



Music Review - Bati l’Gani (I Have Come Into My Garden) by Meira Warshauer

Review by GPFS Member BJ Nicoletti

- Available through Hildegard Publishing Company - <https://www.hildegard.com>
- Information on the piece from the composer’s website - <https://meirawarshauer.com/works/bati-lgani-i-came-into-my-garden/>
- Performance by Paula Robison, for whom the piece was written: https://youtu.be/Fhc_A0lNCYw

This beautiful piece for solo flute was written by Meira Warshauer for flutist Paula Robison. It is very flowing, subtly moody, and largely modal. It is impossible not to be, in some way, deeply spiritually moved by this piece.



- The composition is about six minutes long with a tempo range of quarter note equals 56 with rubato for the opening section and a gradual rising in tempo with each proceeding section, then an acceleration to an eighth note equals 112 in 3/8 meter with some gently joyful bounce.

“When I play “Bati l’Gani” I feel transported, carried into a lush garden filled with trees heavy with fruit, water gently flowing, birds singing, and a voice filled with love calling out to me. I’ll be forever grateful that Meira has written this beautiful music for all of us.” - Paula Robison, internationally acclaimed flutist

Bati l'gani (I have come into my garden) offers glimpses of intimacy between lovers, between Creator and His/Her creation, the delight of recognition: Divine goodness flowing into the world. The Shechinah, God's in-dwelling Presence, enters the earthly garden of Creation - communes with Creator in the earthly Garden of Creation.

It is inspired by Song of Songs, Ch. 5, vs. 1:

I have come into my garden,

*My sister bride. I have gathered my myrrh
with my spices,*

*I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey, I
have drunk my wine with my milk.*

Eat, friends,

Drink and be drunk, beloved ones.

(Translation by the composer)

- The form flows gradually. The mood and your sense of place in the piece moves over seven sections or, more in the spirit of the piece, passages/paths. It calls the musician to project a strong, but warm sense of “arriving with curiosity” with each section. The sections change in mood from “cautious, quiet, still, but fearless presence” to more “free, joyful exploration” of the garden. The last third of the piece holds a cadenza like free flow around the melody until it resolves into a “rippling” conclusion (see picture below) which uses the opening statement. The final thought of the piece begins with a short whisper idea as if readying to dissipate into a warm memory, but instead it suddenly turns to a joyous exclamation – something akin to “wow, I was there, it was beautiful, I was meant to be there and will always have that experience in my heart’s memory.” Playing Meira’s Bati L’Gani does give me a feeling of peace and, at my playing best, an intoxication of a sort.

- Meter varies by section, alternating between two and three beats per measure.

- All three octaves of the flute are spectacularly embraced with a range of first octave d to the third octave a-flat.

- The piece is published by Hildegard Publishing Company, the mission of which is to promote women composers through the ages, including contemporary. I love the commitment of this company to undoing the centuries old dismissal of the contribution of women to the creation of music.
- The piece can be played creatively with light, improvised percussion - perhaps even by the audience. Wershauer wants a “delicate” use of this accompaniment. Having worked on this piece awhile, I now associate the slightest chime or bell with the melody and mood of this piece. This is the way to go, including keeping it improvised, spontaneous. It gives the feeling of life in the garden around you in any given moment on any given day.

See picture on next page.

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