

More About SUITE PASTORALE

I didn't originally set out to emulate Beethoven's **Pastoral Symphony** (#6 in F major) with this composition. Few composers--in their right mind at least--would invite comparison to one of the great masterpieces of symphonic literature with a little 8½ minute piano suite!

Suite Pastorale dates from 1971, when I was a graduate composition major at Florida State studying with Carlisle Floyd. I had no images in mind other than pure musical creation and development. It was just a set of 5 short pieces for solo piano with no program, but for reasons I cannot now remember, I gave it that descriptive title. A few months later, it was played on a Campus Composers Concert by another student who was a piano major. After that, it quickly descended into obscurity.

Decades later, I pulled it out and tried to make something sensible out of the title. I rearranged the order of the movements and came up with countryside-descriptive names for them that roughly match the mood of the music:

1. **Golden Morning**
2. **Deer at Play**
3. **Forest Shadows**
4. **Afternoon Downpour**
5. **Evening Reflections***

But they are loosely applied, so you may have to use a bit of imagination. Although the title and program are reminiscent of the Beethoven work, the scope and style have nothing in common with it, so hopefully no comparisons will be drawn!

* (The last movement is not at all reflective in mood. It just contains allusions, mostly subtle, to the preceding movements, like recalling--or reflecting on--the day.)