

PIED BEAUTY, Pick

TTB
accompanied

Pied Beauty



text by

Gerard Manley Hopkins

music by

James Elias Pick

Note from the Composer

Pied Beauty is a song of joy and gratitude, praising God who created a beautifully varied world. The first stanza revels in nature's visual contrasts, such as two-color skies or the patterns on birds' wings. It goes on to describe man's interaction with creation, as farmers work the land, dividing, plowing, and planting—unwitting patchwork artists.

The second stanza shifts to more abstract opposites: swift and slow, sweet and sour, adazzle and dim. The fast-paced world is full of these essential dichotomies, easy to overlook—but if one pauses and savors, glorious beauty is found in such diversity. In the end, Hopkins contrasts the variety in nature with God's changelessness. God is the author of creation, but He is not subject to its limitations and variability; He stands above: "Praise Him."

Several key words in the poem may be unfamiliar (abbreviated definitions from *Oxford Languages*):

- *Pied* [paɪd]: "covered with patches or spots of two or more colors"
- *Dappled* ['dæp əld]: "marked with spots or rounded patches"
- *Brinded* ['brɪn dɪd]: "brownish or tawny with streaks of other color"

Musically, as a song of praise, the mood is undeniably joyful. The piano bubbles with excitement, almost as if breathing in and out. The vivid poetry lends itself to text painting: a pointillistic accompaniment hints at the spotted trout (m. 19-28); the birds' flight is heard in the ascending "ah's" (m. 36-39); major seventh chords juxtapose consonance and dissonance, mirroring the poet's thoughtful consideration of various opposing words, littered with alliteration (m. 77-89).

In performance, the vibrant poetry must come through, making good diction essential. The choir should also take full advantage of the wide range of dynamics and explore different vocal colors to best convey the text.

Soli Deo Gloria.

~ James Elias Pick

Visit www.jamespick.com to contact the composer or share recordings.

Text:

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

~ Gerard Manley Hopkins

(TTB, accompanied)
Also available for SATB, SAB, and SSA

James Elias Pick

PIANO

f *espress.*

con pedale

[illegible]

9 *f*

T1
T2

Glo - ry be - to God for dap - pled things

B

Glo - ry be - to God for dap - pled things

9

f *mp*

2/4 6/8

13

T1
T2
8

For skies of cou-ple - co-lour as a brin - ded cow; —

B

For skies, cou-ple - co-lour, as a

f *mp*

17

T1
T2
8

For

B

cow; —

19

mp

19

p *cresc. poco a poco*

(Ped.)

21

T1
T2
8

rose - moles all in stip - ple —

p

B

Oh

25 *mf* *f*

T1 up - on trout that swim;

T2 up - on trout that swim;

B up - on trout that swim;

28 *dim.*

T1

T2

B *dim.*

31 *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

T1 Fresh - fire - coal chest - nut - falls;

T2 *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

B *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

31 *mp* *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

L.V.

36

T1 *p* *mp* *mp* *mf* *mf*

T2 *p* *mp* *mp* *mf* *mf*

B *p* *mp* *mp* *mf* *mf*

Ah Ah Ah Ah Finch - es'

Ah Ah Ah Ah Finch - es'

41

T1 *f*

T2 *f*

B *f*

wings; wings;

41

45

T1

T2

B

49 *f*

T1
T2
8

Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things

B

Glo - ry be to God for dap - pled things

49 *f* *mp*

53

T1
T2
8

Land - scape plot - ted and pieced fold, fal-low, and

B

Land - scape plot - ted and pieced fold, fal-low, and

f *mp*

57

T1
T2
8

plough; *p* *mp*

And all

B

plough; *p*

p

61

T1 T2 8

trades, their gear and ta - ckle and

mp *mf*

B And all trades, their gear, ta - ckle and

cresc.

65

T1 T2 8

trim.

f

B trim.

f

65

f

69

T1 T2 8

B

73 **rit. poco a poco**

T1
T2
B

rit. poco a poco

f *mp*

77 **Dream-like** (♩ = c. 120) *mp*

T1
T2
B

All things coun - ter, o - ri - gi - nal,

All things coun - ter, o - ri - gi - nal,

p *espress.*

81

T1
T2
B

spare, strange; What - e - ver is

spare, strange; What - e - ver is

84

T1
T2

fi - ckle freck - led (who knows how?) With

B

fi - ckle freck - led (who knows how?) With

87

T1
T2

swift, slow; sweet, sour; a - daz - zle, dim;

B

swift, slow; sweet, sour; a - daz - zle, dim;

poco rit.

90

Slowly returning to Tempo I

T1
T2

mp

mf

He

B

mp

mf

He

90

Slowly returning to Tempo I

cresc.

94

T1 *8* fa - thers - forth _____ whose beau - ty _____ is past *div.*

T2 *8* fa - thers - forth _____ whose beau - ty _____ is past

B *8* fa - thers - forth _____ whose beau - ty _____ is past

Tempo I

98 *f* *rit.*

T1 *8* change: _____

T2 *8* *f* change: _____

B *8* *f* change: _____

Tempo I

98 *f* *rit.*

102 **a tempo**

T1 8 Praise Him. **rit.**

T2 8 Praise Him.

B Praise Him.

a tempo

rit.

106 **a tempo**

T1 8 Praise Him. **allarg.**

T2 8 Praise Him.

B Praise Him.

a tempo

allarg.

ff