

# Ottorino Respighi

(1879 - 1936)

## *Gli Uccelli (Birds)*

(1927-8)

*arranged for Wind Quintet (Flute & optional Piccolo; Oboe; A, B<sup>b</sup> & Bass Clarinets; Horn & optional hand horn in F; Bassoon) by Toby Miller (2021)*



Ottorino Respighi is best remembered now for his tone poems, *The Fountains of Rome* (1916), *The Pines of Rome* (1924) and *Roman Festivals* (1929), for large orchestra. The first of these brought him success (at its second outing), which in turn engendered the two later works. Perhaps not surprisingly, as a former student of Rimsky-Korsakov, Respighi was thought of (then as now) primarily as a highly skilled orchestrator. He was Koussevitsky's recommendation to Rachmaninov (no slouch himself at the art) as the ideal person to orchestrate his *Études Tableaux*. Unfortunately, one of those who appreciated the tone poems, and had his own view of their symbolism, was Mussolini. Mussolini appropriated the works for his own purposes, but Respighi never encouraged this, and in fact spoke up for Italians more openly political and anti-Fascist such as Toscanini. (Toscanini's championship of Respighi's music in turn opened doors for the composer in the US).

Respighi seems to have turned to smaller forces after working on these large tone-poems; after *Festivals* he wrote: 'With the present constitution of the orchestra, it is impossible to achieve more, and I do not think I shall write any more scores of this kind. Now I am much more interested in small ensembles and the small orchestra.' Respighi, who was a good violinist, viola-player and pianist, also had a strong interest in old music - especially of Italy but also of France - well before this became more fashionable. He produced both transcriptions (such as that of J S Bach's *Passacaglia in C minor*, which also attracted Stokowski) and re-compositions of less well known pieces. Accustomed as we are now to pieces such as Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* (1910), Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin* (1914-7), Warlock's *Capriol Suite* (1926) and Poulenc's *Suite Française d'après Claude Gervaise*, it is easy to forget that dusty old music was still a minority interest. Composers such as Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms, and editors such as Philipp Spitta, had revived interest in Bach, but digging in archives for old works, and 'recycling' them in new compositions, was eccentric, and Respighi is still insufficiently credited for being among pioneers. Unlike Warlock, Respighi did not indulge in tricks or pseudonyms in his recycling, but acknowledged sources directly, and encouraged others (such as his pupil Ferenc Farkas) to follow his lead.

Respighi's ear for tone colour is in evidence in all his compositions, for both large and smaller forces. I detect a particular fondness for woodwind instruments, and perhaps especially the sounds of the double reeds: audible in other works such as the *Botticelli Triptych* (composed just before *Birds* in 1927) and the first two suites of *Ancient Airs and Dances*, as well as very obviously in this virtuoso pictorial suite, a sort of 20th century *Concerto Grosso* for woodwinds on bird themes by ancient composers. (I disagree with '*The Birds*' as a translation of *Gli Uccelli*—these are representatives of different species not particular birds!)

The *Prelude* is an operatic-style overture, opening in grand Baroque style before previewing the following movements. Bernardo Pasquini was a contemporary of Buxtehude: harpsichordist and composer of many operas, he spent most of his life in the service of the Borghese family in Rome. Jacques Gallot was a lutenist and composer in 17<sup>th</sup> century Paris; the *Dove* is a beautiful but mournful piece, a style that Respighi was fond of in his *Ancient Airs and Dances*. The *Hen* by Jean-Philippe Rameau is a much better known harpsichord piece by a composer of a later generation (published 1729/30) - according to Mahan Esfahani it was a favourite salon piece of pianist Louis Diémer, dedicatee of César Franck's *Variations Symphoniques* - and Respighi extracts its full comic potential. The *Nightingale* was said by Respighi to be by an 'anonymous English composer', but it's now thought to be a transcription of a folksong by the Dutch recorder virtuoso Jacob van Eyck (d. 1657), and therefore the earliest of Respighi's sources. The *Cuckoo* is based on another piece by Pasquini, and his overture returns to close the suite. *Birds* is a showpiece in its original form, and becomes an additional test of stamina in this quintet reduction, which keeps the original scoring whenever possible (some sections marked 'background' could be omitted where needed). But I hope that ambitious players will enjoy playing individual movements among friends. Piccolo and hand horn are both optional (in *Nightingale* and *Hen* respectively), but the clarinettist will need all three instruments in order to cover the range, as well as the keys, required in all movements.

Score (instrumental pitch)

(The) Birds arr. for wind quintet by Toby Miller

I - Preludio *after Bernardo Pasquini*

Respighi

Allegro moderato  $\text{J} = 104$

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in A

Horn in F

Bassoon

5

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

10

rall.

[1] Allegro  $\text{J} = 126$

p

pp

pp

15

Vivo  $\text{♩} = 132$

(2) **p** sempre (4) (6) **p**

**p**

21

(2) (4) **p** (6)

**p**

26

**pp** > **mp** sentito **pp** > **pp** > **mp** sentito (8) **pp**

**p**

**pp**

**pp**

32

(2) Allegretto  $\text{♩} = 84$

45

(3)

59

74

*tr* [4] Vivo  $\text{♩} = 132$

*pp* *pp*

(10) (12)

*pp*

*pp*

80

Tempo primo [ $\text{♩} = 104$ ]

*cresc. molto*

*f* v v v v v

*cresc. molto*

*f*

*cresc. molto*

*f*

*cresc. molto*

*mf* v v v v v

*cresc. molto*

*f* v v v v v

84

v

v

v

v

v

v

v

88

ff

ff

ff

ff

rall. [molto] ... ...

Score (instrumental pitch)

(The) Birds arr. for wind quintet by Toby Miller

II - La Colomba (Dove) *after Jacques de Gallot*

Respighi

Andante espressivo [♩ = 69]

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in A

Horn in F

Bassoon

pp (? flutter-tongue or substitute trill figure)

p dolce

pp

pp

5

mp

pp

10

mp

pp

15

5

19

>

24

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

29

poco rall.

6 a tempo

*p* leggiero

marcato

*p* leggiero

marcato

*mf*

cresc.

*f*

*dim.*

*cresc.*

*f*

*dim.*

*mf*

*dim.*

*8*

*f*

*dim.*

*dim.*

33

37

39

41

43

45

mp

41

(dim.)

*p*

*mp*

(dim.)

*p*

*p*

(dim.)

*p*

*mp*

8

(dim.)

*p*

44

(dim.)

*p*

*mp*

*mp*

47

**7**

*p*

*dolce*

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

50

51

52

53

53

54

55

56

*mp*

56

57

58

59

*pp*

60

*pp*

*pp*

59

mp

p

pp

63

(8)

mp

pp

pp

pp

66

p

70

73

pp

p

pp

pp

76

79

**9** Allegro  $\text{♩} = 108$

83

**G P**

Score (instrumental pitch)

(The) Birds arr. for wind quintet by Toby Miller

III - La Gallina (Hen) after Jean-Philippe Rameau

Respighi

**Allegro**  $\text{J} = 126$  ' = molto staccato

The first system of the musical score consists of five staves. The Flute staff starts with a rest followed by a sixteenth-note pattern. The Oboe staff begins with eighth-note pairs at dynamic  $p$ , followed by sixteenth-note patterns at  $ff$  and  $p$ . The Clarinet in B-flat has a single eighth-note rest. The Horn in F starts with a rest, followed by eighth-note pairs at  $p$ , then sixteenth-note patterns at  $ff$  and  $p$ . The Bassoon staff starts with a rest, followed by sixteenth-note patterns at  $p$ . The key signature is common time (indicated by a '4'). Measure numbers 1 through 7 are present above the staves.

8

The second system of the musical score continues with five staves. The Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon maintain their sixteenth-note patterns. The Clarinet and Horn also continue their respective rhythmic patterns. The key signature changes to common time with a sharp sign (indicated by a '#'). Measure numbers 8 through 11 are present above the staves.

12

The third system of the musical score continues with five staves. The Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon maintain their sixteenth-note patterns. The Clarinet and Horn also continue their respective rhythmic patterns. The key signature changes to common time with a sharp sign (indicated by a '#'). Measure numbers 12 through 15 are present above the staves.

[10]

Musical score page 16, measures 16-20. The score consists of five staves. Measures 16-17 are mostly rests. Measure 18 begins with dynamic *f*, followed by *p*, *ff* (with a crescendo arrow), *ff* (with a decrescendo arrow), *p*, and *ff* (with a crescendo arrow). Measure 19 starts with *f*, followed by *p*. Measure 20 starts with *f* (with a crescendo arrow), followed by *p*.

Musical score page 21, measures 21-25. The score consists of five staves. Measures 21-24 feature eighth-note patterns with dynamics *p*, *ff* (with a crescendo arrow), *p*, *ff* (with a crescendo arrow), *p*, and *ff* (with a crescendo arrow). Measure 25 concludes with a dynamic *mf* (with a crescendo arrow).

Musical score page 26, measures 26-30. The score consists of five staves. Measures 26-29 begin with eighth-note patterns: *tr*, *mp*, *p*, and *5*. Measures 27-29 also include sixteenth-note patterns. Measure 30 concludes with a dynamic *5*.

31

11

tr      *f*      *ff p*      *ff p*      *ff*

*mp*      *mf*

*mf*

37

*f*      *f*      *p*      *ff*

*tr*

*open* *o o*      *ff (stopped)*

*f*      *ff*      *mf*

41

**G P**

*f*

*tr*      *f*      *mp*

*open* *o o*      *(6)*      *mp*

*f*

*(stopped)*

*mp*

47

**12** *tr*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*mf*

52

*mf*

*ff*

*mf*

*ff*

*ff*

*mf*

*ff*

*f*

56

*ff*

*p*

*mp*

*f*

*open* (6)

(0) (0) (0)

(stopped)

*f*

*ff*

*p*

**13**

61

*(smile)*

**B**

65

**B**

70

74

G P 14

*f*

(stopped)

*mf*

*p*      *f*

80

*mp*

*p*

*p*

*p*

85

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

90

5

94

15

100

106

ff 3  
6  
open till 113  
6)  
(o)  
ff 3 p  
f mf  
ff 6

110

p dim.  
p dim.  
ff 3 p ff 3 3 3 3 (stopped) p dim.  
p dim.  
p dim. dim.

115

G P

(dim.)  
(dim.)  
(dim.)  
(dim.)  
(dim.)

ff fff ff ff

Score (instrumental pitch)

## (The) Birds arr. for wind quintet by Toby Miller

Respighi

IV - L'Usignuolo (Nightingale) after a folksong tr. Jacob van Eyck

**Andante mosso** ♩ = 96

Flute

Oboe

Bass Clarinet

Horn in F

Bassoon

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

*ppp*

*pp dolce*

*pp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

*ppp*

*p*

*pp*

**17**

To Piccolo

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

19 (Picc., or Flute 8va)

Picc. *pp*

Ob.

BC

Hn. *ppp*

Bn. *pp*

24 To Flute (Flute)

Picc. *p* *pp* *ppp*

Ob. *pp* *p*

BC

Hn. *pp*

Bn. *pp* *ppp* *p*

18 8 (4)

F1 *p*

Ob. *pp* *pp*

BC

Hn. (4)

Bn. *pp*

37

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

[19]

*p*

*ppp*

(8)

*pp > ppp*

*tr*

*poco*

*tr*

*ppp*

43

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

*ppp*

*pp*

*ppp*

*ppp*

(11)

*pp*

*ppp*

*dolce espress.*

*pp*

47

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

*tr*

*tr*

*pp*

*pp*

50

Fl Ob BC Hn Bn

Fl Ob BC Hn Bn

52

Fl Ob BC Hn Bn

tr b pp

p

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

Fl

Ob

BC

Hn

Bn

54

3

*tr*

3

3

*tr*

p

*pp*

57

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*pp*

*pp*

pp

20

pp

*tr*

*tr*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

65

Fl Ob BC Hn Bn

rall. *tr* *pp*

*tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *pp*

*pp* *pp*

*p* *pp* *pp*

70

Fl Ob BC Hn Bn

*a tempo* *ppp*

*morendo*

*pp* *ppp* *dim.*

*pp* *8:* *dim.*

*ppp* *dim.*

76

Fl Ob BC Hn Bn

rall. ...

*(dim.)*

L'Usignuolo, page 6 of 6

### Score (instrumental pitch)

## (The) Birds arr. for wind quintet by Toby Miller

## V - Il Cucù (Cuckoo) after Bernardo Pasquini

## Respighi

Musical score for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in A, Horn in F, and Bassoon. The score consists of three systems of music.

**System 1 (Measures 1-2):**

- Flute:** Starts with a sixteenth-note pattern (pp) followed by eighth-note pairs (p).
- Oboe:** Starts with a sixteenth-note pattern (pp) followed by eighth-note pairs (ppp).
- Clarinet in A:** Eighth-note pairs (p).
- Horn in F:** Sixteenth-note patterns (pp) followed by eighth-note pairs (p).
- Bassoon:** Sixteenth-note patterns (pp) followed by eighth-note pairs (ppp) and (p).

**System 2 (Measures 3-4):**

- Flute:** Sixteenth-note patterns (pp), (p), (pp), (p).
- Oboe:** Sixteenth-note patterns (pp), (p), (pp).
- Clarinet in A:** Sixteenth-note patterns (pp), (p), (pp).
- Horn in F:** Sixteenth-note patterns (pp), (p), (pp).
- Bassoon:** Sixteenth-note patterns (p), (pp), (p).

**System 3 (Measures 5-6):**

- Flute:** Sixteenth-note patterns (p), (mf), (f), (f), (f), (tr).
- Oboe:** Sixteenth-note patterns (p), (mf), (mp), (mf), (f), (tr).
- Clarinet in A:** Sixteenth-note patterns (mf), (f), (mf), (f), (f), (tr).
- Horn in F:** Sixteenth-note patterns (mf), (f), (mf), (f), (f), (tr).
- Bassoon:** Sixteenth-note patterns (mp), (f), (mf), (f), (f), (tr).

10

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

15

[21] **Tempo 1**

*pp*

*tr*

*pp*

*pp*

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

18

*p*

*ppp*

*pp*

*p*

*p*

*p*

21

*mf*    *mp*

*mp*

*f*

25 rit. ... .... Al tempo più largo [ $\text{♩} = 80$ ]

*p*

*f*

*ff*    *p*

32 poco rall [22] a tempo più mosso [ $\text{♩} = 120$ ]

*p*

*mf*

36

rit.

Allegro vivo  $\text{♩} = 132$

$p$

$pp$

$pp$

$p$

$p$

40

$p$

$pp$

$(4)$

$p$

43

$p$

$pp$

$(6)$

$(8)$

$p$

47

(10) (12)

*pp con sord.*

50

(14)

53 [23]

56

59

62

65

*rall.* ... ...

*dim.* *pp* *ppp*

*dim.* *pp*

*dim.*

*ppp*

*pp dim.* *ppp*

69

24 Più moderato  $\text{♩} = 100$

*mf*

*mf*

*open*

*mf*

74

77

[25] a tempo  $\text{♩} = 132$

*p*

*pp*

*tr*

*mp*

*pp*

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

81

*sempre dim.*

*sempre dim.*

*tr*

*sempre dim.*

*sempre dim.*

*sempre dim.*

84

3

(dim.)

*ppp*

*tr*

(dim.)

*ppp*

(dim.)

*ppp*

*ppp con sord.*

(dim.)

*ppp*

87

rall.  
*tr* ...

(4)

90

...    ...    ...    ...

**[26] Tempo del primo pezzo [♩ = 104]**

*ppp*  
*tr* ...

*ppp*

*pp*

(8)

*pp* *sempre con sord.*

93

*pp*

5

*p*

*p* (quasi tromba)

*ppp*

97

*mf*

*ff*

*mf*

*ff* open

*ff*

*ff*

rall. [molto] ... ... ...

101