

Gwyneth Walker

About Leaves

Three Portraits for Chamber Orchestra

inspired by the poetry of Robert Frost

- I. *"Treading on Leaves"*
- II. *"Light As Balloons"*
- III. *"The Last Color"*

Program Notes

About Leaves: Three Portraits for Chamber Orchestra is inspired by three poems of New England poet Robert Frost (1874-1963). Each portrait presents a distinct aspect of autumn foliage. The poems may be read aloud before each movement. Or, the music may be played without interruption.

I. "Treading on Leaves" follows the Frost poem "A Leaf Treader," and specifically focuses upon the lines:

*I have been treading on leaves all day until I am autumn-tired.
God knows all the color and form of leaves I have trodden on and mired.
Perhaps I have put forth too much strength and been too fierce from fear.
I have safely trodden underfoot the leaves of another year.*

The music initiates with forceful 'tromping' rhythms in the strings marked "As if treading on leaves -- with a mixture of joy and determination." The winds punctuate the string phrases with added insistence and energy. This movement aims to capture the good humor and hard work associated with "leaf control!"

II. "Light As Balloons" is a fanciful movement inspired by the poem "Gathering Leaves." Many of the images of the music, especially the airy chases between the clarinets, are derived from the opening lines of the poem:

*Spades take up leaves no better than spoons.
And bags full of leaves are light as balloons.*

III. "The Last Color" is a reflective movement dealing with the fading of the foliage colors and the end of the beauty of autumn. Often the musical lines fall, as one might picture the last few leaves gently falling to the ground, or perhaps falling tears. Chords unfold slowly, as the blurring of colors. In the end, the music fades away, as in Robert Frost's beautiful poem, "Nothing Gold Can Stay."

*Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief.
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay*

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Kate Tamarkin, Music Director
Castleton, Vermont
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Duration: 12'

A Leaf Treader

by Robert Frost

*I have been treading on leaves all day until I am autumn-tired.
God knows all the color and form of leaves I have trodden on and mired.
Perhaps I have put forth too much strength and been too fierce from fear.
I have safely trodden underfoot the leaves of another year.*

*All summer long they were over head, more lifted up than I.
To come to their final place in earth, they had to pass me by.
All summer long I thought I heard them threatening under their breath.
And when they came it seemed with a will to carry me with them to death.*

*They spoke to the fugitive in my heart as if it were leaf to leaf.
They tapped at my eyelids and touched my lips with an invitation to grief.
But it was no reason I had to go because they had to go.
Now up to my knee to keep on top of another year of snow.*

12

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

B

18

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

23

Fl. *f* *p*

Clar. *f* *p*

Bsn. *f* *mf* *f* *p*

Vlns. *f* *mf* *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *mf* *f* *p*

Vlc. *f* *mf* *f* *p*

Bass *f* *mf* *f* *p*

gliss ad lib.

27

Fl. *p* *mf* *p delicato*

Clar. *p* *mf* *p delicato*

Bsn. *p* *mf* *p delicato*

Vlns. *sfp* *mf* *f* *p*

Vla. *sfp* *mf* *f* *p*

Vlc. *p* *mf* *pizz.* *arco* *p*

Bass *p* *mf* *pizz.* *arco* *p*

C

D

32

Fl. *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Clar. *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Bsn. *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

This block contains the woodwind parts for measures 32 through 37. It includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Clar.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The music features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplet markings. Dynamic markings range from piano (p) to fortissimo (f). A box labeled 'D' is positioned above the first measure.

D

Vlns. *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Vla. *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Vlc. *pizz.* *arco* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Bass *pizz.* *arco* *f* *p* *f* *p*

This block contains the string parts for measures 32 through 37. It includes staves for Violins (Vlns.), Violas (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), and Bass. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplet markings. Dynamic markings range from mezzo-forte (mf) to fortissimo (f). The Vlc. and Bass parts include 'pizz.' (pizzicato) and 'arco' (arco) markings. A box labeled 'D' is positioned above the first measure.

38

Fl. *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Clar. *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Bsn. *mf* *f* *f*

This block contains the woodwind parts for measures 38 through 43. It includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Clar.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The music continues with the rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplet markings. Dynamic markings range from mezzo-forte (mf) to fortissimo (f).

Vlns. *f* *p* *f* *f*

Vla. *f* *p* *f*

Vlc. *f* *p* *f*

Bass *mf* *f* *f*

This block contains the string parts for measures 38 through 43. It includes staves for Violins (Vlns.), Violas (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), and Bass. The strings continue with the rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplet markings. Dynamic markings range from fortissimo (f) to mezzo-forte (mf).

43 **E**

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Musical score for measures 43-46. The Flute part has rests. The Clarinet part features a melodic line with triplets and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The Bassoon part has rests.

E

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

Musical score for measures 43-46. The Violins and Viola parts have rests. The Violoncello part has a pizzicato accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *p*. The Bass part has a steady rhythmic accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *p*. A *div.* (divisi) marking is present in the Violins part.

47 *blurred, rapidly* **F**

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Musical score for measures 47-50. The Flute part has a melodic line with triplets and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The Clarinet part has a melodic line with triplets and a dynamic marking of *p*. The Bassoon part has a melodic line with triplets and a dynamic marking of *mf*.

unis. **F**

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

Musical score for measures 47-50. The Violins part has a melodic line with triplets and a dynamic marking of *p*. The Viola part has rests. The Violoncello part has a pizzicato accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *p*. The Bass part has a steady rhythmic accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *p*.

52

Fl. *p* *mf* blurred

Clar. *p* *mf* blurred

Bsn. *p*

Vlns. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Bass *p*

56

Fl. *p* *mf*

Clar. *p* *mf*

Bsn. *p*

Vlns. *mf* *pizz.* *p*

Vla. *mf* *div.* *unis.* *p*

Vlc. *arco* *mf* *p*

Bass *arco* *mf* *p*

G

60

Fl. *f* *mf* *f*

Clar. *f* *mf* *f*

Bsn. *f* *mf* *f*

Detailed description: This block contains the woodwind parts for measures 60 through 64. It includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Clar.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The music features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* again. There are also accents and hairpins. A box labeled 'G' is positioned above the second measure.

G

Vlns. *f* *p* *f*

Vla. *f* *p* *f*

Vlc. *f* *p* *f*

Bass *f* *mf* *f*

Detailed description: This block contains the string parts for measures 60 through 64. It includes staves for Violins (Vlns.), Violas (Vla.), Violoncellos (Vlc.), and Bass. The music features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte), *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* again. There are also accents and hairpins. A box labeled 'G' is positioned above the second measure. Performance instructions like 'div.' (divisi) and 'arco' are present.

65

Fl. *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Clar. *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Bsn. *mf* *f* *f*

Vlns. *f* *p* *f*

Vla. *f* *p* *f*

Vlc. *f* *p* *f*

Bass *mf* *f* *f*

Detailed description: This block contains the full orchestral score for measures 65 through 69. It includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Clar.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Violins (Vlns.), Violas (Vla.), Violoncellos (Vlc.), and Bass. The music features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), and *p* (piano). There are also accents and hairpins.

70 **H**

Fl. *p* *mf* *p delicato*

Clar. *p* *mf* *p delicato*

Bsn. *p* *mf* *p delicato*

H

Vlins. *p* *mf* Solo *p* Tutti *p*

Vla. *p* *mf* Solo *p* Tutti *p*

Vlc. *p* *mf* Solo arco *p* Tutti *p*

Bass *p* *mf* Solo arco *p* Tutti *p*

75

Fl. *p* *mf* *p*

Clar. *p* *mf* *p*

Bsn. *p* *mf* *p*

Vlins. *mf* *p*

Vla. *mf* *p*

Vlc. *mf* *p*

Bass *mf* *p*

87

Fl. *p*

Clar. *p*

Bsn. *p*

Vlns. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Bass *p*

90 *rit.* *a tempo*

Fl. *f*

Clar. *f*

Bsn. *f*

Vlns. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Bass *f*

gliss.

gliss. to end of string

slap pizz.

Gathering Leaves

by Robert Frost

*Spades take up leaves
No better than spoons,
And bags full of leaves
Are light as balloons.*

*I make a great noise
Of rustling all day
Like rabbit and deer
Running away.*

*But the mountains I raise
Elude my embrace,
Flowing over my arms
And into my face.*

*I may load and unload
Again and again
Till I fill the whole shed,
And what have I then?*

*Next to nothing for weight;
And since they grow duller
From contact with earth,
Next to nothing for color.*

*Next to nothing for use.
But a crop is a crop,
And who's to say where
The harvest shall stop?*

*Spades take up leaves
No better than spoons,
And bags full of leaves
Are light as balloons.*

II. Light as Balloons

$\bullet = 132$

Flute

(as balloons rising in the air)

Clarinet in B \flat

p light and feathery

p light and feathery

Bassoon

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Bass

5

rit. **A**

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

22

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

mf

p *mf*

unis.

27

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

C

p *mf* *p* *mf*

mf *mf* *p* *mf*

p *mf* *p* *mf*

p *mf* *p* *mf*

p *mf* *p* *mf*

p *mf* *p* *mf*

gliss. div. unis.

gliss. div. unis.

gliss. div. unis.

gliss. div. unis.

arco gliss. *p* *mf*

43 **D** Slower, more freely ♩ = c.120 //

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

D Slower, more freely ♩ = c.120

lightly, as leaves flying off

slow, leisurely tremolo

lightly, as leaves flying off

unis.

div.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

47 **E** //

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

playfully

mp

E *unis.*

sf

sf

sf

sf

sf

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

49

Fl. *playfully*

Clar. *mp* 3 3 3 3 3 3

Bsn. *mp* 3 3 3 3 3 3

Vins. *sfp*

Vla. *sfp*

Vlc. *sfp*

Bass *sfp*

playfully *mp* 3 3 3 3 3 3

51

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn. *playfully* *mp* 3 3 3 3 3 3

Vins. *sfp*

Vla. *sfp*

Vlc. *sfp*

Bass *sfp*

F [1/2 only, — others remove mutes]
pizz. *p*

F [1/2 only, — others remove mutes]
pizz. *p*

(arco) *mp*
div. *mp*

pizz. *p*

pizz. *p*

53 *lightly, as leaves flying off*

Fl. *p* *poco* *poco*

Clar. *p* *poco* *poco*

Bsn. *mp*

Vlins. *div. arco* *poco* *p* *div. arco*

[others remove mutes] *unis. pizz.*

Vla. *poco* *mp*

Vlc. *poco* *mp* *p*

Bass *poco* *p*

56

Fl. *mf*

Clar. *mf*

Bsn. *p*

gradual accel.

[all Violins senza sord.]
unis.

Vlns. *mf*

Vla. *p*
unis.
arco

Vlc. *p*
arco

Bass *p*

senza sord.

mf

59

Fl. *f*

Clar. *f*

Bsn. *f*

Vlns. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Bass *f*

G ♩ = 132

65 **H**

Fl. *p* *f*

Clar. *f*

Bsn. *p* *f*

H

at point of bow

div. unis. at point of bow

p *f* *p*

Vlns. *p* *f* *p*

Vla. *p* *f* *p*

Vcl. *p* *f* *p*

Bass *p* *f* *p*

70

Fl. *p* *f*

Clar. *p*

Bsn. *p* *f* *p*

Vlns. *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vcl. *f* *p*

Bass *f* *p*

I

74

Fl. *p* *f* *p* *f*

Clar. *f* *f*

Bsn. *f* *p* *f*

I

Vlns. *f* *p* *p* *f* *div.*

Vla. *f* *p* *p* *f*

Vlc. *f* *p* *p* *f*

Bass *f* *p* *p* *f*

at point of bow

79

Fl. *p* *f*

Clar. *f*

Bsn. *p* *f*

Vlns. *unis.* *p* *p* *f* *div.* *unis.*

Vla. *unis.* *p* *p* *f*

Vlc. *p* *p* *f*

Bass *p* *p* *f*

84

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

J

mf

p

mf

p

J

a few players

p

p

p

p

89

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

mf

non dim.

joyously

joyously 4:3

mf 4:3

p

mf

p

94

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

p *mf* 4:3

joyously *mf* 4:3

K

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

a few players

99

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

p *mf* *f*

L

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

tutti *mf* *f*

L

104

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.
Vlns.
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

div.
unis.

110

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.
Vlns.
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

M rit.

118 **N** Quickly ♩. = 144

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

p

N Quickly ♩. = 144

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

p

div. 2

sim.

O *rit.* **a tempo** ♩. = 144

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

f

p

O *short, high gliss.* *longer; higher gliss.* **a tempo** ♩. = 144

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

f

hold bows up

Nothing Gold Can Stay

by Robert Frost

*Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf is a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.*

III. The Last Color

♩ = 88 *gently, as falling leaves and colors unfolding*

Flute

Clarinets in B \flat

Bassoon

♩ = 88 *gently, as falling leaves and colors unfolding*

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Bass

con sord.
p

7

A slightly faster ♩ = 100

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

A slightly faster ♩ = 100

Vns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

p

poco accel.

B ♩ = 112

13

*lightly, as a speck
of gold color*

mp

breathe when necessary

poco accel.

B ♩ = 112

{div. in 3 (p)

div. (p)

(p)

18

mp

mp

accel.

32

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

mf

p

mf

lightly tongued

mf

mf

p

accel.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

p

mf

mf

arco

p

mf

mf

mf

senza sord.

senza sord.

senza sord.

E ♩ = 112

36

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

mf

mf

mf

E ♩ = 112

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

senza sord.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

40

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.
Vlns.
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

44

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.
Vlns.
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

F

F

molto rit.

♩ = 88

48

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

molto rit.

♩ = 88

div.

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

G

51

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

mp

p

G

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

mp

p

poco accel.
56 H ♩ = 100

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.

poco accel.
♩ = 100

Vln.1
Vln.2
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

61 *accel.*

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.

accel.

Vlns.
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

I ♩ = 112

65

Fl. *mf*

Clar. *mf*

Bsn. *mf*

This block contains the woodwind staves for measures 65 through 68. It includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Clar.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The Flute part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Clarinet part has a similar melodic line with some chromaticism. The Bassoon part provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained notes and some rhythmic patterns. The dynamic marking is *mf* (mezzo-forte).

I ♩ = 112

Vlns. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vlc. *mf*

Bass *mf*

This block contains the string staves for measures 65 through 68. It includes parts for Violins (Vlns.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), and Bass. The Violins and Viola parts feature intricate rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth notes. The Violoncello and Bass parts provide a steady accompaniment with sustained notes and some rhythmic patterns. The dynamic marking is *mf* (mezzo-forte).

69

Fl. *mf*

Clar. *mf*

Bsn. *mf*

This block contains the woodwind staves for measures 69 through 72. It includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Clar.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The Flute part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Clarinet part has a similar melodic line with some chromaticism. The Bassoon part provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained notes and some rhythmic patterns. The dynamic marking is *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Vlns. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vlc. *mf*

Bass *mf*

This block contains the string staves for measures 69 through 72. It includes parts for Violins (Vlns.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), and Bass. The Violins and Viola parts feature intricate rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth notes. The Violoncello and Bass parts provide a steady accompaniment with sustained notes and some rhythmic patterns. The dynamic marking is *mf* (mezzo-forte).

J ♩ = 100

rit.

73

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

rit.

J ♩ = 100

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

78

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

(non tremolo)

(non tremolo)

(non tremolo)

Tutti arco

34 *accel.* K ♩ = 112

82

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

mf *f* *f*

accel. K ♩ = 112

Vlns.

Vla.

Vcl.

Bass

p *f* *f* *f*

87

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

3

Vlns.

Vla.

Vcl.

Bass

3

92 L *gradual rit.*

Fl. *3*

Clar. *3*

Bsn. *3*

Vlns. *3*

Vla. *3*

Vlc. *3*

Bass *3*

97 M ♩ = 100 *delicately, as a single leaf fluttering in the breeze*

Fl. *p*

Clar. *p*

Bsn. *p*

Vlns. *p*

Vla. *p* *div.*

Vlc. *p* *div.*

Bass *p*

102 N

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

N

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

107 O slightly faster ♩ = 112 *accel.* ♩ = 126

Fl.

Clar.

Bsn.

O slightly faster ♩ = 112 *accel.* ♩ = 126

Vlns.

Vla.

Vlc.

Bass

114

Fl. *f*

Clar. *f*

Bsn. *f*

Musical score for measures 114-116. The Flute part starts with a dynamic of *f* and features a melodic line with a slur over measures 114-115 and a triplet in measure 116. The Clarinet and Bassoon parts also start with *f* and have similar melodic lines with slurs and accents.

P (♩ = 126)

Vlns. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Bass *f*

Musical score for measures 114-116. The Violins, Viola, Violoncello, and Bass parts all start with a dynamic of *f*. The Violins and Viola parts have melodic lines with slurs and accents. The Violoncello and Bass parts feature triplet patterns in measures 114-115 and 116.

117

Fl. *f*

Clar. *f*

Bsn. *f*

Musical score for measures 117-119. The Flute part starts with a dynamic of *f* and features a melodic line with a slur over measures 117-118 and a triplet in measure 119. The Clarinet and Bassoon parts also start with *f* and have similar melodic lines with slurs and accents.

Vlns. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Bass *f*

Musical score for measures 117-119. The Violins, Viola, Violoncello, and Bass parts all start with a dynamic of *f*. The Violins and Viola parts have melodic lines with slurs and accents. The Violoncello and Bass parts feature triplet patterns in measures 117-118 and 119.

119

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.
Vlns.
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

123

rit. **Q** ♩ = 112 *gradual rit.*

Fl.
Clar.
Bsn.
Vlns.
Vla.
Vlc.
Bass

mf *f* *mf* *mf* *f* *mf*
f *sf* *f* *f* *sf* *sf*
f *sf* *f* *f* *sf* *sf*

This musical score page, numbered 40, contains two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 128, features woodwind parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Clar.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon parts begin with a forte (*f*) dynamic and transition to mezzo-forte (*mf*) and fortissimo (*ff*) dynamics. The Bassoon part includes triplet markings. The second system features string parts for Violins (Vlns.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), and Bass. The strings play a rhythmic pattern with triplet markings, starting at a forte (*f*) dynamic and moving to fortissimo (*ff*). The Violin parts include a 'fingered tremolo' instruction. Both systems are marked 'slower' with a tempo of 88. The score is written in a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#).

