A MOTIVIC ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICES OF AKRODHA (1998)

BY KEVIN VOLANS, INCLUDING COMPARATIVE ANALYSES OF SHE


Timothy A. Feerst, B.M., M.M.

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APPROVED:

Mark Ford, Major Professor
Eugene Corporon, Committee Member
Christopher Deane, Committee Member
Benjamin Brand, Director of Graduate Studies in the College of Music
John Richmond, Dean of the College of Music
Victor Prybutok, Vice Provost of the Toulouse Graduate School

This dissertation presents an analysis of *Akrodha* (1998), a multiple percussion solo in two movements, composed by Kevin Volans. The analysis is focused on the motivic content and subsequent iterations written within the tempos that provide the structural form of the piece. The structural tempos are supported by the presence of various motifs that serve as the tempos' characteristic traits, thereby giving the tempos more tangibility. As the work develops, these motifs reappear either as note-for-note reiterations or as variations that still maintain the unique qualities of the motifs. For comparison, similar analyses of Mr. Volans' other multiple percussion solos, *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* (1985) and *Asanga* (1997), are also presented to further explore Mr. Volans' use of motifs as they relate to structural tempos. In addition, a comprehensive performance practice of *Akrodha* is presented based on a synthesis of considerations and methods from individuals involved in the piece's development and early performances. These include Dr. Volans himself, Jonny Axelsson (for whom *Akrodha* was written), and Robyn Schulkowsky (for whom *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* and *Asanga* were written), as well as the author's personal experiences. This dissertation provides a deeper understanding of *Akrodha* for the scholar and provides performance guidance for the performer to enhance the ability to replicate the musical spirit of Kevin Volans' compositional intentions.
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By

Timothy A. Feerst
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible, were it not for a collective of supportive individuals. First of all, I wish to thank Dr. Kevin Volans, Robyn Schulkowsky, and Jonny Axelsson for taking the time to contribute to my research and for being so supportive every step of the way. Next, I would like to thank my advisory committee: Professor Mark Ford, Professor Christopher Deane, and Professor Eugene Migliaro Corporon. Their unwavering support, understanding, and patience have helped me grow personally, as well as professionally. Thirdly, I would like to thank the vast array of wonderful teachers I have had the honor of studying percussion under during my tenure at the University of North Texas. In addition to Professors Ford and Deane, they include Professors Paul Rennick, Edward Soph, Michael Drake, José Aponte, and Edward Smith. Their guidance and high performance standards are things that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. Additionally, I wish to thank my fellow students, some of whom I have performed alongside and some of whom I taught in some capacity. I am truly grateful for all I have learned from them, and for their friendship. Last, and certainly not least, I would like to thank my mother and father, as well as our cat, Maimie, for always believing in me. Their unconditional love and support were what kept me going through the thick and thin of this research and resulting dissertation.
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Composed by Kevin Volans © Copyright 1998 Chester Music Limited.  
All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured.

**She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket**
Composed by Kevin Volans © Copyright 1985 Chester Music Limited.  
All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured.

**Asanga**
Composed by Kevin Volans © Copyright 2001 Chester Music Limited.  
All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The multiple percussion solos of Kevin Volans were written in a time when the compositional technique of serialism was beginning to decline, and the art movement of minimalism was on the rise. Amidst this conflict between the two musical styles, Volans found in himself a desire to compose music that was neither serialist nor minimalist.¹ His first multiple percussion solo, *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* (1985), was cited in Steven Schick’s book *The Percussionist’s Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams* as a “finer example” of “posttonal, postserial… percussion music.”² Volans later composed two additional multiple percussion solos, *Asanga* (1997) and *Akrodha* (1998). Along with *She Who Sleeps*, these three works have become staples in the contemporary percussion repertoire.³

The word, “Akrodha,” is Sanskrit for “freedom from anger.”⁴ However, Volans says that the title has no programmatic connotations; to him, the title is abstract.⁵ The work has a comparatively larger instrument setup than either *She Who Sleeps* or *Asanga*. A prospective performer would need a total of 28 different instruments to perform both movements.⁶ Furthermore, close to 30 minutes is required to completely perform the work.⁷ These are possible reasons as to why *She Who Sleeps* and *Asanga* are more frequently cited in recent repertoire lists than *Akrodha* and suggests that current academic knowledge of *Akrodha* is

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¹ Christopher Fox, “Where the River Bends: the Cologne School in Retrospect,” *The Musical Times* 148 no. 1901
⁵ Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondences: Kevin Volans,” January 31, 2017.
⁷ Ibid., v.
Because of this state of knowledge, a musical analysis and performance practice of *Akrodha* is necessary for a truly optimal performance of the work.

A clear and concise analysis of *Akrodha* can be accomplished through an in-depth examination of the piece’s motivic content within the context of the different tempos that Volans writes. While it is tempting to look to the motivic content alone to provide a semblance of structure in *Akrodha*, Volans instead says that the work’s tempos and their subsequent interactions directly determine its formal structure. With this given information, an analysis of the tempos’ motifs indicates that the motifs support these “structural tempos.” Each of these structural tempos contains motivic material that is characteristic and unique. Generally, when a particular structural tempo reappears, Volans either reiterates or recreates that tempo’s motivic material, which results in “varying degrees of ‘redundancy’ or ‘novelty’.”

To add further support, this dissertation will draw upon similarities found in Volans’ other two works for solo percussion as they relate to *Akrodha* for the purposes of further cementing *Akrodha*’s analytical findings. The third and final purpose of this study will be to identify, examine, and offer performance solutions to the musical and logistical challenges that appear in *Akrodha*. These challenges include instrument selection, instrument setup, implement suggestions, and executions of certain passages in the music. At the conclusion of this dissertation, the reader will have a better understanding of the musical content and performance logistics of *Akrodha* for the purposes of providing the prospective performer with a more substantial and meaningful performance.

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9 Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondences…”
CHAPTER 2
KEVIN VOLANS

According to Volans, much of the scholarly information that has been written about him is inaccurate. For that reason, the author has turned to Volans himself to provide his biographical information. This information was obtained through interview and subsequent email communications, which are documented in part, in Appendix A: “Email Correspondence with Kevin Volans.”

Born in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa on July 26, 1949, Kevin Volans studied at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and the University of Aberdeen in Europe. Beginning in 1973, Volans studied under Karlheinz Stockhausen and later became his teaching assistant. Additionally, he studied piano with Aloys Kontarsky, musical theatre with Mauricio Kagel, and electronic music under Hans-Ulrich Humpert. In 1981, Volans returned to South Africa and taught composition at the University of Natal; he was awarded a Doctor of Music from the institution in 1985. After leaving his post at the University of Natal, he resumed his career as free-lance composer, basing himself from 1986 in the Republic of Ireland. He also held temporary posts as composer-in-residence at Queen’s University, Belfast, from 1986 to 1989, and visiting scholar at Princeton University in 1992. Volans currently lives in Kinsale, after becoming an Irish citizen in 1994.
Kevin Volans was a significant member of a group of younger-generation composers, based in Cologne, Germany. This group of composers included Clarence Barlow, Claude Vivier, and Walter Zimmermann, who were associates of Volans. By the mid 1970’s, a few of these composers were tiring of the historicist restrictions of so-called “new music” and the ideas that came out of serial composition. According to Volans, “Our taste was wider than this.”

Volans began to rebel against compositional rules set forth by his teachers and set out to create a form of “new music” that was not reminiscent of the “dogmatism” of serialism, while at the same time not emulating the “bland pursuit of predictability” found in minimalism. Volans and his contemporaries sought to write music, “unmediated by complex pre-compositional planning” and had a more direct relationship “between their creative impulse and its musical expression.”

This movement, known as New Simplicity or Neue Einfachheit, was “short-lived,” and over by the end of the 1970s. She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket was written in 1985, initially as part of a series of pieces that Volans called “African Paraphrases.” In this series, Volans intended to “write a set of pieces that began with (almost) traditional African music and moved away from that, becoming more ‘original’ composition and less and less African.”

“She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket, which was near the end of the series, had little or nothing to do with African music, and only the title is African.” Later, however, in about 1985, he dropped the group of the pieces under the

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18 Ibid.  
19 Ibid.  
20 Ibid.  
21 Ibid.  
23 Ibid.  
25 Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”  
26 Ibid.  

title “African Paraphrases” as he felt that this title suggested an approach that was too “Germanic and inconsistent with the very nature of the music he was interested in.”

Volans’ overt references to African Music trailed off around the end of the 1980s, although the lessons he learned from African composition techniques are to be found in much of his work from then on.

With regard to the patterning in She Who Sleeps and all of his later solo percussion works, the initial impetus is to be found not in African music, but in African textiles – Shoowa weavings, in particular. In fact, She Who Sleeps does not bear any resemblance to traditional African drumming, and the drums he uses are not African either. The instruments used in She Who Sleeps are South American congas, Cuban bongos, and a western marimba, developed in Central America.

From this point forward, Volans favored writing music with “non-referential material.” Asanga and Akrodha, Volans’ multiple percussion pieces that followed She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket, reflect this approach.

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27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
CHAPTER 3

MOTIVIC ANALYSIS OF AKRODHA (1998)

Akrodha for Solo Percussion was written in 1998 for Swedish virtuoso percussionist Jonny Axelssson, as the result of a commissioning by the Swedish Concert Institute and with financial support from the Swedish Radio. Mr. Axelssson gave the premiere performance of Akrodha on March 18, 1999, at the Stockholm Music Festival.

A portion of Akrodha’s material can be traced back to Volans’ 1996 work 5:4 for solo percussion and tape. The “tape” part of the piece is in fact another written-out percussion part that the player must pre-record prior to a performance. Alternatively, two percussionists can perform 5:4, where the second percussionist plays the “tape” part live alongside the first percussionist. Through electronic communications, Volans writes that 5:4 was written to accompany dance, and “both the choreography and the music are incomplete without the other.” Therefore, it is not accurate to classify 5:4 as an independent solo percussion work.

As mentioned in this dissertation’s introduction, the motivic content of Akrodha offers an element of characteristic support to the piece’s structural tempos. Oxford Music Online defines a “motif” as “a short musical idea, melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, or any combination of these three.” More specifically, a “rhythmic motif” can be explained as “a short characteristic sequence of accented and unaccented or short and long articulations, sometimes including rests.” What separates a motif from a “theme” is that a theme “usually refers to complete

34 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Appendix A: Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
39 Ibid.
phrases or periods… and is used typically of the more important passages.”\(^{40}\) Therefore, it is more appropriate to classify *Akrodha’s* musical material as a narrative of motives, rather than themes.

*Akrodha’s* first movement, entitled “Part 1,” is orchestrated for drums or “natural skins,” comprising of “nine drums (a mixture of seven skin and two wooden heads)” plus five bass drums.\(^{41}\) The nine drums should “range from tom-toms through congas to high bongos,” and the third and fifth bass drums “need to be played by pedals.”\(^{42}\) The following table outlines the movement’s structural tempos and assigns a letter to each different tempo in a similar way that one would assign letters in a thematic analysis of a given piece of music. Additionally, the table contains the beats per minute (BPM) of each structural tempo, as well as the measure numbers in which these tempos appear and reappear (Figure 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Beats per Minute (BPM)</th>
<th>Appearances (Measures No.’s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1-83, 90-113, 212-266, 373-401, 407-411 (end)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>84-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A (B)</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>114-161 [Note: synthesis of motivic material from both A and B]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>162-177, 189-197, 201-207, 267-282, 328-360, 364-372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>177-188, 198-200, 208-211, 402-406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>283-327, 361-363</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Structural Tempos for *Akrodha*, Part 1.

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\(^{41}\) Volans, *Akrodha*, iv.

\(^{42}\) Ibid.
When written in a linear outline, the “temporal form” of Part 1 is as follows:

\[ \text{A – B – A – A (B) – C – D – C – D – C} \]
\[ \text{D – A – C – E – C – E – A – E – A} \]

Tempo A (126 BPM) has a great variety of motivic content. The best way to interpret Tempo A’s material is to think of two sections. The first of which is one that involves an interaction of multiple motifs in close proximity to each other. The other section is one that frequently reappears throughout the movement, and this section’s motifs beget new motifs and ideas that still maintain the characteristics of its previous appearance. The beginning section of Tempo A’s first iteration can be found in measures 1 through 65. Here, Volans writes three primary motifs and two secondary or supporting motifs that add extra color, punctuation, and coherence. The following table outlines in detail the three primary and two secondary motifs in this section (Figure 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMARY MOTIFS</th>
<th>First Appearance</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. 1</td>
<td>Melodic Quarter Notes in the upper staff with occasional ornamentations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Example" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. 3</td>
<td>Melodic Quarter Notes and Dotted Quarter Notes within an “11:5” polyrhythm in the upper staff with occasional ornamentations</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Example" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRIMARY MOTIFS</strong></td>
<td><strong>First Appearance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M. 17</td>
<td>Rhythmic figures consisting of 2 16th Notes and 1 Quarter Note in the upper staff; syncopation occurs as the movement progresses</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Example" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **SECONDARY MOTIFS** | **M. 4** | Bass Drum hits that fill in the space of upper staff content, as well as provide periodic rhythmical accompaniment | ![Example](image2) |
|                     | M. 29    | Rhythmic figures consisting of 1 Quarter Note and 2 Eighth Notes with occasional ornamentation; they primarily serve transitional purposes | ![Example](image3) |

Figure 2: *Akrodha*, Part 1 Motivic Content in Tempo A, m.m. 1-65.

As this section of Tempo A progresses, Volans melodically develops each of the primary motifs. Some measures are reiterated and some are varied, either in pitch or in rhythm.

However, the character of each of these motifs remains intact throughout their development.

Though the motifs are isolated at first, they then interact with each other in close proximity.

Measures 45 through 50 are an example of one of these instances (Example 1).
Example 1: Kevin Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 45-48

A return of these motifs occurs in measures 212 through 238 by abbreviating material from the first 65 measures, while including measures of new material not previously seen in the movement.

A change to wooden implements from felt implements and the sudden change in dynamics to triple-forte at measure 66 signals the beginning of the second section of motivic content within Tempo A and is characterized by a series of sixteenth-note episodes with ever-varying time signatures (6/16, 7/16, 9/16, 5/8, 8/16, 3/8) in rapid succession (Example 2).

Example 2: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 66-70.

Although these small groups of 16th notes can be initially perceived as random and unrelated, they do have common elements amongst each other. First of all, each episode in the series follows a particularly hocketed contour with rapid alterations from lower-pitched drums to higher-pitched drums and vice-versa. In other words, there is an absence of “step-wise motion” in these series of melodies. Secondly, the episodes each have a release note of a longer rhythmic
value that act as a pseudo-placeholder to separate each event. This is either written in the form of an eighth note or a dotted-eighth noted (sometimes notated as an eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note rest).

This motif returns in measure 90, but with a significant variation. Volans re-characterizes this motivic return by mostly writing sextuplet episodes instead of sixteenth-note episodes, although some sixteenth-note episodes are integrated into this passage (Example 3).

Example 3: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 94-100.

The motivic idea of including sextuplets in the movement is expanded upon in two ways within Tempo A. The first of which is in measures 130 through 135, which depicts a rapid series of fast, continuous sextuplets that serve as a transition to explosive impacts separated by noticeable amounts of space seen in measures 136 through 140 (Example 4).

Example 4: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 130-138.

Volans takes some of the sextuplet patterns he wrote in measures 119 and 120 and adopts them into the new material he wrote for this passage. Furthermore, he reiterates measures 130 through 134 note-for-note in measures 239 through 243. The only difference is that he directs the performer to use felt sticks, rather than wooden sticks. Immediately afterwards, he writes a variation of the sextuplet and sixteenth-note episodes first written in measures 96 through 110.
The melodies of these episodes remain intact, but Volans writes a noticeable amount of them in different time signatures, often substituting 7/16 meters for 6/16 meters and vice versa. This leads to another manifestation of the metered episodes, featuring a series of repeated systems. The repeated systems are each assigned a specific number of repetitions that the performer must play, not unlike music by minimalist composers such as Steve Reich (Example 5).

Example 5: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 255-266.

This repeated system idea is revisited and expanded upon in measures 381 through 399, following 6 measures of patterns found in measures 253 through 258 but all transcribed in 6/16 time signatures. Volans completely reiterates measures 259 through 266, including the number of repeats, in measures 381 through 388 (with the exception of a new accent on the eighth note in measure 386). Afterwards, he writes new repeated patterns of sextuplet episodes written in 6/16 and 4/16 that gradually move up the drums’ register as the performer moves from one repeated system to the next.

The last of Tempo A’s material makes up part of the movement’s “Coda,” which lasts from measures 400 to the end. Two virtual explosions of sixteenth-note gestures with half notes occur at the meter change to 3/2 in measures 400 and 401 (Example 6).
Volans reiterates measure 400 in measure 407 and then finishes Tempo A’s material (and the movement) with two measures of ascending syncopated eighth notes in the upper staff.

“Tempo B,” marked at 120 BPM, first appears in measures 84 through 89. Volans presents a motif comprised of eighth notes in the upper staff alternating between the two highest drums through diverse time signatures. These eighth notes are frequently interrupted with rhythmic “hiccups” in the form of either dotted 16th-32nd figures, as seen in measure 84, or a single 32nd note that is attached to an eighth note seen in the 21/32 or 17/32 time signatures at measures 85 and 87, respectively (Example 7).

This motif reappears twice in the movement. The first reappearance begins at measure 114, and the second occurs at measure 141. Both times, each measure of the original appearance returns, though they are in a different order in which it was initially presented and are expanded upon with new material with the same motivic character. Additionally, Volans writes these two passages with Tempo A’s tempo of 126 BPM and injects one to two measures of either
sixteenth-note or sextuplet episodes. The sixteenth-note episode happens in measure 147 and copies the first three beats of measure 167, as though it were an element of foreshadowing. The sextuplet episode first occurs in measures 119 through 120, which is then reiterated in measures 150 through 153. The episode foreshadows future material in its own way, as individual patterns can be found in measures 130 and 131 in different combinations. Therefore, it is best to label measures 114 through 161 as “Tempo A (B),” rather than Tempo A or Tempo B exclusively, due to the apparent synthesis of both the Tempo B material and the brief sixteenth and sextuplet episodes.

Tempo C is identified as 144 BPM and contains a sequential series of sixteenth-note patterns that first appear in measures 162 through 177. The importance of order in these measures is noticeable. Two instances of full reiterations of the sequence occur in measures 267 through 282 and measures 328 through 343. The only differences between these reiterations and the original source are the implements used to perform them. While measures 162 through 177 direct the performer to use wooden sticks, measures 267 through 282 are to be played with felt sticks, and measures 328 through 343 are to be played with “harder sticks,” a performance direction first seen in measure 293.

Other reappearances of Tempo C’s material involve either variations or re-combinations of the original statement. Measures 189 through 197 mark the first reappearance of Tempo C. In this instance, Volans takes select measures from the original motivic iteration, recombines them to create a new sequence, and then writes four measures of new sixteenth-note patterns that include interplay with the bass drum (Example 8).
Example 8: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 188-198.

Another example of re-ordering and injecting new material can be found in measures 201 through 207, where Volans reiterates measures 162, 164, 163, and 173 before writing new material that emulates certain fragments of previous Tempo C measures combined with new patterns (Example 9).
Example 9: Volans, Akrodha, Part 1, m.m. 201-207.

The last two motivic mentions of Tempo C are juxtaposed against a quarter note-dotted quarter note ostinato in the bass drums, which is a motif that first appears as art of Tempo E in measure 293. The first of these occurrences happens from measures 347 through 359 (Example 10).
Example 10: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 346-351.

In the second mention with accompanying bass drum motif, Volans reiterates a variation by emulating note-for-note measures 189 through 197 (Example 11).

Example 11: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 361-367.

These efforts of reiterating, varying, or recombining Tempo C, all while adding new related material, is a perfect example of this idea of redundancy versus novelty. Clearly, Volans strikes a balance of the two avenues in his treatment of Tempo C’s motivic content.
The four iterations of Tempo D’s motivic material grow out of the third primary motif in Tempo A. At 100 BPM, the motif of Tempo D acts as a slower and more somber alternative to Tempo A’s third primary motif. Tempo D retains the off-beat sixteenth-sixteenth-quarter note rhythmic figures, as well as the “back-beat” element in the bass drums. However, within these four occurrences, variety exists.

Occurring first in measures 178 through 188, the motif of Tempo D begins initially with the same pitches and rhythm as measures 17 through 19 of Tempo A, before shifting to voices reminiscent of measure 55 (Example 12).

Example 12: Volans, Akrodha, Part 1, m.m. 176-183.

A 6/4 variation of this motif happens in measures 198 through 200. The upper staff fuses the two different pitch groupings of the first appearance. Furthermore, Volans “frees up” the rhythms of the bass drums in that they do not strictly occur on beats 2 and 4 (Example 13).

Example 13: Volans, Akrodha, Part 1, m.m. 198-200.
Tempo D’s reappearance in measures 208 through 211 presents a rhythmic variation in
the upper staff amid the return of the bass drums to beats 2 and 4. The variation happens on the
third beat of each measure with a sixteenth note leading to a dotted eighth note tied to a quarter
note. Additionally, the sixteenth-sixteenth-quarter note figures are presented consistently on the
downbeats. The downbeats in the upper staff, combined with the bass drum counterpoint, give a
feeling of a slow funeral march making its way towards a recapitulation of the opening material
of the movement (Example 14).

Example 14: Volans, Akrodha, Part 1, m.m. 208-211.

Along with material from Tempo A, Tempo D has presence in the movement’s coda.
The bass drums on beats 2 and 4 (and 6) are reiterated, and there is another reiteration of the two
upper-staff distinct pitch groupings mentioned earlier. Reminiscent of the earlier iteration at
measure 208, the sixteenth notes occur on downbeats, rather than off-beats. Furthermore, the
motif is presented with a forte dynamic and is expanded upon. The expansion culminates in a
widening of the rhythmic space of the hocket between the two staffs, resulting in an increase in
dramatic effect (Example 15).
Three motifs make up the content of “Tempo E,” written at 168 BPM. The first of which is a series of double-stop eighth notes with occasional syncopation. This motif makes its debut in measure 283 with four strong, accented quarter notes that “kick off” the eighth notes. The double stops are hocketed against Tempo E’s second motif, a quarter-dotted quarter rhythmic ostinato in the bass drum staff. There are a few beats of overlap that occur as the movement switches from one motif to the other (Example 16).
In contrast with the motivic material of Tempo C, the double stops contain a great deal of variation amongst each appearance. Volans elects to write new material around selected reiterated measures. The first and second appearances of the double stops, measures 283 through 293 and 297 through 300 respectively, are only partly reiterated. Measures 307 through 317 are of the third appearance are reiterations of measures 298 through 300, while measures 289 through 211 are themselves reiterated in 324 through 326 of the fourth appearance.

The bass drum ostinato motif is generally static and unvaried with the exception of a few occasional deviations from the quarter-dotted quarter sequence. As mentioned earlier in this analysis, the bass drum motif is later re-voiced and placed into segments of Tempo C to serve as rhythmic accompaniment for the sixteenth-note patterns.

Tempo E’s third motif is a three-measure interlude at measures 318 through 320 comprising of eighth-dotted quarter note double-stop figures in the upper staff that are contrapuntal to the bass drum motif. The rhythms in the upper staff heavily favor beats 1 and 3, which is a departure from the prior double-stop material (Example 17).

Example 17: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 318-320.

The motif reappears only once, and that is at measures 361 through 363. Volans uses the motif in these measures as an interlude separating the two Tempo C reappearances that have the bass drum motif as accompaniment.
Through this analysis of Part 1 of *Akrodha*, it is evident that Volans composed his motivic content with great variety within the five structural tempos in the movement. Nevertheless, there are multiple times where he bridges the gaps in this variety, including having new motifs draw upon preceding material of earlier motifs, or even transplanting a motif into another structural tempo altogether. The end result is a sense of coherence, rather than disorganization, amongst a series of contrasting motifs throughout the movement. Furthermore, a sense of movement “from a lower and more static energy to a very high energy” is created.\(^43\)

The second movement of *Akrodha* is expectantly entitled “Part 2.” Part 2 is written “for two sets of seven [metallic] instruments, one set suspended and one set lying.”\(^44\) The general format of the movement can be characterized as a series of vertical rhythmic clusters that feature intricate counterpoint between the lower staff of lying metallic instruments and the upper staff of suspended metallic instruments. Typically, each one of these rhythmic clusters is separated by a period of rests that can have durations as short as one beat or as long as 30 beats. Volans’ writing of *toujours laissez vibrer*, meaning “always let ring,” is a possible explanation for these long periods of rests in that he intended to let the vibrations of the instruments to dissipate, either slightly or completely, before continuing to the next cluster.

The structural tempos for this movement are less plentiful than Part 1. Volans chooses to write for only two different tempos. “Tempo A,” written at 96 BPM, appears three times, while “Tempo B,” written at 80 BPM, appears only once. This results in a total of four temporal sections for the movement, which are outlined in the table below (Figure 3).

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\(^43\) Appendix C: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence: Jonny Axellson,” February 24, 2017.
\(^44\) Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Beats per Minute (BPM)</th>
<th>Appearances (Measure No.’s)</th>
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</thead>
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<td>96</td>
<td>1-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>36-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>94-149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-3</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>150-213 (end)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Structural Tempos for *Akrodha*, Part 2.

This, in turn, creates the following form:

**A-1 – B - A-2 – A-3**

Volans takes a more “micro” approach to the reappearance of motivic content within the structural tempos. Rather than reappearing complete sections of motifs similar to Part 1, he instead focuses on reappearances of individual measures. In fact, no more than four sequential measures of the score reappear at a time, which, in of itself, is a rare occurrence in this movement. Because of this, over 40 individual motifs appear in Part 2, an exponential increase in the number of motifs from Part 1 to Part 2.

However, certain motifs do appear more frequently than others in the forms of reiterations, transpositions, variations, and so forth. A given cluster’s rhythmic content and intervallic relationships among the notes presented are crucial traits when identifying and describing one of Part 2’s motifs. Moreover, these traits help in determining whether a rhythmic cluster is a new motif or a type of reappearance of a motif previously seen in the score. Therefore, the identification and explanation of motivic content must be done using musical set theory analytical techniques.

Furthermore, Volans treats the lying material and the suspended material as separate entities. As the movement progresses, Volans will present material from a given measure’s lying or suspended staff, but without the contrapuntal material with which it was paired in its first appearance.
For this motivic analysis of Part 2, the various motifs, as well as their reappearances, were identified. Next, a frequency analysis was undertaken to tabulate and determine how often, or not often, the motifs appeared and reappeared. The results of the frequency analysis revealed that while most of the individual motifs appeared either once or twice in the entire movement, certain motifs of noticeably higher frequencies of appearance exist. It is worth discussing these high-frequency motifs in greater detail, in order to develop a better understanding of the movement. The full data from the frequency analysis can be found in Appendix D of this dissertation.

Given the vast number of motifs present in Part 2 and Volans’ independent writing of the material in the lying and suspended staffs, motifs and any other material in the movement will be identified through the assigning of a letter and number combination, pertaining to the staff and measure number in which the material is located. The letter “L” will indicate that the material appears in the lying staff, while the letter “S” will indicate that it appears in the suspended staff. Consequently, the number assigned with the letter will indicate the material’s measure number location.

In Tempo A-1 (90 BPM) of Part 2, the suspended staff usually enters one beat into the presentation of the lying staff. There are three exceptions to this. The first two are measures 6 and 29 that are written with a 7/8 time signature. The fact that 7/8 is a compound meter could be a possible explanation as to why he deviated from his writing on the second beat principle as the rest of the measures in Tempo A-1 are simple meters (3/4, 13/4, 18/4, 15/4, etc.). The third exception is measures 33 and 34, which isolate the lying and suspended melodies with no overlap. Since these are the last two measures of Tempo A-1 with musical content, the isolation of these measures could imply a codetta of some sort.
Within Tempo A-1 is the most frequently used motif of Part 2, which is the first rhythmic cluster in measure 2 of the lying staff, “L2.” Reappearances of L2 make up a noticeable amount of the first section of the movement, measures 1 through 35. In fact, the first reappearance of L2 is in the suspended staff of the very same measure, S2-3. S2-3 is a transposition of L2 by an interval of a lower third. Additionally, a rhythmic variation of L2 exists in L6, with the use of double-dotted eighth notes, instead of single-dotted eighth notes, but still maintaining L2’s intervallic integrity (Example 18).

Example 18: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 2, m.m. 1-8.

This transposition is reiterated frequently throughout this section, including S6-7, S14-15, S16-17, and S18-19. S2-3 also reappears as upper-third transpositions in measures S88, and as a lower-third transition in measures such as L151 and L182, which is reiterated in measure L184.

A rhythmic variation of S2-3 is presented in S4-5, where Volans, again still maintaining the same intervallic integrity, writes double-dotted eighth notes, instead of the source material’s dotted eighth notes. This makes S4-5 a varied lower-third transposition of L2. S4-5 has instances of transpositions in measures L29 and S29-30. A variation occurs in measure S116
with the last interval being a seventh, instead of a fifth. A lower-third transposition of S116 is found in L203 (Example 19).

![Diagram of S116 and L203 transpositions]

Example 19: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 2, m. 116 and m. 203.

As it can be seen, these reiterations, transpositions, and variations of L2 have their own reiterations, transpositions, and variations. This is an indication that L2’s altered and unaltered reappearances act as their own entities, yet they still have roots in L2, as though L2 were somewhat of a “parent motif.”

At 80 BPM, Tempo B’s traits grow out of the traits of Tempo A-1. Volans no longer limits the suspended staff to beat 2 with every entrance. Though some beat-2 entrances are retained, he expands the suspended staff’s possible entrances to include any entrances on any on-beat. Tempo B presents multiple instances of new motifs and subsequent reappearances of different varieties. Of particular interest is the lying staff in the first twelve measures. In addition to the fact that this is the most amount of continuous material without long periods of rests seen so far in the movement, measures L36 through L47 depict a pattern of new motifs found in measures 36 through 47 of the lying staff that have lower or upper-third transpositions.
in between each new motif. The only break from this pattern is L38 immediately segueing into L39 with no transposition of L38. Although L39 could be argued as being a lower-third transposition of L38, the presence of the additional quarter note on beat 5 makes L39 a new motif, rather than a transposition of L38 (Example 20).

Example 20: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 2, m.m. 33-48.

In addition to transpositions, Volans also extends the time signatures of the reappearing measures, thereby adding extra beats of rests. The one exception to this is the reappearance of L40 in measure L41, which both have a time signature of 4/4.
S46 is another motif that makes frequent appearances in Section B. These include an upper-third transposition in beat 11 of S65 through S66 and reiterations in S75-76 and S79 (Example 21).

Example 21: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 1, m.m. 46-47 and m.m. 65-66.

Two other motifs in Section B are L51 and L52. Upon closer examination, L51 is actually a reiteration of S46-47. However, L51 reappears very frequently in the lying staff with the staves of the notes grouped as such. Therefore, though L51 is technically a reiteration of S46-47, it will be interpreted in this analysis as a separate entity. L52 offers a contrast to L51 having a melodic contour of dotted eighth notes that is different from L51. Volans mostly reiterates these L51 and L52 with the exception of an upper-third transposition of L51 in L122 of Section C (Example 22).
Example 22: Volans, Akrodha, Part 2, m.m. L51-L52 and L122.

Volans has a moment of motivic synthesis in measures 72 through 79, which comprises reiterations from motifs previously seen in Section B. L72 through L75 include three reiterations of L51 and a variation of L52. L76 through L79 are a complete reiteration of measures 36 through L39 on the lying staff. In counterpoint to this newly combined lying voice, Volans inserts two reiterations of S46-47 in S75-76 and S79 (Example 23).

Example 23: Volans, Akrodha, Part 2, m.m. 72-79.
Following a measure of rest, Volans additionally reiterates L41 through L45 in measures L81 through L85 (Example 24).

Example 24: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 2, m.m. 81-85.

Volans returns to 90 BPM at measure 94 with Tempo A-2. While Tempos A-1 and B are saturated with new motivic material, Tempo A-2 contains a majority of returned motifs from the previous two sections. A significant characteristic of Tempo A-2, however, is that the suspended staff material now enters on off-beats. An interesting technique that Volans does with these returns can be found in measures 103 through 114. Here, Volans reiterates measures L16, L18, L20, L23, and L26, but instead of the lying staff, Volans writes the reiterations in the suspended staff. Additionally, he places reiterations of suspended material in the lying staff, particularly S45 and S46-47 (Example 25).
Example 25: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 2, m.m. 103-116.

As this is occurring in the suspended staff, reiterations of Section B material, L46, L69, and L51, are placed in L103, L105, and L110, respectively.

Measures 137 through 144 are another example of lying source material being reiterated in the suspended staff and vice versa. This portion of Section C reiterates L36, L38, L40, L42, L43, and S46-47 (Example 26).
Example 26: Volans, *Akrodha*, Part 2, m.m. 135-148.

The fourth and final structural tempo, “Tempo A-3,” begins at measure 150 and retains the previous tempo of 90 BPM. Tempo A-3 inherits characteristics of Tempo A-2, including reappearances of past material and a majority of suspended voice entrances occurring on an off-beat. One unique segment of Section D happens in measures 160 through 171. Here, Volans writes both contrapuntal voices in the suspended staff, rather than the previous practice of having one voice in the lying staff and the other in the suspended staff. The “upper” suspended voice in these measures comprises of a segment of new material, as well as reiterations and upper-third transpositions of past motifs. Correspondingly, the “lower” suspended voice, filling the role of the lying voice, contains reiterations and upper-third transitions of past motifs, particularly iterations of L39 and L42 (Example 27).
Example 27: Volans, Akrodha, Part 2, m.m. 159-172.

Further evidence of this intent of the voices can be seen in the way Volans writes the stems of the notes. They indicate a clear independence of each other, despite their close proximity.

Compared to Part 1 of Akrodha, Part 2 demonstrates a more fluid approach to motivic content. Additionally, Part 2’s motifs operate more independently of the structural tempos. The increased number and variety of the motifs create a landscape that is less directional and more spontaneous. It is clear that there are characteristics that distinguish each structural tempo. However, evidenced by the appearances and reappearances of the motifs, Part 2’s motivic content as a whole does not appear to influence the movement’s structure and vice versa. Overall, this motivic independence from the structural tempos, as well as the relatively small
difference in beats per minute between Part II’s 90 BPM and 80 BPM, contributes to “a structure of being more static, staying more or less in the same expression all the time.”

With that being said, the reappearance of individual motifs is not by accident. Stockhausen, one of Volans’ composition teachers, wrote music that steered “clear of musical objects [i.e. motives, themes, repetition, development].” Conversely, “most so-called ‘post-modern’ and ‘pre-modern’ music makes use of repeated and recurring elements.” Volans classifies his music as “post-serial” but says that his long study of serial music influenced him, particularly serialism’s “concern with information theory and rates of change.” In his own words, Volans says, “For information levels to remain high [in information theory terms, this is desirable – it ultimately means 'not boring'] there has to be varying degrees of 'redundancy' – (things that have been heard before) – and 'novelty' (new material), and the rate of change at which this happens must itself change.” In Volans’ terms, this boils down to “golden rule for students” that “the rate of change must change!”

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45 Appendix C: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
47 Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
CHAPTER 4

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS:

SHE WHO SLEEPS WITH A SMALL BLANKET (1985)

Kevin Volans wrote *She Who Sleeps with A Small Blanket* in 1985 for the virtuoso percussionist Robyn Schulkowsky. Ms. Schulkowsky first performed the piece “at the Museum Carolino Augusteum in Salzburg on October 22, 1985.” *She Who Sleeps* is scored for two pairs of bongos, one conga, one tumba, one bass drum with foot pedal, and one Low-A marimba. In his “Composer’s Note,” Volans write, “I decided to make it [She Who Sleeps] a composition study for myself, by limiting the instrumentation to drums only, with a brief coda on marimba.” As mentioned earlier, some musical scholars assert that *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* is an African-inspired piece. While these findings are most certainly well thought-out, Volans counters these claims, saying, “The only overtly African thing about this piece is the title, which implies ‘she who sleeps alone’, i.e. without a lover.”

Volans wrote *She Who Sleeps* as a “virtuoso etude.” An “etude,” as defined by *Oxford Music Online*, is “a short piece restricted to the exploitation of one kind of passage.” In other words, etudes focus on a particular technique or idea as the basis of its structural content. However, at a the total duration around 16 minutes, *She Who Sleeps* is by no means a “short piece.” In fact, this piece has multiple independent ideas and techniques, as though this etude

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52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
were actually a “collection” of smaller etudes. Furthermore, many of these independent ideas (or in this case, motifs) occur within the same written tempo. Because of this, the structural tempo’s governance over the motivic content of *She Who Sleeps* is called into question. A decision must be made whether to consider the contrasting motifs written in the same tempo as part of the same structural idea or as separate motivic entities. Deciding on the latter approach would assert that the motifs are almost as much a deciding factor in determining the piece’s structure as the tempos themselves. After much deliberation, in order to adhere to the classification of the work as an etude, this motivic analysis of *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* must allow the motivic content to be a pivotal factor in determining a structural tempo’s relation to another. Therefore, the structural tempos are outlined as such (Figure 4).

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<tr>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Beats per Minute (BPM)</th>
<th>Appearances (Measure No.’s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>23-28, 30, 45-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>63-175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-1</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>176-198</td>
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<td>A-3</td>
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<td>199-228</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-2</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>229-301</td>
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<td>144</td>
<td>302-385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E [Coda]</td>
<td>160-180</td>
<td>386-421 (end)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Structural Tempos for *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket*.

The resulting form is as follows:


Tempo A-1 (240 BPM) involves the development of a motif that is first presented in measure 2. As Tempo A-1 progresses, this motif is expanded upon through different means, such as the addition of kick drum notes and additional triplet variations, as seen in measures 5 and 9, respectively (Example 28).
Example 28: Kevin Volans, *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket*,
m. 2 (above left), m. 5 (above right), and m. 9 (bottom).

A second motif is introduced in measure 13 in the form of ascending quarter note triples in between hits from the kick drum, which interrupts the rhythmic flow of the eighth-note triplets. In the following measure, Volans fuses these two motifs together (Example 29).

Example 29: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m.m. 13-14.

Like Tempo A-1, Tempo B (160 BPM) has two governing motifs. The first occurs in measures 23 as a series of alternating high-register eighth notes that are immediately answered by descending eighth notes, periodically ornamented with grace notes. The second main motif is of a similar aesthetic and first appears in measure 45. Rather than alternating eighth notes at the beginning, Volans writes eighth-note quintuplets on the highest bongo, which is played against quarter notes in the tumba and conga. A similar answer of descending eighth notes appears afterwards (Example 30).
As with Tempo A-1, both of Tempo B’s motifs are worked through and juxtaposed against each other. As the section progresses, elements of 2-against-3 and 4-against-5 emerge, as well as intricate counterpoint between the two hands in the staff. This iterance of Tempo B reaches its climax with triple-forte eighth-note fivelets traveling all around the drums as the kick drum provides pulsing hits.

Interestingly enough, Volans injects material from Tempo A-1 into the Tempo B areas multiple times. Aside from the sudden momentary change to Tempo A-1 at measure 29, Volans writes Tempo A-1 material three times (measures 51, 54, and 55) in the tempo of Tempo B. He uses different rhythms in these instances, which mathematically results in these reappearances having the same speed as they had in Tempo A-1 (Example 31).

This close interplay of motifs between the motifs of Tempo A-1 and Tempo B within the same tempo (in this case Tempo B’s 160 BPM) is not unlike the way Tempo A (B) is written in Akrodha, Part 1, which juxtaposes Tempo A and Tempo B motifs both within Tempo A’s 126
BPM. Though the difference in BPM between Tempo A-1 and Tempo B in She Who Sleeps is far greater than the tempo difference in the mentioned section of Akrodha, Part 1, the similarity still exists nonetheless.

Tempo C (144 BPM) is a third element Volans introduces amidst this interaction between Tempos A-1 and B. In Tempo C, eighth-note triplets (that shortly modulate to eighth notes) alternate between the high register and the low register of the drums. This alternation eventually gives way to a more register-encompassing melodic pattern among the drums. In measure 35, Volans adds accents in groups of four that in turn create a cross-rhythmic effect (Example 32).

![Example 32: Volans, She Who Sleeps, m. 35.](image)

The first structural tempo that calls for the medium-soft mallets is Tempo A-2 (240 BPM), which begins at measure 63. Tempo A-2’s motivic content is more fluid with diverse rhythmic development present in this section, which is a departure from the nature of Tempo A-1’s motivic content. Broadly speaking, the motif of Tempo A-2 can be described as “downbeat-centric.” Volans writes, all at pianissimo, increasingly complicated and expanded rhythms around consistent downbeats. The ever-changing rhythms begin as eighth-note triplets, and then morph into sixteenth notes and eventually quarter-note triplets. Nevertheless, the rhythms always lead to a downbeat. A sudden forte statement occurs on beat 4 of measure 117, comprising of quarter-note triplets, as well as introducing the kick drum. Afterwards, the pianissimo dynamic returns, and the rhythmic cycle of development resets itself and begins
again. Volans reiterates the melody of measures 71 through 82 in measures 110 through 121 but adds the kick drum to vary the reappearance. This causes each melodic statement to be extended one beat, in order to compensate for the new presence of the kick drum (Example 33).

![Example 33: Volans, She Who Sleeps, m.m. 78-80 (top) and 117-120 (bottom).](image)

Following measure 121, the perceived reappearance of Tempo A-2’s first half deviates from its path of varied reiteration and presents new material, including expanded triplet passages and quarter-note triplet double-stops.

The tempo of 180 BPM and the direction of “In speech rhythm” at measure 176 mark the beginning of a new structural tempo, “Tempo D-1.” The motivic material contains eighth-note double-stops written in groups of one, two, or three notes. Melodically, only so much as small musical fragments reappear; the rest of the material do not reappear as a reiteration, variation, or otherwise. This indicates that Tempo D-1 is through-composed. However, common elements exist from a harmonic standpoint. Volans tends to favor either the fifth or the seventh for the double-stops’ intervals. Fifths and sevenths make up for almost all of the intervallic content (Example 34).
Occasionally, he will use intervallic thirds. However, since they occur much less often than fifths or sevenths, they appear to be anomalies. This contrasts with *Akrodha*, Part 1’s double stops, which contain a greater variety of intervallic content.

Tempo A-3 takes a similar approach to its motivic development as Tempo A-2. This fortissimo structural tempo involves fast, accented triplets that move rapidly around the drums at 240 BPM, although Volans writes in a footnote: “The acoustics of the hall may dictate a slightly slower tempo.”

Due to the fast tempo demands, the use of double sticking or the crossing of the hands to execute these passages is advisable. The triplets’ wall of sound is interrupted in one of two ways: either through the writing of quarter note rests, first seen in measure 205, or a vamped measure at a piano dynamic level, as seen in measures 210 and 213 (Example 35).

Example 35: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m.m. 204-205 (top) and m. 213 (bottom).

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Like Tempo A-2, Volans uses the kick drum to enhance the reiteration of select measures. In the case of Tempo A-3, those measures are 202 through 206; Volans reiterates these measures in 207 through 209 with an added kick drum pulsation (Example 36).

Example 36: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m. 202 (top) and m. 207 (below).

This is similar to how measures 347 through 372 of *Akrodha*, Part 1, reiterates much of its Tempo C motivic material but adds the kick drum ostinato underneath it for extra enhancement.

The second appearance of 180 BPM, “Tempo D-2,” carries a few ideas over from Tempo D-1. The use of double-stops return, although Volans has written a comparatively greater deal of rhythmic variety. In addition to eighth notes, Volans includes assortments of triplets, quarter-note triplets, and eighth-note fiveslets. Syncopation of these various rhythms appears periodically. Harmonically speaking, the commonality of using the fifth interval makes a return. However, there is an increased presence of thirds in measures 257 through 260. The seventh interval has fewer appearances in Tempo D-2 and serves a more anomalous role. The extra presence of the “hard stick” notes adds an additional layer of color not seen before in the work (Example 37).
The inclusion of the hard stick is *She Who Sleeps*’ “foreign timbre.” Each of Volans’ solos has one foreign timbre that sounds completely different from the solos’ normal sounds, yet that timbre operates in close proximity with them. *Akrodha*’s foreign timbre is the presence of the wooden-headed drums that are fully ingrained into Part 1’s melodies, and, as it will discussed further in the next chapter, *Asanga*’s foreign timbre is the two high metals or high drums.

The hard stick takes on a variety of roles as Tempo D-2 progresses. Initially, it takes on the form of grace notes and standalone notes that are mostly isolated from the rest of the notes. Beginning in measure 263, following a sudden piano and subsequent crescendo, the hard stick becomes the top note of a series of sforzando chords that contrast with soft passages of material (Example 38).

As with Tempo D-1, this portion of Tempo D-2 is through-composed. The section presents a development of certain rhythmic ideas and harmonic motifs but is less concerned with reiterating or varying what preceded it.

Following a reiteration of measure 53 in measure 267, Tempo D-2 presents a varied recapitulation of measures 45 through 62. This portion of Tempo D-2, measures 268 through the
second beat of 286, marks the first major “reappearance” of material not written in close proximity to its original statement. In addition to the Tempo B being written in the tempo of D-2, the variations include multiple pitch alterations, certain measures left out, and the inclusion of the third hard stick. For comparison, Example 39 shows measures 45 through 47 as it originally appears, followed by measures 268 through 290, its corresponding recapitulating measures.

Example 39: Volans, She Who Sleeps, m.m. 45-49 (top) and m.m. 268-290 (bottom).

Following this recapitulation is the last section of Tempo D-2, or beat 3 of measure 286 through measure 301. Climatic episodes of sixteenth notes and 4-note chords at fortissimo surround a few recurring motifs. The first of these is a triplet pattern first presented in beat 3 of measure 286. This motif reappears as a reiteration twice in measure 288 and once the second half of 296. A unique transposition of this motif appears in measure 290. The second and third triplets are transposed down a third, while beat 2 is transposed up by a third (Example 40).

Example 40: Volans, She Who Sleeps, m.m. 288-290.

In measure 292, Volans foreshadows a motif that appears in the upcoming Tempo C-2 with a triplet pattern that makes reappearances in measures such as beat 4 of 315, beat 5 of 323,
and beat 5 of 329 as part of a pseudo-reiteration of 323. Additionally, he reminisces the quarter-note triplet motif of Tempo A-1 in measure 295 at a dynamic level of mezzo forte; although the melodic pitches in the drums are different, the rhythmic placement of the kick drum remains the same.

Tempo C-2 (144 BPM) sees a more subtle reappearance of previous motivic content, as well as small instances of internal reiterations. Within this section, Volans injects small fragments of previous motifs amidst newly written material. This includes measures such as 221 through 224, which are rewritten in measures 319 through 322, minus the grace notes (Example 41).

Example 41: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m.m. 221-224 (above) and m.m. 319-322 (below).

Although the time signatures are different in the reappearance, the pitches are retained with this particular example. Another instance involves the comparison of measures 80 and 303. Both ideas have common traits in that they both have downbeats followed by ascending sixteenth notes on the beats before their next measures (Example 42).

Example 42: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m.m. 80-81 (left) and 303-304 (right).
Examples such as these happen very infrequently in Tempo C-2. The new material written might seem familiar, but very rarely are they direct reiterations of previous material. Common elements include broad concepts such as the presence of triplets and double stops, as well as similar treatment of rhythm, but no direct connections exist. One could say Tempo C-2 acts a “ghost” of motivic content previously seen in the piece.

With that being said, certain internal reappearances in Tempo C-2 do occur. The most noticeable example is the pseudo-reiteration of measure 323 in measure 329. Measure 329 retains the pitches and rhythms of 323 but reorders them so that 323’s beat 4 becomes 329’s beat 1 (Example 43).

Example 43: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m. 323 (top) and m. 329 (bottom).

Other occurrences of internal reappearances pertain to individual beats. An example of such an occurrence is the triplet motif that first appears on the first beat of measure 307 (Example 44).

Foreshadowed in measure 300, beat 1, of Tempo D-2, this motif accounts for the beat 1’s of the following measures within Tempo C-2: 307, 315, 350, and 358. A slight variation of this motif appears in measure 356 with an altered pitch on the third triplet (Example 45).

Example 45: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m. 356.

Beginning at measure 386, Tempo E (160-180 BPM) is designated as the coda and is the final structural tempo of the piece. Furthermore, it is the first and only appearance of the marimba. The coda depicts interplay between the left hand and the right hand in the marimba’s bass clef. The notes with the downward-facing stems are to be played by the left hand with a “very soft mallet,” while the notes with the upward-facing stems are to be played by the right hand with a “soft, light felt timpani mallet.”

There are two different motifs that take place within the coda. The first of which is the first measure of the coda, measure 386. The right hand plays two quarter notes of G and four quarter notes of E, while the left hand provides grace notes. Once the melody arrives on E, a

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diminuendo takes place (Example 46).

As the motif develops, it expands through the addition of notes that create increasingly complex phrases. The phrases of this motif generally resolve to E, although deviations occur as the coda progresses. Additionally, the right hand almost always plays the primary notes, while the left hand provides the grace notes; the one exception to this is in measure 404, where multiple grace notes are present, necessitating the need to use both hands to execute them (Example 47).

The coda’s second motif involves eighth notes alternating between the right and left hands on the A below middle C. This is first presented in measure 411 (Example 48).

Due to the relatively fast tempo range of 160 to 180 BPM, the eighth notes can almost be heard as a roll, though the fact of having different implements in each hand hinders the evenness
of timbre. One exception to the alternating eighth notes exists in measure 412, where two right-hand eighth notes are played on beat 1, rather than one on the right hand and one on the left hand (Example 49).

Example 49: Volans, *She Who Sleeps*, m. 412.

The second motif’s development is more static than the first motif. The only changing factor is the length of the individual reappearances. Measures 411 and 419 last six beats, measure 412 lasts 7 beats, and measure 420 (the final appearance) is 20 beats long.

As it can be seen, different structural tempos have the same written tempo, yet this motivic analysis has demonstrated that new ideas do indeed take place among these same written tempos. Furthermore, direct reappearances of motivic content occur at very select moments. This makes *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* somewhat of a through-composed piece. The emotional result is “an intensity curve jumping in between high and low energy,” yet it creates an “overall… general curve of energy going from very high to low energy.” Compared to *Akrodha* (and what will be seen with *Asanga* in next chapter), *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* favors creating new material over precisely reappearing previously stated motifs.

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61 Appendix C: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
CHAPTER 5

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: ASANGA (1997)

In 1997, Volans wrote his second multiple percussion solo, Asanga. Like She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket, Asanga was written for Robyn Schulkowsky; Volans composed the piece as a gift to Ms. Schulkowsky on the passing of her father. Following a “preview performance” of the work on June 12, 1998 at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin, Ms. Schulkowsky gave the definitive world premiere of Asanga on September 30, 1998 in Fylkingen, Stockholm.

The piece features an instrumentation requirement of “four low drums (including bass drum) and two higher tom-toms, plus two high metal plates or extremely high skins.” Directions such as “four low drums” and a choice of either “high metal plates or extremely high skins” indicate that Volans intended to leave a portion of the instrument selection up to the performer. This is a departure from the very specific instrumentation required for She Who Sleeps. However, Asanga’s instrument directions are more in line with Part 1 of Akrodha. Both pieces give a prospective player some leeway in selecting his or her instruments for a given performance, but at the same time, Volans does offer ground rules for certain instruments and instrumental criteria.

Further contextual similarities between Asanga and Akrodha, Part 1, exist, likely due to the fact that both pieces were written only a year apart from one another. The word “Asanga” means “freedom from attachment” in Sanskrit. As mentioned earlier, “Akrodha” is also a Sanskrit word, which means “freedom from anger.” Additionally, the title for Volans’

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63 Kevin Volans, Asanga (London, UK: Chester Music, 1997), iii.
64 Ibid., iv.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid., iii.
67 Volans, Akrodha, iii.
percussion trio, Chakra, means “wheel” in the Sanskrit language, as well as “the name given to the seven energy centres [sic] in the body.”\textsuperscript{68} Musicologist Christine Lucia attributes Volans’ apparent fascination with Sanskrit titles to a “spiritual journey” Volans took to India in October of 1994.\textsuperscript{69}

As with Akrodha, clear structural tempos can be identified in Asanga. An examination of the piece reveals four specific structural tempos, which the table below outlines (Figure 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Beats per Minute (BPM)</th>
<th>Appearances (Measures No.’s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>1-45, 59-72, 78-136, 161-205 (end)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>46-58, 73-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>152-160</td>
<td>137-150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>151-160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Structural Tempos of Asanga.

The following is the form, horizontally written:

\begin{center}
\textbf{A \ – \ B \ – \ A \ – \ B \ – \ A \ – \ C \ – \ D \ – \ A}
\end{center}

In terms of motivic content and overall musical material, Asanga bears even more similarities to Akrodha. The opening portion of Tempo A (116 BPM)’s first appearance, measures 1 through 32, features an interaction of three short motifs, which are outlined and explained in the following table (Figure 6).


\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., 11-13.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif</th>
<th>First Appearance</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syncopated quarter notes and eighth notes occasionally ornamented with grace notes.</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Example 1" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tenuto fivelets with a written decrescendo; always voiced in the lowest drum.</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Example 2" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5 (4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; eighth note)</td>
<td>Accented dotted eighth note immediately followed by an accented quarter note; sometimes integrated with other motivic content and at other times isolated in its own measure.</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Example 3" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: *Asanga* Motivic Content in Tempo A, m.m. 1-32.

Volans treats the opening motifs in the same way he treats Section A of *Akrodha*, Part 1, in that he swirls and mixes the motifs with each other. They are worked through in various ways, including reiterating certain measures, creating variations, and writing new material that maintains the original motifs’ characters. This happens more with Motifs 1 and 3, as Motif 2 remains relatively static in its development. However, the interactions are much more intimate than in *Akrodha*. In contrast with *Akrodha*’s seemingly measure-by-measure isolation of its
opening motivic content, Asanga wastes no time in splattering each motif onto the opening section’s easel, and their subsequent mixtures occur vertically, as well as horizontally. Also absent from Asanga’s opening is the use of space found in Akrodha to give the listener ample time to process each motivic statement.

Reappearances of the first portion of Tempo A’s motivic happen frequently. Usually, he combines reiterated measures with measures of previously unseen material that emulate the ideas of the opening motifs. Measures 37 through 41 are an example of such a combination (Example 52).

Example 50: Kevin Volans, Asanga, m.m. 37-41.

The second motif of Tempo A involves a series of fast and rhythmic sixteenth-note patterns, not unlike those found in Tempo C of Akrodha, Part 1. They first appear in measures 33 through 34 and are expanded upon in measures 59 through 66 and again in measures 85 through 123 (Example 53).

Example 51: Volans, Asanga, m.m. 37-41.

With every expansion, Volans adds more patterns to the motif. The following table lists these patterns and where they first appear (Figure 7).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>First Appearance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>m. 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>m. 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>m. 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>m. 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>m. 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>m. 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>m. 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>m. 103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>m. 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>m. 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>m. 106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>m. 127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7: First Appearances of Tempo Sixteenth Note Patterns in *Asanga*.

When the different reappearances of the patterns are compared, certain sequences become noticeable. *Asanga*’s sequences are grouped on a much smaller scale than *Akrodha* in that Volans will maintain sequences made up of two or three patterns, rather than a full reappearance’s worth. The following table isolates each section of *Asanga* in which the sixteenth-note patterns appear and dictates the sections’ sequences of sixteenth-note patterns (Figure 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33-34</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-66</td>
<td>ABCABCCB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-123</td>
<td>ABCABCCB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DEFGCCBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EFHIJKEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HIGCCBDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FHIEFEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127-130</td>
<td>LLAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8: Sixteenth-Note Sequences in Reappearances of Tempo A in *Asanga*.

Outside of the clear reiteration of measures 59 through 66 presented in measures 85 through 92, certain parts of no more than three measures at a time are more frequently used. Among these include “ABC,” “CCB,” “DEF,” and “EF.”
A third motif that operates within Tempo A is the presence of accented “bell tones” that are ornamented by grace notes. In their first appearance at measures 81 through 84, they are juxtaposed against opening Tempo A material (Example 54).

Example 52: Volans, Asanga, m.m. 80-83.

In addition to a slightly varied appearance in measures 131 through 136, the motif’s rhythmic content plays an expanded role as the main material for the piece’s coda, which lasts from measure 166 to the end of the work. The motif is fused with short episodes of the three opening motifs (Example 55).

Example 53: Volans, Asanga, m.m. 172-181.

Tempo A’s last two motifs are more sparingly used. They each only appear twice in the entire piece. The first of these are fast rhythmic figures made up of two 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes and one sixteenth note. They are presented one after the other and move in rapid succession around the instruments. Measure 35 marks its first appearance (Example 56).
Its second appearance occurs in measures 42 through 45, where the motif is expanded in length to four measures. While the individual pitches of measure 35 do not reappear, the rhythmic sequence (with the exception of an eighth note in measure 45) and the rapid movement around the instrument setup are retained.

The final motif of Tempo A is, with the exception of the coda, the only motif to incorporate the two highest tom-toms or metal plates, depending on the instrument choices of the performer. It first appears in measures 124 through 136 and features fast, loud sextuplets with accents every eighth note. One hand navigates between the two high instruments, while the other moves around the setup (Example 57).

When the motif returns in measures 161 through 165, Volans completely reiterates measures 124 through 126, save for one pitch variation in the sixth sextuplet of beat 3 in measure 124. Measures 164 through 165 are new material that expands the motif’s length.

Tempo B (160 BPM)’s first motif depicts groups of ornamented eighth notes separated by sixteenth notes, thereby giving the dotted eighth note the pulse. The motif’s first appearance
at measures 46 through 50 comprises of three bars of 9/8, one bar of 21/16, and one bar of 17/16 that ends with an eighth note with no sixteenth-note rest following it (Example 58).

Example 56: Volans, *Asanga*, m.m. 46-50.

Interestingly enough, this portion of Tempo B’s motivic material only reappears in the one appearance of the *più mosso* Tempo D (200 BPM), which occurs in measures 151 through 160. As with previous motifs in this work, Volans integrates the reiteration of the motivic content with similarly written new material (Example 59).

Example 57: Volans, *Asanga*, m.m. 153-156.

There are two other motifs that make up the material of Tempo B. These two motifs are similar in nature in that they both involve rapidly ascending sixteenth notes. However, one uniquely contains groupings of usually six sixteenth notes. Furthermore, accents are present on the eighth-note releases of these phrases. At the end of certain measures, Volans will deviate
from the groupings of six as a way of “rounding off” the measures. The first appearance of this motif occurs in measures 51 through 58 (Example 60).

Example 58: Volans, Asanga, m.m. 51-55.

In contrast, the second of these two motifs, which first appears in measures 73 through 77, is written at a piano dynamic level and with greater variety in the number of ascending sixteenth notes. Volans begins with eight sixteenth notes but later uses different amounts. Additionally, the accents are written at the beginnings of the ascending lines, instead of at the ends like the previous motif (Example 61).

Example 59: Volans, Asanga, m.m. 73-76.

As with the reappearance of the first Tempo B motif, Volans reappears these two motifs at a different tempo albeit tempo range of 152 to 160 BPM. The material from the motifs makes up the material for this ranged tempo section, or “Tempo C.” It can be best described as a varied synthesis of the two rapid sixteenth-note motifs. In addition to writing the piano sixteenth notes at fortissimo, Volans introduces a variation of measure 77 amidst a combination of reiterated measures from the two motifs (Example 62).
Example 60: Volans, *Asanga*, m.m. 143-147.

In closing, *Asanga* has many more similar motivic approaches to *Akrodha* than *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket*. This is seen through the numerous techniques Volans applies to the motifs within the structural tempos, which further fuel this concept of redundancy versus novelty. In addition to having characteristic tempos, certain motifs transcend their original temporal home and become integrated into other structural tempos, or, at times, even go so far as to wholly become the material of that different tempo. The sequenced layering of motifs one-after-another creates a “straight forward” effect that causes the piece to “simply go up [in energy] all the time until reaching the coda.”

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CHAPTER 6

AKRODHA PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

The vast musical and logistical complexities of Akrodha necessitate the need for a dedicated chapter on performance practices of this work. For an optimal performance of Akrodha to manifest, the prospective performer must take multiple factors into consideration, including instrument selection, instrument setup, implement selection, overall performance considerations, and execution of certain passages within the score. The information presented in this chapter is meant to be a synthesis of potential solutions to these factors, based on the information gained from my interviews of Dr. Volans, Mr. Axelsson, and Ms. Schulkowsky, as well as my own experiences with Akrodha.

In terms of instrument selection, the notes on instrumentation in the score leave the selection of certain instruments in Part 1 up to the performer. Volans does not specifically mention which drums the performer should use in Part 1; in fact, he merely states that the nine drums should range “from tom-toms through congas to high bongos.” For my performance of Akrodha, I wanted to select instruments that reflected this range as best as possible. The following diagram displays the identification numbers of the different drums in Part 1, as well as their assigned positions in the staff (Example 61).

Example 61: Volans, Akrodha, p. iv.

Volans, Akrodha, iv.
The three different timbres of tom-toms, congas, and bongos presented a challenge of how to equally represent the instruments, yet somehow make the upper staff as a whole sound as one entity. After all, the tom-tom and bongo qualities of timbre could not be more different from one another! I saw the conga timbre as halfway point in timbre between the tom-tom and bongo timbres, and, as a result, the conga acted as the perfect mediator. Therefore, after much deliberation, I decided on the instrument combination of three tom-toms (Drums 1, 2, and 4), one conga (Drum 5), and three bongos (Drums 7, 8, and 9). I used what is called a “compact conga,” made by the company Latin Percussion, which is a portable model of conga consisting of only the head and the rim. In addition to the benefits of having less instrumental weight to transport, the compact conga’s depth (or lack thereof) better blended with the other eight drums. The use of a regular conga would give that conga the deepest shell depth by far in the upper staff. This would be odd, considering the drum to which it is assigned is the fourth-highest drum in the upper staff (minus the wooden-headed drums). A quick glance through the score of Part 1 informed me that the drums of the upper staff needed to be articulate, especially considering Tempo A is written with many staccato notes. Although the conga and bongos are inherently articulate, the same could not be said for the tom-toms. To address this issue, I prepared the tom-toms by applying muffling devices, in the form of Moon Gels, to the heads. This fixed any potential lack of articulation in the tom-toms, as well as created further sonic unity with the conga and bongos.

Deciding and implementing the choices for the drums with wooden heads presented its own set of logistical challenges and considerations. I initially thought to use two additional tom-toms, cut wooden disks to the size of these drums, and lay them on the heads of the tom-toms. I had encountered this method before during my undergrad, when I, as a member of the George
Mason University Percussion Ensemble, premiered a new percussion work by Dr. Jesse Guessford, entitled *Deconstruction*, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. While preparing the drums this way made them unique and interesting, I then remembered that they sounded acoustically “dead,” even compared to the conga and bongos. I recognized that the wooden drums obviously needed to sound different, but, at the same time, I wanted a certain level of resonance with these instruments, thereby giving them a semblance, albeit subtle, of common ground with the other drums I had selected. Because of this, I realized that I needed to find another solution.

Fortunately, a solution was presented to me. Christopher Deane, with whom I was studying at the time, located special tom-toms with integrated wooden heads in an instrument storage room at the University of North Texas College of Music. These wooden drums provided the level of resonance I had been looking for, and I used them in my performance of *Akrodha*, Part 1, for my third Doctoral Recital. Unfortunately, the one hazard of using these wooden drums was that they would crack frequently, due to hours of intensive practice and preparation. Fixing them proved to be a challenge in that the heads were not removable from the shells, much less replaceable. Professor Deane helped me fix them by placing glue within the cracks that would occur over time. In my conversations with Robyn Schulkowsky, asked her what she used for the wooden drums. She told me that she cut disks made of plywood to the size of the drums she intended to use.\(^\text{72}\) However, rather than simply laying them on top of a conventional drumhead, she removed the drumhead altogether and replaced it with the plywood disk.\(^\text{73}\) She additionally recommended using longer tension rods to allow them to better reach the lugs on the

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\(^\text{72}\) Robyn Schulkowsky, telephone interview by author, February 7, 2017.  
\(^\text{73}\) Ibid.
drums.\footnote{Ibid.} This solution allowed for the desired resonance of the wooden toms I had used, while providing the option to effortlessly switch out the disk in the event of its cracking.

For the bass drums, it was essential to select a combination of drums that would be able to provide five distinct pitches. Furthermore, many of the bass drum notes were of long durations. Because of these factors, bass drums that could provide an open and sustained sound were needed. Bass drums 3 and 5 needed to be played with foot pedals, as the performance notes dictated.\footnote{Volans, \textit{Akrodha} (1998), iv.} Given the presence of a bass drum in between the two pedaled bass drums pitch-wise, using two drum set bass drums was not sonically feasible, since the standard dimensions of kick drums are in close proximity to each other, thereby resulting in limited pitch ranges. Of course, I was not exactly “limited” to drum set bass drums, since theoretically any bass drum in existence could have a foot pedal attached to it. However, the fast and loud alternation between the two pedaled bass drums in measures 344 through 372 sent me a warning that the bass drums I attach pedals to should also have attached legs to provide enhanced sturdiness in addition to any carpeted rug I might use for performances. To resolve this, I converted a 16-inch by 16-inch floor tom to a kick drum by using what is called a “Jungle Gig” conversion kit made by Pearl Drums that transforms a standard floor tom to a kick drum; I assigned the converted floor tom to the highest bass drum. This solution solved two problems. First of all, it created pitch differences between the kick drums by using a floor tom instead of another kick drum for the highest bass drum, and secondly, this relatively smaller size of the converted floor tom expanded the pitch range of the bass drum voice as a whole. Whichever group of drums the performer selects, it is important that they “create a resonant sound, but also give good conditions for the
articulation.” Although Mr. Axelsson does not have a specific “go-to” combination or setup of drums he uses, he firmly believes that “it is crucial to make the texture come out clear. The piece is grasping a big structure, a bit like a work for orchestra, and therefore… it [the Part 1 setup] should have a vast and rich mix of sounds.”

Part 2’s directions for instrument selection offer the performer greater independence and more possibilities. In his notes, Volans writes that the instruments should consist of “cowbells, Almglocken, mixed with other bells, metal rods, [and/or] metal plates of fairly indefinite pitch.” Furthermore, “Oriental or Western gongs” should not be used, as Volans says they are “not suitable.” Lastly, the combination of the metals’ pitches should avoid “pentatonic and diatonic scales.” Outside of these three parameters, Volans grants freedom to the performer when choosing his or her instruments for the movement. The intent behind these directions was to give the performer the opportunity of selecting pitches for the creation of two sets of “chordal pallets.”

Much of Christian Wolf’s works for percussion involved the use of lying and suspended instruments in a way that resembles a double keyboard.

As a point of reference, Volans lists the individual items and their corresponding approximate pitches in the performance notes that Jonny Axelsson used for the first performances of Akrodha. Dr. Volans and Mr. Axelsson “selected the instruments for the interesting unique quality of their sound.” The two different staffs incorporated in extra element into the selecting process, as they selected half of the instruments that “sounded good

76 Appendix C: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
77 Ibid.
78 Volans, Akrodha, iv.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
83 Volans, Akrodha, iv-v.
84 Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
hanging and half, which sounded good lying.”\textsuperscript{85} The intent was to give Mr. Axelsson “a kind of double keyboard to play on, and creating a set of instruments with very different lengths of decay.”\textsuperscript{86}

Mr. Axelsson’s suspended instruments incorporated the following instruments and pitches (Example 62).

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\begin{center}
\textit{suspended (upper stave)}
\end{center}

1) 35 x 35cm square iron plate
2) 35 x 26cm rectangular plate
3) stainless steel cylinder
4) Almglocke
5) Thai bell
6) flower pot
7) small cow bell

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Example 62: Kevin Volans, \textit{Akrodha}, pp. iv-v.

The lying instruments of Mr. Axelsson’s setup comprised of the following instruments and pitches (Example 63).

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\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.
As it can be seen, the groups of pitches among Mr. Axelsson’s metals do not form a semblance of any scale, pentatonic, diatonic, or otherwise. Additionally there is a considerable amount of pitch overlap between the staffs, which is acceptable, according to Ms. Schulkowsky, though she believes that the “left hand” should have relatively lower pitches than the “right hand.”

Although the performer has the degree of freedom to choose metals, there are certain factors of criteria that should be considered when selecting the metals. Three principles for selection should be adhered to when determining a certain metal’s potential: timbre, resonance, and controllability. The individual timbre of a potential metal must be satisfactory to the performer, but any conflicts with the timbre of the other metals in the pallet should be grounds for disqualification. The metal’s resonance is of equal importance. Metals that sound “dead” or produce little to no natural resonance should not be considered. The movement’s presence of

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87 Schulkowsky, phone interview, 2017.
88 Ibid.
“toujours laissez vibrer,” or “always let ring,” necessitates the need to use resonant metals with capabilities of meaningful sustain. More specifically, Ms. Schulkowsky advises the suspended to instruments to have resonance, while the lying instruments should have “muffled resonance.” Therefore, as with timbre, the chosen metals must have the same degree of resonance, as it applies to its respective staff. Lastly, the performer must have a sense of control over the playing of these metallic instruments. A lack of control can seriously inhibit the performer to optimally execute the rhythmic and melodic passages mandated by the score.

These factors should apply to not only the individual metals but also how they interact musically, as well as logistically. A selected metal must have the capability of becoming an instrument, and the combination of the metallic instruments must be able to create a controllable and concise melodic line and not just a random set of instruments.

I personally selected were the following instruments that produced these approximate pitches (Figures 9 and 10).

![Lying Instruments (Lower Stave)](image)

1. Steel pipe 25 ¼” x 1 ½” (diameter)
2. Steel beam 12” x 6” x 4”
3. LP “Aspire” cowbell 6 ¼” x 4 1/8”
4. Brake drum 9 ½” diameter
5. Brake drum 11 ½” diameter
6. Steel pipe 12 11/16” x 15/16” (diameter)
7. Steel pipe 13 15/16” x 2 ¼” (diameter)

Figure 9: Part 2 Instruments and Approximate Pitches Used by Author (Lying).

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89 Ibid.
Figure 10: Part 2 Instruments and Pitches Used by Author (Suspended).

The absence of an outlined setup diagram for *Akrodha* makes the prospective performer responsible for organizing the fourteen instruments of Part 1 and the fourteen instruments of Part 2. As with all multiple percussion solos, the instrument setup method greatly impacts the quality of a given performance. Therefore, attention must be given to how the instruments of *Akrodha* are arranged and assembled. The setting up of instruments is obviously individualistic from performer to performer, so it is advisable that the reader interprets the following suggestions as one perspective and not as an absolute method.

Part 1’s upper staff features a great deal of fast rhythms that cover a wide range of the drums’ register within a short period of time. Because of this, a streamlined and compact setup with all the drums at the same height is vital. The most compact way to assemble the nine drums is to do so in a way that resembles a chromatic scale on a keyboard (Figure 11).

Suspended Instruments (Upper Stave)
1. Metal plate 15” x 6” x ¼”
2. Metal plate 12” x 6” x ¼”
3. Metal pan 9” diameter
4. Metal plate 17 15/16” x 4” x ¼”
5. LP “Mambo” cowbell 8 1/8” x 4 5/8”
6. Almglocken note (Bb)
7. Almglocken note (F#)
This approach “fills in” the gaps in between the instruments caused by logistical placements of drums and drum stands. In addition, it results in a setup with reduced width and ease of reach to every drum in the score. Furthermore, the chromatic approach automatically places the beating spots at approximate angles of 45 degrees to each other, thereby allowing the performer’s hands to quickly maneuver up and down the drums with little to no need to cross the hands.

The placement of the five bass drums requires consideration as well. Measures 344 through 372 involve the quick alternation between the two pedaled bass drums. Therefore, it is essential that they both be placed on the same side of the setup and as close to each other as possible. The other three bass drums came with their own set of challenges. Since bass drums have large diameters, playing all of the non-pedaled bass drums horizontally is not feasible, for that causes the overall “wingspan” of the setup to exceed the performer’s capabilities. Due to this, I found it necessary to place two of them vertically. To get them as close to the rest of the setup as possible, I suspended the two (bass drums 2 and 4), in order to clear some of the space of the setup that was not being used. For the third (and largest) bass drum, I was able to simply
place it horizontally, so I attached “Multi-Fit Legs,” made by Pearl, which allowed for this to be possible.

I found that these methods and considerations led me to create a setup that best positioned me to perform Part 1. That setup is diagrammed and photographed below (Figures 12 and 13).

Figure 12: Setup Diagram for Akrodha, Part 1.
The setup considerations for Part 2 are simpler, as Volans makes it clear that seven of the metallic instruments are to be suspended, while the other seven are to be lying. However, the logistics of optimally setting up and configuring the instruments will largely be determined by the nature of the individual metals the performer selects. Because of this, the setup methods for Part 2 about to be discussed in this section of Chapter 5 will be based on the metals I myself selected. With the instruments I chose, the best option presented to me was to create two lines of metals, one suspended and one lying. This helped enhance the idea of the “double keyboard” mentioned earlier.

For the lying instruments, it made sense for me to use a table, rather than seven individual stands. The connected surface of the table allowed me to move the instruments as close to each other as possible, resulting in efficiency of movement from instrument to instrument in performance. Additionally, I used a table with a steel frame for extra sturdiness. The lying
instruments I used were very heavy, and I feared that a regular table would not withstand the weight. I draped a large black towel over the table to both add cushioning for the instruments and to cover up the table’s white base color. Unfortunately, the towel fully dampened any resonance from the lying metals. Although it is recommended for the lying instruments to be semi-resonant, the towel went too far. To fix this, I laid two long tubes of window insulation on top of the towel parallel to each other. Resting the instruments on these tubes, which were of a foam-like material, prevented the metals’ resonance from being infringed. However, the heavy weight of the metals caused the tubes to flatten over time, so having extra insulation at the ready for regular replacement was needed.

The suspended instruments were mounted onto a constructed rack made of galvanized pipe. As with the lying instruments, the suspended metals weighed a considerable amount, so sturdy metal pipes, such as galvanized pipe, were crucial to prevent structural failures. Individual suspended metals were strung with either strong rope or fishing line with a substantial amount of test weight. The metals were then secured to the rack with heavy-duty duct tape. While attaching the metals this way was more permanent than simply hanging them from hooks, this approach allowed me to completely customize the distance from metal to metal and not be limited to pre-installed hooks.

The final setup that incorporated all these considerations and methods is depicted in the following image (Figure 14).
Three different sets of implements are needed to perform Part 1: felt, wood, and “harder sticks.” Certain measures in Part 1 require very fast transitions from felt to wood and vice versa. These include measures 66, 178, 188, and 198. The best solution to these fast changes was to use the same implement for both the felt and wood passages, more specifically a “swizzle” drumstick. Initially, I used a pair of Vic Firth TG-25 Combination mallets, which are part of the Thomas Gauger signature series of drumsticks and mallets. The implement featured a general timpani felt head on one end and a general drumstick bead on the other. However, following a performance of the movement for some of the faculty in preparation for my recital, it was brought to my attention that the felt head on the sticks was not articulate enough, especially for the opening staccato figures. Therefore, another implement was needed. I ended up using a pair of the Vic Firth Terry Bozzio signature swizzle drumsticks, officially entitled the “Phase 2” model. The felt side of this implement was much less “fluffy” than the first pair of drumsticks I
had selected, thereby providing that articulate felt sound that I was looking for. Unfortunately, this drumstick model is discontinued and no longer in production. However, an excellent alternative would be to use a general pair of drumsticks and wrap layers of moleskin around the butt-ends of the sticks. This emulates the sound of that articulate felt that provides the necessary contrast to the wood timbre.

The term “harder sticks” is more abstract and therefore required an investigation of the score in that general vicinity. The direction for harder sticks first appears after an extended passage that uses the felt mallets. With this evidence, I inferred that the term “harder” is relative to the felt in this situation. However, the harder implement could not be wood or close to wood because that would negate the significance of the wood timbre. Therefore, I selected an implement that could act as a medium between the two other timbres. That selection was rubber. I decided on the ENS360, a model in the Ensemble Series made by Innovative Percussion. These mallets produce a warm, articulate sound that serves as an excellent mediator between the felt and wood spectrums.

For Part 2, an implement with enough hardness to produce a full tone on the metals is essential. At the same time, however, there are multiple instances where the lying staff and the suspended staff have considerable dynamic contrasts that occur simultaneously. Although rubber, plastic, metallic, and other unwound mallets have the ability to produce the desired full sound, their mono-tonality creates an extra level of difficulty to control the necessary dynamic contrast. Therefore, in addition to having a hard enough timbre to fully engage the metals, the ideal implement must exhibit an element of multi-tonality that gives the performer additional control at softer dynamic levels. This multi-tonality can be found in certain yarn and chord mallets, such as those designed for marimba and vibraphone. After experimenting, I decided to
use the Vic Firth M33 Terry Gibbs Keyboard mallets, the hardest model in Mr. Gibbs’ signature line of vibraphone and marimba mallets. These implements gave me the ability to fully project the metallic instruments without the need to over-exert physically, while simultaneously play piano and pianissimo dynamics in the movement with relative ease.

Kevin Volans’ multiple percussion solos have certain universal performance approaches and considerations. First of all, “the tempos and tempo relationships of the pieces are crucial.” According to Volans, “tempo replaced key systems as a means of structuring the piece.” Post-serial music, of which Dr. Volans’ music is a part of, “tempo replaced key systems as a means of structuring the piece.” Because of this, performing one of Dr. Volans’ multiple percussion works in the wrong tempo is tantamount to playing in the wrong key. Even further, performing with “incorrect tempo relationships” destroys the structure. Equally crucial is the presence of accents or lack of accents; performers are heavily discouraged from adding non-written accents to Dr. Volans’ works. Every written accent is intentional, as is every unwritten accent. In terms of the interpretation of grace notes, they should not be played so close to the primary notes in the same way one would play a flam. Instead, there must be a degree of “openness” in between the grace note and the primary note. Dr. Volans wrote his multiple percussion solos “melodically (meaning he wrote the drum patterns as diatonic ‘tunes’ on the piano), rather than ‘rhythmically’.” Much in the same way one would perform a passage of grace notes for flute or piano or marimba, both notes must be heard. Furthermore, the grace notes reference those of

90 Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
91 Ibid.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
96 Schulkowsky, phone interview, 2017.
97 Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
Morton Feldman. Feldman did not like to hear bar lines in his music, and his use of grace notes were meant to mask the downbeats.

Specific to Akrodha, additional approaches and methods can be applied to further optimize a performance of the work. As seen in the motivic analysis of Akrodha, each structural tempo contains one or more individual motifs that have different aesthetics. It is important to consistently interpret each motif and its subsequent reappearances (varied or otherwise) with a level of uniqueness and nuance exclusive to that motif. This is especially vital in structural tempos where multiple motifs operate in close proximity to each other, such as the opening of Tempo A in Part 1. Giving each motif its own interpretive approach adds additional support to the tempo relationships of the movement. Passages such as measures 178 through 211, which depict multiple alternations between Tempos D and C, benefit from this added interpretive support on top of the given tempo differences and changes in timbre.

This interpretive method is more difficult to apply to Part 2, as the motifs operate more independently of the structural tempos. The melody involves repetition of fragments, as mentioned in Part 2’s motivic analysis, though isolated incidents of reappearances do take place. When these micro reappearances occur, whether as a reiteration, variation, or transposition, they should be made known, in order to recognize a degree of redundancy amidst new material, which Dr. Volans says is necessary to retain high information levels.

Although extraneous accents are not appropriate in Akrodha or any of Dr. Volans’ multiple percussion works, agogic accents can help to convey the intentions of the music. In certain passages, notes are grouped in ways that are, for lack of a better term, unorthodox for the

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98 Schulkowsky, phone interview, 2017.
99 Ibid.
100 Appendix A: “Notes from E-mail Correspondence…”
meters in which they are written. For example, the following table lists the meters and note groupings of measures 71 through 76 (Figure 13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Note Groupings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>2+2+3+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>7/16</td>
<td>2+2+1+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>7/16</td>
<td>2+2+1+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>5/8</td>
<td>2+2+2+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>6/16</td>
<td>3+3 (2+16\textsuperscript{th}-note rest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>4+2+3 (2+16\textsuperscript{th}-note rest)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15: Meters and Note Groupings of Select Measures from Akrodha, Part 1.

It is important for the performer to pay attention to groupings such as these and to not let the pitches of the drums or pre-conceived conventional groupings of compound meters become distractions.

In Part 2, a substantial amount of material within the staffs of the movement is written in sequences of the same rhythm, whether that rhythm is a dotted eighth note, a double-dotted eighth note, or a quarter note. The first 9 measures of the movement have multiple examples of this. With measures such as these, the performer should be less concerned with placing the rhythms within a metrical context and more with the sequences themselves. In measures of Part 2 where rhythmic sequences contain a variety of rhythms, such as measures 36 through 42, more attention should be given to how they are placed in the meter.

The performer should take a relative approach to dynamics in Akrodha. In addition to treating each document level as its own entity of volume, the density of the notes and how they affect the overall volume of the piece at a given point in time should be taken into account. The closer in proximity the notes are to each other in a particular passage, the naturally louder that passage will be. For example, measures 130 through 135 of Part 1 depict sextuplets at a fortissimo dynamic level, while the preceding passage of measures 114 through 129 is of the
same dynamic but contains more space with eighth notes in the upper staff and various melodic hits in the bass drums. Though considerable effort is needed to play measures 114 through 129 at fortissimo, the same amount of effort is not needed for the sextuplets for both passages to be of the same dynamic volume, due to the increased density of the sextuplets.

Part 2 has multiple incidents where vertical dynamic contrast is written. Especially in the beginning, the lying staff is played at mezzo forte, while the suspended staff echoes with a piano dynamic. Later in the movement, Volans expands that vertical contrast more by writing fortissimo against piano. The performer should pay considerable attention to make sure that enough difference in sound exists between the two voices in these particular passages. At the same time, the performer should also make sure that the soft dynamics are not so soft that their presence is completely overshadowed by the sustain of the louder dynamics. However, it should be remembered that the specific amount of volume and contrast required will be dependent on the sonic capabilities of the instruments the performer selects.

Most of Part 1 can be performed with only two sticks or mallets. In measures 297 through 320 within the first appearance of the harder sticks, I switch to three mallets with two in my left hand and one in my right hand. Three mallets are necessary to successfully play select clusters of notes in the upper and lower staffs, such as the “and” of 3 in measure 297 or beat 3 of measure 319. Furthermore, the use of three mallets in this section increases mobility from double stop to double stop in the upper staff. During the part of the bass drum ostinato that serves as a transition from measures 320 to 323, I switch to two mallets in order to set myself up for the Tempo C reappearance at measure 328. In terms of sticking, the performer should feel free to use any pattern he or she feels comfortable with. Although certain stickings are more
efficient than others, the final sound of the music should be the priority. The sticking should help, not hinder, that sound.

There are multiple appearances of grace notes and simultaneous occurrences of three notes or more at certain moments in Part 2. Because of this, the use of four mallets is essential. To further add to and emulate the idea of the double keyboard setup, I chose a sticking method in which my left hand was assigned to the lying staff, while my right hand was assigned to the suspended staff. Even though this led to frequent crossings of the hands, there were advantages to taking this approach. The main advantage was that this made the execution of the moments of vertical dynamic contrasts more efficient. One hand was able to play at forte or fortissimo, while the other could play at piano or pianissimo. Additionally, my hands were able to move linearly with this method, rather than vertically with a certain degree of franticness. To perform the grace notes with this method, I used simple, quick double lateral strokes in either hand; measures in which the grace note and primary note were on the same pitch involved a very small interval between the mallets and consequently a larger wrist motion. At certain points, I deviated from this method, as it made certain measures easier to play. I was more inclined to make these deviations if both the lying and suspended staffs had the same or similar dynamic markings, which, in turn, meant less concern with the need to create a vast contrast in volume between the voices. The same went for moments when only won staff was playing, and the other was resting.

The biggest obstacle with successfully performing both movements of Akrodha is attaining the exact written tempos and tempo relationships. The material at brighter tempos is very fast and quick, but with considerable practice, performing these sections at the intended tempos is feasible. However, there are two measures in Part 1 that are impossible to execute with the proposed setup: measures 297 and 319 (and its reiteration at measure 362) of Tempo E.
The “and” of 2 in measure 297 and beat 3 of measures 319 and 362 require mallet intervals that are unobtainable, even if four mallets were used instead of three. For my performance, I selected one pitch in each cluster to omit (Example 64).

Example 64: Volans, Akrodha, Part 1, m. 297 (left) and 319 (right).

Outside of preferring not to completely reinvent the instrument setup for these two clusters in the piece, there was reasoning behind omitting these specific pitches. I spent a considerable amount of time deciding which pitches would be best to eliminate. The bass drum pitch was already ruled out because it was needed to keep the ostinato intact. That left me with the two pitches in each of the measures. The deciding factor was that in both chords, one of the upper-staff pitches had already appeared in their respective measures, while the others were new pitches in these measures. For measure 297, the reappearing pitch was the treble “Middle C” pitch, which first occurs on the downbeat. In measure 319 (and later 362), the treble “D” pitch first appears on the “and” of beat 1. Therefore, I ultimately decided to omit the reappearing pitches, for omitting the alternative pitches would mean omitting new material.

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an additional layer of knowledge to the information given in the score of Akrodha. There are certain logistics the performer can and
must consider in order to be better positioned to give a quality performance. Furthermore, the musical treatment of the structural tempos and their motifs must be adhered to for an optimal performance to exist. Not doing so risks misinterpretations that can interfere with the composer’s intent.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The overall forms of Kevin Volans’ multiple percussion solos are governed by tempo. The different tempos and their relationships to each other determine the pieces’ structures and musical directions. Supporting these tempos is the motivic content. As discussed in this paper, the motifs in Akrodha act as characteristic traits for each tempo; when one tempo is presented or re-presented, its “signature” motivic content is likely to be heard. Though this was more often the case in Part 1 than in Part 2, characteristics do exist in both movements, albeit at different levels of intensity. The motifs and their subsequent variations seen throughout the work add an additional layer of tangibility to the structural tempos. In Akrodha, the tempo is much more than a number or even a style direction. The motifs demonstrate that concept.

Comparative analyses of She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket and Asanga yielded similar results, although the exact implementation of the motifs varied from piece to piece. Nevertheless, structural tempos and their supporting motifs do serve varying degrees of vitality in each work.

The vastness of Akrodha as a piece and as a setup meant that considerations and methods for overseeing it needed to be discussed. The management of 28 different instruments (with a portion of their selection left to the performer’s discretion) can be a daunting task. Therefore, the suggested performance practices of Akrodha, presented in this paper, provide the performer a concrete starting point to undertake the piece both musically and logistically. Furthermore, these performance practices demonstrated how a prospective performer should approach the piece in accordance with Volans’ intent and how to better convey the structural tempos, through the motivic content, to the listener.
At the same time, portions of the performance practices were deliberately passive. The dynamic of allowing performers to partly choose his or her own instruments for the piece indicate that not only are different, individual performances of Akrodha with different instruments and setups encouraged, but mandated. Though some approaches are universal, the nuances identified when comparing individual performances of Akrodha will play a primary role in helping the performer develop his or her own stylistic expression of this work.
The following are notes taken from multiple email correspondences between the author and Kevin Volans that began on January 31, 2017.

To date, Dr. Volans has written the following percussion pieces:

- She who Sleeps with a Small Blanket
- Asanga
- Akrodha [Part] 1 for metal instruments
- Akrodha [Part] 2 for drums (Dr. Volans later switched the order)
- Chakra (for 3 percussionists)
- Chakra for 3 percussion and orchestra
- Solo percussion Concerto
- Abhaya for 4 percussionists
- Akrodha 3 for piano and percussion
- 4 Marimbas
- perc:piano 1
- perc:piano 2

**AUTHOR:** There was a period of 12 years between composing *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* and composing *Asanga*, and *Akrodha* one year after that. In those 12 years, had your compositional approach to percussion experienced any changes?

**KEVIN VOLANS:** With regard to my attitude to composing for percussion, nothing changed between the composition of *She Who Sleeps* and *Akrodha*. I decided in all pieces to limit the number of instruments as far as possible. I had been bored too often by what I used to call “kitchen sink” pieces, which required a vast array of instruments and often required long set-up times. In addition I also wrote for drums melodically, rather than 'rhythmically'.

**AUTHOR:** When you were writing your solo percussion compositions, were there any outside influences (other compositions, visual art, etc.) that you would say inspired you?

**VOLANS:** All of my music since about 1980 has been striving towards non-conceptual, or materialist, or, if you prefer, existential composition. This is in line with Morton Feldman's
stated aims, but also what I have observed in much African traditional music. It represents an aspiration: it's unlikely a western composer can work entirely without some form of conceptualism.

I did try to choose titles, which were not silly and sometimes had a bearing on the time and circumstances in which they were written. So:

- *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* is the name of a piece from Lesotho, and means “She Who Sleeps Alone” (with no lover).
- *Asanga* (Freedom from attachment) likewise was a gift for Robyn, who had just lost her beloved father. She is a believer in the healing powers of drumming and I felt sure that practicing this piece would provide some comfort.

About the same time I was commissioned to write a large piece for Jonny Axelsson, and I called it *Akrodha* (freedom from anger). Like *Asanga*, this state of mind is an aspiration, as is *Abhaya* – fearlessness.

**AUTHOR:** Some scholars say that *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* is one of your “African Paraphrases,” while you say that the piece is not African. For the record and to clear up any confusion, does *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* have African influences?

**VOLANS:** In the early 80's, I set out to write a series of pieces called African Paraphrases, to be followed by another series Translations from the European. The idea of the African Paraphrases was to write a set of pieces that began with (almost) traditional African music and moved away from that, becoming more and more 'original' composition and less and less African. So they included:

- *Mbira*
- *Matepe*
Each piece was to move further and further away from original models, and to become more and more 'invented folklore'. So *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket*, being near the end of the series, had little or nothing to do with African music (and nothing to do with African drumming). Only the title is African, although I do seem to recall the opening phrases being inspired by some North African Oud music. However, while working on the series, I found the whole idea too conceptual (and therefore contradictory to the nature of the music) and too Germanic and not very African, so I dropped the name and the next series (Translations from the European) entirely. So, the “African Paraphrases” do not actually exist.

The piece [*She Who Sleeps*] doesn't have a single African drum, (but it does have South American congas, Cuban bongos and a western marimba [developed in Central America]). In fact, *She Who Sleeps* doesn’t bear any resemblance to traditional African drumming. (In South Africa, where I was born, there is no drumming music per se, and, with a few notable exceptions, nearly all traditional music is accompanied or a capella vocal music). The initial impetus is to be found not in African Music, but in African textiles, Shoowas weaving, in particular. (I have a collection of these weavings.)

**AUTHOR:** Some have argued that the word *Asanga*, meaning “freedom from attachment,” influenced how you composed the piece, since you have been quoted as saying *Asanga* “was
written with no conscious techniques or concept.”

Would you say that the title’s meaning did influence how you wrote the piece? If so, did the word Akrodha, meaning “freedom from anger,” have any impact on how you wrote your third solo percussion work?

**VOLANS:** All, or nearly all, titles of my pieces were given after the piece was written. They have no particular significance for the piece and have no bearing at all on the way they were written. There is no programme to any of my pieces. They are abstract.

**AUTHOR:** In Akrodha, I found many motifs and patterns that return after they present themselves. If this was your intent, were there any particular approaches as you wrote the piece, particularly pertaining to these motifs and patterns? Were there any additional compositional techniques and/or thought processes you used for Akrodha?

**VOLANS:** With the exception of the avant-garde of the 1950's and 1960's: in music like integral serial music, in which composers like Stockhausen set out to write music with “no motives, no themes, no repetition and no development” or chance music or genuinely minimal music [like La Monte Young or Phil Niblock] (all concept driven); all music usually has some form of patterning which recurs and which is contrasted with other kinds of patterning, whether they be themes and motifs or textures or colour fields or whatever. Most so-called 'post-modern' and pre-modern music makes use of repeated and recurring elements. In this respect there is nothing unusual in the compositional structure of Akrodha. Even Morton Feldman makes extensive use of recurring elements. I made a long and intense study of serial music, and I do think that my music is influenced to some extent by serial music's concern with information theory and rates of change. For information levels to remain high [in information theory terms, this is desirable – it ultimately means

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'not boring'] there has to be varying degrees of 'redundancy' – (things that have been heard before) – and 'novelty' (new material), and the rate of change at which this happens must itself change. (As a post-graduate I studied for 9 years in Germany [Cologne] and was, amongst other things Stockhausen's teaching assistant).

You do need to see my music as coming out of the (next) generation of European composers after Boulez, Stockhausen, Xenakis etc., with a strong influence of Morton Feldman, too.

The tempos and tempo relationships of the pieces are crucial. As are the accents or lack of accents! In post serial music, tempo replaced key systems and a means of structuring the piece. In my opinion, if you play the piece at the wrong tempo, you are playing it in the wrong key! And if you play it with incorrect tempo relationships, you are destroying the structure. (I used to add performance notes to my pieces saying: if you play this piece at the wrong tempo you may as well play all the wrong notes too!).

AUTHOR: You have said that your percussion work, 5:4, was a source for material for Akrodha, and that you do not consider 5:4 to be a piece in its own right, now that Akrodha has been written. Were there particular circumstances that led to your making these decisions?

VOLANS: 5:4 was written for dance, and as such was intended to complement the dance. But both the choreography and the music are incomplete without the other.

After I took what I had written and transformed it into the second movement of Akrodha (now called Akrodha, [Part] 1. The original first movement is now called Akrodha, [Part] 2 – I reversed the order).

AUTHOR: You wrote She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket and Asanga for Ms. Robyn Schulkowsky and Akrodha for Mr. Jonny Axelsson. Were there different experiences in working
with Ms. Schulkowsky for your first two solo percussion works and later Mr. Axelsson for your third, and did that change your compositional approach to solo percussion?

**VOLANS**: As I don't play percussion myself, and don't have instruments to try things out on, I wrote out the music as diatonic melody (meaning I wrote the drum patterns as diatonic “tunes” on the piano) and then sent it to the performers to assess the playability of the music (especially with regard to sticking), speed and the layout of the drums. Usually there were very few patterns, which could not be managed, but now and again one had to be modified. Both Jonny and Robyn surpassed my expectations about speed. I would then visit them and work with them on the pieces and make any adjustments necessary.

Both Robyn and Jonny and I regard the quality of sound to be of supreme importance (as it is in piano or violin playing). Robyn had some 400 drums, many of which were custom made, from which she would select the 'right' ones which would give a rich and balanced sound for each piece. And of course choice of sticks is paramount. Tuning is important, too.

**AUTHOR**: In *Akrodha*, you give the performer quite some freedom in choosing instruments, particularly in “Part 2.” Aside from the instructions you have written, are there any other criteria a prospective performer should adhere to when choosing instruments? When *Akrodha* was first performed, what made you and Mr. Axelsson choose certain instruments over others?

**VOLANS**: Jonny and I selected the instruments for the interesting or unique quality of their sound. As it's written on 2 staves, we also selected half which sounded good hanging and half which sounded good lying, giving him a kind of a double keyboard to play on, and creating a set of instruments with very different lengths of decay. I couldn't specify the
instruments of course, as Jonny's set was unique, and it would mean only he could play the piece.

The following information was also provided by Volans through multiple emails in the email conversation thread:

- Volans studied electronic music under Hans-Ulrich Humpert (not Johannes Fritsch, as reported by other sources).
- Volans held temporary posts as composer-in-residence at Queen’s University, Belfast, from 1986 to 1989, and visiting scholar at Princeton University in 1992.
- Volans became an Irish citizen in 1994.
- Volans’ overt references to African Music trailed off around the end of the 1980s, although lessons he learned from African composition techniques are to be found in much of his work from then on.
- The “Cologne School” was not a school per se; it was a group of younger-generation composers based in Cologne, Germany. As Stockhausen lived in Cologne (as its most famous composer) along with a large number of other professional composers and performers of New Music. So, as such, it was a school.
- Volans: By the mid-seventies, a few of us were tiring of the historical restrictions of New Music and the ideas that came out of serial composition. Our taste (I mean me and a few friends) was wider than this.
• By the end of the 1970s, the New Simplicity [movement] was well and truly over. In its place were many different factions; it was chaos and a very clear indication that New Music was in crisis.

• The title of Akrodha has no programmatic connotations. Despite the Sanskrit translation to “freedom from anger,” the word is abstract as it relates to the overall aesthetic of the piece.

• To Volans, he did not write for marimba in the coda of She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket. He wrote “pianissimo low notes on a marimba played by very soft sticks. Because they were the right color!”
APPENDIX B

NOTES FROM INTERVIEW: ROBYN SCHULKOWSKY
The following are notes taken from a phone interview between the author and Robyn Schulkowsky that took place on February 7, 2017:

AUTHOR: There was a 12-year period in between She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket and Asanga. Did your approach to performing Mr. Volans’ solo percussion music change at all when learning and performing one piece and then the other 12 years later?

ROBYN SCHULKOWSKY: I didn’t ask for either piece. They were both gifts. I had already worked with Kevin in 1981. She Who Sleeps was meant to occupy my need to drum. At that time, he had no specifically designated music for percussion, so we arranged works to include marimba (he and I had a trio with a gamba player from Holland), rattles, and two harpsichords (he and I both played). It is the rhythmic material of this previous work that became the backbone, the basis for creating the first independently solo piece for me. It was conceived as a way to play with your ears. Volans said, “You have to use your muscles but guiding muscles have to come from your ears.” The piece is meant for two mallets, mainly because of the sonic potential of the two mallets. It’s based on the interlocking of two players in African music. However, it is important to note that South Africa is more of a singing culture than a drumming culture. We westerners are fast to believe that everything drumming comes from the gigantic continent of Africa! Hence, she who sleeps really has nothing at all to do with African drumming.

I was involved with She Who Sleeps from the get-go. It was a transformation of the movement from White Man Sleeps, Leaping Dance, [and] African Landscapes. Taking all of that material and putting into a solo piece.

Volans was motivated by Psappha (by Iannis Xenakis). He was trying to find a space that Psappha didn’t occupy. Xenakis wrote Psappha at a time that it wasn’t
politically correct. Everyone had a reaction to Psappha. For percussionists, the reaction was different than for composers and critics. It is an amazing work, and your life as a percussionist is not complete without it. I gave a British premiere of it [She Who Sleeps] in London. It was a concert of Varese, Volans, and Xenakis. It was premiered in the same concert that Pleades (by Xenakis) was being performed. I tend to put Xenakis and Volans together.

Asanga came as a fax. I didn’t expect it. He had done 5:4. He and I worked so hard on where She Who Sleeps should be. When Asanga came about, it was perfectly written. He [also] wrote a piano concerto with sonic blocks and toms. You take it [Asanga] at face value and do what it was there. The tendency is to play too loud; [you need to] balance the dynamic with the tempo.

His music goes to a very dedicated approach. He saw music as a pure art form (like visual art), rather than the traditional art form. One should look at Kevin’s works all together. We’re moving away from virtuosity to art.

I always try for the same thing: an accurate and honest interpretation that opens windows to the secrets BEHIND the notes on the page.

AUTHOR: In your recording of She Who Sleeps, you took a unique interpretation in that you added extra bass drum notes and changed the number of repetitions in some of the repeated measures.102 Was there a particular goal or intention you were trying to convey by doing so?

SCHULKOWSKY: When I recorded She Who Sleeps, it was done with the manuscript. It was a live performance, not a recording. He rather liked that performance, so it was put on the CD. It was completely unedited. Furthermore, the interpretation you heard on the

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102 Robyn Schulkowsky, perf., Kevin Volans: White Man Sleeps, Smith Quartet, recorded July 01, 1989, John Marc Gowans, CD.
live recording is different than the interpretation I recorded in the studio. For me, there were many, many performances of this work in the 89s and 90s. Each one had something special; some were magical. You try your best to play what is on the piece. I had a lot of time to learn it. I got a page at a time, so I had time to practice it. He was writing as I was learning.

There was originally supposed to be a metal instrument in the section with the hard stick. But we realized after the first recording of the piece that it wasn’t going to work. It made it too trivial.

Lastly, do not prepare the marimba (with coins to make it sound like an African marimba). If he wanted something, he wouldn’t have asked for it. He doesn’t write a note, unless you know what it sounds like before you play it.

AUTHOR: When performing *Asanga*, did you choose to use two metallic instruments or two high-pitched drums for the two highest pitches? What was the reasoning behind that decision?

SCHULKOWSKY: I use metal. Always. It was about color change. It’s definitely timbre for me. There’s more resonance at the end.

AUTHOR: What were the implements you have used for both *She Who Sleeps* and *Asanga*?

SCHULKOWSKY: You can’t just say, “I used Deagan red’s all the time, but it might not always work.” What is important with mallet choice is the quality of the room you play in. Always take a mallet selection (more than you think you will need) to your dress rehearsal. Know what you need to hear.

For *She Who Sleeps*, I used Kapoc mallets for the first [section]. It’s a pressed felt on a light bamboo stick. They are hard, but very light. You should be able to have articulation without the hard attack. He was against wooden drumsticks. That also goes
for wooden timpani mallets. For Kevin, wood was a no-go. Preparing the wood somehow, [as in] padding it to take away the “undesirable ping” is always an acceptable solution. Also, we used natural skins, instead of plastic skins, which did away with the “pluck” sounds. It was about “What does the attack do?”

For Asanga, I tried to use something I could use for the entire piece. I made thick maple wooden sticks that were like heavy wooden dowels. I then wrap them in a felt that is softer than piano felt but harder German timpani felt.

**AUTHOR:** What is your history with Volans’ composition, 5:4? Volans has mentioned that he does not consider it a piece in its own right, ever since the composition of his third solo, Akrodha. Is there insight you can provide as to why this might be the case?

**SCHULKOWSKY:** It’s a duo, not a solo. It was written for a particular situation – for percussion and dancers. I made the tapes for the recording. It should be a duo. The conception of the piece came out of non-musical material: dance. With regard to the performances, it felt that the piece lived in the dance situation.

[With regards to 5:4’s relationship to Akrodha] Part 1 of Akrodha starts with a direct quote of 5:4.

**AUTHOR:** Have you had any interactions with Volans’ third solo, Akrodha? If so, are there particular performance approaches you undertook that were perhaps different than your approach to She Who Sleeps or Asanga?

**SCHULKOWSKY:** The idea of lying and suspended instruments came about from a piece that Christian Wolff wrote for me.

For the selection of the metals, the idea was that Kevin gives you the opportunity of selecting pitches for chordal pallets. You find certain pitches/junks that you can turn into
a set of instruments. Timbre, resonance, and controllability were the criteria for selecting the metallic instruments. You have to be able to make that selection into an instrument. You have to hear the line. It’s fine that the pallets mix (right hand and left hand), but I believe the left hand should be the lowest. And you can mix them in the middle.

[Additionally], you want resonance and muffled resonance.

[For the wooden-headed drums] I used plywood on drums. You take the skin off, and plywood acts as the skin. You might need to use longer tension rods in order for the rods to reach the lugs of the drums

In Akrodha, there’s some She Who Sleeps, Asanga, and 5:4. Volans said it was okay to quote yourself.

The second movement (metals) came about because it was too short of the minimum time limit set forth by the consortium. You could play them as Part 1 and then Part 2, or vice versa.

I performed Akrodha once. If he had written it 5 years earlier, I would’ve played it more. But it became harder to travel with my equipment. At the end of the ‘90’s, I had to play what was there. In the 80s through the 90s, I had a driver and a truck. It was easier to travel. In the beginning of 2000, even hiring people to drive, people didn’t want to pay for it. I now program with openness with easier setups.

With the metals, you can’t pick out the metals the night before the gig. Kevin’s music doesn’t work that way. I’ve stopped programming pieces where I am attached to particular sounds and instruments. Psappha, Rebonds (by Xenakis), and She Who Sleeps are easy to travel with because the instruments are there. I don’t play Asanga as often because I like the calfskins.
Asanga, Akrodha, and 5:4 have more grace notes. The grace notes reference Morton Feldman. Feldman didn’t like to hear the barline; the grace notes are meant to mask the downbeats. The grace notes are not flams. You need to hear both notes. Percussion are indefinite pitches but are definite in the moment you want to hear it.
APPENDIX C

NOTES FROM E-MAIL CORRESPONDENCE: JONNY AXELSSON
The following are notes taken from multiple email correspondences between the author and Jonny Axelsson that began on February 24, 2017.

**AUTHOR:** You have recorded all three of Volans’ solo percussion works. Were there any noticeably different performance considerations or interpretations as you approached each piece?

**JONNY AXELSSON:** My first performance of *She Who Sleeps With a Small Blanket* was back in 1990 (I think I was the first male percussionist in the World performing it!). Learning it, very soon I realized the importance of getting a good technique in delivering two fast strokes with one hand on two different drums; to let the bounce of the stick on one drum go sideways and hit another drum. For that I worked on getting flexible wrists. Later on when I learned the other pieces, obviously this was needed with them as well. But there are a lot of differences between them. For instance, with *Akrodha* you are dealing with a very big set-up, which means much longer distances and more complexities in selecting and placing the instruments. Also the structure of the music is more complex with several sections and much more of coloring with different beaters. With *Asanga*, which was the third and last piece I learned, I wanted to find drums making it sounding different to the other pieces. I knew I was going to perform them all at concerts and later on record them. I discussed this with Mr. Volans, who could see the point in doing it. The set-up I use for *Asanga* is technically demanding due to moving the sticks very fast forward and backward in the set-up. All the three pieces has an expression with high energy and when you prepare them for a performance, it is of great importance to make a good planning of how to distribute the energy. In terms of “energy wave forms” they are very different; *She Who Sleeps* has a musical structure giving an intensity curve jumping in between high and low energy, but overall there is a general curve of energy going from very high to low.

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103 Jonny Axelsson, perf., *Jonny Axelsson Plays Volans and Sharman*, Jonny Axelsson, 2011, CD.
energy. At the beginning the piece has a very extrovert expression, but by time it moves more and more into something introvert. Akrodha is more complex having longer sections and more stretched out curves of energy. Part 2 for metal instruments has a structure of being more static, staying more or less in the same expression all the time. I see a very clear connection to Morton Feldman. My experience from performing Part 2 is that you are sharing with the audience the sensation of the timbres from the instruments and the long silences, letting it affect you and making you leave the role of the performer for a while. In Part I there are also longer sections staying in the same mode, but generally it moves from a lower and more static energy (a bit similar to Part 2!), to a very high energy. The process is stretched out and it comprises a more complex musical form. Asanga is the most “straight forward” piece compared to the others, it simply goes up all the time until reaching the coda.

AUTHOR: Volans leaves some room for interpretation in terms of instrument selection for Part 1 of Akrodha. Is there a specific combination of instruments that you consider optimal?

AXELSSON: No, not really, but maybe there are combinations to avoid. I do think that it is good to have a mixture of different drums, and that the group should be able to create a resonant sound, but also to give good conditions for the articulation. For many reasons it’s crucial to make the texture come out clear. The piece is grasping a big structure, a bit like a work for orchestra, and therefore I think it should have a vast and rich mix of sounds.

AUTHOR: What did you use for the wooden-headed drums in Akrodha, Part 1? Was there a particular instrument that you and/or Volans felt worked best?

AXELSSON: When working on the piece we tried many different instruments and ways of preparing them. The wooden drums become a voice on its own in the fast passages, due to
the way of using the “hoketus” technique. This makes the piece become polyphonic. The wooden drums I use are basically normal drums with a flat wooden piece instead of a skin. During the process we tried different surfaces, beaters, ways of preparation, and so on.

**AUTHOR:** How did you interpret the drums with the wooden heads? Did you consider them more separated or more blended with the other seven drums and five bass drums?

**AXELSSON:** See my answer above! I look at them as being a voice on their own, but still they have a clear connection the other drums, especially through the bongos. The role of the bongos and the wooden drums given in the composition are quite similar, even if the wooden drums are used more.

**AUTHOR:** In Part 2 of *Akrodha*, Volans mentions in the performance notes that the required metals should have “fairly indefinite pitch[es],” yet immediately lists the approximate pitches of the instruments you used in your first performance. How did you choose your metallic instruments, and were there factors that caused you to choose these metals over others?

**AXELSSON:** In the very first draft of that movement he indicated cowbells in the score; a group of seven hanging and another seven on a table. Very soon we started to take away them one by one and replace them with other metal objects and a clay pot. In the end we kept only one cowbell… The indications in the score are to give an idea of a kind of scale and world of sounds to achieve. Primarily the outcome with the instruments should be a great mix with different qualities of sound, and with a resonance allowing the two layers in this “Shadow playing” to come out clear.

**AUTHOR:** What were the implements you used for *Akrodha*? Were there specific drumstick/mallet models that you use more than others?

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AXELSSON: For most of the passages I am using soft timpani beaters and I use both ends by reversing them. In that way I quickly can change between soft beaters and wooden ones. Nowadays I prepare my own beaters; they get worn out quickly! But before I have used the Vic Firth soft timpani beaters (I cannot remember the name of the model). In the beginning and in the middle of the piece I add a big bass drum beater in my left hand. There is a passage where I use three relatively hard rubber mallets, and at the end I use wooden sticks.

AUTHOR: In measure 293 of Akrodha, Part 1, Volans calls for the performer to change to “harder sticks.” In addition to what implements you used for the “harder sticks,” how did you interpret them (i.e. harder than the felt but softer than the wood)?

AXELSSON: Yes, exactly: harder than the soft timpani beaters but softer than the wood. This section stands out from the other passages having a lighter character, which comes out better with those beaters. In order to play all what is written you need to use three beaters, and they should not be too heavy. I remember this was something we tried out together when we worked on the piece before the World Premiere.

With regards to the specific execution of measures 297, 319, and 362 of Part 1 of Akrodha, Mr. Axelsson writes:

Many composers are underestimating the impact of distance in a percussion set-up. It is difficult to calculate how much time will be needed to move the hands between the instruments. I encouraged Mr. Volans to write the music he wanted to do, without taking in consideration how it should be executed. After he sent me his first draft and we met to work together, we investigated different solutions, making evaluations on what would be
the best way. Sometimes that meant to revise the score; for instance, small changes made it possible to change mallets. This was the solution of the passage you ask about:

The high bass drum is played with a pedal and I use two beaters in my right hand and one in the other. When I need to play the low bass drum and two other drums at the same time, I play the two drums with my right hand and the bass drum with the left. Sometimes the left hand must move very fast between the bass drum and the other drums, but it is possible!
APPENDIX D

AKRODHA PART 2: FREQUENCY ANALYSIS
The following table displays the full data from a frequency analysis taken of the motivic content found in Akrodha, Part 2. Each motivic entry is identified with the measure number of its first appearance, as well as the staff in which it makes that appearance. “L” indicates that the motif first appeared in the lying staff, while “S” indicates that the motif first appeared in the suspended staff.

<table>
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<th>Reiterations</th>
<th>Transpositions</th>
<th>Variations</th>
<th>Varied Transpositions</th>
<th>Total Frequency of Reappearances</th>
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REFERENCES


Axelsson, Jonny. “Re: Interview!” E-mail message to author. February 24, 2017.


