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# ORIGINAL CLARINET QUARTET WORKS OF MIKE CURTIS AND JOSH SPAULDING: AN ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE

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ORIGINAL CLARINET QUARTET WORKS OF MIKE CURTIS AND JOSH  
SPAULDING: AN ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE

by

Jennifer A. Reeves

A DOCTORAL DOCUMENT

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Under the Supervision of Professor Diane Barger

Lincoln, Nebraska

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ORIGINAL CLARINET QUARTET WORKS OF MIKE CURTIS AND JOSH  
SPAULDING: AN ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE

Jennifer A. Reeves, D.M.A

University of Nebraska, 2017

Advisor: Diane C. Barger

The clarinet quartet genre is a popular chamber ensemble for the instrument and is one that has little to no history available discussing its origins and development.

Following a brief theoretical history of the clarinet quartet genre, the works of two 21<sup>st</sup> century composers are explored throughout the remainder of the document. Mike Curtis and Josh Spaulding's compositions for clarinet quartet are extraordinary examples of the works that exist for this chamber ensemble.

A biography and compositional background is supplied for each composer, followed by individual chapters discussing the composers' original works for clarinet quartet that utilize the instrumentation of four B-flat soprano clarinets or three B-flat soprano clarinets and B-flat bass clarinet. Those works are: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, *Global Tour*, *Polyglot*, and *Mexican Fantasies* by Mike Curtis and *Conversial Hairbows*, *Shadows of Ourselves*, and *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude* by Josh Spaulding. Each chapter provides an analysis of the work as well as a performance guide to provide ensembles with useful information.

The composers' use of form, tonality, instrumentation, *avant garde* techniques, hocket, chordal building, canon, panning effect, use of dynamics, and other techniques are further illustrated by the use of graphic illustrations in tables and musical examples.

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To Josh Spaulding, composer and friend, I extend thanks to him for creating new masterworks for the clarinet quartet genre, for always being available to listen to my ideas, and for allowing my ensembles to influence his clarinet quartet works.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The clarinet quartet is a genre of chamber music that currently has no existing information on its history or development. To date, there is no resource focused centrally on the topic of the clarinet quartet – a popular genre for the instrumentation of four B-flat clarinets or three B-flat clarinets with bass clarinet. A look into the history and growth of the clarinet in military ensembles connected with a discussion of the earliest known piece for clarinet quartet by James Waterson, as well as a foray into the development of the earliest known clarinet-only performance ensemble, provides a theoretical timeline for the clarinet quartet genre.

Wind chamber music gained popularity with the development of the woodwind quintet by composers such as Franz Danzi (1763-1826) and Anton Reicha (1770-1836) around the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The origins of the development of the clarinet quartet ensemble are currently unknown, but the use of multiple clarinet instruments within an ensemble can be seen in the growth of wind bands – chamber and military – since the Classical period. *Harmoniemusik* had its beginnings as early as 1750 with the greatest activity in the central European locales of Vienna, Prague, and Budapest<sup>1</sup>. With the appearance of the clarinet in *Harmoniemusik* in the middle of the 1700s, the instrumentation would grow to include two clarinets within these ensembles creating octets of two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, and two horns.

Until the popularity and further mechanical development of the clarinet grew in the 1800s, the oboe was considered the melodic instrument of military bands. By 1763

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<sup>1</sup>David Whitwell, *The Wind Band and Wind Ensemble of the Classical Period (1750-1800)*, 1984, p. 4

the clarinet would be included in military bands and court wind ensembles within the wind octet of pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons.<sup>2</sup> The clarinet would slowly replace the oboe in military bands as the leading instrument because of its durability and “fiery tone” as described by an anonymous account in 1778 listed in David Whitwell’s *A Concise History of the Wind Band*.<sup>3</sup> The clarinet arrived to military bands in countries like Austria in the 1760s and Germany in approximately 1775 with an ensemble instrumentation firmly established during Frederick the Great’s reign to contain two clarinets, two horns, a bassoon, and trumpet<sup>4</sup>. In France, “the first real modernization of French military bands occurs at the end of the reign of Louis XV [approximately 1764] with the addition of the French Guards of bands consisting of clarinets and horns, an influence not of the Prussians but of the Parisian fashion.”<sup>5</sup> The clarinet’s arrival as a solo instrument in London occurred during the 1740s and 1750s, and military bands documented the instruments appearance in the 1760s.<sup>6</sup> The inclusion of the clarinet within these ensembles as early as the mid-eighteenth century shows the beginning popularity of having multiple clarinets within a performing ensemble. The addition of clarinets grew in numbers in subsequent years as the presence of military bands across the world increased.

Accounts of four clarinets in an ensemble can be seen as early as the 1780s after a dispute within the “the Honourable Artillery Company in England”, that was ultimately

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<sup>2</sup> Eric Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 2008, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup> David Whitwell, *A Concise History of the Wind Band*, 1985 p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 173 and 175.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 176.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 177.

resolved by replacing the oboes in the ensemble with clarinets.<sup>7</sup> As time continued on, Whitwell describes the 19<sup>th</sup> century as one of the most important developmental periods for military ensembles by dividing the century into three periods. The first period occurred in the early part of the century, and this was “the period from the beginning of the century to the Napoleonic Wars, when the military bands in most countries seem only to continue the fundamental ‘*Harmoniemusik*’ approach of the eighteenth century.”<sup>8</sup> This approach was considered a continuation of the *Harmoniemusik* that involved six to eight instruments, usually in pairs.

The middle of the century was the time of greatest instrumental development. This developmental period would include cheaply made instruments that were mass produced, ultimately leading to the standardization of instrumentation within performing ensembles. Because the instruments were inexpensive, more people were able to afford them and learn how to play those instruments. The development and production of auxiliary instruments – like E-flat clarinet and bass clarinet for the clarinet family – also grew at a faster pace, permitting those instruments to be included in those performing ensembles alongside the standard instruments.<sup>9</sup> Due to the growth in availability of instruments during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, music capitols of the world, like France for example, would eventually standardize instrumentation for military ensembles by “a government ordinance [which would] set the official instrumentation for the infantry and cavalry (brass) bands.”<sup>10</sup> The French military band standardization would contain four E-flat

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<sup>7</sup> Eric Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 2008, p. 299.

<sup>8</sup> David Whitwell, *A Concise History of the Wind Band*, 1985, p. 203.

<sup>9</sup> Eric Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 2008, p. 300.

<sup>10</sup> David Whitwell, *A Concise History of the Wind Band*, 1985, p. 218.

clarinets and eight B-flat clarinets by 1854; Austria would standardize with one clarinet in A-flat, one clarinet in E-flat, and three clarinets in B-flat by 1851; and England would have the formation of the Kneller Hall Military School in 1857 in which the Royal Artillery Band would standardize instrumentation with four E-flat clarinets and twenty-two B-flat clarinets that same year.<sup>11</sup> Clarinets were being used in abundance by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century giving a potential starting point of the clarinet quartet ensemble.

The topic of the clarinet quartet as a chamber ensemble is presumably connected to military ensembles due to one of the earliest known (and still frequently performed) clarinet quartet works of James Waterson, *Grand Quartet*.<sup>12</sup> From Europe, Waterson (1834-1893) was the son of a military man who later joined ranks with the 1<sup>st</sup> Life Guards of the United Kingdom, and became heavily involved with the military band as a bass clarinetist at the age of nineteen.<sup>13</sup> Although the exact date of this composition is unknown, the piece was completed before his death in 1893. This piece is for the clarinet quartet instrumentation of four B-flat soprano clarinets, or a bass clarinet can be substituted for the fourth clarinet.

To aid in the formulation of a developmental timeline of the clarinet quartet ensemble, a connection is drawn to this composition and Waterson's involvement with military bands – ensembles that had been and will continue using more clarinetists than

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, pp. 210-220.

<sup>12</sup> This presumption is made by the author in an effort to begin the discussion and research into the history of this genre of which future scholars can build.

<sup>13</sup> Jesse Krebs, "Remembering James Waterson (1834-1893): Clarinetist, Bandleader and Composer," *The Clarinet*, 37, 2, 2010, p. 84.

any other large ensemble (aside from clarinet-only ensembles like clarinet choirs). Waterson was also well acquainted with other musicians, teachers, and faculty of the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall in England. According to Pamela Weston's *Yesterday's Clarinetists: a sequel*, Waterson composed many works for clarinet, including two other *Grand Quartets* for clarinet quartet and three *Grand Trio Concertantes* for three clarinets. Jesse Krebs writes in his article for *The Clarinet* that Waterson is not recorded to have attended the music school, but "he did maintain a close connection to the institution. In fact, his dedication of pieces to Henry Lazarus (professor of clarinet at Kneller Hall from 1858-1894) and James Park (professor of clarinet at Kneller Hall beginning in 1863 and E-flat clarinet soloist in the 1<sup>st</sup> Life Guard Band) suggests his close association with the school – perhaps as a private student of Lazarus and colleague of Park."<sup>14</sup> With this information, one can assume that Waterson was also influenced by his fellow clarinet colleagues to write for clarinet chamber ensemble.

The development of clarinet quartets also connects with the establishment of the clarinet choir in America by Simeon Bellison in the early 1900s. Created in New York in 1927, Bellison's clarinet choir used the majority of the clarinet instrument family. To date, this seems to be the first, and earliest, documentation of a clarinet-only performing ensemble in the United States. The clarinet choir started as a double quartet comprised of eight of Bellison's clarinet students and became the seedling to the later, massive

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

seventy-five person clarinet choir. Bellison arranged popular works for the ensemble's performances allowing the clarinet chamber music genre to grow in popularity.<sup>15</sup>

A look at the development of the clarinet choir as one of the earliest forms of clarinet chamber music is helpful to determining a milestone in the timeline for the clarinet quartet as an ensemble. Simeon Bellison was instrumental in the development of the clarinet choir in America – possibly the earliest documented clarinet-only ensemble. His connections to military band, like Waterson, stemmed from his father's military involvement. His father was a bandmaster in the Imperial Russian Army, and young Bellison grew up around the military bands, frequently attending rehearsals. He observed that the clarinets held the melodies most often, so naturally, Bellison was drawn to the instrument as a young boy. He began studying with his father when he was eight years old, becoming the concertmaster of his father's band in Smolensk by the age of thirteen.<sup>16</sup>

In 1907, at the age of 26, Bellison created his first chamber ensemble that featured clarinet and string quartet, the Moscow Quintet. Ten years later, he created the Zimro ensemble that sailed to America, where Bellison spent the remainder of his life after becoming a citizen on November 16, 1927.<sup>17</sup> That same year, Bellison formed his Clarinet Ensemble which was comprised of a double quartet of his clarinet students, and “coached chamber music groups as a part of the Philharmonic Society scholarship training program” in conjunction with his principal clarinet position in the New York

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<sup>15</sup> Bona Belliston, “The Life and Accomplishments of Simeon Bellison”, (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, July 1956), p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 3-6.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 16.

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra from 1923-1848.<sup>18</sup> Bellison's Clarinet Ensemble was a way for his students to have a performance outlet and another vein of music instruction. Students in this ensemble would also perform in smaller chamber groups or as soloists with piano accompaniment. Over time this ensemble grew to include 75 members, and because this ensemble's repertoire was 'non-existent', Bellison composed and arranged a large portion of the clarinet choir repertoire during a 30-year span.<sup>19</sup> Bellison died in 1953 leaving the clarinet world with a strong history of the American clarinet choir.

Although the information provided about military bands and the development of the clarinet choir does not offer an exact time frame for the development of the clarinet quartet, it suggests the origin of the genre's popularity. As with any other genre, there is a plethora of transcriptions for the clarinet quartet, but there are also many composers of original clarinet quartet pieces such as: Paul Harvey, Robert Stark, Alfred Uhl, Seymour Barab, Yvonne Desportes, Mike Curtis, Josh Spaulding, Jorge Montilla, Gordon Jacob, Pierre Max Dubois, and Michael Kibbe to name a few.<sup>20</sup> Current composers, like Josh Spaulding, are now even more difficult to find as self-publication becomes a more popular format of publishing. In addition, the number of professional clarinet quartet ensembles in existence today provides further evidence of the regard for the genre: Kalamos Clarinet Quartet, Doumka Clarinet Ensemble, Quator Vendôme, Thurston Clarinet Quartet, Hijinx Clarinet Quartet, Novacane Quartet, Harbor Winds Quartet of the United States Navy Band, Paax Kan Clarinet Quartet, Quarteto Vintage, Fell Clarinet

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Jane Ellsworth, *A Dictionary for the Modern Clarinetist*, 2015, p. 28.

Quartet, Moscow Clarinet Quartet, Fourplay Clarinet Quartet, Inner City Four, and many others. After preliminary research into the genre, the author wanted to create a comprehensive list of works for the instrumentation of four B-flat clarinets or three B-flat clarinets with bass clarinet. Hundreds of titles were discovered for this instrumentation and this number far surpassed the initial scope of this project. Virtually none of those pieces or the composers of those works have been discussed in current scholarly research. Ultimately, this document provides the ground work for the history, development, and importance of the clarinet quartet that can be used for further research by future scholars.

The bulk of this document provides a detailed look into two 21<sup>st</sup> century composers who wrote numerous works for clarinet quartet. Two chapters present biographical and compositional information of one well-known composer of clarinet quartet music, Mike Curtis (b. 1952), and one up and coming composer of merit, Josh Spaulding (b. 1991). Also included are detailed discussions of original clarinet quartet works from each composer for the instrumentation of four B-flat clarinets or three B-flat clarinets with bass clarinet, and offers a performance guide for ensembles wishing to study and perform these compositions.

Mike Curtis is a professional bassoonist and composer based in Oregon who began writing for chamber groups at the age of 40.<sup>21</sup> His most popular chamber piece is *A Klezmer Wedding* with arrangements for clarinet quartet (three B-flat clarinets and bass clarinet), wind quartets (two oboes, English horn, and bassoon; or flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon), saxophone quartet, and wind quintet. His original clarinet quartet works

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<sup>21</sup> Mike Curtis, "Biography", <http://www.mikecurtismusic.com/Bio.html>, accessed June 9, 2016.

provide the performers and audiences with a refreshingly fun yet challenging musical experience. Although Curtis has an autobiographical memoir of his life in Mexico, it does not supply an in-depth representation of his compositional output, and until this document there is scant information available about him and his chamber music works. The same information rings true for Josh Spaulding. A young composer, Spaulding currently has no published information about his background, compositional style, or his compositions for clarinet quartet. He has three compositions for the clarinet quartet genre that provide the performers with interesting and demanding works. The chapters contain compositional history, a performance analysis, and a performance guide for each of the original clarinet quartet works of Curtis and Spaulding. Compositional background, importance and use of each clarinet voice, extended techniques (if used), form, and key areas and tonal centers are included.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Each key area or tonal center is discussed in the written pitch of the B-flat clarinet, with the exception of the second movement “Solitude in Persona” of *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, by Josh Spaulding. The key area for this movement is briefly discussed in concert pitch due to the fact that it utilizes prerecorded, electronic piano sound. The remaining discussion of key area within that movement is once again in written B-flat clarinet pitch.

## CHAPTER 2: MIKE CURTIS

### Biographical History

Michael (Mike) Vincent Curtis was born in 1952 in Pasadena, California, and grew up with his parents and two sisters in Spring Valley, California. At a young age, Curtis's father studied clarinet with Vincent Donatelli (Mike's namesake), who played clarinet for RKO Studios in Los Angeles, California. Because of his father's diminished dreams of playing clarinet in a top orchestra, he lived vicariously through his son. Mike took clarinet lessons in the third grade (with his father) after his piano studies became complicated by using two hands and reading in two clefs.<sup>22</sup> After switching to the clarinet, he "was forced to practice an hour a day."<sup>23</sup> Curtis attended Mt. Miguel High School, which is where his father taught band in the 1960s. His mother mostly stayed at home, but played double bass in his father's dance band. Hearing the sound and importance of the bass line led to Curtis's decision to play the bassoon. By the time he entered high school, Curtis had played all of the woodwind instruments, and had the most success on bassoon. Curtis was principal bassoon of the Civic Youth Orchestra in San Diego, and was named to the All Southern California Honor Orchestra, even though he never had a private lesson on the instrument until he attended college.

Living so close to the Mexican border as a child, it is no wonder that many of his compositions are influenced by the country and its culture. His family spent a lot of time traveling throughout Mexico, even buying a truck with a camper top to make quick

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<sup>22</sup> Curtis described playing piano as being too difficult when he begin learning to play with both hands and reading two clefs at the same time. Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, December 22, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

weekend trips. His father would gamble at the Agua Caliente Race Track, drink tequila, and shop for cheap materials for his band program. His mom and two sisters would visit shops to look for clay animals, and Curtis would spend his time hanging out with his father, or on the beach fishing—“using a sack of giant mussels for a quarter as bait.”<sup>24</sup>

In 1970, Curtis spent four years as an undergraduate student at Northern Arizona University. He was awarded a full-tuition scholarship for his bassoon playing and for the first time he received private bassoon lessons, studying under Dr. Charles Warren. At first, he majored in geography, but switched to a degree in bassoon performance after realizing that “playing music was very satisfying”<sup>25</sup> and receiving encouragement from the NAU Repertoire Orchestra conductor, Clarence Shaw. Shaw had a very close relationship with Curtis while he was achieving his degree, even taking him on a flight in a small airplane to view “the Grand Canyon, the 12,000-foot San Francisco Peaks, and Oak Creek Canyon.”<sup>26</sup>

Curtis lived many years in what he called “a dual life”—he was a musician by day and an experimenter of substances who hung out with friends by night.<sup>27</sup> After completing his undergraduate degree, he began graduate studies in bassoon at the University of Southern California (USC) with Norman Herzberg, but his second year there did not fare well.<sup>28</sup> Because of his late start in extensive bassoon studies, he quickly fell behind during the summer after his first year at USC. This, combined with the

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<sup>24</sup> Mike Curtis, *Memoirs of a Musician in Mexico*, 2011, p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, December 22, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 27, 2017.

<sup>27</sup> Mike Curtis, *Memoirs of a Musician in Mexico*, 2011, p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

realization that he did not even own his own bassoon, led to him to drop out of graduate school and move back to Pasadena to live with his best friend's mom. For a while, he assisted with the care of his best friend's twin brother, who was paralyzed, and taught a few lessons on clarinet and saxophone at the Rose Brooks School of Music in Los Angeles.<sup>29</sup> Curtis and the paralyzed brother drank a lot and experimented with various recreational drugs; the pair even sold marijuana until a friend's cousin wound up being held at gunpoint. Deciding that enough was enough, and not wanting to compromise the well-being of his friend's family, Curtis left California in 1976 to spend some time in Mexico—his land of reprieve.

Before he dove into his Mexican excursion, he got in touch with a USC alumnus who was playing in an orchestra in Toluca, outside of Mexico City, and learned that there was a bassoon opening in that orchestra.<sup>30</sup> He borrowed a bassoon, won the audition, and gained an orchestral performing contract for one year. After winning the audition, his parents, who disowned him and stopped giving him any monetary support because he dropped out of college, helped him buy a bassoon with what Curtis described as “newly infused parental funds.”<sup>31</sup> His contract was to play second bassoon for *La Orquesta Sinfónica del Estado de México* (Mexico State Symphony), founded in 1971. He was under the direction of Maestro Enrique Bátiz, who “was a passionate advocate of Mexican classical music... [who] later made several notable recordings of Mexican music with the London Philharmonic.”<sup>32</sup> Curtis was one of approximately thirty

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 61.

American wind players in this orchestra, many of whom studied at reputable music schools such as Indiana University, Eastman School of Music, and the University of Southern California.

Feeling more connected to the people and culture of Mexico, Curtis did not spend much time with the other Americans. Instead, he spent most of his free time exploring different parts of the country. The orchestra rehearsed Tuesday through Friday, with a Friday evening concert in Toluca and concerts in Mexico City on Saturday and Sunday. Life in the orchestra was spontaneous and constantly changing, as the members could receive sudden month-long vacations or they would unexpectedly have to travel to other state capitals without much notice. The orchestra would also play run-out concerts that were well-received, with the host community offering spitted and roasted wild pigs or brandy as celebratory payment for the performances. Curtis's year as an orchestral musician in Toluca was wild and spontaneous, and it suited his unattached lifestyle.

After his contract ended, he decided to move back to Arizona for a teaching position at his alma mater—Northern Arizona University (NAU). He finished his Master's degree in 1977 at NAU while teaching at the university, earning his degree in Woodwind Performance. Interestingly, Curtis finished his Master's degree without any private instruction on woodwind instruments.<sup>33</sup> In 1978, he attended the University of Arizona for a degree in Reed Performance, where he studied clarinet with John Denman, saxophone with Elizabeth Ervin, oboe with Warren Sutherland, and bassoon with Ann Obenour. His third recital, titled *The Confluence of Jazz and Classical Music*, was not

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<sup>33</sup> Curtis's previous bassoon studies transferred after his first attempt at a Master of Music degree from USC.

accepted, and he dropped out of school once again. After some time off from school, a whirlwind marriage, and a life-changing epiphany, he returned to the University of Arizona in 1983 to finish his degree. He graduated in 1985, and landed a job at Oregon State University (OSU) as Assistant Professor of Music. There he taught music appreciation, jazz history, woodwind techniques, concert band, private woodwind instruction, and also served as the interim conductor for the OSU Corvallis Symphony until he left the university in 1990.

Curtis married his first wife, Carolyn, in 1981. At the time, he was playing tenor saxophone in a rock band called *Lost Wages*, and she was the lead singer. Their rocky relationship began when she moved with him to Portland, Oregon after leaving another teaching position at NAU in 1980. They were married in 1983. After their honeymoon, Curtis decided to be a better father to their son, Morgan, and a better husband to his wife. His decision to change took him back to the University of Arizona to finish his doctoral degree. Unfortunately, the couple grew apart during this time, and the pair divorced in 1990. After the divorce, he sought out therapy to dig deep into the root of his personal issues, and soon traded his “rock and roll” lifestyle for a path to personal recovery. He describes this path in his book, *Memoirs of a Musician in Mexico*, by writing the following:

I quit my university job [Oregon State University] and started building bridges to family and friends with a simpler life style. I lived in a tent and then a cabin, had time for friends in the coffee shop, spent half of every week with my son, wrote long letters, and came back to my strength, music. Every Thursday night for 2 years I played a gig of purely improvised music with a talented drummer. As he was also in therapy we shouted our stories through our music for all to hear, revealing ourselves to ourselves, and telling the truth. Towards

the end of those 2 years I met Annalisa. She played the oboe in the row in front of me in the local orchestra. She liked my smile, as I seemed to do every time I saw her. We went out and things progressed quickly. We took a Christmas trip to Spain and then moved in together. Some looked askance at us, as she was young and beautiful and I was not, but our vibe was strong and it was healthy. With courage from my recent improv work, I wrote some duets for us. We've been playing our kind of music together ever since.<sup>34</sup>

Curtis is now married to Annalisa Morton, who played oboe and English horn for the Eugene Symphony when they first met, and is the other half of his duo *Oboe Madness*. They met in 1992, and together they have a son named Ian. Curtis has been playing bassoon with the Eugene Symphony for 23 years, serving as the principal bassoonist for 19 of those years and recently stepping down to second bassoon in 2014. He has played in many types of ensembles, ranging from klezmer, jazz, wind quintet, clarinet quartet, and saxophone quartet. He also leads the Platypus Clarinet Orchestra, founded in 2011, and is a member of the Terra Nova Trio with his wife and Sandy Holder, a pianist, guitarist, and accordionist.<sup>35</sup> Curtis also teaches jazz saxophone and bassoon in a private studio and plays soprano saxophone for a contemporary church service every Sunday, along with composing and his other performance opportunities. Curtis still resides in Oregon with his wife.

#### Compositional Background

When Curtis began composing at the age of 40, he was writing duets to play with Annalisa. His first duos were eventually published as *8 Original Jazz Duos for Oboes* and *8 More Original Jazz Duos for Oboe and Bassoon*. His inspirations for compositions

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 93-94.

<sup>35</sup> Sandy Holder performs all three instruments as needed for the Terra Nova Trio.

come from many sources, and many of those include places he has traveled. In Santa Cruz, a town in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca, he was inspired to compose his two published collections of duos—*5 Huapangos* and *Suite Nayarit*. In 1994, he wrote *Best of Bucerias*, which was influenced by the coastal town of Bucerias, Nayarit on the west coast of central Mexico. Two years later, he composed a piece titled *Souvenir of Guanajuato (A Suite on Mexican Themes)* based on the sights and sounds of the city of Guanajuato in central Mexico. While receiving much enthusiasm and support in Oregon, Curtis’s ultimate dream is for this work to be performed by the orchestra located in Guanajuato. After several attempts to get the work performed there, in 2005 he managed to send a score and CD to the orchestra’s conductor, Maestro Enrique Bátiz—the same conductor Curtis played under for a year as second bassoonist in 1976. This attempt, like the others detailed in his *Memoirs*, ended without a response from the conductor despite several follow-up inquiries.

The inspirations for this piece came from “café jukeboxes, blaring car radios, street musicians, and the plaza’s [of Guanajuato] band shell.”<sup>36</sup> Curtis describes his compositional process for this piece in his book:

I had a little half-size manuscript book and I put a melody at the top of every other page. Later I’d take my Yamaha plastic recorder out onto the slab and play through them—fragments from “La Negra,” “Perfidia,” “Cielito Lindo,” or *¿quién sabe?* Additional phrases in a similar “*típico*” style would often suggest themselves to me as I played and if I was lucky my single melody would blossom into a full 2- or 3- minute tune. While trying the patience of Annalisa, Morgan, and the neighbors I had great fun writing, playing, and naming these little variations on a theme. When I returned to the States I left out

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 110.

some of the “themes” and compiled my tunes into a set of musical snapshots of the city.<sup>37</sup>

Curtis only used a recorder to help him compose this piece because it fit into his luggage during his trip to Guanajuato. His melodies were derived by an inspiration, mood, or an intention, and begins as a single line of music. He then adds a bass line, typically in a contrapuntal fashion, and follows with other voices as needed to create his ensembles. During later trips, he used an old clarinet as a way of playing melodies and writing music because of the instrument’s range and ability to be played softly in hotel rooms.<sup>38</sup>

Admiring the works of Jean Françaix, Francis Poulenc, Erik Satie, the chamber jazz quartets of Paul Desmond and Gerry Mulligan, as well as Balkan and mariachi bands—and, of course, Astor Piazzolla—Curtis’s compositions encompass a range of genres, including klezmer, jazz, and Latin American. Curtis was involved in jazz bands as early as high school, and he later formed his own “jazz-fusion units.”<sup>39</sup> He has also been improvising as a free-jazz musician since the 1970s, and his first foray into klezmer was with the Hester Street Klezmer Band in 1982. He has not stopped playing klezmer since. The improvisational aspect of these genres is only occasionally seen throughout his music, but many players add ornamentations to interpret these styles within his works. He also gives permission for people to take his music and develop it for different types of ensembles. His most popular chamber piece, *A Klezmer Wedding*, has been recorded by a guitar quartet, even though he never arranged it for that specific ensemble. *A Klezmer Wedding* is arranged, by the composer himself, for clarinet quartet (three B-flat clarinets

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, December 22, 2016.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

and Bass Clarinet), wind quartets (two oboes, English horn, and bassoon; or flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon), saxophone quartet, and wind quintet.

Curtis arranges many of his works for varying ensembles and instrumentations, mainly because his pieces change in his mind over time as he begins to hear them in different and new ways, especially when hearing different ensembles perform his music. The Arrieu Wind Quintet, resident quintet at Oregon State University, was formed by the efforts of Curtis and Annalisa, and the ensemble's CD *World Tour* included the original composition of *Souvenir of Guanajuato (A Suite on Mexican Themes)* for oboe and bassoon duo. Since its completion in 1996, this suite has expanded beyond its original duo instrumentation and now includes parts for clarinet and percussion by the composer. A friend (Charles Heiden)<sup>40</sup> of Curtis's has "enthusiastically put together a version for string quartet, [after which he—Curtis] followed it up with the *Quartet-Suite on Mexican Themes* for saxophone quartet. Heiden continued to develop the suite with versions for string orchestra in 2001 and full orchestra in 2003."<sup>41</sup> Although many of Curtis's compositions have been arranged for a wide range of ensembles after their initial publication, he provided the clarinet quartet genre with four original works. These works—*Bulgarian Bat Bite*, *Global Tour*, *Polyglot*, and *Mexican Fantasies*—are discussed in the following chapters.

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<sup>40</sup> A composer and retired violinist and conductor who, while at Willamette University (1960-1976), founded the Salem Symphony and conducted the Central Oregon Symphony at Central Oregon Community College (1981-1994). [www.heidenmusic.com](http://www.heidenmusic.com). Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 11, 2017.

<sup>41</sup> *Memoirs of a Musician in Mexico*, Mike Curtis, 2011, p. 111.

Compositional Output Organized Chronologically

- 8 *Original Jazz Duos* (1993) for 2 oboes, MSS Publishing  
 (1996) for 2 clarinets or 2 flutes/violins or 2 saxophones, Advance Music
- 10 *Klezmer Duos* (1993) for 2 flutes, MSS Publishing  
 (1996) for 2 clarinets or 2 flutes/violins or 2 saxophones, Advance Music
- 8 *More Original Jazz Duos* (1994) for oboe and bassoon, MSS Publishing  
 (2012) for clarinet and bassoon or clarinet and bass clarinet, MSS Publishing
- Klezmer Wedding* (1994) for double reed quartet, MSS Publishing  
 Commissioned by Wizards – a double reed consort  
 (1998) for clarinet quartet, saxophone quartet, woodwind quartet, woodwind  
 quintet, string quartet, Advance Music  
 (2004) quartet with string orchestra accompaniment, Advance Music
- 15 *Jazz Style Etudes* (1995) for oboe, MSS Publishing
- 7 *Jazz and Ethnic Duos* (1996) for 2 bassoons, Trevco Music
- Duo-Suite on Mexican Themes* (1996) for oboe and bassoon, MSS Publishing  
 (1998) for 2 clarinets or clarinet and flute, Advance Music  
 (2001) Quartet-Suite of Mexican Themes for saxophone quartet, Advance Music  
 (2003) Souvenir of Guanajuato—A Suite on Mexican Themes for string  
 orchestra, Advance Music
- From Their Mountain Fastnesses* (1997) for English horn, bassoon, and percussion, MSS  
 Publishing
- Tango La Invitation* (1998) for full orchestra, unpublished  
 Commissioned by Eugene Symphony  
 (2006) for woodwind quartet or sax quartet, Advance Music  
 (2007) full orchestra, Advance Music
- Coconut Cake* (1999) for English horn and bassoon, Trevco Music
- Sketches of China* (2001) for oboe and bassoon, MSS Publishing  
 Commissioned by Lara Wickes  
 (2004) soloist and string orchestra, Advance Music
- New Millennium Bassoon Method* (2001), MSS Publishing
- Tribute to Dexter* (2003) for saxophone quartet, Advance Music  
 Commissioned by Saxofourte – a saxophone quartet
- Children's Book Suite* (2004) for flute, clarinet bassoon, and narrator, Trevco Music  
 Commissioned by bassoonist Lyle Dockendorff
- Bulgarian Bat Bite* (2004) for clarinet quartet, Advance Music  
 Commissioned by Quartetto Italiano di Clarinetti
- Pied Piper of Hamelin* (2005) for flute, clarinet, bassoon, and narrator, Trevco Music  
 Commissioned by Lyle Dockendorff
- 5 *Huapangos* (2005) for clarinet and bass clarinet or 2 clarinets or oboe and bassoon or  
 violin and cello, Advance Music
- Suite Nayarit* (2005) for clarinet and bass clarinet, Advance Music
- Cuarto Cuentos* (2007) for solo bassoon, Trevco Music
- 10 *Klezmer Duos, Vol. 2* (2007) for 2 clarinets or 2 flutes/violins or 2 saxophones,  
 Advance Music

*7 More Jazz and Ethnic Duos* (2008) for bassoon and contrabassoon, Trevco Music  
*Caravans* (2008) for orchestra, unpublished  
    Commissioned by Eugene Junior Symphony  
*Global Tour* (2009) for clarinet quartet or saxophone quartet, Advance Music  
*Woodwind Friends* (2010) for any two woodwind instruments, printed and distributed by  
    lulu.com  
*12 etudes pour l'ete* (2011) for solo clarinet, Billaudot  
*Polyglot* (2012) for clarinet quartet, Billaudot  
    Commissioned by Quarteto Vintage  
*Cuarteto Santa Cruz* (2013) for clarinet quartet or saxophone quartet, Sheet Music Plus  
*Southland Suite* (2013) for oboe and bassoon, Trevco Music  
*Mexican Fantasies* (2015) for clarinet quartet, Schott/Advance Music  
*A Week in Placencia* (2017) for clarinet ensembles, published (pending) by Metropolis  
    Music

### CHAPTER 3: BULGARIAN BAT BITE

#### Composition History

*Bulgarian Bat Bite* is a one-movement work for three B-flat Clarinets and Bass Clarinet that was commissioned by the Quartetto Italiano di Clarinetti in 2003. This Italian clarinet quartet ensemble was founded in 1985, and, at the time of the composition's commission, the members were Giovanni Lanzini, Carlo Franceschi, Maurizio Morganti, and Augusto Lanzini (younger brother of Giovanni and the bass clarinetist).<sup>42</sup> Augusto emailed Curtis notifying him that they would be recording *Klezmer Tryptich* and *Klezmer Wedding* on their 2004 album *tar Bianco e Nero*. During this email exchange, he requested that Curtis compose another piece for the ensemble, and Curtis agreed. Discovering that he would not be compensated for his composition, Curtis decided to refashion “the [1992] duo *Khyberian Catfit* from *10 Klezmer Duos*, using some of the ideas that came out of a recording of it done on the *Confluence*<sup>43</sup> CD by the Dave Leslie Group.”<sup>44</sup> The resulting work, *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, was premiered in Ljubljana, Slovenia in October 2004 for the “Clarinetovanje 2004—Meeting of the European Clarinet Ensembles.”<sup>45</sup> In 2007, Quarteto Vintage (Iva Barbosa, João Moreira, José Gomes, and Ricardo Alves) performed the work at the annual International Clarinet Association ClarinetFest® Conference held in Vancouver, Canada.

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<sup>42</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 11, 2017.

<sup>43</sup> The Dave Leslie Group contains Dave Leslie—piano and accordion; Curtis—clarinet, oboe, tárogató, soprano sax, alto sax, baritone, sax, and bassoon; Dave Captein—bass; and Jeff Cumpston—drums, bongos, marimba, and percussion.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

*Khyberian Catfit* was composed after Curtis took a trip to Eastern Europe in 1992, during which he procured tapes with recordings of Balkan music. Although the inspiration for the original piece was Khyber—a pet cat with wild antics—he gave the new quartet the more appropriate title *Bulgarian Bat Bite* to suit the commission and the piece’s style. Curtis rewrote the instrumentation of *Khyberian Catfit* to fit the instrumentation for a clarinet quartet using, almost exactly, the work’s original content. On the *Confluence* album, all of the melodies are performed by Curtis on the soprano saxophone or the tárogató, a woodwind instrument commonly used in eastern European folk music of countries such as Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, and is often supported by bongos, bass guitar, and piano.<sup>46</sup>

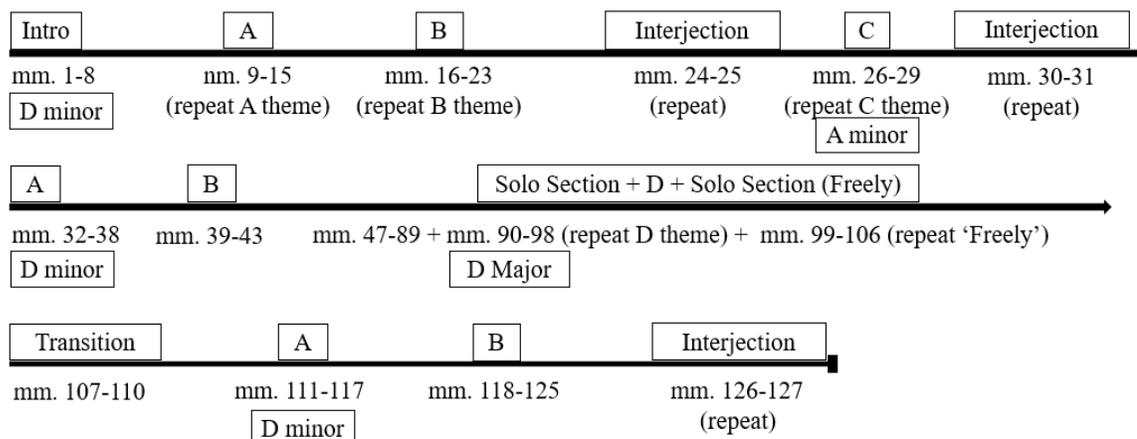
#### Performance Analysis

*Bulgarian Bat Bite* is modeled after the form of a jazz tune: a short introduction is followed by two contrasting themes with two interjecting phrases, a solo section that includes a third unique theme, a return of the earlier two contrasting themes, and a final interjection phrase to end the piece.<sup>47</sup> In short, the work’s form is as follows: Intro, AB, Interjection, C, Interjection, AB, solo + D + solo (freely), transition, AB, and the return of the first interjection as can be seen in table 3.1. For clarity, the different sections will be referred to as “themes” throughout this analysis.

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<sup>46</sup> Eszther Fontana, Tárogató, *Grove Music Online*, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/27520?q=tarogato&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/27520?q=tarogato&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed January 17, 2017.

<sup>47</sup> Curtis describes *Bulgarian Bat Bite* as being similar to “a jazz tune: head (ABC), solo (1/2 clarinets) + D, then head again (ABC)”. Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 11, 2017.



**Table 3.1: Formal structure of *Bulgarian Bat Bite***

As is typical of Bulgarian music's asymmetric patterns, this work utilizes many alternating time signatures—eleven to be exact. The meters of 3/8, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8, 8/8, 9/8, 11/8, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4 are used frequently throughout, changing almost every measure. The piece begins with an eight-measure introduction within the key of D harmonic minor, structured as a parallel period with two four-measure phrases (see example 3.1a), and is performed solely by Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3. This introductory material returns in the solo section at measure 51 as a vamp figure for Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet, supporting the solo instruments. Examples 3.1a and 3.1b compare the material of the introduction and solo sections.

**Example 3.1a: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, mm. 1–8, Introduction material**

**Example 3.1b: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, mm. 51–58, Vamp material<sup>48</sup>**

The A theme begins at measure 9, where Clarinet 1 presents the melody. Clarinet 2 takes over with a new melody in measure 16, which marks the beginning of the B theme. Measures 24–25 interrupts the movement with a jarringly loud, call-to-attention interjection by Clarinet 1, playing alone. These two measures are repeated, allowing the other three instruments to join Clarinet 1. When Clarinet 2 enters, the statement first played by Clarinet 1 is now supported an octave lower, as seen in example 3.2.

**Example 3.2: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, mm. 24–25, Cl. 1 interjection theme**

The C theme begins in measure 26 as a repeated four-measure melody. Before the return of the A theme at measure 32, Curtis provides another call-to-attention interjection in

<sup>48</sup> The differences of the two examples (3.1a and 3.1b) lie in the instrumentation, the omission of Clarinet 3 in the last bar, and the appearance of tenuto articulation in the vamp material.

measures 30–31. This recurrence, shown in example 3.3, is performed first by Bass Clarinet alone.

The image shows a musical score for measures 30-31 of 'Bulgarian Bat Bite'. It consists of four staves: Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Cl. 1 has a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sextuplets, marked 'ff' and '2x only'. Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 play simple harmonic accompaniment, also marked 'ff' and '2x only'. B. Cl. plays a rhythmic pattern similar to Cl. 1, marked 'ff'.

**Example: 3.3: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, mm. 30–31, B. Cl. interjection theme**

During its repetition, Clarinet 1 joins two octaves higher while the other voices provide harmonic support. This is the first time the Bass Clarinet is written as a solo voice within the piece. Following this interjection, Clarinet 1 brings back the A theme at measure 32. After the B theme returns at measure 39, the group is ushered into the solo section beginning in measure 47.

The main melodic themes presented throughout this piece (A and B) are supported by mostly chordal harmonies from the other three clarinet voices, but there are instances of melodic support and interplay within those sections. For example, the Bass Clarinet provides melodic support at measure 12 in unison rhythmically with Clarinet 1, but an octave and a third below (see example 3.4). This intervallic relationship changes throughout the measure so that they fluctuate between major and minor thirds. Clarinet 3 then joins in and provides melodic support at measure 14 (see example 3.5). The relationship between Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 3 is similar to the relationship between

Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet in measure 12, but now the intervals oscillate between major and minor sixths.

**Example 3.4:** *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, m. 12,  
Melodic support (Cl. 1 & Bass)

**Example 3.5:** *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, m. 14,  
Melodic support (Cl. 1 & Cl. 3)

Whenever the supporting clarinet voices are not providing extra melodic stability, they play long tones or rearticulated notes with or without mordents on the larger beats, adding to the style of the piece. When the second melodic theme enters at measure 16, Clarinet 3 provides melodic support to Clarinet 2 by playing in rhythmic unison in major and minor sixths below in measures 18–19 and 22 (see example 3.6).

**Example 3.6:** *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, mm. 16–23, Long-tone accompaniment with mordents & melodic support (Cl. 2 and Cl. 3)

The middle solo section takes the quartet to a different performance level. Curtis utilizes an *avant garde* clarinet technique called the demi-clarinet. The demi-clarinet, or

“1/2 clarinet” as titled by Curtis, is performed by Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2. The technique of the demi-clarinet is achieved by placing the mouthpiece into the lower joint of the clarinet with the bell still assembled, essentially making a “half-clarinet.” The demi-clarinet is played with the right hand on the keys of the bottom joint of the instrument, while the left hand holds the bell for added support. The sound that the demi-clarinets provide is reminiscent of the tárogató, which is the instrument that Curtis plays for the solo section in the recording of *Khyberian Catfit*. Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet provide the demi-clarinets an underlying vamp during this solo section, reusing the introduction material. This solo section is the only section of *Bulgarian Bat Bite* that is not an exact replica of material in the original work, *Khyberian Catfit*.

At measure 59, Clarinet 1 receives the first solo opportunity of this section. The demi-clarinet melody unfolds at a slower tempo ( $\text{♩} = 72$ ) over the vamp figure, which is performed at the original tempo ( $\text{♩} = 116$ ). Curtis dictates “When ready:” above the melody, which means that Clarinet 1 can start the melody at any time within the vamp after the demi-clarinet has been assembled.

The notation for the demi-clarinet is written as if the clarinetist were playing the regular clarinet instrument. The fingerings remain the same for the right hand, so the clarinetist does not have to learn a new system of fingerings to achieve this section, as can be seen in example 3.7.



**Example 3.7: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, m. 59–60, Cl. 1 demi-clarinet notation**

Clarinet 2 enters with a four-measure solo at measure 67. The soloist is required to hold the demi-clarinet by the bottom of the bell to perform a “scoop” into the first note. The left hand—fingers together—covers the entire opening of the bell, lowering the pitch of the notated B-natural at the beginning of the measure. To provide the scoop sound, the left hand smoothly and steadily uncovers the bell opening. If this does not lower the pitch effectively, the fingers can be placed into the clarinet bell, similar to a stopped French horn bell technique. The left hand re-covers the opening of the bell at the end of measure 68.

After a repeat of the Clarinet 1 solo, the two demi-clarinet voices are brought together as a duet in measure 75, both at the slower tempo, as Clarinet 2 provides harmonic support to the melody of the Clarinet 1 solo. From measures 79–82, the demi-clarinets alternate playing Clarinet 2’s material from measures 67–70. The Clarinet 1 material at the end of measure 79 dovetails into the Clarinet 2 material at measure 80. Here, Clarinet 2 scoops into Clarinet 1’s B-natural. Clarinet 1, however, does not at any time perform the scoop technique. The two lines connect again on the second beat of measure 80, with Clarinet 2 passing off to Clarinet 1. This back-and-forth conversation occurs several times, as shown in example 3.8.

The image shows a musical score for two clarinets, Cl. 1 and Cl. 2, in 3/4 time. Cl. 1 has a melodic line with a 'mf' dynamic and a 'scoop' effect. Cl. 2 has a rhythmic accompaniment with a 'mf' dynamic. The score is divided into four measures, with Cl. 1 playing a melodic line and Cl. 2 playing a rhythmic accompaniment. The 'scoop' effect is indicated by a slur over the first note of the first measure of Cl. 1.

**Example 3.8: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, mm. 79–82, Demi-clarinet interplay**

After this alternation of material, Clarinet 2 cues Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet, signaling the downbeat of measure 83, ending the vamp and cueing both voices to perform a long tone underneath the demi-clarinets.<sup>49</sup> Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 repeat measures 83–84 while accelerating into measure 85. The demi-clarinets then perform tremolos in measures 85–86 at a *fortissimo* dynamic. The long tone continues into measure 87, while Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 reassemble their instruments into their original state. The long tone is held until it fades to nothing, allowing more time for instrument reassembly.

To conclude the solo section, a new melody—the D theme—is presented by Clarinet 2 at measure 90 in the key of D major. Measures 90–96 are then repeated, with Clarinet 1 joining in to provide additional chordal harmony. A “Freely” section immediately follows, allowing for solos from Bass Clarinet, Clarinet 3, and Clarinet 1, in that order. Since Clarinet 2 provided the melody at measure 90, this allows the other voices one last solo opportunity before the piece’s end. The solo section concludes with a six-measure transition to the final return of the A and B themes at measure 111 and measure 118, respectively, bringing *Bulgarian Bat Bite* to a cyclical and exciting close.

#### Performance Guide

*Bulgarian Bat Bite*’s repetitive melodies allow the soloist to provide ornaments and embellishments to suit the style of the piece. Curtis states that he even welcomes different interpretations and innovations of his melodies, even though there are no sections in the piece marked *ad libitum*. He goes as far as to say that he “welcome[s] it

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<sup>49</sup> This instruction for Clarinet 2 to cue the long tone of Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet is given by the composer.

all. Some groups have made some wonderful innovations. I wish classical music were [sic] more open like this.”<sup>50</sup>

Difficulty can arise in dynamic balance between the A and B themes. For example, in measure 16 the Clarinet 2 statement of the B theme is instructed to be played at a softer dynamic than the Clarinet 1 statement of the A theme. The difficulty arises with dynamic balance due to the fact that Clarinet 2 performs the B theme in a higher tessitura than Clarinet 1 during the presentation of the A theme. Clarinet 2 is primarily in the upper clarion register for the B theme, while the Clarinet 1 statement of the A theme is primarily in the lower clarion and upper chalumeau registers. For the difference in dynamics to be heard, the accompanying clarinets must play softer underneath the solo line, allowing for the dynamic contrast required for these measures.<sup>51</sup>

In the recording of *Khyberian Catfit*<sup>52</sup>, the interjection sections of measures 24–25, 30–31, and 126–127 are played in 4/4 time (the time signature in *Bulgarian Bat Bite* is 3/4), allowing for greater fluidity and ease in technique. If the ensemble wishes to stay true to Curtis’s original composition of *Khyberian Catfit*<sup>53</sup>, an extra beat can be added to each measure in this section, resulting in the following example 3.9:

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<sup>50</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 11, 2017.

<sup>51</sup> This difficulty also occurs in subsequent reiterations of the B theme throughout the piece.

<sup>52</sup> The Dave Leslie Group, Confluence, *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, Orb Recordings, 1999.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

**Example 3.9: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, mm. 126–127 with altered time signature**

Attention to the precise timing of the entrance of the demi-clarinet solo section allows for the solo to grow out of the vamp material, and create a smooth transition into the solo section shown in example 3.10. At the opening of the solo section in measure 59, if the demi-clarinet solo opens in tandem with the opening notes of the vamp material, whether on the first repetition or any subsequent repetitions, the first note of “E-flat” for Clarinet 1 blends with the chord created by Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet.

**Example 3.10: *Bulgarian Bat Bite*, m. 59, Chord created with vamp instruments and “E-flat” of Cl. 1 solo**

In addition, to ease demi-clarinet disassembly and reassembly, Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 should utilize an extra stand or chair to provide a stable place to store the upper joint of the instrument not being used for this section. An added towel or piece of fabric can muffle clanging sounds while placing and retrieving the upper joint, as well.

To end the solo section, the demi-clarinets repeat the material in measures 83–84, returning to the original tempo of the piece with an *accelerando* during those measures. Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet at this time hold a long tone, fading to nothing while Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 return their instruments to their original state. Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet must breathe before measure 87 to be able to hold out the long tone sufficiently. As the breath runs out and the tone fades to nothing, Clarinet 2 cues the final section at measure 90 once their instrument is reassembled. Clarinet 1 has a few more seconds to assemble their instrument, and joins in at the first ending at measure 97.

The “Freely” solos in measures 99–104 can be played however the performer desires. However, because these measures are repeated, it is beneficial and interesting to add embellishments within the style of the piece to each solo. A study of Bulgarian folk music and klezmer clarinet through listening and practice can help the ensemble achieve this character within Curtis’s *Bulgarian Bat Bite*.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Klezmer clarinet artists to study include but are not limited to: David Krakauer, Hankus Netsky, Ilene Stahl, and Michele Gingras. A plethora of Bulgarian folk tunes and recordings can be found online.

## CHAPTER 4: GLOBAL TOUR

### Composition History

*Global Tour* was completed in January 2007 and was later published in 2009 by Advance Music. Curtis was inspired to write the work for the Cascade Clarinet Quartet, a group he was part of at the time. At the time of the piece's completion, however, the Cascade Clarinet Quartet was not active due to incompatible scheduling. During that time, the Chintimini Chamber Music Festival in Corvallis, Oregon invited Curtis to compose a piece for string quintet. He adapted *Global Tour* for this ensemble, and the premiere occurred on June 22, 2007. The performers were Jessica Lambert, violin I; Eric Peterson, violin II; Kenji Bunch, viola I; Michael Tubb, viola II; and Victoria Wolff-Zevallos, cello.

While the arrangement of this work for clarinet quartet was not commissioned, Curtis was driven by a dream to complete it, as cited in the following program notes he wrote for its premiere:

**Global Tour** is a journey through four of my favorite styles of music: funk, jazz, klezmer, and tango. As opposed to a commission or an idea from my publisher, this piece began without any preconception. A small germ of a funk phrase led to a finished tune, and somehow I thought to follow it with a breezy West-Coast jazz waltz. With the addition of Abraham Goldfaden's 1880 Jewish lullaby, "Rozhinkes mit Mandlen," (Raisins with Almonds) I thought I had completed something called "Funk, Jazz, and Klez," but in a midnight dream a propulsive tango theme to tag on clean jerked me out of bed! Each movement of this work is *attacca* into the next movement providing continuous representation of a tour through these four musical genres.<sup>55</sup>

For the string quintet premiere, Curtis added the following to the above program notes:

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<sup>55</sup> Mike Curtis, *Global Tour*, Program notes, 2009.

So there you have it: a piece that wasn't written for anybody in mind, that has no story, that suggested itself. Still, with my finger firmly on the pulse, I think chamber groups looking for a world music option might like it – I guess we'll see. Tonight is the world premiere.<sup>56</sup>

*Global Tour* was composed to follow on the tails of his successful *Klezmer Wedding*, *Klezmer Triptych*, and *Bulgarian Bat Bite* works for clarinet quartet. Utilizing four of his favorite musical styles—funk, jazz waltz, klezmer, and tango—this piece is depictive of Curtis himself.

#### Performance Analysis

“Funky”, the opening movement of *Global Tour*, is based on Curtis's life during the 1970s while living with his best friend in Los Angeles, California. The rise of funk music influenced Curtis greatly during this period, who said that “[w]e hung out at all hours fueled by beer, pot, and soul music.”<sup>57</sup> The movement is structured simply—ABCD A'. However, written-out solo lines play over these clear, repeated sections, lending a structured yet free nature to the movement. The movement is centered on the F-sharp minor pentatonic scale, moving to the A minor pentatonic scale by measure 26 and returning to F-sharp minor pentatonic at measure 43 as can be seen in Table 4.1. The instrumentation for this movement adds an interesting aspect to the role of the Clarinet 1 player—a foot tambourine is to be played on every beat of this movement. The use of this percussion instrument, in addition to the syncopated bass line (provided by the Bass Clarinet), creates a rhythm section reminiscent of a true funk band.

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<sup>56</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 17, 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

F# minor Pentatonic		A minor Pentatonic	A minor Pentatonic to F# Minor Pentatonic	F# minor Pentatonic
A Theme mm. 1-17	B Theme mm. 18-25	C Theme mm. 26-42	D Theme mm. 43-58	A' Theme mm. 59-66

**Table 4.1: Form and key areas of *Global Tour*, “Funky”**

Each clarinet has a specific role in this movement. The Bass Clarinet provides the initial syncopated groove, as seen in example 4.1.



**Example 4.1: *Global Tour*, “Funky”, mm. 1–3, Opening groove figure (B. Cl.)**

This groove combines with harmonic support from Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 to create the foundation of the A section (measures 1–17). The B section begins at measure 18 and concludes at measure 26, which marks the beginning of the C section and a tonal shift to A minor pentatonic. In the ensuing transition from measures 37–42, the ensemble plays in unison for the first time in the entire movement. The final solo (D) section brings back the original key area of F# minor pentatonic in measure 43. This section ends at measure 58, and the final eight measures return briefly to A section material, closing the movement in a cyclical fashion.

The opening Bass Clarinet groove shown in example 4.1 is the “small germ of a phrase” mentioned in the piece’s program notes, and is presented three times before the A section is repeated, appearing in pickup to measures 2–3, 6–7, and 10–11. Clarinet 1 provides a unique percussive element by tapping a tambourine with the foot, giving a

steady tempo for every beat of the movement.<sup>58</sup> Clarinet 3 provides mostly harmonic support alongside the Bass Clarinet throughout the movement, except for solo opportunities in the A section, the D section, and the very last measure of the movement. Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 have the largest solo roles, having most of the movement's written-out solos, providing obbligato notes around other solos, or performing colorful rhythmic punctuations that intertwine with the rest of the harmonic ensemble.<sup>59</sup>

Clarinet 3 performs the first written-out solo in the movement, opening with a two-measure, lyrical solo in measure 4. This contrasts sharply with the Bass Clarinet's syncopated groove and the dissonant tones of Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2. This creates the first four-measure phrase of the A section, as seen in example 4.2.

Cl. 1 *pesante*  
Foot taps every beat on tambourine throughout movement

Cl. 2 *mf* *pesante* 2x

Cl. 3 *mf* *p* Solo 1x

B. Cl. *legato* *mf* *p*

**Example 4.2: *Global Tour*, “Funky”, mm. 1–5, Opening four-measure phrase**

<sup>58</sup> Curtis adds the percussiveness of the tambourine due to its frequent use in funk music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 17, 2017.

<sup>59</sup> These obbligato notes do not supersede the melody or solo, but are something new to exaggerate the melodic or solo content, providing another layer to the music. David Fuller/R, Oxford Music Online, “Obbligato”, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/20202?q=obbligato&search=quick&pos=3&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/20202?q=obbligato&search=quick&pos=3&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed February 13, 2017.

Clarinet 3 answers the repeated calls of the bass-clarinet groove in measures 8–9 and measures 12–13, creating the second and third phrases of the A section. Measures 14 and 15, written as a first ending within the score and one of the few two-measure phrases in the movement, are a transitional link back to measure 2 for a repeat of this section. During the repeat, Clarinet 2 joins the Clarinet 3 solo lines, creating a dissonant duet, as seen in the held major-second interval in measures 4–5 (see example 4.2). Clarinet 1 provides a couple of obligato statements during the repetition, performing material in measures 9 and 13 that were not performed the first time, as seen in example 4.3. These obligato statements serve to emphasize the solo lines.

Example 4.3 shows three staves of music for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), and Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C).  
 - Cl. 1: Measure 8 is a whole rest. Measure 9 contains a short phrase: quarter rest, eighth note G4, quarter note A4, eighth note G4, quarter note F#4. It is marked *pp* and has a '2x' repeat sign above it.  
 - Cl. 2: Measure 8 starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and a half note B4. It is marked *p* and has a '2x' repeat sign above it.  
 - Cl. 3: Measure 8 starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and a half note B4. It is marked *p* and has a 'Solo 1x' annotation above it.

**Example 4.3:** *Global Tour*, “Funky”, mm. 8–9, Cl. 1 obligato material

The second ending of this section (measures 16–17) is another two-measure transition by Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet. This transitional material, shown in example 4.4, is similar to measures 14–15, but with a slightly altered rhythmic pattern.

Example 4.4 shows two staves of music for Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3) and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C).  
 - Cl. 3: Measures 14 and 15 are marked 'Solo'. Measure 14 has a quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, and a half note B4. Measure 15 has a quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, and a half note B4. A first ending bracket covers measures 14–15, and a second ending bracket covers measures 16–17. Both endings end with a double bar line and repeat sign.  
 - B. Cl.: Measures 14 and 15 are marked 'Solo'. Measure 14 has a quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, and a half note B4. Measure 15 has a quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, and a half note B4. A first ending bracket covers measures 14–15, and a second ending bracket covers measures 16–17. Both endings end with a double bar line and repeat sign.

**Example 4.4:** *Global Tour*, “Funky”, mm. 14–17, Two-measure transitional material

The B section continues in a similar fashion, except that Clarinet 3 is no longer a soloistic figure starting at measure 18. Instead, Clarinet 3 provides the underlying harmonic drive with Bass Clarinet to support the solo/duet of Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2. The B section provides an interesting development of the solo line. Although it develops into duets during the repeat as previously done in the A section, the initial statement of the solo line is not kept within the same clarinet voice. In measures 20–21, Clarinet 2 has the solo line while Clarinet 1 accompanies an octave higher during the repeat. In measures 24 and 25, the roles are reversed, with Clarinet 1 performing the solo line for the first time while Clarinet 2 accompanies an octave lower on the repetition.

At the beginning of the C section (measure 26), Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet begin a *hocket*<sup>60</sup> exchange of their harmonic material, which can be seen in example 4.5. Meanwhile, Clarinet 2 performs a simple, lyrical melody, in contrast to the punctuated material in the A and B sections. Like the previous sections, this material is repeated, with the first ending occurring in measure 33. After the repeat, Clarinet 1 provides a rhythmic *obbligato* to emphasize the melody.

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<sup>60</sup> Hocket was a popular compositional technique used for secular music during the medieval era. Oxford Music Online, “Hocket”, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/13115?q=hocket&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/13115?q=hocket&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed February 13, 2017.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). Cl. 1 is marked '2x only' and 'mf'. Cl. 2 is marked 'Solo 1x' and 'mp'. Cl. 3 and B. Cl. are marked 'mf'. The score includes first endings for Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and B. Cl. The notation shows a hocket exchange between Cl. 3 and B. Cl. in measures 26-33.

**Example 4.5: *Global Tour*, “Funky”, mm. 26–33,  
Hocket exchange between Cl. 3 and B. Cl.**

The C section gives way to transitional material in measures 37–42, which presents the first instance of rhythmic unification for the ensemble. The soprano clarinets begin the transition with a repeated two-measure groove. In measures 39–40, the soprano clarinets unite harmonically by playing unison quarter notes, as seen in example 4.6. This also marks the end of the repetitive nature of the previous 38 measures.<sup>61</sup> This section ends starkly in measure 43 as, for the first time, no clarinet instruments are playing

<sup>61</sup> No measures are to be repeated for the remainder of the movement.

(except the first eighth note of the measure). Only the tambourine fills the silence leading into the D section.

The musical score consists of four staves labeled Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The music is in common time (C). The first staff (Cl. 1) starts with a rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The second staff (Cl. 2) starts with a rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The third staff (Cl. 3) starts with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The fourth staff (B. Cl.) starts with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The music is marked *mf* and *f*.

**Example 4.6: *Global Tour*, “Funky”, mm. 37–42, Transition material showing unison quarter-note harmony in Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3**

Clarinet 3 returns as a solo instrument here, presenting new material that will organize the D section. All four clarinets perform sparsely-written melodic and harmonic lines, once again, in the style of a hocket—passing material back and forth between the different instruments. This creates the illusion that only one or two clarinetists are performing without allowing the music to sound disjunct, as seen in example 4.7.

**Example 4.7:** *Global Tour*, “Funky”, mm. 43–50, D section hoquet exchange

Wrapping up the D section, a cadence occurs on the fourth beat of measure 58 with an A major triad and an added 9<sup>th</sup>—B natural. This measure is the loudest dynamic point in the movement, with each clarinet line written at *fortissimo*. The staccato articulation on the fourth beat allows for a quick moment of silence before the return of A section material on the following downbeat.

For the ending section of the piece (A’), the opening material for Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 returns at measure 59, with different Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet lines. Clarinet 3 is an obligato line for the final eight measures of the movement. The foot tambourine stops on the downbeat of the last measure and the Clarinet 3 line fades to nothing, leading to the *attacca* into the second movement.

The second movement, “Jazz Waltz”, is a waltz reminiscent of the smooth style of the western coast of the United States in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Curtis was influenced to write a jazz waltz from listening to his father’s jazz collection.<sup>62</sup> The movement has a relatively straightforward formal structure and is in the key of A major. The main lyrical portion of this movement is repeated three times, with another voice joining the texture with each repetition until all four instruments are playing. A markedly percussive section ends this movement and serves as a transition to the third movement.

mm. 1 – 32 (first ending): Cl. 1 and B. Cl.			
mm. 1 – 32 (second ending): Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and B. Cl.			
mm. 1 – 29, 33 – 34 (third ending): Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl.			
A major			
Phrase 1: mm. 1 - 8	Phrase 2: mm. 9-16	Phrase 3: mm. 17-24	Phrase 4: mm. 25-32 (or with third ending)
Period 1		Period 2	
Percussive Closing Section (used as <i>attacca</i> transition into next movement)			
A minor, mm. 35-43	C minor, mm. 44-51	F minor, mm. 52-59 (end)	

**Table 4.2: Form and content for *Global Tour*, “Jazz Waltz”**

The main lyrical portion is 32 measures long with a melody formed by two large-scale periods, each 16 measures in length as seen in chart 4.2. The opening eight measures is repeated at the beginning of the second period (measures 17–24). The final eight measures of the lyrical portion (measures 25–32) contains material to transition through the repeat and back to the beginning of the section. Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet perform all three repetitions, Clarinet 2 plays the second and third time, and Clarinet 3 performs the last repetition only. The melodic material lies in the Clarinet 1 line, and is supported by long tones from the Bass Clarinet for all three repetitions. Clarinet 2 provides additional support to the Clarinet 1 line on the second and third repetition.

<sup>62</sup> Examples of Curtis’s jazz influence is listed in the performance guide found at the end of this chapter.

Meanwhile, Clarinet 3 provides an obbligato texture on the third repetition, emphasizing and embellishing the melody. The Clarinet 3 line is written dynamically louder and appears in a higher tessitura than the rest of the ensemble to emphasize the importance of its obbligato character. Example 4.8 shows the first eight measures of the melody in Clarinet 1, along with the supporting lines of the other clarinet voices as they would appear on subsequent repeats.

The image shows a musical score for four clarinet parts. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score consists of four staves: Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 have two solo markings, 'Solo 1. x' and 'Solo 2. x', with a dynamic of *mf*. Cl. 3 has a dynamic of *f* and a marking '3. x only'. B. Cl. has a dynamic of *mp* and a marking '(3x)'. The music is written in treble clef for the first three parts and bass clef for the fourth.

**Example 4.8: *Global Tour*, “Jazz Waltz”, mm. 1–8, Opening melody**

The ending section at measure 35 marks a drastic departure from the previous lyrical material. Curtis denotes this section as “percussive”, indicating that the notes be short and separated, in contrast to the previous lyrical material. He also describes this section as “where a drum solo might be”, similarly to how he calls certain areas “drum breaks” in his later Mexican works.<sup>63</sup> This closing section is described as a point where “harmony is deleted and even the melody is subservient to the rhythm.”<sup>64</sup> Beginning at measure 35 each clarinet enters in tandem, sometimes in unison and other times in octaves. This material slowly moves from the major key of C to the minor tonality of F.

<sup>63</sup> A “drum break” is also used in Curtis’s *Mexican Fantasies* clarinet quartet, discussed in chapter five of this document. While not specifically labeled as a drum break, it serves the same purpose: providing a rhythmic feature to the movement.

<sup>64</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 17, 2017.

The four instruments are in unison by measure 52 and span four octaves, as shown in example 4.9. This final statement culminates in an F to G-flat trill for the last three measures, giving the movement an unsettled feeling, acting as a dominant functioning chord as this movement continues *attaca* into the B-flat minor tonality of the third movement.

**Example 4.9: *Global Tour*, “Jazz Waltz”, mm. 52–59,  
Closing unison statement and trill**

Curtis’s interests in klezmer began in 1982 after hearing his first klezmer band called the Hester Street Klezmer Band, and the clarinetist of that group, Joel Rubin, who currently teaches at the University of Virginia.<sup>65</sup> The third movement, “Klez ‘Rozhinkes mit Mandlen’”, is fashioned after a popular klezmer lullaby from Abraham Goldfaden’s 1880 opera *Shulamith*. Goldfaden is famed for having started the first professional Yiddish theatre company in Romania in 1876.<sup>66</sup> “Rozhinkes mit Mandlen”, which is

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Bret Werb, “Composed Song and Yiddish Theatre”, *Grove Music Online*, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/41322pg4?q=Shulamith&search=quick&pos=3&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/41322pg4?q=Shulamith&search=quick&pos=3&_start=1#firsthit) Accessed Dec. 12, 2016.

translated from Yiddish as “Raisins and Almonds”, is a lullaby sung by a mother to her son in the original opera. The original song is in a minor mode, which Curtis replicates by composing this movement in B-flat minor—a demanding key for the clarinetists, with six flats and a plethora of accidentals throughout. Although the original tune is a waltz in 3/4 time, the introduction to this movement is in 4/4 time.<sup>67</sup>

This movement contains an eight-measure introduction, and the remainder of the movement is in strophic form and in the key of B-flat minor.<sup>68</sup> The introduction lasts eight measures, and the lullaby begins in measure 9. In comparing this movement to various recordings of the lullaby, it is clear Curtis uses only the second and fourth verses of the original song, leaving out the first and third verses.<sup>69</sup> The two verses used for this movement are an exact replica of the tune from the original lullaby, and those verses are listed in example 4.10 in Yiddish and English, respectively.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Strophic is “a term applied to songs in which all stanzas of the text are sung to the same music, in contrast to those that are through composed and have new music for each stanza.” Michael Tilmouth, Oxford Music Online, “Strophic”, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/26981?q=Strophic&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/26981?q=Strophic&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed March 19, 2017.

<sup>69</sup> This statement is made by the author after comparing the movement with other recordings (found online) of the lullaby. In a follow-up interview with the composer in regards to his influence for choosing these particular verses he replied “Sorry for all your research into this but I have to say that I didn’t consult the lyrics for Rozhinkes at all. I had a lead sheet from which I played the tune at Jewish life celebrations, with some penciling in for the intro. Ultimately I wrote my own intro (analogous to a verse) and then just used the refrain several times in succession.”

<sup>70</sup> Translation by George Jakobovits, <http://www.hebrewsongs.com/?song=rozinkesmitmandlen#TL1>, Accessed January 16, 2017.

Unter Yidele's vigele  
 Shteyt a klor-vays tsigele  
 Dos tsigele iz geforn handlen  
 Dos vet zayn dayn baruf  
 Rozhinkes mit mandlen  
 Shlof-zhe, Yidele, shlof.

Under Yidele's cradle  
 Stands a small white goat  
 The goat travelled to sell his wares  
 This will be Yidele's calling, too.  
 Trading in raisins and almonds  
 Sleep, Yidele, sleep.

Un az du vest raykh yidele.  
 Zolzt du zikh dermonen in dem lidele.  
 Rozhinkes mit mandlen,  
 Dos vet zayn dayn baruf.  
 Yidele vet alts ding handlen,  
 Shlof-zhe, Yidele, shlof.

And when you become rich, Yidele,  
 Remind yourself of this lullaby.  
 Raisins and almonds,  
 This will be your calling  
 You'll be a merchant of all wares  
 But for now, sleep, Yidele, sleep.

**Example 4.10: Translation of *Rozhinkes mit Mandlen*, second and fourth verses**

The lines of the second verse are shared between all of the clarinets, while the lines of the fourth verse are presented by Clarinet 3 (which plays only one line) and Bass Clarinet. This is the first time throughout the entirety of Curtis's *Global Tour* that the Bass Clarinet performs an important melodic line instead of providing only harmonic or rhythmic support underneath the soprano clarinets. The following tables 4.3 and 4.4 show which instrument performs each line of text, and also shows in which measures the melodic lines appear throughout the movement.

Text	Measure	Instrument
Unter Yidele's vigele	mm. 11–14	Clarinet 3
Shteyt a klor-vays tsigele	mm. 15–19	Clarinet 2
Dos tsigele iz geforn handlen	pickup to mm. 20–23	Clarinet 1
Dos vet zayn dayn baruf	mm. 24–27	Clarinet 1
Rozhinkes mit mandlen	mm. 28–31	Bass Clarinet
Shlof-zhe, Yidele, shlof.	mm. 32–35	Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2

**Table 4.3: *Global Tour*, “Klez”, first verse**

Text	Measure	Instrument
Un az du vest raykh yidele.	mm. 35 (beat 2)–39	Bass Clarinet
Zolzt du zikh dermonen in dem lidele	mm. 39 (beat 2)–43	Bass Clarinet
Rozhinkes mit mandlen	pickup to mm. 44–47	Bass Clarinet
Dos vet zayn dayn baruf	mm. 48–51	Bass Clarinet
Yidele vet alts ding handlen	mm. 52–55	Clarinet 3
Shlof-zhe, Yidele, shlof.	mm. 56–59	Bass Clarinet

**Table 4.4:** *Global Tour*, “Klez”, second verse

In the original lullaby, three syllables (“ai-lu-lu”) are sung after the first and third verses, forming a slow trill-like figure. Curtis includes this syllabic interlude in this movement, as shown in example 4.11 for Clarinet 1, even though those verses are not used in this movement. It first appears at the beginning of the waltz in measure 9 for Clarinet 1, signaling the entrance of the lullaby. It also appears at the end of the piece in measure 58 in Bass Clarinet, concluding the movement.



**Example 4.11:** *Global Tour*, “Klez”, mm. 9–11, “Ai-lu-lu” figure (Cl. 1)

The shortest of the movements, “Klez ‘Rozhinkes mit Mandlen’”, is a beautiful contrast in character and style to the other three movements of *Global Tour*.<sup>71</sup> This lullaby was often requested of Curtis’s klezmer performing ensembles,<sup>72</sup> and this new setting for clarinet quartet provides the genre with an original work in the klezmer style.

<sup>71</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 17, 2017.

<sup>72</sup> Such ensembles include Oomph, the Mike Curtis Klezmer Quartet, and the Klezmonauts. Ibid.

The final movement, “Tango”, is an exciting seven-part rondo to finish out Curtis’s *Global Tour*. The expression “it takes two to tango” could not be more relevant for this movement. From the very beginning, the ensemble is split into pairs to present the melodic and harmonic roles of Curtis’s tango. Table 4.5 provides each section of the rondo with key area and which instruments present the melodic material in duet form.

A	B	A	Transition	C	A	D	A
mm. 1-16	mm. 17-24	mm. 25-33	mm. 34-37	mm. 38-51	mm. 52-59	mm. 60-72	mm. 73-88
C minor	G minor	C minor	C minor to C Major	C Major	C minor	G Major	C minor
Cl. 1 and 2	Cl. 2 and 3	Cl. 1 and 2	Cl. and B. Cl.; Cl. 2 and 3	Cl. 1 and 2	Cl. 1 and 2	Cl. 2 and 3	Cl. 1, 2, and 3

**Table 4.5: Form, content, and key areas for *Global Tour*, “Tango”**

Beginning in C minor, Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet provide rhythmic drive with *marcato* quarter notes, with a quarter note at 120 beats per minute. Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 perform a melodic dance by playing each measure of the melody alternatively, as seen in example 4.12.

**Example 4.12: *Global Tour*, “Tango”, mm. 2–6, Alternating melodic figures**

A first ending begins in measure 7, and lasts for six measures. The repeat at measure 12 takes the ensemble back to measure 2, and the melody is now played an octave higher.

A contrasting lyrical theme in the dominant key of G minor appears in measure 17. To transition into this new thematic material, Clarinet 1 performs an *agitato* one-measure solo in measure 15, passing staccato eighth notes to Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 in measure 16. The original duet partners switch up with the introduction of new material, as Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 pair off with the melodic material in the B section (starting in measure 17). This lasts for five measures until Clarinet 1 interrupts the lyrical duo, pulling Clarinet 2 back to the original melody for a repetition of the A section at measure 25. However, now the original partnership performs in unison, with Clarinet 1 harmonizing the original theme up an interval of a third. At measure 34, eighth-note triplets transition the ensemble into a C-major section, which is based around a quarter-note triplet theme. This transitional material stays true to the division of the ensemble into pairs. Whenever the eighth-note triplets take place, the voices pair off so that only two voices are performing ascending or descending eighth-note triplets at any time. Example 4.13 shows that even when all four voices play triplets at measure 36, the duets are still intact; Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet are a descending duet, while Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 are the ascending duet.

The musical score for Example 4.13 consists of four staves, labeled Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The key signature is G minor (two flats) and the time signature is common time (C). The score shows a transition into eighth-note triplets starting at measure 34. Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1) and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.) play descending eighth-note triplets, while Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2) and Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3) play ascending eighth-note triplets. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The notation includes slurs, accents, and triplet markings (the number 3) over the eighth notes.

**Example 4.13:** *Global Tour*, “Tango”, mm. 34–37, Transitional triplet duets

This sudden tryst with C major does not last long or truly settle. The quarter-note triplet melody here lies within the Clarinet 2 line, and Clarinet 1 supplies supporting triplets, decorating the melody with unexpected chromatic tones. These tones intensify the unsettled nature of this contrasting middle section, as seen in example 4.14.

**Example 4.14:** *Global Tour*, “Tango”, mm. 38–41, Quarter-note triplet theme

Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet provide the harmonic and rhythmic support, but in duple and quadruple rhythmic divisions, giving this new melody an air of unsteadiness. The melody continues for eight measures, and is repeated in measure 46. This repetition of the melodic material occurs for only six measures, interrupted abruptly by a return to material from the A section at measure 52. Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 are once again the melodic duet, but now the duet further embellishes the material the third time around.

This return of the A section, however, only holds steady for eight measures, as the D section winds its way in via a sequential pattern in the Bass Clarinet at measure 59, as seen in see example 4.15. This pattern provides the rhythmic and harmonic drive for this section while the soprano clarinets perform an overlapping trio, a sort of musical-triangle relationship with conflicting duple, triple, and quadruple beat subdivisions.

**Example 4.15: *Global Tour*, “Tango”, mm. 59–64, B. Cl. sequential pattern**

Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 are the true duet in this section, while Clarinet 1 embellishes around the pair, as if it is in search of a way to interrupt the new partnership. Without missing a beat, the Bass Clarinet line continues to drive the movement towards the final return of the A section at measure 73. This time, the duo partnerships officially break up. Instead, the soprano clarinets finally form a true trio, closing the melodic material at measure 79. The ensemble then accelerates to the end (*accel. al fine*), giving this movement and the entire piece an exciting, whirlwind ending.

#### Performance Guide

For the first movement, “Funky”, Clarinet 1 is required to tap a tambourine with a foot on every beat. This can be achieved successfully by utilizing one of two methods. The first option is to attach a tambourine to a bass drum foot pedal, which the performer can use to strike the tambourine on every beat. This is a viable option, but could cause some issues regarding tempo consistency due to the amount of force required to step on the pedal. The second option is to use a foot tambourine. This tambourine is significantly reduced in size and includes a strap to fasten the instrument around the ball of the foot. These instruments are relatively inexpensive, but if this option is chosen, Clarinet 1 must

be aware to not tap that foot during the other movements, as every movement is *attacca*, leaving no time to remove the tambourine.

The Bass Clarinet part is a source of possible confusion for the performer as, starting in measure 21, the part is written as a *divisi*. The bass clarinetist can perform beat two and the bottom notes written on beats three and four during the first repetition. The top notes are then performed during the second repetition. This highlights the importance of performers being cognizant of material that is to be played first, second, or both times during the repeated sections. For example, the first time through measures 1–15, Clarinet 3 is strictly a soloist. After the repeat, Clarinet 3 is joined by Clarinet 2 to form a duet, with musical tags provided by Clarinet 1 in measure 9 and measure 13.<sup>73</sup> This alternation between solo and duet reoccurs throughout the movement, so it is important to note when each clarinet is performing.

The third movement (“Klez ‘Rozhinkes mit Mandlen’”) is in the klezmer style, with written-out embellishments such as mordents, glissandi, and grace notes. Curtis’s written representation guides performers who are not familiar with the klezmer style of clarinet playing in an easily understandable and attainable fashion, while remaining true to the original lullaby. Extra ornaments are not necessary, but those already written in the music can be altered by experienced klezmer clarinetists.

“Tango” requires attention to detail for Clarinets 1 and 2. Matching articulation and tone quality, while handing off the melody in measures 3–10 back and forth, should

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<sup>73</sup> An example of this can be seen on page 38, Example 4.3. This example shows measures 8-9 of “Funky”, providing the solo of Clarinet 2 and the subsequent duet of Clarinet 2 and 3 upon the repeat of the material. It also shows an example of the Clarinet 1 tag of measure 9.

be accomplished as if only one clarinetist was performing the material. Bass Clarinet and Clarinet 3 must agree on a length of articulation to match the *marcato* style of the A section material as well.

An endless number of recordings can be used to inform the performance of *Global Tours*' wide variety of styles. For further study on funk bands that were influential to Curtis in writing the first movement of *Global Tours*, it is suggested to listen to artists such as James Brown, Sly and the Family Stone, and Parliament. To understand the influence of the jazz waltz in movement two, Curtis suggests listening to *It's a Raggy Waltz* by Dave Brubeck, *Afro Blues* by Mongo Santamaria, *My Favorite Things* by John Coltrane, *Footprints* by Wayne Shorter, and *Windows* by Chick Corea. For the tango, Curtis suggests listening to the traditional tango music of Rudolf Valentino and Carlos Gardel.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 17, 2017.

## CHAPTER 5: POLYGLOT

### Composition History

*Polyglot* is a one-movement work that was commissioned by the clarinet ensemble Quarteto Vintage for the 2009 International Clarinet Association (ICA) ClarinetFest® in Porto, Portugal. This was the same clarinet quartet that performed the ClarinetFest® premiere of *Bulgarian Bat Bite* in 2007. An active ensemble since the late 1990s, Quarteto Vintage's members include Iva Barbosa, João Moreira, José Gomes, and Ricardo Alves.

The beginning embers of this piece were ignited from a clarinet motif Curtis heard while on his neighborhood block in Eugene, Oregon. Curious about the mysterious clarinet tune he kept hearing, Curtis eventually knocked on the front door of clarinetist Bari Doeffinger's home, who was practicing for a recording session of the Oregon-based Balkan band, Kef. Later that year, when Quarteto Vintage contacted Curtis to compose a piece for them, he decided to develop this motif (shown in example 5.1) into *Polyglot*. Unfortunately, Curtis missed the premiere due to an expired passport. His family, however, traveled ahead without him and attended the performance. When he finally reached Portugal a few days later, he was still able to meet the ensemble in person and played quartets with Iva, João, and Carol (a clarinet friend of Curtis's) before returning home.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 24, 2017.



**Example 5.1: *Polyglot*, mm. 5–7, Motif that inspired Curtis to write the work**

### Performance Analysis

The work’s title, *polyglot*, has several definitions, including “speaking or writing in several languages”, “composed of elements from different languages”, and “many (poly) languages (glot)”.<sup>76</sup> Curtis describes *Polyglot* as “the individual languages of the 4 friends [of the Quarteto Vintage quartet]”.<sup>77</sup> The work uses four motifs (referred to as “languages”) to represent those friends in conversation. Accordingly, he provides a label with the first entrance of each language. The first language, *misterioso*, is presented by Clarinet 1, followed by *vivo* for Bass Clarinet, *urgente* for Clarinet 2, and finally, *languido* for Clarinet 3. The only performance instruction listed for this work is the following: “When the languages move across to other instruments in the conversations and dances, the original inflections or expressions should be maintained.” Essentially, each clarinetist imitates another clarinet voice’s language at some point throughout the piece. The languages for Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 3 are slower and lyrical, while the Clarinet 2 and Bass Clarinet languages are faster and more articulated.

*Polyglot* is free in form with developmental sections, or conversations, for the languages. It also includes exciting dance sections that serve as transitions in the middle and towards the end of the piece. The overall form of the piece can be seen in Tables 5.1a

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/polyglot>, Accessed January 23, 2017.

<sup>77</sup> Mike Curtis, Program notes, *Polyglot*, 2012.

and 5.1b at the end of this chapter.<sup>78</sup> The work shifts tonally throughout and rarely settles into a single key area, but each language identifies with a major or minor key area.

*Misterioso* lives within the minor key tonalities. The *vivo*, *urgente*, and *languido* languages live within major key tonalities. Other tonalities utilized within *Polyglot* are mentioned when other relevant sections are discussed throughout the chapter.

After a four-measure introduction, the Clarinet 1 musical language, *misterioso*, is presented in measures 5–13. Curtis describes this motif as being “from the Balkans”.<sup>79</sup> This motif lives within a very limited range, as seen in example 5.2. It is accompanied by long tones from Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3, while the Bass Clarinet provides staccato quarter notes on the first and third beat of almost every measure until measure 14.



**Example 5.2: *Polyglot*, mm. 5–9, Cl. 1 *misterioso* language**

In measure 14 the Bass Clarinet language, *vivo*, appears for the first time. This language is at a jarringly faster tempo (to fit the *vivo* character) with articulated and arpeggiated sixteenth notes that last for four measures, as shown in example 5.3. The Bass Clarinet’s language is harmonically ambiguous, given that the third scale degree is largely avoided throughout, creating a D-minor arpeggio.

<sup>78</sup> Tables 5.1a and 5.1b are found on pages 66-67.

<sup>79</sup> Mike Curtis, Program notes, *Polyglot*, 2012.



**Example 5.3: *Polyglot*, mm. 14–18, B. Cl. *vivo* language**

At its conclusion, the Clarinet 1 language returns for six measures. The Bass Clarinet language returns in measures 23–26, leading into the Clarinet 2 language, *urgente*, in the second half of beat two of measure 26, as seen in example 5.4. This language, in the key of C major, lasts until measure 30, when all three languages begin to talk in conversation until measure 39.



**Example 5.4: *Polyglot*, mm. 26–30, Cl. 2 *urgente* language**

The Clarinet 3 language, *languido*, is the last to arrive, appearing in measure 40 with a pickup eighth note. Shown in example 5.5, this lyrical language is solidly in the key of G major, contrasting the languages of the other instruments.



**Example 5.5: *Polyglot*, mm. 39–45, Cl. 3 *languido* language**

After their initial statement, these four languages pass through each voice throughout the remainder of the piece, either interrupting the texture or serving as developmental motifs, and so representing the interjections and winding threads of a spoken conversation between friends. For example, in measures 46–57, short interjections

of the four languages are heard among the members of the quartet and then the languages are exchanged to different members of the ensemble for the first time in measures 58-63. Although the Clarinet 3 language was the last to be presented in the piece, it is the first language to pass to the other clarinet voices. Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, and Clarinet 3 begin this exchange by sharing the Clarinet 3 language to create a melodic phrase, as seen in example 5.6. Measures 64–69 present a similar treatment of the *misterioso* language, this time including the Bass Clarinet. Languages are shared in a similar fashion in measures 86–96, 149–178, 195–203, and 204 through the end (also labeled as the closing section in table 4.1b).

**Example 5.6: *Polyglot*, mm. 58–64, *Languido* language shared between Cl. 1, 2, & 3**

Short “dance” sections serve as transitions between areas of language development. These sections are not labeled as specific dances in the music, but are described by Curtis in the program notes of the piece and in an interview with the author.<sup>80</sup> The first transition utilizes an interesting “panning” effect throughout the ensemble, a technique not used in his earlier quartet works.<sup>81</sup> It begins in the third beat of

<sup>80</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 24, 2017.

<sup>81</sup> Panning is a term used by the author and the composer discussed in following chapters, Josh Spaulding, to describe the effect of music notation that moves up and down the musical score in score order or reverse score order. It creates a sound similar to that of a hocket, but is easier to see and often pleasing to view on physical paper. Hockets, on the other hand, do not require a specific pattern of movement.

measure 69, with sixteenth-note patterns being shared across the ensemble, beginning with Bass Clarinet and moving up in score order to Clarinet 1 and back down again, as shown in example 5.7. Occurring several times, the effect moves around the ensemble, showcasing the ability of the performers to match articulation lengths, tone shape, and style. Throughout this transition, trills and eighth note *glissandi* are also exchanged via this “panning” technique. This transition concludes at measure 85, when the conversational style returns to the ensemble.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 3/4 time. The score illustrates a 'panning' effect where sixteenth-note patterns are shared across the ensemble. The instruments play in a sequence, with the Bass Clarinet starting in measure 68 and moving up to Clarinet 1, then Clarinet 2, and Clarinet 3, before returning to the Bass Clarinet. Dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *p* (piano) and *ppp* (pianissimo). Performance markings include *gliss.* (glissando), *f* (forte), *p* (piano), and *ppp* (pianissimo). The score is divided into two systems, with the first system covering measures 68-74 and the second system covering measures 75-81.

**Example 5.7: *Polyglot*, mm. 68–74, “Panning” effect**

The second transitional section utilizes what Curtis describes as a “jazz dance with mini *ad. lib.* solos”.<sup>82</sup> This transition begins with another (much shorter) panning

<sup>82</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 24, 2017.

effect in reverse score order by passing rhythmic movement from clarinetist to clarinetist. The mini-solos are marked by dynamic changes of either *mezzo forte* or *forte* dynamics, while the underlying ensemble must remain at a *mezzo piano* dynamic level. The Clarinet 1 solo lasts from measures 101–104, the Clarinet 2 solo lasts from 105–108, and Clarinet 3 solo lasts from measures 109–113, finishing out the solo section. The second half of the transition, measures 113–126, utilizes chordal-building<sup>83</sup> beginning with Bass Clarinet and concludes with a two-measure canon comprised of articulated arpeggios—a nod to the Bass Clarinet language. Example 5.8 shows the last six measures of the chord building (measures 119–124) and the canon that concludes this “jazz dance” (measures 125–126).<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Chordal building is a term used by the author and composer Josh Spaulding (who will be discussed in later chapters) to describe a composing technique. In this technique, a single performer presents a single note or motivic idea. This note or idea is then repeated, and another performer joins in with a note or the same motivic idea, using different pitches on top of the original statement. This can be repeated as needed to create an auditory impression of layering notes and/or motives into a chord.

<sup>84</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 24, 2017.

**Example 5.8: *Polyglot*, mm. 119–126, Closing chord-building & canon of “jazz dance” transition**

The second dance section of the piece immediately follows in measures 127–148. Curtis describes this dance as being a “Middle Eastern Dance”,<sup>85</sup> and uses melodic material closely resembling the *misterioso* language’s limited range and grace notes as a duet between Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2. The work’s four-measure introduction material

<sup>85</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 24, 2017.

also makes a reappearance here, interrupting the dance in measures 137–140. Clarinet 1, originally absent in the true introduction, presents the material here with sixteenth-note embellishments. The dance returns in measure 141, and concludes in measure 148. A comparison of the introductory materials is shown in the following example 5.9. The introduction, originally in A minor, is now in E minor in its return.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 1-4) is in A minor and features Clarinet 1 with static notes, Clarinet 2 and 3 with triplet sixteenth-note patterns (mp), and Bass Clarinet with eighth-note patterns (mp). The second system (measures 137-140) is in E minor and features Clarinet 1 with static notes and sixteenth-note embellishments (f), Clarinet 2 and 3 with triplet sixteenth-note patterns, and Bass Clarinet with eighth-note patterns.

**Example 5.9: *Polyglot*, mm. 1–4 and mm. 137–140,  
Comparison of return of introduction material**

Immediately following the return of the dance at measures 141–148, the Clarinet 2 and Bass Clarinet languages reappear for their first developmental treatment in the piece. These languages are shared among the ensemble, as opposed to remaining within one clarinet voice. Nine measures are utilized for articulated static notes (of the Clarinet 2 language) and articulated arpeggios (of the Bass Clarinet language), leading into yet

another iteration of the Clarinet 3 language at measure 158. The Clarinet 3 language lasts for six measures, and builds the piece up to an unexpected moment of silence on the final beat of measure 163, as shown in example 5.10.

The musical score for Example 5.10 consists of four staves: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score shows a buildup of intensity through measures 158 to 163, culminating in a moment of silence on the final beat of measure 163. Dynamics range from piano (p) to fortissimo (f). Articulations include trills, slurs, and accents.

**Example 5.10: *Polyglot*, mm. 158–163, Buildup to moment of silence in m. 163**

The moment of silence before measure 164 prepares the listener for a transition to G minor, reminiscent of the Clarinet 1 language. While not exactly the same as its initial statement, the theme still utilizes a minor key, grace note embellishments, and a limited range of notes. Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet perform solos in this section. The final *fermata* note of measure 178 pivots the ensemble to G major, with a B-natural from Clarinet 2. A third dance ensues, focusing on the Bass Clarinet’s arpeggiated language, now unambiguously in G major. Curtis here reveals his funk music roots, fashioning the dance’s arpeggiated notes and tied sixteenth notes after a song by the band War called *Nappy Head*.<sup>86</sup> The synthesized piano in *Nappy Head* uses a similar descending arpeggio figure and tied-note rhythm used in this sixteen-measure dance section.<sup>87</sup>

Clarinet 2 and Bass Clarinet join forces in the final section, which is devoted to the *languido* language of Clarinet 3. The beginning two measures of this section provide

<sup>86</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, January 25, 2017.

<sup>87</sup> War, *All Day Music*, “Nappy Head”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBUmwssBQ5M>, Accessed on January 27, 2017.

another instance of ambiguity between G major and G minor, but suddenly settles into G major in measures 197–200. However, G minor ultimately wins the conversation by measures 201–203, ushering in the closing section of the piece.

In measure 204, all four languages return for a final conversation, unfolding at a breakneck pace ( $J=160$ ), the fastest tempo in the piece. The excitement builds as the ensemble moves swiftly through each language. As the piece concludes, there is another instance of chordal building in measures 249–250, and a final five-measure arpeggiated canon rushes the ensemble to a final, forceful G major chord, as seen in example 5.11.

**Example 5.11: *Polyglot*, mm. 249–255, Chordal building and closing arpeggiated canon**

### Performance Guide

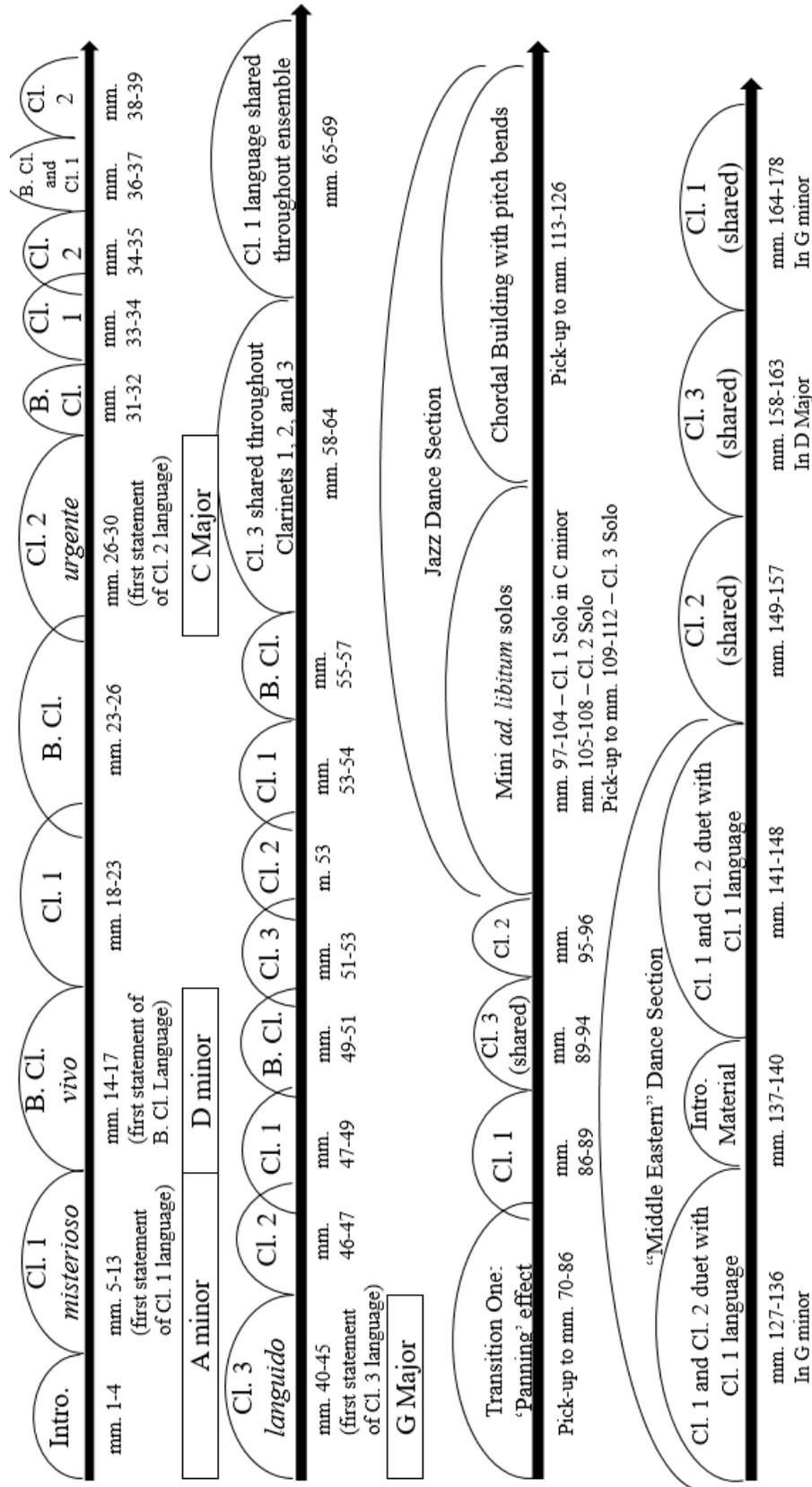
A performance of this piece requires careful adherence to the composer’s written instructions: “When the languages move across to other instruments...the original inflections or expressions should be maintained.”<sup>88</sup> Therefore, an ensemble must practice and perform each language in the style of its initial statement in the work. Rehearsing each language in isolation, both the initial statement and its subsequent iterations by the

<sup>88</sup> Mike Curtis, *Polyglot*, Program notes, 2012.

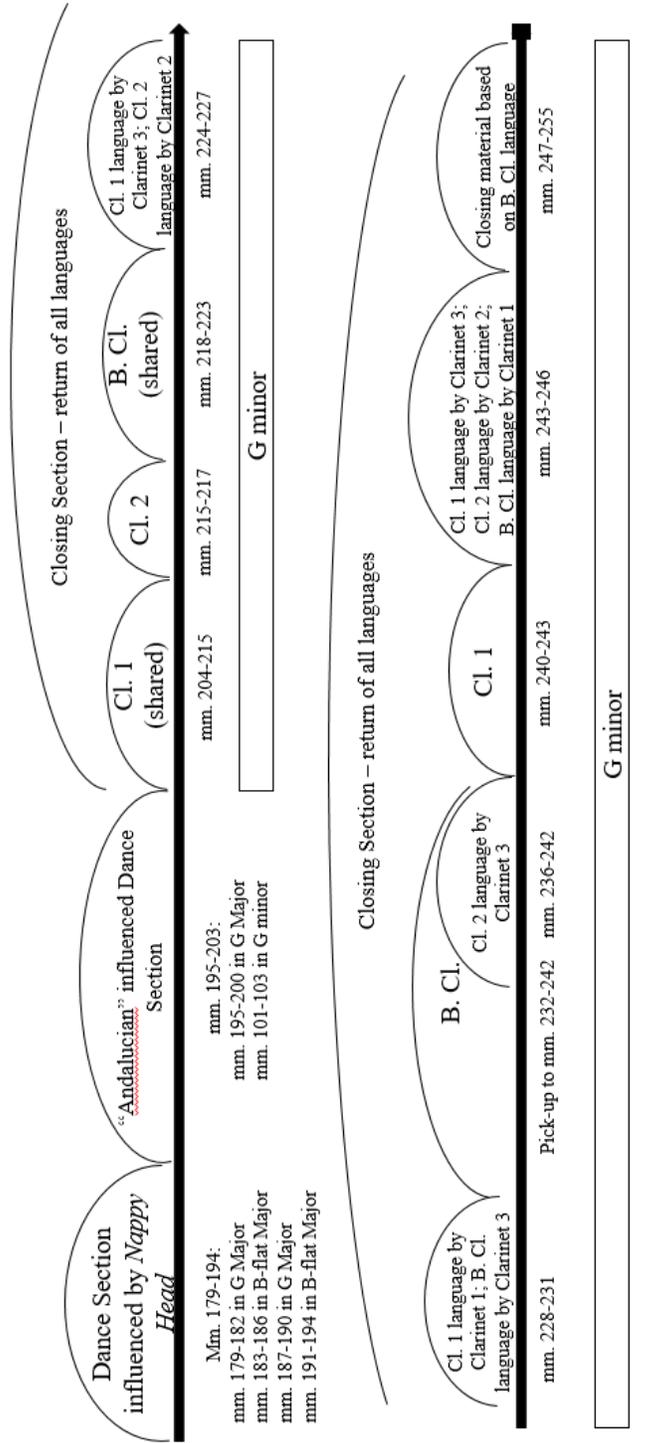
rest of the ensemble, ensures that each language's style holds its integrity as it is shared by ensemble members. This practicing technique is also ideal to coordinate the "panning" effect from pickup into measure 70 through measure 85.

Each performer must also know when a language is being spoken so that each language can be heard clearly. Curtis placed dynamic markings appropriately within the piece to this end. If adhered to, the languages will not be overshadowed by accompanimental figures. Finally, as this work shifts through different styles, tempos, and meters rapidly and suddenly, it is imperative that the performing ensemble prepare for these sudden shifts accordingly.

Table 5.1a: Musical form of *Polyglot*, mm. 1–178



**Table 5.1b: Musical form of *Polyglot*, mm. 179–255**



## CHAPTER 6: MEXICAN FANTASIES

### Compositional History

*Mexican Fantasies* has four movements, entitled “Amores”, “The Blue Cupola”, “Amistades”, and “La reina del trópico”. This piece was composed in the summer of 2014 after Curtis vacationed for two months in Mexico. These four movements were selected out of twelve of Curtis’s favorite melodies that he created during the trip. His inspiration to complete a clarinet composition based around the sounds of his favorite culture was sparked by Margaret Thornhill who directs the Los Angeles Clarinet Choir. Curtis was in attendance for that ensemble’s performance of *Global Tour* and met Thornhill during that time.<sup>89</sup> Her curiosity and desire for a new piece for clarinet choir is what ultimately inspired the creation of *Mexican Fantasies*. This new commission for clarinet choir was premiered on November 15, 2014 in Pasadena, California, but only after the original version for clarinet quartet was completed and premiered.<sup>90</sup> The clarinet quartet was premiered on September 13, 2014 by Cuarteto de Clarinetes Paax Kan (a clarinet quartet from Mexico).<sup>91</sup>

Curtis describes each movement of the piece as follows:

The titles of the movements have their own stories. The first and third are general concepts that I attributed later to the music but have no programmatic elements. Amores (Loves) refers to being away from home and dreaming about all the loves of one’s life, particularly any that occurred *in Mexico*. Amistades (Friendships) refers to friends one can meet at any given moment *in Mexico*, where people are so friendly. The Blue Cupola...was an actual architectural feature I saw outside my hotel room when I wrote this tune. It suggested the

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<sup>89</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, February 5, 2017.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. The members of this quartet are (and were during the time of the *Mexican Fantasies* premiere): Anel Rodriguez, Guadencio Juarez, Citlalli Rosas, and Ivan Fuentes.

connection of Mexico to Spain and to the Moors that was a natural inspiration for a particular writing style. *La Reina del Trópico*...refers to a Mexican movie of that name that I saw in my hotel room. I didn't attempt to replicate its music, only draw energy from its spectacle.<sup>92</sup>

### Performance Analysis

The first movement of *Mexican Fantasies* is titled “Amores”, and it is typified by the different melodies presented in the movement. This movement's formal structure – a modified five-part rondo – is as follows: ABA'C1C2C3DC3'A, and is detailed in Table 6.1. The opening A section is almost identical to the closing A section, while the A' section lasts for four measures and is used as a transition into the following B section. The presentation of these three melodies showcases the different kinds of love that one can experience at any given moment. The outer A sections differ, however, in several ways. First, the final A section lacks an *accelerando* before the final *ritardando* in measures 113–116 (in comparison to the *poco accelerando* prior to the final *ritardando* in measures 7–10). In addition, measure 10 includes an eighth-note cadential link into the downbeat of measure 11 that does not return in measure 116, as seen in examples 6.1 and 6.2.

A	B	A'	C1	C2	C3	D	C3'	A
mm. 1-10	mm. 11-22	mm. 23-26	mm. 27-42	mm. 43-58	mm. 59-74	mm. 75-90	mm. 91-106	mm. 107-116
D minor						A minor		D minor

**Table 6.1: Formal structure of “Amores” from *Mexican Fantasies***

<sup>92</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, February 5, 2017. Emphasis provided by Curtis.

**Example 6.1:** *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amores”, mm. 7–10, Close of opening A section

**Example 6.2:** *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amores”, mm. 113–116, Close of final A section

There are differences in time signature between the outer A sections. The final A section is completely in 4/4 time, while the opening A section switches to 5/4 time in measures 2 and 4. The A' transitional section stays true to the opening in this regard, switching to 5/4 in measure 24. The relevant four measures of the outer A sections are shown in examples 6.3 and 6.4.

Cl. 1 *mp*

Cl. 2 *p*

Cl. 3 *p*

B. Cl. *p*

**Example 6.3: *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amores”, mm. 1–4,  
Use of 5/4 time signature in opening A section**

Cl. 1 *mp*

Cl. 2 *p*

Cl. 3 *p*

B. Cl. *p*

**Example 6.4: *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amores”, mm. 107–110,  
Lack of 5/4 time signature in final A section**

The B section is only heard once throughout the movement, and contains an interplay of eighth-note sharing between the soprano clarinets, as shown in example 6.5. This section moves to the key of D minor and ends on a  $V^7$  chord in measure 22, setting up a return of the first two measures of the movement.

The image shows a musical score for three clarinets (Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3) in 3/4 time. Cl. 1 plays a melodic line starting with *mf*, then *subitò p*. Cl. 2 plays a rhythmic line starting with *mp*, then *subitò p*. Cl. 3 plays a rhythmic line starting with *mp*, then *p*. The score illustrates eighth-note sharing between Cl. 1 and Cl. 2.

**Example 6.5: *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amores”, mm. 11–14,  
Eighth-note sharing between Cl. 1 and Cl. 2**

The C section is divided into three sections (C1, C2, and C3). Each section involves a layering of the soprano clarinets on top of the “jaunty” melody in the Bass Clarinet line. This section is described by Curtis as a “drum break”, which he often writes into his music influenced by Mexican themes. In this section, Curtis suggests all material that appears rhythmically similar to pitched tom-tom<sup>93</sup> drums may be considered to be drum-like and percussive, due to the articulate nature of the musical content.<sup>94</sup> C1 presents Bass Clarinet alone with its rhythmic melody, lasting for sixteen measures. In C2, the Bass Clarinet line is repeated with only slight alterations, while Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 join in, adding to the rhythmic quality of the C section material. This phrase is repeated for a third time in measures 59-74, this time with Clarinet 1 joining the rest of the ensemble. The Clarinet 1 voice provides a *forte* lyrical melody that flows on top of the ensemble’s rhythmic undertones. The first eight measures of the third repetition are shown in example 6.6, showing the role each voice plays in the C section.

<sup>93</sup>James Blades and James Holland, Oxford Music Online, *Tom-tom*, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/28095?q=tom-tom&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/28095?q=tom-tom&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed April 18, 2017.

<sup>94</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, February 5, 2017.

**Example 6.6: *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amores”, mm. 59–66 with pickup<sup>95</sup>**

The D section lasts from measures 75–90 and, like the B section, occurs only once in this movement. This material serves as a transition to the return of C3 in pickup to measures 91–106. This repetition is only slightly altered from its initial statement.

Clarinet 2 now performs the lyrical melody, at the same dynamic level as Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 3. Clarinet 1, meanwhile, now performs the Clarinet 2 material from the previous C3 section, while Clarinet 3 continues with its previous material (albeit an octave higher). The Bass Clarinet continues with the same rhythmic melody as before.

The final A' section of measures 107–116 closes this first movement in a cyclical fashion. As previously mentioned, this material is almost an exact replica of the opening A section, but remains in a steady 4/4 time signature and does not include an *accelerando*, instead slowing gradually to the end.

The second movement, “The Blue Cupola”, draws its inspiration from a favorite Mexican view—the Blue Cupola is a blue dome structure that Curtis viewed from a hotel room during his visit to Mexico in 2014. This architectural structure influenced Curtis’s thoughts about the architectural connection of Mexico to Spain. The movement is meant

<sup>95</sup> Clarinet 2, Clarinet 3, and Bass Clarinet continue at *mezzo forte* from the previous section, along with a *leggiero non marcato* articulation style.

to be played freely, as suggested, and is structured in a rondo form—ABACADA’.

Table 6.2 shows a breakdown of this movement’s formal structure in detail.

A	B	A	C	A	D	A’
mm. 1-5	mm. 6-10	mm. 11-15	mm. 16-21	mm. 22-26	mm. 27-30	mm. 31-32
A minor			D minor	A minor	D minor	A minor

**Table 6.2: Formal structure of “The Blue Cupola” from *Mexican Fantasies***

Each section is clearly separated from the other. The movement is also harmonically sparse—consisting only of a pedal tone held on A by either Clarinet 3 or Bass Clarinet—while a solo is performed by either Clarinet 1 or Clarinet 2.

The opening A section is presented by solo Clarinet 1, with the pedal note provided by the Bass Clarinet. This section lasts from measure 1 through measure 5, with fermatas in the first four measures. Although measure 5 contains no fermatas, it is still considered a part of the A section, as the pedal tone is tied to the previous measure. In addition, when the A section later returns, the contents of measure 5 also returns in its entirety. This measure serves as a sort of cadential tag in both instances, as seen in example 6.7.

The image shows a musical score for two parts: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1) and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 3/4 time. The Cl. 1 part has a melodic line with fermatas over measures 4, 5, and 6. In measure 6, there is a dynamic marking of *mf*. The B. Cl. part provides a pedal tone with fermatas over measures 4, 5, and 6.

**Example 6.7:** *Mexican Fantasies*, “The Blue Cupola”, mm. 4–6<sup>96</sup>

The B section begins in measure 6 and lasts until measure 10, containing no fermatas and having an established rhythm in contrast to the A section. Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet continue in their same roles as the previous section—Clarinet 1 is the solo voice, while Bass Clarinet provides the pedal tone. Measures 11–15 brings the first repetition of the A section, with Bass Clarinet now providing the solo material. It is the same material as the Clarinet 1 line from measures 1–5, but now sounds an octave higher than the original statement. The pedal tone for this repetition is provided by Clarinet 3. Each of these five measures contain a *fermata* and should be played as freely as the initial A section.

The C section immediately follows from measures 16–21. This section combines ideas from the previous sections by alternating measures with a steady tempo and those with freely-interpreted content. Those measures with freely-interpreted content are marked with written *fermata*, while the measures with a steady tempo have none. The solo material here is presented by Clarinet 2, and the notation differs only slightly from

<sup>96</sup> Measure 6 represents the start of the B section. Measure 5 should be interpreted as a cadential tag for the previous four measures, due to the break in the *fermata* for the Bass Clarinet line in that measure, along with the eighth-note rest in the Clarinet 1 part.

previous sections; Clarinet 2 here begins the solo line with a chalumeau E-flat, instead of the original E-natural in measures 1 and 11.

The third A section appears in measures 22–26, and the solo is once again performed by Clarinet 1. This solo is presented two octaves higher than the original statement in measure 1, and Clarinet 3 is now providing the pedal tone. This pedal tone is also played three octaves higher than the original statement, placing it in the same register as the clarion B-flat performed in the solo line. Due to the range of these notes, this section provides a more audible dissonance between the melody and the pedal tone, as seen in the following example 6.8.

The musical score for Example 6.8 consists of two staves. The top staff is for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1) and the bottom staff is for Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3). Both staves are in 3/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Clarinet 1 plays a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked 'mp'. Clarinet 3 plays a sustained pedal tone, marked 'p'.

**Example 6.8: *Mexican Fantasies*, “The Blue Cupola”, mm. 22–26,  
Third repetition of the A section**

In the D section and the final A’ section, the pedal tone returns to the Bass Clarinet. The D section consists of the one and only occurrence of unison lines for the soprano clarinets in the movement. In measure 27, Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 perform an articulated rhythm in unison octaves. The higher-octave line, played by Clarinet 2, moves to Clarinet 1 in measure 28. The lower-octave line of Clarinet 3 moves to Clarinet 2, and Clarinet 3 plays the same material on the lowest octave. This is also the loudest section of the entire movement, as seen in the following example 6.9.

**Example 6.9: *Mexican Fantasies*, “The Blue Cupola”, mm. 27–28,  
Unison lines in Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3**

Clarinet 2 drops out of the unison statement by measure 30, Clarinets 1 and 3 finish out the section together. The A’ section returns again briefly for the final two measures. The solo line is again in Clarinet 1, while Bass Clarinet continues with the A pedal note. Every clarinet line holds the final *fermata* chord, ending the movement. Although only 32 measures in length, the tempo marking “Freely ♩ = 56” stretches out this movement’s material for a duration of over three minutes.<sup>97</sup>

The third movement, “Amistades” (“Friendships”), speaks to the friendliness of Mexican culture. Curtis creates here an aural representation of friendships by always sharing this movement’s melody among two or three soprano clarinets, while the Bass Clarinet serves a driving harmonic and rhythmic role. This sharing of melodic material lasts the entire movement.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>97</sup> This performance length is based on the recording by the Cuarteto Pax Kaan, available on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjUISGnG47s>, Accessed February 5, 2017.

<sup>98</sup> Conclusion drawn by author based on the sharing of melody between the soprano clarinets.

Curtis uses only two contrasting melodic ideas throughout this D-minor movement, one lyrical and the other rhythmic in nature. The following table 6.3 shows when these melody types occur, and which instruments perform the material.

<i>Type of Melodic Content</i>	<i>Measures of Occurrence; Melodic Voices</i>
Lyrical	1–19; Cl. 1 and Cl. 2
Lyrical	20–43; Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3
Lyrical	44–62; Cl. 1 and Cl. 3 in duo
Rhythmic	63–80; All
Lyrical	81–100; All
Rhythmic	101–108; Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3

**Table 6.3: Occurrences of lyrical and rhythmic melodic content in “Amistades” from *Mexican Fantasies***

The first complete melodic phrase begins in measure 1 and cadences in D minor in measure 19. The material is passed between Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2, while Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet provide harmonic and rhythmic motion. The melody performed by Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 may be seen in example 6.10. Clarinet 2 begins the repetition of this material in measures 20–43, including Clarinet 3 in sharing the melodic content while the Bass Clarinet continues its accompanimental material as before. This section ends with a cadential extension, lengthening the phrase by five measures.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1) and Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2). The key signature is D minor (three flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The music is marked *mf*. The first staff (Cl. 1) begins with a melodic phrase in measure 1, which is then repeated in measure 2. The second staff (Cl. 2) begins with a similar melodic phrase in measure 20, which is then repeated in measure 21. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals, and the phrase concludes with a cadential extension.

**Example 6.10: *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amistades”, mm. 1–10,  
First half of melodic phrase, shared between Cl. 1 and Cl. 2**

Measures 44–62 presents this same melodic material a third time in its original length of 19 measures. Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 3 take over the duet role, while Clarinet 2 joins Bass Clarinet’s harmonic and rhythmic support line. In measures 63–80, a new idea arises, shared between the three soprano clarinet lines as seen in the following example 6.11. Curtis refers to this section as a written drum break, which continues for another 14 measures.<sup>99</sup>

The musical score for Example 6.11 consists of four staves. The top staff is for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), the second for Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), the third for Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and the bottom for Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 7/8 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern. Cl. 1 and Cl. 3 play a melodic line with dynamics *mf* and *mf pieno*. Cl. 2 and B. Cl. play a supporting line with dynamics *pp sotto voce*.

**Example 6.11: *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amistades”; mm. 63–66,  
Sharing of rhythmic melody between Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3**

The opening melody returns almost note for note in measures 81–100, excepting the final two bars. Here the Bass Clarinet moves from its pedal tone to take over the final measure of melodic material at measure 100. The Bass Clarinet takes on a solo role for the first time here, but only as a short transition to the next section. The *ritardando* in measure 100 leads the ensemble to the closing section, which returns to the contrasting rhythmic material from measure 63. The original Bass Clarinet line is now performed by Clarinet 3, as the Bass Clarinet is now holding a pedal tone on the chalumeau D. This

<sup>99</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, February 5, 2017.

material lasts for eight measures, fading away to *a niente* as seen in example 6.12, allowing for a moment of quiet in preparation for the robust and loud final movement.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows measures 101-104. Cl. 1 and Cl. 3 play a melodic line starting with a *mf* dynamic, while Cl. 2 and B. Cl. play a rhythmic accompaniment starting with a *pp* dynamic. The second system shows measures 105-108. Cl. 1 and Cl. 3 play the same melodic line, but Cl. 2 and B. Cl. play a more complex rhythmic pattern. The dynamics for Cl. 1 and Cl. 3 are *pp* and *ppp* respectively, both leading to a *a niente* instruction. The B. Cl. part is silent in the second system.

**Example 6.12:** *Mexican Fantasies*, “Amistades”, mm. 101–end, Closing material utilizing rhythmic melodic theme

The final movement, “La reina del trópico”, is inspired by the Mexican drama “The Queen of the Tropics”. The inspiration for this final movement comes from the “energy from [the drama’s] spectacle”, as most television dramas are just that—dramatic and over the top.<sup>100</sup> This movement is organized into five large sections, as seen in the following table 6.4.

<sup>100</sup> Mike Curtis, interview by author, email correspondence, February 5, 2017.

A	B	C	D	E	A'
mm. 1-32	mm. 33-48	mm. 49-66	mm. 67-82	mm. 83-106	mm. 107-139
A minor	E minor	E minor	A minor	A Major	A minor

**Table 6.4: Formal structure of “La reina del trópico” from *Mexican Fantasies***

This final movement is instructed to be played “In one”. However, while the time signature is written in 3/4, much of the movement is treated as 6/8 with an underlying triple eighth-note subdivision, instead of the expected duple eighth-note subdivision. This oscillation and contrast between triple and duple meter subdivision takes place throughout the movement.

The first section contains two sixteen-measure periods in the key of A minor. Each period can be divided into two eight-measure phrases. Clarinet 1 carries the melody for the first period, with the first phrase ending at measure 8 with an imperfect authentic cadence emphasizing the fifth (E natural) in the Clarinet 1 line. The second phrase provides an authentic cadence on the tonic at measure 16, closing the first period. The second sixteen-measure period opens in measure 17, with Clarinet 2 now holding the melodic figure. The first eight-measure phrase (measures 17–24) is similar to the melody in measures 1–8, except that now Clarinet 2 performs the melody in a 6/8 feel with triple eighth-note subdivisions, as can be seen in the following example 6.13. The eight-measure phrase in measures 25–32, the second half of the second period, turns into a duet for Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 in unison octaves.

**Example 6.13: *Mexican Fantasies*, “La reina del trópico”, Comparison of Cl. 1 melody in mm. 1–8 and Cl. 2 melody in mm. 17–24**

The two phrases that constitute the first section of this piece are followed by two eight-measure phrases in measures 33–48. This B section emphasizes the dominant key of E major, with the melody presented by Clarinet 3. However, Clarinet 3 does not play the entire phrase, as Clarinet 2 takes over in measures 37–40. In measure 41, the melody seems to return to Clarinet 3 after a cadence in E major at measure 40, but this lasts only for two measures, with Clarinet 2 taking over once again in measures 43–44. Ultimately, in a battle for the spotlight, Clarinet 1 secures the lead in measure 45 through measure 48.

The C section is split into two similar sections. The first section (measures 49–57) is a call and response between Bass Clarinet and Clarinet 2 that grows from *mezzo forte* to *fortissimo*, concluding emphatically with a strong cadence on the dominant (E) in unison octaves across the entire ensemble. The second section (measures 58–66) also utilizes a call and response idea, but this time in pairs: Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet form a pair, while Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 form the other pair. This section begins at a softer dynamic, now a *mezzo piano*, and grows again to *fortissimo*. This time, the section cadences on the dominant chord in the first inversion, leading to the return of A minor. Example 6.14 shows the call and response idea for the pairs of clarinets in measures 58–66.

The image displays a musical score for four clarinet parts: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is in 3/4 time and is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 58-66) features a call and response between Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2, with dynamics marked *mp*. Clarinet 1 plays a melodic line starting with a half note, followed by quarter notes and eighth notes. Clarinet 2 responds with a similar melodic line. Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet provide accompaniment with sparse notes. The second system (measures 67-74) shows a continuation of the call and response, with dynamics marked *ff*. Clarinet 1 leads the melodic material, while Clarinet 2 repeats it. Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet continue their accompaniment.

**Example 6.14:** *Mexican Fantasies*, “La reina del trópico”, mm. 58–66, Call and response between clarinet pairs

The A minor key area returns in the D section at measure 67 after the emphatic half-cadence in measure 66, ushering in another sixteen-measure period. This new material serves as a transition into the following section marked “Maggiore” (meaning “in the major mode” and signaling a shift to A major). Clarinet 1 is the sole melodic leader for the first eight-measure phrase from measures 67–74. At measure 75, Clarinet 2 repeats the melodic material while Clarinet 1 harmonizes in thirds above Clarinet 2. Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet provide sparsely-written accompaniment throughout.

After a cadence in A minor at the downbeat of measure 82, the Bass Clarinet line continues into the next section. The E section (“Maggiore”) is comprised of measures 83-

106. This section is established quickly in the key of A major by the C-sharp notes presented from Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet in measure 83. Two eight-measure phrases occur within this section (measures 83-90 and measures 91-98), but an expected cadence at the downbeat of measure 99 is avoided. Instead, an eight-measure cadential extension begins at measure 99 that delays the cadence until measure 106. The major tonality of this section offers a contrasting reprieve to the minor tonalities of the surrounding sections.

The final 33 measures of this piece contain replicas of the A section's opening phrases, providing a cyclical close to "La reina del trópico". Measures 107–122 are an exact replica of measures 1–16, while measures 123–130 are an almost exact replication of measures 17–24. The only difference occurs in measures 123–130, with Clarinet 1 playing Clarinet 2's original line an octave higher than its original statement. The final measures of the movement, as if to imitate the over-the-top acting in Mexican dramas, showcase the highest range of the clarinet by placing material similar to measures 25–32 an octave higher. This means that Clarinet 1 plays up to an altissimo A (the highest note written in any original clarinet quartet by Curtis), while Clarinet 2 provides support an octave lower, yet still in the upper clarion register. The piece ends on a very emphatic V-i cadence on beat three of measure 138 and the downbeat of measure 139, bringing *Mexican Fantasies* to an exciting conclusion.

#### Performance Guide

An area of concern for the ensemble lies with the performance of triple and duple subdivision groupings that are often times alternating within a stable time signature. The C section of the first movement ("Amores") contains this interesting use of meter with

the Bass Clarinet solo alternating between 6/8 and 3/4 time signatures. At measure 43 (the C2 section), however, the time signature remains in 3/4 while the Bass Clarinet repeats the previous 16 measures verbatim. This causes Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 to play duple against the Bass Clarinet's triple subdivisions. If this section is felt in one (with one beat per measure), this section can easily be accomplished without any difficulties. The Bass Clarinet, especially, should not compromise its performance of the C section material, adhering to the style of its original statement.

Another issue arises with dynamics that are intentionally not consistent between similar sections of this movement. The two C3 sections in the first movement (pickups to measures 59–74 and measures 91–106) contain differing instructions for dynamics. The Clarinet 1 melody in the initial C3 section is written at *forte*, while the rest of the ensemble is at *mezzo forte*. In the second C3 section, Clarinet 2 plays the melody at *mezzo forte*, and the other soprano clarinets accompany at the same dynamic. This allows the rhythmic Bass Clarinet line to return at *forte*. This dynamic distinction between these sections requires special attention, as the second C3 section should be presented as an ensemble *tour de force*, with the rhythmic drive provided by Bass Clarinet instead of a solo section with underlying accompaniment.

For the second movement, “The Blue Cupola”, breath endurance poses the greatest difficulty for whichever instrument is providing the pedal tone. Performers should always avoid breaking the pedal tone to breathe. If necessary, and the performer is able to do so comfortably, circular breathing can and should be utilized as this extended technique continues the pedal tone without causing a break in the sound. If the performer

is unable to sustain the tone with or without utilizing this technique, a breath within the pedal tone can be taken whenever the solo performer is not holding a fermata note against the pedal tone. The timing of this breath allows the dissonant and consonant harmonies created by the solo melody against the pedal tone to be produced without a break in the sound.

The range also poses special challenges for Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet in the third movement. In measures 11–15, the Bass Clarinet solo material is in the upper clarion to a high D and at a *forte* dynamic, which is louder than the original statement by Clarinet 1. This solo must be strong and adequately supported by the bass clarinetist to achieve the desired contrast. The clarinetist who performs the Clarinet 1 part must also possess a great deal of dynamic control in the altissimo register. Its repeated solo in measures 22–26 is marked at *mezzo piano*, while the original statement in measure 1 (which is written two octaves lower) is written at *mezzo forte*. The performer must use a great deal of control to achieve the desired dynamic level in both statements.

Each movement presents its own difficulties for the ensemble. The first and third movements contain frequent meter changes. The second movement tests individual endurance as well as the ensemble consistency in dealing with the thinner texture of the music in comparison to the other movements. The fourth movement is entirely in 3/4 time, but its speed ( $\text{♩} = 180$ ) and extreme range (culminating to an altissimo A at measure 31 and the final beat of the movement) presents its own challenges. Individual preparedness, as well as teamwork and understanding of the piece from the entire ensemble, will make a successful performance.

## CHAPTER 7: JOSH SPAULDING

Joshua (Josh) Spaulding was born in 1991 in Boston, Massachusetts.<sup>101</sup> After his father finished his Master's degree in occupational therapy, the family moved to Johnson City, Tennessee. Spaulding's exposure to music happened early in his lifetime due to his father's unfulfilled dreams of becoming a composer. Spaulding's father had no formal music training as a child, growing up on a farm in northeast rural New York with no access to music teachers. In fact, his father could not even read musical notation. Because of this, Spaulding's father gave many opportunities to Josh and his younger brother and sister for musical exposure to make sure they had the opportunities he never received growing up. As a result, young Josh Spaulding grew up listening to a variety of music, including Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Miles Davis, Oscar Peterson, John Coltrane, Led Zeppelin, and Spyro Gyra. The Spaulding family also owned an upright piano, on which the entire family was always encouraged to play.

These influences motivated Spaulding to join the Indian Trail Middle School band in the sixth grade. He was drawn to saxophone in the beginning, but the inconvenience of braces as a young student got in the way of his original dream. Because of his braces he was unable to produce a sound comfortably on any mouthpiece, so his band teacher Randy Coapstick placed him in the percussion section. For the next few years he enjoyed playing music, but was not yet drawn to it as a career path; until his sophomore year in high school, he aspired to become an astrophysicist. At that time he met Dan McGuire, the percussion teacher at Science Hill High School in eastern Tennessee. McGuire was

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<sup>101</sup> All biographical information about Spaulding was gathered during an interview on January 1, 2017.

strict, but challenged Spaulding in new ways and never accepted anything below the best for and from his students. This motivated Spaulding to concentrate on improving his playing, eventually leading him to audition for (and be accepted into) the Tennessee Governor's School for the Arts in 2008. Tennessee Governor's School for the Arts provides pre-professional instruction of the arts during the summer months in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. That summer of serious musical study, combined with an unsuccessful semester of mathematics that changed Spaulding's mind about studying astrophysics, would push his growing musical passion into a career in music.

While attending the summer music program in 2008, Spaulding met Dr. Julie Hill, the current Director of Percussion Studies and Chair of the Music Department at the University of Tennessee at Martin (UTM), for the first time. Despite many of his high school teachers advising against his attendance at UTM, he began a degree in Music Education there in the fall of 2011. Instead of pursuing his original dream of studying percussion in graduate school, Spaulding decided to take time off in between music degrees to pursue a teaching career. After graduating with his degree in 2015, Spaulding accepted a position as Director of Percussion and Assistant Middle School Band Director at Horn Lake Middle School in Mississippi. He taught percussion for all grades within the school system (sixth grade through twelfth grade), organized the middle school band program, and arranged some of the marching band shows that were presented during the school's fall season. Spaulding also spent time working with an independent, open-class percussion group called Clarksville Audio Theater, an ensemble within the Winter Guard International organization. Spaulding also began a percussion duo, Syncro Percussion,

with his friend and fellow percussionist Noah Friedman. This duo is still active to this day.

He resigned from his position at Horn Lake schools in December of 2016 due to political tension within the program. During that year and a half of teaching, however, he constantly felt a pull to pursue his talents as a composer. Having had no formal training in composition, Spaulding planned to take graduate auditions during the spring of 2017 to pursue graduate studies in composition. As of now, his composing interests include writing music for multimedia and film, and he has ambitions to achieve a Doctorate in Music Composition and teach composition at the collegiate level. Spaulding's original works for clarinet quartet with the instrumentation of three B-flat clarinets and bass clarinet are *Conversial Hairbows* (2011), *Shadows of Ourselves* (2013), and *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude* (2016). These pieces are discussed in detail in the following chapters.

### Compositional Background

As previously mentioned, Spaulding received no formal compositional training. Through his own personal listening, score study, and compositional experimentation, combined with plenty of encouragement from family, friends, and music teachers, he has already developed a strong sense of himself as a composer.<sup>102</sup> His first inspiration for composing stems from his father's childhood dreams of becoming "a music composer and a songwriter."<sup>103</sup> Spaulding composed his first melody for piano in the seventh grade, after being involved in music for only a year in middle school band. By sophomore year

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<sup>102</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, email correspondence, January 25, 2017.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

of high school, he composed a solo for marimba that required the use of four mallets. “I pieced the entire thing together completely by ear,” said Spaulding, “and it was my percussion teacher, Mr. McGuire, who encouraged me to write it down and play it on one of our percussion concerts.”<sup>104</sup>

Spaulding’s compositional style is influenced by his wide number of musical experiences and interests, blending them together in unique ways. He added the following regarding his current compositional style:

[My compositional style is] somewhere between minimalism, rock music, and neo-classical. I’ve really always desired to emulate the music of the styles I tend to gravitate to. I have a rather wide net of musical interests, so I tend to bring many different influences into my own works. I wouldn’t call myself a composer that sets out into new and uncharted territory, but, rather, I seek to find interesting things and blend concepts of music that are already in existence. I also have a strong desire to make my works relevant and relatable to my audience no matter what genre or style I am writing in. I would certainly say that I have been significantly influenced by minimalism and post minimalism. I fell in love with Terry Reilly and Steve Reich’s music during my first year of my undergrad, and traces of minimalistic style have since found their way into what I write. I love repeating patterns and how they change. However, I cannot call myself a true minimalist or even a true post-minimalist since none of my works truly adhere to the strict processes that make up minimalism.<sup>105</sup>

Spaulding’s compositions also include influences from his extensive studies in percussion. Because of the plethora of instruments throughout the percussion family, he has been able to explore different sounds and techniques that he can apply to his compositions. Spaulding’s percussion background is most noticeable in his use of rhythm; his compositions typically include complex and/or uncommon rhythmic ideas

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

that many other instrumentalists do not often get to experience. Polyrythms, for example, are prevalent in almost all of his works for clarinet quartet.<sup>106</sup> His part writing for the clarinet quartet is also emblematic of part writing for four-mallet marimba compositions. Each mallet (or “voice”) can be responsible for playing an individual sixteenth note or multiple notes in a sixteenth-note technical pattern, and those patterns then move into every other voice in the wind instrument ensemble. These concepts will be discussed further in the following chapters.

Spaulding received the idea to compose a clarinet quartet from fellow undergraduate clarinet students at the University of Tennessee at Martin, Molly Waxman and Lizzie Lee. These two students, being friends with Spaulding and knowing about his compositions for percussion, asked him to write a piece for their clarinet quartet, the Four Stikx Clarinet Quartet. The completed work, *Conversial Hairbows*, would become his first official work for a non-percussive instrument.

Spaulding pulls from many places in his daily life to fuel his creativity, having the following to say about his inspirations to write music:

I find more reasons to write music... than I ever would talking or writing about it...It has become, to me, my most sincere method of communication, and because of that I find a lot of things in the world that we live in to communicate about. I also feel strongly about the power of artistic expression and connecting to the audience, so I

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<sup>106</sup> Polyrythm is the use of different rhythms for different lines within an ensemble. This layering of rhythms can create different meters, e.g., a duple meter (like 2/4) produced by one instrument layered on top of a triple meter (like 3/4). An excellent example may be found in the first movement of his most recent clarinet quartet work, *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude* (2016). This will be discussed further in Chapter 9. Oxford Music Online, *Polyrythm definition*, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/22059?q=polyrhythm&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/22059?q=polyrhythm&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed March 14, 2017.

sincerely aim to communicate some sort of ideal or story through the work that I produce.<sup>107</sup>

Most of Spaulding's compositions are for the solo or chamber music genre, but he has begun to write for larger ensembles as well as more popular music genres, like rock songs and Americana.<sup>108</sup>

His compositional process begins with developing a motif or melody, coupled with the knowledge of the ensemble instrumentation for which he intends to write. From those ideas, he writes in full harmony for smaller ensembles or sketches a skeletal structure of the melody for larger instrumentations, and after the final product is on paper he cleans it up, adding articulations and dynamics specific to the instrumentation.<sup>109</sup> He typically has specific performers in mind for his works and will, if able, work closely with those performers to fine-tune a compositional project.

No stranger to compositional success, Spaulding won a composition fellowship from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln for the summer Chamber Music Institute in 2013 for a composition titled *Jubilee* for woodwind quintet. He also has one other work for clarinet and marimba with an optional cajón part.<sup>110</sup> A complete list of Spaulding's compositions, which are self-published, can be found in the following section of this chapter.

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<sup>107</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, email correspondence, January 25, 2017.

<sup>108</sup> Americana is often referred to as American folk music. Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> A cajón is a box drum originally from South America. J. Richard Haefer, *Cajon de tapeo*, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/L2293935?q=cajon&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/L2293935?q=cajon&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed March 16, 2017.

Compositional Output Organized Chronologically<sup>111</sup>

- Ascent & Tremors* (2008) for solo marimba  
*The Invention of Groove* (2010) for percussion trio  
*Etude in G minor* (2010) for solo marimba  
*Reflection V* (2010) for solo marimba  
*Reflection VI* (2010) for solo marimba  
*Dance Dangersque* (2010) for solo snare drum  
*Conversial Hairbows* (2011) for clarinet quartet  
     Dedicated to the Four Stikx Clarinet Quartet  
*Metamorphosis* (2011), for marching band front ensemble  
     Commissioned by Stephen Hughes  
*Grey Dawn* (2011) for marimba choir  
     Commissioned by the 7AM Marimba Choir  
*Dance to Joy* (2011) for solo piano  
*Globetrotter* (2011) for drum set  
*Flute Quintet No. 1* (2011) for 3 flutes, piccolo, and alto flute  
*Onward* (2012) for brass quartet or brass quintet  
*Intermezzo No. 1 in E minor* (2012) for solo piano  
*Crankshaft* (Concertino for Bass Trombone) (2013) for bass trombone and piano  
     reduction  
*Jubilee* (2013) for reed quintet  
     Commissioned by the 2013 UNL Chamber Music Institute  
*Shadows of Ourselves* (2013) for clarinet quartet  
     Dedicated to Jennifer Reeves and the UNL Clarinet Studio  
*Out of Socket* (2013) for pandiero duo  
     Dedicated to the Rebana Duo  
*Glacial Cathedrals* (2013) for solo French horn and percussion quintet  
     Dedicated to the UTM Percussion Studio and Dr. Jessie Thoman  
*Blue Transference* (2014) for marimba and clarinet  
     Commissioned by and dedicated to Lizzie Lee  
*The Shades of Night* (2014) for string orchestra  
     Commissioned by and dedicated to Zachary McCoy  
*Journeys* (2015) for woodwind trio  
     Commissioned by the LCD Trio  
*Black Mamba* (2015) for percussion trio  
     Commissioned by the ARC Trio  
*Like a Feather* (2016) for marimba duo  
     Dedicated to Noah Friedman  
*The Black Knight* (2016) for percussion ensemble  
*Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude* (2016) for clarinet quartet  
     Dedicated to Jennifer Reeves and the Hijinx Clarinet Quartet

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<sup>111</sup> Spaulding is currently a self-published composer, and his works can be found for purchase on his website: <http://joshspauldingmusic.weebly.com/>.

## CHAPTER 8: CONVERSIAL HAIRBOWS

### Compositional History

*Conversial Hairbows* was composed in 2011. This was Spaulding's first work for a wind instrument ensemble, in addition to being his first composition for clarinet quartet. The piece was written for the Four Stikx Clarinet Quartet, a group founded in 2010 at the University of Tennessee at Martin by clarinet students Jennifer Reeves, Molly Waxman, Lizzie Lee, and Cindy Morris. Spaulding represented each clarinetist in this composition by writing a four-movement work that spotlights each member during their respective movement. *Conversial Hairbows* was particularly inspired by the group's concert attire. Donned in all black, each quartet member added a solid color to their costumes that represented their individual personalities in the form of Converse® shoes with matching bows pinned in their hair. The four movements of this piece are titled to represent the color worn by each performer, and in turn, that movement showcases that clarinetist. The Four Stikx Clarinet Quartet gave *Conversial Hairbows* its world premiere in Thailand in June 2012 during the quartet's final performance tour. In Spaulding's program notes he explains the meaning of the title:

The name "Conversial Hairbows" derives from three words: first, the words converse and conversational which combine to form the imaginary word "Conversial", and the word hairbows which obviously stands for what it is. The meaning behind these simple words is what makes the title what it is, and subsequently what represents my desires in writing this piece.<sup>112</sup>

The first movement (titled "Aqua-Blue") presents the third clarinetist in a soloistic light. The second movement, "Purple Groove", showcases the bass clarinetist.

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<sup>112</sup> Josh Spaulding, *Conversial Hairbows*, Program notes, 2011.

Movement three, “Pink Identity”, is the longest of the movements, illustrating the endurance of the first clarinetist. Finally, the fourth movement, “Fire Red”, brings the piece to a fiery conclusion while featuring the second clarinetist.

This work can also be compared to more traditional musical forms, found in a symphony or concerto: Movement one is a prelude, movement two a scherzo, movement three a theme and variations, and movement four the exciting and straightforward ABA finale. Spaulding combines these musical forms with 21<sup>st</sup>-century twists using compositional techniques such as hocket and canon, as well as adding other embellishments such as hissing and finger snapping. The technical aspect of this work is challenging, but it utilizes a multitude of clarinet sounds and colors throughout the entire fifteen minutes of its performance, making it an excellent addition to the current body of clarinet quartet literature.

#### Performance Analysis

Spaulding describes the symphonic prelude aesthetic of the first movement, “Aqua-Blue”, as beginning with “a quiet, fanfare-like opening that transforms into a melody that is quite liquid-like in nature.”<sup>113</sup> “Aqua-Blue” is ternary in form (ABA) and is in the key of B-flat major. This movement is the only movement within *Conversial Hairbows* that is in a major key area. The following table 8.1 represents each section of the form, the measures that section encompasses, and the key areas presented for each.

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<sup>113</sup> The composer describes this opening as ‘fanfare-like’ although it is quiet in dynamic. It is meant to be a short, quiet, call-to-attention opening to the movement. Ibid.

B-flat Major			
Introduction mm. 1-5	A Section mm. 6-16	B Section mm. 17-50	A Section mm. 51-66

**Table 8.1: Form and Key Area for *Conversial Hairbows*, “Aqua-Blue”**

The opening fanfare consists of trills from Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, and Clarinet 3, building upon each other to form different chords. This manner of chord building is prevalent throughout this work. Growing up near the Appalachian Mountains, Spaulding was drawn to Aaron Copland’s use of chord building in the opening of *Appalachian Spring*:

In the beginning of *Appalachian Spring*—the very opening spot—Copland does this technique where he’s got this solo line, and he just keeps slowly adding, piece by piece, more sounds, and keeps thickening up the standing chord that’s just going through there. It really almost becomes like a pedal tone until, I believe it’s either an oboe or a bassoon that comes in later with the actual first melodic figure there. Until then it’s just this wall of sound that slowly, slowly grows, and I just fell in love with that idea. Always in my head, it reminded [me] a lot of—being someone who grew up in the Appalachian Mountains—like whenever you have a sunrise, and the sun is slowly creaking through all the valleys and all the parts of the mountains. So it is highlighting things almost individually, piece by piece, as it goes. I really got that visual imagery a whole lot from how he wrote that, and so that’s just something that really struck me.<sup>114</sup>

In Spaulding’s efforts to recall the building chord from *Appalachian Spring*, he layered trills that repeat and grow dynamically into measure 5, leading Clarinet 3 into a short eighth-note cadenza that is supported by *forte piano* long tones from Clarinet 2 and Bass Clarinet. Example 8.1 shows the fanfare opening as described from movement one.

<sup>114</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, December 31, 2016.

With Excitement, Flowing ( $\text{♩} = 60$ )

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

**Example 8.1: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Aqua-Blue”, mm. 1–5, Fanfare opening with chord-building trills**

After this five-measure fanfare, the melody begins in measure 6. In 6/8 time, Clarinet 1 provides a bubbling sixteenth-note character that supports the Clarinet 3 melody, accompanied by alternating half notes and dotted-quarter notes from Clarinet 2 and Bass Clarinet. The Clarinet 3 melody begins in the lower half of the chalumeau register, which is why it is written at a *forte* dynamic while the other voices are no louder than *mezzo piano*, as seen in example 8.2.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

**Example 8.2: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Aqua-Blue”, mm. 6–9, Cl. 3 melody accompanied by sixteenth-note figures**

As the Clarinet 3 line moves up to the clarion register in measures 10–15, the entire ensemble increases in volume. This increase, coupled with a repeat back to the softer

material at measure 6, creates a wave-like effect, supporting the composer’s “liquid-like” thematic idea for this movement.<sup>115</sup> This effect supports the fluidity of Spaulding’s thematic idea.

Measure 17 begins a breakup in the rhythmic flow of the 6/8 section, with unison hemiolas creating a sense of 3/4. This section also demonstrates that although Clarinet 3 is the soloist here, the ensemble is still working as a single unit, even after the soloist breaks away to embellish over the harmonies of the other clarinets at measure 20.

Example 8.3 displays this sudden change of meter. Spaulding relates that this section represents uneven rocks in the bed of a babbling brook, as “the players weave around each other, just like water is a connected, interwoven form of matter.”<sup>116</sup>

The image shows a musical score for four parts: Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Clarinet 3, and Bass Clarinet. The music is in 6/8 time, with a dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo) at the beginning of each staff. The score illustrates a shift in metric pulse to 3/4 time, achieved through unison hemiola rhythms. Clarinet 3 is the soloist, and the ensemble works as a single unit. The score includes fermatas at the end of the section.

**Example 8.3: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Aqua-Blue”, mm. 17–23, Unison hemiola rhythms shifting metric pulse to 3/4**

The held B-flat from measures 23–27 by Clarinet 3 begins a transition into a minimalist compositional technique that is seen frequently throughout Spaulding’s

<sup>115</sup> Josh Spaulding, *Conversial Hairbows*, Program Notes, 2011.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

clarinet quartet works: canon. Spaulding here creates a hocket canon, which means the material is divided among the clarinet voices. Each voice dovetails into the other, creating a single motif that is passed around the ensemble.<sup>117</sup> Spaulding often uses this technique as a rhythmic or harmonic function in his compositions that can be seen in the following example 8.4. Here it is used as a harmonic function and also provides rhythmic drive by Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, and Bass Clarinet, while the melody is presented by Clarinet 3. The canon begins in measure 29 and lasts through measure 33, repeating an arpeggiated gesture that dovetails between the different clarinet voices, as seen in example 8.4.

The musical score for Example 8.4 consists of four staves. The top staff is for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), the second for Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), the third for Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and the bottom for Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The score shows a hocket canon figure from measure 29 to 31. In measure 29, Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 play an arpeggiated figure starting on a quarter rest, while Cl. 3 plays a whole note. In measure 30, Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 play the arpeggiated figure starting on an eighth rest, while Cl. 3 plays a half note. In measure 31, Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 play the arpeggiated figure starting on a quarter rest, while Cl. 3 plays a quarter note. The Bass Clarinet part plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests throughout the three measures.

**Example 8.4: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Aqua-Blue”, mm. 29–31, Hocket canon figure**

This canon speeds up, moving into another canon for Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 in measure 34. The new overlapping canon is offset by an eighth note, with an emphasis on the first note (B-flat in the upper clarion register) of each four-note grouping. This allows every eighth-note pulse to be felt, as can be seen in the following example 8.5. This

<sup>117</sup> The author determines this technique to be a canon due to the fact that the hocket material is repeated multiple times. The use of canon in this instance is like an echo, but does not decrease in volume.

rhythmic pulse continues at *mezzo forte*, while Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet dominate through this texture with a rhythmically augmented version of the melody at *fortissimo* and *forte*, respectively.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is written in 6/8 time and consists of two systems of staves. In the first system, Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 play a hocket canon with a *mf* dynamic. Cl. 3 and B. Cl. play an augmented version of the solo melody with *ff* and *f* dynamics, respectively. The second system continues this texture, with Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 maintaining their hocket canon and Cl. 3 and B. Cl. playing their augmented solo melody.

**Example 8.5: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Aqua-Blue”, mm. 34–38, Hocket canon accompanied by augmented version of Cl. 3 solo melody**

This crescendo builds to a transition section, which begins abruptly with a *fortepiano* as well as a sudden character and meter shift to 5/8. The realization of this movement’s liquid-like nature would not be complete without this character shift to a more tumultuous metrical pattern which contrasts the docile nature of the rest of the movement. This section builds with rhythmic and dynamic intensity for nine measures, accelerating

to the downbeat of measure 48, where the ensemble reaches a collective *fortissimo* on a C-major chord in second inversion—the highest point in the movement. The ensemble then cascades down, decreasing in speed and volume until the return of the A' section at measure 51. The chord at measure 48 represents the brink of a waterfall as water rushes over the edge and begins its descent, as can be seen in example 8.6.

The musical score for Example 8.6 consists of four staves: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The time signature is 3/8. The score shows a series of rapid sixteenth-note passages in measures 45-49, building up to a *fortissimo* dynamic. In measure 50, there is a *rall.* marking and a *ff* dynamic. The music then transitions into the A' section in measure 51, which features a final melodic flourish for Clarinet 3.

**Example 8.6: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Aqua-Blue”, mm. 45–50<sup>118</sup>, Buildup to m. 49 and subsequent diminishing cascade into the return of the A' section in m. 51**

The A' section at measure 51 settles the movement back to its original state, but it is not completely the same as it was before. Clarinet 3 gets one final showcase with the opening melody, now two octaves higher at a *fortissimo* over the other three clarinet voices, which are no louder than *forte*. Any balance issues that may have arisen earlier are ultimately solved at this point, as the melody line is now easily heard over the other clarinet lines.

Clarinet 1 takes over in measure 55 with an altissimo F, leading into the closing section. Clarinet 1 then opens yet another canon section in measure 57. Clarinet 2 repeats the canon material at measure 58, but seemingly plays the wrong notes. Clarinet 1 tries to

<sup>118</sup> The crescendo into measure 48 begins as a *fortepiano* at measure 39 and *cresc. poco a poco* for nine measures.

begin the canon again and Clarinet 2 repeats the phrase—this time with the correct notes—on the second beat of the measure. These two voices continue, canonically, to the end of the piece, picking up Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet along the way. Measure 62 begins a new and relatively swift buildup from *pianissimo* to a climactic *fortissimo* on a tonic B-flat major chord in measure 65. The movement closes with a soft stinger note by Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet.

Movement two, “Purple Groove”, is a movement fitting to its name, and it serves as a welcome and upbeat contrast to the first movement. Another ternary movement, “Purple Groove” is in the key of G minor, and the opening melody appears in measure 5 after a four-measure rhythmic idea is established as a short introduction by the Bass Clarinet—the movement’s featured performer. Throughout this movement, asymmetrical time signatures, hemiola, canons, and chordal building reminiscent of the first movement take place. The solo line is structured, yet improvisational, with notated finger snapping at certain points for the ensemble. This movement is the shortest of this work and incredibly dense as most of the above-mentioned techniques take place within the first 20 measures.

G minor				
Opening Rhythmic Idea mm. 1-4	A Section mm. 5-40	B Section mm. 41-63	A' Section mm. 64-78	Closing Rhythmic Idea mm. 79-88

**Table 8.2: Form for *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove**

The time signature is in 5/4, with eighth notes rhythmically grouped in threes and twos for most of the movement’s duration, as seen in example 8.7.



**Example 8.7:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 1–4, Opening rhythmic idea by B. Cl.

This rhythmic grouping is the foundation of this movement’s essential groove. In measures 9–10, another instance of chord-building takes place between Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, and Clarinet 3, as seen in example 8.8. The accented notes, especially, help to bring out the chords built in these measures.

**Example 8.8:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 9–10, First instance of chord building in movement

In measures 12 and 13, the soprano clarinets unite with a hemiola. Here the solo Bass Clarinet line returns, playing eighth notes in groupings of three in measure 13, as seen in example 8.9.

Cl. 1  
Cl. 2  
Cl. 3  
B. Cl.

*mf*  
*mf*  
*mf*

*subito p cresc. poc*

**Example 8.9: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove” mm. 12–14, Hemiola in rhythmic unison (Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3) with bass clarinet solo**

After a crescendo to *mezzo forte* that is followed by a *subito piano* in measure 14, the opening groove is stated alone in the Bass Clarinet for four measures. Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 join in at measure 18, with Clarinet 2 creating open fifths. In measure 20, Clarinet 1 embellishes the groove figure, leading the ensemble to a climactic point in measure 22, after which the ensemble immediately fades to *piano* and *mezzo piano*, as seen in example 8.10.

Cl. 1  
Cl. 2  
Cl. 3  
B. Cl.

*mp cresc. poco a poco*  
*f*  
*f*  
*f*  
*f*

**Example 8.10: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 18–22, Groove figure climax with Cl. 1 embellishment**

Bass Clarinet begins its structured, improvisational solo line in measure 28. The soloist is instructed to “add to the solo line written as long as it is tasteful to the texture of

that particular moment in the music. However, the performer is not advised to freely depart from the written solo altogether.”<sup>119</sup> This means the solo line may be embellished, but the performer should not stray far from the line written in the music. This allows the individuality of the bass clarinetist to shine through the groove set by the remaining ensemble.

In measure 36, four measures of unified and accentuated rhythms, reminiscent of the first movement’s *accelerando* section, leads the ensemble to the second and third instances of chord building – the B section, which appears at measure 41. The soprano clarinets here join forces again in measures 40-41 and 44-45, directing the listener’s attention to the solo figures in Bass Clarinet both times, as seen in example 8.11. The key area remains in G minor, but this texture of the ensemble thins allowing the Bass Clarinet solo line be more present over the soprano clarinets.

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<sup>119</sup> Josh Spaulding, *Conversial Hairbows*, Program Notes, 2011.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

**Example 8.11: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 36–45, Accentuated rhythmic buildup to chordal building in soprano clarinets**

The soprano clarinets then present a new rhythmic groove beginning in measure 46. This new idea builds in intensity, landing on a *forte piano* on the downbeat of measure 48 and building up again to a *marcato, sforzando* G in octaves on the downbeat of measure 49, as seen in example 8.12.

The image shows three staves of music for soprano clarinets, labeled Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3. The music is in 5/4 time and features a rhythmic groove. The first two measures show a pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes with dynamic markings of *sfz p*. The third measure shows a half note followed by a quarter note, with dynamic markings of *fp sfz*. The fourth measure shows a half note followed by a quarter note, with dynamic markings of *sfz*.

**Example 8.12:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 46–49, New rhythmic groove in soprano clarinets

Clarinet 1 then breaks off to present a lyrical melody in hocket with Bass Clarinet in measures 50–54. Hemiola reappears in measures 58–59 and 61–62 between Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet, offsetting the meter’s subdivision from duple to triple, as can be seen in example 8.13.

The image shows two staves of music for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1) and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 5/4 time and features a hemiola pattern. The first measure shows a half note followed by a quarter note, with dynamic markings of *sfz p*. The second measure shows a half note followed by a quarter note, with dynamic markings of *sfz p*.

**Example 8.13:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 57–58, Cl. 1 and B. Cl hemiola

The Bass Clarinet then punches through the texture in measure 63 with a held *fortepiano* note, leading the ensemble to the return of the A section with two quarter-note pickups into measure 64.

The Bass Clarinet continues the groove like the initial A section, but the rest of the ensemble breaks away from a direct repeat of the material. Instead, the soprano clarinets hocket running sixteenth notes from measures 68–75, harmonically propelling

this section forward as the groove modulates up a step in the Bass Clarinet line in measures 68, 70, 72, and 74. The cascading sixteenth notes modulate upwards to match the Bass Clarinet's modulation, with Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, and Clarinet 3 shifting upward within the hocket figure in measures 70, 72, and 74, respectively. This effect also builds a series of chords as the sixteenth notes pass from voice to voice, as seen in example 8.14.

The musical score for Example 8.14 consists of four staves. The top three staves are for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), and Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and the bottom staff is for Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The time signature is 5/4. The music is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The upper staves feature cascading sixteenth notes that modulate upwards, while the Bass Clarinet line provides a steady groove.

**Example 8.14:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 68–71, Modulating bass clarinet groove and hocket figure

Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 have a final opportunity to perform a rhythmic hocket in measure 77 as they pass sixteenth notes back and forth. Clarinet 3, meanwhile, provides an eighth-note pulse for each beat of that measure, as seen in example 8.15.

The musical score for Example 8.15 consists of four staves. The top three staves are for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), and Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and the bottom staff is for Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The time signature is 5/4. The music is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* (forte). The upper staves feature interjectional hocketing, while the Bass Clarinet line provides a pulse. A *rall.* (rallentando) marking is present above the staff.

**Example 8.15:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Purple Groove”, mm. 77–78

This rhythmic breakdown leads into the final presentation of the groove figure, with dramatic growth and broadening in note lengths beginning in measure 78 that has not been seen previously in this movement. The final eighth-note chord in measure 78, a particularly dissonant tetrachord of F-Ab-Bb, launches the ensemble into a blasting *fortississimo* and propels the Bass Clarinet back into the groove figure at measure 79. The Bass Clarinet repeats its groove three times, fading to nothing while the soprano clarinet players snap their fingers, ending “Purple Groove” as it began – with a solo rhythmic groove from the Bass Clarinet.

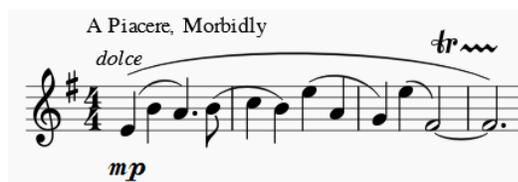
Regarding the third movement, “Pink Identity”, the composer says the following:

Many consider pink to be a “girly” color, but in this movement I consider pink to be a representation of identity and the courage to stand out and be unique. The movement begins with a melancholy melody surrounded by an ethereal harmony that is dark [and] oppressive. As the movement presses on, the melody constantly pushes to be set free to become a unique sound all its own. By the movement’s ending, the melody has escaped the darker nature of the beginning and relaxed into a joyous sound that is truly a unique identity.<sup>120</sup>

“Pink Identity” features Clarinet 1 and opens with its solo melody, as seen in example 8.16. Throughout this movement, this melody is stated nine times—most often, but not always, by Clarinet 1. The music surrounding the melody continually changes for every restatement, similar to a theme and variations. All the while, the movement shows a melody that breaks free from its dark and oppressive surroundings. Table 8.1 shows which clarinet voice performs the melody during each of its statements, along with in which measure each statement occurs.

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.



**Example 8.16:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 1–4, Cl. 1 melody

Measure 1	Clarinet 1 solo (E minor)
Measure 14	Clarinet 1 solo (E minor)
Measure 17	Clarinet 2 (with Clarinet 1 an octave higher; E minor)
Measure 33	Clarinet 1 solo (beginning half of melody; E minor)
Measure 38	Clarinet 1 (second half of melody with Clarinet 3 a third higher; E minor)
Measure 43	Clarinet 1 (beginning half of melody with Bass Clarinet sounding two octaves and a third lower; E minor)
Measure 48	Clarinet 1 (second half of melody, with Bass Clarinet sounding two octaves and a third lower; E minor)
Measure 52	Bass Clarinet solo (E minor)
Measure 68	Clarinet 1 solo (‘breaking free’, now in G Major)
Measure 82	Clarinet 2 solo (G Major)
Measure 91	Clarinet 2 solo (G Major)

**Table 8.3:** Occurrences of melody in “Pink Identity” from *Conversial Hairbows*

Clarinet 1 performs the melody most often, as noted before. After its initial statement, a truncated version of the melody returns in measure 14. Only the first two measures are present, and the first quarter note on the downbeat is now four ascending sixteenth notes, leading into the second beat. The following example 8.17 shows this truncated statement, as well as the new accompaniment created by the rest of the

ensemble. When compared to the first statement of the melody, which had no support from the other voices, the environment surrounding this statement of the melody is much busier and syncopated.

Cl. 1 *mf*

Cl. 2 *mp*

Cl. 3 *mp*

B. Cl. *mp*

**Example 8.17:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 14–15, Second melodic statement

The third melodic statement occurs in measure 17. This time, Clarinet 2 provides an almost exact replica of the original melody, with Clarinet 1 accompanying an octave higher, as seen in example 8.18.

Cl. 1 *ff*

Cl. 2 *ff*

Cl. 3 *f*

B. Cl. *f*

**Example 8.18:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 17–19

This statement is at a *fortissimo*, representing an emotional outburst and cries for attention. As this movement is about the melody breaking free from overwhelming darkness, one can conclude that Clarinet 1 is the original voice crying out in the higher tessitura, while Clarinet 2 joins the cries of Clarinet 1 to show that it is never truly alone. This idea is fleeting, as in measure 19 an *accelerando* and flourishes of notes leads into a faster section at measure 24. This section serves as a transition into the fourth statement of the melody. Bass Clarinet arrives with a new rhythmic motive in measure 24, shifting the character of the movement from smooth and rhapsodic to locomotive and rigid for the next fourteen measures, as seen in example 8.19. This motive serves as the driving force into the next melodic statement.



**Example 8.19: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 24–25,  
B. Cl. rhythmic motive**

This transition section continues to build in intensity and volume until a sudden moment of silence—a grand pause—occurs in measure 32 on beats three and four, as seen in example 8.20. This sudden pause allows the listener to “clear the aural palette” and prepare for the new section. This technique—used for the first time in this piece and appearing twice within this movement—is more prevalent in Spaulding’s later clarinet quartet works.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, December 31, 2016.

The image shows a musical score for four parts: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes triplets and trills, leading to a grand pause in measure 32. The dynamics are marked as *mf* for Clarinet 1, *mp* for Clarinet 2, *mp* for Clarinet 3, and *mp* for Bass Clarinet.

**Example 8.20: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 30–32,  
Buildup to grand pause in m. 32**

Measure 33 brings the fifth melodic statement, now in an augmented rhythm. Clarinet 3 joins above Clarinet 1 in thirds at measure 38. This duet returns in measures 43–51, with Clarinet 1 now an octave higher and Bass Clarinet replacing Clarinet 3. In the second half of measure 51, Clarinet 1 breaks off from the soaring melody into a three-measure rhythmic gesture, embellishing over the melody that now resides solely in the Bass Clarinet at measure 52, as seen in example 8.21.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 43-48) features a long melodic line for Cl. 1 starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic, while Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 play a rhythmic accompaniment at mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamics, and B. Cl. plays a lower melodic line at mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamics. The second system (measures 49-50) shows a change in dynamics and articulation, with Cl. 1 playing a sustained note and Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. continuing their respective parts. The third system (measures 51-52) shows the continuation of the melodic lines, with Cl. 1 and B. Cl. playing sustained notes and Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 playing rhythmic patterns.

**Example 8.21:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 43–50, Fifth melodic statement (Cl. 1 and B. Cl.)

The overall goal of this section, starting from the transition at measure 24 (which concludes at measure 32) and continuing for thirty measures, is to build up to the moment

that the melody finally breaks free from the restraints of darkness (the minor key tonality). This moment is measure 64, with a *fortississimo* G-major chord landing after a flourish of sextuplets from Clarinet 1. This final burst from G minor to G major leads to moments of jubilant freedom for Clarinet 1, as can be seen in its rhapsodic sixteenth-note figures in example 8.22. Clarinet 1 returns to the melody in measure 68, finally in the major key. From this point on, the melody is free from the darkness of the minor tonality and “Pink Identity” has triumphed in its emotional journey.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is organized into three systems. The first system shows the initial flourish of sextuplets in Clarinet 1. The second system highlights the key change to G major at measure 64 with a fortississimo chord and Clarinet 1's rhapsodic sixteenth-note figures. The third system shows Clarinet 1 returning to the melody in the major key.

**Example 8.22: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 61–67, Key change to G major (m. 64) and moments of freedom for Cl. 1 (mm. 65–67)**

Clarinet 2 provides the final two melodic statements, but now in the major key in measures 82–85 and an octave higher in measure 91. Clarinet 1 continues to embellish in the clarion and altissimo registers over the melody and the remaining harmonic support of the ensemble, as seen in example 8.23.

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), the second for Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), the third for Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and the bottom for Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. Cl. 1 starts with a *ff* dynamic and features a complex, high-register line with trills and grace notes. Cl. 2 starts with a *ff* dynamic and has a melodic line with a trill in measure 85. Cl. 3 starts with a *f* dynamic and has a sustained note. B. Cl. starts with a *f* dynamic and has a sustained note. The score is divided into two systems of four staves each.

**Example 8.23: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Pink Identity”, mm. 82–87, Tenth melodic statement by Cl. 2 with embellishment by Cl. 1**

Measure 92 begins a decrescendo to *mezzo piano* for Clarinet 1 and *piano* for the remaining voices. Here the rhythmic motive from measure 24 returns in Clarinet 2, Clarinet 3, and Bass Clarinet, while Clarinet 1 performs an accented hemiola of sixteenth-note groupings in three in measure 93. This transition section lasts for eight measures, building once again to a grand pause in measure 101. Reminiscent of

measure 32, this sudden silence allows for the final seven measures to ease into a peaceful chorale, settling down from the high emotional energy of “Pink Identity”.

The fourth and final movement is an exciting finale that brings this fifteen-minute work to a fiery conclusion. Aptly titled “Burning Red”, this movement showcases the second clarinetist. Although it is the final movement, the composer actually completed it first.<sup>122</sup> Spaulding was close friends with the second clarinetist of the Four Stikx Clarinet Quartet, Molly Waxman. The two met in 2008 at the Tennessee Governor’s School for the Arts, and their friendship reignited when they both entered the University of Tennessee at Martin as freshman music education majors the following year. *Conversial Hairbows* was written as a token of friendship between Spaulding and the members of the quartet, but the oldest of those friendships took form in this work’s final movement. “Burning Red” presents the largest instance of Spaulding’s signature use of canon, as well as hoquet, chordal building, and an interesting use of hissing sounds, representing the hissing a fire makes as it sizzles down to nothing.

Spaulding discovered this movement’s introduction while tinkering on a piano in his university’s percussion studio.<sup>123</sup> This material forms a rhythmic motor of sorts, propelling the entire movement forward. That motor is seen in the following example 8.24, as performed by Clarinet 2. It consists of repeated, staccato eighth and sixteenth notes.

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.



**Example 8.24: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 1–5, Cl. 2 rhythmic solo**

The rest of the ensemble enters in measure 5, repeating and building on a rising eighth-note motive, resembling rising sparks before a fire catches into flames, as seen in example 8.25. This movement is ternary, similarly to “Aqua-Blue” and “Purple Groove”, and remains in the minor key area of E minor. The form of “Burning Red” with corresponding measures and key signatures can be seen in the following table 8.4.

**Example 8.25: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 5–8, Rising sparks motive in Cl. 1, Cl. 3, and B. Cl.**

E minor				E minor (with a false cadence in G Major at mm. 92-94 returning to E minor at m. 95)
Introduction mm. 1-14	A Section mm. 15-34	B Section mm. 35-68	A' Section mm. 69-80	Closing Section mm. 81-111

**Table 8.4: Form and Tonal Areas of *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”**

As the rhythmic motor builds into a climax of *forte* at measure 9, the first instance of hissing appears, representing the extinguishing of flames. The soloist starts hissing in

measure 10, Bass Clarinet joins in measure 11, and Clarinet 3 in measure 12. As the sound dwindles to nothing but hissing, Clarinet 1 establishes the final hiss at measure 13, as seen in example 8.26.

**Example 8.26: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 13–16, Extinguishing hissing motive**

From these dying embers, Clarinet 2 provides a *glissando* from clarion B on the fourth beat of measure 13 into measure 14, introducing the movement’s true melody in measure 15, as seen in example 8.27.

**Example 8.27: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 15–20, Cl. 2 melody**

Six measures in length, the melody is supported by lyrical harmonies provided by the ensemble. At measure 21, Clarinet 2 repeats the melody an octave higher, while Clarinet 3 also plays the melody in the original octave on the third beat of the measure, creating the first canon of the movement. A transition section starts at measure 27, and

the second clarinetist finally gets a chance to show technical prowess with rapid descending arpeggios between short, sixteenth-note interruptions by the ensemble. This is the movement's first example of harmonic hocket, as the Clarinet 2 line plays during the remaining ensemble's rest notation, as seen in example 8.28.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of four staves each. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The first system shows a hocket where Clarinet 2 plays rapid descending arpeggios (e.g., G4-F#4-E4-D4, F#4-E4-D4-C4, E4-D4-C4-B3) while the other instruments rest. Dynamics include *f*, *fp*, *mp*, and *p*. The second system continues this pattern, with Clarinet 2 playing arpeggios and the other instruments resting. Dynamics include *f* and *mp*.

**Example 8.28: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 27–31, Hocket between Cl. 2 and rest of ensemble**

The B section begins in measure 35 with a cadence into E minor by the Bass Clarinet. Here, the Bass Clarinet plays a low D<sup>124</sup> in an asymmetrical, triple-triple-duple eighth-note subdivision of the 4/4 time signature. Meanwhile, Clarinet 2 presents a new

<sup>124</sup> This movement requires a low C bass clarinet in order to accomplish this note in the proper octave. If the performer only has a low E bass clarinet, the note must be played up the octave.

lyrical melody in the lower clarion register at measure 37. The melody lasts almost six measures until it is repeated an octave higher, and appears again on the third beat of measure 42 with Clarinet 1 in the original octave. The Bass Clarinet’s hemiola also shifts in the middle of measure 42 to support the Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 melody, as seen in example 8.29.

**Example 8.29:** *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 35–43, B section, highlighting B. Cl. hemiola shift to support Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 melody

At this point, an eighteen-measure canon—the longest of the entire piece—begins in measure 49 as a transition into the A’ section. As seen in example 8.30, Clarinet 1 begins the canon on the downbeat of measure 49. Clarinet 1 begins on the second beat of that bar in the same octave as Clarinet 1. Clarinet 3 is an octave lower, beginning on the

third beat, while Bass Clarinet sounds two octaves lower than Clarinet 3, beginning on the final beat of the measure. The melodic material of the canon is ten beats in length. By the third beat of measure 51, the canon repeats in E minor. The third rotation is in A minor, the fourth in D major, fifth in B minor, and sixth in C major. The final rotation returns to E minor—the original key of the movement—and remains in that key area for the return of the A' section.

**Example 8.30: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 49–52,  
Initial statement of canon**

Like flickering flames, measures 67–68 end the canon with trills, building chords once again in a Copland-esque manner reminiscent to the opening of the first movement, “Aqua-Blue”. Clarinet 2’s pickup into measure 69 brings the return of the first lyrical theme. Clarinet 1 joins the melody, harmonizing a fourth above Clarinet 2. The melody is at *fortissimo*, with Clarinet 2 being the loudest of the four voices. Just as the B section melody was repeated after six measures, but offset by two beats, the return of the A section melody is also repeated after six measures, and is offset by two beats in Clarinet 1 only. This creates another canon between the two melodic voices, as seen in example 8.31. Clarinet 2 here plays an octave higher than before, with Clarinet 1 in the same register as before.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 4/4 time and G major. Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 play a unison melody that shifts to a canonical statement. Cl. 3 plays a percussive eighth-note rhythm. B. Cl. plays a low register line with a fortissimo dynamic. The score includes various dynamic markings (f, ff, mf) and performance instructions like trills and a sixteenth-note figure.

**Example 8.31: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 67–76, Unison melody between Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 shifts to a canonical statement**

Meanwhile, Bass Clarinet has an important harmonic role during the ensuing canon: the first three notes of the melody—F-sharp, G, and E—are rhythmically augmented in the instrument’s lowest register at a *fortissimo*, as can also be seen in example 8.31.

Measures 81–92 comprises what Spaulding describes as a point in the fire where the flames suddenly appear to be low, as if to soon extinguish.<sup>125</sup> The fire is fueled again with Spaulding’s longest use of chord building in this work combined with hocket.

Clarinet 3 opens with a percussive and articulated eighth-note rhythm, present in the first

<sup>125</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, December 31, 2016.

half of each measure. Clarinet 2 then creates a hocket effect by filling the remaining beats of each bar with a short flash of sixteenth notes. Bass Clarinet joins Clarinet 3's articulated figure in measure 83, and Clarinet 1 joins as well in measure 85, as seen in example 8.32. This section crescendos little by little, shifting from E minor to G major in measures 89 and 90, and settles on D major by the end of measure 92.

The musical score for Example 8.32 consists of four staves: Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The music is in 4/4 time and features hocket figures. Cl. 2 plays sixteenth-note runs in measures 81-83, with the instruction "begin each run successively louder". Cl. 3 and B. Cl. play articulated figures in measures 81-83, with markings "subito p", "cresc. poco a poco", and "p". Cl. 1 joins in measure 85. The score shows a crescendo through measures 89 and 90, settling on D major by the end of measure 92.

**Example 8.32: *Conversal Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 81–86, Beginning of closing section with hocket figures**

Like “Pink Identity”, this movement utilizes one of Spaulding’s signature techniques: the building to a sudden moment of silence. This section starts in measure 81 at a *piano* and crescendos through measure 92, building steadily to another grand pause in measure 93. However, instead of moving to the key of G major after the grand pause, as the half-cadence on the dominant of G major in measure 92 would lead the listener to expect, the grand pause allows for a transition back to the original tonality of E minor, with Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet performing the first three notes of the A’ melody in an

augmented rhythm. Showing that the fire has returned, Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 provide rhythmic propulsion with sixteenth notes in hocket. These sixteenth notes begin to overlap, and by measure 104 are in unison rhythm, as seen in example 8.33 below.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 4/4 time and G major. The first system shows Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 playing a hocket figure of sixteenth notes, with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*. Cl. 3 and B. Cl. play a rhythmically augmented melody with dynamics *ff*. The second system shows Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 playing a hocket figure of sixteenth notes, with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*. Cl. 3 and B. Cl. play a rhythmically augmented melody with dynamics *ff*. The third system shows Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 playing a hocket figure of sixteenth notes, with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*. Cl. 3 and B. Cl. play a rhythmically augmented melody with dynamics *ff*.

**Example 8.33: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 95–103, Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 hocket figure, accompanied by Cl. 3 and B. Cl. with rhythmically augmented melody**

In measure 106, the ensemble returns to the asymmetrical subdivision of triple-triple-duple eighth notes, originally seen in measure 35 by Bass Clarinet. The piece

comes to a sizzling conclusion with hissing from Clarinet 1, Clarinet 3, and Bass Clarinet in the penultimate measure, while Clarinet 2 plays a final trill. A stinger note on the downbeat of the final bar gives “Burning Red” and *Conversial Hairbows* its final spark, as seen in example 8.34. This movement contrasts the others in intensity and technique, and offers a dark conclusion to the work by returning to, and ending in, the key of E minor.

The image shows the final bars of the piece for four instruments: Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Clarinet 3, and Bass Clarinet. The music is in 4/4 time and the key of E minor. Clarinet 1 plays a melodic line with accents and a final stinger note. Clarinet 2 plays a trill. Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet play a rhythmic pattern with trills and a final stinger note. Dynamics range from *fp* to *fff*. A spoken "sss" effect is indicated for Clarinet 1, 3, and Bass Clarinet.

**Example 8.34: *Conversial Hairbows*, “Burning Red”, mm. 108–111, Final bars with hissing technique and stinger E-minor chord**

#### Performance Guide

The greatest difficulty in performing the first movement, “Aqua-Blue”, lies in successfully achieving the proper dynamics to support the melody. For example, Clarinet 1 supports the melody in the chalumeau register from measures 6–9 at a *piano*, while Clarinet 2 and Bass Clarinet support the melody at a *mezzo piano*. Meanwhile, Clarinet 3 plays the melody at *forte*, due to the fact that the melody is in the chalumeau register and is easily overpowered. Issues similar to this arise in all of Spaulding’s clarinet quartets, as

the texture is consistently thick. The entire ensemble must execute the dynamics properly to achieve proper balance and bring out the phrases and characters.

Another example of this occurs at measure 10. The ensemble crescendos to *forte* while Clarinet 1 only increases to *mezzo forte*, as Clarinet 1 moves from a throat tone B-flat to an altissimo F in that single measure. At the same time, Clarinet 3 (who has the melody) is also in the chalumeau register, but only moves to the middle of the clarion register at *forte*. Therefore, Clarinet 1, although written at *mezzo forte*, must keep the altissimo F—a strident note if not controlled—underneath the melody of Clarinet 3. Similar balance issues occur throughout the movement. Performers must be cognizant of individual and ensemble dynamic levels to support the melodic line adequately.

Another ensemble balance issue in “Aqua-Blue” occurs in measures 34–38. Here, Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2 provide a rhythmically driving canon that is to remain underneath the Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet lines. Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 2, however, are written in a higher tessitura in comparison to the melody. Thus, the canon must be performed at a collective, not individual, *mezzo forte*, so as to not overpower the melody. At the same time, the Bass Clarinet must not overpower Clarinet 3, as this is the voice that needs to be heard over the entire ensemble.

These balance issues continue into the second movement, “Purple Groove”. For example, measure 22 marks the beginning of the Bass Clarinet solo section. The ensemble here is, once again, playing continuously throughout, making the texture in this section very thick. The collective dynamic should remain at or below *mezzo forte* so that

the Bass Clarinet solo can come out of the texture and be heard over the three soprano clarinets. This continues until the crescendo in measure 35.

A different balance difficulty confronts the ensemble in measures 68–76 of “Purple Groove”: a crescendo spans all nine measures. Spaulding incorporates similar long crescendos throughout his clarinet quartets, and these can be difficult to achieve naturally. Although the beginning of the crescendo is marked *mezzo piano* for each clarinet voice, Clarinet 1 must play below this dynamic level in order to blend with the rest of the ensemble, as its line is in the upper clarion register. If needed, this section should begin below a *mezzo piano* to allow for a steady, organic crescendo through measure 76. Conversely, Bass Clarinet must control a long decrescendo for measures 79–86 at the end of the second movement. Bass Clarinet plays alone here, while the rest of the ensemble accompanies with finger snaps, a thin texture unusual to Spaulding’s work.

“Pink Identity” is the longest movement of *Conversial Hairbows* and requires the most endurance from the ensemble. There are no indications (or indeed, moments of rest or breaks) for breathing throughout the entire movement. The ensemble must discuss appropriate points to breathe so that breaths are staggered and there are no gaps in the sound. Some notes are marked in parentheses by the composer to allow for breaths—specifically, for Clarinet 2 and Clarinet 3 in measures 33–60 during their 28 measures of continuous sixteenth notes. In order for this movement to be continuous and smooth, performers should stagger breathe whenever necessary. Spaulding admits that he did not

take breathing into consideration in composing this piece, being a percussionist before being a composer.<sup>126</sup>

The rest indicated in measure 101 of the third movement should be treated like a grand pause, allowing all of the sound to dissipate before the soft, lyrical ending in measures 102–108. Interestingly, the final note in the Clarinet 1 part was originally written to be an altissimo B played at a *piano*, but Spaulding lowered the pitch to altissimo G to aid the clarinetist after six minutes of continuous playing. If able, the clarinetist should perform the higher note, but it is not expected. This movement requires the most physical and mental endurance, as it is the longest movement of the work and requires a Clarinet 1 player with control and support of the upper clarion and altissimo registers of the instrument.

The final movement, “Burning Red”, also contains some potential balance issues, with the largest occurring in measure 69. Here, Clarinet 2 performs the melody in a lower register than Clarinet 1. However, the Clarinet 2 melody must not be overpowered by the rest of the ensemble. While Clarinet 1 is already written at a softer dynamic level, the first clarinetist should play softer to accommodate for the higher tessitura if needed. Clarinet 1 should remain at this softer dynamic level until Clarinet 2 is in a higher tessitura at measure 75, as the melody can now be heard over the harmony created by Clarinet 1. For the hissing effect within this movement, the most effective (and loudest) way to perform this technique is for each person to verbalize ‘shh’ at the front of the mouth, against the front teeth.

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 9: SHADOWS OF OURSELVES

### Composition History

Spaulding's second clarinet quartet was composed in 2013. *Shadows of Ourselves* was dedicated to Jennifer Reeves and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) clarinet studio. Reeves, one of the founders of the Four Stikx Clarinet Quartet, was pursuing her Master's degree in clarinet performance at UNL at the time of the piece's completion. This one-movement work is approximately nine minutes in length, and uses the clarinet quartet's different voices in a more unified fashion than Spaulding's first piece, *Conversial Hairbows*, which featured each voice in a soloistic manner. Here, Spaulding instead digs into his own personal experience to write something that musically captures himself, his ideas, and his struggles.<sup>127</sup>

### Performance Analysis

*Shadows of Ourselves* is written in free-form, and the piece focuses on the keys of G minor and G major.<sup>128</sup> It centers around three melodic ideas, with Spaulding creating a variety of sounds with the same compositional techniques seen in *Conversial Hairbows* (chord building, canon shadowing effects, minimalistic repetition). The form and melodic ideas that make up this piece can be seen in the table at the end of the chapter. The first melodic idea appears at the beginning of the piece with a short instance of chord building, as seen in example 9.1. This chord building is presented within the soprano clarinet lines, and it creates a contrast with the lyrical nature of the long tones followed by the crispness of the staccato sixteenth notes seen in measures 2, 4, and 7.

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<sup>127</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, December 31, 2016.

<sup>128</sup> Chart 9.1 located on page 143 shows the form and tonal areas for this piece.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

**Example 9.1:** *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 1–7, First melodic idea and chord building in Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3

The second melodic idea is ultimately the most important melody in the work, as it appears numerous times in the composition. It begins in measure 15 in Bass Clarinet. For the Bass Clarinet, the melody is written in both the upper clarion and altissimo registers of the instrument, as seen in example 9.2.

*f* *espress.*

**Example 9.2:** *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 15–19, Second melody (B. Cl.)

This melody returns nine times, developing in a way reminiscent of the theme and variations in the third movement of *Conversial Hairbows*. Table 9.1 shows where this

melody occurs throughout *Shadows of Ourselves*, along with notating the clarinet voice or voices that have it at that point of time, and the key area of each occurrence.

<i>Measure of Main Melody Occurrence</i>	<i>Instrument</i>
Measures 15–19	Bass Clarinet (G minor)
Measures 20–24	Bass Clarinet (G minor)
Measures 36–40	Clarinet 2 (G minor)
Measures 84–88	Bass Clarinet (octave lower; G minor))
Measures 89–93	Bass Clarinet (original octave, extended melody; G minor); Clarinet 1 (an octave higher; G minor)
Measures 94–96	Bass Clarinet (octave lower; G minor)
Measures 103–108	Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 3 (G minor)
Measures 115–122	All clarinets (augmented rhythm; G minor)
Measures 167–173	Bass Clarinet (variation of melody; E minor)
Measures 189–193	Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet (melody in G Major)

**Table 9.1: Occurrences of main melody in *Shadows of Ourselves***

The third melodic idea first appears at measure 28. This idea is more rhythmic than lyrical, pointing to Spaulding’s percussive background and his penchant for the minimalistic compositional technique of repetition, while also providing forward momentum for the piece. This idea returns in measures 28–35, 42–52, 69–71, and 195–204. Its first iteration can be seen in example 9.3.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The first two staves (Cl. 1 and Cl. 2) play a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and accents, marked with a forte (ff) dynamic. The third and fourth staves (Cl. 3 and B. Cl.) play a rhythmic accompaniment consisting of eighth-note chords, also marked with ff. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves.

**Example 9.3: *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 28–31, Third rhythmic melody**

As the title suggests, shadows play a vital role in this work, which Spaulding represents via canon. The largest instance of canon in this work is in measures 54–65. Example 9.4 shows how the canon shadowing effect appears to be performed in the same octave on all four instruments, however, the Bass Clarinet material sounds an octave lower than written. This section also utilizes a plethora of crescendos and decrescendos to create waves of sound across the ensemble.

**Example 9.4:** *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 54–57, Shadows canon figure

The melodic chord building idea from the start of the piece returns at measure 72, and is exactly the same as the initial statement for Clarinets 1, 2, and 3. Bass Clarinet then joins with an additional syncopated groove figure at measures 73 and 75. Unlike the beginning section, this repeat of the opening material only lasts for eight measures, and the soprano clarinets join Bass Clarinet on a unison D for measure 80 and a unison descending eighth-note passage for measure 81. An unexpected two-measure groove in 7/8 time brings forth a louder and more rhythmic harmonic support of the main melody in Bass Clarinet. At measure 84, the Bass Clarinet melody returns. It is an octave lower than the original statement, and is repeated at measure 89 in its original octave in Bass

Clarinet—only now joined by Clarinet 1, sounding an octave higher than the Bass Clarinet. Measure 94 gives us the Bass Clarinet melody, in a lower octave with articulated accents from the three soprano clarinets.

The image displays a musical score for four parts: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is organized into three systems. The first two systems are in 4/4 time, and the third system is in 7/8 time. The key signature is one flat (B-flat).

- System 1 (Measures 72-73):** Cl. 1 and Cl. 2 play a melodic line with dynamics *pp* and *mp*. Cl. 3 plays a rhythmic accompaniment with dynamics *p* and *mp*. B. Cl. plays a melodic line with dynamics *mf* and *p*.
- System 2 (Measures 74-75):** Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3 play a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mf*. B. Cl. plays a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mf*.
- System 3 (Measures 76-77):** All parts play a melodic line with dynamics *mf*.

**Example 9.5:** *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 72-83, Return of melodic chordal building of measure 1-8 with addition of 7/8 rhythmic pattern

At measures 101–102 and 129–130, the ensemble gradually builds in volume, with an abrupt cutoff and grand pause across the ensemble immediately afterward. The first occurrence is only a four-measure build from measures 98–101, as Bass Clarinet pushes forward with its melody while Clarinets 1, 2, and 3 hold long tones. The chord in measure 101 is the dominant (D), leading back to a G-minor chord at measure 103 after the measure of silence. The second buildup to a grand pause can be seen in example 9.6.

**Example 9.6:** *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 98–102, First buildup to grand pause

The section at measure 103 loses momentum (marked as “pensive, slightly slower”), and the second melody now lies in Clarinets 1 and 3, as seen in example 9.7. This contrasts with the previous articulated and rhythmic material, and serves as a moment of reflection and reprieve from the intensity of the previous 102 bars. The melody is performed by Clarinet 1 and Clarinet 3 in unison, with Clarinet 2 providing harmonic support. The chorale section begins with a slow, dynamic build to a repeat of the melody, in augmented rhythm, at measure 115.

Pensive, Slightly slower

Cl. 1 *p*

Cl. 2 *pp*

Cl. 3 *p*

**Example 9.7: *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 103–107,  
Second melody in slower, chorale section**

For the first time in measure 115, the second melody changes from its original statement. Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet play the rhythmically augmented melody two octaves apart, while Clarinets 2 and 3 harmonize. This augmentation leads into the second dynamic buildup, followed by a grand pause in measure 129. Bass Clarinet remains on a held pedal-tone G for the duration of this buildup section, starting at measure 123. The other three clarinet lines also begin on a held G, descending stepwise every measure until measure 129. The final chord in measure 129—two pairs of minor thirds (G-B $\flat$  and A-C)—is quite dissonant; even more so at an unapologetic *fortississimo*, as seen in example 9.8.

Cl. 1 *f*

Cl. 2 *f*

Cl. 3 *f*

B. Cl. *f*

*fff*

**Example 9.8: *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 115–129, Second buildup to grand pause**

Clarinet 1 begins a seven-measure solo at measure 131, and Bass Clarinet joins with whole notes at measures 138–140. After this solo, the original tempo returns in measure 141, with Clarinet 1 beginning an eighth-note rhythmic phrase supported by quarter-note harmonies from Bass Clarinet. This section grows dynamically and in rhythmic complexity, gaining momentum until the end of the piece.

After a crescendo from measures 153–158, the key suddenly shifts to B-flat major at measure 153. Measure 155 shifts to C minor, measure 159 to B major, measure 161 to A major, measure 163 to G major and by measure 166 everything settles into E minor. The main melody reappears at measure 167 in Bass Clarinet, supported by percussive soprano clarinet lines. At measure 174, another shadowing effect takes place, this time using a rhythmic hocket to propel the quartet, as seen in example 9.9.

The image displays a musical score for Example 9.9, 'Shadows of Ourselves', measures 174-180. The score is in 4/4 time and G major. It features a rhythmic hocket effect between three clarinet parts (Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3) and a bass clarinet (B. Cl.). The first system (mm. 174-180) shows the clarinet parts playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with dynamics ranging from pp to mp. The second system (mm. 181-188) shows the clarinet parts playing a more melodic line, with dynamics ranging from mf to f. The bass clarinet part is also present in both systems, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

**Example 9.9: *Shadows of Ourselves*, mm. 174–180,  
Shadow effect with rhythmic hocket**

A dominant cadence in G major at measure 184— shifting the piece suddenly from E minor to its relative G major for one measure only— brings the piece promptly back to G minor at measure 185, but only temporarily. The next four measures, 185–188, builds the momentum into the “Brilliantly to the end!” section at measure 189. *Shadows of Ourselves* drives furiously towards the end, using the driving rhythms of the third melody. This section, now again in G major, ends the piece on a brighter note. The final

three chords give resounding finality and are the loudest of the entire work. These chords should be played emphatically with *rubato*, with the tempo dissolving into the final, sustained chord.

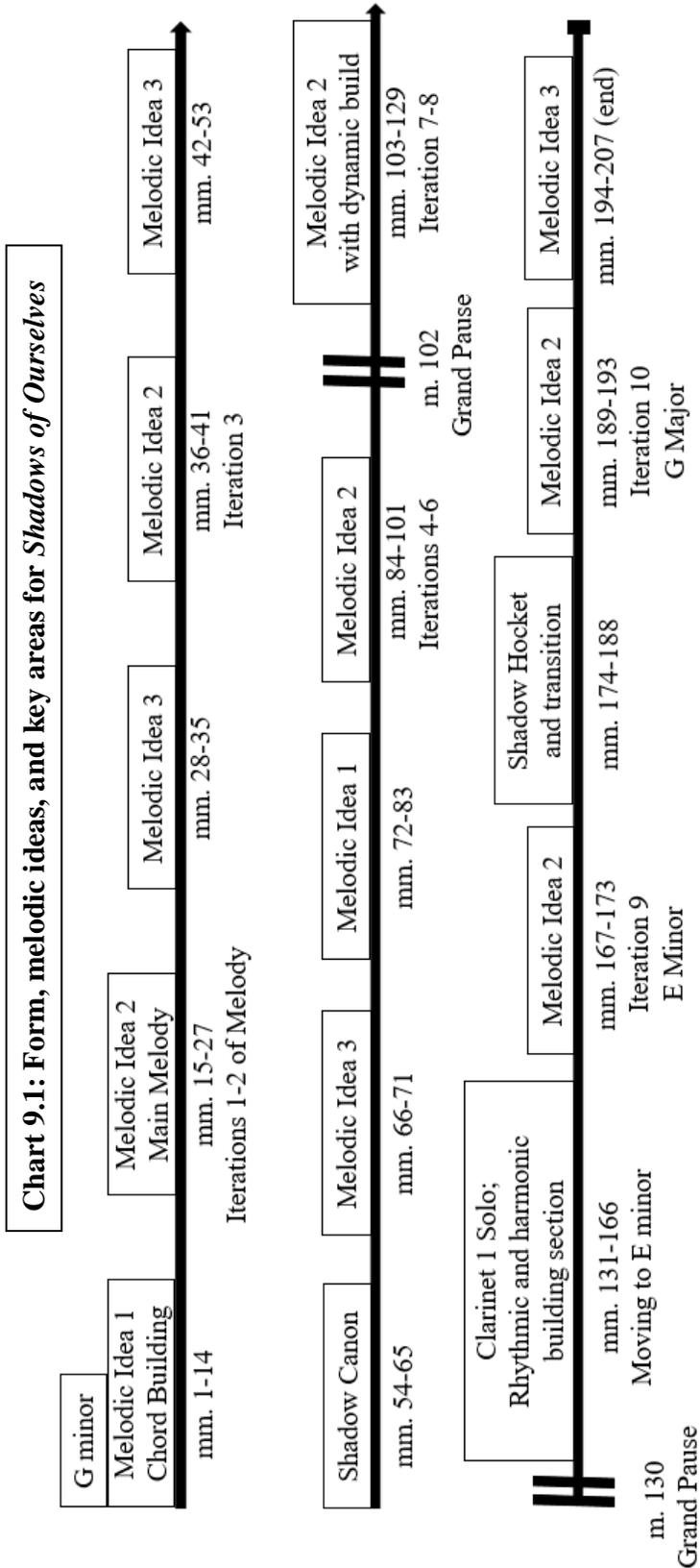
### Performance Guide

One of the challenges present within this work is the issue of matching articulation style while keeping a steady tempo. The opening chord-building section requires the three soprano clarinetists to match articulation style and tempo, in measures 1, 3, and 5–6, due to the staggered entrances from each performer. The repeated sixteenth-note patterns of measures 2, 4, 7–9, etc. should also match in articulation quality and length.

Another ensemble issue that proves difficult is dynamic balance. Although the descending canon figure in the shadow section at measures 53–65 naturally decrescendos as notated, the emphasis and clarity of the first note from each voice is what ultimately needs to be heard. After the first beat of each note grouping is heard, the performer must back off quickly to allow the canon entrances from all other voices to be heard. In addition, the crescendo following each decrescendo needs to be delayed slightly until the third and fourth beats; this helps create the dynamic wave effect integral to this section. At the end of measure 65, the ensemble must remain as soft as possible to allow for the five-measure growth back to *fortissimo* at measure 71. A slight lift may also be taken at the end of measure 65 to allow for the entire ensemble to take a breath. This also allows the previous material to settle and accentuates the following *pianississimo*. Due to range of the soprano clarinets at measure 69, it is important to not cover up the third melodic idea in Bass Clarinet that ushers a return of the opening melodic idea at measure 72.

This piece contains several very long crescendos that require a great deal of dynamic control and endurance from the entire ensemble. For example, a long crescendo occurs from measures 149–159, followed by a long decrescendo from 160–164. This section opens at a *mezzo forte*, growing to a *fortissimo* and retreating to a *pianissimo* by measure 165. This should be the quietest moment of the entire piece. The tempo then picks up at measure 189, propelling the quartet to the final closing section. The quartet must keep in mind that the loudest point of the entire work is the final three measures, reserving the *fortississimo* for the last three chords.

A third issue to be addressed is interpretation of silence and solo Clarinet 1 material that occurs at measures 130 and 131. Although there is a notated measure of silence at measure 130, the Clarinet 1 solo that follows in measure 131 should wait until the sound stops ringing, and should remain as quiet as possible while being expressive with its melody in measures 131–137. The soloist can take some liberty with the tempo, but the descending pattern of measure 137 should seamlessly connect with the Bass Clarinet at measure 138. The two players can then play the whole notes at measures 138–140 at a freely pace, as long as the notes remain connected and there is no space before measure 141. The original, faster tempo should be given at measure 141 by Clarinet 1, and the ensemble should be careful not to slow down whatsoever through the end of the piece.



## CHAPTER 10: TROIS EMBLEMES DE LA SOLITUDE

### Composition History

*Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude* is Spaulding's newest work for clarinet quartet, commissioned by Jennifer Reeves in 2015. This three-movement work was written to explore the intense solitude felt in mental illness, such as depression and severe anxiety. Each movement explores these mental states in different ways, focusing on the different types of solitude they create: "Solitude in a Crowd", "Solitude in Persona", and "The Mind in Solitude". The title is French for "Three Emblems of Solitude". Spaulding chose French for the work's title as an homage to his sister and mother, who studied French:

[I] had a miniature reflection of [my sister and mother] in that title. I wanted to do some sort of thing that was a reflection of solitude or reflections of loneliness... I thought it would be cool to put it in a different language. So, I thought of French. It sounds darker; more emotional.<sup>129</sup>

The premiere performance was at the National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors National Conference held in Santa Fe, New Mexico in October 2016 by the Hijinx Clarinet Quartet. The performers were Jennifer Reeves, Shiana Montanari, and Stephen Borodkin on B-flat clarinets, and Lucas Willsie on Bass Clarinet.

### Performance Analysis

The inspiration for "Solitude in a Crowd" was a melodic theme Spaulding had already written, drawing upon it when he was commissioned to write this work<sup>130</sup>:

I could open my computer, and I could show you that there is a giant folder of ideas that I've written down. I doubt I'll ever use those.

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<sup>129</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, December 31, 2016.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

There is another giant folder of ideas that I've written down that I think I probably will use. I just keep them all together. There is another folder of things that I am working on that I know I will get finished. I try to keep myself organized with all of those ideas, so this is one that I put into the "I don't know if it will be something" folder. [The melodic idea for "Solitude in a Crowd"] was lying around, and I happened to put it into clarinet quartet format. That's where I started from...<sup>131</sup>

"Solitude in a Crowd" also drew its inspiration from the isolated life of Spaulding's grandparents, who were farmers in rural, upstate New York. He described the life of his grandparents as "meandering", and that "they were kind of lost in the shuffle of society where no one is thinking about them. No one is giving any sense of care or concern of what's going on for them. But yet, they're still people..."<sup>132</sup>

Spaulding expanded on this concept, relating it to the solitude of being lost in the shuffle of the crowded streets of a big city.<sup>133</sup>

...you are by yourself. You have no idea what you're doing, and you're basically just trying to find a way to go to wherever you need to go or find some sort of purpose or value. Even though you have plenty of people or things to interact with around you, it's not as easy for certain people as it is for others to just go around and meet new people. A lot of people struggle with that, so I realized that this texture, this idea, was the same sort of thing, just in a different environment.<sup>134</sup>

This movement is also free in form, and utilizes the main key area of D minor.<sup>135</sup>

The overall content discussed within this chapter can be seen in the chart after the conclusion of this chapter's Performance Guide. The opening statement of this movement represents the shuffling, disaffected crowd through the battling lines of Clarinets 2 and 3.

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> This movement's form and tonal areas are located in Chart 10.1 on page 170.

The asymmetrical time signature and use of hocket between the two clarinet lines creates an unsettled and unstable mood. These figures, shown in example 10.1, last until measure 39 and reappear at measures 64–75 and 95–111.

**Example 10.1:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 1–6, Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 hocket figure

Continuing with this rhythmic idea, a D-natural minor melody enters at measure 9 in Clarinet 1. This long, plodding melody is longer than any that Spaulding has created in his other clarinet quartets, as seen in example 9.2. This melody represents someone who feels isolated within the crowd.

**Example 10.2:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 9–17, Isolation melody in Cl. 1

Bass Clarinet finally joins the ensemble at measure 19, and answers Clarinet 1 canonically, as seen in example 10.3.

**Example 10.3:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 17–24, Isolation melody in canon between Cl. 1 and B. Cl.

This momentum continues until measure 40, when the ensemble is in unison for the first time. However, it does not resolve the unsettling and battling nature of the movement. Instead, it is a “hurried unison” between the voices, bringing no resolution and ushering the ensemble into the next section.<sup>136</sup>

The meter suddenly changes from 7/8 to 4/4 for two measures, with nothing but half notes that grow from a *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*. The unstable 7/8 time signature returns at measure 50, bringing an even more rhythmically complex section—arguably the hardest section in the entire piece. For ten measures (measures 50–60), the ensemble plays in three different time signatures creating the first occurrence of polymeter for this movement.<sup>137</sup> While notated as 7/8 across the ensemble, Clarinet 1 is actually playing in a duple meter—a combination of 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4—over the asymmetrical 7/8 meter created by Clarinets 2 and 3. Meanwhile, Bass Clarinet is in 5/4. The pattern realigns and repeats at measure 56, as seen in example 10.4.

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid. Spaulding describes this instance of unison as “hurried unison”—an instance where the voices come together after building the texture, but the character does not change.

<sup>137</sup> Polymeter is defined as “the simultaneous use of two or more metres; occasionally the term is used for the successive use of different metres in one or more parts”. Oxford Music Online, *Polymetre*, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e5270?q=polymetre&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e5270?q=polymetre&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed March 17, 2017.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 7/8 time. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 50-55) features a complex rhythmic structure with superimposed meters: 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, and 5/4. The second system (measures 56-61) shows the music realigning and repeating. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo) and *f* (forte). A vertical line in the second system indicates a repeat or a specific structural point.

**Example 10.4:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 50–56, Superimposition of 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, and 5/4 over 7/8, realigning and repeating in m. 56

After the repeat of this rhythmically complex section, measures 64–75 echoes the material from measures 24–35. The only change in notation is that the tied note in measures 64–65, performed by Clarinet 1, is now two octaves higher than before. The dynamics are no louder than *mezzo piano*, creating the idea of an echo. These twelve measures build slowly from *piano* for Clarinets 2 and 3 and *mezzo piano* for Clarinet 1 and Bass Clarinet to *forte* for all voices by the end of measure 75. A palette-cleansing grand pause occurs after the crescendo; except now, Bass Clarinet plays a rhythmically driving groove during the soprano clarinet’s sudden silence. This groove is answered in hocket by the soprano clarinets in measures 77, 79, 81, 83, and 85. The ensemble once again crescendos into measure 85 and decays to *pianissimo* by measure 90. This soft dynamic prepares the ensemble for another dynamic buildup followed by a sudden,

abrupt silence, ushering a return of the original melody in measure 95, as seen in example 10.5.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows measures 72-75, with a grand pause in measure 76. The second system shows measures 77-80, with a grand pause in measure 81. The third system shows measures 82-85, with a grand pause in measure 86. The score includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *mp*, *f*, and *ff*, and features a grand pause in measure 94. A black box highlights the grand pause in measure 94 across all staves.

**Example 10.5: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 72–95, Dynamic buildup to grand pause in measures 76 and 94**

At measure 95, the opening idea returns until measure 110. At this point, this movement moves to a new melodic idea. This idea is presented by Clarinet 1 alone from

measures 111–118. This idea is repeated in the following eight measures, but the dynamic is softer while the rest of the ensemble plays the lyrical idea at *forte*, as seen in example 10.6.

Cl. 1 *mf*

Cl. 2 *f*

Cl. 3 *f*

B. Cl. *f*

**Example 10.6: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 119–126, Superimposition of new rhythmic melody (Cl. 1) and lyrical melody (Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl.)**

A third long crescendo beginning in measure 123 builds to another sudden moment of silence in measure 126. Instead of presenting new material here, Spaulding moves the rhythmic idea to Clarinet 3. Clarinet 3 remains at a softer dynamic than the rest of the ensemble, even though the ensemble is collectively louder than at measure 119. Clarinet 2 repeats the lyrical idea exactly as before, while Bass Clarinet plays an articulated, accentuated version of it an octave lower. Clarinet 1, meanwhile, returns to the original melody from measure 9, only now playing it an octave higher, as seen in example 10.7.

The image shows a musical score for four clarinet parts: Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The music is in 7/8 time and B minor. The first system consists of four measures. Cl. 1 plays a sustained melodic line. Cl. 2 plays a melodic line with dynamics *mp* and *ff*. Cl. 3 plays a rhythmic line with dynamics *f*. B. Cl. plays an accentuated rhythmic line. The second system also consists of four measures, continuing the same patterns.

**Example 10.7: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 127–134, Superimposition of isolation melody (Cl. 1), lyrical melody (Cl. 2), rhythmic melody (Cl. 3), and accentuated lyrical melody (B. Cl.)**

At measure 135, Clarinet 3 joins the ensemble at a *fortissimo* and repeats the rhythmic idea an octave higher. This repetition brings the ensemble in unison rhythmically in measure 142. After four measures, the key changes to B minor and each clarinet voice draws away from the rhythmic content to a held note. By measure 150, Clarinet 3 is the only voice providing any rhythmic movement.

This move to B minor only lasts for 14 measures, suddenly switching to F-sharp minor at measure 160. The ensemble decrescendos here from *forte* at measure 160 to *pianissimo* by measure 164. Here, Clarinet 3 begins a canon that passes to Clarinet 1 at measure 165 and Clarinet 2 at measure 166. By measure 173, the soprano clarinets are in unison rhythm, playing in thirds. Bass Clarinet enters at this point with a

rhythmically augmented version of the lyrical melody from measures 119–126.

Polymeter returns once again during this melodic restatement; here, the soprano clarinets are in 7/8, while the Bass Clarinet is in 4/4, as seen in example 10.8.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is in A major (two sharps) and 7/8 time. Cl. 1, Cl. 2, and Cl. 3 are in 7/8 time, while B. Cl. is in 4/4 time. Dynamics include p and mp.

**Example 10.8:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 173–181, Polymeter of 7/8 (Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3) and 4/4 (B. Cl.)

The material in measures 173–184 is repeated again in measures 185–196. The dynamic is one level higher than before, and the Bass Clarinet line is an octave lower than previously. Measures 197–206 transitions into 3/4 time by measure 207. Although this time signature seems symmetrical, Clarinet 2 destabilizes the pulse with hemiolas at measure 211 and is joined by Clarinet 3 in measure 215. This offset rhythm communicates how things might seem stable on the surface, as evidenced by the change in time signature and Clarinet 1’s lyrical, dotted-half-note melody, but yet there still are, and may always be, underlying issues and strife. The following example 10.9 also shows a canon of the lyrical melody, with Clarinet 1 opening the canon in A major. Seven

measures later Bass Clarinet begins the canon material on an F $\sharp$  but varies the interval relationships, slightly, in comparison to the Clarinet 1 melody. Clarinet 2 also enters on an F $\sharp$  in measure 220, but stays true to the intervallic relationships that are presented originally by Clarinet 1. Clarinet 3 provides the final entrance in a replica of the original Clarinet 1 melody in measure 223, completing the alternating entrances of the melodic material.

**Example 10.9:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 209–225, Dotted-half-note melody canon entrances

“Solitude in a Crowd” ends with a chorale for all four clarinet voices. However, this seemingly tranquil chorale grows more and more dissonant as the final measure approaches. Spaulding describes the ending chorale as follows:

Toward the end, even though it has resolved from a tempo and rhythmic perspective to something relaxed, harmonically it is still

very jarring, especially toward the end. It is reminiscent of the experience of going through what was so very jarring and very harmful, possibly, to the individual. It is one of those traumatic moments, like if you are claustrophobic and you go into an elevator. You end up in the fetal position thinking “Oh god! Why did that happen?” That’s the similar effect I was going for here for the end. We’ve gotten to where we can relax; we are in a bit of a safe zone, but we still haven’t been able to escape.<sup>138</sup>

The chorale opens in F-sharp minor. The chords change every two measures until finally ending up with a struggle between jarringly dissonant notes—D, D#, A, and A-sharp—at measure 242. The final chord at measure 244 sounds as if it is the functioning dominant; although missing the third (an A#), F# is in Clarinet 3 and Bass Clarinet, C# in Clarinet 1, and E-natural (the lowered seventh) in Clarinet 2, as seen in example 10.10. The chord leaves the listener hoping for a resolution that never comes, as the quartet instead moves on to the next movement, “Solitude in Persona”.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is in 3/4 time and F-sharp minor. It shows a dynamic buildup from *pp* to *ff* and then to *ppp* over several measures, culminating in a grand pause and a final unresolved F#7 chord. The notes for the final chord are: Cl. 1 (C#), Cl. 2 (E), Cl. 3 (F#), and B. Cl. (E).

**Example 10.10:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”, mm. 235–245, Final buildup to a grand pause and final unresolved F#<sup>7</sup> chord

<sup>138</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, December 31, 2016.

“Solitude in Persona” is a brief, three-minute movement that is through-composed in the concert key of D minor (E minor for the quartet).<sup>139</sup> It uses a prerecorded accompaniment comprised of piano and synth-pad, which is played while the quartet performs. Meanwhile, the instrumentation changes to four B-flat clarinets—with Bass Clarinet switching to soprano clarinet. Additionally, Clarinets 2, 3, and 4 should perform their parts offstage, while Clarinet 1 remains onstage, embodying the “pure isolation” that Spaulding had in mind for this movement.<sup>140</sup>

The pulsing of the prerecorded accompaniment mimics a heartbeat, which Spaulding incorporated to mimic the total deprivation of sensation brought about by the padded, unlit, and soundless isolation chambers used in prisons or mental institutions.

Spaulding expands further:

It is the quietest room in the world. They’ve padded it all up, and most normal people can’t stay in there for longer than a couple of minutes or so, or they will literally start going insane. The sound of your heartbeat drives you insane if you listen to it over and over again for an extended period of time...It’s crazy to think about. You can’t stay in there by yourself for so long, otherwise you’ll start hearing yourself moving or growing. That’s the creepiest thing. Even in silence there is no such thing as no sound at all. It is impossible to get that. That’s why that whole background track is a distorted, messed-up piano sound, and it’s got that heartbeat there. That keeps repeating through the whole entire thing. It’s that person’s heartbeat with all these other distortions and sounds going on. I got a really dark and crunchy, yet warm, synth-pad sound that goes underneath and makes the pedal tone.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> The concert key is mentioned here as a statement that the prerecorded synthesizer is in the key of D minor. All other statements of key areas and pitches are the written keys and pitches for B-flat clarinets/bass clarinet.

<sup>140</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, December 31, 2016. There are currently no performance instructions for this within the score, but the composer suggests this to create the desired effect of physical loneliness – “Solitude in Persona”.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

The accompaniment maintains a steady pulse, which helps the ensemble on and offstage keep in time. The opening measures of the prerecorded accompaniment may be seen in example 10.11.



**Example 10.11:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in Persona”, mm. 1–7, Opening measures of heartbeat figure by prerecorded piano/synth-pad

The quartet plays a static, languid melody on top of this continuous pulse. These long-winded sighing figures (as seen in example 10.12) bring a sense of sadness and wistfulness to this movement.

**Example 10.12:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “Solitude in Persona”, mm. 8–16, Sighing figure across ensemble

The quartet also creates its own dynamic waves and pulses with long crescendos and decrescendos. For example, the ensemble swells from *piano* to *mezzo piano* and back in measures 8–11, *piano* to *mezzo forte* in measures 12–16, and *piano* to *forte* in measures 17–22. Clarinet 1 swells from *mezzo piano* to *forte* in measures 25–31, climbing to the altissimo register by measure 30 and increasing the impact of the

crescendo. A final wave from *mezzo forte* to *forte* occurs in Clarinet 1 in measures 33–41; an especially long and steady crescendo. After a B minor chord of support from Clarinets 2, 3, and 4 at measure 38, Clarinet 1 plays alone with the prerecorded accompaniment in measure 39, and reaches its dynamic peak in measure 41. This peak is the loudest point in the movement. The loneliness of Clarinet 1 continues until measure 51 when Clarinets 2, 3, and 4 present three more long-tone sighs that diminish in volume until the *piano* dynamic is established by Clarinet 1 in measure 57. The closing measures (43–68) die away slowly, while the heartbeat also slows until the final pulse on the downbeat of the last measure.

The final movement, “The Mind in Solitude”, digs even deeper into the skewed perceptions that envelop those with mental illness. It is the only movement with a true formal structure—ABA, and it begins in the key area of E major. Chart 10.2 at the end of the chapter captures the overall form of this movement. The first twenty-two measures (the introduction) use greatly contrasting themes to capture how a person can seem normal on the outside, even though the mind is riddled with anxiety, nervousness, and aggression. “The Mind in Solitude” begins with this nervous and aggressive energy from Clarinet 2, 3, and Bass Clarinet with forceful, *staccato* sixteenth notes, while Clarinet 1 opens with a soft and flowing melody in E major—a normal exterior, masking the restlessness beneath, as seen in example 10.13. The melody in Clarinet 1 is reminiscent of the religious tune “Jesus Loves Me”; although not Spaulding’s intent, he related that this accident makes the movement even more dark and ominous.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

The image shows a musical score for four clarinet parts. The top staff is for Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), which plays a peaceful theme in a 'dolce mp' dynamic. The bottom three staves are for Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), which play forceful sixteenth-note figures in 'f' dynamics. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The dynamics for Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. are marked 'f' at the beginning and 'mp' in the middle, with 'f' again at the end of the passage.

**Example 10.13: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”, mm. 1–7, Peaceful Cl. 1 theme against forceful sixteenth-note figures in Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl.**

At measure 22, the war between internal strife and exterior peacefulness ends— with the internal taking over and forming the A section. Now in E minor, Clarinets 2 and 3 reiterate their aggressive opening sixteenth-note figure, only now at a very dissonant minor second interval. These two voices then trade off opposing rhythms at measure 24 with Clarinet 1 adding to the unsteadiness at measure 29 with a four-note grouping of wide intervallic leaps from the altissimo to the clarion register, as seen in example 10.14. The four-note grouping on the first beat of measure 29 is an important theme in this movement, reappearing multiple times throughout.

The musical score consists of three systems of staves for Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Clarinet 3, and Bass Clarinet. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system (measures 22-30) shows Cl. 1 with a whole note chord and a fermata, Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 with a rhythmic motor of eighth notes, and B. Cl. with a whole note chord and a fermata. The second system (measures 31-35) shows Cl. 1 silent, Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 continuing the rhythmic motor, and B. Cl. silent. The third system (measures 36-40) shows Cl. 1 with a melodic line starting with a sixteenth-note triplet, Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 continuing the rhythmic motor, and B. Cl. silent. Dynamics include *ff*, *pp*, *f*, *mp*, and *mf*.

**Example 10.14: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”, mm. 22–30,  
Cl. 2 and Cl. 3 material in opposing rhythms with wide intervallic leaps in Cl. 1**

Bass Clarinet remains silent until the 9/8 meter change at measure 36. After returning to the dissonant rhythmic motor of Clarinets 2 and 3 at measure 37, the melodic material repeats with only slight alterations at measure 40. Here, the Clarinet 1 line is an octave

lower, the Clarinet 2 and 3 lines are an octave higher, and Bass Clarinet joins Clarinet 1 canonically on the third beat of measure 40.

Clarinet 2 and 3's minor-second, opposing-rhythm motive came to Spaulding while he was at the Chamber Music Institute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2013. A similar motive used in a string quartet he heard while there inspired him to recreate the incessant inner arguments of someone with a mental illness in a similar fashion, musically:

When I went to [the Chamber of Music Institute], one of the student composers there... wrote this string quartet while he was there, and the whole thing—for about a couple of minutes of the beginning of it—was the members of the quartet going around and around, but they would change and be very chromatic... Dr. White listened to that, and he got so excited about it. He said “I love it! It’s like four people just arguing across the cliff at each other. ‘I hate you!’ ‘I hate you!’”, and he raised his fists and everything. It was a really impressionable moment for me.<sup>143</sup>

At measure 46, Clarinet 1 repeats the sixteenth-note figure from measure 29 over and over again, rolling into the second occurrence of 9/8 meter in measure 49. Bass Clarinet repeats this material in canon, as seen in example 10.15.

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The score is in 4/4 time and is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 46-49) shows a falling sixteenth-note figure in Cl. 1 and B. Cl. marked *mf*, and an opposing rhythmic motive in Cl. 2 and Cl. 3. The second system (measures 50-57) shows a falling sixteenth-note figure in Cl. 1 and B. Cl. marked *ff*, and an opposing rhythmic motive in Cl. 2 and Cl. 3.

**Example 10.15:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”, mm. 46–49, Opposing rhythmic motive (Cl. 2 and Cl. 3) and falling sixteenth-note figure in canon (Cl. 1 and B. Cl.)

The material thickens considerably in measures 50–57, as the entire ensemble plays *forte* while performing lines that are not in unison. Embodying a mind drowning in its multitude of neuroses, Clarinets 1 and 3 pick up the falling sixteenth-note figure in canon while Bass Clarinet plays a groove reminiscent of the first movement, with Clarinet 2 adding depth to this nervous energy with interjectory sixteenth-note groups, as seen in example 10.16.

The image displays a musical score for four instruments: Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first system shows measures 50-53. Cl. 1 and Cl. 3 play a falling sixteenth-note figure, while the B. Cl. plays a groove. Cl. 2 plays a sixteenth-note interjection. The second system shows measures 54-57, where the instruments continue their respective parts. Dynamics markings include *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

**Example 10.16: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”, mm. 50–53, Superimposition of falling sixteenth-note figure (Cl. 1 and Cl. 3), B. Cl. groove and Cl. 3 sixteenth-note interjections**

These four measures are repeated, followed by a call and response section in measure 58. After a written-out repetition of the four previous measures, measure 58 presents a call and response section for the ensemble. Bass Clarinet repeats its groove from the first and second beats of measure 50 and soprano clarinets respond in the second half of the measure. This interplay continues until measure 61, with soprano clarinets joining in unison at measure 62. Bass Clarinet continues with its groove, playing the full figure this time from measure 50–53, as seen in example 10.16. The ensemble here shifts suddenly to *mezzo piano*, contrasting sharply with the near-incessant loud dynamics up to this point. This phrase lasts for four measures and is repeated in measures 66–69 at *mezzo forte*.

Measure 70 begins an eight-measure transition into the B section, using an articulated version of the four-note grouping prevalent throughout most of the A section. A long crescendo from *forte* to *fortissimo* spans measures 70–76 and a *molto accelerando* through measures 74–76. Measure 77 is silent, an abrupt pause allowing the pounding rhythm and the forceful *fortissimo* to clear the air. Clarinet 1 then enters alone at *pianissimo* at measure 78, opening the B section.

The B section introduces no new material. Instead, it repeats and develops the external theme. This B section presents this theme in E major, and it contrasts the A section by representing a moment of reprieve and acceptance of the inner workings of the mind. The melody representing external perception, first presented by Clarinet 1 in measure 2, reappears in measure 78, now once again in E major. Although the tempo has slowed from  $\text{♩} = 140$  to  $\text{♩} = 70$ , the notation allows the melody to remain at the same perceived speed as before. Example 10.17 compares these two versions of the melody (measures 2–6 and measures 78–82). The new texture and character of this contrasting chorale section continues through measure 98 with staggered entrances of long tones from the rest of the ensemble – Clarinet 2 at measure 80, Clarinet 3 at measure 82, and Bass Clarinet at measure 86.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Clarinet 1. Both staves are in E major (three sharps) and 4/4 time. The top staff, labeled 'Cl. 1', shows measures 2-6 with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 140$ . The music consists of a sequence of notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), followed by a half note G4, a half note F#4, and a whole note E4. The dynamics are marked 'dolce mp'. The bottom staff, also labeled 'Cl. 1', shows measures 78-82 with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 70$ . The notes are the same as in the top staff but spaced out over a longer duration. The dynamics are marked 'pp' at the beginning and 'mp' at the end.

**Example 10.17: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”, mm. 2–6 and mm. 78–82, Comparison of peaceful theme in Cl. 1**

A sudden key change at measure 96 brings what appears to be the key of G major. This key lasts for only two measures before it is immediately changed to E minor by measure 98. This key change has added characterization from forceful *forte piano* dynamics with crescendos from the entire ensemble in measure 98. A brief moment of silence on the fourth beat of measure 98 breaks the momentum of the ensemble crescendo, and allows for an impactful *sforzando* within measure 99. The A' section returns unexpectedly at this measure, and the aggressive nature of the opening takes over once more. This section builds to a *fortissimo* by the end of measure 106, followed by a 2/4 measure of silence setting up the final character.

The following section (measures 108–140) incorporates the sounds and feel of Electronic Dance Music (EDM), with a constant eighth-note pulse from Clarinet 2, 3, and Bass Clarinet while Clarinet 1 plays a slower version of the four-note grouping from the A section on top, as seen in example 10.18.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Electronic dance music is defined as being “produced ‘from the beats up,’ in that melodies, vocals and sound effects are layered over a steady beat”, and it is “music intended primarily for dancing at nightclubs and raves.” Geeta Dayal and Emily Ferrigno, Oxford Music Online, “Electronic Dance Music”, [http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2224259?q=electronic+dance+music&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2224259?q=electronic+dance+music&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), Accessed February 26, 2017.

The musical score consists of four staves: Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. The first measure is in 4/4 time, the second in 2/4, and the third in 4/4. Cl. 1 starts with a *fp* dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note. Cl. 2 starts with a *fp* dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note. Cl. 3 starts with a *fp* dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note. B. Cl. starts with a *fp* dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a half note. The second measure is a rest for all parts. The third measure is in 4/4 time and features a four-note grouping above the pulse in Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. Dynamics include *mf* and *ff*. Articulations include accents and slurs.

**Example 10.18:** *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”, mm. 105–112, Electronic Dance Music section, with Cl. 1 four-note grouping above pulse in Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl.

This departure into a completely new direction, and the new key area of C major, depicts how one tries to cope with their mental issues, turning to outside influences to reshape their internal and external perceptions. Spaulding describes this section—and EDM’s influence on his compositional style—as follows:

Now we are taking... on the struggle of pushing out of this mindset. Many people try to escape from these conditions that they have in numerous ways. They are just trying to find ways to cope. One idea that really hit me with this section is that when people have problems they will try to find something to fill the void. Similarly, the EDM culture is something that I’ve paid attention to a lot recently and something that has really affected me. I’ve gotten more and more into

electronic music, and trying to write stuff of that sort of nature. I find myself listening to dubstep more than anything else on Spotify these days. So this section is very much dubstep-esque, like an electronic dance music type of section. We have that same four note idea from before coming back, and we've altered it just a little bit. Underneath it there is this “wubbing” synthetic part.<sup>145</sup>

The Clarinet 1 line constantly reminds the listener of these ever-present mental issues and struggles, while the rest of the ensemble represents the coping mechanism—the “escape”—to these problems. An abrupt six-measure closing section ends the piece, concluding surprisingly in G major. The abrupt ending is composed of ascending scales and a final chord at the loudest dynamic possible for the entire ensemble, as seen in example 10.19.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), Clarinet 3 (Cl. 3), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.). The music is in 4/4 time and G major. The score consists of six measures. In the first measure, Cl. 1 is silent, while Cl. 2, Cl. 3, and B. Cl. play ascending eighth-note scales. In the second measure, Cl. 1 enters with a sixteenth-note scale. In the third measure, Cl. 1 plays a sixteenth-note scale while the other instruments continue. In the fourth measure, Cl. 1 plays a sixteenth-note scale while the other instruments continue. In the fifth measure, Cl. 1 plays a sixteenth-note scale while the other instruments continue. In the sixth measure, all instruments play a final chord in G major. Dynamics are marked as *mf*, *f*, *ff*, and *fff* across the staves.

**Example 10.19: *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”, mm. 141–146, Closing ascending scales and chord in G major**

This seemingly out-of-place ending comments on the reality of mental illness, which often has no conclusion or satisfying resolution. Spaulding expands further:

The reason I did that was because ... [of the] previous section that deals with coping. There is really no finale to that. Mental illness doesn't just go away. So, that's why I ended it the way I did because

<sup>145</sup> Josh Spaulding, interview by author, email correspondence, December 31, 2016.

we are not completely satisfied. We are not completely satisfied because we have not really found a conclusion.”<sup>146</sup>

### Performance Guide

The first movement, “Solitude in a Crowd”, is difficult to keep in tempo during the hocket between Clarinets 2 and 3 in the opening measures. Metronome work as a pair is essential to achieve maximum comfort and ease in the execution of those measures. Similar metronomic difficulty arises with the superimposition of three different time signatures at measure 50. Clarinets 2 and 3 here should keep a steady eighth-note pulse, which should be established firmly during the two measures of 4/4 time immediately before (with nothing but half notes during its duration). Focused practice with a metronome with the Clarinet 2 and 3 lines is essential. Bass Clarinet’s line can then be added next, followed by Clarinet 1, so that each performer can hear how the parts work together as a single unit. As an additional practice aid, Clarinet 1 can continue the pulse from the half-note section to help the ensemble hear the alternating divisions in this section. The phrase repeats in measure 56, which can help the ensemble regroup again if needed. Spaulding wanted to provide wind players with complex rhythmic ideas often seen in percussion music, which is why this section contains polymeter.<sup>147</sup>

Later in movement one, the ensemble has to perform dynamics against natural tendency. The half notes of Clarinet 2, 3, and Bass Clarinet should be louder than Clarinet 1’s rhythmic line in measure 119. This is the opposite of what one would expect in this section, as one would instinctually downplay the slower-moving harmonies and

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

instead feature the faster, rhythmic line. However, the half-note, lyrical melody at this point is more important than the rhythmic melody.

In the second movement, “Solitude in Persona”, Clarinet 2, 3, and Bass Clarinet must leave the stage to perform this movement as intended. This allows Clarinet 1 to personify the concept of complete isolation. The rest of the ensemble should perform backstage or out of sight of the audience, if possible. Bass Clarinet needs an instrument stand on stage to allow the performer to change to soprano clarinet as this movement requires Clarinet 4 instead of bass clarinet. These offstage performers can then embody the voices within one’s mind, which one can hear—but cannot see.<sup>148</sup> The prerecorded accompaniment should start as soon as the remaining ensemble members reach the offstage destination. The texture of the second movement is thinner than the rest of Spaulding’s works, allowing the ensemble a moment of reprieve between the longer and intensive outer movements. Clarinet 2, 3, and Clarinet 4 should return to the stage after the movement’s completion.

In the third movement, “The Mind in Solitude”, Clarinets 2 and 3’s articulation in measure 22 should match in length and quality. The articulation should be light, so as to not bog down the tempo. This section tests articulation endurance for those clarinet lines.

The transition section at measures 70–76, the *accelerando* should not take place until measure 74. The Bass Clarinet should give its eighth notes here some length to keep measures 70–73 at a steady tempo. During the following grand pause in measure 77, all members of the ensemble should remain absolutely still, allowing for as much time as is

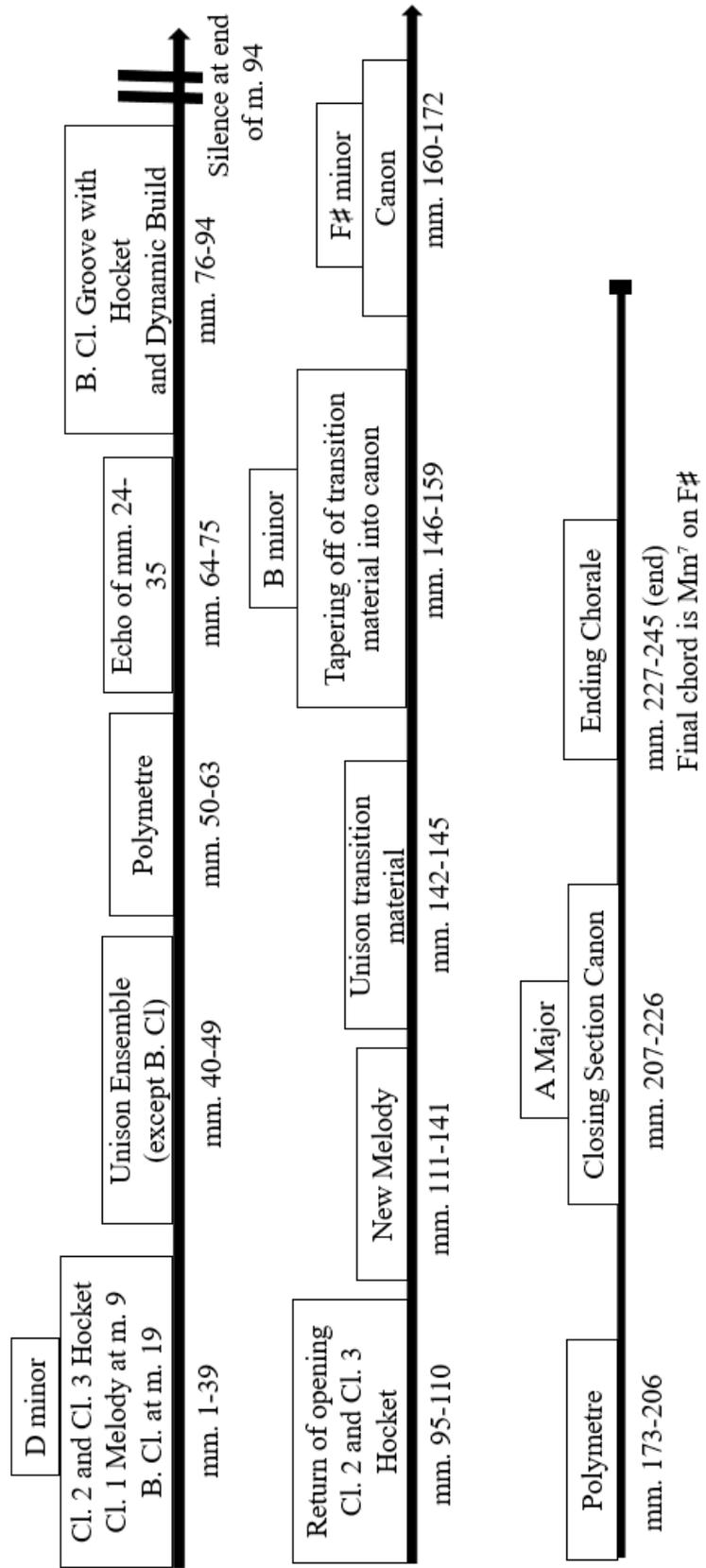
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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

needed for the sound from measure 76 to dissipate. The new character of the B section should grow out of this silence.

Although Clarinet 1 is marked at a *fortissimo* in measure 108, these notes should also grow and decay along with the dynamic swells in Clarinet 2, 3, and Bass Clarinet. This will help counterbalance the high tessitura of Clarinet 1's notes. The eighth-note accents in measures 108–139 should be heavy in weight, not in articulation, providing the proper heaviness of the pulse required to imitate EDM.

**Chart 10.1: Form and content for *Trois Emblems de la Solitude*, “Solitude in a Crowd”**



**Chart 10.2: Form and content of *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, “The Mind in Solitude”**

Introduction		B Section – mm. 78-98
E Major	E minor	E Major; G Major – m. 96; E minor – m. 98
Internal and External Perceptions introduced	External Conflict takes over	Internal Peace makes presence known
mm. 1-21	mm. 22-77	
<p>Four-note-grouping appears in m. 29            Transition into B Section begins at m. 70</p>		
A Section – mm. 99-106		Closing Section
E minor		Coping Mechanism Section
		Abrupt Ending
		C Lydian with four-note-grouping layered on top
		G Major
		mm. 141-146 (end)
		mm. 108-140
<p>Grand Pause            m. 107</p>		

## CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSION

The clarinet quartet works of Mike Curtis and Josh Spaulding are just a sample of the plethora of quartet chamber works that exist since the quartet genre's inception. Comparisons can be made between each composer and each of their works for the genre. Both utilize compositional techniques such as chordal building, hocket, and panning effect in their works. Each composer writes idiomatically for the clarinet by pushing the limits of technique without overstepping the boundaries of the instrument.

Several contrasts can be made between the works of Curtis and Spaulding, such as their use of texture, form, tonality, character, and style. Curtis provides melodies that mostly lie within the Clarinet 1 part with only harmonic support from the ensemble, while Spaulding offers thicker textures from the entire ensemble as he focuses on overall color and effect; a texture that often creates balancing issues within the ensemble. Curtis utilizes strophic and variations on rondo forms more often than any other form due to the influences and repetitiousness of song types such as jazz, klezmer, tango, and Mexican tunes (not necessarily folksongs, but songs influenced by his travels to the country). He also utilizes pentatonic tonalities as can be seen in the first movement of *Global Tour* – a tonality not seen in Spaulding's quartets – and a healthy mix of the major and minor tonalities. In fact, Spaulding lives within the minor tonalities more often than not, and only uses a major key area for the entirety of the “Aqua-Blue” movement from *Conversial Hairbows* and the ending sections of “Pink Identity” from *Conversial Hairbows*, *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, and *Shadows of Ourselves*. Additionally, Spaulding provides an opportunity for the quartet to perform with prerecorded, electronic

accompaniment for his *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, while Curtis dives into simple yet memorable melodies influenced by his favorite travel destination – Mexico. Spaulding reuses his characteristic composing traits like canon, lengthy crescendos and decrescendos for passages, polymeter, polyrhythm, and moments of the loudest dynamic possible followed by a grand pause within his clarinet works, while Curtis utilizes different styles and genres that influence his compositional style and his compositional output.

As an ensemble studies these pieces, it is important to point out that Curtis provides original works at varying levels of difficulty – the least difficult being *Bulgarian Bat Bite* (a current popular clarinet quartet work that is highly recommended by the author due to the use of demi-clarinets within the piece), although it is one for the advanced college-level group due to the piece requiring, a strong bass clarinet player with command over the entire instrument and a Clarinet 1 player that has fluent technique in the altissimo register. *Global Tour* consists of many different genres of music such as funk, jazz, klezmer, and tango which requires the ensemble to have knowledge and understanding of how to accurately represent these styles. *Mexican Fantasies* offers insight into Curtis’s influence from his travels, but the piece utilizes constant meter and rhythm changes requiring an ensemble with an understanding of the Mexican influence as well as a stable sense of tempo and rhythm. *Polyglot*, presumably the most challenging of these works, requires quick and frequent character, style, tempo, and key signature shifts throughout the lengthy one-movement work.

Spaulding's works require endurance of technique, embouchure, and breath for each individual and for the ensemble as a whole due to the length of each piece and the fact that none of his three works offer much time for rest from beginning to end. Overall dynamic balance for the ensemble and control of tone and technique throughout all registers of the instruments requires that each piece be adequately matched by the abilities of the clarinet quartet ensemble. Each of Spaulding's pieces carry a higher level of technical difficulty than seen in *Bulgarian Bat Bite* and *Global Tour. Conversial Hairbows* (also highly recommended by the author due to its showcasing of each member of the ensemble) provides the quartet with four movements that allows each member to get a moment in the spotlight, but the fifteen-minute work does require endurance, strong technique, and a bass clarinetist that has the ability to perform in a much more prevalent capacity than merely serving as harmonic support. *Shadows of Ourselves* may be the shortest in length of the three Spaulding quartets, but this free-form, one-movement work challenges each performer in articulation style and speed, endurance, and smoothness of dynamic control, as well as, asking the performers to understand the quick movement of melodic content from player to player. The final of the three Spaulding quartets, *Trois Emblèmes de la Solitude*, provides the ensemble with study in polymeter, the use of prerecorded and electronic accompaniment, and the task of emitting the concepts of mental illness placed into the piece by the composer.

The works of Mike Curtis and Josh Spaulding are to be included as staple pieces of the clarinet quartet repertoire. These composers use compositional techniques that have stood the test of time, and each composer uses these techniques in different ways to

enhance their compositions providing clarinet quartets with original works that are challenging yet interesting. The uniqueness of these compositions pushes the boundaries of form and tonal concepts, style, character, and technique while maintaining integrity to the instruments and providing the clarinet quartet repertoire with new and varying literature.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jennifer Reeves is currently a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and is a Doctoral Candidate in Clarinet Performance. She serves as principal in the UNL Symphony Orchestra and Philharmonia Orchestra, and is an active participant in the university's Graduate Chamber Music Program.

Reeves achieved a Master's degree in music from UNL in May 2014. Prior to moving to Lincoln, she attended the University of Tennessee at Martin (UTM) where she won the First Annual Friends of Music Concerto Competition in 2009. During her time at UTM, she was a substitute clarinetist for the Jackson Symphony Orchestra in Tennessee and the Paducah Symphony in Kentucky. In the summer of 2012, the Four Stikx Clarinet Quartet (co-founded in 2010 at UTM) was invited to present recitals at Mahidol University and Silpakorn University in Thailand (as a member of the quartet and as a soloist). In addition to her university studies, Reeves has worked with other world renowned teachers and performing artists at the 2015 Savvy Musician in Action Entrepreneurship Workshop, 2011 Aria International Summer Academy, and the 2009 Belgian Clarinet Academy.

Reeves teaches clarinet at Cornerstone Academy of Clarinet, Union College and Doane University in Nebraska, and founded the Hijinx Clarinet Quartet in 2015. Reeves and the Hijinx Clarinet Quartet are active guest artists throughout the country presenting clarinet quartet works with innovative visual collaborations all over the world. The group has been invited to perform at the University of Alabama-Birmingham's Clarinet Symposium, National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors National

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