

An Archive of the musical compositions by Herb Bielawa

Composition:

The Bailiff's Daughter – SATB and piano, or a cappella

Date: 1965

Duration: 5:30

Recording: San Francisco Chamber Singers (a capella)

Program Note:

This piece was written for Spring Branch High School in Houston during the Contemporary Music Project. Another version of it was also made for soloist and piano. *The Bailiff's Daughter* is a folk tale about a young lass who questions her lover's fidelity. To test him, she goes to him in disguise and reports that the bailiff's daughter is dead. When the youth registers grief upon hearing this news, she joyfully throws back her disguise to reveal the one he thought had died. Everyone is happy. The piece has an AB/AB/C/AB form. An interesting feature of section C is a dialogue. Here the youth and the disguised maiden converse back and forth in recitative style; the sopranos and altos singing the young girl's lines and the tenors and basses, the youth's lines. It is in some ways a miniature buffo opera scene. The rendition of the music here lends itself well to dramatic gestures by the choir.

Text:

There was a youth and a well beloved
youth
And he was an esquire's son
He loved the bailiff's daughter dear
Who lived in Islington.
But she was coy, she would not believe
That he did love her so, no,
Nor at any time she would
Any countenance to him show.
But when his friends did understand
His fond and foolish mind
They sent him up to fair London
An apprentice for to bind.
And when he had been seven long years
And his love he had not seen.
Many a tear have I shed for her sake
When she little thought of me.
All the maids of Islington went forth to
sport and play;
All but the Bailiff's daughter dear;
She secretly stole away.
She then put off her gown of gray,
And put on pugish attire:

She's up to fair old London gone,
her true love to require
But as she went a long the road
The day was hot and dry.
She was aware of her truelove,
At length came riding by.
She stepped straight to him red as any rose
And took him by the bridle ring;
"I Pray you, sir will you give me one penny
To ease my weary limb."
"I prithee sweetheart, canst thou tell me
Where that thou wast borne?"
"At Islington, kind sir," said she,
Where I have had many a scorn."
"I prithee, sweet-heart canst thou tell me
Whether thou dost know
The bailiff's daughter of Islington?"
"She's dead, sir, long a-go"
"Then will I sell my goodly steed,
My saddle and my bow.
I will into some far country,
Where no man doth me know."

“Oh stay, O stay, thou goodly youth!
She lives, she is not dead;
She standeth here now by thy side,
And is ready to be thy bride.”

“O farewell grief, and welcome joy,
Ten thousand times and o'er!
For now I've seen my own truelove,
That I thought I should see no more.”