



## Bugs (2000)

Grade 5 • 17:00

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### PROGRAM NOTES

With the success of *Colours*, a work in which each movement is a musical depiction of a particular color, composer Roger Cichy began considering other 'topics' of the sort for ideas that might transpire into future musical compositions. *Bugs* came to mind a few years ago and the thought of giving a "musical personality" to the selected bugs seemed humorous, inventive, and capricious all at the same time. The insect and spider collection at the Fields Museum of Natural History in Chicago, Illinois provided much inspiration, and at the same time, made it difficult for Cichy to narrow the list down to about six or so. The particular bugs represented in this suite were chosen partly because of the contrasting styles of music that would be composed for each.

*Prelude*, which begins the suite, was not conceived as a part of the original set of movements but was included when Cichy began work on the piece. "The suite seemed to need an introduction and this just came out and fell into place", commented Cichy. The prelude is meant to suggest many of the creatures we associate as bugs.

*Dragonfly* portrays several issues. First, the insect is really considered an aquatic bug spending most of its life under water while emerging only in its adult stage to take to the air. The second issue is reflected in folklore where the dragonfly is responsible for flying around at night and sewing shut the mouths of fibbing boys and girls.

*Praying Mantis*, as its name infers, provides a perfect topic for a slow, religious movement. The mantis is often pictured resting with its front legs folded as though in meditation or prayer. The rather bizarre mating tendencies of the praying mantis were purposefully left out of this movement.

## PROGRAM NOTES (continued)

*Black Widow Spider* was a movement Cichy couldn't resist. Set to a cool blues, the opening statement was written with an eight note pattern (eight legs of the spider) which changes several times in order of notes but contains the same pitches. Within a few repetitions of the pattern, five more notes are added to complete a dodecaphonic (twelve-note) scale. In its entirety, the dodecaphonic scale is played from C to a C an octave higher working inward to the center pitch (F#) which represent the spider's web. The textures begin changing from cool blues to hot as the black widow spider approached its prey with its deadly venom.

The suite would be incomplete without the most gorgeous of all insects, the butterfly. Cichy chose *Tiger Swallowtail* for no particular reason other than it is commonly called the "flying flower". Set in a lyrical style, this movement tries to musically depict the grace and beauty of such a remarkable insect.

The final movement,

*Army Ants*, provides the perfect subject for a march-style piece. Cichy created a dissonant march portraying the army ants as salvage predators which are constantly on the move.

## INSTRUMENTATION

**Winds:** Flute 1/Piccolo, Flute 2, Oboe 1 & 2, Bassoon 1 & 2, Bb Clarinet 1 - 3, Bb Bass Clarinet, Bb Contrabass Clarinet, Eb Alto Saxophones 1 & 2, Bb Tenor Saxophone, Eb Baritone Saxophone

**Brass:** Bb Trumpet 1 - 3, F Horn 1 - 4, Trombone 1 - 2, Bass Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba

**Percussion:** Timpani, Percussion 1 (snare drum #1, vibraslap, suspended cymbal, bongos, bass drum, tam-tam, crash cymbals), Percussion 2 (snare drum #2, suspended cymbal, ratchet, bass drum, bar chimes, rain stick, 4 concert toms, vibraslap, hi-hat, vibraphone, marching machine), Percussion 3 (snare drum #3, vibraslap, woodblock, xylophone, vibraphone, bass drum, crash cymbals, orchestra bells)

**Keyboard:** Piano