

*Lake Samish, Op. 415 (1988)*

Alan Hovhaness

*Prelude and Fugue*  
*Allegro assai*  
*Andante maestoso*  
*Adagio misterioso*  
*Aria and Jhala*

"*Lake Samish* is a peaceful lake among wooded hills, south of Bellingham, Washington.

The first movement, *Prelude and Fugue*, begins with a peaceful melody in clarinet and violin followed by a gentle, lyrical fugue with the piano playing the middle voices of the fugue in soft repeated notes suggesting a celestial motet of nature.

The second movement, *Allegro assai*, is a polymodal canon, violent, rapid, with three clashing keys or modes.

The third movement, *Andante maestoso*, is a majestic hymn; a peaceful melody follows, leading to a return of the majestic hymn-like mood.

The fourth movement, *Adagio misterioso*, suggests astronomy or music of space with star-like sounds in the piano and a lonely love song in the clarinet. A duet in canon by violin and clarinet suggests a celestial motet of interstellar space.

The fifth movement, *Aria and Jhala*, begins with a song-like melody, *Andante espressivo*, which I heard in a dream. This melody is played by violin and clarinet. *Allegro brillante* follows with the piano playing in *Jhala* style. *Jahala* is a Sanskrit word from *Jhala Taranga*, or 'Waves of Water,' which is a style of East Indian percussion music played or improvised on porcelain cups filled with various levels of water and struck by small sticks. The *Jhala* music becomes a canon for violin, clarinet, and piano which brings the music to a brilliant ending."

—Alan Hovhaness

The world premiere of *Lake Samish, Op. 415* was on September 29, 1988 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Alan Hovhaness (1911–2000) is well-known to classical music connoisseurs through his numerous orchestral works that were championed by conductors such as Stokowski, Reiner, and Kostelanetz, as well as through his ballets for Martha Graham. With over four hundred works (a number of which have never been performed) including sixty-seven symphonies, numerous orchestral, chamber and choral works, songs, ballets, and an extensive repertoire for the piano, he is one of the most prolific composers of modern times.

A truly global composer, Hovhaness draws on the years he lived and immersed himself in the traditional music of India and Japan, his fascination with Renaissance polyphony, and his rich Armenian ancestry. His music (like that of the minimalists) is built on clear tonal centers and repetitive patterns. Melody is perhaps Hovhaness' greatest gift. Integrating exotic scales, rhythm, and instrumental figurations of Asia with modal harmony and structures of Western classical music, he created a highly developed and universal approach to art.

Additional information is available at [www.hovhaness.com](http://www.hovhaness.com).