

A PRAIRIE TRIBUTE

No. 3

Who Has Seen the Wind

For SA Choir, Clarinet and Piano

John Burge

About this Work:

A Prairie Tribute was commissioned by the Cantaré Children's Choir of Calgary, Alberta, Catherine Glaser-Climie, Artistic Director, 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, and 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.

—Text for this movement is found at the end of the score—

Commissioned by the Cantaré Children's Choir, Calgary, Alberta, Catherine Glaser-Climie, Music Director.

Who Has Seen the Wind

Movement 3 of "A Prairie Tribute"

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Music: John Burge (b. 1961)

Adagio cantabile ♩ = 56

Clarinet in B♭

Piano

6

11

The musical score is written for Clarinet in B♭ and Piano. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Adagio cantabile' and a metronome marking of ♩ = 56. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) shows the Clarinet in B♭ and Piano parts. The Clarinet part starts with a rest, followed by a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *f*. The Piano part features a complex accompaniment with dynamics *p*, *mp*, *p*, and *f*. The second system (measures 6-10) continues the Clarinet and Piano parts, with dynamics *mp*, *mp*, *mf*, and *p (sub.)*. The third system (measures 11-15) shows the Clarinet part with dynamics *p (no cresc.)* and *mp*, and the Piano part with dynamics *mf*, *p (sub.)*, and *(p)*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

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*

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

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

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

mf *f*

f

29

through, the wind is pass - ing through, the

through, the wind is pass - ing through, the

dim.

dim.

dim.

33

rit. *a tempo* *accel.*

p

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

p

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

mp *p* *mp cresc.*

rit. *p a tempo* *accel.*

37

f

mp cresc. *f*

43

ff *rall.* *a tempo*

p

rall. *a tempo*

ff *p cresc.*

(molto pedale)

48

53

a tempo **Poco più mosso** ♩ = 63

molto rall. *più f* *ff*

57

ff *ff* *

Who has seen the wind? _____

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

61

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

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

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

fff

rit.

molto dim.

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*)

82

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

mf *mp* *mf*

mf (*p*)

88 *p* *mp* *p*

Who has seen the wind, the wind?

p *mp* *p*

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
div. a 2

ah

mp *p* *p*

pp (sempre)

95

pp

ah

pp

ah

mp *p*

98

p *mp* *p*

Detailed description: The image shows a page of a musical score, numbered 10 at the top left. The score is divided into two systems, each starting with a measure number (95 and 98). Each system contains four staves. The top two staves are vocal lines with lyrics 'ah' written below them. The bottom two staves are piano accompaniment, featuring a consistent triplet pattern in the right hand. Dynamic markings are used throughout: 'pp' (pianissimo) appears at the beginning of the vocal lines in both systems; 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and 'p' (piano) are used in the piano accompaniment. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is not explicitly shown but appears to be 4/4. A large, semi-transparent watermark 'SAMPLE' is oriented diagonally across the page.

101 *pp*

ah _____ (close to hum)

pp

ah _____ (close to hum)

104 *mm*

mm

pp *n.*

rit.

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.