

Everglades Symphony

I. From Dawn To Dusk - Allegro Ma Non Troppo (♩ = 84) ca 14:20

At some time in the middle of the Everglades night, the new day begins. You cannot really put your finger on it, but something is there - a tension, a breath, something barely audible. The sleepy water comes to life, the first bird ruffles its feathers and sends a tentative call into the night which is answered and echoed by others.

The ripples of the water hit the firm land. Some mosquitoes, some wasps and hornets are stirred up. Hundreds of voices join together in the Everglades pre-dawn. As the sky becomes brighter and brighter, the shapes and colors become more distinct, the noises more organized, until the sun, the big champion, enters the scenery, spreading harsh and overwhelming light.

Now you can see this beautiful land in its endless monotony so full of life and detail. The movements of the water and of the mangroves and trees seem to unite in one never-ending waving, rolling motion. Sometimes dark and mysterious, sometimes triumphantly beautiful, sometimes melancholic, sometimes playful - always the Everglades.

Then, around the early afternoon, the air thickens, a thunderstorm is brewing in the west. Big black clouds create an atmosphere of menace, a lightning strikes here and there, followed by the growl of thunder, still far away. As the storm gets closer, it becomes a bizarre, polonaise-like dance (ever danced to a 5/4 polonaise? You'll be amazed how many legs you have). As the dark, menacing clouds move out, calming rain and fresh air move in; the polonaise of nature's forces continues in a more harmonic, pleasant manner.

As the daylight turns golden, all the voices return to the song of the Everglades. Finally, as the sun goes down, a single voice calls the night, answered by the voices of the water, the birds, the plants. They recapitulate the events of the day in many different colors and variations, all embedded in the song of the Everglades.

And as night falls, all the little birds, spiders, lizards wiggle away to their respective sleeping quarters; the Everglades day has come to an end.

II. Everglades Birds - Larghetto (♩ = 68) ca. 9:45

The second movement of the Everglades Symphony is inspired by the beauty and elegance of the birds' flight, its quiet and calming lines, its contemplation of life from high above it all.

III. Life In The Mangroves - Scherzo - Andante Moderato (♩ = 124) ca. 10:09

In the Mangroves, there is a party going on. The Purple Galluline is the clown of the group, with its seemingly awkward movements and its multi-color costume. The Anhinga is there, a moorhen, a couple of lizards, a tree frog, a turtle - they start dancing to the worry-free 3/4 beat.

Did I say worry-free? There is an uninvited guest trying to sneak in at the party, an alligator, but his flawed understanding of the music gives him away. He snaps a couple of times, but the little bird he was after escapes, and the dance resumes.

The Manatee joins in; he is not really a dancer - really not! But he has a great sense of humor and laughs about himself the loudest, making everybody join in.

In the Trio, a couple of cottonmouth snakes are having a separate party. They slow-dance around each other in their sleek and limber ways.

IV. From The Ocean To The Lake - Allegro (♩ = 82) ca. 7:21

The final movement of the Everglades Symphony reflects the function of this giant osmotic filter - from the vast saltwater ocean to the freshwater lakes and rivers. In between there is a microcosmos of mysterious swamps, mumbling creeks, rich farm and village life. At the end of the transformation, a reprise of the Everglades song concludes the symphony.