

Old McDonald Concerto

for beginning soloist and band

arr. Daniel Gordon

Solo part: Grade 1
Ensemble: Grade 3-4

Instrumentation:

Flute 1-2

Oboe

Clarinet 1-3

Bass Clarinet

Bassoon

AATB Saxophones

Trumpet 1-3

Horn 1-2

Trombone 1-3

Euphonium

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion

Chimes, Xylophone, Temple Blocks

Cowbell, Whip, Triangle, Ratchet

Optional: Duck Call, Rubber Duckie Squeak, Tambourine, Bass Drum

Duration ca. 2'30" to 5'
depending on optional verses

Program Note

The idea of concertos for beginning players inspired me to write this piece. Beginners deserve to experience the thrill of being a concerto soloist just like older and more experienced players. I am grateful to Melanie Brooks for coordinating a number of composers to write other pieces like this as part of her doctoral studies.

The basis of this piece, the folk song *Old McDonald*, provides plenty of opportunity for musical fun and games. The animals in each verse are introduced with simple extended techniques from various instruments in the ensemble imitating the sounds of the animals. Each verse also uses pre-existing musical excerpts related to each animal. Some of the excerpts will be obvious to everyone; others are like little musical puzzles to be solved.

While writing this piece, I had the distinct feeling over and over again that someone should have written this piece a long time ago. I am pleased to be the person who finally did.

Notes to the Conductor

The goal of *Old McDonald Concerto* is to provide a concerto with a solo part playable by a beginning soloist and an ensemble accompaniment that is playable by a middle school band. Another goal is to provide a piece that is educational and enjoyable for both players and audiences.

There are several musical layers to the piece:

1. The solo part calls for only different 5 pitches, all of which, in the concert key of Eb, fall within the “first six” notes that beginning players learn on their instruments. The solo part is therefore playable by beginning players on almost every instrument in the standard concert band. (The exceptions are French horn and tenor saxophone; their solo parts are playable by slightly more advanced players. The tenor saxophone will require playing an octave higher than notated on the Bb solo part. Tubas can play the solo part using only the “first six” notes, but one octave below notation on the bass clef solo part.) In order to accommodate any solo instrument, a solo part is provided for C, F, Bb, Eb, and bass clef instruments.
2. The simple extended techniques that introduce the animals offer the opportunity for students to explore other extended techniques on their instruments.
3. Identifying the pre-existing musical excerpts in each verse is part of the fun of the piece. These excerpts provide material for teachable moments. Conductors can discuss where each excerpt comes from, who composed it, what its animal connection is, etc. For conductors who might not be familiar with all the excerpts, the source of each is listed below.
4. Each of the interludes between the verses uses a different musical device or technique. The first (4 before C) uses invertible counterpoint in diminution; the second (4 before E) uses “animalistic counterpoint”; the third (4 before G) uses quasi-*Klangfarbenmelodie*, with the Old

McDonald melody implied by the various animal and percussion sounds; the fourth (4 before J) uses mirroring of the theme at a the interval of a third below, which creates a modulation to the key of C minor; and the last one (letter K) dispenses with an interlude altogether in favor of the soloist becoming a narrator.

5. Optional verses offer material for discussing musical form, open forms, and aleatory. The basic piece consists of the cow, horse, and geese verses. Performances should always include these three verses (the beginning up to and including one bar before E, and letter L to the end). Because the solo part works for so many instruments, there may be multiple soloists available. In that case, or if a single soloist has enough stamina, optional verses for duck, sheep, and shark may be added in any combination. If multiple soloists are used, they may play together, trade off verses, or use any other workable configuration. The cuts for the optional verses are indicated in the music.

Pre-existing musical excerpts:

Cow verse

- 5 after B: Robert Schumann's "The Happy Farmer," from *Album for the Young*, Op.68, No. 10.

Horse verse

- Letter D: Theme song from the 1960's American television show *Mr. Ed*, whose main character was a talking horse. The lyrics to the excerpt are "A horse is a horse, of course, of course."
- 3 after D: Excerpt from Gioachino Rossini's *William Tell Overture*, better known as the theme music for the opening of the 1950's American television show *The Lone Ranger*.

Duck verse

- Letter F: *Rubber Duckie*, song from the 1970s American educational television show *Sesame Street*. It was sung by the muppet character Ernie.

Sheep verse

- Letter H: Aria from J. S. Bach's Cantata, BWV 208, "Sheep May Safely Graze."
- 5 after H: *Mary Had a Little Lamb*.

Shark verse

- Letter K: Leitmotif for an impending shark attack from John Williams' movie soundtrack to *Jaws*.

Geese verse

- Letter M: Children's nursery song *Goosey Goosey Gander*.
- 3 after M: Repeating fragment from the Christmas carol *The Twelve Days of Christmas*: "On the sixth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me six geese a-laying." The fragment repeats six times.

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Moderato $\text{♩} = 112$

A

Flute 1 *mf* *pp* *pp* shout "Cow!"

Flute 2 *mf* *pp* *pp* shout "Cow!"

Oboe *mf* shout "Cow!"

Bassoon *mp* *p* *p* shout "Cow!"

B♭ Clarinet 1 *mp* *mf* *pp* *pp* shout "Cow!"

B♭ Clarinet 2 *mp* *mf* *pp* *pp* shout "Cow!"

B♭ Clarinet 3 *mp* *mf* *p* *p* shout "Cow!"

Bass Clarinet *mp* *p* *p* shout "Cow!"

Alto Sax 1 *mf* shout "Cow!"

Alto Sax 2 *mf* shout "Cow!"

Tenor Sax *mf* shout "Cow!"

Bari Sax *mp* shout "Cow!"

Solo (in C) *f* *f* (play, hold beyond ens. shout) *f*

B♭ Trumpet 1 *mf* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* shout "Cow!"

B♭ Trumpet 2 *mf* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* shout "Cow!"

B♭ Trumpet 3 *mf* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Horn 1 in F *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Horn 2 in F *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* "Moo" on lowest possible note *mf* shout "Cow!"

Trombone 1 *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Trombone 2 *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Trombone 3 (Bass Trombone) *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Euphonium *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Tuba *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Timpani (Bb, Eb) *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Cow!"

Chimes, Xylophone, Temple Blocks *mf* shout "Cow!"

Cowbell, Whip, Triangle, Ratchet (opt.: Duck call, Rubber duckie squeak, Tambourine, Bass drum) Cowbell (large)

B

C

Musical score for various instruments including Flutes (Fl. 1, 2), Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Clarinets (B♭ Cl. 1, 2, 3, B. Cl.), Saxophones (A. Sax. 1, 2, T. Sax., B. Sax.), Solo (C), Trumpets (B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, 3), Horns (F Hn. 1, 2), Trombones (Tbn. 1, 2, 3 (B. Tbn.)), Euphonium (Euph.), Tuba (Tbn.), and Percussion (Timp., Ch., Xyl., TBlocks). The score includes dynamic markings like *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *f*, and performance instructions such as "Moo" on lowest possible note and "(loco)". A large "PREVIEW" watermark is overlaid on the page.

Chell. Whip,
Trg. Ratchet
(opt.: D Call,
RD squeak,
Tamb, BD)

Optional cut:
E to G

E

41

Fl. 1 *pp* *p < f* *pp* *pp*

Fl. 2 *pp* *p < f* *pp* *pp*

Ob. *p < f*

Bsn. *p* *p < f* *p* *p*

B♭ Cl. 1 *pp* *mf* *p < f* *pp* *pp*

B♭ Cl. 2 *pp* *p < f* *pp* *pp*

B♭ Cl. 3 *p* *p < f* *p* *p*

B. Cl. *p* *p < f* *p* *p*

A. Sax. 1 *p < f*

A. Sax. 2 *p < f*

T. Sax. *mf* *p < f*

B. Sax. *mf* *p < f*

Solo (C) *f* *f*

B♭ Tpt. 1 *mf* ("Whiny") *p < f* *mf* *8^{ad lib.}*

B♭ Tpt. 2 *mf* ("Whiny" *f* half-valves, any notes) *p < f* *mf* *8^{ad lib.}*

B♭ Tpt. 3 *mf* ("Whiny" *f* half-valves, any notes) *p < f* *mf* *8^{ad lib.}*

F. Hrn. 1 *p < f* *mf*

F. Hrn. 2 *p < f* *mf*

Tbn. 1 *mf* ("moo") *p < f* *mf*

Tbn. 2 *mf* ("moo") *p < f* *mf*

Tbn. 3 (B. Tbn.) *mf* ("moo") *p < f* *mf*

Euph. *mf* *p < f* *mf*

Tbn. *mf* ("moo") *p < f* *mf*

Temp. *mf* *p < f* *mf*

Ch., Xyl., TBlocks *mf* Temple blocks (T blocs) Xylophone *mf*

Chell. Whip, Trg., Ratchet (opt.: D Call, RD squeak, Tamb, BD)

Optional cut:
G to J

G

H

Sheet music for various instruments including Flutes (Fl. 1, 2), Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Clarinets (B♭ Cl. 1, 2, 3, B. Cl.), Saxophones (A. Sax. 1, 2, T. Sax., B. Sax.), Solo (C), Trumpets (B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, 3), Horns (F Hn. 1, 2), Trombones (Tbn. 1, 2, 3 (B. Tbn.)), Euphonium (Euph.), Tuba (Tba.), and Percussion (Timp., Ch., Xyl., TBlocks, Tambourine).

Performance instructions include dynamics such as *pp*, *p*, *mp*, *f*, and *mf*. Musical directions include *ad lib.*, *stacc.*, and *stacc.* with specific articulation notes like "Bass - stopped, flutter-tongued, medium-low note".

Lyrics for the vocal parts include "shout 'Sheep!'" and "Baa - stopped, flutter-tongued, medium-low note".

Tempo markings include *Allegretto* and *Andantino*.

Chell. Whip,
Tig. Ratchet
(opt. - D Call
RD squeak,
Tamb. BD)

Optional cut:
J to L

K

J

FL. 1 *mp* *pp* *pp* (silent) shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

FL. 2 *p* *pp* *pp* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Ob. *mp* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Bsn. *p* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

B♭ Cl. 1 *p* *pp* *pp* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

B♭ Cl. 2 *p* *pp* *pp* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

B♭ Cl. 3 *p* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

B. Cl. *p* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

A. Sax. 1 *mp* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

A. Sax. 2 *mp* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

T. Sax. *p* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

B. Sax. *p* *p* *p* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Solo (C) *f* *f* (spoken) "Shark?" "What's a shark doing in this piece?" "Sharks don't make any sounds. And besides, sharks don't live on farms!"

B♭ Tpt. 1 *mf* *sf* *sfz* *sfz sfz* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

B♭ Tpt. 2 *mf* *sf* *sfz* *sfz sfz* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

B♭ Tpt. 3 *mf* *sf* *sfz* *sfz sfz* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

F Hn. 1 ("baa") *f* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

F Hn. 2 "baa" - stopped, flutter-tongued, medium-low note *f* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Tbn. 1 *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Tbn. 2 *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Tbn. 3 (B. Tbn.) *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Euph. *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Tba. *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Timp. *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Ch., Xyl., TBlocks *mf* *mf* *mf* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

Cbell, Whip, Trg., Ratchet (opt.: D Calt, RD squeak, Tamb., BD) *f* *f* *f* shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!" shout "Shark!"

L **M**

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Fl. 1 *ff* *pp* *pp* shout "Geese!"

Fl. 2 *ff* *pp* *pp* shout "Geese!"

Ob. *mf* *ff* Remove vocal shout "Geese!"

Bsn. *p* *ff* *pp* SUCK on large end of bocal with reed on other end shout "Geese!"

B♭ Cl. 1 *ff* *ad lib.* *pp* *pp* *pp* shout "Geese!"

B♭ Cl. 2 *mf* *ff* *pp* *pp* *pp* shout "Geese!"

B♭ Cl. 3 *mp* *ff* *p* *pp* *pp* div. shout "Geese!"

B. Cl. *p* *ff* *p* *pp* *pp* Play on mouthpiece & neck only shout "Geese!"

A. Sax. 1 *mf* *ff* *p* *pp* *pp* Play on mouthpiece & neck only shout "Geese!"

A. Sax. 2 *mf* *ff* *p* *pp* *pp* Play on mouthpiece & neck only shout "Geese!"

T. Sax. *mp* *ff* *p* *pp* *pp* Play on mouthpiece & neck only shout "Geese!"

B. Sax. *p* *ff* *p* *pp* *pp* *f* Play on mouthpiece & neck only shout "Geese!"

Solo (C) *f* *f* *f*

B♭ Tpt. 1 *mf* *ff* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* shout "Geese!"

B♭ Tpt. 2 *mf* *ff* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* shout "Geese!"

B♭ Tpt. 3 *mp* *ff* *mf* *ad lib.* *mf* *ad lib.* shout "Geese!"

F. Hn. 1 *mp* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

F. Hn. 2 *mp* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

Tbn. 1 *mp* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

Tbn. 2 *mp* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

Tbn. 3 (B. Tbn.) *p* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

Euph. *p* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

Tba. *p* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

Temp. *p* *ff* *mf* shout "Geese!"

Ch., Xyl., TBlocks *ff* *ff* *mf* *mf* *mf* Xylophone Triangle

Cbcl. Whip, Trg. Ratchet (opt., D. Call, RD squeak, Tamb. BD) *mf*

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FL 1 *mf* *p* *ff*

FL 2 *mf* *p* *ff*

Ob. *mf* (bocal & reed) *p* *ff* (bocal & reed) Repeat honks ad lib *ff*

Bsn. *f* *ff*

B♭ Cl. 1 *p* *ff*

B♭ Cl. 2 *p* *ff*

B♭ Cl. 3 *p* *ff*

B. Cl. (neck & mouthpiece) *f* (neck & mouthpiece) Repeat honks ad lib *ff*

A. Sax. 1 (neck & mouthpiece) *f* (neck & mouthpiece) Repeat honks ad lib *ff*

A. Sax. 2 (neck & mouthpiece) *f* (neck & mouthpiece) Repeat honks ad lib *ff*

T. Sax. (neck & mouthpiece) *f* (neck & mouthpiece) Repeat honks ad lib *ff*

B. Sax. (neck & mouthpiece) *f* (neck & mouthpiece) Repeat honks ad lib *ff*

Solo (C) *ff*

B♭ Tpt. 1 *ff* Repeat "whimpy" ad lib *f* *ff*

B♭ Tpt. 2 *ff* Repeat "whimpy" ad lib

B♭ Tpt. 3 *ff* Repeat "whimpy" ad lib

F Hn. 1 *ff* If Sheep verse is included, repeat "baa" sounds here *ff*

F Hn. 2 *ff* If Sheep verse is included, repeat "baa" sounds here *ff*

Tbn. 1 *ff* Repeat "moo" ad lib *ff*

Tbn. 2 *ff* Repeat "moo" ad lib *ff*

Tbn. 3 (B. Tbn.) *ff* Repeat "moo" ad lib *ff*

Euph. *ff*

Tba. *ff* Repeat "moo" ad lib *ff*

Timp. *ff* Random pedal *ff* glissandos Xylophone *ff*

Ch., Xyl., TBlocks Chimes *mf* *ff*

Cbell, Whip, Trg, Ratchet (opt.: D Call, RD squeak, Tamb, BD)

(Ratchet)
 (Triangle (roll))
 (Cowbell)
 (rattle on inside with SD sticks)

If optional verses are included, play their sounds here (Duck: duck call & squeak; Sheep: tumb. shake)