PROGRAMMATIC GEOGRAPHICAL DEPICTIONS IN LARGE-SCALE JAZZ ENSEMBLE WORKS: MAJOR WORKS BY GIL EVANS AND CHUCK OWEN AND A NEW WORK BY AARON HEDENSTROM

Aaron Hedenstrom, B.M., M.M.

Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2016

APPROVED:

Richard DeRosa, Major Professor
Debbie Rohwer, Committee Member
John Murphy, Committee Member and Chair of the Division of Jazz Studies
Benjamin Brand, Director of Graduate Studies in Music
Warren Henry, Interim Dean of the College of Music
Costas Tsatsoulis, Dean of the Toulouse Graduate School

This dissertation explores the creative process in large-scale jazz ensemble works that are programmatic in depicting geographical locations. This is achieved through analyses of Gil Evans’s *Sketches of Spain*, Chuck Owen’s *River Runs: A Concerto for Jazz Guitar, Saxophone, & Orchestra*, and Aaron Hedenstrom’s *Sketches of Minnesota*. Each work is examined using five analytical categories: orchestration, large-scale form, harmonic/melodic development, programmatic framework, and use of featured soloists. The analyses draw from musical scores, interviews, biographies, recordings, and articles to reveal more detail about each composer’s artistic intentions. This study contributes to the broader knowledge of large-ensemble jazz works and programmatic jazz works. This research meets the need for more critical analyses of important jazz ensemble works relevant to composers, arrangers, and scholars.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES</th>
<th>iv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. SKETCHES OF SPAIN BY GIL EVANS</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. RIVER RUNS BY CHUCK OWEN</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SKETCHES OF MINNESOTA BY AARON HEDENSTROM</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Example 1: Evans, *The Pan Piper*, mm. 1-2 ..................................................................................15
Example 2: Evans, *The Pan Piper*, mm. 14-17 ..............................................................................15
Example 3: Evans, *Saeta*, trumpet processional (from handwritten sketch) .................................16
Example 4: Owens, *River Runs*, Mvt. I, Main Theme, mm. 59-66 ...............................................22
Example 5: Owen, *Prologue: Dawn at River’s Edge*, mm. 1-9 ....................................................25
Example 6: Owen, *Bound Away*, mm. 1-4 .....................................................................................26
Example 7: Owen, *Dark Waters, Slow Waters*, mm. 27-44 ..........................................................28
Example 8: Owen, *Chutes and Wave Trains*, mm. 1-8 ..................................................................29
Example 9: Owen, *A Ridge Away*, mm 1-8 (harmonic reduction) ..............................................30
Example 10: Sketches of Minnesota Thematic Voicing ................................................................36
Example 11: Hedenstrom, *The Mighty Mississippi*, mm. 41-49 ..................................................37
Example 12: Hedenstrom, *The North Woods*, mm. 38-48 ...........................................................38
Example 14: Hedenstrom, *Green Pastures*, mm. 1-6 .................................................................41
Example 15: Hedenstrom, *Lake Superior*, mm. 2-8 .................................................................42
Example 16: Hedenstrom, *The Twin Cities*, mm. 26-33 ............................................................44
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of jazz, there have been a number of significant and influential jazz works written for non-standard jazz ensemble instrumentation. Many jazz composers have scored orchestral strings, winds, and percussion in their music. Gil Evans’s *Sketches of Spain* (1960) and Chuck Owen’s *River Runs, A Concerto for Jazz Guitar, Saxophone, & Orchestra* (2013) fall into this category. Both are major works from different eras that highlight the development of this tradition. While there have been many programmatic jazz works, these pieces are unique because they specifically depict geographical locations and landscapes. My original five-movement suite, *Sketches of Minnesota*, falls in line with this tradition as an example of orchestral-jazz fusion that features soloists and is programmatic in nature. *Sketches of Minnesota* draws from the programmatic elements in the work of Evans and Owen.

This document is intended to further investigate the creative implications of the compositional process as it pertains to geographically-inspired programmatic jazz works. The obvious implication is that the music is inspired by geographical locations, but a deeper analysis is necessary to understand in what capacity each piece was influenced by the imagery and stories associated with them. There is a complexity to the way that the creative mind associates sound with a mental picture and the relationship between these aspects of composition needs further exploration.

The programmatic element is of primary importance in understanding these works. Both Evans and Owen used musical devices to depict geographical locations and borrowed folk themes to aid this depiction. In his article *The Emergence of the Rural American Ideal in*
Jazz: Keith Jarrett and Pat Metheny on ECM Records, David Ake stated that “jazz has long been identified as an urban genre,” citing New Orleans, Chicago, Kansas City, and New York as primary examples. The Munich-based ECM Records became the home for a more rural sound within jazz compositions, as musicians such as Keith Jarrett explored what Ake called “wide open spaces” with regards to rhythm, form, and harmony.¹ Both Sketches of Spain and River Runs fit within this mold, as both depict geographical, folk-inspired locations in Spain and the United States, respectively. Chuck Owen referred to one portion of River Runs as being “country ECM” because of its use of typical American country elements.² Reviewer Jeff Simon praised “Chuck Owen’s great tribute to the powers of nature with his superb big band the Jazz Surge.”³ Maria Nockin echoed this sentiment, writing, “this is a fascinating piece of program music and it deserves to be widely heard. I think it belongs in the recording library of every fan of contemporary music.”⁴

The term “program music” (originally spelled “programme”) originated with pianist/composer Franz Liszt, who defined it as “a preface added to a piece of instrumental music, by means of which the composer intends to guard the listener against a wrong poetical interpretation, and to direct his [or her] attention to the poetical idea of the whole or to a particular part of it.”⁵ This style of composition is characterized by its depiction of a non-musical object or concept. By this definition, both Sketches of Spain and River Runs are

² Chuck Owen, “Presentation on River Runs,” Lecture, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, April 6, 2015.
programmatic, since both pieces have a preface that defines the geographical locations that the music is inspired by. The pieces, however, are not always narrative and do not always tell a literal story, and therefore may not fall under some scholars’ interpretation of the term.⁶

When discussing River Runs, Chuck Owen said, “I don’t typically write music from a programmatic standpoint, and honestly even with River Runs, there’s only one movement that I is truly what I would call “programmatic,” and that’s the very first one. And that one, I did kind of follow, even here, really very loosely.”⁷ Although his mention of programmatic composition referred to a literal narrative, Liszt’s definition would qualify River Runs as a programmatic work in that it is depicting the experience of rafting these rivers, even if it is in a more general, experiential sense. “I think the feelings… behind the river themselves were more important for me in terms of crafting the music than actually any sort of physical characteristic of the river. But there were certain things that would come out... [like] the rocks in the Chattooga.”⁸

In The Duke Ellington Reader, Ellington was quoted as saying, “that’s the way I was raised up in music. I always have a mental picture.”⁹ Edward Green wrote, “it is prudent to remember that our purely “absolute” reading of a work may simply result from never having heard the composer account for its programmatic dimension. And Ellington throughout his career was deeply committed to music’s programmatic potential.”¹⁰ Green’s argument supports the idea that programmatic music is not always composed from a predetermined, planned out storyline but can be inspired by a mental picture of something, and sometimes

---

⁶ Scruton, “Programme music.”
⁷ Chuck Owen, Telephone interview with Aaron Hedenstrom, February 8, 2016.
⁸ Owen.
that process is unknown to the audience or abstract even to the composer. Owen’s thoughts about *River Runs* demonstrate a combination of literal programmatic process (each movement being directly inspired by a specific river in the U.S.) and abstract mental picture (memories and emotions associated with his experiences on these rivers).

There has been some critical analysis of Duke Ellington’s programmatic works such as “Harlem Air Shaft” and “The Far East Suite.” Edward Green argued that Ellington’s highly specific program for “Harlem Air Shaft” may have been developed both before and after the composition was written, stating, “inspiration is always both conscious and unconscious, and it is no paradox to say that a composer may discover truths about his music while composing—or even after completing a work.”

Mark Lomanno discussed Ellington’s work “The Far East Suite,” writing that “Ellington’s desire to let himself be influenced but not imitate suggests his wariness of appropriation.” While the piece was inspired by his travels to the Middle East and Japan, it was not intended to be an authentic piece of music from those cultures. Ellington wrote, “I don’t want to copy this rhythm or that scale. It’s more valuable to have absorbed while there. You let it roll around, undergo a chemical change, and then let it seep out on paper in the form that suits the musicians who are going [to] play it.” This research suggests that composition of programmatic music is a fluid and diverse process.

There are certainly parts of *River Runs* and *Sketches of Spain* that depict literal storylines and extra-musical images. But the pieces contain a mixture of absolute music and programmatic music. Not every single note can be assigned a specific meaning; some of the

---

music is a logical development of thematic material. There are also sometimes multiple layers of programmatic meaning. On the micro level an instrument may depict a certain object, while on the macro level the whole of the harmonic, melodic, and textural components may depict a more general mood, feeling, or landscape.

In addition to the music having a programmatic geographical element, both of these works are written for the performance of one or more featured soloists in the model of the classical concerto. Sketches of Spain was one of Gil Evans’s famous collaborations with Miles Davis, who years later admired the work during a production of the piece at the Montreux Jazz Festival; arranger Gil Goldstein recalled Davis listening to a rehearsal and saying, “nobody will ever write like that again.” Evans revered Davis’s musicianship as well, calling him “a sensational singer of songs.” The album was conceived with Davis’s playing in mind, making his artistry a focal element in the music.

Chuck Owen had two soloists in mind when he composed River Runs: tenor saxophonist Jack Wilkins and guitarist LaRue Nickelson, both of whom are Owen’s colleagues at the University of South Florida. Wilkins and Nickelson have been featured prominently as a regular member of Owen’s Florida-based big band, the Jazz Surge. The piece is set up as a modern form of the concerto, primarily featuring soloists as the main voice.

The large-scale works of Gil Evans and Chuck Owen have served as a model for multi-movement jazz works with additional orchestral instrumentation. Gil Evans’s Sketches of Spain was written in collaboration with Miles Davis as a response to Spanish music that

---

influenced Evans, including traditional flamenco music and the classical works of Manuel de Falla. Chuck Owen’s *River Runs* is a modern example of a large-scale programmatic work that depicts multiple rivers in the United States.

Because *River Runs* is so new, there is very little research on the piece. The primary available information includes Owen’s personal notes and explanations about the piece, interviews with him, and critical reviews by others. In addition, the full score is available for study and analysis. Because Chuck Owen is still alive and working, no official biographies of Owen have been published, but multiple critical reviews have been published concerning his music by various newspapers and magazines.

*Sketches of Spain* has more material written about it, although the bulk of the resources available are interviews, critical reviews, biographies, and historical overviews. Many of these articles are in mainstream jazz publications such as DownBeat. Unlike *River Runs*, there are no published scores available for *Sketches of Spain*, due to the lack of a surviving score and parts from the original recording session. However, unpublished transcriptions by Joe Muccioli, and some of the original sketches were used in the score study for this document. These transcriptions and sketches are not officially published but were available through the Gil Evans Estate. In addition, there is a score for one of the *Sketches of Spain* pieces, *Will O’ The Wisp*, in Steve Lajoie’s book *Gil Evans & Miles Davis: Historical Collaborations*, which was pieced together using a combination of aural transcription and the original handwritten sketch that was recovered (a grand staff sketch with condensed rhythmic figures and harmonic structures). Lajoie provided a detailed

---

melodic, harmonic, formal, and rhythmic analysis in his book, but none of the other pieces from *Sketches of Spain* currently have a formal analysis published. Lajoie’s analysis also does not specifically dive into the programmatic elements of the piece.

Recent developments in research about Gil Evans have included a 2003 biography of Gil Evans written by Stephanie Stein Crease. In addition, composer and scholar Ryan Truesdell acquired access to the Gil Evans’s safe and all of the sketches, scores and parts that were passed down from Evans to his estate. Truesdell was able to scan every sketch, score, and part for all of the included Gil Evans documents and enter and edit them in Finale. This is a major development because previously, very little of Evans’ music has been available for study or performance. Truesdell produced and recorded *Centennial* (2012), an album of ten Gil Evans arrangements featuring modern-day players that garnered multiple awards.

**Method**

In this document, I highlighted selected elements from each movement of the three works involved in order to demonstrate the composer’s musical techniques and intentions. The pieces are presented in chronological order. *Sketches of Spain* is followed by *River Runs* and concluded with *Sketches of Minnesota*. I have organized my analysis into five categories of analysis for each piece:

I. Orchestration of material: How the composers distribute music across the instrumentation

---

II. Large-scale form: Across movements and within movements using “modules” as a definition for a formal section, a term borrowed from Steve Lajoie in his analysis of Gil Evans’s collaborative works with Miles Davis.²⁴

III. Harmonic and melodic content/thematic development

IV. Conceptual/programmatic framework for musical material

V. Use of featured soloist vs. use of ensemble

For each piece, I begin with categories I and II as they pertain to the entire work, and categories II, III, IV, and V are dealt with independently within each movement.

The systematic guidance of these five categories allows for a thorough and direct analysis of the material in a way that provides clear explanation of the conception of each work. Because the scope of this document is primarily to investigate the programmatic elements of these works, the other aspects of analysis will be limited to selected examples of each concept within the music, due to the sheer quantity of musical material present in these large works.

²⁴ Lajoie, Gil Evans and Miles Davis: Historic Collaborations: An Analysis of Selected Gil Evans Works.
CHAPTER II

SKETCHES OF SPAIN BY GIL EVANS

Bill Mathieu wrote that *Sketches of Spain* was “one of the most important musical triumphs that this century has yet produced.” The work was born out of Evans and Davis’s desire to adapt Joaquin Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* for a jazz setting, but as they studied more Spanish music, they broadened their scope to include a more diverse array of compositions and arrangements. Two of the five pieces on the album were adaptations of works by Spanish composers Joaquin Rodrigo (*Concierto de Aranjuez*) and Manuel de Falla (*Will O’ The Wisp, adapted from El Amor Brujo*) and the remaining three pieces were original compositions by Gil Evans based on Spanish and South American folk music.

This work takes the form of a recorded album as opposed to being considered a multi-movement work in the traditional sense. The album, released in 1960, contains five parts:

I. *Concierto de Aranjuez*

II. *Will O’ The Wisp*

III. *The Pan Piper*

IV. *Saeta*

V. *Solea*

When composing this work, Evans based the pieces primarily on Spanish themes and genres with one example of South American folk music. Two of the pieces are direct adaptations of previously-composed pieces; movement II of Joaquin Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* and *Will O’ The Wisp* (originally *Canción del Fuego fatuo*) from Manuel De

---

Falla’s ballet *El Amor Brujo*. When Evans was preparing for this album, he spent a lot of time studying Spanish music in the library, and used the material he studied as the basis for three original compositions: *The Pan Piper, Saeta,* and *Solea*.28

Gil Evans was well known for his use of orchestral instruments within a jazz context that crossed stylistically between the jazz and classical genres. The instrumentation for *Sketches of Spain* is as follows:29

- Flugelhorn/trumpet (feature)
- 4 Trumpets
- 2 Trombones
- 3 French horns
- Tuba
- 2 Flutes
- Oboe
- Clarinet (with oboe double)
- Bass clarinet
- Bassoon
- Harp
- Acoustic bass
- Drum kit
- Two percussionists

While there are no orchestral strings present in this work, there is a clear focus on orchestral wind instruments in addition to harp, and there is a chamber-orchestra feel throughout the album. Evans uses these orchestral sounds to add a mysterious and wistful emotion to the album, carefully adapting the Spanish themes into modal jazz harmonies.

One specific example of orchestration in creating a Spanish sound is the use of percussion inspired by flamenco music with castanets and marching snare drum conjuring imagery from the streets of Spain, which contributes to the programmatic nature of the

---

work.\textsuperscript{30} Evans derived much inspiration from listening to flamenco music.\textsuperscript{31} The small chamber ensemble size of the group is more intimate than the large size of Owen’s \textit{River Runs}, which creates a much larger sense of grandeur.

\textit{Sketches of Spain} is programmatic because it is clearly using musical devices to evoke the landscape and scenery of Spain. Roger Scruton says of programmatic music: “Some prefer to attach the term purely to instrumental music with a narrative or descriptive ‘meaning’ (for example, music that purports to depict a scene or a story). Others have so broadened its application as to use the term for all music that contains an extra-musical reference, whether to objective events or to subjective feelings.”\textsuperscript{32} Using this definition of program music, \textit{Sketches of Spain} is a programmatic work that deserves to be recognized for this aspect of its composition.

While the programmatic label applies to \textit{Sketches}, Gil said of the album, “we hadn’t intended to make a Spanish album. We were just going to do the \textit{Concierto de Aranjuez}...we began to listen to other folk music, music played in clubs in Spain, where you could hear the glasses crashing and the guitars playing along...So we learned a lot from that and it ended up being a Spanish album.”\textsuperscript{33} In defense of a broader understanding of program music, Edward Green stated, “many people will invalidate any programmatic statement that cannot be proven to predate other aspects of composition. I think this attitude is unjust to the creative process, and greatly restricts the range of true scholarly research into the phenomenon of programmatic composition.”\textsuperscript{34} This provides the framework for analyzing the programmatic

\textsuperscript{30} Davis and Evans, \textit{Sketches of Spain}.
\textsuperscript{32} Scruton, “Programme Music.”
\textsuperscript{33} Crease, \textit{Gil Evans: Out of the Cool: His Life and Music}, 206.
\textsuperscript{34} Green, “Harlem Air Shaft: A True Programmatic Composition,” 41.
elements of this work regardless of whether or not Davis or Evans regarded it with this intent.

The work of Miles Davis on this album is the focal point around which Evans composed. In the 2009 re-release of *Sketches of Spain* by Columbia Records, Gunther Schuller mused, “for his part Gil Evans, the arranger-composer, saw in Miles’s poignant contemplative style a parallel to his own predilection for relaxed tempos, smoothed-out velvety orchestral textures, although colored with a wide range of instrumental timbres and a rich, healthy chromaticism.”

Evans and Davis were a perfect match for one another’s styles.

*Concierto de Aranjuez* is a jazz arrangement of movement II of Rodrigo’s composition for guitar and orchestra, using the same themes but harmonizing and orchestrating them within the jazz idiom. The main theme for this piece was later used as the introduction for Chick Corea’s Latin jazz composition *Spain*, making it part of a larger lineage.

Joaquin Rodrigo composed *Concierto de Aranjuez* in 1939 for guitar and orchestra. The original work had three movements, and for *Sketches of Spain*, Gil adapted only the second movement. The main theme for this is taken directly from the original score. Ryan Truesdell of the Gil Evans Project talked about the drama that Gil creates in the *Concierto*:

“castinets and the trilled harp, and the trio comes in and there’s all this linear stuff, the bass has a linear movement and all this… motion and texture happening at the beginning, and as soon as Miles comes in, everything goes away.”

Evans waits to bring in Davis until after

---

38 Ryan Truesdell, Telephone Interview with Aaron Hedenstrom, December 11, 2015.
the first statement of the melody so that the listener has to wait for it and by doing so creates drama.

The movement has a number of references to Spanish music, beginning with the fact that it is an adaptation of a Spanish composer’s work. Elvin Jones plays castanets from the beginning of the movement, another Spanish sound, although not played in a specifically Spanish rhythmic context. The castanets and harp create a compelling texture in the introduction with a repeated triplet figure that conflict to the duple feel of the piece.

The form of the composition may be broken into modules based on broad stylistic features, events, and moods that occur in the piece. Within each module there may be changes in texture.

I. Introduction (0:01-0:55)
II. Exposition: Miles Davis plays melody (0:55-4:46)
III. Double Time Swing (4:46-5:44)
IV. Trumpet Cadenza/Oboe Solo (5:45-8:13)
V. Fast triplet section/Slow, Dark Section (8:13-9:20)
VI. Miles Davis Solo (9:20-12:47)
VII. Climax/Orchestra Feature (12:48-15:46)
VIII. Coda (15:46-16:20)

Evans’s other recomposition on this album is *Will O’ The Wisp*, based directly on a piece from Manuel De Falla’s ballet, *El Amor Brujo*. The original piece is titled *Canción del Fuego Fatuo*. Evans took the vocal melody from De Falla’s *El Amor Brujo* and scored

---

it to feature Davis. The tempo was also slowed down from the original opera piece, adding to the subdued energy of the album. Evans also altered the rhythm and chord voicing of the basic rhythmic groove. Lajoie provides a comprehensive analysis of *Will O’ The Wisp* including form, harmony, and themes.41

The first of Evans’s original compositions on the album, *The Pan Piper* is the only piece on *Sketches of Spain* that is not based on Spanish music. The melody played by Davis was taken from a folk recording of a Peruvian street vendor played on a penny whistle.42 While the source material was only a melody, Evans put an imaginative harmony in the accompaniment parts. The piece is set in the key of A minor with the first chord as an upper-register root position A minor triad with a G sharp directly below the root. This is voiced in the upper woodwinds (piccolo, flute, oboe) with a bassoon in its upper register playing the tension note of G sharp. To add atmosphere and drama, Evans scores a triangle ringing throughout the rubato opening section.

There are just two modules in this movement:

I. Introduction/Statement of the Melody

II. Vamp section with Davis’ improvised solo

Module I has Davis playing the entirety of the melody from the folk recording with dissonant, ethereal chords voiced in the woodwinds and harp. This melody is *rubato* and Evans uses this to create a sustained and ethereal musical texture. Truesdell said that Evans used this unmetered style to create a “freeness of interpretation” that stems from the jazz tradition.43 Even when the notes were written out, Davis had the freedom to use his own

---

43 Ryan Truesdell, Telephone Interview, December 11, 2015.
musical voice to pace the timing and nuance of each phrase in a personal way. Davis’s interpretation of the opening melody to *The Pan Piper* was subdued and breathy, with a harmon mute adding a buzz to his tone.

Example 1: Evans, *The Pan Piper*, mm. 1-2

```
Module II is a repeated vamp that Davis improvises over. The simplicity of this composition relies on Davis to develop his lyrical lines over the top of this repeated vamp. The woodwinds and French horns play a songlike melody over and over, further emphasizing that Evans was not afraid to write simple music when it best conveyed the relevant imagery.

Example 2: Evans, *The Pan Piper*, mm. 14-17

The use of a Peruvian musical source in an album about Spain demonstrates that Evans’s conception of the album was not so strict as to follow rigid criteria for the included
pieces. The inclusion of The Pan Piper highlights the fluid nature of the creative process within programmatic works.

The second of Evans’s original compositions, Saeta, is based on the musical genre of the same name. The saeta is a style of Catholic sacred music from the Andalusian region of Spain, sung in street processions as a mournful cry referring to Christ’s crucifixion. This piece begins with a bassoon playing a repetitive, ornate melody derived from flamenco music. A marching snare drum, repeated tambourine pattern, and militant trumpet harmonies fade in slowly, giving the impression of a processional coming from a distance and getting closer. In addition, a drone is played by the arco acoustic bass on a G and D perfect fifth. The staccato trumpet lines are played in the key of D major, and the upper structure D major triad layered on top of the G-D fifth structure in the bass creates a subtle bi-tonal structure. This is an example of Evans achieving a sophisticated harmonic palette using simple material.

Example 3: Evans, Saeta, trumpet processional (from handwritten sketch)

Lajoie stated that “the F-sharp of this triad clashes with the F-natural of the G Aeolian Mode,” adding to the emotional intensity of the scene. The flugelhorn solo by Davis is representative of the woman mourning Christ’s crucifixion in the procession.45

The movement can be organized into five modules:

---

I. Introduction-Bassoon Melody

II. Processional fades in

III. Open trumpet improvisation/drone

IV. Processional fades in

V. Coda

This is another movement that embodies a relatively simple structure but still manages to have a sophisticated feel. Evans appears to use simplicity to achieve the dramatic elements of folk music.

*Solea* is the final piece on *Sketches of Spain* and is the third Evans original composition on the album.\(^\text{46}\) The soleares (the plural of soleá) is defined as “the form that embodies flamenco’s most vital elements of rhythm and harmony.”\(^\text{47}\) This is traditionally a sorrowful style and means “solitude” in Spanish.\(^\text{48}\) The introduction of the movement has a sad, wailing quality to it as Davis plays a *rubato* melodic statement answered by a number of sustained, dissonant chords, ambient hand percussion, and harp glissandos. This embodies the dramatic mysticism of the flamenco style, which traditionally features a vocalist instead of a trumpet. Davis’s vocal tone quality is well suited to fill this role in the composition.

This movement is broken into just two modules:

I. Introduction: *Rubato* Melodic Statement

II. Groove and Improvisation

Once again, the simplicity of Evans’s writing allows for the improvisational voice of Davis to be the foreground of the piece. The repetitive vamp in module II is a 6/4 groove of


\(^{47}\) Stefano Valdo, “Nuevo Flamenco: Jazz Influences and Introduction of the Electric Bass” (PhD diss., Istituto Universitario di Architettura, 1999), x.

layered percussion instruments that each have independent patterns, which combine to form a polyrhythmic texture. While the brass and woodwinds come in with various background figures throughout this long section, Davis freely improvises on top. Sometimes Davis sits out while the ensemble plays a prominent melodic role (for example, 6:08-6:16) but for the most part this is one long solo section. It all takes place over one basic tonal center of A Phrygian. This conservative harmonic approach is very much a tribute to Spanish folk music, as the jazz of the 1950s was often more harmonically active and featured multiple key centers. The dramatic nature of this piece and the compelling improvisation keeps the piece interesting for just over 12 minutes, a testament to the skill and vision of both Evans and Davis.

*Sketches of Spain* presents a wide range of material that Evans compiled into a whole picture that portrays his vision of Spain. While the music is not authentically Spanish in every facet, it borrows themes, instruments, cultural references, and compositions of Spanish origins. Whether or not Evans considered the work programmatic, it does follow a program in the sense that it paints a wide interpretation of Spanish musical traditions and was an influential work in the fusion of Spanish styles with jazz.
CHAPTER III

RIVER RUNS BY CHUCK OWEN

Chuck Owen is well known for his work with his big band, the Jazz Surge. The group has released four full-length CDs of original compositions and Owen has had a prolific career. Upon receiving the Guggenheim Fellowship, Owen began the work for River Runs, a project for symphony orchestra fused with jazz rhythm section and soloists. River Runs is a major artistic accomplishment and is a landmark in the lineage of jazz arranging due to the size of the project and the accolades it has garnered. Legendary saxophonist Dave Liebman said this about the work: “Copland-esque in scope, suitable as a score for an epic Hollywood movie, Chuck Owen has created an incredibly colorful portrait of a part of America’s natural beauty, specifically rivers that he has rafted or canoed on. This concerto is on a grand scale with the solo voices of Jack Wilkins (tenor sax) and LaRue Nickelson (guitar) soaring throughout. The music is visceral…you can feel the power and majesty of these natural settings with all the sections (each named for a river) evoking a singular mood.”

River Runs has been met with praise by musicians and critics alike, demonstrating its importance with positive reviews by jazz luminaries Rufus Reid, Randy Brecker, Dave Liebman, and Bob Belden.

River Runs was originally composed for orchestra and jazz sextet, but Owen decided to feature his big band, the Jazz Surge in addition to the orchestral strings and winds. The piece is intended for a slightly reduced symphony orchestra, including a standard-sized large

string section. In addition, a full big band, additional solo violin, solo guitar, and solo tenor saxophone are included in the score. The piece is scored for the following instrumentation:

- Tenor Sax Soloist
- Jazz Guitar Soloist
- 1 Piccolo/Flute
- 1 Flutes (doubling Alto Flute)
- 1 Oboes (doubling English horn)
- 1 Bassoon
- 3 horns in F
- 5 Woodwinds (A/A/T/T/B each with multiple doubles)
- 4 Trumpets in Bb
- 4 Trombones
- Jazz Violin
- Piano (Optional)
- Acoustic Guitar (Steel String, Nylon String, 12-String, and Dobro)
- Bass
- Drum Set
- Timpani (contains Perc. 4 cues)
- 3 Percussion
  - Percussion 1: Vibraphone, Orchestra Bells, Suspended Cymbal, Tom-toms, Cabasa, Vibraslap, Agogô Bells
  - Percussion 2: Marimba, Orchestra Bells, Xylophone, Tam-tam, Slap-stick
  - Percussion 3 (Jazz Perc.): Tambourine, Woodblock, Guiro, Triangle
- Harp
- Celesta (contains Perc. 4 cues)
- Strings

River Runs: A Concerto for Jazz Guitar, Saxophone, and Orchestra is a five-movement work that conveys a wide range of emotional and stylistic settings. Each movement programmatically portrays one or more United States rivers using musical devices.\(^{51}\)

Movement I: *Dawn at River’s Edge/Bound Away* (Greenbrier & New Rivers, WV)

Movement II: *Dark Waters, Slow Waters* (Hillsborough River, FL)

Movement III: *Chutes and Wave Trains* (Chattooga River, GA & SC)

---

Movement IV: *Side Hikes-A Ridge Away* (Green & Colorado Rivers, CO & UT)

Movement V: *Perhaps The Better Claim: The River of No Return* (Salmon River, ID)

While each movement goes through several style changes and has the impression of being through-composed, all of the movements are based on the concept of a jazz song form. The variety within each movement comes from the fact that Owen manipulates the song form to be less predictable. “For the most part, I don’t write through-composed music, but what I do do, as you obviously note, is obscure the…song form. I am a jazz composer, and song form is what’s really comfortable to me, but it’s also so predictable that I’ve gotten to the point where I rarely use it…in a straightforward manner.”\(^{52}\) For example, Movement IV is based on a composition from Jack Wilkins’ *Ridgeline* album.\(^{53}\) Each movement is organized into modules based on general style, mood, and character.\(^{54}\) This is a commonality in programmatic music, as the form is organized by extra-musical ideas.

*Rivers Runs* is thematically unified across all five movements by virtue of almost all of the thematic material being traced back to the original theme, stated in movement I. The exceptions include the use of an alteration of the folk song “Shenandoah” in movement II and a previously-composed theme in movement IV. According to Owen, many of the other themes were derived from this main theme by use of inversions, retrogrades, and similar interval structures.\(^{55}\)

\(^{52}\) Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.
\(^{55}\) Chuck Owen, “Presentation on *River Runs,*” April 6, 2015.
Chuck Owen wrote the work originally to be performed by symphony orchestra and jazz sextet. However, Owen claims that he re-orchestrated the material to feature his Florida-based big band, the Jazz Surge, with symphonic strings and additional orchestral instruments, in order to streamline the recording process and provide a strong foundation for the jazz rhythms present in the piece.\textsuperscript{56} The instrumentation is as follows:\textsuperscript{57}

- Tenor Saxophone (Featured Solo)
- Jazz Guitar (Featured Solo)
- Piano
- Acoustic Guitar (Steel String, Nylon String, 12-String, & Dobro)
- Bass
- Drum Kit
- 2 Flutes (1 with piccolo double)

\textsuperscript{56} Chuck Owen, “Presentation on River Runs,” April 6, 2015.
• Oboe
• Bassoon
• 2 Alto saxophones (with soprano saxophone and flute doubles)
• 2 Tenor saxophones (with clarinet and bass clarinet doubles)
• 3 French horns
• 4 Trumpets
• 3 Trombones
• Bass trombone
• 3 Percussion (Vibraphone, Orchestra Bells, Suspended Cymbal, Tom-toms, Cabasa, Vibraslap, Ago-go Bells, Xylophone, Marimba, Tam-tam, Slap-stick, Tambourine, Woodblock, Guiro, and Triangle)
• Harp
• Celesta
• Full Orchestral String Section

The use of orchestration in this piece is very diverse, with many textures and instrument groups utilized at different times. Twentieth century composers such as Ravel, Debussy, and Bartok along with modern twenty-first century composers influenced Owen’s concept of orchestration. Owen cites John Adams as a major influence in his writing, and listened to a number of major twentieth and twenty-first century art music composers before starting work on River Runs.58

The use of folk music instrumentation in the depiction of American rivers was intentional, as Owen made use of several stringed folk instruments: dobro, acoustic guitar, 12-string guitar, and nylon-string guitar. Owen uses the “lower woodwinds as kind of gravitational pull in combination with all of the guitars” to achieve a sense of groundedness.59

Behind the musical content lies the natural imagery conjured by the various rivers and natural settings that inspired Owen to write the piece. Owen uses musical devices to depict this imagery, for example, by matching the tempo to the scene. Movements I and III are

58 Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.
59 Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.
about fast, thrilling rivers and the brisk tempos reflect that. Movements II and IV are about slower rafting experiences and reflective emotional states, which are mirrored by the slower tempos. Owen provides a basic overview of each river in his composer’s notes with descriptions of his viewpoint regarding each one. In addition, Owen discusses a second layer of meaning behind the piece, a metaphorical depiction of losing his parents and feeling “a surprising sense of rudderlessness” throughout the piece.\footnote{Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”}

Movement I, *Bound Away* (and introductory Prologue entitled *Dawn at River’s Edge*) is based on the Greenbrier River and the New River, both in West Virginia. Owen describes his experience rafting on these rivers as a Boy Scout and conveys these fond memories of adventure with a narrative program that the music follows.\footnote{Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”} This is the only movement of the piece with a literal narrative program attached to it.

This movement is organized into 13 modules:

I. Prologue

II. Measures 1-59: Bold/Adventurous

III. Measures 59-67: Statement of Theme

IV. Measures 67-143: Development

V. Measures 143-240: Saxophone Solo


VII. Measures 264-352: Guitar Solo

VIII. Measures 352-381: Revisits Country ECM

IX. Measures 381-439: Funk Groove (change of pace, drops into rapids)\footnote{Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.}

\footnote{Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”} Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”

\footnote{Chuck Owen, “Presentation on *River Runs,*” April 6, 2015.}

\footnote{Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.}
X. Measures 439-475: Dark and beautiful
XI. Measures 475-504: Joyful and Adventurous
XII. Measures 504-553: Edgy/Aggressive
XIII. Coda: Majestic, Powerful

Example 5: Owen, *Prologue: Dawn at River’s Edge*, mm. 1-9

The prologue, *Dawn at River’s Edge* is intended to depict the sense of unease that Owen remembers feeling on this formative raft trip. The slow crawl of the contrabass leads to a hushed layering of atonal strings and celesta, never settling into a harmonic resolution. The violins are scored using touch-fourth harmonics to give an airy, quiet tone, and the slow, scalar counterpoint between all of the parts add to an atmosphere of uncertainty and suspense. Owen describes this section as “approaching the river from the mountains in the early, early morning when it’s not quite light yet, and the fog hanging down over the river, and just this kind of both exciting but also somewhat a little bit ominous departure.”
From measures 9-19, various voices in the orchestra are added one by one, each with their own atonal melody lines. This gives the impression of dawn, as slowly the world awakes and the sun comes out. The prologue sets up the next module of the movement, which is when the rafting starts.

Example 6: Owen, *Bound Away*, mm. 1-4

Movement I begins at a suddenly fast tempo with all of the instruments playing a marcato hit on beat one on a D dominant chord with a fourth instead of a third (D7sus4) to give a sense of suspended excitement. The woodwinds are scored with minimalistic, overlapping rhythmic ostinatos that combine to create a rhythmic “motor” that feels like the forward motion of a river’s current, as well as the anxious excitement of a perilous journey. The high register of the woodwinds suggests the brightness of the early morning and the glint of sunlight on the river’s surface. The tempo is brisk and energetic and conveys an emotional excitement inspired by the feeling of leaving on an adventure. The bright tempo is
maintained throughout the entire movement while the overall style goes through emotional changes based on the programmatic storyline.

Movement II, *Dark Waters, Slow Waters* is inspired by the Hillsborough River in Florida. Owen’s experience on this river is that it is in a dense subtropical climate with hidden wildlife including alligators and snakes.\(^{64}\) The picture he paints musically is one of an unsettled paddler, with an uncertain feeling conveyed throughout movement II.

The atmospheric black-and-white photography of Clyde Butcher partially inspired the slow-moving textures of movement II. Owen states, “the Hillsborough River from the second movement, it’s really more about painting a picture, or even a photograph.”\(^{65}\) One of Butcher’s photographs was used as album art Owen’s album *Here We Are*. This photographic concept is embodied in the introduction as the juxtaposition of a C Aeolian bass line and upper register atonal sounds result in a feeling of uncertainty. When a more stable rhythmic feel comes in at measure 23, the crawling tempo and dark tonal colors continue to add to the feeling of drifting slowly down a dark, canopied river.

The use of dobro doubling the bass line adds a regional folk color, as Owen instructs the player to “play lazily with a blues/bayou flavor” in measure 19. The folk aspect is also tied in to the melody of this movement, which is a variation of the folk song “Shenandoah.”\(^{66}\) This melodic theme is first stated from measures 27-44.

---

\(^{64}\) Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”
\(^{65}\) Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.
\(^{66}\) Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”
Example 7: Owen, *Dark Waters, Slow Waters*, mm. 27-44

The second movement can be organized into eight modules:

I. Measures 1-7: Introduction

II. Measures 7-23: Dark and Brooding

III. Measures 23-66: Melodic Statement

IV. Measures 66-107: Guitar Solo

V. Measures 107-129: Slightly brighter, quicker

VI. Measures 129-163: Latin-inspired groove, guitar and tenor sax trade fours

VII. Measures 163-192: Climactic, cinematic

VIII. Measures 192-219: Slow, crawling, mysterious

Movement III, *Chutes and Wave Trains* is inspired by the Chattooga River, a prominent whitewater rafting location. Owen wrote, “a chute is simply a narrow waterway in which a larger body of water is funneled…creating a strong, fast current often combined by a precipitous drop. Wave Trains are strings of large (usually benign) waves at the end of a
rapid that provide a great roller coaster like ride.” This sense of exhilaration and unpredictability is depicted throughout the third movement with angular intervals, irregular phrase and meter length, and rhythmic placements for surprise.

Example 8: Owen, *Chutes and Wave Trains*, mm. 1-8

This movement can be split into nine modules:

I. Measures 1-37: Introduction, pizz. strings, angular and jagged

II. Measures 37-119: Funky with frequent meter changes

III. Measures 119-151: Smooth ECM, Latin-inspired

IV. Measures 151-215: Funky and bluesy violin solo

V. Measures 215-305: Funk section, guitar and tenor sax trade four-bar phrases

VI. Measures 305-349: Pizz. strings with drum solo

VII. Measures 349-391: Hemiola underlies lyrical melody above

VIII. Measures 391-415: Majestic climax

IX. Measures 415-488: Wild funk groove, fade out to angular pizz. strings

Owen’s programmatic concept for movement III was more based on emotion than literal depictions of the river through music. According to Owen, “it was really more about

---

67 Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”
capturing that sense of fun and playfulness and family and fellowship” than it was about each note portraying part of a specific image.\(^{68}\) Regardless of the initial conception of the movement, the material ends up fitting the description of the Chattooga River with the angular meter changes and surprising hits simulating the exhilarating and unpredictable experience of a rafting trip.

Movement IV, *A Ridge Away* is a musical reflection of the exploration around the sides of a river, along the ridges and hiking paths. In particular, Owen is using family trips to the Green River in Utah and the Colorado River as inspiration for the music.\(^{69}\) The sense of beauty and majesty of these rivers and their surrounding areas are portrayed with lush chords, soaring melodies, spacious solo sections, and climactic builds.

Example 9: Owen, *A Ridge Away*, mm 1-8 (harmonic reduction)

*A Ridge Away* can be organized into eight modules:

I. Measures 1-9: Introduction

II. Measures 9-32: Melody/Song Form

---

\(^{68}\) Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.

\(^{69}\) Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”
III. Measures 32-54: Saxophone Solo

IV. Measures 54-76: Guitar Solo

V. Measures 76-88: First climax section

VI. Measures 88-96: Buildup to second climax section

VII. Measures 96-106: Second and ultimate climax section

VIII. Measures 106-112: Coda, reprise of introduction

*Side Hikes* is a reference to hiking alongside the river during paddling breaks. The music was intended reflect on the scenic outlooks Owen has experienced on his trips. This movement has multi-layered meaning, however, with an abstract philosophical inspiration added to the physical depiction of the Green River and the Colorado River. Owens stated, “you’ve made choices, you’ve taken paths that are really cool, that are really good, you’re at the top of this big, great vantage point, you can almost trace where you’ve been and maybe even where you’re going, but you can look over to that one ridge over there, and you can see a spot that, man I would love to go over there, but I’ll probably never get there.” This meaning cannot be traced to specific musical elements but can be linked to the overall feel and atmosphere of the music in a broader sense.

The fifth and final movement of *River Runs* is entitled *Perhaps the Better Claim*. This is a quote from Robert Frost’s poem *A Road Not Taken*, which is cited as a meaningful work to the composer. In addition to the inspiration from this poem, the movement looks to the Salmon River in Utah for musical inspiration; a river nicknamed “The River of No Return” for its thrilling but dangerous whitewater rafting opportunities.71

*Perhaps the Better Claim* can be separated into 9 basic modules:

---

70 Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.
71 Chuck Owen, “Composer’s Notes.”
I. Measures 1-11: Introduction, slow and winding

II. Measures 11-37: Statement of melody/song form

III. Measures 37-61: Faster and more urgent

IV. Measures 61-201: Fanfare and reprise of melody

V. Measures 201-347: Guitar Solo

VI. Measures 347-361: Fanfare

VII. Measures 361-537: Tenor Saxophone Solo

VIII. Measures 537-628: Gradual growth process into chaos

IX. Coda: Rubato statement of main theme from Mvt. I

Just as Gil Evans wrote with Miles Davis in mind, Chuck Owen wrote his work with two soloists in mind: tenor saxophonist Jack Wilkins and jazz guitarist Larue Nickelson, who were both featured on the recorded CD. Wilkins has recorded with Owen’s big band, the Jazz Surge, and they have had prior experience collaborating together. Nickelson, on the other hand, has not been on the Jazz Surge recordings but was clearly an important figure in the composition of this piece: Owen was able to use four different types of stringed instruments (Steel String, Nylon String, 12-String, and Dobro) in the composition process due to Nickelson’s unique skill set. This wide range of timbral color helped Owen to depict a folk-influenced landscape of North American rivers.

The compositional process for River Runs supports Green’s assertion that a programmatic work may be only partially based on a predetermined narrative or solely on a mental picture. While certain moments of River Runs are based on a literal narrative, much of it comes from a broader inspiration from various geographic locations and rivers. The

---


32
creative process cannot simply be confined to rigid terms and definitions but must allow space for a composer to work within their own inspiration.
Sketches of Minnesota is an original jazz work composed in the tradition of Sketches of Spain and River Runs as a geographically oriented programmatic piece. Each movement is inspired by a different location within my home state of Minnesota, including the Mississippi River, Lake Superior, and the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Among the ideas that were inspired by the Evans and Owen pieces, I include the use of folk music techniques, sonic textures that mirror physical scenes, along with dynamics and emotional developments that capture the essence of my experiences with each location. As with River Runs, the melodic content of Sketches of Minnesota is based on variations of just a few themes that tie each movement together into one complete work.

This piece is divided into five movements:

I. Mvt. I: The Mighty Mississippi

II. Mvt. II: The North Woods

III. Mvt. III: Green Pastures

IV. Mvt. IV: Lake Superior

V. Mvt. V: The Twin Cities

The instrumentation for this piece is as follows:

• 2 Flutes (with piccolo)
• Oboe
• English Horn
• 2 Clarinets
• Bass Clarinet
• Alto Saxophone (with soprano saxophone)
• Tenor Saxophone
• Baritone Saxophone
• 2 Bassoons
• 3 French Horns
• 3 Trumpets
• 2 Trombones
• Bass Trombone
• Tuba
• Percussion 1: Glockenspiel and variable auxiliary percussion instruments
• Percussion 2: Vibraphone and variable auxiliary percussion instruments
• Harp
• Violin 1 and 2
• Viola
• Violoncello
• Jazz Guitar
• Piano
• Acoustic Bass
• Drum Kit

Orchestrating music for an ensemble of this size and nature presented challenges with dynamic balance, idiomatic performance practices, player endurance, and narrowing down choices. With so many instrumental timbres available, many complex decisions had to be made and they were done with the overall structure and attention to the programmatic references as the main driving factor.

The balance presents challenges because of the major differences in dynamic range between the instruments. For example, strings are much softer than the drum kit. In order to counter that, I used drums in ways that accommodate the acoustics of strings. In movement I, the drums start out in brushes, which serves to accommodate the string volume but also mimics the sound of the Mississippi River’s rushing water. The strings, woodwinds, and percussion then enter on a four-note harmonic voicing that is used as a foundation for all five movements and reused in different inversions and melodic structures. The voicing is comprised of the notes (from bottom to top) B-C-F-G, forming a complex interval structure that includes a minor second (major seventh inverted), a major second (minor seventh inverted), a perfect fourth, perfect fifth, and a tritone. The flexibility and emotional
ambiguity of this chord allow for different bass notes to create varying modal implications and emotional options.

Example 10: Sketches of Minnesota Thematic Voicing

This is used in various transpositions, and inversions throughout the movement. At the beginning, to depict the moving texture of the river, this chord is voiced in tremolos so that each instrument alternates between either G and F or C and B to create the full chord. Underneath this chord is a thematic bass line that is adapted to various modes. In the first statement in measure 41, the bass line implies the D Dorian mode.
Example 11: Hedenstrom, *The Mighty Mississippi*, mm. 41-49

The first movement is lightly based on a song form that I composed. This movement is highlighted by a trumpet soloist that first plays a melody derived from the thematic voicing and then plays an improvised solo for the duration of the movement. The general texture and feel of the entire movement is a depiction of the Mississippi River with flowing drum textures, powerful bass lines, and lyrical melodies, but the development of the piece has no specific storyline or narrative that drives each compositional decision. It is much like the work of Evans and Owen in that its primary programmatic goal is to set up an emotional palette and atmosphere with occasional literal depictions throughout, like the drum brushes depicting rushing water and the cyclical, driving bass line and repetitive formal organization simulating the endless, powerful current of water that flows down the Mississippi.
Movement II, *The North Woods* is also in the same vein, with a lyrical theme and soft modal harmonies that are designed to set a mood that mirrors the peace and beauty of the expansive wilderness of northern Minnesota. In order to convey the simplicity and serenity of these natural surroundings, the melody (labeled the “Woods Theme”) is primarily diatonic, with just three accidentals in various places to add complexity and depth to the music.

Example 12: Hedenstrom, *The North Woods*, mm. 38-48

This example is the Woods Theme as stated by the strings and woodwinds from measures 38-48. The melody can be heard as being in the key center of A major, first as a Lydian with the D sharp in the first measure, and then later in ionian when it becomes a D natural. The melody is re-harmonized and adapted to various modes and key centers throughout the piece, including during the extended tenor saxophone solo from measure 50 to the end of the movement.

The basic form of the movement is broken into five modules:

I. Introduction

II. Statement of Theme

III. Second Statement of Theme

IV. Solo Section

V. Coda
Modules I, II and III are, overall, peaceful and serene. In measure one, a soft layering of strings, piano, harp, and oboe are progressively layered using pitches from the A Lydian mode. The thematic voicing from movement I enters on beat four of measure seven in the woodwinds, harp, and guitar, and piano. Repetitive layers of modal figures enter in to form a multi-layered texture that simulates the image of leaves falling, a gentle wind blowing, and ambient nature sounds resulting in a sense of natural beauty. Oscillating eighth-note background figures in measures 38-41 are scored in contrary motion in the violas, cellos, and bassoons. This also creates the sensation of gentle stirring and progresses slowly through the harmonic progression like a slow walk through the woods.


Modules IV and V feature a plodding quarter note bass line that lays a foundation for the tenor saxophone soloist to play over it in a wild, free manner. The deep sound of perfect
fifths between the piano, bass, bass clarinet, and bass trombone sound earthy and dark and suggest the feeling of being in the woods at night. During this section, chromatic modal voicings scored in the wind section crawl through the texture in slow rhythms that cross over the bar lines to create a sense of unease and eeriness. The drummer and percussionists play varied ambient percussion instruments with written instructions to create the impression of the wildness of the forest. The tenor solo improvises a wild solo until the end, when the final statement of the Woods Theme is created.

The inspiration for movement III, *Green Pastures* is the vast landscapes of farmland, rolling hills, and lush fields found in Minnesota during the spring and summer seasons. This movement contains no overt narrative program, but the rhythmic syncopation, train-inspired drum groove, lyrical melody, and active harmonic progression depict the overall feeling of being in the open countryside. The entire movement is based on a repetitive groove and melodic rhythm that is stated from the first measure all the way until the last. The rhythmic pattern has a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth tied to a half note, lasting a total of one measure, and repeats with different harmonic specifics for the duration of the piece. The accent on beat one of each measure conflicts rhythmically with a syncopated melodic line that never lines up on beat one. The tension created by this rhythmic juxtaposition creates a sense of forward momentum. The overall form of this movement is AABAC.

The drums enter the piece during the second A section with a folk-inspired groove that references both the imagery of a train rolling through the plains and the American folk music tradition. This draws a parallel to Owen’s use of dobro/acoustic guitar and Evans’s use of castanets as references to folk music. The quality of the melody and repetitive rhythmic pattern is also suggestive of folk music’s simple melodies and harmonic patterns. The
absence of melodic chromaticism throughout the movement was scored with the intent of creating folk-inspired beauty.

Example 14: Hedenstrom, *Green Pastures*, mm. 1-6

The choice to feature soprano saxophone in movement III is because the soprano saxophone’s light, airy tone sings gently over the orchestral texture like a summer’s breeze. The soprano is featured through the entirety of the movement, first playing the melody in the key of C major, then improvising over the same song form in the key of D flat major, followed by a shortened statement of the form (the final AC) in the key of D major. The piece follows a dynamic curve that begins softly with the piano and soprano saxophone and builds to a full-ensemble statement of the melody in the key of D major from measure 177 to measure 194, then wanes into a soft ending.

This peaceful ending transitions into movement IV, *Lake Superior*. Movement IV begins with *rubato* ambient percussion sounds that are designed to sound like the wind and ambience on the shoreline of Lake Superior. The percussion continues throughout the movement in a free, untimed manner. This is much like Evans’s arrangement of *Concierto de Aranjuez* that features ambient, unmetered percussion to create a hazy mood. This movement
is through-composed and uses the Water Theme from movement I as the main melodic material throughout. The image of Lake Superior is big, wide, powerful, and still. To achieve this sense of majestic calm, I used major and minor triads in open position to achieve wide intervals and used one primary triad in the low register and one upper-structure triad in the upper register. The first iteration of this, for example, is an F major triad in the low register answered by a G major triad in the upper register to create an F Lydian tonality.

Example 15: Hedenstrom, *Lake Superior*, mm. 2-8

![Example music notation]

The use of open position triads continues throughout the movement. The slow tempo with open space is also indicative of the feeling of calm and peace.

The piece is organized into four modules:

I. Introduction

II. Melodic Statements

III. Climax

IV. Coda

To simulate the rolling waves on the lake, the piano, guitar, and harp gently strum a chord pattern from measure 48 to measure 61 (the final measure). The texture in this section,
created by three distinctly independent strumming rhythms, gives the illusion of waves rolling along the lake surface. Similar to Owen’s statement that River Runs is more about the feelings behind the rivers than the literal depiction of them, this movement is more about the feeling of staring across a beautiful landscape that is overwhelmingly peaceful and still.73

Movement V, The Twin Cities begins with a majestic brass chorale in order to transition from the powerful calm of movement IV. The chorale is taken from the chorale in movement I to depict the scene of the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River flows through Minneapolis and Saint Paul and serves as one of the defining characteristics of the cities and the recalling of one of the movement I themes connects the two movements. The concept behind the final movement is to represent the modern urban environment of Minneapolis and St. Paul, which has diverse range of cultures, arts, foods, people, and architecture. The modern side of the Twin Cities is represented by the overall style and groove, which is based on jazz-funk fusion.

The form of movement V is based on an AAB song form, but the section with the guitar solo is completely through-composed. The melody in this movement is independent from those of the other movements. The movement is divided into five modules:

I. Introduction
II. Statement of the Form: AAB
III. Interlude
IV. Guitar Solo
V. Reprise of the Melody
VI. Coda

---

73 Chuck Owen, Telephone interview, February 8, 2016.
During the A sections of the form, the drummer plays a rim shot-focused groove and the sound of the acoustic bass, piano, and bass clarinet playing a unison bass line is a common sound in contemporary jazz. The melody is harmonized in fourths, which is another sound considered a part of modern jazz.

Example 16: Hedenstrom, *The Twin Cities*, mm. 26-33

The driving rhythmic feel throughout this movement represents the fast-paced tempo of the workweek in a major city. All of the fast-changing textures and instrumentation choices are representative of the wide range of activities and people all over the city. In measures 74 through 89, the style changes from a half-time rock feel to a driving eighth note groove with playful, bluesy upper register hits led by the piccolo. The bass trombone, baritone saxophone, and bass clarinet add weight to the active bass line to give it power and force which simulates the bustling, industrial urban atmosphere. The French horns, alto and tenor saxophones, bassoons, and English horn enter with a mischievous melody line that adds to the urgency of the music and greater tension like the stress of traffic.
While there are these specific comparisons one might make to literal objects or experiences in the city, the intent behind the music was mostly to capture the essence of my personal feelings about the city. The modern harmonies, driving grooves, and quirky textures represent the overall diversity of the city while leaving room for interpretation.

The intention behind *Sketches of Minnesota* was to convey a sense of beauty that comes with my memories of my upbringing in Minnesota. The work is not intended to follow a narrative program, but rather it is inspired by a series of emotions, memories, pictures, experiences, and locations. In the tradition of Evans and Owen, I strove to portray the various landscapes and leave the listener with a broad sense of the simple beauty and natural diversity of the state and contribute to the tradition of programmatic works in jazz.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Programmatic music is a term that aids us in defining music based on non-musical imagery. Sometimes this can mean using music to simulate a literal storyline, but in many cases, it means that a composer is using musical devices to convey a broad concept, character, object, or scene. In the case of these three works, music is often used to convey landscapes, cultural traditions, personal experiences, and emotions. And yet, as is the composer’s right, some parts of each work are narrative, following storylines to varying degrees of specificity. The process for a composition can be programmatic without the composer setting out to meet the definition of the term, with creative choices dictating the direction of the music. The works of Gil Evans and Chuck Owen stand as landmarks in an ongoing tradition of programmatic jazz music that portrays landscapes of geographical locations, and \textit{Sketches of Minnesota} is an homage to these composers’ work, contributing to what is already a rich history.

There is a need for further investigation into the creative process of jazz composers and arrangers. Much can be gained by studying the conceptual intentions behind a composer’s music, both from a historical and musical standpoint. There are a plethora of large ensemble jazz works that are available to scholars for critical analysis, creating opportunities to understand historical relationships between musicians and their works.

The application for this study is relevant to future analysis of jazz works, as it is important to study the creative implications of a composer or arranger’s process beyond the concrete data of rhythm, melody, and harmony. The decisions that may drive the compositional process are without limits and it is beneficial to use sources outside of the
score such as biographies, interviews, articles, and quotes to gain a better understanding of the composer’s intentions. This removes some of the guesswork behind musical analysis and aids in a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of important works and their relationship to history.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Articles


Books


**Discography**


Miscellaneous


Scores


Websites


Interviews
