MICHAEL MAULDIN

PHILLIP’S TUNE
for strings
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Phillip, a neighbor at Annacarla, my composing and teaching retreat in northern New Mexico, was a self-taught artist and poet. Until he moved to a lower altitude for health reasons, we talked often—the kind of deep thoughts that friends share. Over coffee one morning, he recalled a dream he had the night before. The Southwestern Indians believe that “silver birds” (their name for ravens) are messengers from the gods. Phillip's dream was about a large raven that was protecting a boy who was lost in the forest. Phillip said he heard a melody in the dream, and he played it for me on his harmonica. I was struck by both its simplicity and its richness. The changing meters were not self-conscious efforts at “being different,” but rather they were organic uses of time. I immediately arranged it for strings, with youth orchestra in mind.

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Duration: 2:33

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PHILLIP'S TUNE

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