

PROGRAM NOTE - OVERTURE TO A GREEK DRAMA

Nearly everything that I write has a “program,” and this work is not an exception. It is the result of a self-imposed assignment to write a short orchestral work that would express anger and aggression. When I started to think about what makes me angry, “waiting for men” was very near the top of the list. And who is the quintessential figure waiting for a man? Penelope, who waited for her husband Odysseus for twenty years. For a while I called the piece **Penelope’s Revenge**, imagining what would have happened if she hadn’t waited, if she had killed off all those silly suitors by herself. I was sure she would have found a way to make it happen. But then, reading the myth again, I decided that I really couldn’t change the original Greek story; the piece would have to be a description of the scene where Odysseus comes home and kills the suitors. And so the title metamorphosed into **The Revenge of Penelope**, but that sounded a little too much like **The Perils of Pauline**, so I chose a generic title instead. The audience is therefore free to imagine any Greek drama they like.