LOOSE ID FOR ORCHESTRA

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the University of North Texas in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the Degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

By

Steven Bryant, B.Mus.
Denton, Texas
August, 1996
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Bryant, Steven, *Loose Id for Orchestra*. Master of Music (Composition), August, 1996, 53 pp., 6 examples, 7 titles.

*Loose Id*, scored for orchestra (piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in Bb, Bb contrabass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns in F, 3 trumpets in Bb, 2 trombones, 1 bass trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion (3 parts), violin I, violin II, viola, violoncello, and contrabass), is an abstract realization in sound of the energy of the Id. Unleashed, without the counterbalance of Ego or Superego, the Id generates unbridled instinctual energy, resulting in an orgiastic frenzy. Distinct from a state of dementia, this piece represents a thoroughly lucid and intentional rampage of self-indulgence.

The accompanying essay examines the underlying structural principles of *Loose Id*, focusing on how they aid the creation of the overall experience of the piece. Particular attention is given to the concepts of linearity and nonlinearity and their roles in different levels of creative and listening processes.
INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant factors in our experience of sound, all sound, is its organization, or lack thereof, over time. It could be argued that music is differentiated from random noise by this organization; that the purposeful ordering of sounds by a human, regardless of process or aesthetic, is the creation of music. Understanding this, it is necessary to explore the ways in which sound can be organized and the ways in which music exists in time and time exists in music. This in turn illustrates how the various aspects of Loose Id combine to effectively convey my intention.

Section One presents a brief overview of my intent in creating Loose Id and provides a basis for the related issues discussed in the following sections. The second section outlines linearity and nonlinearity, and places Loose Id within this paradigm, followed by an application of this concept to my compositional process in Section Three. The "storage-size" model of perception is used in the fourth section to illustrate the method by which Loose Id creates in the listener a feeling of compressed, frenzied activity. The fifth section contains an analysis of various components of the piece in detail, and how they contribute to the larger aspects already described. The sixth section describes what I've learned from both composing and writing this essay about Loose Id.

Section One: Overview Of Loose Id

Extremes fascinate me. Extremes of tempo, register, volume, density - these are what I draw from in creating music. In Loose Id these elements are
bound together to create linear, goal-directed motion toward ever-increasing hysteria, so that the piece gives one no choice but to listen. This is often difficult to achieve in the context of late twentieth-century Western culture, where the continual bombardment of all senses by television, radio, the internet, and other sources has resulted in heightened competition for audiences’ attention. More information is concentrated into less time and space than ever before in the history of communication. In order to compete in this environment, information must be extremely focused and compressed, hovering at the edge of incomprehensibility but never crossing this threshold. *Loose Id* is an attempt to embody this concept in the traditional medium of the symphonic orchestra; an attempt to reconcile technology’s impact on information transmission with the older paradigm of the concert music experience.

I use extramusical associations to further determine the shape and scope of a particular work. Siegmund Freud’s theory of the Super Ego, Ego, and Id, while no longer considered comprehensive or effective as a psychological theory, provides a source of imagery and inspiration that corresponds naturally with a depiction of extremes in the arts. In Freud’s theory, the Id is the source of instinctual energy based on the pleasure principle and is kept in balance by the Ego and Super Ego. The concept of an Id “on the loose,” with no mitigating factors, provided me with an attractive basis for a compressed, intense piece of music. This is further elucidated in the program notes in the score:

*Loose Id* is an abstract realization of the energy of the Id in sound. Unleashed, without the counterbalance of Ego or Superego, the Id generates unbridled instinctual energy, resulting in an orgiastic frenzy. Distinct from a state of dementia, this piece represents a thoroughly lucid and intentional rampage of self-indulgence.
Creating a satisfying sense of unrestrained, spontaneous, frenzied activity requires careful organization. Merely creating unstructured sounds of high volume and quick tempo would not convey a sense of sustained intensity, but would instead result in boredom and annoyance. The key is finding the borderline between a “safe” level of perception (below the maximum threshold of the listener) and going “over the edge” into perceptual chaos, at which point tension is lost in a sea of aimless noise. This corresponds to the “storage-size” model of information theory and the limits of memory and perception, which is dealt with more thoroughly in Section Four. For the present, suffice it to say that achieving this goal necessitated a linear ordering of events in a progression of related yet ever-changing musical gestures, thereby creating an experience of coherence and alleviating the natural attenuation of perception that occurs from continuous exposure to the same stimulus. I applied this concept in the music by carefully managing the energy and intensity levels throughout the piece, and by keeping, as I composed, a constant awareness of the listener’s linear experience of the music.

Section Two: Linearity And Nonlinearity

Before discussing *Loose Id* in more detail, it is necessary to define and examine the concepts of linearity and nonlinearity in music. Jonathan Kramer, in *The Time of Music*, explains that “[v]irtually all music utilizes a mixture of linearity and nonlinearity. Linearity and nonlinearity are the two fundamental means by which music structures time and by which time structures music” (Kramer 1988:20). He offers the following definitions of the
two terms:

Let us identify linearity as the determination of some characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise from earlier events of the piece. Thus linearity is processive. Nonlinearity, on the other hand, is nonprocessive. It is the determination of some characteristic(s) of music in accordance with implications that arise from principles or tendencies governing an entire piece or section. Let us also define linear time as the temporal continuum created by a succession of events in which earlier events imply later ones and later ones are consequences of earlier ones. Nonlinear time is the temporal continuum that results from principles permanently governing a section or piece (Kramer 1988:20).

Whereas the linear perception of time is a fundamental component of Western music, Kramer’s focus throughout the book is weighted toward nonlinear time, since it is relatively foreign to Western thought. He points out the rise in nonlinearity in music of the twentieth century; the increasing attention to the “timeless now” instead of past-present-future. While this trend is certainly evident in the Western art music of this century, linearity in music is by no means outdated or exhausted of its potential.

Instead of rejecting linearity, I have chosen to embrace it and exploit the Western listener’s familiarity with this type of time-organization, using the learned listening patterns as a framework in which to push the amount of information perceived to an extreme. For this reason, Loose Id is fundamentally linear in nature. Every gesture is designed, not merely to imply the next, but to aurally “shove” the listener forward. There is always a clear sense of direction for the listener. Each element of the music works cooperatively toward this end, casting each moment of the music in sharp relief.

While Loose Id is almost uniformly linear, there is a relatively short
section where forward motion ceases, giving way to a pulseless sense of floating. The lack of pulse is of primary importance in demarcating this section from the rest of the music, since the motivic/gestural material is the same throughout most of the piece. This section of relative stasis ultimately serves, however, to heighten the overall linearity of the music by providing a momentary (and only slight) release from the overriding forward motion. The familiar paradigm of tension and release plays its role here. In these terms, *Loose Id* is nearly all tension, with only brief moments of minimal relaxation. True release is found only in the silence immediately after the conclusion of the piece. Section Five deals with the specific musical elements and how they create the linearity and nonlinearity described above.

The structure of a piece is not the only level on which this dichotomy exists. "Linearity and nonlinearity as listening strategies [italics mine] are always in operation, and the temporal continuum of every composition has both linear and nonlinear aspects. We can have both linear perceptions of nonlinear structures and nonlinear understandings of linear structures" (Kramer 1988:220). In other words, a listener, by definition, first experiences a piece of music linearly, regardless of the composer's method of composition or the notational layout of the piece. Conversely, a perception of the consistent underlying principles and characteristics of a piece can be gained in retrospect, thereby illustrating how the work as a whole progresses in a consistent linear fashion. This is my interpretation of Kramer's "nonlinear understanding of linear structure." The application of these two concepts to *Loose Id* is a primary function of this essay.

The process of composition, to me, consists of creating a web of implications among the motivic ideas and gestures, and managing the progression from one moment to the next. The connections between moments
are as important as the moments themselves. Kramer points out, “As we move through a piece (or, as it moves through us), we cannot avoid hearing it as a linear presentation, no matter how strong its inherent nonlinearity” (Kramer 1988:219). Instead of attempting to thwart this inherent linearity, I prefer to strengthen it; to wallow in the complex, puzzle-like nature of creating a unified whole. Every element is connected, and each must be handled with a sophisticated awareness of its function in the larger structure. In saying that the relationships between gestures are as important, if not more so, than the gestures themselves, I deny the basic tenet of moment form music: the appreciation of the moment for itself, separate from and without regard to surrounding events. *Loose Id* affirms that a spider's web is more interesting than the individual strands that comprise it; the brain is more interesting than the neurons of which it's composed. I find the pattern to be of greater significance and interest than its component elements, since it is the pattern, whether embodied in linear music, a spider's web, or the human brain, which moves, changes, grows. This is obviously a personal preference, and is not intended as an evangelical proclamation of the one, true kind of temporal experience, only as a means of understanding my background as a composer and my intention in creating *Loose Id*.

Section Three: The Process Of Composition

Composers’ processes of creating music vary widely. A composer’s method is indicative of both his underlying aesthetic predilections and of the larger paradigm in which he works. As is illustrated in the previous two sections, I generally prefer the linear over the nonlinear listening experience.
However, my compositional process is most accurately understood as a combination of these conceptual approaches. I compose on two levels simultaneously: a large-scale, macro-structural level, and a smaller, gestural level. The former corresponds to nonlinearity in that the underlying principles of a work as a whole are evident. The piece is viewed as a single, preexistent shape, not as a process that changes over time. This approach functions as an evaluative tool by which I direct the overall flow of the piece. This “god’s-eye” view insures that all events work cooperatively toward the musical goal, in this case maintaining a feeling of near-hysteria without causing numbness or boredom.

The second level, where the bulk of actual creation occurs, is linear. I compose specific gestures; the natural tendencies of these (usually toward certain pitches) suggest possibilities for the larger direction of the musical flow. This linear approach (composing gestures in the order they occur) insures that each either connects smoothly with the next or is thwarted in a logical and satisfying manner. Working at this level is akin to improvisation, an approach that was used in composing Loose Id to maintain a feeling of spontaneity and unrestrained primal release.

The interaction of these two levels begins with the initially composed details of the music (individual gestures and orchestrational subtleties) suggesting a larger shape and direction for the piece. This shape and structure is supported, and to some degree determined, by these details, yet once it is established, it acquires a life of its own and recursively determines what new gestures or orderings of old gestures are necessary. The nonlinear totality of the work is first given birth by the small, self-contained gestures, but subsequently creates and redirects these ideas toward the larger goal of the piece. This anthropomorphization of the process might seem to be an
overstatement. However, it accurately represents my internal experience of the process, and therefore seems appropriate as an explanatory device. By working on both levels throughout the composition of a piece, I maintained coherence and unity without sacrificing the improvisatory quality and moment-to-moment flow.

In *Loose Id*, the overall shape discussed above is generated primarily through the harmonic device of pitch-level relationships. In discussing this piece, I use the term pitch-level instead of tonic, since the key pitches (those that establish pitch-levels) define points along the shape of the piece, rather than functioning as cadential goals toward which the music moves. I find them to be effective tools for creating and manipulating the structure of a composition.

Another fundamental aspect of my compositional process is the use of motivic construction. I am concerned with creating tightly constructed music, primarily by using a single motive for an entire piece. The music is generated by the continuous development of this motive, creating a strong unity of materials and therefore a sense of coherence. While this is not a new paradigm of compositional thought, it is fundamental to understanding my approach toward writing music.

*Loose Id* represents a deviation from this approach. I've attempted to expand the scope of my learned compositional preferences and tendencies. Instead of a single motive, there are several motivic ideas in the piece, and they are not developed in a continuous, linear fashion. Gestures are instead often sharply juxtaposed or chained together in such a fashion that the linear connectivity is not a result of gestural similarity through development, but of common pitch-level relationships. These relationships are explored in more detail in Section Five.
Section Four: Compression And The Psychology Of Time-Perception

The perception of linearity, as discussed earlier, is created from implications, expectations, and the fulfillment or denial of these. Thus memory, and how it functions in music, is of critical importance. Kramer addresses this, first discussing the subjective nature of our experience of time.

"The human sense of time succumbs readily to outside (and inside) influences. We all know, for example, that enjoyable experiences seem short, while boredom can seem endless" (Kramer 1988:331). This suggests a direct relationship between the amount of information taken in and the perceived duration of that information. Given equal clock-time intervals, the higher the information content, the longer the perceived duration of the interval. However, the relationship is not purely linear. "[M]aximally filled time intervals are perceived as longer than moderately filled intervals of the same clock duration" (Kramer, p. 331). In other words, when information content becomes too high, it is perceived as collapsing into a single layer of information, instead of an increasingly complex web of multiple ideas. Thus, conveying a sense of complexity and compression is akin to a balancing act on the tightrope of the listeners' perceptive abilities.

In order to apply this to *Loose Id*, it is necessary to examine how music is perceived and remembered. The process of encoding information is aided or hindered by the ease with which it falls into patterns, or "chunks" (a term taken from Kramer). The more chunks, the more memory required. Thus, the more easily an idea or musical passage breaks down into certain size chunks, the more easily it is remembered.
"The amount of memory required is dependent therefore on two factors: the amount of information in the stimulus and the codability of that information. These factors, then, affect the "storage size" in memory and hence the remembered duration. *The more "storage space" a passage requires, the longer its subjective duration*" (Kramer 1988:337).

Kramer discusses the function of this storage-size model in affecting perceived durations in a piece of music; I wish to use the model in a different way to explain the perception of compression in *Loose Id*. For a musical idea to be chunked, it must fall within a certain duration. This is the duration of our short-term attention span, or approximately 5-7 seconds. Though not conscious of it while composing the piece, I have since realized that nearly all the identifiable gestures in the piece (particularly the motives discussed in Section Five) fall well within this durational limit. By using small, easily chunked musical material, more ideas can be presented within this attention span while still retaining clarity. I propose that this is a fundamental reason for the sensation of dense, crowded activity in the piece. Multiple, clearly defined gestures are experienced within a duration normally associated with a single idea, so that the perceptual space feels crowded yet is still clearly comprehended. *Loose Id* approaches but does not cross the threshold of Kramer's "maximally filled time intervals," thereby pushing the intensity of the piece to an extreme.

Section Five: Analysis of Motivic and Pitch-Level Structure

*Loose Id*'s structure is determined primarily by levels of intensity. These intensity levels are created by the use of long-term pitch level
progression, textural density, and dynamic levels. Motivic recurrences function in coordination with these intensity levels to further define the large-scale shape of the piece. The overall shape is an inverted arc with an extended final section consisting of ever-increasing tension. Thus, the form of the piece can be loosely described as ABA' Coda. Example 1 shows the layout of the

Example 1: Formal Outline of Loose Id

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>transition</th>
<th>A'</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mm.:</td>
<td>1-79</td>
<td>80-99</td>
<td>100-125</td>
<td>126-132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

sections by measure numbers. Obviously, divisions are not based upon their lengths or relative proportions: the transition is longer than either B or A', and the Coda is nearly as long as A. These absolute durations are irrelevant. The motivic material and pitch levels are the significant factors in how the structure of the piece is perceived.

The first A section is the longest portion of the piece. It contains the quickest changes in pitch-level and thus the most jagged and unstable music. This contrasts with the less intense B section, which is more continuous in nature. The transition back to A' is distinct from the rest of the piece; there is no marked pulse from mm. 100-107, creating a floating, nondirected atmosphere. Gestures appear in a disjointed fashion, gradually gaining coherence until the original pulse and direction are reestablished. The intensity returns to the original level upon reaching A'. After only seven measures of the original material, the intensity level increases further than expected. This marks the beginning of the Coda, which consists of a relentless increase in intensity to the end of the piece.
Loose Id has a strong chromatic flavor which results from its octatonic underpinnings. These scales are the soil out of which the various gestures grow, and they provide a rich source of half- and whole-step leading tones with which to manipulate the pitch-levels of the piece. The use of this type of scalar material is also conducive to creating instability in the piece. While constantly resolving tonal tendencies by half-steps, octatonicism simultaneously thwarts larger tonal expectations that may be established, since figures easily fold in on themselves in unpredictable and non-repetitive ways.

Loose Id is constructed of a small library of motives, each goal-directed and short (usually contained within a single measure), and built out of relatively small intervals, ranging from a semitone to an augmented fourth. The significance of the short lengths is discussed in Section 4. The A sections and the Coda contain most of the motivic material, with the B section consisting of a separate, single idea. The first identifiable and recurring motive is built of descending whole-steps:

Example 2: descending whole-step motive, violins I and II, mm. 4-5

The second motive, nearly always presented in the low brass and low strings, is intended as a suggestive groan or growl and acts as a recurring answering or
Example 3: suggestive growl, trombones 1 and 2, m. 4

A third motive, appearing in the horns and functioning as a connective gesture:

Example 4: horn motive, mm. 9-10

The fourth and perhaps most important motive usually appears as a pyramid built of alternating augmented and perfect fourths. It should be noted that these are the largest intervals used in any of the motivic ideas. This

Example 5: pyramidal motive, flute 1, m. 11
pyramidal motive usually serves as a demarcation point where all motion is briefly unified, and often signals a change in intensity and/or pitch levels. These motives and their derivatives, in combination with octatonic scale passages and large-interval rips (usually an octave or minor ninth), constitute the bulk of the piece.

The single motive used in the B section (example 6) also derives from the underlying octatonicism of the piece, playing upon the first four notes of the blues scale (contained within the octatonic scale), particularly the diminished fifth common in the jazz idiom. This correlation is made because of

Example 6: B section motive, trumpet 1, mm. 89-90

The swing-sixteenth ride cymbal rhythm that persists throughout this section, giving it a slightly less intense feeling.

The directed gestures of Loose Id drive toward particular goals, often specific pitches, and these gestures are chained together to produce a larger progression of pitch-levels. A pitch-level is essentially a tonal center; it functions as the goal of a particular gesture or section, but is usually quickly supplanted by another pitch-level. This is a significant element in creating a sense of constant motion. Linearity, as discussed earlier, relies on internal implications of the music; events arise as consequences of earlier events, creating a logical progression from one point to another. The linearity of Loose Id is most evident in these pitch-level progressions. By exploiting the Western listener's learned ability to hear and resolve tonal tendencies, Loose Id provides
a reliable aural handhold while continually pushing him or her in a new
direction. The following discussion of measures 1-17 outlines an example of
these smaller, goal-directed gestures and how they form a larger pitch-level
progression. Due to the size of the example, it is necessary to refer directly to
the score.

The piece opens with a large polychord that functions as a frenzied
cluster, with the primary pitch of A-flat dominating the sound. It should be
noted that most pitch-levels throughout the piece are determined by a half- or
whole-step cluster, with the upper note serving as the defining pitch. The
opening gesture is an expanded example of this, utilizing eight pitches instead
of two. The gesture ends in m. 3 on a high D, thereby implying pitch
movement of a tritone. This is a fundamental interval in the construction of
Loose Id. The opening gesture, by nature of its inverted arc, implies the shape
of the piece as a whole. The A-flat is reasserted by the bassoons, trombones,
and violas in the cluster in m. 3, leading to the A-natural in the horns and
violins in m. 4. This is answered by the suggestive growl in the trombones, and
then extended by the horns and violins to C-flat. Beginning in m. 6, a sweep
starting in the low register extends over five beats and ends on the initial A-
flat. After three beats, this pitch-level is raised to B-flat, two beats later to D
(in the horns), followed one beat later by E-flat (in the clarinets and violins).
This downward octatonic scalar passage lands on A, which forms the base of
the pyramid in m. 11 built of perfect and augmented fourths. The pyramid
establishes G as the pitch-level in m. 12, which is sustained through m. 16.
The A-flat forcefully returns in m. 17 only to be superseded by A-natural one
beat later. The measure culminates with an ascending passage in the
clarinets, bassoons, horns, and xylophone up to D-sharp, a tritone from the
previous A.
A second, slightly different and more obvious example of pitch-level motion is found in mm. 55-71. Measure 55 is the first point of relaxation. The high-register activity that has been nearly constant since m. 1 ceases, and the energy becomes submerged into and subsumed by the pulse of the timpani, which establishes the pitch-level of E. This continues through m. 61, where the same pyramidal figure breaks the pulse and moves the pitch-level up a whole-step to F-sharp. The pulse resumes on this new level, and as the texture begins to thicken, the timpani, joined by bassoons, trombones, 'cellos, and contrabasses, move upward through an octave, culminating on A-flat. The horns enter on this A-flat, establishing A-natural in m. 72, B-flat followed by B-natural in m. 74, and hinting at C in m. 75 before the pitch is fully revealed in the clarinets, horns, trumpets, violins, and violas in . 76. This is the effective end of the first A section.

A third example of pitch-level manipulation is found in mm. 126 to the end (A' and the Coda). A' re-establishes the original pitch-level of A-flat (the closest equivalent of a tonic in the piece). The music follows an identical pattern to that of mm. 1-7. At m. 133 (corresponding to m. 8), instead of returning to A-flat, the scalar passage continues to B-flat. This effectively modulates the piece up a whole step, thus signaling a new level of energy, and ultimately a final push to the end of the piece. The pitch-level of B-flat is literally sustained from mm. 133-151, moving to D at m. 152, and then to E at m. 166. The horns establish F on beat 1 of m. 171, only to be superseded by F-sharp on beat 2. The pyramid of fourths enters in m. 172, pushing the pitch-level to G in m. 173 (just as it does when it first appears in m. 11). The blatant, sustained pitch-levels dissolve into a dense, chromatic, fluctuating texture which moves slowly upward in both register and timbre, culminating in the flutes and trumpets in mm. 182-183. The clarinets and horns erupt on D.
in m. 185 and are joined by the trombones in a downward slide. Out of this comes the final, enormous, upward swell, returning in m. 188 to the initial B-flat of the Coda. This is sustained as the texture thickens to a euphoric cluster of noise, and climaxes in an orgasmic shriek.

This type of pitch-level motion continues throughout the piece at varying rates. Almost without exception the movement is in an upward direction. This cyclical motion through pitch levels functions as continual modulation, thus maintaining a relentless feeling of tension.

The use of meter is another defining element in the structure of *Loose Id*. Kramer addresses the issue of meter and its effects on perceived duration (Kramer 1988:345-349). Meter is determined by the placement of accents, which occur on varying levels and to a varying degree. The strongest metric accents are typically at the beginning of a measure, with subsequent, lesser accents dividing the bar. *Loose Id* presents a clear, consistent use of meter, which provides an indication of the intensity of the music at that point. The first A section is primarily in 3/4 and 4/4 time (3/4: 30 of 79 bars; 4/4: 38 of 79), the B section and transition are almost entirely in 4/4, A' is mostly 3/4, and the Coda is mainly in 2/4. These meter designations are indicative of the larger metric accents, and thus the perceived speed of the piece. The 4/4 meter in the A and B sections correspond directly to the least intense portions of the music. In contrast, the Coda, which embodies the highest tension, is in 2/4. The driving pulse of the music in these sections bears out this analysis. Measures 175 to the end are an apparent exception. However, the articulation groupings in mm. 175-184 indicate that this is still felt in two-beat groupings, not four. At m. 185, every beat essentially becomes an accented pulse. These two areas are notated in 4/4, instead of 2/4 and 1/4, for notational clarity.
A final, significant element of the piece are gestures called “motion timbres” (a term taken from John Corigliano). These are best described as broad orchestrational brush strokes: instruments (usually most of the orchestra) ascend in a somewhat random fashion from the low register (sometimes strictly notated) to a top pitch and then descend in the same manner. By their nature, these gestures are indeterminate to some degree, since most pitches are not notated, and rhythm is generally indicated to be as fast as possible. The effect corresponds closely to the visual appearance (refer to pp. 20-22 of the score, mm. 120-124), and is heard as a broad, complex sweep of noise through the registral range of the orchestra. In the case of mm. 120-122, the motion timbre begins in the contrabass clarinet with notated pitches, joined by the contrabassoon and other instruments as it works its way up to the key pitch of F-sharp and then descends. Each instrument follows this pattern when it enters. Instead of a simple up-down arc motion, however, the effect is one of movement in multiple simultaneous directions. This gesture is shaped by the placement of each instrument’s high point (in this example, F-sharp). The lower instruments enter earlier, reach F-sharp first, and then descend, while higher instruments are entering, thus, instruments are descending while the overall shape of the gesture is still moving upward. It should be noted that this key pitch of F-sharp establishes itself as the pitch-level, which is raised to G by the trombones in mm. 122-123 in a gesture similar to the motion timbre, which leads to A-flat in m. 125 and the marks the beginning of the A' section (at the same pitch-level of A-flat as in m. 1).

This type of gesture is used by composer John Corigliano in his music of the early 1980s, most notably the score to the film “Altered States.” Three Hallucinations is a three-movement concert piece taken from the film music,
and it is the third of these, *Ritual*, which served as the model for *Loose Id*. This movement accompanies the Hinchi Indians' mushroom rite in the film, a savage ritual dance of relentless frenzied energy. Because of the intense quality of the music, and of these gestures in particular, they are appropriate to the character of *Loose Id*, and were adapted to further heighten the effect of the piece.

Section Six: Conclusion

*Loose Id* represents a point of arrival in my compositional and aesthetic development. The relentless intensity and quick tempo of the piece represent the culmination of a trend in my music of the past several years. At this point, I am unsure whether these characteristics will persist in future compositions, or will be supplanted by a totally new approach.

This study of the piece has also clarified, for me, where I stand within the range of possibilities for temporal organization. I am more aware of my own deep roots in linear, directed music, and therefore able to more efficiently capitalize on my musical preferences. The techniques discussed here, primarily the use of pitch levels and motivic construction, are fundamental elements of my compositional approach. Understanding these techniques in detail allows me to further develop or circumvent them in the future.

In attempting to create a piece which is accessible (meaning the piece possesses an obvious and easily chunked surface), I may have inadvertently achieved the opposite. Perhaps this piece represents my own, personal limit of perceptual abilities; a perceptual "speed limit" of sorts, the threshold at which I can perceive change and still retain clarity. This threshold is undoubtedly
personal and highly variable, thus rendering much of the speculation about
time and perception as embodied in *Loose Id*, discussed in Chapter 4, relevant
only to those with perceptual abilities comparable to my own. A listener with
a slower perceptual speed limit will likely experience the piece more as
pointless noise than carefully crafted tension, unable to pick up the cues of
linear progression, while a listener with higher perceptive abilities will probably
find the piece less intense than intended, even boring. However, I have
attempted to anticipate the norms of perception. The duration of short-term
memory is fairly constant from one individual to another, and repeated
listenings will, as with nearly any piece, make obvious the underlying
structure, so that *Loose Id* will be accessible to any listener, regardless of
musical background or ability.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


LOOSE ID
for Orchestra

STEVEN BRYANT

Duration: ca. 5'
Transposed Score

INSTRUMENTATION

Piccolo (doubles 3rd Flute)
2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in Bb
Bb Contrabass Clarinet (doubles 3rd Clarinet in Bb)
2 Bassoons
Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in Bb
3 Trombones (2 Tenor, 1 Bass)
1 Tuba

Timpani (4 drums)
Percussion
1: Flexatone, Suspended (Ride) Cymbal (shared with Perc. 3), Xylophone (shared with Perc. 2), 4 Tomtoms, Tamtam (large)
2: Police Whistle, Bass Drum (shared with Perc. 3), Xylophone (shared with Perc. 1), Ratchet, Triangle
3: Suspended (Ride) Cymbal (shared with Perc. 1), Lion's Roar, Bass drum (shared with Perc. 2), Brake drum

Strings
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Contrabass
Loose Id is an abstract realization in sound of the energy of the Id. Unleashed, without the counterbalance of Ego or Superego, the Id generates unbridled instinctual energy, resulting in an orgiastic frenzy. Distinct from a state of dementia, this piece represents a thoroughly lucid and intentional rampage of self-indulgence.

Performance Notes

A) to indicate the passage of time, but NOT rearticulation, during a passage of indeterminate pitch. These passages are always notated with a slur.

B) to indicate an articulated rhythm during a glissando or other passage of indeterminate pitch. No slur is used.

Arrows above notes indicate a quarter-tone alteration of the notated pitch. In this example (mm. 56-59, Tbn. 2) all notes are played a quarter-tone higher than the indicated pitches.

"Wa" indicates a quick opening of the plunger mute at the attack of the note. The notation is similar to the desired effect. Horns use trombone plunger mutes.

An accent at the end of a slurred gesture indicates a sharp ending to the note (stopped with tongue or abrupt breath cutoff), instead of a sharp attack.
glut 

approximate shape of
Dry and mechanical like a drum