AN ANALYSIS OF THE AMERICAN CONCERTO BY ELLEN TAAFFE ZWILICH,
IDENTIFYING THE USE OF MOTIVES, AND A GUIDE
FOR PERFORMANCE PREPARATION

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Ellen Taaffe Zwilich is an important figure in the compositional world, having written a diverse body of works for which she has received many accolades, including the coveted Pulitzer Prize. The second chapter examines this American composer, the commission of the *American Concerto*, and events leading to the piano reduction of the concerto.

The *America Concerto* is a modern work that incorporates synthetic scales, unusual notation, and the organization of melodic material through motives. The third chapter includes an analysis that identifies the form and tonal centers as well as the primary motives used in the concerto.

The fourth chapter includes pedagogy considerations for performance. Issues relating to tessitura, articulation, flexibility, endurance factors, fingerings, and technical features of the piano reduction accompaniment are evaluated. Detailed suggestions are provided to aid in preparing the piece for performance, including a study of stylistic concerns. The *American Concerto* is quite diverse stylistically as Zwilich explores the symphonic and jazz genres. The dual nature of the trumpet is examined as the piece combines classical and jazz styles in a virtuosic setting.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people I would like to thank for contributing their time and efforts in this project. First, thank you to Ellen Zwilich for her time and support of this project. She continues to be a hero of mine and I look forward to playing more of her pieces in the future. Thank you to Daniel Dorff who made the piano reduction of the *American Concerto* and who responded to my email with valuable information about the concerto. Thank you to Xiao-Li Ding for her artistry, professionalism, and dedication to this project. Thank you to Keith Johnson, my professor at UNT, who molded me and taught me so much about brass pedagogy as well as how to be a better person. Thank you to Eugene Corporon, John Holt, and Lenora McCrosky for serving on my committee and helping me finish my degree. Thank you to my friend Cynthia Beard for all the copying and leg-work retrieving the signatures I needed at UNT while I was in Kansas. Thank you to my family in Plano, Texas, Doug and Betsy Darlington, I am lucky to have you in my life. Thank you to my late mother, Tomasa Heredia, who always believed in me and whom I miss every day. And of course, thank you to Wendy Darlington, my inspiration, love, and future.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose of the Study

Ellen Taaffe Zwilich is an important figure in the compositional world, having written a diverse body of works for which she has received many accolades, including the coveted Pulitzer Prize. Her output for the trumpet has been significant, contributing such works as *Concerto for Trumpet and Five Players* (1984), *Clarino Quartet* (1977), and the trumpet concerto work that will be discussed in this paper, the *American Concerto* (1994). Zwilich is breaking new ground as a leading female composer, having reached many firsts in her career. She was the first female to receive a doctorate in composition from Julliard and was the first female composer to win the Pulitzer Prize for composition.

There are currently two recordings that feature Ellen Zwilich’s works for trumpet. “Trumpet Comes Of Age 1940-1980” by trumpeter Louis Ranger, which features *Clarino Quartet* (Crystal Records) and “Ellen Taaffe Zwilich: Symbolon,” which features her *Concerto for Trumpet and Five Players* (New World Records). The *American Concerto for Trumpet* has not been recorded at the time of this paper but has been performed by such Orchestras as the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, Cedar Rapids Symphony Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic. The premiere was performed by Doc Severinson with the San Diego Symphony Orchestra in 1994.

Because of the exposure she has garnered through her success as a composer, her works for the trumpet are even more significant. Traditionally orchestras feature voice, piano, and string concertos in their concert seasons. The trumpet is not a leading solo instrument due in part to its scarce repertoire in comparison. In the case that the trumpet is called upon to the concert
stage, more often than not, one will hear either the Franz Joseph Haydn, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, or Alexander Arutunian concertos. In order for the trumpet to elevate its stature in the solo concert stage, it is vital to have modern significant composers writing new repertoire.

My purpose in writing this paper is to examine Zwilich’s compositional procedures in her American Concerto for Trumpet and to provide a performance guide for future performers. Considering the interest in performing new modern works today by many trumpeters, an analysis of the American Concerto is needed to help prepare for performance. With the success of Zwilich’s works for the trumpet, it is my hope that other leading composers will take the challenge to write for this noble instrument.

State of Research

Although there has been much written about Zwilich’s orchestral works and woodwind concertos, there is a lack of information concerning her trumpet music. Dissertations have been written on Zwilich’s clarinet, flute, and horn concertos, as well as compositional style in her orchestral works. Additionally, many articles have been written on Zwilich as a person, composer, and educator (Zwilich, an active music educator, currently holds the Francis Eppes Distinguished Professorship at Florida State University). The most extensive published research of a trumpet work by Ellen Zwilich is by Laurel A. MacAdam, whose article entitled “Cross-Relationships and Contrasts: Ellen Taaffe Zwilich’s Concerto for Trumpet and Five Players” was published in the December 1992/28 issue of the International Trumpet Guild Journal. There have been no articles written on the American Concerto to my knowledge.

I hope to offer additional information about the current state of research concerning the trumpet music of Ellen Zwilich, and in particular, the American Concerto. My sources will come from the existing literature on Zwilich’s music including dissertations, articles,
biographical dictionaries, and audio recordings. I will also use information gathered from a phone interview with Zwilich and email correspondence with Daniel Dorff, who arranged the piano reduction. Zwilich provided information on circumstances that led to the commission of the concerto, compositional methods in the work, and helpful insights for performance practice issues.

Method

My method of research will include an analysis of the *American Concerto* with regards to performance practice. I will analyze the formal design, identify motives and their development, and provide stylistic considerations for performers. The concerto is a one-movement work with three distinct sections. I plan to identify formal sections, tonal centers, and significant stylistic features including harmonic language and motivic processes.

The use of motives, synthetic scales, unconventional notation, and/or serialism is prevalent in much of contemporary music. A performer would be well served by recognizing modern compositional techniques in preparation of a contemporary piece. Of the techniques mentioned above, the *American Concerto* incorporates synthetic scales, unusual notation, and the organization of melodic material through motives. My analysis will identify the primary motives used and suggest an explanation for Zwilich’s compositional choices. I will then use motivic analysis to consider Zwilich’s seamless weaving of motives to generate melody.

Beyond motives, Zwilich makes use of large intervals in melodic lines, most commonly intervals of thirds and tenths. She also incorporates the interval of a second with some frequency, with and without octave displacements that transform them into ninths, and variably their inversions (sevenths). I will identify common intervals used to aid in preparation for performance.
My analysis will also identify significant harmonic devices used by Zwilich. For example, the harmonic vocabulary of the *American Concerto* includes a common Zwilich device, the dual-third chord. This is a root-third-fifth-dominant seventh chord that also contains the flatted third. I will identify and discuss the different ways this harmonic device is used in the concerto, which range from ostinati static backgrounds to periodic rhythmic interruptions in the accompaniment. Figure 1 depicts Zwilich’s use of the dual third dominant seventh chord in first inversion in the piano accompaniment (trumpet in Bb) in measure nine.

![Figure 1. Dual dominant third chord measure 9, Zwilich *American Concerto*.](image)

I will discuss pedagogy considerations for performance issues relating to range, tessitura, articulation, flexibility, endurance factors, fingerings, and technical features of the piano reduction accompaniment. I plan to include detailed suggestions to aid in preparing the piece for performance, including a discussion of stylistic concerns. The *American Concerto* is quite diverse stylistically as Zwilich explores the Symphonic and Jazz genres. I will discuss the dual nature of the trumpet as the piece combines classical and jazz styles in a virtuosic setting. Zwilich indicates a change of style by using the terms symphonic and jazz articulation to create a stylistic transformation. Although the piece does not have improvisation, Zwilich writes the jazz sections in a way to suggest the trumpet is improvising sixteenth notes in a bebop style. I will
discuss articulation issues in regards to these sixteenth note passages. Zwilich also incorporates modern notational writing in the trumpet part. I will provide specific trumpet techniques that can be utilized to interpret this notational writing. The performer can then use this information to make decisions about how to approach the work.
CHAPTER 2

ELLEN TAAFFE ZWILICH

Biographical Information

Ellen Taaffe Zwilich was born April 30, 1939, in Miami, Florida. Although her parents were not musically inclined, music came easily to young Ellen. She began taking piano lessons at a young age from a neighborhood piano teacher. By the time she was in high school, she was quite proficient on trumpet, violin, and piano. She attended Coral Gables High School and was active in the band and orchestra. She was the first chair trumpet in band and first chair violin in the school orchestra. In addition to performing, she was also conducting, arranging, and composing music at this time.\(^1\) She composed a school fight song and by the time she was eighteen she was tackling the job of composing a full-scale orchestral work.\(^2\)

Zwilich continued with her musical endeavors in college. She enrolled at Florida State University in Tallahassee. As a composition major, she studied composition with John Boda and violin with Richard Burgin.\(^3\) She won many compositional awards at Florida State and received her Bachelor of Music degree in 1960 and Master of Music degree in 1962.

After graduating, Zwilich moved on to a teaching position at Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina. She only remained at this position for a year before deciding to move to New York. She began studying violin in New York with Ivan Galamian and soon became a member of the American Symphony Orchestra. Leopold Stokowski was the conductor


and founder of the American Symphony Orchestra. Zwilich performed with the orchestra from 1965 to 1972. Zwilich recalls her time in the orchestra as a kind of apprenticeship for a composer.

Zwilich entered the Julliard School of Music to study composition in 1970. Her teachers included Roger Sessions and Elliot Carter. Zwilich made history by becoming the first female to receive the doctorate in composition from Julliard in 1975.\footnote{Ibid.} Zwilich’s future became even brighter when Pierre Boulez programmed her Symposium for Orchestra (1973) with the New York Philharmonic. This performance helped establish Zwilich as a serious composer and she soon had other commissions. The 1970s proved to be a fruitful decade for Zwilich in her career and personal life. As she was acquiring success as a composer, she also met and married her husband, Joseph Zwilich, who was a violinist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Unfortunately, tragedy coincided with the end of the decade when her husband died suddenly of a heart attack.

The compositional style of Zwilich was altered by the death of her husband in 1979. Her music created prior to the passing of her husband was characterized by an atonal style somewhat reminiscent of the Second Viennese School. Works following this date became more tonal and accessible.

Zwilich kept writing and soon composed her Symphony No.1 which was premiered by Gunther Schuller and the American Composers Orchestra on May 5, 1982. A year following this event Zwilich was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in composition. She was the first female to receive such an honor and became famous virtually overnight.
Zwilich has garnered many other awards following the Pulitzer, some notables being the 1995 Inaugural Carnegie Hall Composer’s chair which she held for three years, four Grammy award nominations, and the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Chamber Music Prize.

Zwilich is still very active as a composer and educator. She currently holds the Francis Eppes Distinguished Professorship at Florida State University. She has also written concertos for many of the orchestral instruments. Her style in writing for a particular instrument relies heavily on the performer. “Her approach to the solo writing has been to closely work with each of the soloist-often prominent performers-who would premiere these works in an effort to combine virtuosity and idiomatic capabilities of instrument and performer.”


The bulk of Zwilich’s compositional output consists of instrumental works that are made up of chamber and orchestral works. Zwilich, being a former brass player, has richened the repertoire of brass literature with splendid solo works. The *American Concerto* is such a piece and will be discussed in the following chapters.

The Commission

The *American Concerto* was written for Doc Severinson who is known for his exciting pyrotechnics on trumpet. Severinson, along with JoAnn Falletta, who is the musical director of the Virginia and Buffalo Symphony Orchestras, commissioned the work. Severinson said of Zwilich, “I just felt Zwilich was more consistent… I could listen to a concerto or symphony of different pieces, and I could hear Ellen Zwilich in all of them. And she played trumpet in college.

She played the Haydn trumpet concerto. She knows the instrument.”

Zwilich accepted the commission because she was familiar with Falletta and Severinson. She says of Severinson, “Doc is so versatile and such an unbelievable trumpet player… I played well enough to know how well he plays. He’s top of the line.”

Severinson is a well-known jazz trumpet player. He is most known for being the big band leader of the Johnny Carson Show. Although he is a proficient jazz musician, he did not want a piece that was a jazz trumpet solo with orchestra. Zwilich, in writing the concerto, said her writing, “… was informed by Severinson’s entire range of talents.”

Zwilich, having been a trumpet player herself, has an intimate knowledge of the capabilities of the instrument. “I think the trumpet is a terrifically versatile instrument. We’re kind of used to hearing the sort of Baroque stuff you hear in bookstores, the high trumpet playing long lines. It does have a long history, military and ceremonial.”

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7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.
According to Zwilich in a phone interview, she takes a consistent approach when writing for a particular instrument. Zwilich states that she “…likes to get under the skin of the musical instrument.”\(^\text{10}\) She went on by saying that in the *American Concerto* she took an organic approach. She tried to connect the three parts of the piece by providing familiar material throughout the piece. The piece is not repeated but evolves in unexpected or unfamiliar ways. Although there is a sense of having the traditional three set of movements, Zwilich considers the parts as more of a continuing set of variations.\(^\text{11}\)

The concerto utilizes jazz and symphonic elements. Zwilich also stated that the piece is not a third stream piece but does utilize certain elements that give it the essence of the jazz idiom.\(^\text{12}\) Jazz is an American music that was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. The music was a hybrid of the blues and ragtime. This music went through many periods of evolution. Some of these periods included Big Band Swing, Bebop, Cool, Hardbop, Free Jazz, and Fusion. Not only has jazz become a legitimate musical art form, it has garnered respect from many symphonic composers. Many significant classical composers have been influenced by the jazz genre including Igor Stravinsky, Aaron Copland, and Leonard Bernstein just to name a few.

Zwilich has fused elements of the symphonic and jazz genre in the concerto. She named the piece *American* because, “…the reason I call this ‘American Concerto’ is that American trumpeters play in many styles. I myself have played the trumpet classical concerto by Haydn

\(^{10}\) Zwilich, Ellen Taaffe. Telephone Interview. 04 Feb. 2008.

\(^{11}\) Ibid.

\(^{12}\) Ibid.
but I have also played in a big band. The trumpet has a rich heritage and is unique. The trumpet style in America is much different than the European style.”

The American Concerto was commissioned by The California Center for the Arts, Escondido, The San Diego Symphony, The Virginia Symphony, The Buffalo Philharmonic, and Doc Severinsson. It was premiered by Doc Severinsson and the San Diego Symphony Orchestra under the direction of JoAnn Falleta on September 24, 1994.

The Piano Reduction

Daniel Dorff who is a composer and editor at Theodore Presser Company was invited by Zwilich to do the piano reduction of the American Concerto. In addition to making a piano reduction of the trumpet concerto, he also made a reduction of Zwilich’s violin concerto. The American Concerto piano reduction was finished in April of 1995. Zwilich was intimately involved in the project. According to written correspondence with Dorff, he worked through his draft of the piano reduction and sent the proposed reduction to Zwilich with additional questions about challenging passages. Zwilich ultimately made all the decisions in regards to the piano reduction and according to Dorff, “This was a team effort with her approval and oversight.”

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13 Ibid.

14 Dorff, Daniel. E-mail interview. 20 Jan. 2008.

15 Ibid.
CHAPTER 3

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

The American Concerto is a one movement enclosed concerto. The piece is through composed and divided into three sections with a cadenza. In this paper I will recognize Section 1 as movement one, Section 2 as movement two, and Section 3 as movement three. A broader outline of the sections is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Outline of the sections in the American Concerto.

Section 1: measures 1-117 (Movement I)

Section 2: measures 118-205 (Movement II)

Cadenza: measures 206-231

Section 2 (transition): measures 232-282

Section 3: measures 283-403 (Movement III)

In addition to outlining the different movements of the piece, I will also identify the form and tonal centers of each movement. Table 2 provides a broader outline of the form and tonal centers of each movement.

Table 2. Outline of the form and tonal centers of Movements 1, 2, and 3.

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<td>IA</td>
<td>D minor</td>
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<tr>
<td>37-55</td>
<td>IIA</td>
<td>A major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-68</td>
<td>IIB</td>
<td>B major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69-92</td>
<td>IIIA</td>
<td>B major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-97</td>
<td>IIC</td>
<td>B major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98-117</td>
<td>IIC</td>
<td>Db major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Although the *American Concerto* is a modern work, Zwilich still incorporates traditional methods in the piece. A concerto typically has three movements and is usually in the form of fast-slow-fast. The *American Concerto* follows this traditional concerto format. Upon first hearing the concerto one is struck by the rhythmical feel of the piece as well as the use of rich harmonies. A common harmonic device used in the *American Concerto* is the dual third chord. This is a chord that presents the major triad of a root, third, and fifth with also the minor third. In this dissertation, this chord will be identified as a dual third chord. At times, Zwilich also adds the dominant seventh to the dual third chord. In this case I will identify the chord as a dominant dual third chord. I will also print the chord by using both the upper and lower case letter separated by a dash. For example, in the case of a dual third chord on D, I will indicate it in print as D/d. In the case of a dominant dual third chord in D, I will identify it in print as D/d7.

The analysis in this dissertation will be based on the piano reduction score of the *American Concerto*. I will identify the piano accompaniment as the piano part. The trumpet part is written for the trumpet in B flat. In identifying notes in the trumpet part, I will exclusively use the concert pitch name when speaking of a note. I will also identify different ranges of the
trumpet. I will identify the C below the staff as C1, the C in the staff as C2, and the C above the staff as C3. This will also apply to the particular notes that lie in between these ranges. In addition, I will identify notes from G2 to Bb2 as high, and B2 and above as very high when discussing issues of tessitura.

The *American Concerto* is a piece that is constructed melodically and harmonically through the use of motives. These motives reappear in the piece often and function as a means of providing familiar material to the listener. Zwilich also uses the motives to function as a foundation for tonality. For example, the motives are often chords or arpeggios outlining the tonal center. This is significant because harmonically the piece is assembled in a rather contemporary manner.

Zwilich immediately presents the majority of the motives in the first movement. In fact, ten out of the twelve motives are found initially in the first movement. The criteria used to identify motives are as follows:

1. The motive had to appear more than once in the piece and be a complete melodic or rhythmical idea.

2. The motive had to be recognizable even when undergoing transformation.

Recognizing the motives will prove to be helpful in understanding the piece. The motives included will comprise of a description and visual image. The images were taken from Daniel Dorff’s piano reduction score published by Merion Music, Inc. I will also include a table in the Appendix listing where each of the twelve motives are found in the piece.
Motives

Motive one is a synthetic scale. Figure 2 shows an example found in the first movement, measure 1.

Figure 2. Motive 1.

Motive two is an arpeggio figure that leads to a half note. Figure 3 shows an example found in the first movement, measure 3.

Figure 3. Motive 2.
Motive three are percussive $32^{\text{nd}}$ notes on a dual third chord. Figure 4 shows an example found in the first movement, measure ten.

![Figure 4. Motive 3.](image)

Motive four are figures that include a neighbor tone. Figure 5 shows an example found in the first movement, beat two in measure 24 of the trumpet part.

![Figure 5. Motive 4.](image)

Motive five is a $32^{\text{nd}}$ rhythmic figure. Figure 6 shows an example found in the first movement, measure 33.

![Figure 6. Motive 5.](image)
Motive six is a dominant dual third chord. This is a root, $3^{\text{rd}}$, $5^{\text{th}}$, dominant $7^{\text{th}}$ chord with the minor third. Figure 7 shows an example found in the first movement, measure 36.

![Figure 7. Motive 6.](image)

Motive seven is a syncopated rhythm figure that is found in the accompaniment. Figure 8 shows an example found in the first movement, measure 37.

![Figure 8. Motive 7.](image)

Motive eight is a 16$^{\text{th}}$ note run followed by a sustained note. Figure 9 shows an example found in the first movement, measure 40, in the trumpet part.

![Figure 9. Motive 8.](image)
Motive nine is a rhythmic figure in wide intervals of a perfect fourth. Figure 10 shows an example found in the first movement, measure 52-53.

Figure 10. Motive 9.

Motive ten is a 16\textsuperscript{th} note run followed by descending quarter notes a 5\textsuperscript{th} apart beginning on the note B. Figure 11 shows an example found in the first movement, measures 75-76.

Figure 11. Motive 10.

Motive eleven is a scale ascending two octaves. Figure 12 shows an example found in the second movement, measure 150, in the piano part.

Figure 12. Motive 11.
Motive 12 is a rhythmic figure made up of 16\textsuperscript{th} notes. Figure 13 shows an example found in the third movement, measure 287.

\textit{Figure 13. Motive 12.}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure13.png}
\end{figure}

\textbf{First Movement}

The Concerto begins by immediately introducing motive one, a synthetic scale motive. This scale is a descending arpeggiated series of notes. The piano plays the second motive, an arpeggio (D major), in measure three. Zwilich uses this third motive often before a trumpet entrance. This arpeggio ends on a dotted half note (F2) that is played by the trumpet and piano in unison. This note (F2) is the minor third of the arpeggio and completes the dual third harmony. The piano accompaniment outlines the notes Bb and F in wide intervals in measure six as the trumpet plays an ominous tune.

The trumpet plays a declamatory figure in wide intervals of a major sixth and perfect fifth in measure nine. Tension is created in the piano in measure ten when motive three is presented. This motive is characterized by percussive 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes on a dual third chord. The trumpet plays an octave interval up to a C3 that descends with 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes which are played freely and alone. The score notates the trumpet should play “freely, but in the time of two beats.”
The first chord in measure thirteen is a dominant dual third chord (A/a7) and is followed by another synthetic scale that outlines the tonality of A major. The synthetic scale, played by the piano, ends on a half note (E2) that is played by the trumpet alone. The trumpet begins playing a lyrical and haunting melody. The score indicates the trumpet to play cantabile, mellow “cornet sound”. The melodic phrase ends on the introduction of motive four in measure twenty-four of the trumpet line. This fourth motive is the neighbor tone motive outlining a minor second. Zwilich uses the interval of a minor second with some frequency.

Motive five is introduced in measure twenty-nine in the piano part. This motive is a 32\textsuperscript{nd} rhythmic pattern on a dominant dual third chord, C#/c#7. This chord creates tension and the trumpet begins to outline the notes A flat and D flat in intervals of a perfect fourth and fifth in unison with the piano in measures thirty and thirty-two. These notes are also the enharmonic spelling of the G sharp and C sharp that is being played in the piano part in the measures preceding and following these measures. This culminates with the introduction of motive six, a dual third chord (D/d), in measure thirty-six. This segues to the B section of the first movement in measure thirty-seven.

The B section begins with motive seven. This motive is a syncopated rhythm in the accompaniment. The character of the piece changes to one of excitement. The entrance of the trumpet in measure forty introduces motive eight. This motive is a 16\textsuperscript{th} note run followed by a sustained note. The trumpet line in the B section stays in the high tessitura range of the trumpet. There is a brief reprieve in measure forty-nine when the trumpet plays the fourth motive. This neighbor tone motive is repeated for three measures. This is followed by the introduction of motive nine in measure fifty-two in the piano accompaniment. This motive is a rhythmical
figure with wide intervals. This motive is repeated once more before the piano plays motive seven again in measure fifty-six.

The trumpet answers with the introduction of motive ten in measure fifty-eight. This motive is a 16th note run followed by descending quarter notes in fifths. The piano again plays motive seven in measure sixty-one which is answered by the trumpet in measure sixty-three. Motive seven is transformed in the trumpet line but is still recognizable. The piano plays motive four in measure sixty-seven and sixty-eight. This motive outlines the tonality of B major.

Measure sixty-nine includes motive nine in the piano accompaniment. This is repeated until measure seventy-three when motive seven is re-introduced. Motive eight is played in measure seventy-five by the piano. This is followed by motive seven as it is played again in measure seventy-eight. The trumpet has been resting since measure sixty-eight but re-enters in measure eighty. The trumpet line is characterized by large intervals most predominantly the intervals of a perfect fourth and fifth.

The motives begin to weave in measure eighty-five. The piano plays motive seven and then motive four in measure eighty-six and eighty-seven. The trumpet enters in measure eighty-eight with a syncopated figure on G2 and Bb2. Motive four reappears in measure eight-nine in the piano part, followed by motive six in measure ninety-one, (E/e7). This motive outlines the tonality of E major briefly before returning back to B major in measure ninety-three.

Motive five is played by the piano in measure ninety-three. This is immediately followed by motive seven in measure ninety-six. The trumpet plays motive seven in measure ninety-eight in unison with the piano. This motive is played by the piano until measure 100. The trumpet enters in measure 104 as it plays a figure in intervals of a fifth, namely Eb2 and Bb2. These rhythmical interjections end in measure 110 when the trumpet ascends to a Db3, followed by a
descent of perfect fourth quarter notes to an F1. The accompaniment becomes very thin in measure 110 where the score calls for a cymbal, bass drum, and hi-hat. The first movement ends in a Lento section as the trumpet plays an augmented version of the seventh motive. The score indicates the measure as, “subito free, full and singing”.

Second Movement

The second movement begins with a strong sense of G flat major. Motive four is played by the piano in measure 122, 123, 125, 127, and 129. This motive, a neighbor tone motive, is altered as it is now played by 32nd notes. Motive one is played in measure 128 by the piano followed by the motive four in measure 129. Measure 131 changes tonality to one of E flat major as it is outlined by motive two in the piano part. The trumpet enters in measure 131 in a melodic style. The score indicates the trumpet to play “flugelhorn-like” and “espressivo”. The style is very free as the accompaniment plays a series of chords. Motive six is played in measure 134 in the piano as is outlines a dual third chord, Eb/eb. The trumpet ends the A section of the second movement by playing motive four in measure 138.

The B section of the second movement begins with a new tempo and tonal center. The tempo is quarter note equals 60 and the new tonality is B major. The accompaniment plays a series of eighth notes that are indicated to play in a “biting” style. The tonal center is transformed to E flat major in measure 146. Motive eleven is introduced in measure 150 in the piano part. This motive is an F Lydian scale ascending two octaves.

Measure 153 has an ostinato bass line in the piano part that outlines B flat minor until measure 158. The trumpet plays a high lyrical line in a mezzo-forte dynamic. The strong sense of E flat is reinforced in measure 158 by the appearance of motive six in the piano. This motive is a dominant dual third chord, Eb/eb7. This motive reappears in measures 160, 161-2, and 163.
Motive eleven is played by the piano in measure 165 and then answered by the trumpet in measure 168. The piano plays motive four in measure 169 followed by motive one in measure 170. This is again repeated in the next two measures where it reinforces a strong sense of E flat major.

The trumpet enters with an eighth note pick-up into measure 173. The score indicates the trumpet should play with a “dark, brooding” style. Motive two is played by the piano in measure 176 that outlines a dual third chord (Bb/bb), the dominant of E flat. Motive six is played in measures 178-179 and 181-182 in the piano. These series of motives are again outlining a dual third chord (Bb/bb).

The C section begins in measure 183 and the tempo is quarter note equals 120. The piano plays the motive nine in measure 183-184. This motive is repeated again as rhythmic interjections in measures 189-190, 192-193, 199-201, and 205. The trumpet line includes a series of arpeggiated figures in intervals of a fifth. The tempo is also fluctuating with many changes of tempos. The trumpet line is foreshadowing the upcoming cadenza by playing a series of short cadenza-like figures. The cadenza begins in earnest in measure 206.

The cadenza is accompanied sporadically by the piano with short interjections and a percussionist. The piano reduction calls for a bass drum, hi-hat, and cymbal. In a phone interview with Zwilich, the composer stated that the concerto could be played without the percussion part. In addition, there is not a separate percussion part, if one were to perform with a percussionist, the percussionist would need to look off the score.

The jazz idiom makes its first appearance in the cadenza. The trumpet line incorporates a series of 16\textsuperscript{th} notes to be played in a bebop fashion. The score indicates a “slight jazz articulation”. The figures are too fast to be swung and are most conducive to be played with a
bebop style. The trumpet line alternates from that of a jazz style to one of a symphonic style. The score indicates “symphonic” to indicate the trumpet should play in an orchestral or legit style. The figures associated with this type are arpeggiated figures with large intervals. The cadenza also incorporates many accelerando lines that end with very high notes. The trumpet is asked to play Db3 in measure 228 and Eb3 in measure 230. Measure 230 has the hi-hat playing in an improvisatory manner as the trumpet ascends to the Eb3.

The piano enters in measure 230 which begins the D section of the second movement. This is also the transitional material leading to the third movement. Motive two is played in measure 232, outlining a dominant dual third chord, C/c7. This chord is sustained until measure 240.

Measure 242 highlights the piano as it plays melodic material in a new tempo of quarter note equals c.60. Motive four is played in measure 255. The trumpet enters in measure 258 in a “majestic” style. Measure 258 begins the E section of the second movement and the tonal center is transformed to B major. Motive six is played in measure 280-281 outlining a dominant dual third chord, C/c7. The trumpet ends the second movement by playing Eb3 in measure 281. A grand pause in measure 282 serves as a pause before the start of the third movement in measure 283.

Third Movement

The third movement begins with a declamatory quarter note introduction played by the piano. The tempo is faster, quarter note equals 132. The final motive, twelve, makes its first appearance in measures 287-288. The trumpet entrance in measure 289 is notated to be played with “jazz articulation” in the score. The trumpet entrance in measure 289 are 16\textsuperscript{th} note figures to be played in the bebop style.
Motive six appears in the piano part in measures 290-293 outlining a strong tonal center of C. The second trumpet entrance in the third movement is notated to be played in a symphonic style. The line is characterized by large intervals. This is followed by motive twelve in the piano part in measure 304, outlining a dominant dual third chord, Eb/eb7. This is repeated in measures 306, 308, and 310-312.

The piano plays motive twelve with two chords, namely F sharp diminished and D diminished, in measure 316. The tonal center changes to a strong sense of E major. Motive twelve reappears in measures 320 to 327 outlining both E major and minor.

The trumpet enters in measure 334 playing a syncopated figure. The accompaniment is outlining a new tonality, one of E flat. The accompaniment is orchestrated very thinly, only playing short accented notes. The accompaniment plays motive two in measure 345, only this time it is not outlining a dual chord, but rather a D flat major chord. This is outlining the new tonal center in measure 347, which is C sharp minor, the enharmonic spelling of D flat.

Motive twelve is again played by the piano in measures 351 to 354 outlining a dominant dual third chord, C#/c#7. The trumpet enters in measure 355 playing 16th note figures in a “jazz inflection”. The piano accompanies the trumpet by playing motive six in short percussive eighth notes.

The piano plays motive twelve in measures 371, 373, 375 outlining a dominant dual third chord, E/e7. The trumpet is playing figures that are alternating from “jazz articulation” and “symphonic” style in the score. Motive six reappears in the piano in measure 377 to 378 playing a dominant dual third chord, E/e7.

Motive twelve reappears in measure 380 to 381 in the piano part, outlining a strong G tonal center. This motive is also played by the piano in measures 396 to 398 outlining a
dominant dual third chord, Bb/bb7. The piece ends with the trumpet playing an octave leap from D2 to D3 while the piano plays strong quarter notes in octaves on D.
CHAPTER 4

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE PERFORMERS

The *American Concerto* is a difficult work in the trumpet repertoire. The trumpet player is asked to do many things. The performer must possess incredible stamina, have superior technique and range, and must be able to play in the jazz and symphonic idiom. Despite the technical and physical issues that come with playing the *American Concerto*, the performer must also be sensitive to the musicality that the piece demands.

Playing brass, in general, is a physical challenge. The body must stay relaxed while exerting much wind and energy. There are many exercises that a brass player incorporates in their daily practice routine in order to achieve an optimum performance level. Some of these exercises include wind, flexibility, range, and finger dexterity drills.

In practicing the piece I quickly found out that the piece was written, for the most part, in the high tessitura. This fact made practicing the piece a difficult task, especially when doing repetitions of a particular passage. The large intervals in the trumpet line were also problematic. In short I had to find creative and efficient ways to work the piece while not destroying my chops for the day.

Beyond the issue of physical stamina that comes with performing the concerto one is faced with the musical aspects that the piece demands. Knowing the piano score and being knowledgeable about the formal structure and tonal centers will prove to be advantageous in performing the piece. For example, the piano may play a particular passage with large intervals that the trumpet will soon echo. Taking note of the piano and recognizing the line is similar will help the performer hear the pitches before playing.
First Movement

The first entrance in the trumpet in measure three of the first movement is a dramatic crescendo leading to a fanfare-like passage. Making a slight exaggerated emphasis on the crescendos and decrescendos will facilitate the line and bring out the musical gesture that is desired. The goal note is the C3 in measure eleven. This note is followed by descending 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes. Playing the 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes in a slower and sostenuto style will facilitate clarity in the line.

The trumpet plays in a lyrical fashion in measure fourteen. The score indicates “cantabile, mellow, cornet sound” in the trumpet part. Using vibrato to shade the line will help bring about this cornet sound. A technical problem that arises is the fact that the line is marked mezzo-forte until the end of the phrase in measure twenty-four. There are many large intervals in the passage including a minor sixth and seventh. Supplementing soft long tone playing in large intervals as part of one’s daily practice will help facilitate this difficult challenge.

Measure thirty includes eighth notes played by the trumpet and piano in octaves. This occurs again in measure thirty-two. This is followed by the fifth motive played by the piano and echoed by the trumpet. The trumpet note is an A flat which is the enharmonic spelling of G sharp being played by the piano. The trumpeter should listen to the piano as the G sharp is being sounded as part of its chord, (C#/c#7).

The trumpet line transforms into an upbeat declamatory voice beginning in measure forty. The predominant intervals are the perfect 4\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th}. These intervals are also being sounded by the piano as it plays the seventh motive in measure thirty-seven.

In measure sixty-three the trumpet begins playing the seventh motive in a partial format. The trumpet should match the jubilant style that the piano had played in measure thirty-seven. This occurs again in measure ninety-eight. The first movement ends in an augmented version of
the seventh motive played by the trumpet. This should be played in a full singing voice. The line is written in the low register of the trumpet which gives it a nice contrast from the high fanfarish playing the trumpet utilized for the majority of the first movement.

Second Movement

The second movement begins with the piano part playing lone sustained chords. The key has moved to that of a G flat major. The trumpet enters in measure 131 playing a lyrical line that is indicated on the score as to be played “flugelhorn-like”. The flugelhorn is a larger trumpet, usually in the key of B flat. The flugelhorn is characterized by a dark and mellow sound. The trumpet, in imitating this sound, should focus on long sostenuto phrases with little if any vibrato. The interval jumps should be smooth and sound effortless.

The style changes a bit in measure 140, as the tempo gets a little faster and the accompaniment plays short biting eighth notes. The trumpet is still playing lyrical passages although now the score indicates, “trumpet sound”. This is conducive with a brighter sound as compared to that of the flugelhorn. The intervals should still be approached with smoothness. The trumpet line gets more interesting as it is now contrasting lyrical playing with fanfare-like playing.

In measure 151 the trumpet line sees a modern compositional notation. The line includes 16\textsuperscript{th} notes with a figure indicating the trumpet should be open and the suggested valve-combinations that is desired, in this case, 1+3. The trumpet, when using a plunger, may see this same type of notation, which indicates if the trumpet should play open or closed (+ = shut, o = open). The trumpet performer should alternate the fingerings of 1+3 with the open or no valves finger variations. This type of fingering will give the trumpet a tremolo effect. The valve combination of 1+3 and 0 are both playing an F although with slightly different intonations. The
valve combination 1+3 will be slightly sharper. Figure 14 and 15 illustrate the trumpet figure and how it is notated in the second movement.

![Figure 14. Trumpet notation in measure 151, movement two.](image1)

![Figure 15. Trumpet notation in measure 152, movement two.](image2)

The trumpet line in measure 153 stays in the high range for the trumpet. This is difficult to sustain in a mezzo-forte dynamic that is indicated. Proper breath and support will help the embouchure. The piano plays the eleventh motive in measure 165 that is echoed by the trumpet in measure 168, although on different pitches.

The next few measures are fanfare-like figures that are executed by the trumpeter. Care should be taken not to play them too loud or fast. Rather, a crescendo is desired in these figures. These short fanfare-like figures culminate in measure 192 on a C3 in the trumpet. This is followed by a descending intervallic passage comprised of thirds and fourths. These notes should be played in a broad style.
The cadenza begins in measure 206. The trumpet line indicates a glissandi slur on the fourth beat. The note should start with the open fingering and as the line ascends the fingering should quickly switch to the (1+3) fingering. I recommend playing the written low F, C1, and F1 in a slower tempo as it ascends to the C2, as this will help with clarity in the line. This figure is immediately followed by a glissando from B2 to B3. I recommend using a half valve glissando as the note ascends. Figure 16 shows the trumpet notated line in measure 206.

![Figure 16](image)

*Figure 16. Trumpet cadenza in measure 206, movement two.*

A type of articulation that can be utilized besides the usual single, double, or triple tonguing is the doodle tonguing technique. In double and triple tonguing the usual syllables used are t or d and k. The dominant syllable in double and triple is the t or d and the rebound syllable is the k. In doodle tonguing, the dominant consonant is also d or t, but the rebound sound is ul. The vowel sounds, a-e-i-o-u, in combination with the dominant and rebound sound would sound, da-dle, dee-dle, di-dle, do-dle, doo-dle. This type of articulation is utilized by many brass jazz musicians, especially trombone players. This would be conducive for a very fast style of articulation. Measure 209 includes a single note in which the trumpet articulates a note from slow to as fast as possible. Doodle tonguing is highly suggested. Figure 17 presents measure 209 in the second movement as played by the trumpet.
The trumpet first begins playing in the jazz idiom in measure 212. The score indicates to play in a “slight jazz articulation” in measure 215. The trumpet line is a series of 16\textsuperscript{th} notes, at times beginning on weak beats. The fast tempo makes it more conducive to play the figures in a bebop style rather than a swing style. Also, I suggest using a technique called ghosting the note. According to Wikipedia, “Ghost notes are musical notes occurring in a rhythmic figure which are purposely deemphasized, often nearly to the point of silence.”\textsuperscript{16}

The cadenza continues with a sequence of triplets that are accelerated and lead to a Db3. This sequence is followed by another sequence raised a fifth higher that leads to another jazz articulated series of 16\textsuperscript{th} notes. This is followed by a fermata in which the hi-hat improvises as the trumpet plays two notes in the very high register, C\#3 to Eb3. As stated earlier, the composer stated that the trumpet concerto may be played without a percussionist. In this case, the trumpeter would take little time after the fermata to play the two notes, namely the C\#3 to Eb3. The second movement ends with the trumpet playing another Eb3 in measure 281.

The high and enduring notes in the *American Concerto* will demand the trumpet performer to practice high register supplemental material. The equipment one uses should also be evaluated. Traditionally, the modern day trumpeter uses many sizes of horns depending on the task at hand. The mouthpiece used may also change depending on the horn. The repertoire will also be a deciding factor on mouthpiece and/or instrument choice. The *American Concerto*

is written for a trumpet in B flat. I chose to do the piece on a B-flat trumpet mainly in part because of the jazz associations. In my interview with Zwilich I asked what she preferred in terms of an instrument choice. She stated that she thought the B-flat trumpet had a more robust sound. She also informed me that Doc Severinson wanted the piece for a B-flat trumpet. In deciding on a mouthpiece I chose one with a smaller cup size. I felt this helped with the high register. A performer will need to make these same decisions.

Third Movement

The third movement is the shortest movement and is filled with many 16th notes that are articulated in the jazz style. This is contrasted almost immediately with a change of character and style as the trumpet line indicates the trumpet to play in the “symphonic” style. This dichotomy of style can be challenging to the trumpeter. The modern trumpeter, for the most part, has had a diverse performing experience. This can range from wind band, brass band, marching band, jazz band, orchestra, and rock. The American Concerto enables the trumpeter to celebrate the experiences the modern day American trumpeter has encountered. The material in the third movement should be played in this festive spirit. The last note played by the trumpet, a D3, should be a joyous sound as it is sustained for four measures.

CONCLUSION

The *American Concerto* is a trumpet piece written by a trumpet player for a trumpet player. Ellen Zwilich wrote the piece for Doc Severinson, who is a living legend to many trumpeters. The piece is demanding because of the high degree of tessitura and technique that is required. The piece is modern through its compositional framework as well as the trumpet writing that includes extended techniques.

Ellen Zwilich is a significant American modern composer who is breaking many barriers in the musical world. Her pieces have already garnered many awards including the prestigious Pulitzer Prize. Her trumpet works are modern and challenging and have been recently championed by Philip Smith, principal trumpet of the New York Philharmonic.

The Concerto utilizes motives as its melodic and harmonic framework. The piano reduction, in which Zwilich was intimately involved, has stayed true to its original orchestral version. This piece is a worthy piece for any graduate student recital and should become a staple for trumpet music majors across the United States. The orchestral version is a tour de force and will hopefully be programmed frequently in the future.

The trumpet, in its long history, has gone though many periods. The golden age for the trumpet occurred in the baroque period as the trumpet was featured in many concertos and sonatas. The Classical period relegated the trumpet to a life of obscurity in the orchestra. The trumpet is seeing another golden age today because of renewed interest by many new composers. Ellen Zwilich’s *American Concerto* is an essay to what an American trumpeter faces growing up in America. The concerto is quite simple a treasure in the trumpet repertoire.
APPENDIX

MOTIVES
Table 3. Motives found in the American Concerto.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motive</th>
<th>Measure number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1, 13, 128, 130 (partial), 143-144, 170, 172 (partial)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3, 14, 21, 131, 176, 232, 249, 273, 345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10-11, 228, 230, 280, 281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 93, 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>37, 93, 98 (with trumpet), 56, 61, 65, 66, 73, 78, 81 (partial), 85, 102, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>40, 75, 78, 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>52, 54, 69, 71, 105, 105, 183, 189, 192, 199, 203, 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>58, 75, 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>150, 165, 168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Description of motives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motive</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A descending synthetic scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>An arpeggio that leads to a half note.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Percussive 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes on dual 3\textsuperscript{rd} chords.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A neighbor tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>32\textsuperscript{nd} rhythmic pattern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dual third chord (without preceding arpeggio).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A syncopated rhythm in the accompaniment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>A 16\textsuperscript{th} run followed by a sustained note.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A rhythmic figure with wide intervals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A 16\textsuperscript{th} note run followed by descending quarter notes in intervals of a fifth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A scale ascending 2 octaves (Lydian).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>A rhythmic figure (in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Dorff, Daniel. E-mail interview. 20 Jan. 2008.


