

STRING ALTERNATIVES SERIES

Fiddlin' Casey Jones

Traditional American Folk Song

Arranged by Andrew H. Dabczynski (ASCAP)

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score	1
Violin I.....	8
Violin II.....	8
Viola.....	5
Cello.....	5
String Bass	5
Piano Accompaniment.....	1

All aboard! This sparkling, bluegrass-style arrangement of the beloved American folk song is playable by intermediate players, but more advanced students will find it delightful. All sections are featured, with opportunities for optional improvised solos. A great opener or closer for any concert program!



Program Notes

Fiddlin' Casey Jones is an uptempo, “blurgrassy” arrangement of the well known American folk song, “The Ballad of Casey Jones.” The original ballad tells the well known story of a Southern railroad engineer and his heroic death in a tragic 19th-century railroad accident. The song was made famous by vaudeville performers, and with Casey reaching almost mythical status, entered the repertoire of folk singers and fiddlers throughout the country. In this version, listen as the instruments imitate the chugging of the engine, the train’s whistle, and play their melodies and solos in a hard-driving bluegrass style. All-aboard for a fiddlin’ good time!

Notes to the Conductor

The piece is arranged with the skills of late-beginner/intermediate string players in mind, with options to challenge more advanced students. All sections of the orchestra are featured at some point in the arrangement.

Legato bowing in the melodic lines should always contrast with the rhythmically “chugging” accompanying figures (played heavily and off-the-string, if possible) throughout the piece, and the pizzicato bass line should always be driving and intense. This is apparent even in the introduction, where divided first violins imitate a train whistle (mm. 2 & 4). The first violins then introduce the verse in G Major (mm. 5–12); attention should be given to the double up-bowings and syncopated accents in these measures. The violins present the chorus in thirds (mm. 13–20) over the chugging accompaniment of the rest.

Roles are reversed in a change to C Major, with violas/celli playing the verse and violins playing the syncopated rhythmic accompaniment (mm. 21–28); when the chorus follows (mm. 29–36), first violins add a countermelody. Accented, chromatic chords and figures (mm. 35–36) lead to a repeat of the introductory material (mm. 37–41) in D Major. A repeated chorus is then presented in D (mm. 41–48). In this area of the piece, the violins “trade fours” with the violas/celli, all playing solo-type figures in bluegrass style. Alternatively, soloists may play the written parts or improvise using the given chord symbols. If this option is chosen, the remaining violin section members should rest during mm. 41–44, and remaining violists/cellists should rest during mm. 45–48 so that the soloist(s) can be heard easily.

A subito piano dynamic marks another repeat of the chorus played by second violins/violas (mm. 49–56), with all instruments playing broadly legato. This section builds to a final rhythmic statement of the chorus (mm. 61–64) followed by a heavily accented and chromatic final coda (mm. 65–67).

Fiddlin' Casey Jones

CONDUCTOR SCORE
Duration - 2:20

Traditional American Folk Song
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Fast and driving (♩ = 132) *div.*

Violins
I *ff* *sim.* *p*
II *f* *heavy, off string* *sim.* *p*

Viola
f *heavy, off string* *sim.* *p*

Cello
pizz. f *heavy, off string* *sim.* *p*

String Bass
f *sim.* *p*

Piano Accompaniment
mf *pp*

Vlns.
I *f* *legato non div.* *sim.*
II *mf* *sim.*

Vla.
mf *sim.*

Cello
mf

Str. Bass
mf

Pno. Accomp.
mp

1 2 3 4 5 6

Hi 2

sim.

V Lo 2 V

I Vlns.

II Vlns.

Vla.

Cello *sim.*

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

7 8 9

V V V

I Vlns. *ff* *f*

II Vlns. *ff* *f*

Vla. *ff* *mf*

Cello *ff* *mf*

Str. Bass *ff* *mf*

Pno. Accomp. *f* *mp*

10 11 12

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

13

heavy, off string

sim.

4

13 14 15

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

16

17

18

21 *non div.*

Vlns. I *ff legato* *mf*

Vlns. II *ff legato* *mf*

Vla. *ff legato* *f legato*

Cello *ff legato* *f legato*

Str. Bass *ff* *mf*

Pno. Accomp. *f* *mp*

19 20 21

Vlns. I *sim.*

Vlns. II *sim.*

Vla. *sim.* Hi 2 Lo 2

Cello *sim.* x1

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

22 23 24

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

25 26 27

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

ff *heavy, off string* *sim.*

ff *ff* *f*

28 29 30

I Vlns.

II Vlns.

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

31 32 33

I Vlns.

II Vlns.

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

34 35 36

1 Lo 1 Lo 2 Hi 2

Hi 2 Lo 2

4 2 -2 4 -1

37

Vlns.
I *div.*
II *heavy, off string*

Vla.
heavy, off string

Cello
heavy, off string

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

sim. *p* *p* *p* *pp*

37 38 39

41 (Optional Improvised Solos)

Vlns.
I *f* (rest mm. 41-44 if improvised solos are performed)
II *f* (rest mm. 41-44 if improvised solos are performed)

Vla.
mf

Cello
mf

Str. Bass
mf

Pno. Accomp.
mf

D *G* *D* *G* *D* *G*

40 41 42

Vlns. I
sim. D A7 D

Vlns. II
sim. D A7 D

Vla.
D A7 Lo 2 Hi 2

Cello
D A7 *f* (rest mm. 45-48 if improvised solos are performed)

Str. Bass
D A7 *f* (rest mm. 45-48 if improvised solos are performed)

Pno. Accomp.
D A7 D

43 44 45

Vlns. I
G/A D A D

Vlns. II
G/A D A D

Vla.
G/A D Lo 2 Hi 2 A 4 D

Cello
G/A D A D

Str. Bass
G/A D A D

Pno. Accomp.
G/A D A D

46 47 48

49

Vlns. I *p sub. legato*

Vlns. II *p sub.*

Vla. *p sub.*

Cello *p sub. legato*

Str. Bass *p sub.*

Pno. Accomp. *pp*

Vlns. I *cresc.*

Vlns. II *cresc.*

Vla. *cresc.*

Cello *cresc.*

Str. Bass *cresc.*

Pno. Accomp. *cresc.*

opt. div.

-1

4 1 1 57 V 4 V

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

f
f
f heavy, off string
f heavy, off string
f
mf
sim.
sim.

56 57 58

V 4 V

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.

59 60 61

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

62 63 64

Hi 2
Lo 2

Vlns.
I
II

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

65 66 67

ff
ff
ff
ff
f

div.