Kjos String Orchestra Grade 3 Full Conductor Score SO278F \$6.00

## Alexander Borodin Deborah Baker Monday, Arranger

In the Steppes of Central Asia





#### The Arranger

Deborah Baker Monday currently teaches in the Logan City School District Orchestra Program in Logan, Utah. She is a cello/bass specialist who works with 4th through 8th grade students in several schools. Ms. Monday received her B.M.E. from Florida State University with an emphasis in strings and an M.M. in Composition from the University of Alabama. She began working on a D.M.A. at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge while teaching string classes at the 4th through 12th grade levels.

Ms. Monday is an active bass performer and private teacher. She has served as an adjunct bass instructor at Utah State University for several years, has been on the faculty of the Utah ASTA with NSOA Bass Fest, and has served as a clinician at the Midwest Clinic, ASTA with NSOA National Conference, and various state music educators conventions throughout the country. In 1999, she was named the Utah ASTA with

NSOA Elementary Teacher of the Year and she also received the award for "Superior Accomplishment" at the 2003 Utah Music Educators Association Conference acknowledging her exceptional contributions to educational music for young string players. Ms. Monday was declared winner of the 2006 Utah ASTA Composition Competition for her composition *Chant-Formations*.

Ms. Monday has many publications to her credit including three collections coauthored with Janice L. McAllister, *Strings Extraordinaire!*, Holidays Extraordinaire!, and More Strings Extraordinaire! She is also coauthor (with Robert S. Frost) of Artistry in Ensembles.

#### The Arrangement

This arrangement is close to the original in its form. The first theme (m. 5) is stated by the upper strings in the keys of A and C major with a connecting thread of a pedal E played as a harmonic throughout the section. The exotic second theme appears first in the cellos (m. 43), then doubled in violas in A natural minor. A recurring *pizzicato* passage with accented harmonics in 5ths creates a sense of travel and motion that resolves into the melodic sections. The orchestra reaches a beautiful climax when both themes occur simultaneously in the key of A major (m. 181). All instruments share in the melodic interest and contribute to the rich orchestral palette. In the conclusion, the ensemble gradually gets softer to end on a whisper.

#### Instrumentation List (Set C)

- 8 1<sup>st</sup> Violin
- 8 2<sup>nd</sup> Violin
- 5 Viola
- 5 Cello
- 5 String Bass
- 1 Full Conductor Score

Additional scores and parts are available.

#### Learning Bank: Alexander Borodin (1833–1887)



Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, to a prince and his mistress, the young Borodin showed a passion for both music and science. In his youth, he attended medical school and specialized in chemistry while composing music on the weekends (he later referred to himself as a "Sunday composer"). After finishing his degree, he worked as a physician alongside the great composer Modest Mussorgsky, who was an officer in the military. In the 1860s, Borodin and Mussorgsky joined three other Russian composers to form a group that came to be known as "The Mighty Handful." These self-taught musicians strove to create a distinctly Russian sound, leading their nation's first major musical movement.

After a number of early successes, Borodin found himself balancing his music with family life and his career as a chemist. For this reason, many of his compositions remained "works in progress" for years. Despite these distractions, however, he produced many compositions of lasting importance. In addition to three symphonies and numerous chamber and piano works, Borodin's most influential compositions include the opera

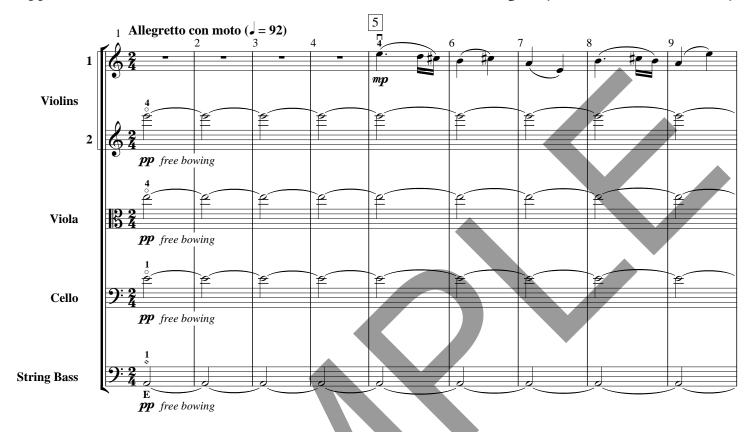
Prince Igor, Polovtsian Dances (part of the opera), and of course, In the Steppes of Central Asia. Composed in early 1880 to commemorate 25 years of Tsar Alexander II's reign, Borodin's masterpiece was heavily influenced by Russian folk song. The steppes are a dry, prairie landscape that stretch from Eastern Europe all the way to Mongolia. Much of this region came under the Russian sphere of influence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and this complex relationship between the Tsar and this vast territory is represented musically in the work. It was designed with two main themes that gradually work their way into counterpoint with one another: the first, simple and noble, represents the glory of Russia. The second theme conjures the exotic East with its elaborate ornamentation (grace notes). While presented independently at first, these themes start to intermingle towards the end of the piece, representing a fusion of Russian and Eastern influences. In the Steppes of Central Asia is a timeless piece of music, but it also represents the political realities of its time.

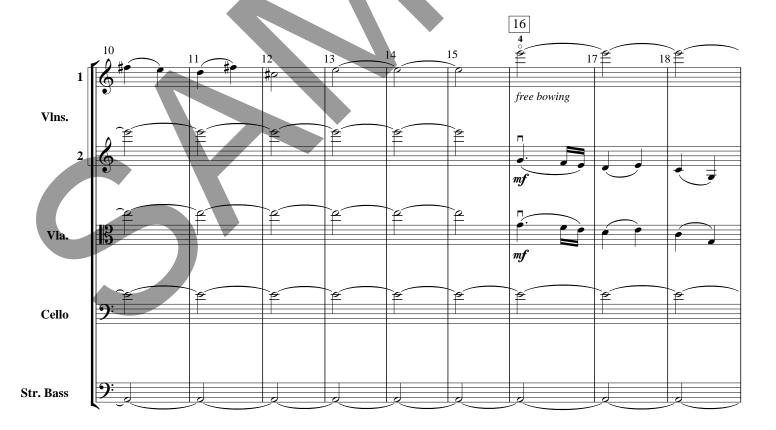


### In the Steppes of Central Asia

Full Conductor Score Approx. time – 5:10

Alexander Borodin Arranged by Deborah Baker Monday





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