

An Analysis of Jan Pavel's Little Dancer (Malá tanečnice)

By
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Instrumentation: Standard Concert Band (Two Tenor Saxophone Parts/ Two Tuba Parts)

Duration: 4 Minutes

Grade: 3

Harmonic Language: Tonal (Bb Major – F Major)

Meter: 4/4

Texture: Melody and Accompaniment

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Composer Bio:

Jan Pavel, born March 19, 1946 in Doloplazy, from the district of Olomouc, in the Czech Republic, is a graduate of the Kroměříž Conservatory of Music, who has been a most versatile musician familiar to the general public as conductor, choirmaster, musical pedagogue and composer. He is a member of the Musical Artists and Scientists Association and he has been cooperating with significant musical ensembles, with the Czech Radio Broadcast and Czech TV.

Presently, he is engaged in pedagogical activity at the Elementary School of Arts —Žerotín—in Olomouc. He also gives lessons to students of Choir Direction and Conducting at the Philosophical Faculty of Palacký University in Olomouc in the Institute of Musicology.

Prior to 1989, Jan Pavel asserted himself very rarely and composed for his own need or upon requests from friends, since he was not considered in favor by the government's political-artistic authorities. At this time, he composed a sacred vocal music for use in church and instrumental pieces for pupils in the music schools. He markedly affected the sphere of brass instruments and gradually became recognized among the established composers when his pieces for brass orchestras were finally executed on radio and TV programs.

Since the Velvet Revolution in 1989, Jan Pavel has been accepted as an artist and his compositional life has been prolific. During this rich period, he has composed pieces for symphonic wind ensembles to be played at festivals and competitive performances. However, focus has been placed on the current needs of music education; that is, for instructive compositions. He also occupies himself with transcriptions of pieces and has written lessons for tuba, euphonium, bass bugle-horn, trombone and French horn.

Composer Notes:

Little Dancer is a well crafted miniature profile of a bolero dance, somewhat akin to the well-known *Bolero* by Maurice Ravel. *Little Dancer* has a refreshing harmonic flavor because of the accidentals in the melodic line which twist and turn in a most interesting way, giving the "little dance" life and energy. This grade 3 composition will surely find its way on concert programs because of its immediate appeal and charm. It builds towards a climatic ending via key changes and layering of textures. Very appealing and destined to be very popular.

Bolero:

A Bolero is a dance in 3/4 that originated in Spain in the late 18th century. It is a combination of the contradanza and the sevillana. The bolero is danced by either a soloist or a couple. It is in a moderately slow tempo and is performed to music which is sung and accompanied by castanets and guitars with lyrics of five to seven syllables in each of four lines per verse.

The American Style Bolero is a ballroom dance popular in the United States. It is a unique dance style combining the patterns of Rumba with the rise and fall technique and character of Waltz and Foxtrot. The music is 4/4 time, and is danced to the slowest rhythms of the ballroom dances (which include Bolero, Rumba, ChaChaCha, Mambo, and Samba). The basic rhythm of steps in patterns, like Rumba, is Slow-Quick-Quick.¹

Probably the most famous Bolero written for orchestra is the one written by Maurice Ravel. Jan Pavel's *Little Dancer* makes use of several techniques utilized by Ravel. Like Ravel's famous *Bolero*, Jan Pavel's *Little Dancer* for Concert Band, is built over an unchanging ostinato rhythm played on one or more snare drums that continues throughout the piece:

Ravel:



Pavel:

Moderato *J=110*
solo (Side Drum - Snare Drum)

Percussion I
Side Drum, Snare Drum
Tambourine



p *crescendo poco à poco*

A musical staff in 3/4 time showing a rhythmic pattern. The staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The pattern consists of a series of eighth notes, with groups of three eighth notes beamed together and marked with a '3' above them, indicating a triplet. The pattern repeats across the staff. The notation includes a dynamic marking of *p* and a tempo marking of *Moderato* with a metronome marking of *J=110*. The piece is marked as a *solo* for Side Drum and Snare Drum. The percussion part is also labeled as Percussion I, Side Drum, Snare Drum, and Tambourine. The notation includes a *crescendo poco à poco* marking.

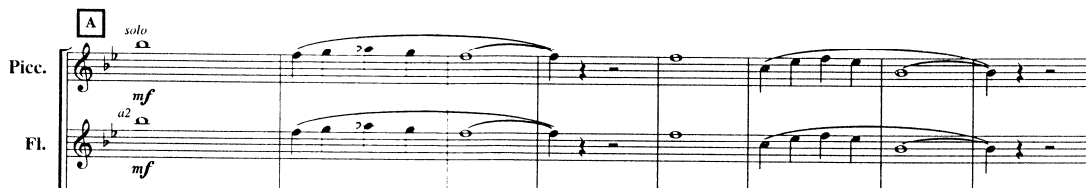
¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolero> (accessed 02/10/08).

On top of this rhythm, in both Ravel's *Bolero* and Pavel's *Little Dancer*, is a single repeated theme. Both composers provide tension through the contrast between the steady percussive rhythm, and the expressive melody trying to break free. Interest, in both works, is maintained by constant reorchestration of the theme, leading to a variety of timbres, and by a steady crescendo. The melody is passed among different instruments. Finally, the accompaniments, in both works, become gradually thicker and louder until the whole orchestra is playing at the very end.

Form:

Introduction	ms. 1 – 4	Snare Drum	Bb Major
A	ms. 5 – 20	Piccolo, 2 Fl, Cl I	Bb Major
A'	ms. 21 – 36	Full Band (Woodwind Melody)	Bb Major
Transition	ms. 37 – 42		Bb Major → F Major
A''	ms. 43 – 58	Brass Melody	F Major
A'''	ms. 59 – 78	Alto Sax Melody	F Major
<i>D. S. to ms. 21</i> <i>ms. 36 to Coda</i>			
Coda	ms. 79 – 86		Bb Major

Theme (Piccolo/Flute, ms. 5 – 12):



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