

## PROGRAM LISTING

**Geppetto's Workshop** (1997)

Michael Gandolfi (b.1956)

- I. A Magic Piece of Wood that Laughs and Cries like a Child
- II. Pinocchio Frolics with Punch and Judy, which Incites the Menacing Fire-Eater
- III. The Talking Cricket Warns Pinocchio of the Dangers Ahead
- IV. Pinocchio Ignores the Talking Cricket's Warning and is Chased by the Fox and the Cat

## PROGRAM NOTES

*Geppetto's Workshop* is a four-movement piece based on the first several chapters of C. Collodi's *The Adventures of Pinocchio*. The piece is programmatic; the musical ideas were conceived in response to the discreet images that I gleaned from the story.

The first movement describes the creation of Pinocchio. A piece of wood with magical powers (it laughs when scratched and cries when cut) is given to Geppetto by a carpenter friend. The opening chords heard in the piano, which consist entirely of major triads going at great speed, represent Pinocchio 'trapped' in this piece of wood. As Geppetto sculpts the wood, the triads 'spread out' and Pinocchio (the flute) first emerges in unison with the topmost voice of the piano texture. As Pinocchio emerges through Geppetto's fine crafting, he immediately reveals his mischievous nature: the moment Geppetto carves an arm from the wood, it reaches out and grabs his glasses; the leg he carves kicks him; when he finishes the body of Pinocchio, before he has time to form ears, Pinocchio scurries out of the workshop, pursued by Geppetto, creating great trouble for them both (Geppetto is improperly taken to jail!). Later, Pinocchio experiences hunger for the first time and unsuccessfully seeks food. He returns to the workshop and awaits Geppetto's return. They reconcile and Geppetto manages some necessary repairs to Pinocchio. Geppetto then sells his only coat to raise money for the purchase of a school book, thereby enabling Pinocchio to realize his desire to attend school.

The second movement begins with Pinocchio's walk to school. Soon after leaving the workshop, he approaches a puppet theater with great curiosity. He sells his schoolbook to raise the two-cent admission. When he enters the theater, the puppets, 'Punch and Judy' and Harlequin, beckon him and all four frolic on stage. This incites 'Fire-Eater', the puppet master, who angrily removes Pinocchio from the stage and commands the other puppets to start the show. After the show, Fire-Eater intends to use Pinocchio as firewood to sustain the dwindling fire for his roast goat. Pinocchio pleads for his life, convincing the Fire-Eater to spare him. Pinocchio then defends Harlequin, whom the Fire-Eater next seeks to keep his goat cooking. Thanks to Pinocchio's persuasive powers, the Fire-Eater settles for a rare roast!

The third movement centers on the Talking Cricket, a major character in the story, who regularly warns Pinocchio of impending danger. I used the piano as a chorus of nocturnal, chirping crickets, over which the flute 'speaks' the Talking Cricket's wise advice.

The fourth movement begins with Pinocchio reflecting on the Talking Cricket's advice (initially the cricket chorus is heard, two octaves higher, as if lodged in Pinocchio's distorted

memory), which he quickly twists into a carefree figure. Of course, Pinocchio ignores the Talking Cricket's advice to avoid nighttime travel through the woods. The murderous fox and cat soon engage Pinocchio in an all-night chase. Ultimately he is caught, and as he struggles to stay alive he wishes for papa Geppetto to save him (the triads-music from movement-one is heard, reminiscent of Pinocchio as he first appeared to Geppetto). Pinocchio makes a final escape effort before succumbing in one last gasp (on C, the central pitch of the piece). Although the murderers hang Pinocchio, at this point in the story, don't despair; the Blue-Fairy summons a crow to resuscitate Pinocchio, and his adventures continue.

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