Young String Orchestra

Grade 2



Tumbleweeds

Doris Gazda

YAS66 INSTRUMENTATION

Full Sc	ore								1
Violin I									8
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Violin I									
Viola									
Cello									
Bass									
Piano									

Program Notes

Tumbleweeds are the above-ground part of a Russian thistle plant that has broken off from the root. The Russian thistle probably was brought to the American West in shipments of flax seed to Ukrainian farmers living in South Dakota in the 1870s. The thistle plant can grow to be three feet tall and has thousands of seeds. When it is mature, the plant breaks off from its base and because it has round shape, it can roll and tumble in the wind. By rolling through fields and down country roads, it scatters its seeds far and wide.

Farmers consider it to be a terrible weed, but sometimes it does provide forage for livestock. It grows in fields and in sandy, desert areas. The large tumbling weeds are often seen tumbling or rolling along on windy days.

Every year, the city of Chandler, Arizona, builds a huge "Christmas Tree" out of tumble weeds. A wire frame is placed in the town square and then hundreds of tumbleweeds are fastened to the frame. The tree is spray painted and lit with spotlights. It is a very distinctive and festive sight.

When you play *Tumbleweeds* you will notice that the piece is built with many scales. To me, those scales seem to depict the rolling of the tumbleweeds. I hope you enjoy just rolling along while playing this happy waltz!

-Doris Gazda

About the Composer

Doris Gazda is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and Penn State University. She enjoyed many years as a string specialist in the Montgomery County, Maryland public schools, where she founded and conducted the Frederick County Youth Orchestra, and conducted the Potomac Valley Youth and Frederick Community Orchestras. Most recently, Ms. Gazda was on the faculty at Arizona State University. She has served nationally as Secretary for the American String Teachers Association, President of the National School Orchestra Association and Member-at-Large for the ASTA with NSOA.

A proponent of new music for student musicians, Ms. Gazda composes for strings and string orchestra. She is the author of *High Tech for Strings* (Carl Fischer), a set of technical studies for middle and high school orchestras, and co-author of the beginning method *Spotlight on Strings* (Neil A. Kjos). Nationally known for her leadership and expertise in string instruction, Ms Gazda presents workshops and conducts conference and regional student orchestras. She is a frequent presenter at state and national meetings for MENC (Music Educators National Conference), ASTA (American String Teachers Association) with NSOA (National School Orchestra Association), MTNA (Music Teachers National Association), regional school systems, and string workshops.



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