AESTHETIC MODELS AND STRUCTURAL FEATURES IN

CONCERTO FOR SOLO PERCUSSION AND CONCERT BAND

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*Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band* was commissioned by Staff Sergeant Rone Sparrow, a percussionist with the West Point Military Academy Band. Funding for the project was provided by the Barlow Foundation. The piece was premiered April 13, 2005 in the Eisenhower Hall Theater at West Point, New York. Rone Sparrow performed with the USMA band, and Colonel Thomas Rotondi Jr., Commander/Conductor, conducted the piece. The concerto consists of three movements, and each movement features a different instrument: the first features marimba, the second, vibraphone, and the third movement features the drum kit together with a rhythm section (piano, bass, and drums).

In addition to the piece, the dissertation paper discusses important technical detail related to the piece, including: harmony, form, rhythm, programmatic ideas as they relate to motivic strands, and the process of generating and discarding material. The paper also focuses on a number of factors that were influential to the piece, such as postmodern philosophy.
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PART I

AESTHETIC MODELS AND STRUCTURAL FEATURES IN

CONCERTO FOR SOLO PERCUSSION AND CONCERT BAND
Chapter 1

Context

In May of 2003, Staff Sergeant Rone Sparrow, a percussionist with the West Point Military Academy Band commissioned me to compose a three-movement percussion concerto to feature him with the ensemble. In September 2003, the Barlow Foundation agreed to provide funding for the project. The resulting work, *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*, was premiered April 13, 2005, in the Eisenhower Hall Theater at West Point, New York. Rone Sparrow performed with the USMA band, and Colonel Thomas Rotondi Jr., Commander/Conductor, conducted the piece.

As part of the commission, Sergeant Sparrow specified a number of provisions regarding the parameters of the work, which affected the compositional design. He wished each movement to feature a different percussion instrument: the first movement was to be composed for marimba, the second, vibraphone, and the third movement for the drum kit together with a rhythm section (piano, bass, and drums). In the third movement Sergeant Sparrow hoped to “play time” on the drum kit and integrate the rhythm section together with the wind ensemble. The musical aesthetic, including the harmonic, rhythmic, and formal details was left to my discretion, subject only to the condition that the piece should have the capacity to be successfully “programmed on the same concert as a Disney medley.” In other words, the ensemble performs a wide range of pieces for diverse audiences, including “pops” material; thus, the necessity of requesting a more accessible work. Given the specifications of the work, my challenge was to compose
honest music that “makes my blood race…[and] the hair on the back of my neck stand up” (Stucky, 1993) while remaining palatable to the West Point Military Academy Band and their audience.

The plans for the theoretical detail provide the link between the “palatable” and the “honest” in the music. In a few of my earlier works, I was captivated by the concept of composing a musical composition wherein the harmony was entirely based on a single chord. In Correspondences,¹ the pitches from the Major7⁷⁶⁵⁴⁷⁰⁹ chord generate all of the melodic material, and related modes were used in combination with the chord to expand the harmonic boundaries of the piece. In another work, Streets of Glass, I extended this concept of deriving harmonic and melodic material from a single chord to include large-scale structural features that correspond to the chord. The principal chord in Streets of Glass consists of two perfect fifths separated by a semi-tone. Each of the key centers corresponds to one of the pitches of the chord.

In Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band, this process is taken one step further to link rhythmic elements to the intervallic relationship of the chord. As will be demonstrated in this dissertation, Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band is a tightly constructed work wherein almost all of the harmonic and melodic material is generated from a single chord. Similarly, the large-scale points of arrival outline the original chord, and additionally, portions of the piece derive their rhythm from the intervallic relationship of the chord and the corresponding scales.

The concept of the chord, and how it relates to other parameters of the work are some of the technical factors that create cohesion in the piece. But the structural details are not exactly what breathe life into the music. The factors that influence my aesthetic
come from many disparate sources. In part, my formal training in both “classical” and jazz music, the music that I listen to, and the perception I have of my relationship to the composers who have preceded me have impacted my compositional style.

Throughout my Master’s and Doctoral studies, I became increasingly exposed to many techniques and philosophies that flourished in the twentieth-century. After contemplating the vastness, the complexity, and the philosophical depth of the repertoire, I began to ponder some of the questions that are perhaps typical of composers from my generation. What could I possibly produce that would make any contribution to what has already been accomplished, and, is it possible to expand upon the “avant-garde’s search for novel sounds, compositional strategies, and formal procedures…” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 23)? It was only later in my doctoral work that I became more finely attuned to some of the recent currents in composition related to postmodern philosophy. I became intrigued by the composers associated with the “Bang on a Can” festival (e.g., Julia Wolfe, David Lang, and Michael Gordon). Each demonstrates an interest in amalgamating disparate elements, including rock music (especially aspects of rhythm) or any other unusual compositional element. Similar stylistic ideals (i.e., embracing pop music or pop culture) have emerged among a number of composers that have become emblems of postmodern music, like John Zorn and Michael Daugherty. While I found their music interesting, what appealed to me most was their seemingly overt passion to create music that is written as a direct iconoclast to (or at least supersedes) the industrialized and accepted currents in composition.

It seems that critics have a difficult time talking about this new music. Referring to Julia Wolfe’s musical style, Evan Ziporyn comments, “when one hears her music, the
catch-phrases become inadequate and simplistic” (Ziporyn 2001, 1). Mark Swed, commenting on David Lang’s aesthetic, remarks, “there is no name yet for this kind of music” (“David Lang Biography” 2002, 1). Yet a number of scholars are engaged in debating postmodernism in relation to the music of the Bang on a Can composers, John Zorn, Michael Daugherty, and others.

The term, “postmodernism” is, in the words of Jonathan D. Kramer, “a maddeningly imprecise musical concept” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 13). Postmodernism has increasingly become a byword, a catchall phrase that perhaps has been applied to too many things. Kramer questions,

Does the term refer to a period or an aesthetic, a listening attitude or a compositional practice? Does postmodernism react against or continue the project of modernist music? (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 13)

Judy Lochhead continues in a similar vein:

…Any number of writers in musical and other domains have questioned the usefulness of the term, remarking on its conceptual slipperiness and its broadstroke and hence feeble descriptive powers. The term “postmodern” is in full use in descriptions of musical practice, and its growing prevalence suggests a responsibility to demarcate the dimensions of its meanings. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 4)

Moreover, the word has also developed different connotations depending on nationality and historical context. According to Joakim Tillman,

when the general and international postmodern debate made its way into Germany [mid-80s], the significance of the term became more confused in reference to music. The word soon lost its aesthetic meaning as a new ‘semantic wave spilt over from France and proved difficult to contain within precise musical channels.’ (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 75)

From the prefix, “post,” it may be construed that postmodernism either signifies a succession to, or a continuation and adaptation of modernism. A similar debate could also be taken up as to the meaning of “modernism” in order to effectively establish what
is being succeeded or modified. Carl Dahlhaus’s definition confines modernism to the years between 1890 and 1910, limiting it to time of “the ‘breakthrough’ of Mahler, Strauss, and Debussy.” Daniel Albright dates modernism in music from Debussy’s *Afternoon of a Faun* (1894) to John Cage’s *Music of Changes* (1951), which he marks as the onset of postmodern music. Similarly, scholars do not agree when the origins of postmodernism begin. For example, Hermann Danuser pinpoints the origin of postmodernism dating back to the “premodernist” tendencies of George Rochberg, Krzysztof Penderecki, Ladislav Kupkovic, and the younger generation of West German composers in the 1970s. For the sake of brevity, this document will assume a definition by the broader consensus that modernism may be understood today (at least in narrow terms) “as an umbrella term for new music [of the twentieth-century] (serial, post-serial, and avant-garde)” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 77).

Before characterizing postmodernism as it relates to music, it is important to note that the advent of postmodernism in music followed the phenomenon in literature, architecture, the visual arts, and other fields. Regarding the origins of postmodernism in literature and architecture, Clendinning writes,

…writers about literary theory date the emergence of posmodernism in their discipline to the mid-1960s, books and articles from the 1970s and ‘80s by Jean Baudrillard, Jean Francois Lyotard, Fredric Jameson, and Linda Hutcheon are frequently cited as setting the direction of this trend in literary criticism. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 120)

Postmodernist trends began to appear in architecture around the same time and the origins are “usually dated to the publication of Robert Venturi’s *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* in 1966…” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 120)

Modernism in architecture has its roots in the German Bauhaus style of architecture beginning in the early twentieth-century, which exhibited flat roofs, cubic shapes, and
Some identify the origins of modernism in American architecture with the publication, *The International Style* (1932), by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. Clendinning pinpoints the beginnings in the 1920s and notes that it “was the leading style in architecture for most of the twentieth century” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 120-121). The International Style is typical of many of the skyscrapers found in large cities across America – rectangular, glass plated exterior, flat topped, with the functional purpose of maximizing volume. Order and unity both within and without was maintained. Venturi, known for his statement, “less is a bore,” expressed his boredom with the functional structures implemented in modernist architecture. He favored juxtaposing contradictions: traditional elements offset with unusual contrasts. One of his most famous works is a home built for his mother (*The Vanna Venturi House* - 1964). The house amalgamates symmetry and asymmetry and contemporary elements pitted against references to traditional architecture. Two large facades are symmetrically spaced. Each side contains five window frames that are asymmetrically placed. At the same time, the house is said to make reference to “Michaelangelo's Porta Pia in Rome, the Nymphaeum at Palladio, Alessandro Vittoria's Villa Barbaro at Maser, and Luigi Moretti's apartment house in Rome” (Craven, 2005, 1). Following Venturi’s model of complexity and contradiction, postmodernism in architecture became associated with “disunity, multiple meanings, playfulness, and emphasis on surface decoration.”

Postmodernism in music shares comparable traits with postmodernist architecture. Ihab Hassan noted some differences between modernism and postmodernism in music. The following list is extracted from his “Schematic Differences between Modernism and Postmodernism” and is incorporated into Timothy D. Taylor’s *Music and Musical*
Practices in Postmodernity (Lochhead and Auner, 2002, 94-95). It should be noted that Taylor includes the list, in part, to contend that such lists cannot fully delineate the complex issues that surround the topic. Taylor argues:

Such representations can lead...to problems, as if one can approach any cultural form or event with a checklist: Postmodern? yes/no. (Lochhead and Auner, 2002, 94-95)

I incorporate the list here, because I feel that it helps to illustrate parallels between postmodern architecture and music.

“Schematic Differences between Modernism and Postmodernism” [extract] (Hassan 1987, 91-92)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modernism</th>
<th>Postmodernism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design [and Control]</td>
<td>Chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determinacy</td>
<td>Indeterminacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form (conjunctive, closed)</td>
<td>Anti-form (disjunctive, open)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>Antithesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphysics</td>
<td>Irony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The order and unity for which Venturi held disdain, and his desire for complexity and contradiction is paralleled in music by the contrast between the control in serialism and the freedom offered by chance procedure and indeterminacy. This is likely the reason that Daniel Albright and other scholars seek to place Cage as the catalyst for postmodernism in music, due to Cage’s introduction of chance and indeterminate philosophy into western music.

Despite Taylor’s insightful “anti-list” warning, I choose to cite another list by Jonathan Kramer, as I believe that it represents some of the contemporary trends in musical postmodernism. However, Kramer expressing a similar sentiment as Taylor cautions,
Not many pieces exhibit all these traits, and thus it is futile to label a work as exclusively postmodern. Also, I would find it difficult to locate a work that exhibits none of these traits. I caution the reader, therefore, against using these sixteen traits as a checklist to help identify a given composition as postmodern or not: postmodern music is not a neat category with rigid boundaries. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 17)

Kramer’s list of sixteen common traits in musical postmodernism:

1. is not simply a repudiation of modernism or its continuation, but has aspects of both a break and an extension;
2. is, on some level and in some way, ironic;
3. does not respect boundaries between sonorities and procedures of the past and of the present;
4. challenges barriers between “high” and “low” styles;
5. shows disdain for the often unquestioned value of structural unity;
6. questions the mutual exclusivity of elitist and populist values;
7. avoids totalizing forms (e.g., does not want entire pieces to be tonal or serial or cast in a prescribed formal mold);
8. considers music not as autonomous but as relevant to cultural, social, and political contexts;
9. includes quotations of or references to music of many traditions and cultures;
10. considers technology not only as a way to preserve and transmit music but also as deeply implicated in the production and essence of music;
11. embraces contradiction;
12. distrusts binary oppositions;
13. includes fragmentations and discontinuities;
14. encompasses pluralism and eclecticism;
15. presents multiple meanings and multiple temporalities;
16. locates meaning and even structure in listeners, more than in scores, performances, or composers. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 16-17)

Kramer’s list draws another parallel to Venturi’s view of postmodern architecture: embracing contradiction (number 11). Akin to the topic of embracing contradiction, is the pervasive use of collage and quotation technique fostered by several postmodern composers.

Within “classical music,” Rochberg’s Third String Quartet and Zorn’s Forbidden Fruit serve as an archetype and a prototype for collage techniques in postmodern music. Rochberg’s early attempts to amalgamate tonality with more dissonant harmonies have been viewed by some to be a prime representation of a “reactionary neoconservative” type of postmodernism. Mark Berry warns that such a stance does not take into account
the “radical” historical significance of the piece. Rochberg had formerly been a serial
composer “working within a post-Schoenbergen atonal style and under the shadow of
composers like Milton Babbit” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 245). Just as modernism in
architecture favored order and unity, modernist ideology in music prided itself on
“consistency and organicism”¹² in terms of pitch structure, texture, and form. What is so
radical about Rochberg’s Third String Quartet is that it drastically challenged both of
these modernist tenets. The first movement contains six different musical units that are
either performed in succession or are juxtaposed at times. Each unit is characterized by
contrasting gestures. Some of the material is aggressive and atonal while other units are
more tonal, like the “chorale in B major played in double-stops by the viola and cello”
(Berry 2002, 245). It was the fact that the former serial composer turned towards an
aesthetic that embraced harmonic plurality (including a return to tonality), contradicting
textures, and fragmented forms that created such controversy.

One of the important traits associated with this pluralism is Rochberg’s concept of
ars combinatoria. Berry writes,

*ars combinatoria* amounts to a critical commentary on the accepted
teleological approach to history and its implications in the study of music.
When musicians develop a teleological view toward music, they assign
particular works to the epoch of their creation and ignore their validity as
cultural forms in the present. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 238)

Rochberg challenged teleology by juxtaposing stylistic traits of different eras of the past
with his own music. Certainly, earlier composers had quoted other pieces in their music,
but not to the degree found in the Third String Quartet. Rochberg explained his thought
process stating:
I stand in a circle of time, not a line. 360 degrees of past, present, future. All around me. I can look in any direction I want to. Bella Vista. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 238) (Rochberg [1969] 1984, 158)

It should be mentioned that in the Third String Quartet, the references to older music are not actual quotations. Rather, they evoke the stylistic world of particular composers. Berry explains the allusion to other composers’ styles:

At almost every point in the quartet, one can compare what is heard to other music in the western classical repertoire: non-tonal passages evoke the work of such composers as Bartok, Stravinsky, and Schoenberg, while other sections incorporating common practice tonality are written in styles characteristic of Beethoven and Mahler. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 243)

As a side note, the “neoconservative” style of Rochberg became more established in his later string quartets (e.g., the Sixth String Quartet) as the harmonic language became more consistently tonal and his historical references became actual quotations.

The design of John Zorn’s Forbidden Fruit bears some similarity to Rochberg’s Third String Quartet. Like the Third String Quartet, part of the premise of the piece is to exploit contradictions. The primary difference between the two is the radically increased degree of discontinuity and fragmentation in Forbidden Fruit, as well as the drastically inflamed intensity level of the music. Kramer, addressing what he views as the “radical” postmodern style, comments:

Listening to Forbidden Fruit can be as dizzying as it is electrifying. You never know what is coming next, nor when. The stylistic juxtapositions are amazingly bold. If there is any discernible thread of continuity, the music would surely be more tame, more predictable, more ordinary. But there is not. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 236)

Berry continues:

Its contrasting musical excerpts constantly interrupt each other, precluding a regular temporal flow and destroying any pre-conceived expectations of how music should function: the “postmodern chaos” awakens listeners from their own complacency. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 236)
Zorn summarizes the compositional plan:

[the piece is] composed of sixty sections in all, four sets of twelve variations each, and twelve themes, all squeezed into ten minutes, this is perhaps my most compact and fast-moving piece to date. (Joost 2005)

Ironically, the result is not too unlike the textures found in the modernist’s klangfarbenmelodie technique, due to the never-ending textural contrast. The tones in such pieces as Webern’s Variations for Piano, Op. 27 or Pierre Boulez’s Structures Ia are constantly displaced to extreme registers. Almost every note is attacked differently and there is a constant fluctuation of dynamics from gesture to gesture or note to note. While each gesture generates a great deal of surprise, this perpetual surprise can ironically create a sense of expectation. In Forbidden Fruit, the textural changes are so drastic and occur so frequently that globally there is no sense of direction, no larger contrasting sections, and no sense of teleology. Like the jagged klangfarben melodies, fragmentation and discontinuity becomes the norm in Forbidden Fruit.

On a side note, another difference between the Third String Quartet and Forbidden Fruit is that the historical references in Forbidden Fruit are often actual quotations.

Composers in both commercial and “classical” music have made use of eclectic mixes from various sources. Because of this, certain fans and critics of popular music have sought to classify some popular artists as postmodern as well. For example, some websites that attempt to define and categorize postmodern music place George Rochberg, John Zorn, Luciano Berio, The Beatles, and Grandmaster Flash together on the same list.14 The Beatles are described in postmodern terms because they are considered rock music’s “first great eclectics,”15 and they make the list due primarily to their eclectic
instrumentation. For example, in “Eleanor Rigby,” a string quartet is used in lieu of a rhythm section, in “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds,” a harpsichord sound is paired with cloudy electronic sounds, and a sitar takes the place of the typical electric guitar in “Norwegian Wood.” Grandmaster Flash and other Rap/Hip-Hop artists find their way on the postmodern list due to their use of collage and quotation technique wherein sound samples are juxtaposed from disparate sources.

What is generally different between the examples found in popular music and those in “classical” music is that the former commonly maintains a continuous groove, while the latter frequently features some degree of rhythmic discontinuity. But this, of course, is not always true either, and is another reason why the prescribed “postmodern lists” can fall short. One example, Lost Objects, by Gordon, Lang, and Wolfe, is a “postminimalist” oratorio that features stasis and repetition, and there is none of the fragmentation that is characteristic of the prescribed “postmodern style.” David Brackett draws a similar conclusion by noting the stylistic contrast between Michael Daugherty’s Jackie O and David Lang’s Cheating, Lying, and Stealing. Daugherty’s comments in the liner notes for Jackie O demonstrate that the composer consciously applies “continual juxtaposition and intersection of different styles, rhythms, and melodies.” Lang’s piece, on the other hand, “represents the opposite extreme from Jackie O, relying on long sections in which the texture remains static” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 212). Jackie O cleanly aligns itself with the techniques found on Kramer’s list, while David Lang’s Cheating, Lying, and Stealing does not. Brackett observes, “if one associates ‘postmodernism’ only with stylistic eclecticism, one will miss the ways in which
‘Cheating’ and others of its ilk represent a reaction to modernism” (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 212).

The contradiction inherent to all of this classification is that while the spirit of the Bang on a Can composers is to create music that is new and defies categorization, the ideological pursuit of those who write about the music is to sort out, define, and categorize.

If I were to synthesize a definition (admittedly hypocritically) based on what has been written, it seems that postmodernism can be understood in three broad categories:

(1) Postmodern Ideology
(2) Postmodern Style
(3) Postmodern Era

(1) Postmodern Ideology. As with its usage in literature, postmodernism not only applies to a manner of thinking in the compositional process (both literary and musical), but is also “used as a way of reading or to describe an interpretative stance.”

In other words, just as literary criticism can approach a topic from a postmodern perspective, musical analysis and interpretation may choose to view music through a postmodern perspective. This should be done judiciously, however!

(2) Postmodernism has become associated with particular stylistic features. Among stylistic traits, the subject of plurality and eclecticism seems to be quite pervasive, and it is these two attributes that extend to many other postmodern qualities (i.e., challenging barriers between “high” and “low” styles, embracing contradiction, and fostering fragmentations and discontinuities). It should not be construed, however, that these are the defining features of postmodern music. Rather, an understanding of the ideology warrants the use of any stylistic trait.
Postmodernism can be interpreted as an era beginning at the time when a great deal of postmodern musical and analytical activity began to flourish in the late 1980s, and the 1990s to the present. I do feel that it would be erroneous to delineate 1951, as Albright suggests, as the onset of musical postmodernism because composers of this era were not speaking about their music in terms of postmodernism. Ironically, it is the recent postmodern idealism that has created such controversy over the origins of postmodernism as an era. As mentioned previously, the act of searching history for works that foster attributes resembling the current postmodern ideals can be very insightful, but should be done with caution. On the other hand, it is important to recognize the significance of Cage, Berio, Rochberg, and Penderecki (and others) as catalysts for a new way of thinking, for presenting new stylistic traits, and for their role in ushering in a new musical age.

It is interesting to note that most of the previously cited articles make no mention of George Crumb’s pluralism in “juxtaposing the seemingly incongruent” in works such as Black Angels or Ancient Voices of Children. Further, another problem with pinpointing Cage’s Music of Changes as the starting point for postmodern music is that earlier composers occasionally incorporated techniques that are exploited by the postmodernists. Much of Charles Ives’s music features pluralities (i.e., Three Places in New England), and Ravel’s Bolero has strong minimalist tendencies. While it may prove beneficial to conceptualize these works through postmodern ideology, it would be foolish to demarcate the beginnings of the postmodern “era” as 1914 (Three Places in New England). Likewise, despite the repetitive nature and concise use of materials in Ravel’s Bolero, the year 1928 makes an unlikely origin for minimalism.
How does the topic of postmodernism relate to my personal aesthetic? While I do not consciously seek to unite myself with any particular compositional, philosophical, or stylistic alliance (including postmodernism), I do tend to sympathize with some of the concepts associated with postmodernist ideology. As a backdrop, I refer again to another of Kramer’s lists. This time Kramer identifies reasons why many younger composers are drawn to postmodern values. I have selected a few that resemble some of my sentiments (either entirely or in part):

(2) Some composers react against the institutionalism of modernism—against, in other words, its position of power within the musical establishment…

(4) Some composers are…motivated by a desire to close the composer audience gap created – they believe – by the elitism of modernism.

(6) Some composers today know and enjoy popular music. While there were always “classical” composers who liked pop music, nowadays some composers who appreciate it (…Michael Daugherty) see no reason to exclude it from their own stylistic range – a further instance of composing what they love, regardless of how respectable it is.

(8) Some composers, like their predecessors in earlier eras, want to create music that is new and different. Yet they have become disillusioned with the avant-garde’s search for novel sounds, compositional strategies, and formal procedures, and with its adversarial stance with regard to tradition. Rather, they seek originality in the postmodernist acceptance of the past as part of the present, in disunifying fragmentation, in pluralism, and in multiplicity. (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 22-23)

I enjoy the music of the Schoenberg, Webern, Boulez, Babbitt, and Carter etc., and I own many recordings by these composers. However, I feel no desire to perpetuate the aesthetic that they championed decades before my birth. During my early student years, while sometimes feeling constrained to compose in certain aesthetics, I wondered how I could ever compose a piece in the rigidly structured style of Babbitt or Wuorinen and maintain any personal identity. This is partially why I feel that I can relate so well to some of the tenets of postmodernism. Kramer summarized my views on this matter:

Postmodernists like to feel that they can be whatever they wish. Their music can happily acknowledge the past…but they can nonetheless include modernist (and earlier) styles… (Lochhead and Auner 2002, 18).
On the other hand, I do not see myself as an appendage to the aesthetics fostered by Gordon, Lang, Wolfe, Zorn, or Daugherty, all of whom were born in the 1950s. They are each at least twelve years my senior and grew up listening to the popular music (among other things) of their generation. While I do enjoy some of the artists that were influential to them (e.g., Led Zeppelin) I do not hold quite the same passion for rock music that some of them do (though perhaps Zorn and I share more in common).

Where exactly do I stand, then, as a composer? I see myself with the ability to formulate my own aesthetic that draws upon what I have learned from my predecessors (and contemporaries) in a personal and individual way. The words of George Crumb are quite profound related to the topic of the future of music:

I am optimistic about the future of music. I frequently hear our present period described as uncertain, confused, chaotic. The two decades from 1950 to 1970 have been described as “the rise and fall of the musical avant-garde,” the implication being that nothing at all worthwhile was accomplished during those years. I have even heard the extremely pessimistic idea expressed by some composers that…all possible combinations have by now been exhausted and music has finally reached a dead end. My own feeling is that music can never cease evolving; it will continually reinvent the world in its own terms (Crumb 1980, 19).

To enumerate each of the factors that stimulated my compositional psyche as related to my aesthetic and Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band would be a lengthy ordeal. There are a few factors that come to mind, however. In my younger years, I developed an interest in the brilliant orchestrations of Joseph Schwantner with his exploitation of percussive metals, bombastic drum intrusions, and likewise, his harmonic language as a leader in the “resurgence of tonality” movement that was initiated in the 1970s. The sound of minimalism (i.e., Terry Riley and Steve Reich; not so much Philip Glass) affected the faster music in States and is manifested in the succinct approach to rhythm. Rather than utilizing additive or phase techniques that the minimalists favored, the concerto exhibits a process of circulating concise rhythmic gestures. George Crumb’s
technique of superimposing the “seemingly incongruent” was the primary catalyst behind the merger of the disparate worlds of the drum-set solo together with the contemplative chorale music from the second movement. A long-time personal favorite has been Witold Lutoslawski, and elements of his style are manifested in the concerto through the piling up of themes at major cadence points. During the pre-compositional work for the concerto, I felt a strong desire to unify the structure of the piece more than I had in any of my previous compositions. The positive example of serial composers in this regard (i.e., Charles Wuorinen and Milton Babbitt, et al), with their meticulous focus on structural detail, had an impact on some of the rhythmic detail as well as the formal design of the piece. In particular, Milton Babbitt’s time-point technique is executed in the slow pedal point section, and some of the rhythms are derived from the intervallic relationship of the chord and chord-scales. The irony here is that formerly, I had not felt a strong desire to use serial procedures, and much of the postmodern thought spoken of is centered in getting away from such rigid structuring. In this piece however, I hoped to try to incorporate serialism, but in my own way.

Finally, jazz obviously has been highly important in my compositional development. Particularly in this piece, the rhythmic palette, the concept of voicing chords, modal harmony (e.g., planing chords over a pedal point), and jazz theory together with the technique of pairing chord-scales are at the core of *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*.

Regarding the remainder of the dissertation paper, some portions are descriptive and analytical. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 deal primarily with the structural components in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*: the harmony, form, and rhythm.
Chapter 5 traces the relationship of the motivic strands that unfold in the piece. Chapter 7 discusses the process of generating and discarding material as a compositional procedure.

NOTES

1. *Correspondences* is a piece I composed for percussion and piano, 2001. Incidentally, Rone Sparrow and I premiered the piece at the University of North Texas, 2001.
4. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
9. Clendinning, in Lochhead and Auner 2002, p. 120.
11. Mark Berry discredit’s Jonathan Kramer’s view that Rochberg was a “reactionary neoconservative” in Lochhead and Auner 2002, p. 235
16. Ibid., pp. 227-228.
17. David Brackett discusses David Lang’s *Cheating, Lying, Stealing* in terms of postminimalism, noting the consistency of the work, as opposed to the discontinuity recognized in many postmodern works in Lochhead and Auner 2002, p. 212.
18. Ibid.
19. Clendinning, in Lochhead and Auner 2002, p. 120.
21. This idea is drawn from Jonathan Kramer in Lochhead and Auner 2002, p. 15.
Chapter 2

The Major-Seventh/Suspended-Fourth Chord

Nearly all of the harmonic and melodic material for the entire piece is derived from a single chord, the major-seven/suspended-fourth chord. The chord is presented in its basic construction below:

Example. 2.1

Given the nature of the commission, the chord seemed to be a suitable choice for governing the harmony, as it is a diatonic set that perhaps is not too unfamiliar to the untrained ear, yet sufficiently translucent to function as one component in additional harmonic combinations. There are three basic operations by which the harmony is implemented in the piece. The first is to simply invert the chord and apply different chord voicings. The second operation consists of planing the chord over pedal points and the third involves the pairing of compatible scales to the chord.

Like any chord, the chord may be inverted or arpeggiated from each scale degree as seen below:

Example. 2.2
From these four positions (root, first, second, and third inversion), a great deal of melodic material is generated in the piece, especially in the various marimba cadenzas and other soloistic passages. When the chord is sounded in one of these configurations alone, it generates the first, fourth, fifth, and seventh scale degrees. The chord has a strong association with the major scale, except that the major third is perpetually withheld. Passages that administer the chord in this state obviously will produce a low degree of harmonic tension.

In order to create a mechanism that would allow for moments of greater harmonic tension, and in opposition to the harmonic stasis that would exist by consistently sounding the diatonic set, a system was devised so that the chord could be planed upward in minor thirds over a pedal point. For example, if a lower voice continuously sounds a Db in the bass, the upper instruments may play the chord from the root, from the minor third, the flat-five, or from the diminished-seven. The following figure displays the technique:

Like the chord inversions, the four positions of chord planings may be inverted or arpeggiated in various combinations. As each chord plane establishes a four-note set, each may be permutated or arpeggiated in sixteen possible orderings, therefore supplying substantial possibilities for arpeggiated melodic material, especially when various levels
of chord planes are sounded in succession. It may also be noted that the chords need not appear in close position as each of these examples depict. They may be re-voiced or reshaped in a variety of ways that reinforce their intrinsic beauty.

At various points in the piece, the upper woodwinds arpeggiate the tones found in the chord planes. At times, the arpeggiations utilize only a portion of the pitches from each chord plane. This is depicted in Example 2.4 as performed by the flutes (mm. 46-47).

It may also be seen that in addition to omitting certain pitches in each chord plane, the chord planes are reordered and the pitches in chord planes 2 and 3 are permutated.

In conjunction with the chord inversions and the chord planes, the original chord may be paired with a few compatible scale types. For example, given the fact that the chord tones are 1,4,5,7, the chord is compatible with the Db major scale, the ascending melodic minor scale, and the harmonic minor scale. The diagram in Example 2.5 demonstrates.
In addition to these three scales, a synthetic scale was created that includes two augmented seconds. This scale, which emphasizes these starker intervals, was designed to provide even greater melodic and harmonic contrast from the diatonic set and its related diatonic scales. It should be noted that the synthetic scale yields a mirror image, being based on two augmented seconds that are followed by half steps in opposite directions.

Example 2.6

Taken altogether, the original chord with its three points of inversion; the design of the root-position chords that are sounded over pedal points and stacked up from the first, flat-third, flat-fifth, and diminished-seventh scale degrees; the chord spacings; and the addition of the four scale types provide a sizable harmonic palette from which almost all of the harmonic material of the piece is assembled. The ensuing discussion will address precisely how these materials are implemented at selected portions of the piece.

Many of the techniques spoken of are incorporated in the opening of the piece. At the outset of the first movement, a tri-chord is sounded in the flutes and percussion that outlines the tones (1,4,7) of the EMaj7(sus4) chord. The soloist performs the full chord on marimba an octave below. The EMaj7(sus4) is not the tonal center, however; rather, it represents the first level of planing based on Db, though the key center is withheld until later (mm. 1-5).
Various configurations of the chord are realized until the harmony shifts to the GMaj7\(^{(sus4)}\), which corresponds to the third plane addressed in Example 2.3 (mm.13-14).

Here, two simultaneous voicings of the chord obscure the basic tonality of the chord. The clarinets present an open spacing with the fourth scale degree as the lowest note (C), while the marimba plays the chord in root position, but the fifth is voiced an octave higher. This is seen in Example 2.8.
In the ensuing three measures, the soloist performs a short cadenza that outlines pitches from the E major scale (15-17).

Already within the first seventeen measures we see the manifestation of some of the basic methods of harmonic construction in the piece. The opening chord and following material exhibit harmony taken from the first level of planing, the various voicings depict the possibilities of reshaping the chord, and the marimba cadenza draws upon the compatible major scale.

As mentioned, the real key center has been withheld up to this point. The arrival of the key center (Db) is preceded by a forceful downward arpeggiation of the
EMaj7\(^{(sus4)}\), then DMaj7\(^{(sus4)}\), both arpeggiating root position chords. The DMaj7\(^{(sus4)}\) is the only chord so far that is not functional to the previously explained system. The chord works effectively, however, as a downward chromatic descent leading to the Db in half-step motion. This chromatic descent to the “root” strengthens the weight of the movement’s key center, as well as that of the entire piece. The harmony relating to the global form of the piece will be addressed in Chapter 3.

With the arrival of the Db pedal point sounded by the bass register instruments (including timpani), the music unfolds in a four-part texture. Each of the three layers corresponds to one of the methods of harmonic construction mentioned previously. In short, the layers in the texture for mm. 23-51 can be described as follows:

1. The pedal point that continually re-strikes the root.
2. A rhythmically offset and sustained layer distinguished by its forte-piano attacks. This layer employs the pitches derived from the harmonic minor scale.
3. Upper register melodic chord arpeggiations performed by the high woodwinds and the glockenspiel. The melodic material is related to the chords in the harmonic planes.
4. Violent percussive outbursts that are performed on the tom-toms.

Once the Db pedal establishes the key center, the harmony in the second layer abandons the chord structures that lend themselves to major tonalities and begins to produce various interval stacks based on the harmonic minor mode. The first of such interval stacks is illustrated below (mm. 26-29).

Example. 2.10
Incidentally, if this chord was configured with E as the “root,” the result is strikingly similar to the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord. The difference is the presence of the flat-six in the harmonic minor configuration as opposed to the fifth in the EMajor7[sus4] chord. Example 2.11 displays the similarity between the two.

Example 2.11

(Harmonic Minor Configuration – mm. 26-29) EMajor7[sus4]

As may be seen in Example 2.11, the harmony in this portion of the movement remains sonically consistent with the opening material, but by slightly modifying the interval stack, the new material is delineated from the former, and the greater harmonic tension enhances the sense of harmonic instability.

Example 2.3 defines the nature of the chord planes and Examples 2.5 and 2.6 illustrate how different scales correspond to the major-seventh, suspended-fourth chord. Example 2.5 depicts how the chord planes are executed in a melodic line, Example 2.8 shows how the chord may be voiced in unusual ways, and Example 2.9 demonstrates arpeggiated material based on the major scale. However, it has not yet been explained how these materials may be combined into a single chord stack. Between mm. 52-59, three large pyramid structures are formed. The third pyramid juxtaposes tones from the harmonic minor scale and two chords from the chord planes above the key center (mm. 58-59).
Taken all together, the chord renders ten different pitches simultaneously. It is in this manner that a great deal of harmonic variety is achieved. In its bare formation, the major-seventh/suspended fourth chord offers a low level of harmonic tension. Likewise, the configurations that emphasize the tones in the major scale obviously, in turn, produce a high level of diatonicism. Nonetheless, when the scale tones converge with the pitches in the chord planes, there is a greater opportunity for unusual combinations, and a higher level of harmonic tension may be achieved.

One final point of interest relating to the harmony in the first movement occurs in the large marimba cadenza (mm. 216-248). Referring to the cadenza, Sergeant Sparrow described it as “a study in major sevenths.” At this point the harmony is liberated and enacts various arpeggiations and planings of the chord, and not just those that are planed in minor thirds. The concept here is like that of the development sections in the symphonies of the Classical era. The chord progressions generally are freer to move to disparate keys in order to generate a greater degree of harmonic tension. Likewise, to heighten the developmental nature of the cadenza, the major sevenths are highlighted often and the fourth and fifth scale degrees are removed to elicit the starker interval of the seventh. The following extract illustrates how the fourth and fifth scale degrees are removed in order to emphasize the interval of the major seventh.
The second movement is entitled *Gray in C* not because the movement is written in C major, but rather because the entire movement functions around the harmonic design of the chord planes and compatible major scale that correlate with the key center “C.”

There are three main components that make up the harmony in the second movement.

1. The vibraphone solo and interjectory material that employ tri-chords derived from the pitches in the chord planes.
2. An ensemble chorale that assimilates the parallel planing technique that was performed by the brass in the latter part of the first movement wherein chord voicings are planed in parallel motion beneath a melodic line.
3. A multi-voice linear chromatic texture in between portions of the ensemble chorale.

One manner of implementing harmony in *Gray in C* is found in the vibraphone solo at the beginning of the movement. The vibraphone arpeggiates tri-chords drawn from the tones in the chord planes. The diagram below shows the compositional design (mm. 1-6).

In the first movement, each time the chord planes were arpeggiated, they were presented in the context of a pedal point or accompanying chord, and therefore, the arpeggiations were understood in relation to the accompanying harmonies. In the opening of the
second movement they are performed without accompaniment, and their chromatic nature is exposed. Herein lays the irony between the title and the music. While the movement adheres to the harmonic design of the piece and functions within the key center C, the introductory and interjectory music (played on the vibraphone) more closely resembles dodecophony than traditional tonality.

The premise of this movement is to accentuate the gray character associated with the program of the piece.\(^1\) It is manifested musically through the orchestration and the gradual expansion in both harmony and register. While the purpose of this chapter is not to discuss the orchestration, by comprehending its relationship to the harmony, a greater understanding may be achieved of how the two work together to create a gray musical atmosphere. Example 2.15 depicts the orchestral plan.

As depicted in the diagram, the accumulation of forces begins with a single instrument and gradually combines instruments until the climax. Following the climax, the orchestration unfolds in the inverse order, but in a much shorter timeframe. It is important to note that the orchestration is explicitly designed to not incorporate frequent timbral shifts, as in the more traditional manner of orchestrating. Instead, the program is enhanced by the weight added by gradually amassing instruments. In this manner, the
orchestration is additive, as opposed to being organized around interchanging instrumental groups.

The additive orchestration is complimented by the gradual expansion of harmony and register in the chord voicings. Like the orchestration, the harmony and voicings gradually spread out until the climax point in m. 81 by adding notes to the chords and extending to higher and lower registers. As the orchestration begins to gradually reduce forces after the climax, likewise, there is a reduction in harmony (i.e., fewer pitches per chord) and the voicings contract into a smaller range.

As mentioned, the main technique featured in the chorale is that of parallel planing. The melodic line is derived from the bass clarinet solo in States (mm. 138-145) and various voicings based on the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord are planed beneath in parallel motion. Like the use of tri-chords in the vibraphone solo (Gray in C mm. 1-11), the opening phrase of the chorale begins with a tri-chord that omits the fifth from the major-seventh/suspended fourth chord. Each phrase of the chorale draws upon a particular voicing of the chord. The first way that the chord is expanded is by applying block chords; a technique used by many jazz arrangers and composers. The technique consists of doubling the top note an octave lower. Another voicing that is commonly used in conjunction with block chords is the drop-two voicing. This refers to taking the second highest note and placing it an octave below. As the movement progresses towards the climax, the block and drop-two voicings continue to form the basis for many of the chords, and scale tones are added and are also sometimes dropped at the octave. Appendix A illustrates the transformation of the voicings from their most compressed state as a tri-chord to their full expansion at the climax (m. 81).
The third type of harmony incorporated in *Gray in C* is found in the multi-voice linear chromatic textures that are interjected between portions of the ensemble chorale beginning at m. 35. This is the only melodic or harmonic material in the entire piece that is not directly related to the original chord. Here, individual lines wander in a mostly stepwise fashion, either descending or ascending, and the texture becomes momentarily fugal. Harmonically, the chromatic lines resemble Wagner’s linear chromaticism in *Tristan und Isolde*, wherein the chromatic lines convey a sense of yearning or striving to reach the unobtainable. Wagner heightens the sense of harmonic instability through semitone voice leading that resolves to dominant chords or to various versions of the “Tristan Chord” (which is intrinsically unstable). The technique is similar to a jazz piano chromatic reharmonization technique that I learned from jazz pianist, Stefan Karlsson. For example, to reharmonize a song, certain fingers sustain portions of a particular chord while two or more other fingers wander chromatically until they reach the pitches of the succeeding chord. But immediately, once a portion of the next chord is sounded, two or more fingers chromatically are drawn away from the chord towards the subsequent chord. The fugal chromatic excursions help to provide variety from the parallel planing technique and the homophonic texture used in *Gray in C*.

Taken as a whole, the slow tempo, the additive orchestration, the gradual expanse of harmony due to the increasing use of extensions, the continuous outward expansion to wider registers, and the chromatic excursions all help to accentuate the gray character associated with the program of *Gray in C*.

The title of the third movement, *Retrospective/Prospective*, refers to its association with the work as a whole. The movement is retrospective in that,
harmonically, the music maintains a strict relationship to the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord, and considerable portions of the music apply parody technique, as the ensemble quotes or draws upon segments of the first two movements. The prospective aspect of the music lies in its obvious reference to jazz and the drastic change in character due to the use of the drum kit. The harmony found in this movement falls into two categories that relate to the material types.

1. Ensemble chord punches that punctuate soloistic material played on the drum kit.
2. Musical quotations or references to music from the earlier movements.

While the harmony of the third movement maintains a meticulous adherence to the harmonic foundation of the work, the main difference between the third movement and the earlier two is that the portions of the piece that interject chord punches do not always adhere to the system of the chord planes, and there is greater variety in voicing types. In general, the system of chord planes is sometimes incorporated, but there are more passing chords that are not based on the chord planes. Since the harmony of the third movement is an extension of the earlier two, only a few examples will be provided.

A good example of the variety in voicings is demonstrated at the beginning of the movement. In the first two movements, the chords were planed in minor thirds, however in the third movement, the harmony incorporates chords that are not limited to planing in thirds. For example, the first two chord punches reestablish the key center, C, as they fashion two versions of the CMaj7(sus4) chord. The chord planes related to the key center, C, are CMaj7(sus4), EbMaj7(sus4), GbMaj7(sus4), and AMaj7(sus4). The AbMaj7(sus4) is the flat-six of the key center and is not part of the chord plane system in C. Likewise, the chord voicings are more freely chosen and are not limited to block, drop-two, or to some
of the other voicings that permeated the second movement. Example 2.16 displays the first few chords and voicings in the third movement (mm. 3-8).

Example 2.16

Much time could be spent documenting other cases in the movement that demonstrate the various voicing types and passing chords utilized, but suffice it to say that in general, the voicings are expanded and draw upon more extensions from the major scale. Passing chords abound, and at certain points, the system of chord planing remains intact.

The second type of material that is incorporated in *Retrospective/Prospective* relates to the reuse of material. In an attempt to maintain global continuity in the piece, selected portions of the movement draw upon music heard previously. For example, the accompanying material played simultaneously during the drum solo heavily quotes portions of the chorale (mm. 61-84). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the concept is to “juxtapose the seemingly incongruent.” The drum solo, coming out of a jazzy opening, is pitted against the contemplative chorale. The drums occasionally imply a double-time tempo. The chorale, in a temporally free manner, is completely independent of the drum kit and plays at a slow tempo. By nature of reusing music from the chorale, the principles that governed the harmony in the second movement (e.g., parallel planing technique) are also applicable to the third movement.
NOTES

1. Chapter 5 discusses the program associated with each of the movement titles. *Gray in C* represents the gentle rain and the slow moving clouds that seemed to remain in Western Illinois for several months at the time this movement was composed.

2. Block chords are very common in compositions and arrangements by Sammy Nestico, Thad Jones, Frank Foster, Bill Holman etc. They are frequently used in saxophone soli sections in which the lead alto and baritone saxophones are doubled at the octave. See Rayburn Wright. *Inside the Score.* (Delevan, NY: Kendor Music, 1982).


Chapter 3

Form Related to the Chord

Much has been written thus far concerning the importance of the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord in relation to the harmony of the piece. In Chapter 2, the key centers were occasionally discussed to reveal some of the important correlations to the harmony. What has not yet been addressed is how the chord tones of the original chord serve as the large-scale points of arrival throughout the piece. In short, each of the key centers in the piece is drawn from one of the notes in the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord. Three schematics are included in the Appendix (B, C, and D) that delineate the internal forms of each movement with their corresponding key centers.

As can be seen in Appendix 1, the first large point of arrival following the opening material occurs on the root of the chord, Db (m. 23). The Db is emphasized by the slow pedal point heard in the low register instruments (mm. 23-59). The marimba solo interlude ushers in the second arrival point, Ab (mm. 64-65), corresponding to the fifth of the original chord. It should be noted that the points of arrival were ordered in such a fashion that they do not occur consecutively from the lowest to the highest pitch.

During the faster material, the Ab is sometimes emphasized, while in other moments the outlining of harmonies from the corresponding chord planes obscure the key center (mm. 65-120). The bass clarinet solo outlines the notes in the Ab major scale, but the strongest emphasis occurs during the pedal point section when the Ab is distributed between various bass register instruments (mm. 129-183).
The appearance of the fourth scale degree, Gb, occurs abruptly, without any preparatory passagework. It is, however, elusive, as the initial chord is derived from the first plane, AMaj7(sus4) (m. 184). This section also marks the return of the opening material from measure 1, which is compressed and amalgamated with the music derived from the first slow pedal point section. The pedal point material is now also compacted: when the two sections were first heard at the beginning of the piece, they spanned fifty-nine measures; when they recur in Gb, they span only sixteen measures.

The Gb key center is less obvious in the ensemble interludes (mm. 200-209) and in the marimba cadenza (mm. 216-248), but again, once the final fast pedal point enters, it becomes clear that the key center is still Gb (mm. 249-273). A short marimba fill prepares the final key center, C, and likewise, the arrival at the seventh of the DbMaj7(sus4) chord. The movement concludes triumphantly as the full ensemble strikes multi-octave Cs forty-four times. Though consisting of distinct sections, the teleological nature of States is the result of the unfolding of key areas derived from the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord.

The form of Gray in C is less sectionalized than that of States. The programmatic references of the titles will be discussed in Chapter 5, but the grayness alluded to in the title is enhanced by the absence of strong formal divisions, as well as the lack of clear arrival points within key centers. In this regard the music of the second movement is static, and the process of gradual change governs the perception of the form; in other words, the shape of the music is felt through the accumulated weight as forces amass.

Perhaps more significant than the internal form of Gray in C, is its affiliation with the form of the piece globally. As the central movement of the piece, it occupies the
center in the three-part form, and I approached the piece as though the second movement were the fulcrum in the global form. It is fitting, then, that music would prolong the highest pitch of the DbMaj7(sus4) chord while at the apex of the piece.

The internal form of *Retrospective/Prospective* is similar to that of *States*, in that it exhibits a sectionalized form. In terms of the large-scale plan, the points of arrival represent the mirror image of those in the first movement. In *States*, the key centers were presented in the following order: root, fifth, fourth, and seventh. In *Retrospective/Prospective*, they take place in retrograde: seventh, fourth, fifth, and root.

The opening section of *Retrospective/Prospective* warrants some explanation with regard to its affiliation with the form. One of the realities of live performance is that after extended periods of play, brass players need to empty condensation from their valves, wind players may need to swab out their instruments, and pages often need adjusting. Between movements, unless the composer calls for an “attaca,” there is usually a brief pause when these adjustments take place. The pause also allows the audience to cleanse the aural palette before the music proceeds. The attaca, on the other hand, propels the flow of the music between movements seamlessly, and sometimes, it can be difficult to decipher when one movement ends and the other begins. This performance ritual is generally understood and expected by active concertgoers. The opening of the third movement takes this performance ritual and incorporates it as part of the form to surprise the audience when the music begins. While the end of the second movement does not call for an attaca segue, the opening of the third movement requests that the players either empty their valves, swab, tune, or quietly rehearse passages as part of the piece. The soloist also plays fills and acts as if he is checking the drum kit. Because it is not
common practice to rehearse passages between movements, audience members may feel uncertain as to why the program indicates a third movement, but the performers act as if they are warming up. In the midst of the “warming up,” the soloist aggressively plays time on the kit and shortly thereafter the conductor cues the chord punches. In this manner, the traditional performance ritual is changed, and the audience members suddenly find themselves cast into the midst of the piece. What is significant about the opening of the third movement structurally is that the activities that are not normally considered to be music are integrated as part of the musical form.

At this point the key center, C, is reaffirmed as the chord punches enter, prolonging the seventh scale degree that permeated the second movement. As indicated in Appendix 3.3, the Gb key center is established with the entrance of the piano solo. However, both the C and Gb key centers are somewhat ambiguous as a result of extensive planing away from key centers. The strongest emphasis of any key center in the movement occurs with the entrance of the fifth (Ab) at the recapitulation of the pedal point material that is derived from the first movement (mm. 131-189). Ironically, the final return to the root, on the other hand, occurs quite subtly. The fact that the form integrates the tones of the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord as key centers is an important factor that contributes to a stronger sense of cohesiveness in the global form.
Chapter 4

Rhythm

The discussion in Chapter 2 focuses on the nature of the major-seventh, suspended-fourth chord and the assortment of ways that the melodic material and supporting harmonic structures are centered in the chord. The premise of Chapter 3 is to demonstrate how the tones found in the DbMaj7(sus4) chord serve as structural pillars, functioning as important key centers throughout the piece. Likewise, the subject matter of Chapter 4 resumes the discussion of how the major-seventh, suspended-fourth chord correlates to other parameters of the concerto, and will convey how certain portions of the piece incorporate rhythms that are derived from the chord. Specifically, this chapter will address four basic methods in which rhythms are applied and will recount how these methods assist in the unification of the work as a whole.

There are four basic operations from which much of the rhythm content of the concerto is based. Two of these operations directly correspond to the intervallic relationship of the original chord or the compatible scales, while the other two draw upon some of the other compositional influences that were noted in Chapter 1. The four rhythmic operations appear below:

1. Chord rhythms
2. Scale rhythms
3. Circulation of rhythmic fragments
4. Symmetrical Rhythms (including hemiola, polyrhythm, and polymeter)

In an effort to maintain structural unity between musical elements, an attempt was made to base some of the rhythms in the piece on the intervallic relationship of the major-
seventh, suspended-fourth chord and its corresponding inversions. For example, the pitch-classes of the root-position chord and the three inversions render the following numerical sequences.

**Chord Inversion Series**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inversion</th>
<th>Numerical Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Root position:</td>
<td>(0,5,7,11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First inversion:</td>
<td>(0,2,6,7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second inversion:</td>
<td>(0,4,5,10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third inversion:</td>
<td>(0,1,6,8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lowest tone in each inversion has been converted to “0” to facilitate placement on a “time-point” grid. While the intent was not to administer an entire piece based on strict integral serial procedure, the technique is similar to Milton Babbitt’s time-point system as carried out in his *Composition for Twelve Instruments*. In *Composition for Twelve Instruments*, Babbitt uses the numerical series of a pitch-class set as “time points within a bar,” and “the same set of integers therefore denotes…placement within a bar” (Schwartz and Godfrey 1993, 84-85). In Babbitt’s system, the measure is “divided into twelve equally spaced time-points, with the metrical signature…determined by the internal structure of the time-point set.”1 Because of this, Babbitt’s time-point technique favored meters in which the twelve units of the time-point could be contained within a single measure, such as 6/8 (12 sixteenth-notes) or 3/4 time (12 eighth-notes). A primary difference between Babbitt’s technique and the manner that the “time-point system” is enacted in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band* is that the starting points of each inversion need not coincide with the barlines, and the intervals merely correspond to the duration of each attack.
The time-point system is initiated in States with the entrance of the Db pedal point (mm. 25-47). At measure 23, the Db pedal begins with two measures that are not rhythmically serialized before the time-point pattern begins (mm. 23-24). The first appearance of the serialized rhythms delivers the chord inversion sequence in “prime form” (mm. 25-29). In other words, the rhythms follow the chord inversion series starting in root position, then first inversion, second inversion, and third inversion. Example 4.1 illustrates the procedure.

Example 4.1

Akin to the process of ordering rhythms based on the chord intervals and the chord inversions is the process of ordering the intervals based on the compatible scales. Appendix E illustrates the rhythmic patterns based on both the chord inversion series and the four compatible scales. Immediately following the first appearance of the serialized rhythms rendered in the prime form, the rhythms in the succeeding bars are based on the intervallic relationship of a portion of the major scale (mm. 30-31).

Example 4.2

mm. 30-31

The next strand of rhythms in the pedal point takes the chord inversion sequence and applies it in retrograde (mm. 32-36), while the ensuing three measures draw upon the ascending melodic minor scale (mm. 37-39).
mm. 32-36

Retrograde of the Chord Inversion Sequence

Example 4.3

mm. 37-39

Ascending Melodic Minor \( \text{d} = 1 \)

Example 4.4

The remaining portions of the Db pedal point consist of a strand of the chord inversion series in retrograde (mm. 40-44), another segment of the ascending melodic minor (mm. 45-47), and a rhythmically free final segment that builds to the close of the section. As can be seen, the pedal point alternates between segments that are rooted in the chord inversion sequence and segments that are derived from the compatible scales. It should be noted that the rhythms which draw upon the chord inversion sequence utilize the eighth-note as the unit, but with the scale rhythms, the quarter-note is the unit. Shifting between the eighth-note and quarter-note pulse helps to establish a nice balance between the slightly faster and slower segments.

While reflecting on the use of these techniques, an important discovery came to mind. Implementing integral serial procedures to assist with the production of rhythms proved most beneficial in music of slightly lesser consequence. In other words, the rhythms in the Db pedal point could have been slightly altered and it is plausible that they may have produced positive results. In other passages, a greater degree of control proved necessary, and the chord and scale rhythms produced stale results. But the systematic
generation of rhythms in the pedal point helped to avoid personal stylistic (or rhythmic) ruts while at the same time establishing greater cohesion between musical elements.

Finally, with the pedal point rhythms intact, the other layers in the texture (including the harmonic minor chord stacks and the suspended-fourth chord arpeggiations) were more easily assembled, and their rhythmic placement could therefore be chosen judiciously by the principles of good counterpoint.

The third rhythmic operation applied in the concerto consists of the circulation of short rhythmic fragments. While Chapter 6 addresses the topic of generating and discarding music as a compositional procedure, suffice it to say at present that the rhythmic material that occupies much of the faster music in States also has roots in serial procedures (mm. 65-120). Although the serial procedure was eventually discontinued, the music that remained in the final draft was strongly influenced by the process of having attempted to systematically order the fragments.

The marimba ushers in five different rhythmic patterns at the commencement of the faster material (mm. 65-73). These rhythms serve as the primary rhythmic cell for much of the remainder of the movement and are spread around in various configurations through the ensemble. As the piece continues, these rhythms resurface repeatedly in various ways, but towards the end of the first movement and in the second and third movements they are often disguised by augmentation or diminution. A tracing of the motivic strands will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter 5. The rhythmic patterns, taken from the marimba solo, are displayed below in Examples 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7.
The first rhythmic pattern spans one measure, and the second spans three beats before it cycles (mm. 65-66). In the subsequent measure, a fragment of the first rhythm is briefly sounded two times before the second rhythm returns in the next bar (mm. 67-68), also fragmented. After two iterations of rhythm 3, the fourth and fifth rhythms are performed before the final statement of rhythm 3. Thus, the rhythmic makeup of the faster material consists of the succession and alternation of rhythmic fragments.

To trace all of the exchanges between rhythmic fragments would result in a lengthy and tedious narrative. Briefly stated, the material that was inaugurated in the marimba solo becomes the secondary material and is transferred to the woodwinds, with
occasional punctuations from the brass (mm. 74-120). Like the material from which it is
derived, the music consists of the circulation of these rhythmic fragments. The marimba
interacts with the rhythmic backdrop, performing a variety of arpeggiations based on the
major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord.

Sonically, the music in this section more closely resembles minimalism than
serialism. What is “minimal” concerning the music is the fact that the rhythms are not
significantly developed. Rather, a few rhythmic fragments merely alternate, and the real
interest in the music lies in the interplay between the accompaniment and the soloist. It
should not be construed that the piece is minimalist in nature, however, in the common
sense of the word. The difference between the minimalism of Phillip Glass or Steve
Reich and the technique employed in States is that Philip Glass often exercised additive
techniques [gradually adding notes or rests to short, repetitive fragments], and Steve
Reich was known for his explorations in phasing techniques. The circulating rhythmic
fragments in States are neither additive, nor do they phase; but they are concise and
somewhat repetitive.

Another point of interest is the nature of the rhythms themselves. As mentioned
in Chapter 1, one of the influences on the music in States is jazz, particularly in the many
cross rhythms that are exploited. It is in this regard that the fourth rhythmic operation,
symmetrical rhythms (including hemiola and polyrhythm, and polymeter) comes into
play.

The Wikipedia encyclopedia defines hemiola as “a metrical pattern in which two
bars in triple time (3/2 or 3/4 for example) are articulated as if they were three bars in
duple time (2/2 or 2/4)” (Wikipedia, 2005). The same encyclopedia distinguishes the terms, “polyrhythm” and “hemiola”:

Polyrhythm is the simultaneous sounding of two or more independent rhythms. A simple example of a polyrhythm is 3 evenly-spaced notes against 2, with the 3-beat pattern being faster than the 2-beat pattern, so that they both take the same amount of time. Other simple polyrhythms are 3:4, 4:3, 5:4, 7:4 (Wikipedia, 2005).

According to these definitions, hemiola more commonly refers to a metrical pattern within a set of measures that is articulated in such a fashion that it insinuates a different meter, whereas the term, polyrhythm, refers more to the relationship between rhythms. Most of the rhythmic fragments employed in States generally fall into one of these categories. But the definitions provided by Wikipedia do not distinguish precisely what came to mind during the pre-compositional process. Instead, the intention was to design each of the rhythmic fragments in such a way that if a particular pattern were to persist uninterrupted, the pattern would create an aural effect whereby the original pulse would be disguised and a new quarter-note pulse would emerge at a different tempo. Therefore, the symmetrical rhythms in States create a sensation of constantly fluctuating “tempos” insinuated by the perpetual use of disparate hemiola, polyrhythms, or polymeter.

To exemplify, at measure 82 the woodwinds play rhythm 1 for four beats. Rhythm 1 presents two adjacent sixteenth notes followed by a stream of offbeat sixteenths. If the pattern were to continue without cessation, the offbeat sixteenths would begin to sound like downbeats, thereby instituting a new quarter-note pulse at twice the tempo. While rhythm 1 is not exactly an example of hemiola, it is highly syncopated and does suggest a new (double-time) tempo.
Rhythm 2 creates a similar effect. This pattern cycles every three beats despite the way it may be barred, and the way the rhythm is designed, four pulses are suggested in the space of three beats, yielding a 4:3 ratio. Like rhythm 1, this pattern is not a hemiola, but it is articulated in such a fashion that it produces the allusion that it is a faster tempo in another meter. Example 4.9 demonstrates one example of how the rhythm appears in the score and also shows how it is actually heard (m. 83).

Example 4.9

Though not explicitly addressed in the Wikipedia definition, a common rhythm which jazz musicians generally regard as a type of hemiola consists of four evenly-spaced notes in the time of three beats. This rhythm is often improvised in a jazz waltz, and there are two ways that it may be notated. The first is notated as quarter-notes as seen in Denny Zeitlin’s “Time Remembers One Time Once” in Example 4.10 (fourth bar):

Example 4.10
As an aside, this excerpt shows both types of hemiola; a 2/4 reference in 3/4 time (3rd bar of excerpt) (as indicated in the Wikipedia definition) and a 4/4 reference in 3/4 time (4th bar). The more literal way to notate the rhythm is the way rhythm 3 is written in *States* as seen in the woodwind part in Example 4.11.

Sometimes the rhythmic fragments are superimposed to create a polyrhythmic relationship between two or more fragments. At mm. 86-87, the woodwinds play two measures of rhythm 3; the 4:3 hemiola just mentioned, consisting of four evenly spaced attacks in the time of three beats. At the same time the marimba soloist performs sixteenth-note quintuplets. The quintuplet figure cycles every four beats and yields a 5:4 ratio, or five quintuplet figures in the space of four beats. The polyrhythmic relationship occurs in the correlation between the woodwind and marimba rhythms.

Example 4.11

Herein lies the rhythmic interest in this portion of the piece. In the space of six measures, rhythms 1, 2, and 3 are heard, (and the latter is coupled with the marimba quintuplet figures), and these are followed by syncopated punctuations. The result is a consistently
fluctuating and turbulent pulse that incessantly creates the element of surprise despite the repetitive circulation of rhythmic fragments.

After a brief interlude by the solo bass clarinet, rhythm 3 returns in the bass register of the (bass) marimba (mm. 129-131). Because the marimba is unaccompanied, it is a bit unclear whether the rhythm is still a 4:3 relationship from the previous tempo, or if a new tempo has actually been established. The uncertainty is briefly thwarted when the clarinets softly reassert rhythm 1 for four beats (m. 132). The marimba then confirms that the figure is still a hemiola by playing rhythm 3 again (mm. 133-134). The clarinets contest once more with the syncopated rhythm 4, but to no avail (mm. 133-135). The hemiola pattern found in rhythm 3 finally takes over, and the 4:3 ratio now bridges the former material with the metric modulation and a new quarter-note pulse at 144 beats per minute (mm. 136-137).

Example 4.12

mm. 136-137

After the metric modulation, a different kind of symmetrical rhythm emerges. Instead of being contained within the space of a single measure, here the rhythms of equal divisions are sometimes elongated over the space of a few measures. One example is found in the brass figure in which four groups of three beats are heard in the time of three groups of four beats (mm. 156-158). Example 4.13 illustrates:
This rhythm is not too different from rhythm 3, as both create a 4:3 relationship. In rhythm 3, the unit was the sixteenth-note; now the unit is elongated to the quarter-note. In this figure, the rhythm works perhaps more like a polymeter than a hemiola, as 3/4 time is suggested within a 4/4 meter. At the same time, a number of symmetrical rhythms are overlapped. One example is found in the tom-tom part, which superimposes a symmetrically spaced eighth-note triplet layer (a hemiola) possessing a 6:4 ratio (six attacks in the space of four beats) (mm. 158-159).

Thus, one important factor that helps to establish cohesiveness in the concerto is the extensive use of symmetrical rhythmic patterns which are either hemiola, polyrhythmic, polymetric, or highly syncopated figures that suggest different tempos. This statement should not be construed that hemiola, polyrhythm, and polymeter are
unifying features in and of themselves. But the fact that the rhythmic fragments (after their initial presentation in the marimba solo, mm. 65-73) recur with such frequency and permeate so much of the rhythmic detail for the remainder of the piece helps to maintain rhythmic unity throughout the concerto.

NOTES

Chapter 5

Programmatic Ideas as They Relate to Motivic Strands

One important element that helps to create global continuity relates to the use of motivic strands that recur throughout the piece. The use of these strands is linked to the programmatic nature of the movement titles. The first two movement titles of the concerto represent a bit of a travel log. States was composed over the course of the summer of 2004 during which time I traveled (by automobile) through ten different states to participate in various projects or activities: two recording sessions, a family reunion, and performances at the Crested Butte Summer Music Festival. I traveled through Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas, then Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and Kansas. Despite the monotony of the travel, I became interested in the structural layout of the terrain. I noticed that certain land formations from one state often appear to merge seamlessly into those of another until the elements of the former state begin to dissipate almost imperceptibly (e.g., Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas). Other times, however, drastic fluctuations in trajectory obtrusively disrupt the continuity of the terrain (e.g., western Colorado in contrast with eastern Colorado). The nature of the music in States is somewhat reflective of these characteristics. At times particular musical elements from earlier portions of the piece flow imperceptibly into later portions, while at other points, drastic textural contrasts take place.

When I returned to Illinois in August, it seemed to be rainy, or at least overcast, for months. It was during this period that I composed Gray. I was fortunate to have six
large windows in my teaching studio at Western Illinois University. The incessant gentle rain seemed to stimulate my psyche and enhance the somber sonic character of the movement during the compositional process.

The title of the third movement, *Retrospective/Prospective*, is indicative of the approach to the techniques implemented more than any affiliation with a particular program. True to the first part of the title (*Retrospective*), the music draws upon music from the earlier movements, including harmony, key centers, and the reuse of motivic strands. The “prospective” aspect of the title relates to the fact that the material is cast in an entirely new sonic environment (i.e., the drum kit and “time keeping”) while retaining a strict relationship to the piece’s compositional design.

One of the chief factors that facilitates the effect of musical entities imperceptibly flowing from one section to the next is the reuse of material, especially the motivic strands. Their relevance to this discussion is not just that they recur, however. Rather, a careful tracing of the strands reveals that they permeate nearly every facet of the piece after their original appearance. The motives are utilized in three broad ways. First, some of the motives/themes return as large sections recapitulate. But even these are usually re-orCHEstrated in new ways each time they return. Second, the rhythmic fragments from the marimba solo frequently return as one component in a multi-layered texture and function in a subsidiary role. Third, certain motives undergo significant transformation and develop in unusual ways.

Appendix F corresponds to the motives associated with large recurring sections, and the table shows the points of return in the first movement and in *Retrospective/Prospective*. Appendix G itemizes the reoccurrences of the rhythmic
fragments related to their first appearance in the marimba solo (mm. 65-73). What is unique about the way that the rhythmic fragments resurface is that they often do not return in a literal recapitulation; instead, the fragments are treated as individual elements that are interwoven into a multi-layered texture, sometimes masked by augmentation or diminution. To illustrate with just one example, rhythm fragment 1 (taken from the marimba solo m. 65) rematerializes several times in various contexts. At mm. 267-269, two versions are sounded concurrently. It is heard in the high woodwinds in augmentation (in eighth notes), and another version begins one beat later in sixteenth notes. Example 5.1 illustrates:

Example 5.1

(Rhythm 1 in augmentation in clarinets mm. 267-268)

(Rhythm 1, marimba mm. 267-269)

Neither strand is heard as a return of thematic material, as the two serve as secondary components in the larger texture. At the same time, fragments of rhythm 5 are spread throughout the low brass and timpani parts while the brass chords, drawn from the bass clarinet solo, serve as the principal layer (mm. 262-269). This is depicted in Example 5.2:
Therefore, while the two versions of rhythm 1 present a primary motive, their purpose here is to function in a supporting role.

Appendix H illustrates a strand of motives that undergoes significant transformations from their original state. As the diagram depicts, the bass clarinet solo draws upon the grace note figures that were first heard in the marimba solo, and this material generates several variants. The fragmented figure in mm. 149-151 draws upon the bass clarinet solo and transforms the melodic line with offset rhythms, inserted rests, and notes punctuated with short articulations. Another gesture anchored in the bass clarinet solo is a reorchestration of the line in a multi-octave spread (mm. 254-266). The bass clarinet solo also generates the principal line from which the brass chords are drawn, and together, the material presented in both the brass chords and the bass clarinet solo produce the substance that develops into the ensemble chorale in *Gray in C*. The ensemble chorale, the brass chords, and the bass clarinet quotations likewise reappear transformed in *Retrospective/Prospective*. Thus, it may be seen that much of the later material has strong ties to the marimba (mm. 65-73) and bass clarinet (mm. 121-129)
solos. More importantly, the motives are continually reshaped or reorchestrated, and it is this factor that contributes to the “imperceptible flow of elements” related to the program.

In Chapter 1, much of the discussion surrounding postmodernism related to the manner in which various composers employ collage technique. There is some similarity between the overlapping motives in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band* and the collage technique employed by some postmodernists. The obvious resemblance lies in the act of simultaneously overlaying disparate strands of music. On the other hand, the primary difference between the juxtaposition of themes in a work such as Zorn’s *Forbidden Fruit* and the overlapping themes in the concerto is that many of Zorn’s quotations are taken from outside sources, whereas the juxtapositions in the concerto are taken from motives within the piece.
Scholars have observed that few of Mozart’s manuscripts were extensively revised. No doubt it is impressive that such craft and expertise could be achieved in his works from the onset of the compositional process, especially given the vast body of music he produced. For example, regarding the efficiency with which the Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major, K. 467 was completed, Jan LaRue wrote:

> Within four short weeks…Mozart conceived and wrote down 83 pages of music, many of them elaborately scored in his small, clear hand, with scrupulously specific indications of slurs, staccatos, crescendos, sforzatos, and other dynamics – but amazingly few corrections or revisions. Just to copy the concerto would take many musicians a full month; and considering the initial creative effort, one might think it would have occupied Mozart’s every waking moment. (LaRue 1985, viii)¹

On the other hand, Beethoven significantly revised his music and discarded portions that did not meet his compositional goals. For instance, the sketches for the Quartet No. 14 Op. 131 in C# minor generate three times the material that actually survives in the piece.² Sieghard Brandenburg noted that, “Beethoven’s autographs contain corrections and rejected versions of the musical text to an incomparably greater extent that those of Haydn and Mozart” (Brandenburg 1980, 278).³ Consequently, Beethoven was significantly less prolific than Mozart or Haydn in terms of number of the completed works.
There is an obvious disparity when these figures are compared with the output of Haydn and Mozart: 9 symphonies, for example, to Haydn’s 100 or Mozart’s 50. A partial explanation, of course, is that Beethoven’s symphonies are longer and grander; but another reason is that Beethoven wrote music with great difficulty (Grout 1996, 625).

In light of the praise that surrounds the work of a composer who produces a prodigious amount of material, Beethoven’s “difficulty” in composing could, for some, reduce him to a lower tier. But this sort of praise does not take into account the composer’s individual philosophy or work habits. It seems that Mozart’s compositional procedure was centered in rapidly transcribing the numerous melodies and harmonies that ran through his mind without contemplating at length the possibilities of challenging the accepted formal structures of his era (e.g., sonata form, minuet and trio form etc.)

Beethoven, in contrast, appeared to be dissatisfied within the confines of these forms in the strict sense, and began to seek ways to expand their boundaries (e.g., the Eroica Symphony) in order to exploit his expressive goals. Considering Beethoven’s process of generating and purging material, Erwin Stein asserted, “through Beethoven music learned to think” (Nottley 2000, 245).

Since Beethoven, composers have sought new ways to achieve a balance between structure and expression. For many, the process of experimentation has been important in order to find an individual link between the two. The work of John Cage is a prime example in this regard. Like the serial composers of his day, Cage fostered a strong belief that tightness of structure was an essential part of the music. He delineated the relationship between structure and expression in terms of “law and freedom.”
In his writings prior to 1950, Cage had insisted that musical structure should be the realm of discipline—a “law element.” But as strongly as he felt that structure must be the self-negating discipline of music, equally as strong was his belief that musical form (i.e., musical content) should be the realm of expressivity in music—a “freedom element.” (Pritchett 1993, 61)

Cage’s Sonatas and Interludes (1948) are an interesting example in this respect. In terms of structure, the sonatas are rigorously organized, especially rhythmically. Each sonata is in binary form, but more importantly (to Cage), is that the “sounds, rhythmic figures, and dynamic values...are...placed within a strict framework of proportions: 3:5:6\(3/4\):6\(3/4\):5:3\(1/8\), for a total of 29\(5/8\)” (Schwartz and Godfrey 1993, 71). Philosophically, the music reflects Cage’s interest in Eastern philosophy, and music of non-Western cultures. What is communicated to the audience, however, are simply the interesting timbres created by inserting various objects into the piano strings.

Cage’s understanding of the connection between law and freedom came about gradually through experimentation and evolved over time. For instance, the degree of control and methodology for controlling structure progressed from the time that Cage began the Concerto for Prepared Piano and Chamber Orchestra (1950-51) through the completion of Music of Changes (1951). Due in part to his growing interest in Buddhist philosophy, since the late 1940s Cage had begun to feel a need to negate Western harmony in favor of harmonic progressions that are not teleological in nature. But he had not previously applied such non-goal oriented thought to other parameters of his music. Further, the concerto was Cage’s first attempt to create a “self-negating musical form” wherein the sounds were organized through an external device. The correlation between law and freedom was mitigated through the relationship between the piano soloist and the ensemble. The ensemble represents the control, being carefully ordered through a chart

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system in which certain rows correspond to particular instruments and high or low sounds. The piano music, on the other hand, “‘came from the heart,’ composed in…[a] quasi-improvisational way that Cage had used throughout the 1940s” (Pritchett 1993, 62). There was no systematic method for assigning sounds to the rhythm, however, and the rhythmic content was therefore generated by intuition. In the first two movements, Cage applied “mind control,” and chose different paths around the chart to establish the flow of sounds. By the third movement, Cage began to develop a new mechanism that would incorporate the use of chance as an organizational tool and assist in plotting paths on the chart. But this idea was not intact during the pre-compositional stages. James Pritchett explains:

The use of chance within the chart technique within the concerto was something of an afterthought; Cage realized that the technique of materials organized into charts and ordered by chance was capable of a much greater flexibility…(Pritchett 1993, 78)

Around the same time, Cage met Morton Feldman and discovered the I Ching, both of which expanded his concept of law and freedom through chance procedures. Feldman’s Projections and Intersections had a particularly strong impact on Cage. In Projection 1 for solo cello, Feldman incorporated graphic notation on the score in which empty boxes designate different timbres and pitch ranges of high, medium, or low, while the precise pitch choice is left to the performer. The concept of allowing the performer to participate in some of the precise musical choices seemed to open up new possibilities for Cage pertaining to freedom. The I Ching, or Chinese Book of Changes, given to him by his student, Christian Wolff. It was at this point that Cage adapted his chart technique to include the use of the I Ching in the third movement.8

Like Feldman’s model, Cage’s first use of chance was fairly general and
corresponded to sound, silence and register. James Pritchett explained Cage’s method:

The *I Ching* was also used to determine the continuity of sounds and silences in the third movement. Cage first chose a collection of thirty-two simple moves that could be made on the sound chart. Then he consulted the *I Ching* once for each measure, noting the hexagram numbers obtained… Each number represented a single sound or silence: thirty-two possible numbers were assigned to the thirty-two moves (thus resulting in sounds), while the remaining thirty-two hexagrams caused silences to occur. Durations were kept simple: if only one number had been obtained for a measure, then the sound or silence filled the measure. (Pritchett 1993, 78)

To utilize the *I Ching*, three coins were tossed to determine the path between the hexagrams. It was with this tossing of coins that Cage initiated his use of chance procedures and expanded his negation of self-will in the compositional process.⁹

In *Music of Changes* (1951), Cage further extended the use of chance to correlate not only to sound, but to duration and dynamics as well. The procedure was clarified so that the charts containing musical elements (i.e., sound, durations, and dynamics) would directly coincide with the cells in the *Book of Changes*. Cage again tossed coins to select a number in the *Book of Changes*, and the corresponding cell on the musical charts were then located.¹⁰ With the direct connection between the musical elements charts, the *I Ching*, and the negation of self-will through the tossing of coins, Cage discovered a unique liaison between structure and freedom. The musical elements were strictly ordered, but by implementing chance, “combinations [were created] that Cage would never have considered himself, thus widening the scope of the piece” (Pritchett 1993, 79).

Thus, it can be seen that Cage’s method for coordinating structure and expression gradually developed over time. In *Sonatas and Interludes*, law (structure) had been scrupulously maintained through the strictly ordered rhythmic proportions. In the Concerto for Prepared Piano and Chamber Orchestra, Cage’s methods changed. The
orchestral music represented law through chart system, while the piano music was freely composed. In *Music of Changes*, the organization of law and freedom came to fruition with the consultation of the *Book of Changes* for structure and the tossing of coins to negate self-will.

In other fields, such as science and medicine, experimentation is also regarded as a necessary step in the discovery process. Regarding Thomas Edison’s experiments, “it is said he tried over 6,000 different carbonized plant fibers, looking for a carbon filament for his light bulb,” and “while working on the nickel/iron storage battery, he performed 10,296 experiments” (Jewel 1998). Similarly, Dr. Jonas Salk’s research experiments continued for seven years before a vaccine for the poliovirus was developed in 1954.¹¹

In my personal quest for balancing structure and expression, experimentation and the process of elimination proved to be important parts in the compositional procedure in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*. As noted in Chapter 5, much of the thematic material that exists in the latter part of *States* and in the second and third movements was generated in mm. 65-120. It was this section of the piece that caused the most deliberation and “difficulty” during the pre-compositional stages. When the piece was conceived in its “raw state,”¹² the rhythms that now occupy the music of this section came strongly to mind. It was anticipated in the early developmental stages of the piece that the tones in the major-seventh/suspended-fourth chord would have a strong correlation with the rhythms and the form. A preliminary attempt was made to utilize the intervals from the chord inversion sequence and the scales to generate the rhythms that would coincide with the music that had been imagined in the raw state. The attempt proved unfruitful, as the rhythms were not nearly as interesting as those imagined.
Consequently, the “raw state” rhythms were notated and grouped into fragments. It was at this point that it was determined that the fragments could potentially produce positive results if the fragments were systematically ordered (an attempt to avoid compositional habits and negate self-will). Four or five attempts were made to systematically order the fragments, but none produced a completely desirable outcome when coupled with the marimba solo material. In the end, I concluded that while some of the systematic orderings of the fragments were actually quite interesting, a greater degree of flexibility would be necessary in order to coordinate the solo material with the rhythmic backdrop. It was then determined to draw upon some of the systematic orderings, but to allow them to be manipulated by composer instinct (or “mind control”)

During the ensuing portion of States (what is now the bass clarinet solo and the Ab pedal point mm. 121-183), a previous attempt had been made to engage an isorhythmic technique similar to that incorporated in the first movement of Messiaen’s Quartet for the End of Time. In the piano music of Messiaen’s quartet, two cycles function concurrently. The rhythmic cycle consists of a seventeen-unit rhythmic ostinato while the chord series cycles every twenty-nine chords. In States, the pitch structure would draw upon the tones in the chord inversion sequence and order them in retrograde. The rhythms were drafted from the Db pedal point with rests inserted to produce a bit of a disconnected feel. In total, the pitch structure would cycle every sixteen notes, and the rhythms would cycle after every 24 eighth notes or rests. This section was notated and
the music produced positive results. However, after pondering what had been written, and despite the pleasing outcome, I realized that this music was almost an exact replica of a portion of one of my earlier pieces. Considering my attempts to coordinate the structural and expressive aspects of the music, I remembered that Edgar Varèse felt it was a sign of compositional weakness to rely on a system.14 Sometime later, after much reflection, the simple idea came for the bass clarinet solo, which exploits grace note figures in the high register. As noted in Diagram 5, the bass clarinet solo is anchored in the grace note figures heard in the marimba (mm. 65-73), and from the bass clarinet solo, much of the thematic material for the remainder of the piece is generated.

While several of the early attempts to structure the piece were not retained in the final draft, the process of generating and discarding music served in the discovery of new compositional ideas that otherwise may not have come to fruition. As Beethoven generated an excess of material and discarded portions that did not best serve his pieces, and as Cage experimented with a number of methods to achieve a balance between structure and “expressivity”15 his music, much was learned from the generated and discarded music.
NOTES


7. ibid, p. 63.

8. ibid. p. 70.

9. ibid.

10. ibid, p. 78.


13. James Pritchett’s way of describing Cage’s method of choosing sounds from his sound chart in Concerto for Prepared Piano and Chamber Orchestra.


15. Cage’s term.
Appendix A

The Transformation of Chord Voicings in *Gray in C*
The Transformation of Chord Voicings in *Gray in C*
- Chord Voicings That Are Planned in Parallel Motion Beneath the Melody -
(the melody notes remain diatonic to the key of C major)

**Opening tri-chord** - taken from the major-seventh, suspended fourth chord (fifth omitted)

mm. 12-26

![Diagram of Opening tri-chord](image)

**Block voicing** – the melody doubled at the octave

mm. 27-30

![Diagram of Block voicing](image)

**Drop-two** – the second highest note is lowered an octave

mm. 30-35

![Diagram of Drop-two voicing](image)

Add 9 and dropped an octave, drop-two [the 5th]

m. 40

![Diagram of Add 9 and drop-two](image)

Add 9 and dropped, block, drop-two

m. 49

![Diagram of Add 9 and dropped, block, drop-two](image)

**Chord stack at the climax** - amalgamating each of the former voicing types and adding tones

m. 81

![Diagram of Chord stack at the climax](image)
Appendix B

Formal Features in States
FORMAL FEATURES IN *STATES*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPENING MATERIAL</th>
<th>PEDAL POINT SECTION</th>
<th>SOLO</th>
<th>FASTER MATERIAL</th>
<th>SOLO</th>
<th>PEDAL POINT SECTION</th>
<th>SLOW PEDAL POINT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHORD PLANES</td>
<td>CHORD PLANE ARPEGGIATION</td>
<td>INTERLUDE</td>
<td>RHYTHMIC PATTERN</td>
<td>INTERLUDE</td>
<td>OVERLAPPING THEMES</td>
<td>MATERIAL FROM MM. 23-59</td>
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<td>HARMONIC MINOR INT. STACKS</td>
<td>KEY CENTER ESTABLISHED</td>
<td>CIRCULATION</td>
<td>FRAGMENTED SAX LINES</td>
<td>BRASS PLANING</td>
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<td>MARIMBA SOLOISTIC</td>
<td>OBTRUSIVE TOM-TOMS</td>
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mm. 1-22 | mm. 23-59 | mm. 60-64 | mm. 65-120 | mm. 121-8 | mm. 129-183 | mm. 184-199 |

[Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] |
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<td>(seventh)</td>
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<th>MARIMBA CADENZA</th>
<th>FAST PEDAL POINT</th>
<th>MARIMBA BREAK</th>
<th>CODA</th>
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<tr>
<td>Eb Maj7(sus4)/D – (THE FOURTH PLANE IN Gb)</td>
<td>HARMONICALLY UNSTABLE DEVELOPMENTAL</td>
<td>MULTI-LAYERED TEXTURE OVERLAPPING THEME TECHNIQUE</td>
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mm. 200-209 | mm. 216-248 | mm. 249-273 | mm. 274-5 | mm. 276-290 |

[Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | [Chord Tones] | 
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Appendix C

Formal Features in *Gray in C*
FORMAL FEATURES IN *GRAY IN C*

(Key Center – seventh of the DbMaj7(sus4))

**OPENING**
- VIBRAPHONE SOLO
  - GbMaj7(sus4)
  - EbMaj7(sus4)
  - CMaj7(sus4)
  - mm. 1-11

**PARALLEL PLANING**
- GROUP 1 – TPTS., HNS., SAXES., BS. CL.
  - mm. 12-30

**PARALLEL PLANING VS. CHROMATIC EXCURSIONS**
- GROUP 1 + CLS., OBS.
  - mm. 31-34

**CLIMATIC**
- FULL WIND CONSORT
  - (mm. 59)
  - PERC. ADDED
  - mm. 49-64
  - mm. 65-74
  - mm. 75-80

(Intensity Related to Weight and Loudness)

**CLIMAX THEN CONTRACTION**
- GROUP 1 – TPTS., HNS., SAXES., BS. CL.
  - mm. 81-87

**ENDING**
- VIBRAPHONE SOLO
  - CMaj7(sus4)
  - EbMaj7(sus4)
  - GbMaj7(sus4)
  - mm. 88-91

mm. 92-97
Appendix D

Formal Features in *Retrospective/Prospective*
FORMAL FEATURES IN RETROSPECTIVE/PROSPECTIVE

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<tr>
<th>FORMAL FEATURES</th>
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<td>NOISE AND CHANGE</td>
<td>CHORD PUNCHES</td>
<td>RHYTHM</td>
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<td>IN PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>HEMIOLA</td>
<td>SECTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>RITUAL</td>
<td>SOLOISTIC</td>
<td>HALF-TIME SWING</td>
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<td>SURPRISE BEGINNING</td>
<td>DRUMMING</td>
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<th>mm. 59-60</th>
<th>mm. 61-84</th>
<th>mm. 85-130</th>
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<td>C (seventh)</td>
<td>C (fourth)</td>
<td>Gb</td>
<td>Gb</td>
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RECAPITULATION OF PEDAL POINT FROM STATES (from mm. 249-273) REWORKED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mm. 131-189</th>
<th>mm. 190-194</th>
<th>mm. 195-203</th>
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<td>Ab (fifth)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Db (root)</td>
<td>Db (root)</td>
<td>Db (root)</td>
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CODA “SURPRISE ENDING” MATERIAL DRAWN FROM STATES OPENING CHORD, BUT NOW ONLY OCTAVES ON THE ROOT. JUXTAPOSED OVER MATERIAL FROM SLOW PEDAL (from mm. 23-51) BUT NOW PEDAL IN MIDDLE REGISTER, DIFF. RHYTHMS, AND DELICATE. SUSTAINS ON CHORD TONES NOT HARMONIC MINOR AS BEFORE.
Appendix E

Rhythmic Patterns in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*
Rhythmic Patterns in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*

### Chord Inversion Sequence

- **Root position:** (0,5,7,11)
- **First inversion:** (0,2,6,7)
- **Second inversion:** (0,4,5,10)
- **Third inversion:** (0,1,6,8)

The lowest tone in each inversion is reduced to “0” in order to facilitate placement on the time-point grid.

### Scale Rhythmic Patterns

(Based on the Relationship of Half- and Whole-Steps)
- Quarter-note = 1
- Half-note = 2

[Quarter-Note = 1 in each example]

- **Major Scale Rhythms – 2212221**

- **Ascending Melodic Minor Scale Rhythms – 2122221**

- **Harmonic Minor Scale Rhythms – 2122131**

- **Synthetic Scale Rhythms – 1312131** (a non-retrogradable rhythm)
Appendix F

Motivic Strands in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*
Motivic Strands in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*

An Itemized List of Prominent Motives Associated with Formal Divisions

(Drawn From the Opening Three Sections of *States* - mm. 1-59)

- **Opening chord** - from mm. 1-5 and larger section mm. 1-19
  - *States*
    - mm. 184-192: Reworked in Gb; Condensed.
  - *Retrospective/Prospective*
    - mm. 195-202: Orchestrated like opening chord, but now as a single note in octaves.

- **Db pedal point** - from mm. 23-51 - Serialized rhythms
  - *States*
    - mm. 193-199: Shortened from 24 bars to 6 bars. Rhythms are extracted from the former, but not heard in their entirety.
  - *Retrospective/Prospective*
    - mm. 105-112: Conclusion of the piece. Re-orchestrated in unusual manner. Played by the horns on a single note in the middle register. Two offset rhythmic groupings, the composite of which is steady sixteenths.

- **High register chord plane arpeggiation** - from mm. 9-59
  - *States*
    - mm. 95, 150, and 166
    - mm. 187-199: As part of the texture with the return of the pedal point.
  - *Retrospective/Prospective*
    - mm. 67, 143
Appendix G

Motivic Strands in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*
Motivic Strands in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*

Itemization of Motivic Strands/Rhythmic Fragments
- Reuse and Re-orchestrations -
(Drawn From The Marimba Solo - mm. 65-73)

- **Rhythm 1 fragment** - from marimba solo m. 65
  - **States**
    - mm. 164-167: Augmentation in “half-time.”
    - m. 215
    - mm. 267-269: Two juxtaposed strands. One in augmentation and the other like the original.
    - mm. 276-277: Tutti, unison and multi-octaves.
    - mm. 285-286
  - **Retrospective/Prospective**
    - mm. 73-75: Background to drum solo. Legato.
    - mm. 81-84
- **Rhythm 2 fragment** - from marimba solo m. 66
  - **States**
    - mm. 213-214
    - mm. 287-289: Tutti, unison and multi-octaves
- **Rhythm 3 fragment** - from marimba solo m. 69
  - **States**
    - mm. 172-173
    - mm. 207-209: One of many superimposed rhythms.
    - mm. 212-213: Played by the soloist.
    - mm. 278-282
  - **Retrospective/Prospective**
    - mm. 153-161: In augmentation.
- **Rhythm 4 fragment** - from marimba solo m. 71
  - **States**
    - m. 135
    - mm. 207-209: One of many superimposed rhythms.
    - mm. 249-274: Serves as one of the driving rhythms in the Gb pedal point.
- **Rhythm 5 fragment** - from marimba solo m. 72
  - **States**
    - mm. 252-271: Serves as one of the driving rhythms in the Gb pedal point.
    - m. 280
  - **Retrospective/Prospective**
    - mm. 18-21: Octaves in low register.
    - mm. 106-112: Octaves in low register.
    - mm. 134-189: Serves as a primary rhythm in the Ab pedal point.
Appendix H

Transformation of Motivic Strands in *Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*
Transformation of Motivic Strands in

*Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band*

Marimba Grace Note Figures

(Inaugurated in mm. 65-73)
The rhythms permeate the circulatory rhythm section mm. 74-120

Bass Clarinet

Contrast between short grace notes and long notes with fermatas
mm. 121-129

Fragments

Drawn From Bs. Cl.
Solo Fragmented
mm. 149-151
mm. 157-160
mm. 169-171
mm. 173-175

Brass Chords

Sustained Chord Figures
mm. 156-183
mm. 252-273

Bs. Cl. Quotations

Multi-Octave Spread
mm. 254-266

Ensemble Chorale

Brass Chords

Chord Punches
mm. 3-39
mm. 61-84
mm. 94-129
Sustained Chords
mm. 144-194

Bs. Cl. Quotations

Multi-Octave Spread
mm. 70-71; 74
mm. 78-79
mm. 150-152

States

Gray in C

Retrospective /Prospective

Ensemble

Chorale that accompanies the drum solo
mm. 61-81
Works Cited


______. *Music: Does it have a future?* The Kenyon Review, Summer 1980.


PART II

CONCERTO FOR SOLO PERCUSSION AND CONCERT BAND

(FULL SCORE)
Stephen R. Anderson

Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band

Commissioned by the Barlow Foundation for
The United States Military Academy Band, West Point, New York
Colonel Thomas Rotondi Jr., Commander/Conductor
Staff Sergeant Rone Sparrow, Percussion

Score

© 2005
Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band

Movements

I. States……………………….c. 10’
II. Gray in C…………………..c. 4’
III. Retrospective/Prospective….c. 6’

USMA Concert Band Instrumentation

3 Flutes (Flute 1 doubles piccolo)
2 Oboes
1 Eb Clarinet
9 Bb Clarinets
1 Bass Clarinet
2 Bassoons
1 Soprano Saxophone
1 Alto Saxophone
1 Tenor Saxophone
1 Baritone Saxophone
5 Trumpets
4 Horns
2 Tenor Trombones
1 Bass Trombone
2 Euphoniums
3 Tubas
1 Double Bass

Percussion Solo:
I. (Bass) Marimba (if available)
II. Vibraphone
III. Drum Set

1 Timpani

3 Percussion:
1. Vibraphone, Wood Block, Snare Drum
2. Crotales (bow), Glockenspiel, Triangle (mounted), Tambourine (mounted), Suspended Cymbal, Tam-Tam
3. Chimes, Suspended Cymbal, Tom-Toms, Guiro, Whip

1 Piano
Concerto for Solo Percussion and Concert Band

II.

Gray in C

molto lento, rubato espressivo

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet

Clarinet 1.2

Clarinet 3.4

Clarinet 5.6

Clarinet 7.8.9

Bass Clarinet

Bassoon

Saxophone

Alto Saxophone

Tenor Saxophone

Baritone Saxophone

Trumpet

Trombone

Low Trombone

Euphonium

Tuba

Double Bass

Solo Percussion

Timpani

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Percussion 3

Piano

Transposed Score by Stephen R. Anderson

2005
molto lento, rubato espressivo

molto lento, rubato espressivo

molto lento, rubato espressivo
In a very natural manner (not contrived), adjust pages, brass players empty valves, winds may swab out their instruments, individually tune or quietly rehearse passages. Soloist, noodle around on the kit as if checking the setup. At c. 30", drums begin rudely and loudly bashing and set the time (half-note = c. 138). Watch for conductor cue to continue to bar 2.
Return to Double-Time Swing

[Open Piano Solo]
(Begin with strong time feel but very soloistic)

(periodic interaction with the piano and bass)

(primary tonal center

(begin in steady time feel with Some interaction with all parts)

(begin to play more flourishes and less time keeping)

(blink)
All figures in boxes - no pauses between fermatas. Sneak breaths.

(play pitches in boxes fast in any order)
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