

(note from the composer)

Ghost of the White Deer is a romantic and dramatic bassoon concerto which tells the legend of two young Chicasaw Indians in love. In this concerto, the bassoon depicts all aspects of the characters, specifically the timbre and calling of the sacred white deer. The story is as follows:

A brave, young Chicasaw warrior called Blue Jay fell in love with the daughter of a clan Minko (Chief). The Minko did not like the young man, so he created a price for the bride that he was sure Blue Jay could not pay.

"Bring me the hide of the White Deer," said the Minko. The Chicasaw believed that all white animals were magical. "The price for my daughter is one white deer," the Minko laughed. He knew that an albino deer was very rare and would be very hard to find. White deerskin was the best material to use in a wedding dress, and the best white deer skin came from the albino deer.

Blue Jay went to his beloved, Bright Moon. "In one moon's time, I will return with your bride price and we will be married. This I promise you." Taking his best bow and his sharpest arrows Blue Jay began to hunt.

Three weeks went by, Blue Jay was hungry, lonely, and scratched by briars. Then, one night during a full moon, Blue Jay saw a white deer, who seemed to drift through the moonlight. When the deer was very close to where Blue Jay hid, he shot his sharpest arrow. The arrow sank deep into the deer's heart. But instead of sinking to his knees to die, the deer began to run. But instead of running away, he charged straight toward Blue Jay, with his red eyes glowing and his horns sharp and menacing...

A month passed and Blue Jay did not return as he had promised Bright Moon. After months of waiting, the tribe decided that he would never return.

But Bright Moon never took any other young man as a husband, for she had a secret. When the moon was shining as brightly as her name, Bright Moon would often see the white deer in the smoke of the campfire, running, with an arrow in his heart. She lived hoping the deer would finally fall, and Blue Jay would return.