SUSANNA AND THE ELDERS, A ONE-ACT BALLET
IN THREE SCENES

THESIS

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

For the Degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

by

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The ballet, based on the story of Susanna as found in the Apocrypha, is scored for chamber orchestra consisting of flute doubling piccolo, oboe, Bb clarinet, bassoon, horn in F, two Bb trumpets, trombone, piano, harp; two percussionists playing timpani, tambourine, xylophone, glockenspiel, chimes, small triangle, large triangle, small suspended cymbal, large suspended cymbal, two crash cymbals, antique cymbals, snare drum, piccolo snare drum, bass drum, bongos, three tom-toms, sleigh bells, large gong, temple blocks, bell tree, metal wind chimes; and a string quintet of two violins, viola, violoncello, and contrabass.

The music consists of an overture lasting approximately three and one-half minutes, and three scenes lasting approximately eight and one-half, nine and one-half, and ten minutes respectively. The entire ballet is approximately thirty-one and one-half minutes in duration.
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ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

Susanna and the Elders is a one act ballet in three scenes based on the apocryphal book of Susanna, which originally formed the introduction to the Biblical book of Daniel. It is scored for chamber orchestra consisting of flute doubling piccolo, oboe, B^b clarinet, bassoon, horn in F, two B^b trumpets, trombone, piano, harp; two percussion players playing two timpani, large suspended cymbal, small suspended cymbal, chimes, glockenspiel, xylophone, bass drum, medium snare, piccolo snare, crash cymbals, temple blocks, large triangle, small triangle, bell tree, bongos, tambourine, large gong, three tom-toms, metal wind chimes, sleigh bells, and antique cymbals; and string quintet of two violins, viola, violoncello, and contrabass. The music consists of an overture lasting approximately three and one-half minutes, and three scenes lasting approximately eight and one-half, nine and one-half, and ten minutes, respectively, with a total duration of thirty-one and one-half minutes.

Story

The story occurs in Babylon during the exile of the Jews, where the beautiful Susanna married the wealthy
Joakim. They, as well as Susanna's parents, were God-fearing people, obedient in every way to the Law of Moses. Because he was a prominent and wealthy citizen, Joakim had many legal dealings daily with the townspeople. Two young Elders had just been appointed as chief judges over the town, and therefore they also came daily to the home of Joakim and Susanna.

These two Elders both gradually came to lust after Susanna. One day as they were coming to Joakim's home, they confessed their lust for Susanna to each other, and thought up a wicked plan to entrap her.

Later that day, as she was bathing in the pool behind her house in the garden, Susanna thought she was alone. The two Elders, knowing the time of her baths, had secretly crept in and hid themselves behind the bushes. After watching her awhile, they jumped out and confessed their lust to her, and told her to lie with them. She would not, so they told her that if she would not, they would tell everyone in town that she had been lying with another man when the Elders happened to enter and see them together. They would explain how they tried to grab him, but could not hold him. This lie they would make up and, by the Law of Moses, condemn her if she would not comply. Susanna then screamed, and the maidservants and townspeople ran in to see what happened. The Elders told them the lie they had contrived—and all were ashamed for Susanna.
Later that day, Susanna, her husband and family, and the servants and townspeople all met in Joakim's garden where the Elders convicted Susanna with their lie. Susanna and all present wept with fear. She would, after all, be put to death. Suddenly a young man named Daniel appeared in the garden, wondering what was transpiring. He had always known Susanna and her righteousness, and could not believe the accusation against her.

So he spoke up at this meeting, and accused the Elders of lying. Now, all the townspeople had believed them because of their spiritual facade. After all, they had been appointed as judges, to judge righteously. How could these Elders bear false witness?

Daniel asked the Elders to be separated one from another and asked them each where Susanna had lain with the man in the garden. As there were many trees there, the first Elder answered that it had taken place under the Mastic tree. Daniel then called the second Elder, who answered Daniel that it had taken place under the Evergreen Oak tree, far from the Mastic tree. With this, Daniel proved that the Elders had made up their story and were guilty.

As the Elders are taken away, Susanna and her family rejoice with Daniel and the townspeople and give praise to God.
Sectional Content

The major sections of the overture and each scene are distinguished primarily by tempo, instrumentation, and mood. The overture introduces the primary melodic transformation of the germ motif (Figure 1); transforms it into Susanna's theme; presents it again in a dramatic development; and finally transforms it into the Hebraic dance theme also found at the end of the ballet. Scene 1 introduces the townspeople and Susanna's family with a fugato section continually developing into brass fanfares. The main characters are introduced individually, each with his or her own melodic theme in this order: The two Elders, Susanna, and Daniel. Scene 2 is in two sections, the first being Susanna's bath and the second being the Elders' surprise attack. Scene 3 depicts all the major characters and townspeople in attendance at Susanna's trial, and finally her innocence, with all present dancing for joy.

Although each section in the overture and the three scenes has its own unique character as it follows the constantly shifting dramatic action, the continual thematic transformations of a single germ motif throughout the ballet provide a unity for the entire composition. Each of the major characters' melodic themes, and all the melodic material and embellishments as well, originate from the germ motif. Detailed illustrations of the treatment of pitch for these thematic transformations are found in the discussion and tables that follow.
The Germ Motif

The "germ motif" found in all the thematic melodic lines is illustrated in Figure 1.

Fig. 1--Germ motif

This motif is a sequence of three intervals of a third (both major and minor) descending stepwise. As this motif is transformed into thematic material, changes occur in various ways. For example, in the primary melodic transformation which serves as the ballet's "motto" (announced at the very beginning of the overture in measures 1-3 and heard throughout the ballet), the intervals are all minor (the second enharmonically written as an augmented second), with only the second and third intervals overlapping. Figure 2 illustrates this transformation.

Fig. 2--Primary melodic transformation

In Figure 2, the influence of the germ motif can be seen. At times, its influence is more disguised, and even repeated, as in Susanna's theme, found at measures 16-26 in the overture (see Figure 3).
This theme inverts the third interval and repeats the germ motif's influence, the second time adding a note between the two notes of the third interval.

The Elders' theme, shown in Figure 4, makes its first appearance at measures 196-204 in Scene 1.

As illustrated, the trombone completes the motif as it takes over the horn's initial statement. With all the intervals major now, the germ motif has injected its original overlapping intervallic shape into this theme.

Another example of a thematic transformation that is more disguised than the others is Daniel's theme, found in Scene 1 at measures 251-258, and illustrated in Figure 5.
This theme includes the germ motif with the three intervals all inverted, and additional intervals of the third preceding and following.

The germ motif generates the pitch content and intervallic relationships in the above major melodic themes. How the motif influences other thematic treatment will be discussed in the following analysis.

The Overture

The overture is a series of four sections and a short transition into Scene 1. It introduces some of the main thematic material (the primary melodic transformation, Susanna's theme, the "conflict" theme, and the Hebraic dance theme found again at the finale) and sets the mood for the subsequent dramatic action. The four sections occur as follows:

- Section 1: mm. 1-14--primary transformation,
- Section 2: mm. 15-37--Susanna's theme,
- Section 3: mm. 37-62--conflict theme,
- Section 4: mm. 63-77--Hebraic dance theme, and
- Section 5: mm. 78-90--primary transformation.

Although the tempo remains constant in the overture (except for the Hebraic dance section), the mood shifts drastically by means of varying accompanimental devices. After the
primary melodic transformation is stated fortissimo with an open fifth drone-like accompaniment, Susanna's theme is introduced in the flute with a delicate harp accompaniment based on the germ motif beginning at measure 15. This is illustrated in Figure 6.

Fig. 6--Harp accompaniment in overture

Figure 6 illustrates how the harp accompaniment uses only two of the three germ motif intervals. As the overture progresses, a "conflict" theme is introduced in the brass at measure 40. This rhythmic theme, illustrated in Figure 7, provides a triplet figure which is subsequently heard throughout the ballet whenever the Elders are in conflict with either Susanna (Scene 2) or Daniel (Scene 3).

Fig. 7--Conflict theme

This theme, too, is a disguised transformation of the germ motif. During the whole of Section 3 (measures 37-62) the theme is shared in a quick, active dialogue between the three choirs of instruments--the woodwinds, the brass, and the strings--with xylophone and temple blocks adding punct-
tuation. The fortissimo dynamic level also adds to the energy level in this section.

Figure 8 illustrates the Hebraic dance theme found in Section 4 (measures 63-77). Another transformation of the germ motif, it resembles the primary melodic transformation with its beginning grace note (compare Figure 2):

![Fig. 8--Hebraic dance theme](image)

This melody is accompanied by a rhythmic drone figure comprising two open fifths, and is set in a contrasting 5-4 meter as illustrated in Figure 9.

![Fig. 9--Hebraic dance accompaniment](image)

This rhythmic dance achieves quite a contrasting mood to the rest of the overture, and adds an early positive, "hopeful" element to the otherwise tragic circumstances that follow.

After this dance theme, there is a very brief return to the primary melodic transformation which forms a transition into Scene 1. The following Table I outlines the use of musical materials throughout the Overture.
TABLE I

MUSIC MATERIALS IN OVERTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Element</th>
<th>Section 1/mm. 1-14</th>
<th>Section 2/mm. 15-37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>$\mathbb{J} = 80$</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>ff $&gt;$ pp</td>
<td>mp/mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>dense; thick doublings, thinner by m. 13</td>
<td>thin and light; homophonic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbre and Articulation</td>
<td>mostly legato; short grace notes; staccato in strings and woodwinds (mm. 7-11)</td>
<td>very legato, except for staccato xylophone notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm and Meter</td>
<td>alternating $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{2}{4}$; syncopated eighth notes and $\frac{1}{4}$ runs</td>
<td>$3, \text{ interrupted by } \frac{4}{4}$; eighth note accompaniment with sixteenth triplets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>wide, from low strings to high woodwinds</td>
<td>mostly middle to high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Content</td>
<td>primary melodic transformation</td>
<td>Susanna's theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch Center</td>
<td>D major/minor, ambiguous</td>
<td>from D major/minor to E major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3/mm. 37-62</td>
<td>Section 4/mm.63-77</td>
<td>Section 5/mm.78-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Same</strong></td>
<td><strong>mf &lt; f &lt; ff</strong></td>
<td><strong>ff mp&lt;f&gt;pp</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pp &lt; ff &lt; fff</td>
<td><strong>open fifth string drone accompaniment; homophonic</strong></td>
<td>heavy, as at first, then at m. 81 thin suddenly (with cl., ob., and timp.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parallel minor triads in quick succession</td>
<td>detached; woodwinds staccato, strings arco and pizzicato</td>
<td>legato, with accented staccato (m. 81); cl. and ob. play tongued legato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continual shifts between instrumental choirs; combination of legato and staccato with accents</td>
<td><strong>3/4</strong> (3+2 feel), marcato; eighth note syncopation</td>
<td>short <strong>3/4</strong> then <strong>2/4</strong>; syncopation, predominantly ♩ and ♩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3/4; sixteenth triplets predominate</strong></td>
<td>sharp contrast between high ww. melody (m. 67) and low scalar passage (mm. 75-77)</td>
<td>emphasis on high, shifting to low in cl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spans entire range</td>
<td><strong>Hebraic dance theme</strong></td>
<td>primary melodic transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conflict theme with primary melodic transformation</td>
<td><strong>G mixolydian</strong></td>
<td><strong>D major/minor, ambiguous</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continually modulating with unstable parallel chords</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Scene 1: Overview

The curtain opens to a scene of the neighborhood in front of Susanna's and Joakim's house. It is morning—the beginning of a typical day. In contrast to the dramatic tension of the overture, Scene 1 begins with a fugue in the strings (at measure 91) introducing the townspeople and lawyers, all busy at their daily routines. This first section has a rather casual and impersonal tone, punctuated with fortissimo brass fanfares to herald the new day. The second section abruptly changes to a slow, mysterious atmosphere (measure 194) as the Elders make their entrance. Soft dynamic levels and an interest in whole-tone harmonies create a sense of foreboding as the Elders' theme is stated first in the horn and trombone, and then elaborated upon by the violin and cello in a cadenza-like passage (measure 209). The Elders' theme is stated once again by the horn in a transition to Section 3 (beginning at measure 222) where Susanna appears for the first time. Her theme, heard again in the flute, leads to Section 4 (beginning at measure 246) which shows the love between Susanna and Joakim in a dance which proceeds as Daniel enters and acknowledges them. Section 5 then concludes Scene 1 at measure 282 with a return to the fugato material once again in the strings as the townspeople and lawyers once again get back to their business. The five sections in Scene 1 are as follows:
Section 1: mm. 91-194--fugato, brass fanfares,
Section 2: mm. 194-221--Elders' theme,
Section 3: mm. 222-245--Susanna's theme,
Section 4: mm. 246-281--new dance, Daniel's theme, and
Section 5: mm. 282-315--fugato, brass fanfares return.

Scene 1 is essentially an introduction. The only
dramatic content in this scene begins when the Elders appear
lurking around Susanna's house, watching intently for her
(Section 2), and when the love between Susanna and Joakim
is seen (Section 4). Each section in this scene is distin-
tinguished by continual changes of mood achieved through
tempo changes, differing thematic content, dynamics, and
instrumentation. The thematic transformations of the germ
motif create the major unifying element throughout the scene.
A detailed analysis of Scene 1 follows.

Scene 1: Analysis

The opening fugue subject is a transformation of the
germ motif used twice in succession, with the intervals
changed from that of the third to that of the fourth.
Figure 10 illustrates both the fugue subject and its answer
(beginning at measure 91).

Fig. 10--Scene 1 fugue subject and answer
Even the answer is influenced by the germ motif. The descending succession of the three germ intervals is not found here, however. The fugue subject and its answer are only concerned with the presence of three similar intervals, fourths in the subject and thirds in the answer. This fugue eventually builds from mezzo-forte to fortissimo as brass fanfares enter in a constantly shifting meter (beginning at measure 123). This is shown in Figure 11.

![Brass fanfares in Scene 1](image)

The three intervals of the third are again found here as well. After a brief development section (measures 129-142) featuring the clarinet with the fugue subject in augmentation, there is a return to the fugue, this time in the woodwinds with harp and triangle embellishment (measures 143-171). This, once again culminates in brass fanfares leading into Section 2.

Section 2 introduces the Elders with their melodic theme in the horn and trombone at measure 194 (see Figure 4). This theme is built on a whole-tone scale which affects the harmony in this section, resulting in a sudden change of mood. A free cadenza for violin I and cello accompany the drama as the Elders are seen sneaking about trying to catch
a glimpse of Susanna. This cadenza is entirely built on the Elders' theme with two brief references to the primary melodic transformation. Without a feeling of meter in this cadenza, the mood changes drastically as time seems to stop, while the attention is focused on the Elders and their wick-edness. After a brief transition with the horn restating the Elders' theme, the mood changes again.

Susanna makes her first appearance in Section 3, where her theme is stated in the flute against tremolando strings and harp (see Figure 3). This section immediately proceeds to Section 4, which introduces two more themes: Susanna's and Joakim's new dance theme (Figure 12) and Daniel's theme (Figure 5).

Fig. 12--Susanna's and Joakim's dance theme

The dance theme in Figure 12 is a transformation of the germ motif as the three descending intervals of the third are found. Daniel's theme has already been illustrated.

Section 5 returns immediately to the fugue in the strings, and to the climactic brass fanfares, both already discussed. The following Table II outlines the use of musical materials throughout Scene 1.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Musical Element</th>
<th>Section 1/mm. 91-194</th>
<th>Section 2/mm. 194-221</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Action</td>
<td>townspeople begin their daily activities</td>
<td>Elders make their first appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>♩ = 72</td>
<td>♩ = 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>mf &lt; f &lt; ff &gt; mp &lt; f &lt; ff</td>
<td>sub. p &lt; mp f p &lt; mp &lt; mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>contrapuntal; starts thin, builds to tutti fanfares</td>
<td>thin and light; solo violin I and cello cadenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbre and Articulation</td>
<td>fugato string and ww. choirs; brass fanfares; mostly legato, staccato embellishment</td>
<td>very legato; whole-tone harmonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm and Meter</td>
<td>mostly 6/8 with occasional 3/8 and 5/8 interruptions; syncopated eighths, ♩ runs</td>
<td>4/4, free cadenza, 3/4; mostly ♩ and ♩ motion; varied in cadenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>starts middle; fanfares use wide range, winds are high</td>
<td>wide throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Content</td>
<td>fugue subject; brass fanfares</td>
<td>Elders' theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch Center</td>
<td>Db major to E major, with constantly modulating fugue</td>
<td>E minor/ambiguous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3/mm. 222-245</td>
<td>Section 4/mm. 246-281</td>
<td>Section 5/mm. 282-315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susanna appears</td>
<td>Daniel enters as Susanna and Joakim dance</td>
<td>townspeople continue their business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Same</strong></td>
<td>$\downarrow = 120$</td>
<td>$\downarrow = 72$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p and mf</td>
<td>$mf &lt; f &lt; ff$</td>
<td>$mf &lt; f &lt; ff &lt; fff$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homophonic, light</td>
<td>homophonic; begins light, ends heavier</td>
<td>contrapuntal; starts thin, builds to final fanfares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very legato solo</td>
<td>pizzicato strings; detached and staccato winds</td>
<td>fugato strings; brass fanfares, mostly legato; staccato embellishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woodwinds against</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>string tremolos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\frac{3}{4}$, with $\frac{4}{4}$ interruptions; mostly eighth note motion</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4}$, with $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{2}{4}$ interruptions on Daniel's theme</td>
<td>mostly $\frac{6}{8}$, with $\frac{3}{8}$ and $\frac{5}{8}$ interruptions and syncopated eighths, $\downarrow$ runs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle to high</td>
<td>begins low and middle; ends high</td>
<td>starts middle, ends full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susanna's theme</td>
<td>new dance theme; Daniel's theme</td>
<td>fugue subject; brass fanfares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A major</td>
<td>constantly shifting</td>
<td>constantly shifting but ends in F major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Scene 2: Overview

The early afternoon of the same day, the scene now has shifted to the garden behind Susanna's and Joakim's house. Several trees and a large bathing pool are seen. The first section of Scene 2 begins peacefully with an oboe solo (at measure 7), embellished by piccolo bird-song (beginning at measure 4). A growling piano figure in the lower ranges (measure 11) serves as a reminder that all is not to remain peaceful as the Elders are seen quietly entering the garden looking for a place to hide. After the Elders have hidden themselves, Susanna's two maidservants enter to prepare the bath. Eventually Susanna enters, the maidservants leave, and Susanna is alone. Throughout this section, the oboe melody is taken over soloistically by the woodwinds, strings, and solo piano as the maidservants and Susanna enter and prepare for the bath. When Susanna is finally alone, a foreboding cello solo makes a brief transition into Section 2 at measure 60, which is accompanied throughout by calm, muted triadic chords that contain added tones and mostly move in parallel motion. During this accompaniment, Susanna's theme is found in the flute, with harp and piano embellishments depicting the rippling water in the pool. The Elders' theme is heard once in the lower register of the clarinet, but otherwise, the entire section grows calmly from pianissimo to fortissimo as Susanna dances, delighting in her "privacy." Sul ponticello tremolos in the cello and
contrabass form a brief transition into the third and final section of Scene 2. Here, at measure 114, the Elders jump out from behind their hiding places and confess their lust for Susanna. In this section, the Elders' theme is used to full advantage with intermittent appearances of the conflict theme. Lively percussion and a piano ostinato in its lowest range provide a strong rhythmic background for the dramatic action. The primary melodic transformation is also heard several times in this section. At measure 220, Susanna's theme, this time heard fortississimo in the brass, precedes her scream which everybody hears, and as the townspeople and her family enter the garden to see what has happened, the scene ends. The three sections in Scene 2 occur as follows:

Section 1: mm. 1-59--new melody in oboe,
Section 2: mm. 60-113--Susanna's theme, muted chords,
Section 3: mm. 144-244--Elders' theme, conflict theme.

Although Sections 1 and 2 of this scene are calm and dreamlike, they both share an element of foreboding which leads logically into Section 3, contrasting sharply. Changes in tempi, thematic content, dynamics, and instrumentation all contribute to the sudden change in mood as the action unfolds toward Section 3. Besides the musical elements creating the sense of foreboding, the thematic transformations of the germ motif create unity in this scene. A detailed analysis of Scene 2 follows.
Scene 2: Analysis

The oboe solo which serves as the new theme of Section 1 is another transformation of the germ motif. It begins in measure 7 and is illustrated in Figure 13.

Fig. 13--Oboe theme found at beginning of Scene 2

Again, the intervals have changed from that of the third to that of the fourth. Figure 14 shows how the piccolo bird-song beginning in measure 4 is also another transformation.

Fig. 14--Piccolo bird-song embellishment

This bird-song embellishment is literally the first two intervals of the germ motif verbatim (although transposed beginning on A). This figure is repeated often throughout Section 1.

Susanna's and the Elders' themes are the only familiar material in Section 2. The muted chordal accompaniment which eventually grows to fortissimo, and the piano and harp "ripple" embellishments were both freely composed away from the influence of the germ motif. However, the muted chords and the piano and harp figures together serve as a harmonic
unifying device. The muted chords are built in thirds, and the piano and harp embellishments are built in fourths and fifths. Played simultaneously with each other, a sonority is created utilizing both intervals (thirds and fourths) that have been used to create thematic transformations from the germ motif. This free material, then, furthers the unity of the transformations in a new way.

Section 3 uses familiar material (the Elders' theme, the conflict theme, the primary melodic transformation, and even Susanna's theme), only in different settings than heretofore utilized. Each familiar theme is now found in a very rhythmically persistent context, with the help of a piano ostinato in its lowest range beginning at measure 138. This is illustrated in Figure 15.

![Image of piano ostinato in Scene 2]

Fig. 15--Piano ostinato in Scene 2

Figure 15 illustrates the ostinato as another transformation of the germ motif. Even Susanna's theme is presented in a new way as the brass intrudes on the action with her theme in a fortississimo passage. The element of shock and surprise in the dramatic action is bolstered by the instrumental treatment of the thematic material. The following Table III outlines the use of musical materials in Scene 2.
TABLE III
MUSICAL MATERIALS IN SCENE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Element</th>
<th>Section 1/mm. 1-59</th>
<th>Section 2/mm. 60-113</th>
<th>Section 3/mm. 144-244</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Action</td>
<td>Susanna and maidservants enter and prepare bath</td>
<td>Susanna dances in her garden</td>
<td>Elders attack and struggle with Susanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>$J = 72$</td>
<td>$J = 56$</td>
<td>$J = 176$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>$p &lt; mf &gt; pp$</td>
<td>$pp &lt; ff &gt; pp$</td>
<td>$ff &gt; f &lt; ff \text{ sub. } pp &lt; mp &lt; fff$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>homophonic, light; thicker by m. 27</td>
<td>parallel triadic chords with melodic embellishments; thick (m. 94)</td>
<td>rapidly alternating thin and thick sections; parallel minor triads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbre and Articulation</td>
<td>very legato; staccato piccolo embellishment</td>
<td>very legato; staccato embellishment</td>
<td>rapidly alternating legato and staccato; very bright timbre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm and Meter</td>
<td>$\frac{3}{4}$, with $\frac{4}{4}$ interruptions; $\dagger$ and $\ddagger$ motion; $\ddagger$ triplets in piccolo</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ alternating; slow $\dagger$ motion</td>
<td>mostly $\frac{4}{4}$; every rhythm heretofore present used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>mostly high; low piano figures; full middle; low cello ending</td>
<td>full throughout</td>
<td>full throughout; low piano ostinato; high piccolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Content</td>
<td>new oboe melody</td>
<td>Susanna's theme; &quot;bath&quot; chords</td>
<td>Elders' theme; conflict theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch Center</td>
<td>D major</td>
<td>D major; modulating to G# minor</td>
<td>begins G# minor; then shifts constantly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scene 3: Overview

Scene 3 opens to the same scene of the garden behind the house, only the time is much later that day. After a short new rhythmic idea is introduced in the tom-tom and temple blocks at measure 1, the flute enters cautiously with the conflict theme, containing some newly altered pitches. The piano and harp (measures 15-20) form a transition to the Elders' theme in the strings (measure 21). The gravity of Susanna's trial in this first section is then enhanced musically by a slowly building passage in 6-8 meter which introduces a new accompanimental figure in the harp as well as a short new theme found once in the oboe and repeated once in the flute. This entire 6-8 passage (beginning at measure 38) is built on a polychord of F# major against A minor. The passage quickly builds to a fortissimo fanfare-like ostinato which quickly subsides and returns to its original piano dynamic level. This passage musically represents the shame which Susanna and her loved ones are put through. After the tom-tom and temple block rhythmic idea returns, Susanna then pleads her innocence before the crowd as the strings and woodwinds slowly comment with another transformation of the germ motif (measures 76-84). A transition with the tom-tom and temple blocks leads into Section 2, where Daniel enters and is surprised at the gathering in the garden. His theme is stated in a building brass "pyramid" (beginning at measure 89) as he gradually
learns what has happened. The snare drum and suspended cymbal embellishing the chords of Susanna's bath scene (Scene 2, Section 2) culminate with the primary melodic transformation stated fortississimo as Daniel accuses the Elders of lying (measure 119). Section 3 begins at measure 120 with the material from the transition between the overture and Scene 1, and immediately proceeds into a free cadenza section for the two percussion players playing non-pitched instruments. Daniel questions each Elder at this point, and the recurring triplet figure of the conflict theme helps create tension musically. As each Elder answers differently and their lie is discovered, Section 4 begins (measure 150) with the muted chords of the bath scene, this time building quickly to fortississimo brass chords heralding the triumph of Susanna over the Elders' wickedness. Section 5 (beginning at measure 175) is a dance in 5-4 meter that is more extended than its introduction in the overture. Here the townspeople and Susanna's family rejoice with Susanna and Daniel and give praise to God. The ballet ends with one final statement of the primary melodic transformation at measure 205. The five sections in Scene 3 occur as follows:

Section 1: mm. 1-88--Susanna's trial, conflict theme,
Section 2: mm. 89-119--Daniel's theme,
Section 3: mm. 120-149--free percussion,
Section 4: mm. 150-174--muted "bath" chords, and
Section 5: mm. 175-220--Hebraic dance theme.
Sections 1 and 2 of Scene 3 share a common mood as Susanna appears to be in trouble. Sections 3, 4, and 5 each change mood drastically following the dramatic action. Once again, it is through changes in tempi, thematic content, dynamics, and instrumentation that these changes in mood are brought about. Since most of the thematic material is familiar by now, a unity between Scene 3 and the rest of the ballet is achieved. The new material is based on the germ motif, and this unifies all of the material within the scene. A detailed analysis of Scene 3 follows.

Scene 3: Analysis

At the beginning of Scene 3 (measure 1), a new rhythmic idea appears in the tom-tom and temple blocks which recurs several times. Figure 16 illustrates this idea.

Fig. 16--Rhythmic idea in Scene 3

As this idea appears several times in the first section of the scene, it introduces the importance of the percussion throughout Scene 3. Before now, the percussion has not been utilized in a soloistic fashion. In this scene, it is.
Several new ideas are transformations of the germ motif in Section 1. For example, Figure 17 shows the piano melody (measure 15, right hand), Figure 18 illustrates the harp accompaniment (measure 38), and Figure 19 shows the new oboe melody (measure 42).

Fig. 17--Piano melody (right hand)

Fig. 18--Harp accompaniment figure

Fig. 19--Oboe melody

The influence of the germ motif is easily seen in Figure 17, but it only exerts a mild influence on the harp accompaniment in Figure 18. Only two intervals of the third are used, and the second has been inverted into a major sixth. The germ motif is somewhat disguised with added notes in the oboe melody in Figure 19, yet its presence can be seen.
The 6-8 passage, beginning at measure 38 is built on the simultaneity of two triads: F# major and A minor. This sonority is illustrated in Figure 20.

![Fig. 20--Polychord sonority during trial scene](image)

This prolonged harmonic background serves to point out the tension and dramatic conflict as Susanna's trial transpires.

In measure 80, as Susanna is presenting her case, the woodwinds have a figure which emphasizes the despair she is feeling. The flute melody is another transformation of the germ motif, as seen in Figure 21.

![Fig. 21--Flute melody during Susanna's plea](image)

With all three intervals minor, this short melody is practically a statement of the germ motif itself with little change.

Section 2 contains Daniel's theme as he enters, and includes the primary melodic transformation at the end. Very little is unfamiliar here, excepting the emphasis on
percussion. This section builds to fortissimo as Daniel accuses the Elders. This section is the main dramatic turning point for the action in the entire ballet.

With only the use of the conflict theme's triplets, Scene 3 presents no new thematic development. However, the percussion is once again used soloistically in two free, meterless passages as Daniel questions the Elders separately. Except for the crescendo building of the triplet figures, this section is mainly piano throughout.

Section 4 presents the bath scene's muted chords, and Section 5 ends the ballet with the Hebraic dance theme followed by the statement of the primary melodic transformation. In both of the sections, the dynamic level ranges from fortissimo to fortississimo, with no new thematic material added. This gives a feeling of culmination as the material is all familiar. Good has triumphed over evil, and the final scene now ends in a confident feeling of D major. Table IV illustrates the specific musical elements used throughout Scene 3.
## TABLE IV
MUSICAL MATERIALS IN SCENE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Element</th>
<th>Section 1/mm. 1-88</th>
<th>Section 2/mm. 89-119</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Action</td>
<td>Susanna's trial</td>
<td>Daniel enters and cannot believe the accusation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>$\text{j} = 88 / \text{j} = 48$</td>
<td>$\text{j} = 120$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>mf $&lt; \text{ff} &gt; \text{p}$</td>
<td>mf $&lt; \text{fff}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>thin at first; building to thick homophonic texture, then back to thin</td>
<td>polyphonic beginning; homophonic at m. 108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbre and Articulation</td>
<td>varied; middle is very legato and full</td>
<td>slowly builds to full tutti; legato throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm and Meter</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4}$ beginning and end, (\begin{frac}{5}{8}) middle section; mostly eighth note motion</td>
<td>alternating $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$; mostly moderate eighth note motion; $\frac{\text{}}{6}$ runs and tremolos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>begins and ends high; middle section is full</td>
<td>begins middle, building to high; ends full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Content</td>
<td>new theme; Susanna's theme</td>
<td>Daniel's theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitch Center</td>
<td>begins in A (ambiguous); remains ambiguous throughout; contains F# major/A minor sonority</td>
<td>G minor thirteenth sonority; ends in A (ambiguous)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3/mm.120-149</td>
<td>Section 4/mm.150-174</td>
<td>Section 5/mm.175-220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel questions the Elders</td>
<td>the Elders' lie is discovered</td>
<td>Susanna triumphs, all rejoice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\downarrow = 120,96,132,66$</td>
<td>$\downarrow = 56$</td>
<td>$\downarrow = 176 / \downarrow = 66$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p &lt; ff</td>
<td>p &lt; fff</td>
<td>mf &lt; fff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very thin; parallel minor triads</td>
<td>homophonic; parallel triadic chords</td>
<td>open fifth drone accompaniment, homophonic; at m. 205, homophonic, parallel chords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varied; light and free percussion</td>
<td>very legato; full; builds to thick fanfares</td>
<td>detached; woodwinds staccato; strings arco and pizzicato (m. 175-204); then legato to end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alternate $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{4}{3}$, and free; varied rhythmic groupings</td>
<td>$\downarrow = 4$, then $\downarrow = 4$; mostly $\downarrow$ and $\downarrow$ motion</td>
<td>$\frac{5}{4}$ (3+2), marcato; eighth note syncopation throughout; at mm. 205-220, the meter is $\frac{3}{4}$ throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle to high; low strings at m. 146</td>
<td>full throughout; wide harp glissandos</td>
<td>sharp contrast between high woodwinds and low strings (mm. 175-204); then full to end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free; conflict theme triplets</td>
<td>&quot;bath&quot; chords</td>
<td>Hebraic dance theme; primary melodic transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ambiguous</td>
<td>D major; ends on B augmented triad sonority</td>
<td>G mixolydian/D major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

In *Susanna and the Elders* I have attempted to create a musical ballet score which follows the dramatic action of the story of *Susanna*, and remains true to the original story and setting. As far as my research revealed, a major work for the ballet had never been created around this story. However, two important works in other genres have been inspired by the story: Georg Friedrich Handel (1685-1759) wrote the sacred oratorio entitled *Susanna* (1743); more recently, Carlisle Floyd (1926- ) wrote the opera entitled *Susannah* (1955). Handel's oratorio remains true to the character of the original story, but Floyd's opera is only loosely based on the concept of the story (set in a present-day Tennessee mountain valley, where Susannah is left embittered and alone at the conclusion). Thinking that this story lends itself well to the dance, I have attempted to create a legitimate contribution both to the ballet and to the heritage of the historical story of *Susanna*. 
SUSANNA AND THE ELDERS

A One-Act Ballet in Three Scenes

For Chamber Orchestra

by

ROCK E OAKESON

1983
Lively, in a Hebrew Folk Style (d=176)
As At First (d=60)
Scene 1

With Spirit (d=72)

Stage
Curtain Opens

Neighborhood in front of house. It is morning.
Stage: Young people (and children) gradually enter.
The activity of a typically busy day.
BY NOW A LARGE MULTITUDE
IS SEED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.
Eventually the sail and the with (Oedipus's parents) appear.
Stage

I AMY'S B Selection TO ARRIVE AT
...MONTH'S HOUSE TO DO BUSINESS...

I

II

Perc

I

II

VA

VC

CD
STAGE:

SAY 1: TELL ALL YOUR PEOPLE.

AT HEIGHT OF ACTIVITY.

SAY 2:
Suddenly Mysteriously, With a Sense of Foreboding (2-58)

STAGE: THE TWO ELDERLY PEOPLE ENTER. ALL THE TOWNPEOPLE ACKNOWLEDGE THEM POLITELY BUT GRANDIALLY. LEAVE THE MOUNTAIN THEY DO NOT SEEM TO ENJOY THEIR COMPANY.

Suddenly Mysteriously, With a Sense of Foreboding (2-58)
Freely, Quasi Cadenza ($d=104$)

As the people despaired, the flutes circled around
the house trying to set a purpose of sustenance.

Freely, Quasi Cadenza ($d=104$)
SUSANNA APPEARS (WITH HER TWO HAIRSPRAY CANS, SHE AND SONIA EMERGE. THE BARRIES ARE SLABBERING HEY).
Moderately Fast, Dancelike (## = 120)

SUSANNA AND TAMMIE DANCE
THE PEOPLE WHICH FROM A DISTANCE

Moderately Fast, Dancelike (## = 120)
With Spirit (d. = 72)

THE ELDER'S HOME OUT TO THE SIDE
WHERE THEY ARE SINGING TOGETHER

With Spirit (d. = 72)
Scene 2

Moderately, Peacefully (♩= 72)

PICC. (+ FIXED)

Scene 2:

DIRECTORS
CURTAIN OPENS TO SCENE INN UPSTAIRS AND SITUATION HOUSE.
IT IS THE EARLY AFTERNOON OF THE SAME DAY.

PIANO

HARP

ANT. ORG. (METAL)

PERCUSSION

Violins

BASS

ContraBass
STAGE:
SPARROW'S APPRENTICES, HAVING FINISHED THEIR
SUTIES, NOW BEGAN TO LEAVE.
NOW THAT SHE THINKS SHE IS
ALONE, SPARROWAppBar IN HER
SUPPOSED PRIVACY, THE ELDERS,
HINTS, WATCH HER.

FINO:

HP:

PERC:

VIOL:  

CEL:

Very Calmly, Dreamlike (G-56)
As Susanna dances, the elders can be seen smiling and nodding approval at each other.
SOPHIE TAKES HER CLOTHES (PAGE) OFF.
WE SIMPLY GETS AND GEE ZOOL.

METAL WIND CHIME.
FL

CB

CL

BN

HN

I

TPt

II

TBV

STAGE

They fight and struggle...

PNO

HP

I

PERC

I

VA

II

VA

VC

CB
... THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES...
THE ELKERS MAKE ONE LAST VITAL ATTEMPT.
Intensely (d=132)

Intensely, Slower (d=80)

Stage: Susanna screams. The lights are struck with fear. Young people enter to see what is happening.
LIGHTS OUT! CURTAIN FOLLOWS.
Scene 3

CURTAIN OPENS AGAIN TO SCENE BEHIND JOAQUÍN'S AND SUSANNA'S HOUSE. JOAQUÍN'S FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN THE COUNTRY, BANDANAS ON, PREPARE FOR HABANERO. THE TIME IS LATER. THE SAME DAY.

Scene 3:

Curtain opens on a scene behind Joaquín’s and Susanna’s house. Joaquín’s family and friends in the country, bandanas on, prepare for a habitant. The time is later. The same day.

FLUTE

Moderately (lento)

PIANO

HARP

PERCUSSION

Tempo Bl. (hard)

VIOLINS

VIOLA

CELLO

Contrabass
THE MULTITUDE BELENING THE ELDER, ARE
ASSEMBLED AND ASHAMED OF SOMETHING.
As Before (d=78)

Faster, With Hopeful Expectation (d=120)

Gradually apply and increase bow pressure.
Suddenly Slower, Threateningly ($\dot{\theta} = 72$)
STAGE

Piano

Harp

I

Percussion

Wind I

Woodwind II

Viola

Cello

Baritone
Quickly (1=120)

Free, Molto Ad Lib. (d = 96)
Freely, Molto Ad Lib. (d = 96)
STAGE

TIME: 150

VINCE: UNITE THE PEOPLE UNDER THE MASQUE TREE;
THE SENSE UNDER THE DARK, THE LIES ARE REVEALED.
THE WHOLE MULTITUDE UNDERSTANDS AND IS GREATLY RELIEVED.

150

CALMLY ($d = 56$)
The future gradually begins

Tambourine
Moderately, Majestically (4-66)

DANIEL RETURNS AS ALL ARE STILL IN OVERTON.

CHIMES

Moderately, Majestically (4-66)