Young String Orchestra

Grade 2



# Dance of the Harlequins

## Larry Clark



#### **Program Notes**

When I started to write this piece I came up with the main melody first, then I harmonized it. In the process of doing that I realized that I was composing a new piece that was based on the harmonic progression found in the famous *Canon* by Johann Pachelbel. At first this sort of worried me, but then by doing a little research on the famous canon, I realized I was far from alone. There is even an incredibly funny YouTube video call "Pachelbel Rant" where comedian Rob Paravonian points out many of the usages of the chord progression from Pachelbel's Canon found in many popular/rock songs. Watch it if you get a chance it is very funny! So, I decided to forge ahead and complete the piece.

After the main theme begins without introduction that includes short punctuations of the harmony in the lower strings, the main theme is repeated with a countermelody played by the violas. The cellos then take up a new B theme with the countermelody to this section covered by the first violins. The main theme with counter melody is stated one more time before it is followed by a transition to a more lyrical and augmented theme that is first presented in the violas. This theme repeats now with the melody in the first violins and a countermelody added in the violas. One more statement of the lyrical section theme is presented, but now the celli state the original main theme in augmentation along with the lyrical theme and countermelody. This is followed by an extended transition that leads back tot the B section theme now presented in the violins. After an extended cadence and build, the main theme returns one last time followed by a lively coda to complete the piece.

There is something about the use of this famous chord progression that just makes it feel so right. I hope that I did justice to it and provided you and your students with a musical vehicle that will be enjoyable and at the same time educational.

It has been my pleasure to have the opportunity to write this piece. I hope you and your students enjoy it and find it useful for your program.

-LARRY CLARK Lakeland, FL 2011

#### **About the Composer**

Music by Larry Clark (b. 1963) is some of the most popular and most performed by concert bands and string orchestras of all ability levels. Larry is equally adept at writing music for beginners as he is for high school and college ensembles. His music is tuneful, contains a fresh harmonic perspective, is well scored and stretches the musicianship of the performers. He prides himself on producing music that is not only intriguing to performers and audiences alike but that contains a playability that comes from a keen understanding of the technical difficulties inherent in all instruments. His pieces have been performed internationally and appear on numerous contest/festival performance required music lists. He is an ASCAP award-winning composer, has over 200 publications in print and is in demand to write commissions for bands and orchestras across the country.

Besides his abilities as a composer Larry serves as Vice President, Editor-in-Chief for Carl Fischer Music. In this capacity he oversees all publications in all genres for this esteemed music publisher. However, his main focus is on selecting, editing and producing concert band and string orchestra music for the company. He travels the world representing Carl Fischer Music doing clinic/workshops and guest conducting appearances. His background as a former middle school and university band director at Syracuse University, combined with his composing and editing, have placed Larry at the forefront of music for school ensembles. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Music Education from Florida State University and Masters Degrees in Conducting and Composition from James Madison University in Virginia. For more information about the music of Larry Clark, visit his website www.larryclarkmusic.com .

### **Dance of the Harlequins**











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