

# DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

(Day of the Dead)

By Richard Meyer

## INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score	1
Violin I	8
Violin II	8
Viola	5
Cello	5
String Bass	5
Percussion (Maracas, Claves, Cowbell)	2

## DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

*Dia de los Muertos* is a festive piece depicting the Day of the Dead celebration that is observed in Mexico and other Latin American countries each year at the beginning of November. According to popular belief, on the Day of the Dead, the spirits of the dead return to commune with the living, and this celebration commemorates the deceased so they might rest in peace.

This piece begins with an arpeggio figure in the violins and violas which serves as transition material throughout the work. In m. 4, the low strings quote the “Dies Irae” (“Day of the Wrath”) from the Requiem Mass. This melody is soon transformed into the main theme of the piece (m. 15), stated in the festive key of G major. This infectious tune is presented in rondo form, and is meant to depict the energetic celebrations that take place in the streets as part of the holiday. The pace of the piece relaxes at m. 78. Cellos and basses strum their instruments, imitating Spanish guitars as the upper strings play *col legno*, depicting the procession and arrival of the angelitos (little angels), the spirits of the deceased children. A tender and simple melody is introduced by the first violins, and then shared by the entire orchestra. The “Dance of the Little Old Men” follows (m. 140); the theme is also derived from the “Dies Irae.” In some places, boys perform this dance, hobbling around with canes, holding their backs in pain and wearing masks that look like funny old men. As the dance continues, the dancers become younger, stomping merrily about. The piece ends in a flurry of fun and high energy—sure to be an audience favorite.



Commissioned by and dedicated to the students at Lake Zurich Middle School South,  
Lake Zurich, Illinois, and their conductor Ron Polomchak

# Dia de los Muertos

(Day of the Dead)

CONDUCTOR SCORE

Duration - 5:45

Richard Meyer

**Allegro con gusto** (♩ = 144)

Violins I, II  
Viola  
Cello  
String Bass  
Percussion (Maracas, Claves, Cowbell)

Vlins. I, II  
Vla.  
Cello  
Str. Bass  
Perc.

11 12 13 14

Vlns. I *cresc.* *f*

Vlns. II *cresc.* *f*

Vla. *cresc.* *f*

Cello *cresc.* *f*

Str. Bass *cresc.* *f*

Perc.

15 16 17 18

Vlns. I *simile*

Vlns. II *simile*

Vla. *simile*

Cello *simile*

Str. Bass *simile*

Maracas

Claves *f* *simile*

19 20 21 22

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

23 24 25 26

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

*f*

*f*

*f*

27 28 29 30

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

31 32 33 34

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

35 36 37 38

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

To Cowbell

39 40 41 42 43 44

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

Clap: *f*

*f* Clap:

*f* Clap:

*f* Clap:

Soli

*f* *f*

Cowbell *f*  
(with Snare Drum Stick)

23363

45 46 47 48 49 50

Vlns. I *f*

Vlns. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Cello *pizz.* *f*

Str. Bass *pizz.* *f*

Perc. Maracas *f*

51 52 53 54 55

Vlns. I *f*

Vlns. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Cello *arco* *f*

Str. Bass *arco* *f*

Perc. *To Claves* Claves *f*



56 57 58 59

I Vlns.

II Vlns.

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

60 61 62 63 64

I Vlns.

II Vlns.

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.



65 66 67 68

Vlns. I *pizz.* *p*

Vlns. II *pizz.* *p*

Vla. *pizz.* *p*

Cello *pizz.* *f* *p*

Str. Bass *pizz.* *p*

Perc.

69 70 71 72

Vlns. I *sim.* *mp* *arco*

Vlns. II *sim.* *mp* *arco*

Vla. *mp* *arco*

Cello *mp* *arco*

Str. Bass *mp* *arco*

Perc. *mp*

73 74 75 76 77

Vlns. I  
Vlns. II  
Vla.  
Cello  
Str. Bass  
Perc.

78 **Andante tranquillo** (♩ = 92)

79 80 81 82 83

Vlns. I  
Vlns. II  
Vla.  
Cello  
Str. Bass  
Perc.

Col legno, mute strings with left hand

Col legno, mute strings with left hand

non div. pizz. (strum with thumb)

Col legno, mute string with left hand

86

84 85 86 87 88 89

Vlns. I arco *p cantabile*

Vlns. II Col legno, mute strings with left hand *p*

Vla. *p*

Cello *pizz.*

Str. Bass *p*

Perc.

90 91 92 93 94 95

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

96 97V 98 99 100 101V 102

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

*p*

*arco*

*p*

*arco*

*p*

*arco*

*p*

*arco*

*p*

103 104 105 106 107 108 *div.*

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

*p*

*mf*

*mf*

*mp*

*mp*

109 110 111 112 113 V 114

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

115 116 117 V 118 119 120 a tempo

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

Col legno (mute) *p*

Col legno (mute) *p*

Col legno (mute) *p*

Soli *mp*

Soli *mp*

*rit.*

*rit.*

*rit.*

*rit.*

121 strings) 122 123 124 125 126

I Vlns.

II Vlns.

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

127 128 129 130 131 arco  $\vee$  132

I Vlns. *p*

II Vlns. arco *p*

Vla. arco *mp* *p*

Cello *p* pizz. *p*

Str. Bass *p*

Perc.

133 134 135 V Solo *p* Slower 136 137 138

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. 1st stand *pp*

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

139 1st stand 140 **Deliberately** (♩ = 84) 141 142 143

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. tutti *pp*

Cello pizz. *p* *pp*

Str. Bass *pp*

Perc. Maracas *pp*



144 145 146 147

I Vlns. *tutti* *pp* *sempre cresc.*

II Vlns. *pp* *sempre cresc.*

Vla. *pp* *sempre cresc.*

Cello *sempre cresc.*

Str. Bass *sempre cresc.*

Perc. *sempre cresc.*

148 149 150 151

I Vlns. *e accelerando*

II Vlns. *e accelerando*

Vla. *e accelerando*

Cello *e accelerando* *arco*

Str. Bass *e accelerando* *arco*

Perc. *e accelerando*

152 **Tempo I** (♩ = 144)

**Vlns. I**  
**Vlns. II**  
**Vla.**  
**Cello**  
**Str. Bass**  
**Perc.**

**Vlns. I**  
**Vlns. II**  
**Vla.**  
**Cello**  
**Str. Bass**  
**Perc.**

Claves  
*f* *sim.*



168

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

169

170

171

172

173

174

175

The musical score is arranged in a system with six staves. The top staff is for Violins I, followed by Violins II, Viola, Cello, String Bass, and Percussion. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Measures 168-171 show a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the strings and a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the percussion. Measures 172-175 show a change in the string pattern, with some notes marked with accents (v) and a change in the percussion pattern.

176 177 178 179 180

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

*p* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

181 182 183 184

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc.

*tr* *tr* *ff*