

The Puppeteer by Vincent Lindsey-Clark

The origins of this piece go back to the early days of my teaching at London's Centre for Young Musicians (CYM) when the head of Guitar Studies, Tim Pells asked me to compose a piece for all the guitar students to play together for the annual concert at St Johns Smith Square.

I gave the piece a working title intending to change it later but life moved on and the name stuck. So, the piece was known as Cymmetry, the intentional spelling mistake being a nod to the students of CYM. The young players gave a spirited performance and I'm glad to say that the piece was enjoyed by all.

Years later I had the idea that this composition could be condensed down to three parts from the original six and would work well as a concert piece for the Modern Guitar Trio. When it came to recording the work we all agreed that a new title was needed. The music tells a story with contrasting characters and adventures and soon '**The Puppeteer**' became the new name.

Before the first performance of the piece with this name I asked the audience to imagine their own story unfolding as the music unfolded but I'm forever grateful to my dear friend and colleague, Teresa Henderson for writing the poem inspired by the music. Her poem now reveals the story of **The Puppeteer**.

The Puppeteer by Teresa Henderson

The fruits of his labours in repose on the floor,
It is time to rest tired hands in his lap.
His canine companion spreads out at his feet,
The Puppeteer settles for a well-earned nap.

When heads have nodded and eyes are shut,
The boy sits up, takes a quick look round.
He strains to rise up onto stiff new legs,
Frustrated he falls back angrily to the ground.

The girl sits up to watch the boy trying,
Arising quietly, she is nimble on her feet.
Gracefully she turns, head high, arms out,
With steps so delicate, movements so neat.

Her hands go out to help her friend,
She keeps him close as together they dance.
Their echoing footsteps on the dusty boards
Awaken the dog, they seize their chance...

Running outside to the world with new freedom,
The dog at their heels, they spin into the street.
Pulled along by the crowds of fast-moving people
Un-noticing, knocking them off unsteady feet.

The park is quieter, and with stronger legs
They mount the steps to the empty stand.

In the milky twilight they resume their waltz
To the silent beat of the invisible band.

The barking they hear is loud and close,
Holding hands, they tumble and trip on each stride,
To fall with relief through the familiar doorway
Where the Puppeteer waits, his arms out wide.

Teresa Henderson