

Play the Recorder Month 2017

Waltz

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

This piece is simply entitled “Waltz,” which when standing alone, presents a wide range of stylistic interpretation. To further encourage this, the performance instructions “As you wish” are not meant to be a nod to “*The Princess Bride*,” but rather to provide the opportunity for players to freely experiment with the composition, so as to mold the piece to fit their musical tastes and skills. Also noteworthy about this piece is that there are no expression or articulation marks. We, as recorder players, are accustomed to reading such music, generally referred to as *urtext*, however, in this case, it is intended to offer further experimental opportunities for the performers to literally shape the music as they wish.

Waltzes fall into many types, some of which are either referenced in their titles, or tempo marks. These include not only the mid-twentieth century popular dance waltz, but also a smorgasbord of others, such as the jazz waltz, waltz in ragtime, mazurka, minuet, ländler, sarabande, scherzo, gigue, gymnopédie, or the typical Viennese waltz.

Here are some interpretive suggestions:

Tempo may vary from slow to moderate to fast.

Music may be felt in three beats to the measure, or in one.

The eighth notes can either be played straight, or in swing style.

Articulation may vary by playing certain passages either staccato or legato.

Freely enhance some passages with use of *accelerando* or *rallentando*.

There are some musical nods in the piece. The rhythmic motif, eighth-quarter-eighth-quarter-notes, of the first theme, is the same rhythm that permeates Scott Joplin’s “*Bethena Waltz*.” The melodic fragment utilized for the second theme (m. 20) can be heard in Johann Strauss’ “*Die Fledermaus*.” If you like, one can also link the dotted-half note bass line (first theme) to any one of Satie’s *gymnopédies*.

One additional note, the bass line is written in a range that can be played by either F or C basses, or both if available.

James Chaudoir