

## Second Suite in F, Op. 28, No. 2, Gustav Holst (1875-1934)

### References:

- Garofalo, Robert. *Folk Songs and Dances in the Second Suite in F*, By Gustav Holst. Whirlwind Music Publication, 2011.
- Fennell, Frederick. *Basic Band Repertory*. The Instrumentalist Co., 1980.
- Miles, Richard. *Music Through Performance in Band*, vol. 7, pages 559-567. GIA Publications, 2010.

### Recordings:

Many great recordings! Below are two that I enjoy. I like various aspects of each movement on both recordings.

- Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra, *Basic Band Repertory*, Frederick Fennell Conductor.
  - Kosei Publishing Co., 1996.
- Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra, *Arnold Gabriel Guest Conductor*. Kosei Publishing Co., 1996.
- Second Suite in F Major, Op. 28 No. 2, H. 106: I. March · North Texas Wind Symphony Composer's Collection: Gustav Holst © 2006 GIA WindWorks Released on: 2006-01-01 Conductor: Eugene Migliaro Corporon  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXOtlTikI&list=RDMXOtlTikI&start\\_radio=1&t=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXOtlTikI&list=RDMXOtlTikI&start_radio=1&t=2)

This is a good recording as well. Available at YouTube link above. Each movement is presented separately.

*There are several editions of this piece. 1922 Boosey edition; 1948 Boosey and Hawkes edition (this edition has additional parts added to satisfy the American concert band); 1984 Boosey & Hawkes (Colin Matthews edition); 2006 Ludwig Music (Frederick Fennell edition). I prefer the Colin Matthews edition. It is much closer to the original.*

### **Movement 1. March.**

Tempos vary with this movement. Col. Gabriel performs this at a very stately half note at MM=104. Maestro Fennell moves this along with the half note at MM=126. I tend to fall someplace in the middle with the half note at MM=114. This is a march and should be interpreted with a march concept basically in place. A British heritage asks for more lyricism with a detached approach when not marked slurred.

Meas. 6, the first note should be weighted. Do not clip the slurred quarter note each time this figure happens.

Meas. 16, I ask for a crescendo on the descending eighths and a tenuto last quarter note.

Meas. 19, Triangle make sure it is seen as well as heard. This represents that bells of the dancers.

Letter B, WW do not clip the quarter that follows the eighths on beat one of each measure.

Meas. 42, let the crash cymbal ring with natural decay to match the decrescendo in the winds.

The quarter note chords at Letter E. Rehearse slowly for balance. I ask that they be played with tenuto with spaced, not staccato.

Meas. 60, the ascending quarters in horn and trombone I asked to be played one dynamic louder, so it lifts out of the texture.

Meas. 61&62, bring out tuba and trombone 3.

Meas. 65, the text is “you fine girl” so I ask that those three half notes be articulated as indicated with the tenuto.

Euphonium should play very expressive throughout this solo.

Snare crescendo beginning in meas. 77 is critical.

Letter G, half notes are full value with slight separation.

Meas. 81, 83, 84, 85, Bass drum and cymbal should not be dampened. Cymbal should match bass drum volume.

Meas. 98, I ask that the dot be dropped. The text is “you’re the girl.” This highlights the text.

Letter H, b flat minor is tonal center. Melody is pentatonic, D flat, E flat, F, A flat, B flat (concert).

First note at letter H should be full quarter.

Don’t clip the slurred or tied eighth note in accompaniment horns, trb., euph, tuba, tenor and bari.

On the D.C. I add a ritard beginning in meas. 108. The last half note is long and resonate.

I give the piccolo specific directions as to when their part is tacet for movements 1 & 4. I would be happy to share if you would like my thoughts. The piccolo adds another level of dynamic and I want to be sure we are true to lines that need to be heard.

## **Movement 2, Song Without Word “I’ll love my love.”**

This was originally written for just 20 musicians. It is really a chamber music piece. The Matthew’s edition calls for 21 players (meas. 19 has tuba divisi, so maybe 22. Just use one and play the lower octave if pitch is good). I would encourage you to play with just one player per part to best realize this chamber like setting of this beautiful folksong. If you do not have an E flat clarinet, I would also encourage you to transpose this part so these pitches, which are not always doubled, are heard.

I ask that the first dotted half not be played at least mp to establish the tonality. They should decrescendo into the third measure.

I ask the half not starting on beat three to start softly and crescendo to one of the next measure.

The Matthews edition is scored for clarinet solo. This is from Holst’s original score.

The clarinet must play four measure phrases.

I ask the solo to crescendo into beat one of meas. 9. Beat one, meas. 9, is a B flat major chord.

The text of the song at this point is, “so sweetly.” A little word painting by Holst.

I add a crescendo in meas. 13 into meas. 14 beat 1. This is to highlight the 9-8 suspension in meas. 14.

I add a ritard in meas. 16, my realization of the “ad lib.” Direction in the score.

Beginning at Letter A I push the tempo a little.

I add a crescendo and decrescendo to the clarinet and alto arpeggios. Follow the contour.

Same crescendo in meas. 24 in all voices with the melody to once again follow the word painting.

Crescendo beginning in meas. 29 from everyone and the euphonium, bassoon, bass clarinet must crescendo into the 9-8 suspension in meas. 30. Pull the tempo back here on the suspension.

Add a ritard beginning in meas. 31 into the fermata in 32.

Notice that clarinet 2 is scored higher than clarinet 1 on the fermata. Be sure to balance this.

Meas. 33, clarinet 1 crescendo to top of line.

Meas. 35, alto stretch the first eighth note. So very expressive!

Balance the whole notes in meas. 36 & 37. Must be under euph and tuba dynamically.  
I add a fermata the last dotted quarter in the last measure. And a fermata on the last tuba F concert. Don't hold too long. It is really a very broad tenuto note.

### **Movement #3, Song of the Blacksmith**

My prep on this is three and four to set the tempo.

The eighth note chords are marked staccato. But they need to be heavy/thick like the blacksmith swinging his hammer.

I agree with Fennell on the tempo of this movement quarter at MM=92. Col. Gabriel is slower about MM=84. Very deliberate and I would never argue or second guess the Colonel, but it feels like it drags just a little, sorry sir!

The alternating three and four bars are easy to master.

Put the rhythmic ostinato in the background at meas. 7 when we get the first statement of the melody.

Letter A, balance to cornet 1 and clarinet 1.

Letter B, cornet has the second statement of the melody.

Meas. 19 trombone and euphonium have fugal entrance of the melody. Careful balance of both lines makes this supper cool!

The anvil enters in meas. 19, YAY! I have tried several things for this sound. I finally decided on a piece of flat metal that I borrowed from the shop teacher and a heavy ball peen hammer.

I have also seen a steel pipe, about 4 inches in diameter, with metal hammer that seems to work as well.

I add a slight ritard in meas. 23, beats 2 & 3 only. The quarter and the eighth are longer.

Letter C is a tutti statement of the theme. Match articulation.

Meas. 28, 29, I ask that the sustained pitches be *maestoso* in approach. This syncopation matches the anvil and cymbal.

Meas. 31, the half note on three and four must be sustained to the bar line.

Last meas. D Major chord, balance and bring out the Picardy third, F#. Be sure the sus cymbal player knows how and when to dampen the roll.

I like to move to the last movement without much delay after the last chord. It just feels right to move on.

### **Movement 4, Fantasia on the "Dargason"**

Again, there are many interpretations on tempos for this movement. Maestro Fennell and Col. Gabriel agree on dotted quarter MM=160. I have settled on MM=140. It does not feel as hurried.

The weight must be on the quarter. Throw off the eighth note. Short searches for long.

Holst scored the opening presentation of the theme for alto only. Sorry tenor.

The triangle in meas. 18 must be seen to be heard.

The four-note tuba motive that begins in meas. 25&26, I ask that they play each segment, (a step higher each time) slightly louder so it give direction and increases tension.

Throughout this Suite I ask all players to draw in the crescendos and decrescendos and not rely on the words. It is too easy to miss the words.

Letter B, tambourine and must be heard! Teach proper technique.

Beginning in meas. 49 I ask that the dotted quarter pyramid entrances be treated as bell tones.

Repeats beginning in meas. 53.

Letter C – D should be conducted in one. Balance to the Greensleeves melody in the euphonium. I have found that a super-metric four pattern works very well. Start and end with meas. 57&58, 87&88 a super-metric two pattern. This pattern looks and feels more musical. Beginning in meas. 97 through 104 is brass band like presentation of the theme. Drop the dots on the dotted quarters in the low brass.

The duples in meas. 117-119 should be played *maestoso*.

At letter F I ask that only one player per part play. To achieve a drastic dynamic change.

Meas. 128 is *tutti*.

Bass Drum hits beginning meas. 137 should be at least *fortissimo* and strive to be felt as well as heard!

Letter G through H again are in one. Same super metric patterns.

I decrease the WW by one dynamic level and strive for a dark resonate brass chorale.

Letter H, I ask that the cornet 1 play one dynamic higher. This is a nice counter melody to the Dargason theme.

In meas. 184 through 191 I ask that the WW release the tied or slurred eighth into the silence, so it is not clipped.

Meas. 192, trombone and euphonium balance to the tuba. Tuba needs to play no more than *mp* to realize articulation and style established on the theme.

Piccolo should play at least *mf* for confidence.

Tuba counter line should be heard, do not disappear!

Last note full quarter!! TAW! Balance the chord.

I enjoy playing and conducting this piece. Each time I find another musical option that brings this great piece even more to life. A brilliant composition that never grows old. It is as fresh today as it was in 1911. BRAVO Mr. Holst!