

Folk Carols for Strings

arranged for string quartet by
Gwyneth Walker

Cherry Tree Carol
Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head
Go Tell it on the Mountain
I Wonder as I Wander

Total duration: 11 minutes

These folk carols (songs) are known for their starkly beautiful melodies and harmonies – simple, yet moving. In creating new string quartet adaptations, the composer has enjoyed revisiting the original tunes, exploring a few new trails of thought.

The “Cherry Tree Carol” is a ballad – a song of many verses telling a story. This string arrangement allows for the steady flow from one verse to the next. The two opening verses are followed by a brief middle section, marked *delicately*, inspired by the small cherries which Mary gathers. This music grows in intensity in telling of Jesus’ birth. And then, with sudden simplicity, the opening theme returns quietly as an ending.

“Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head” is a gentle lullaby with a refrain in chordal, hymn style. These refrains alternate with verses and interludes which are more rhythmic and soloistic in character. Tenderness is an essential quality throughout.

“Go Tell it on the Mountain” is an exuberant song which this arrangement balances between lively refrains and a recitative-style moments of relaxation. [!] Often the music erupts into rapid patterns of boisterous energy.

The opening lyrics for this last song are *I wonder as I wander, out under the sky*. And it is this image of a solitary soul out walking at night beneath the stars that inspires this arrangement. Intervallic leaps in the high range of the upper strings are marked *as stars*. These stars dance lightly above the melody (high range of the Cello). A delicate, solo middle section allow the stars to sparkle above a gentle *earth* underpinning. The sky fills with stars, and then the music quiets to the end. One lone star shines.

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for String Quartet

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1. Cherry Tree Carol

Moderate tempo, flowing ♩ = 108

Violin 1 *p*

Violin 2 *p*

Viola *mf cantabile*

Violoncello *mp*

A

Vln. 1 *(p)* *mf > p*

Vln. 2 *(p)* *mf > p*

Vla.

Vlc.

7

Vln. 1 *mf > p* *mf*

Vln. 2 *mf > p* *mf*

Vla.

Vlc.

13

19 B

Vln. 1 *p* (gentle accomp.)

Vln. 2 *p* (gentle accomp.)

Vla. *p* (gentle accomp.)

Vlc. *legato* (*mf*)

25

Vln. 1 *mf > p* *mf > p* *mf*

Vln. 2 *mf > p* *mf > p* *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vlc. *mf*

31

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

37 C

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc. *pizz.* *arco*

43

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 43 through 48. The first two staves (Vln. 1 and Vln. 2) are mostly silent, with a few notes in measure 43. The Viola and Violoncello parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with slurs, starting in measure 43 and continuing through measure 48.

49

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 49 through 53. The Violin parts play a continuous eighth-note pattern. The Viola and Violoncello parts continue with their eighth-note accompaniment, with the cello part having a few longer notes in the final measures.

54

rit. **D** *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

f *p*
f *p*
f *rolled pizz.*
f *p*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 54 through 58. It begins with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking. At measure 54, the tempo changes to *a tempo* with a quarter note equal to 108 beats per minute. The Violin and Viola parts play triplets of eighth notes, with dynamics ranging from *f* (forte) to *p* (piano). The Violoncello part plays a bass line with triplets and includes a *rolled pizz.* (rolled pizzicato) instruction in measure 58.

59

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

mf cantabile
arco

Detailed description: This system contains measures 59 through 63. The Violin parts are silent. The Viola part plays a melodic line starting in measure 59, marked *mf cantabile*. The Violoncello part plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, marked *arco*. There are triplet markings in the Viola and Cello parts in the final measures.

64

Musical score for measures 64-69. The score is for four string parts: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 64-65 feature a *mf* dynamic. Measures 66-69 show a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics, including *mf* and *p*.

70

Musical score for measures 70-75. The score is for four string parts: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 70-72 feature a *f* dynamic. Measures 73-75 show a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics, including *f*, *p*, and *(p)*.

76

rit.

Musical score for measures 76-81. The score is for four string parts: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked *rit.* (ritardando). Measures 76-80 feature a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics, including *pp*. Measure 81 features a *pp* dynamic with a fermata.

2:10
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2. Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head

At a peaceful tempo ♩ = 100
gently; "rest your head" motive

A *a tempo* ♩ = 100

Violin 1 *p* *legato* *p* (a quiet accomp. to the Viola melody)

Violin 2 *p* *legato* *p* (a quiet accomp. to the Viola melody)

Viola *p* *mp* *gently* *legato*

Violoncello *p* *p* (a quiet accomp. to the Viola melody)

9

Vln. 1 *mp*

Vln. 2 *mp*

Vla. *(mp)*

Vlc. *mp*

poco rit. **B** *Slightly faster* ♩ = 112
with rhythmic energy

16

Vln. 1 *(p)* *mf*

Vln. 2 *(p)*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *lightly* *p*

22

Vln. 1 *p* *(mf)*

Vln. 2 *mf* *p*

Vla. *p*

Vcl. *p*

27 C

Vln. 1 *mf* *sim.*

Vln. 2 *mf* *p* *mf* *sim.*

Vla. *mf* *sim.*

Vcl. *mf* *sim.*

32 *poco rit.* Original tempo ♩ = 100

Vln. 1 *p* *mf*

Vln. 2 *p* *legato* *mf*

Vla. *p* *legato* *mf*

Vcl. *p* *legato* *mf*

39 *rit.* D *a tempo* (♩ = 100)

Vln. 1 *p* (*p*) very delicately, tenderly
very gentle trem.
at the tip

Vln. 2 *p* *pp* very gentle trem.
at the tip

Vla. *p* *pp*

Vcl. *p*

45 E

Vln. 1

Vln. 2 *p* very delicately, tenderly (p)

Vla. *pp* very gentle trem. at the tip p

Vlc. *pp* p

50

Vln. 1 *(p)* *cresc. poco a poco (to F)*

Vln. 2 *cresc. poco a poco (to F)*

Vla. *cresc. poco a poco (to F)*

Vlc. *cresc. poco a poco (to F)*

54 F

Vln. 1 *(cresc.)* *f* *(f)*

Vln. 2 *(cresc.)* *f*

Vla. *(cresc.)* *f*

Vlc. *(cresc.)* *f*

60

Vln. 1 *rit.* *mf* *p* *fade out*

Vln. 2 *mf* *p* *fade out*

Vla. *mf* *p* *fade out*

Vlc. *mf* *p* *fade out*

(long bow) rapidly, unmeasured filigree

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3. Go Tell It on the Mountain

Energetic tempo (♩ = 108)

Musical score for the first system of 'Go Tell It on the Mountain'. It features four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is 'Energetic tempo (♩ = 108)'. The first two measures are rests for all instruments. The third measure begins with a *mf* dynamic. The Violin 1 and 2 parts play eighth-note patterns with accents. The Viola part plays a similar eighth-note pattern. The Violoncello part plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical score for the second system of 'Go Tell It on the Mountain'. It features four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The system begins with a measure rest for all instruments, followed by a boxed '5' and a boxed 'A' above the Violin 1 staff. The Violin 1 part plays a melody of eighth notes. The Violin 2 part plays eighth notes with accents. The Viola part plays eighth notes with accents. The Violoncello part continues with its eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical score for the third system of 'Go Tell It on the Mountain'. It features four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The system begins with a measure rest for all instruments, followed by a boxed '9' above the Violin 1 staff. The Violin 1 part plays a melody of eighth notes. The Violin 2 part plays eighth notes. The Viola part plays chords, with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) marking in the second measure and an *arco* (arco) marking in the third measure. The Violoncello part continues with its eighth-note accompaniment.

13

Vln. 1 *p echo*

Vln. 2 *p echo*

Vla. *p echo*

Vlc. *p echo*

B Slower ♩ = 80
relaxed tempo, recitative style

17 *rit.*

Vln. 1 (*p*)

Vln. 2 (*p*) *mf*

Vla. *mf* (*mf*)

Vlc. *pizz.* (*p*) (*p*)

22 *rit.* *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

Vln. 1 (*p*) *mf* *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. (*p*) *arco* *mf* *f* *playfully* *p*

26 **C**

Vln. 1 *p* *f*

Vln. 2 *p* *f*

Vla. *p* *f*

Vlc. *f*

30

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 30 through 33. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first violin part (Vln. 1) features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and accents. The second violin part (Vln. 2) provides a harmonic accompaniment with similar eighth-note patterns. The viola part (Vla.) has a more active role with sixteenth-note runs. The cello part (Vcl.) plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

34

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 34 through 37. The first violin part (Vln. 1) has a melodic line with some rests. The second violin part (Vln. 2) continues the accompaniment. The viola part (Vla.) has a melodic line with eighth notes. The cello part (Vcl.) plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

38

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

p echo

Detailed description: This system contains measures 38 through 40. The music features a 'p echo' effect in all parts. The first violin part (Vln. 1) has a melodic line with eighth notes. The second violin part (Vln. 2) has a similar melodic line. The viola part (Vla.) has a melodic line with eighth notes. The cello part (Vcl.) has a melodic line with eighth notes.

41 **D**

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

(p)
rolled pizz.
(p)

Detailed description: This system contains measures 41 through 43. The first violin part (Vln. 1) has a melodic line with eighth notes, marked *(p)*. The second violin part (Vln. 2) has a melodic line with eighth notes, marked *(p)*. The viola part (Vla.) is marked *rolled pizz.* and has a melodic line with eighth notes. The cello part (Vcl.) has a melodic line with eighth notes, marked *(p)*.

44

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

cresc.
cresc.
(p)
cresc.

47

E Slower ♩ = 80
relaxed tempo, recitative style

rit.

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

(cresc.)
(cresc.)
(cresc.)
(cresc.)

f
f
f
f

p
p
p
mf

arco

51

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

mf
mf
mf
mf

55

rit.

a tempo ♩ = 108

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

f
f
f
f

p
p
p
p

playfully

59 **F**

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vla. *f*

Vcl. *f*

62

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

65

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

69

Vln. 1 *(f)* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *(p)* *ff*

Vln. 2 *(f)* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *(p)* *ff*

Vla. *(f)* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *(p)* *ff*

Vcl. *(f)* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *(p)* *ff*

[random high pitch, sul D] *snap pizz.*

tremolo gliss.

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4. I Wonder as I Wander

Moderate tempo ♩ = 108
as a star in the night sky

Violin 1 *pp* gently

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello *p* gently

A

as a person out wandering beneath the starry night sky
legato, a simple melody

7

Vln. 1

Vln. 2 *pp* gently

Vla.

Vlc.

as another star in the night sky

pp gently

14

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

20

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

This system contains measures 20 through 26. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The strings play a melodic line in the upper voices and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower voices. Measure 20 starts with a whole rest for all parts. The melody begins in measure 21. There are fermatas over the final notes of measures 22 and 23.

27

B

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

mf

This system contains measures 27 through 32. A box labeled 'B' is placed above measure 27. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#). The strings play a melodic line in the upper voices and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower voices. The dynamic marking *mf* is indicated. There are fermatas over the final notes of measures 28 and 29. The lower strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

33

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

This system contains measures 33 through 38. The key signature remains two sharps. The strings play a melodic line in the upper voices and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower voices. There are fermatas over the final notes of measures 34 and 35. The lower strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

39

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

This system contains measures 39 through 44. The key signature remains two sharps. The strings play a melodic line in the upper voices and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower voices. There are fermatas over the final notes of measures 40 and 41. The lower strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

45

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

51

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

p

p

p

C *lightly, as stars*

57

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

p

lightly, as stars

p

pp

pp

63

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

69 D

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

p

p

75 *the sky fills with stars*

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

mf

p

mf

p

mf

p

80

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

mf

p

mf

p

mf

p

85 *rit.* E *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

mf

f

f

f

f

91

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

Musical score for measures 91-95. The system includes four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 91-95 show a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the upper parts and a bass line with some rests.

96

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

Musical score for measures 96-101. The system includes four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 96-101 show a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the upper parts and a bass line with some rests.

102

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

Musical score for measures 102-107. The system includes four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 102-107 show a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the upper parts and a bass line with some rests.

108 *rit. to end*

dim. to end

dim. to end

dim. to end

dim. to end

pp

one lone star

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vcl.

Musical score for measures 108-112. The system includes four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 108-112 show a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the upper parts and a bass line with some rests. The score includes dynamic markings such as *dim. to end* and *pp*, and a fermata over the final note of the first staff.