BRUCE ADOLPHE

CARNIVAL of the CREATURES
FOR ORCHESTRA
(2010)

Premiered by
The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

The Learning Maestros
Tools for creative thinking
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KEISER
CLASSICAL
Carnival of the Creatures – verses by Bruce Adolphe

INTRODUCTION
There have been celebrations of mammals and birds
With musical tributes and poetic words;
Animals marching while cymbals crash
Bring to mind Saint-Saens and Ogden Nash.

But there are many fine creatures who have not been cheered;
Perhaps they are strange, or creepy or feared;
Perhaps they are slimy or seem quite malicious;
Or maybe they’re too small or simply fictitious.

But the time has come to make amends
And count all life-forms as our friends;
We don’t own this planet, and mustn’t be selfish,
We are no more important than reptiles and shellfish.

While it’s true that spiders aren’t too smart
And sharks don’t make much in the way of art,
And iguanas have limited social skills
And mudskippers never pay their bills,

All that doesn’t mean that they should be ignored
Or that we should be worshipped and always adored;
Do we expect every creature, including the virus,
To look up to us and simply admire us?

Just because humans like Mozart and Shakespeare
Give us a great reputation,
Doesn’t mean the rest of us don’t make mistakes, dear,
Or deserve quite unearned adulation.

So now we present a piece long overdue
To celebrate, not all, but just a few
Of Nature’s not-so “first-run” features;
A Carnival, then, of overlooked creatures.

I. THE PTEROSAUR
No human being ever saw
The terrifying, soaring pterosaur,
A winged reptile that once did fly
In the Mesozoic sky.

To see its fossil in the rock
Still gives human bones a shock;
Maybe the myths and tales are true,
And green, scaly dragons really flew!

II. THE IGUANA
Standing still upon the wall,
Baking in the desert sun,
The iguana hardly moves at all;
It blinks, I think, to have some fun.

But if you make a sudden move
That the lizard might find frightening,
Its locomotion will improve
And flash! It’s gone like lightning!

The desert’s hot, and yet they freeze:
Nature’s breathing statues;
I wonder if they cough or sneeze,
I’ve never heard the “a-choos”.

III. THE OWL
When we’re asleep, in deepest night,
When goblins creep by lunar light,
When dreams the gander and the drake,
The wide-eyed owl is wide awake.

The owl keeps watch for you, for me,
Sitting, wisely, in a tree;
The owl keeps watch for me, for you;
It asks all strangers, simply “Who?”
IV. THE SHRIMP
If you are allergic to shellfish,
You’ll get quite an irritation
From eating even a side dish
That features marine crustacean.

The shrimp’s quite long antennae,
Ten legs, and outside spine
I do not think of when I
Go out at night to dine.

These little bugs of the sea
Are not known for their brawn,
And I’d rather eat two or three
Than one larger, tougher prawn.

You can get a cold shrimp cocktail,
Or Fra diavolo;
And mooshoo pancakes never fail
With extra sauce to go.

We scoop them up from the deep blue sea
By the thousands with a net;
I sometimes wonder how it would be
To have one as a pet.

V. THE SPIDER
If you spend much time on the Internet,
And the web for your work is required,
There’s a creature to whom you owe some debt
Whose website is truly inspired.

The spider, of course, is the one insect
Who is naturally worldly web-wise;
The spider’s web is made to collect
Such goodies as succulent dead flies.

The web itself is really a sight --
Made by nature’s living loom;
And though it struggles with all its might,
The captive fly meets his doom.

Each web is perfectly, beautifully spun
By a patient professional spider;
She knows that its purpose, when finally done,
Is to get a good dinner inside her.

VI. THE SHARK
Deep beneath the ocean’s surface
There’s a fish that makes us nervous;
With long, sharp teeth and powerful jaws,
It’s not a fish that one ignores.

This fish has starred on the silver screen;
It’s always portrayed as hungry and mean;
You get your popcorn and sit in the dark
And soon you’re screaming, “A shark! A shark!”

Sharks are really scary looking,
And they eat food raw, they don’t bother cooking;
They have no manners, they’re terribly rude,
And they consider just about anyone food.

It’s true! When they’re hungry, they’ll eat me or you,
And there’s really not much that we can do
To change the shark’s idea of a menu;
You can’t out-swim a shark, now, can you?

VII. THE MUDSKIPPER
Can a fish climb a tree?
Can a fish take a walk?
It cannot, you agree?
I say yes, but you balk!

There is one that can swim, walk, jump and climb!
It’s one you don’t hear about much of the time,
But these fish are not only climbers and leapers,
They also have pop-up, periscope-peepers!
Their bulging eyes are set close together
And stick out of the water to check on the weather;
These fish store up water in feathery gills
So that walking on land, they can breathe the refills;
With their sharp teeth, they’ll munch on a small crab or spider,
And their mouths can keep opening wider and wider.
No fish could be weirder or cooler or hipper!
What do you call it? It’s called: the Mudskipper!
VIII. MORATORIUM: Meditation on Endangered and Extinct Creatures
Let's take a moment to meditate
On certain creatures and their fate.

From our planet, with all its riches,
Many mammals, reptiles and fishes,
Plants, insects and crustaceans
Have disappeared. So contemplation's Necessary.
Very.

We need not shed too many tears
For dinosaurs, whose golden years
Were pre-historic.
Although the fossils are intact

What we sometimes think is fact
Is just folkloric.

But fossils do tell the sobering tale
That even powerful creatures fail,
And remind us all that we are linked
To both the living and extinct.

We take for granted what is here;
But the Colombian white-tailed deer,
Armadillo, and great black bear
Have become extremely rare.

The volcano rabbit of Mexico
And the fine Hawaiian duck
May sadly be the next to go –
Bad ecological luck.

Even the charming kangaroo
Down under in Australia,
Might not be in some future zoo –
Another tragic failure.

The Little Blue Macaw and Bighorn Sheep
The rhinoceros and Humpback whale
Are all endangered. Will we weep
If the efforts to save them fail?

So during our musical celebration
Of creatures of various kinds,
Let's ponder the beauty of all of creation

And pledge to each other with hearts and minds
We will take care of all creatures on earth.
A brief meditation, then back to the mirth!

IX. THE VIRUS
The very word virus sends chills down the spine
We don't want them inside us or even on-line,
But some types of virus, while lacking in charm,
Do not in any way do humans harm.

The T-4 virus is really our friend;
It eats e-coli and so helps to defend
Our guts from a rather unpleasant end
And buck's the evil virus trend.

T-4 looks around for a cell to infect
In its micro cafeteria,
And somehow knows how to detect
Unsuspecting fresh bacteria.

It then injects its own DNA
Into the cell – It's all the rage!
And then it really starts to play
Producing new bacteriophage.
This process happens in distinct stages
And is, to say the least, contagious.
But still, it does not make you sick;
It's like a fugue, in early music.
The conductor is a singular creature: 
Partly a traffic cop, partly a preacher, 
Often an actor and politician, 
And there are -- just a few -- you might call a musician. 
Conductors like music that has no strict tempo 
Where they are quite free to prolong a crescendo; 
They wildly emote while the orchestra counts, 
And without any warning, upon a beat pounce 
Like a tiger upon a helpless gazelle -- 
Was that upbeat or down? No one can tell. 
Conductors adore a dramatic pause, 
Which inevitably leads to thunderous applause; 
They also love the crash of the cymbal, 
Which they cue like a dancer to show they are nimble; 
Their favorite tempo is Maestoso 
For they have royal blood, and let you know so! 
But it must be lonely up there at the top, 
Instructing the players to start and to stop; 
And they sweat from waving their arms all around, 
But they don’t make a single musical sound.

What can ever begin to compare 
With my special, worn-out Teddy Bear? 
Such soft synthetic-fiber fur, 
As fuzzy wuzzies never were; 
Paddington, Pooh, whatever the brand, 
Made in China, stitched by hand, 
We love our grizzly, floppy friend 
On whom we always can depend, 
Who snuggles when we go to sleep 
And who we’ll always, always keep, 
Forever friend, so true, so rare, 
My cuddly, only Teddy Bear!

There is a creature with many brains 
That carries coats, umbrellas and canes 
Has multi-colored hair and varied complexion 
Yet its thousands of eyes face one direction; 
It makes noise to express its varied views, 
If it doesn’t like what it hears, it boos; 
But if it thinks what it hears is grand, 
It rapidly claps hand to hand 
And if it’s thrilled, it may just stand, 
And then, in Italian, it will demand 
That musicians play more than they had planned; 
The next day it is outraged that the critic panned 
What it had cheered to beat the band. 
This creature both loves and hates at once, 
It’s brilliant, and yet it is also a dunce, 
It cheers and boos both Brahms and Babbitt, 
At its worst, it is merely a creature of habit. 
At its best, discounting some minor flaws, 
It gives the gift of sincere applause, 
For it makes musicians very happy 
When the Audience feels intensely clappy.
XIII. THE UNICORN
Supposedly a mythical creature,
The unicorn has one odd feature;
Otherwise, it looks just like a horse;
But it’s not one -- because of its horn, of course.

Some think the unicorn quite preposterous,
That it was in reality, a skinny rhinoceros.
But scholars and wizards, magicians and priests
Have all told tales of these magical beasts.

Their horns were believed to cure all ills,
In the days before vaccines or pills;
Witches would grind the horn to a powder --
Three cups for a cauldron of Unicorn chowder.

There are legends of virgins, knights and kings;
Of potions, concoctions and magic rings;
There are tapestries, poems, and college courses
All about mythical, one-horned horses.

The question remains: are they fiction or fact?
But you might also ask: does it really detract
From their wonder and universal appeal
If it happens that unicorns aren’t real?

Our Carnival ends with this fictional beast,
Since the odds of a magical mood are increased
When we feature a creature so close to our heart
Who only inhabits the world of art.

And fictional beasts are quite cheap to feed;
You don’t have to walk them, and there is no need
To teach them to sit or to keep them in cages;
Just relax with a book and turn the pages.
What we all love most in the unicorn
Perhaps is the fact that one never was born;
You could search the world over and none will you find,
For the unicorn’s really a state of mind.
And we are entranced by our own creations;
What do we love best? Our imaginations.
## Carnival of the Creatures

Poetry and music by

Bruce Adolphe

### Instrumentation

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Instrumentation

Flute 1, 2 (2. doubling Piccolo)
Oboe 1, 2
Clarinet 1, 2 in B♭
Bassoon 1, 2

Horns 1, 2, 3, 4 in F
Trumpets 1, 2 in C
Trombones 1, 2
Bass Trombone

Timpani

Percussion (3 players):
Chimes, Marimba, Vibraphone
Triangle, Crash Cymbals, Gong
Tom-tom, Bass Drum
Temple Blocks, Woodblock

Harp

Strings

Duration: ca. 30 minutes
Tempo di tango iguanico

Flute 1, 2

Oboe 1, 2

Clarinet 1, 2 (B♭)

Bassoon 1

mp expr.

Bassoon 2

Vibraphone

Percussion

Violin I

pizz.

Violin II

pizz.

Viola

pizz.

Cello

pizz.

Double Bass

p
Very slowly (iguana in the sun)
Suddenly quick!

1. Suddenly quick!
Fl. 1, 2

Ob. 1, 2

Cl. 1, 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Vib.

Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.
Tempo di tango iguanico

Fl. 1, 2
Ob. 1, 2
Cl. 1, 2
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Vib.
Perc.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

Tempo di tango iguanico
Fl. 1, 2

Ob. 1, 2

Cl. 1, 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Vib.

Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.
4. Shrimp

Flute I

Moderate, bouncy

Violin I

Moderate, bouncy

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass
5. The Spider

Slowly, hypnotic

Flute 1, 2

Oboe 1, 2

Clarinet 1, 2 (B♭)

Bassoon 1, 2

Horn 1, 2 (F)

Trumpet 1 (C)

Vibraphone

Harp

Solo Violin

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass
6. The Shark

Fast, threatening, dangerous!

Flute 1, 2

Oboe 1, 2

Clarinet 1, 2 (B♭)

Bassoon 1, 2

Horn 1, 2 (F)

Horn 3, 4 (F)

Trumpet 1, 2 (C)

Trombone 1, 2

Bass Trombone

Percussion

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass
7. Mudskipper

Quickly, mercurial

Flute 1, 2

Oboe 1, 2

Clarinet 1, 2 (B)

Bassoon 1, 2

Horn 1, 2 (F)

Horn 3, 4 (F)

Trumpet 1, 2 (C)

Trombone 1, 2

Bass Trombone

Marimba

Percussion

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

(f) (play pizz for the entire movement)
8. Moratorium: To Extinct and Endangered Creatures

**Perusal**

Flute I
Oboe 1
Clarinet 1 (B♭)
Bassoon 1
Horn 1, 2 (F)
Trumpet 1 (C)
Harp
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Solo Cello
Cello
Double Bass

**Slowly**

 senza sord.

 mp

 senza sord.

 mp expr.
Driving forward, but not too fast

(bacteriophage production begins)

Driving forward, but not too fast
3] Faster, mechanical

Fl. 1

Picc. (Fl. 2)

Ob. 1, 2

Cl. 1, 2

Bsn. 1, 2

Hn. 1, 2

Hn. 3, 4

Tpt. 1

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Mrb.

Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Faster, mechanical

Hard sticks

Pizz.
Very slowly, menacing!

Fl. 1

Picc. (Fl. 2)

Ob. 1, 2

Cl. 1, 2

Bsn. 1, 2

Hn. 1, 2

Hn. 3, 4

Tpt. 1

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Mrb.

Perc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Very slowly, menacing!

Triumphant! Now to start all over again!
very long, suspenseful crescendo

Very slowly and unevenly

very long, suspenseful crescendo

Flute 1, 2

Oboe 1, 2

Clarinet 1, 2 (B♭)

Bassoon 1, 2

Horn 1, 2 (F)

Horn 3, 4 (F)

Trumpet 1, 2 (C)

Trombone 1, 2

Bass Trombone

Timpani

Percussion

very long, suspenseful crescendo

Very slowly and unevenly

very long, suspenseful crescendo

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

very long, suspenseful crescendo

Very slowly and unevenly

very long, suspenseful crescendo
Conductor’s Cadenza: dramatic, romantic, conducting in silence.
very long, suspenseful crescendo

Wildly uneven; each chord played at the whim of the conductor!
11. Teddy Bear

Gently flowing, tenderly

Gently flowing, tenderly

mf warmly, expressively
Fl. 1, 2

Ob. 1, 2

Cl. 1, 2

Bsn. 1, 2

Vib.

Hp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Solo Vc.

Vc.

Cb.
The Audience should be led by someone who knows the responses shown in the score. The leader might be a musician or, perhaps, a child from the audience who has been previously selected and rehearsed.
Allegro

(If no soprano is available, the concertmaster should play the cadenza below.)

Brava! Brava! Encore! Brava! (etc.)

WILD, FRENZIED APPLAUSE!
Majestic, mysterious

pp

Majestic, mysterious

mysteriously

mf

slow gliss. for entire measure

con sord. (for entire movement)

slow gliss. for entire measure

con sord. (for entire movement)

slow gliss. for entire measure

slow gliss. for entire measure

slow gliss. for entire measure

Gong

Cym.

mp