

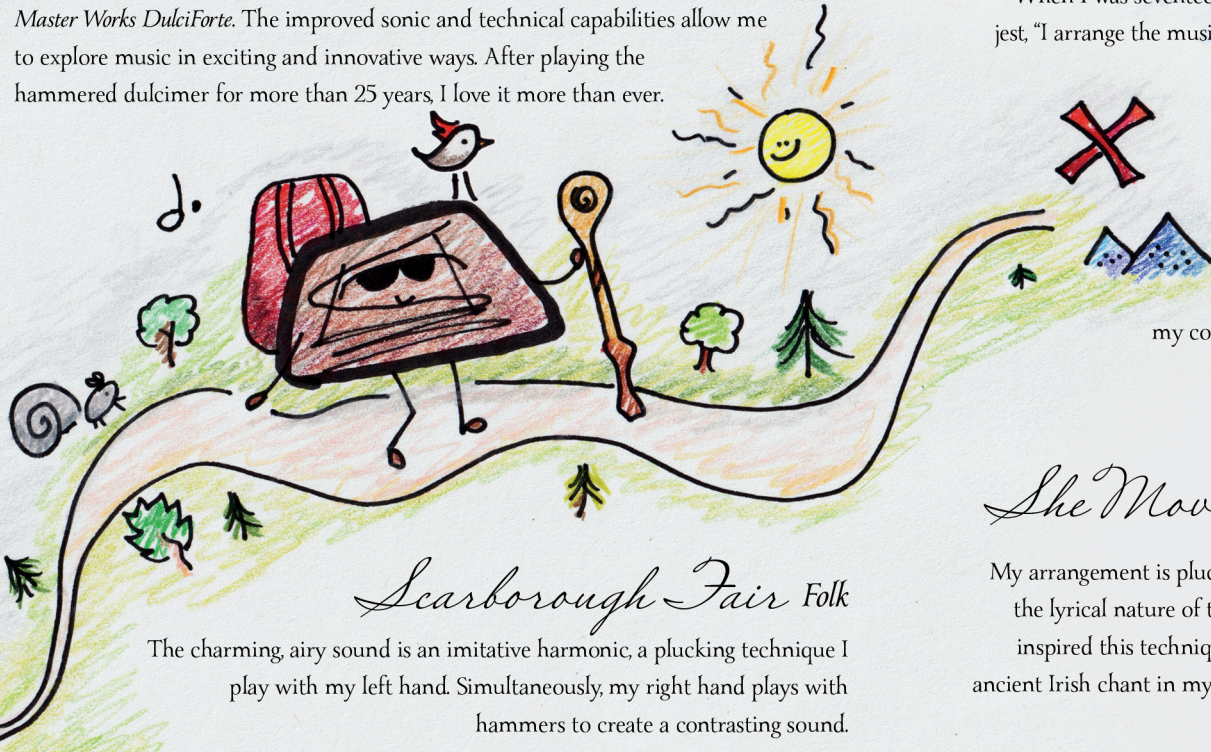


Hammy the Dulcimer in "Fairy Flight"

Illustrated by Stephanie Messick

Dulci Forte Original

The smooth dulce treble and powerful forte bass are esteemed qualities of the *Master Works DulciForte*. The improved sonic and technical capabilities allow me to explore music in exciting and innovative ways. After playing the hammered dulcimer for more than 25 years, I love it more than ever.



Scarborough Fair Folk

The charming, airy sound is an imitative harmonic, a plucking technique I play with my left hand. Simultaneously, my right hand plays with hammers to create a contrasting sound.

Woodsong Wanderlust Original

When I was seventeen, I attended a guitar concert where I heard the performer jest, "I arrange the music, release the album, and then I get my good ideas." Laughs aside, I respected him for improving his music, and I committed to that same approach. After being released on *Woodland Dance* as an ensemble arrangement, I created this solo version for a YouTube video. The composition developed and matured, and my listeners requested this solo recording. *Woodsong Wanderlust* solidifies my commitment to share love, hope, and healing through music.

She Moved Through the Fair Folk

My arrangement is plucked for the additional note coloration, bringing into focus the lyrical nature of this Irish song. You may suspect being married to a harpist inspired this technique, and I would heartily agree. While playing, I imagine an ancient Irish chant in my head. The low drone is created by plucking three notes in a unique way that enriches the fullness and resonance.

Everlasting Original

I often record my improvisations to explore what my heart has to say through my hammered dulcimer—I try not to think about anything technical. This approach was used while composing *Everlasting*. After reviewing the recording, I realized the time signature was 11/8. Next, I pondered the developing composition with more technical insight to construct a chord progression and melody. Once *Everlasting* was completed, I learned my heart was longing to prioritize and value the most important things such as love, faith, family, and relationships.

Oh Shenandoah Folk

The fluid arpeggiated movement and free-flowing timing imitate the current of a river.



Fairy Flight Original

For Stephanie, my endearing, fun-loving, and imaginative wife. Stephanie enjoys the cute and whimsical things of life. Every day, she gives me a handmade card featuring a pun. She also enjoys tending her fairy gardens on our deck overlooking a valley of the Blue Ridge Mountains. During summer evenings, the fairy gardens are occasionally illuminated by fireflies. Only at the stroke of midnight have we seen the fairies dancing with the fireflies.

Wellspring Original

2 Corinthians 12: 9 (ESV) - *But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*



Echoes in Time Original

Imagine being in a time-warp that transports you to a different point in history. *Echoes in Time* would unquestionably be your soundtrack during this trek.

In various ways, this piece constantly echoes in three time signatures: 6/8, 14/16, and 10/16.

Where in history does it transport you?

Autumn Rain Original

Originally appearing on *Desire for Departure: A Hammered Dulcimer Journey (2008)*, this frequent request is usually on my setlist. The arrangement has been seasoned with life and performance experience, and it was time for a fresh, solo recording.

Sakura Sakura Folk

This Japanese folk song depicts the spring season when the sakura (cherry blossoms) are blooming. My first trip to Japan was in 2017 to record on the soundtrack of *Mary and the Witch's Flower*. In April 2018, Stephanie and I returned to visit our new friends in the hammered dulcimer community and at *Studio Ponoc*.

We were enthralled to see the sakura that surrounded Mount Fuji. At the time of this release, I have visited Japan three times and have made many wonderful friends. I hope to return often.



Arran Boat Song Folk

Also commonly known as *Highland Boat Song*, this ancient, enchanting Scottish song felt like a satisfying way to end this album. During the creative process, I tried many different ideas that ranged from abstract to complex, but I couldn't get away from the understated elegance of this minimalistic arrangement. Played as a beautiful evening lullaby, the first verse is plucked and the second and third are hammered.

About the Illustrator

Stephanie Messick

Stephanie Messick is a surgical nurse, Celtic harpist, and crafter.

Hammy the Dulcimer was created to animate Joshua's experiences with music. The first *Hammy* was drawn as Joshua was recording in his studio.

Stephanie enjoyed Joshua's music years before being introduced to him through mutual friends. Today, Joshua and Stephanie record and perform music together. They enjoy living in the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains with their society finches and "pet" robot vacuum.

