

RWS CONCERT STRINGS SERIES

Grade: 3

Conductor Score: RWS-2686-01

Betsy's Blues

Lorrie Baum and Betsy Weston

CONCERT STRINGS SERIES

RWS MUSIC
COMPANY

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Betsy's Blues

Lorrie Baum and Betsy Weston

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score.....	1
Violin 1.....	8
Violin 2.....	8
Viola.....	6
Cello.....	5
Double Bass.....	5
Drum Set (Optional).....	1
Piano Accompaniment (Optional).....	1

PROGRAM NOTE

Betsy's Blues brings together the creative talents of composer Lorrie Baum and her sister, Betsy Weston, in a lively and spirited piece for string orchestra. The result is a work that invites young musicians into the world of blues, offering an approachable yet engaging experience that highlights the joy of ensemble playing.

The blues is a style of music and a musical framework that first emerged in the Deep South of the United States during the late 19th century, especially within African American communities. This genre grew out of spirituals, work songs, field calls, shouts, chants, and simple narrative ballads rooted in African-American traditions. Traditionally, blues music began as a slow and expressive form, often reflecting the struggles and emotions of everyday life. Over time, the blues evolved and inspired new styles, some of which became much more energetic and livelier, such as jazz, rhythm and blues, and rock and roll. Key features of the blues include a call-and-response pattern, distinctive scales, and recognizable chord progressions—most notably the twelve-bar blues structure, which remains a foundation for countless songs across genres.

NOTES TO CONDUCTOR

Since students may be playing jazz for the first time, this piece is a great way to introduce jazz elements. Explain that a "blue note" is a note played or sung a half step lower than usual—often the third, fifth, or seventh scale step—to add feeling and expression. Point out the blue note in the Bass at the start and in other instruments in measure 5, and encourage students to find more examples in the piece.

Although the Piano and Drum Set parts are optional, they will add a great deal of interest to the piece and enjoyment for students and audiences.

Be sure students understand how to execute the slides at measures 21 and 23.

The section from measure 61 to measure 73 could be repeated multiple times to allow for ad-lib student solos. In that case, Viola and Cello would drop out to allow the soloists to take center stage.

Please visit my composer page at rwsmusic.com to connect! *Lorrie Baum*

ABOUT THE COMPOSER



Lorrie Baum is a retired music educator and composer of band, orchestra, choir, and chamber music. Baum's works have been performed worldwide, including by brass groups from Pershing's Own Army Band in Arlington, VA, at the Eastern Trombone Workshop, and at the 2024 Midwest Clinic in Chicago, IL.

Lorrie's extensive teaching career spans over 30 years, primarily within the Denver Public Schools, where she nurtured the talents of K-12 students in band, orchestra, and vocal music. Lorrie continues to inspire young musicians through her published works, which are widely used by school and professional bands, orchestras, choirs, and chamber ensembles.

Since retiring from full-time teaching in 2014, Lorrie Baum has dedicated herself to composing and performing. She regularly plays bass guitar in a women's duo, continuing to share her musical talents with live audiences. Outside of her musical endeavors, Lorrie enjoys traveling, photography, playing golf, and hiking in the idyllic Rocky Mountains.

BETSY'S BLUES

Conductor Score
RWS-2686-00

Lorrie Baum (ASCAP)
and Betsy Weston

Allegro ♩ = 124 (straight eighths)

5

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Drum Set (Optional)

Piano Accompaniment (Optional)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

BETSY'S BLUES

13

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

13 14 15 16 17 18

21

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

19 20 21 22 23 24

mf

f

mf

mf

Slide

Slide

Slide

L1 1

L2 2

H.H. Closed

Tom

BETSY'S BLUES

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
DB
D. S.
Pno.

25 26 27 28 29 30

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
DB
D. S.
Pno.

31 32 33 34 35 36

33

mf pizz.
mf pizz.
mf pizz.
f pizz. Soli
f Ride 1/2 Pos.

mf
Cue: Double Bass

BETSY'S BLUES

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

37 38 39 40 41 42

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

43 44 45 46 47 48

45

arco

f *mf*

L1 L2

L1 L2

L2 L3

L2 L3

4x 2x

arco

f *mf*

f *mf*

Ride

Cr.

f *mf*

play

BETSY'S BLUES

53

Sheet music for measures 49-54. Instruments: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., DB, D. S., Pno.

Measure numbers: 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54

Annotations: L1 2, H2 2, L2 L3, H3 3, L2, 4 3 1

Sheet music for measures 55-60. Instruments: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., DB, D. S., Pno.

Measure numbers: 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60

Annotations: H2 2, L1, L4 3, L2, -3 4 3, 4 3 1 0 -4 1 -3 4, -1, >>>>

BETSY'S BLUES

61

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

mf

mf

mf

H.H. Closed

61 62 63 64 65 66 67

73

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

Ride

68 69 70 71 72 73 74

BETSY'S BLUES

81

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

75 76 77 78 79 80 81

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

DB

D. S.

Pno.

82 83 84 85 86 87 88

f *pizz. div.*

f *pizz.*

f *pizz.*

f *pizz.*

f *choke*

f