ing _____ the

cresc. poco a poco

mf *mp*

60 *cresc.*

farm cats _____ and tam - ing _____ their kit - tens _____ while watch - ing _____ for

cresc.

64 *f* *mp*

grand - mo - ther's roo - - - - - ster.

f *mp* *f*

69 *mf* warmly

Pick - ing - the peas, car - rots, straw - ber - ries too, Let - tuce - and

mp *p* *mp*

mf warmly

74

cab - bage - and big ripe - to - ma - toes, - The plen - ti - ful - ness of - the

79 *f* *mf* *f*

veg - 'ta - ble patch is a - maz - - - ing, a - maz - - -

cresc.

84 *mf* *f* *mf*

ing, the veg - 'ta - ble patch is a - maz - - - ing.

mf *f* *mf*

89 *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

— These are — the things — I like — to do,

mp

p *mp* *p* *mp*

94

mp *mf* *mp* *mf*

these are the things I like to do, these are the

mf *mp* *mf* *mp*

99

f *cresc.* *rit.*

things I like to do in

p (sub.) *cresc.* *f*

f *cresc.* *rit.*

103

a tempo *ff*

sum - mer hol - i - days, hol - i - days,

ff

ff a tempo

107

mf

hol - - - i - - - days.

mf *mp*

mf dim.

111

p

Run through the

mf *p*

p

116

mp *p*

sprink - ler a - gain and a - gain, Swing on a rope, drop - ping

p *mp* *p*

121 *mp* *p* *mp*

in - to the creek, Raft down the ri - ver as

mp *p* *mf* *mp*

mp *p* *mp*

126 *mf* *mp* *cresc.*

slow as you can, Build - ing a tree fort, no

mp *mf* *mp* *cresc.*

mf *mp* *cresc.*

130

a - dults al - lowed up, un - less they are bring - ing you

p *p* *p*

134 *f* *più f*

treats. _____ Ly - ing — in tall wheat — and

f *più f*

138

watch - ing — the clouds. Run a - cross o - pen — fields,

f *più f*

142 *cresc.*

feel - ing — my bod - y — just soar - ing — a - way, just

mp cresc. *f*

cresc.

146

feel - ing — my bod - y — just soar - ing — a - way, just

mf *cresc.*

150

soar - - - ing a - - way.

ff *mf*

ff *dim. (poco a poco)*

ff *mf* *dim.*

154

Rid - ing — on hor - ses, — the

mp

p

p *r.h.*

158 *mf* *mp*

wind in — your hair, Mak - ing — them go just — as

p (sub.) *p (sub.)* *cresc.*

r.h.

162 *mf* *mp*

fast as — you dare, Breath - ing — in deep - ly — the

p *mf*

p (sub.) *p (sub.)* *r.h.*

166 *mf* *mp*

cool morn - ing air. Stay - ing — up late and — then

p *mf* *p* *cresc.*

p (sub.) *p (sub.)* *p (sub.)* *cresc.*

r.h.

170 *mf* *mp*

sleep - ing — 'til noon. The on - ly — re - gret sum - mer's

mf *p (sempre)*

mf *p (sub.)* r.h.

174 *mf* *cresc.*

o - ver — too soon, For — there's so much — to do in — the

mp

p (sub.) r.h. *cresc.*

178 *f (no dim.)*

prair - ries — in sum - mer time — That you'll

mf *f (no dim.)*

f (no dim.)

182

rall. *p* *accel.* *cresc.*

ne - ver get ev - 'ry - thing done, Be - fore you

p *cresc.*

rall. *p* *accel.* *cresc.*

187

a tempo *mf* *cresc.*

must go back to school, be -

mf *cresc.*

mf *a tempo* *cresc.*

192

fore you must go back to school, be - fore you

197

rall. *a tempo*
ff dim.

must go back a - gain to school.

ff dim.

rall. *a tempo*
ff dim.

202

mp *p*

On the prai -

p

p

208

ries.

mp *cresc.*

cresc. poco a poco

213

Musical score for measures 213-217. The system includes a vocal line, a piano accompaniment, and a grand staff. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Dynamics include *ff*.

218

ff marcato

Musical score for measures 218-222. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a grand staff. The piano part has a complex texture with many notes. Dynamics include *ff marcato*.

These are just some of the things you can do in the

223

Musical score for measures 223-227. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a grand staff. The piano part has a complex texture with many notes. Dynamics include *sffp* and *ff*.

sum - mer - time in the prai - - - ries.

III. Who Has Seen the Wind

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Adagio cantabile ♩ = 56

Clarinet in B \flat

p *f*

Adagio cantabile ♩ = 56

Piano

p *mp* *p* *f*

6

mp *mp* *mf* *p (sub.)*

11

p (no cresc.) *mp* *p (sub.)* *(p)*

16

p *mf* *p*

Who has seen the wind? _____ Nei-ther I _____

p *mf* (*no dim.*) *p*

Who has seen — the wind, who has seen the wind, the — wind? Nei-ther

p *mf* *p*

20

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *cresc.*

— nor — you, nei-ther I nor — you. But — when

mp (*no dim.*) *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *cresc.*

I nor — you, nei - ther I nor — you. But — when the —

mp *cresc.*

24

mf *f*

the leaves hang trem - bling, The wind is pass - ing

leaves hang trem - - - - bling, The wind is pass - ing

f

29

dim.

through, the wind is pass - ing through, the

through, the wind is pass - ing through, the

dim.

dim.

33

rit. *a tempo* *accel.*

wind _____ is pass-ing through, _____ is pass-ing through.

wind _____ is pass-ing through, _____ is pass-ing through.

mp *p* *mp cresc.*

rit. *p a tempo* *accel.*

37

mp cresc. *f*

43

rall. *a tempo*

ff *p*

rall. *a tempo* *p cresc.*

(molto pedale)

48

53

57

Who has seen the wind? _____

Who has seen the wind, who has seen the wind, the _____

Nei-ther you _____ nor _____ I, nei-ther you nor _____ I.

wind? Nei-ther you nor _____ I, nei-ther you nor _____ I. But _____

fff

fff

65 *fff* *rit.* *molto dim.*

But _____ when the _____ trees bow _____ down their _____ heads, _____ The _____

when the _____ trees bow _____ down _____ their _____ heads, _____ The _____

molto dim.

rit. *molto dim.*

69 **Tempo primo** ♩ = 56

p cresc. poco a poco

wind _____ is pass - - ing by, _____ the wind is _____

p cresc. poco a poco

wind _____ is pass - - ing by, _____ the wind is _____

p cresc. poco a poco

Tempo primo ♩ = 56

p cresc. poco a poco

73

ff dim.

pass - ing by, _____ the wind _____ is pass-ing by, _____ is

ff dim.

pass - ing by, _____ the wind _____ is pass-ing by, _____ is

ff dim.

ff dim.

77

pass - - - - ing by. *p*

pass - - - - ing by. *p*

p *mp* *mf* *mp*

p *mp* *mf* *mp*

p (*p*)

musical notation for measures 77-81, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment with dynamic markings.

82

mp *mf* *mp* *mf* *dim.*

mf *mp* *mf*

mf (*p*)

musical notation for measures 82-86, including piano accompaniment with dynamic markings.

88 *p* *mp* *p*

Who has seen the wind, the wind?

Who has seen the wind, the wind?

p (no cresc.)

p

mp

p

(keep pedal sustained to the end)

92 *pp* distant

div. a 3

ah

pp distant

ah

mp

p

p

pp (sempre)

3

3

3

3

3

95

Musical score for measures 95-97. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line with lyrics "ah" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a right hand with eighth-note chords and a left hand with triplet eighth notes. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo) and *p* (piano).

98

Musical score for measures 98-100. The score continues in G major and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line with lyrics "ah" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a right hand with eighth-note chords and a left hand with triplet eighth notes. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *p* (piano).

101 *pp*

ah _____ (*close to hum*)

pp

ah _____ (*close to hum*)

104 *rit.*

mm

mm

pp *n.*

rit.