

Spring 4-2018

SPIRITED ABERRATIONS: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE RECITAL

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SPIRITED ABERRATIONS: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES FOR
GRADUATE RECITAL

by

Nathan A. Balester

B.M., Ithaca College, 2016

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Music Degree

School of Music

In the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

August 2018

RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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GRADUATE RECITAL

By

Nathan A. Balester

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Music

in the field of Clarinet Performance

Approved by:

Dr. Eric P. Mandat, Chair

Dr. Christopher Walczak

Dr. Douglas Worthen

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 13, 2018

AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

NATHAN A. BALESTER, for the Master of Music degree in MUSIC, submitted on APRIL 13, 2018, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: SPIRITED ABERRATIONS: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE RECITAL

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Eric P. Mandat

The purpose of this research paper is to provide a detailed overview examination of the lives and compositional styles of certain composers as well as how the specific pieces selected for this recital reflect those elements in the form of program notes. The composers and pieces examined in this paper are respectively Robert Mucsynki's *Time Pieces Op. 43* (1984), Derek Bermel's *Thracian Sketches* (2003), Roberto Sierra's *Tema y Variaciones* (1999), Béla Bartók's *Contrasts* (1940), and Eric P. Mandat's *Chips Off the Ol' Block* (1999). Each chapter provides a brief biographical section, a description of that composer's compositional style, and a brief analysis of the piece to be performed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my graduate committee Dr. Eric P. Mandat, Dr. Christopher Walczak, and Dr. Douglas Worthen for their guidance and mentorship during my time at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and for their assistance in the completion of this document. I would like to thank Dr. Mandat specifically for assistance with my clarinet performance technique and providing new avenue of approach to performance. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr. Walczak and Dr. Worthen for their academic support and respective expertise in the fields of music theory and music research. I would also like to thank my parents whose persistent support and reassurances have invaluable to my success and growth as a musician.

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INTRODUCTION

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries the clarinet and bass clarinet have provided composers with a myriad of new sonic realms to explore. From use in symphony orchestras to folk ensembles, repertoire for clarinets of various ranges can be found in numerous styles from a diverse set of cultures. This recital is meant to demonstrate the variety of directions composers have taken writing for the clarinet in. Most of the pieces in this program, the exception being Bartók's *Contrasts*, were composed within the last half-century.

The title, *Spirited Aberrations*, comes from the high-energy, and oftentimes dance-like nature of several of these pieces. These pieces also have a tendency to bend and morph common harmonic and rhythmic elements in order to create aberrations of the source materials. At least three of the pieces here, *Thracian Sketches*, *Tema y Variaciones*, and *Contrasts*, have a strong element of folk influences in their form, harmonic content, or rhythmic content. These influences can be heard quite clearly in those pieces; however, it quickly becomes apparent how the composers blend their own unique sound with the original materials.

CHAPTER 1

ROBERT MUCZYNSKI'S *TIME PIECES*

Robert Muczynski (1929-2010) was an American composer and scholar who produced almost fifty published works during his lifetime. Walter Simmons describes Muczynski as a "...member of the third generation of 20th century American traditionalists..."¹, citing the fact that his music is reminiscent in a variety of ways to earlier American composers such as Leonard Bernstein, Walter Piston, and Samuel Barber. Much of Muczynski's concert music falls under the genre of chamber music with an emphasis on writing for woodwinds and piano.² Muczynski spent twenty-three years teaching composition as head of the composition department at the University of Arizona from which he retired in 1988. There has not been a great deal of scholarly work published on the music and life of Muczynski as compared to some of his contemporaries despite the popularity of several of his works such as *Time Pieces* and his *Flute Sonata*.³

Muczynski's neo-classical style is in many ways a reflection of the cultural "melting pot" metaphor often applied to the United States as a whole. While various aspects of Muczynski's music seem directly influenced by other composers, both American and European, they combine to create a unique compositional voice. Muczynski's music merges troupes found in both classical and jazz music often

¹ Walter Simmons, "Muczynski Flute Sonata, Duos for Flute and Clarinet, Cello Sonata, Fantasy Trio, Time Pieces," *Fanfare: The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 41, no. 1 (1998): 320.

² Ibid., 319.

³ Ibid.

incorporating harmonic and intervallic material characteristic of the jazz idiom.⁴

Time Pieces (1983) was composed for Mitchell Lurie, a world renowned clarinetist and long-time teacher at the University of Southern California.⁵ The work was premiered by Lurie and Muczynski at the 1984 International Clarinet Association Clarinet Congress in London.⁶ Since its premiere, *Time Pieces* has become an immensely popular chamber work among clarinetists. In a liner note, pianist Dmitry Samogray asserts that “Muczynski’s most popular work in any genre is undoubtedly his *Time Pieces for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 43*.”⁷ While this assertion remains subjective, there is no question that the work remains extremely popular and is performed often.

There is not much information that comes directly from Muczynski in regard to his *Time Pieces*. However, in the liner notes of a record album of his music, Muczynski has been quoted as saying:

This composition is a suite of four contrasting pieces, each highlighting some specific characteristic of the clarinet in terms of range, technical prowess, color, and expressiveness.... The title of the work, *Time Pieces*, has nothing to do with mechanical clocks or watches. It is not a play on words but rather an awareness that everything exists in time: history, our lives and...in a special way...music.⁸

⁴ Simmons, 320.

⁵ Robert Muczynski, “Interview with Bruce Duffie,” Bruce Duffie: Lecturer, Producer, 1987, accessed February 22, 2018. <http://www.bruceduffie.com/muczynski>.

⁶ United States Marine Band, “Chamber Music Series: Sunday, October 8, 2017,” United States Marine Band, 2017, accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.marineband.marines.mil/Portals/175/Docs/Programs/171008.pdf?ver=2017-09-18-100846-160>, 5.

⁷ Robert Muczynski, *Robert Muczynski: Chamber Music*, Ginevra Petrucci (flute), Gleb Kanasevich (clarinet), Dorotea Racz (cello), and Dmitry Samogray (piano). Brilliant Classics BC95433, 2017, compact disc, notes. 4.

⁸ Marine Band, 5.

It is important to note the intentions of the composer regarding this piece. As it was composed for a distinguished clarinetist, Muczynski sought to explore the full dynamic and technical range of the instrument through four distinct movements.

Though Muczynski's goal was to compose four contrasting pieces, each possessing specific characteristics, there are certain motivic elements and structures which can be traced throughout all four movements of the work. This analysis of *Time Pieces* will trace one such element though all four movements. In particular the use of a characteristic trichord consisting of a perfect fourth coupled with either a major or minor second. It has been labeled as the "Muczynski chord" by Gregory Kostraba in his dissertation.⁹

An analysis of this work conducted by Eric Mandat and Boja Kragulj explored the prominence of cell structures and how Muczynski's frequent use of octatonic and pentatonic scales led to constant instances of symmetry in his music.¹⁰ The concept of symmetry along with the predominance of pentatonic and octatonic materials help support the importance of the Muczynski chord throughout *Time Pieces* as the chord members can be derived from each scale. The versions containing the minor second interval are consistent with an octatonic collection and versions of the chord containing the major second fit into a pentatonic collection.

Kostraba recognized that this specific interval collection appears in much of

⁹ Gregory Kostraba, "The First Piano Trio by Robert Muczynski" (Dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 2003), 25-29. <https://etd.ohiolink.edu>.

¹⁰ Eric Mandat and Boja Kragulj "Performance Analysis: Permutations of Cell Structures in Robert Muczynski's *Time Pieces*," *The Clarinet* 24, no. 1 (December 2014): 66.

Muczynski's music and is presented in several inversions. The inversion type is determined by where the interval of the major or minor 2nd fall within the collection. The standard iteration of the chord is voiced a perfect 5th and perfect 4th with the second appearing at the top.¹¹ In *Time Pieces* this chord appears throughout the opening material of the first movement in the piano part left hand as shown by figure 1.

Figure 1: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43, I*, mm. 1-4.¹²



The first inversion of the Muczynski chord occurs as the interval of a second occurs in the middle range of the tri-chord rather than at the top. In *Time Pieces* we can see an example of such an inversion in the piano part on the downbeat of m. 12 in the second movement shown in figure 2. This occurrence of the chord is missing the perfect fifth which is occasionally placed at the bottom of the chord to create a sense of harmonic stability. The second inversion of this chord which features the second as described by Kostraba is absent from *Time Pieces* in any structurally prominent way.

¹¹ Kostraba 27

¹² Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces for Clarinet & Piano, Op.43*, (Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser Company, 1985), 2.

Figure 2: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43, II*, mm. 12-15.¹³



In the first movement of *Time Pieces* the Muczynski chord appears at several prominent structural points. As shown by figure 1 it is the very first sound of the piece and continues as the clarinet introduces the primary thematic material in m. 3.

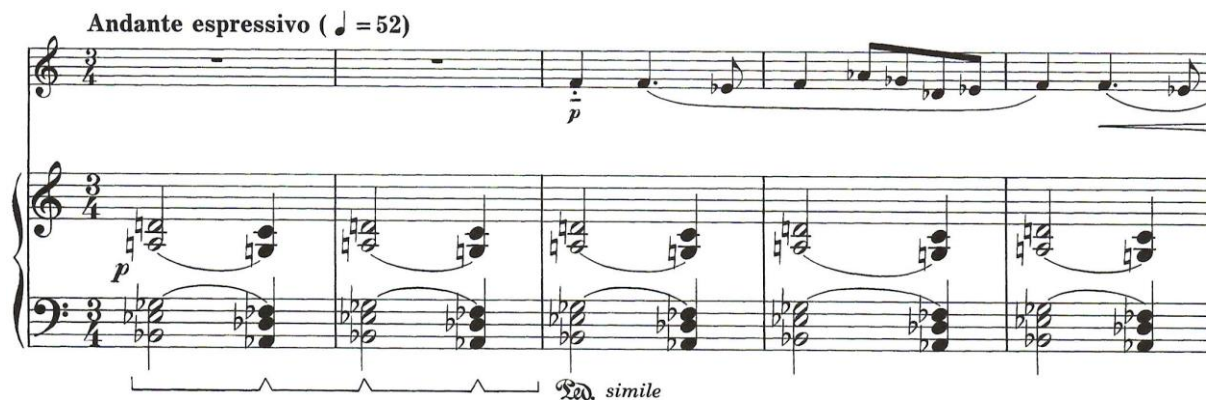
Throughout the rest of the movement the chord reappears with every repetition of the primary theme such as the restatement in m. 33 and the recapitulation in m. 115.

In the second movement of *Time Pieces* the Muczynski chord appears more often as a linear organization rather than as stacked harmony. Once again, first chord sounded by the piano shown in figure 3 is an iteration of the Muczynski chord. This example is voiced in a way that masks the characteristic interval of a second creating a major seventh rather than a minor second. A melodic outlining of the two different iterations of the chord appears in the clarinet part on beats 2 and 3 of m. 4. The G-flat and D-flat create the interval of a perfect fourth. The fact that both pitches are harmonically supported by the accompaniment helps to highlight the structural importance of these two pitches on a foreground level. On either side of this melodic perfect fourth are major seconds, A-flat – G-flat, and D-flat – E-flat respectively. While it would be possible to interpret this moment as either an outlined [A-flat, G-flat, D-flat] chord, or [G-flat, D-flat, E-flat] chord, a stronger argument can be made for the former.

¹³ Muczynski, 10.

While neither the A-flat nor E-flat is harmonically supported, the E-flat functions as a passing tone between the D-flat and the F on the downbeat of m. 5. Since the A-flat occurs on a primary beat and does not appear to be serving an auxiliary function it can be read as outlining the Muczynski chord.

Figure 3: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43, II*, mm.1-5.¹⁴



In the third movement of *Time Pieces* Muczynski makes frequent use of his characteristic chord once again by means of stacked harmonies. The chord appears in the melody line of this section on both the middle and foreground level. At the foreground level, the eighth notes leading to dotted quarter notes on the downbeats of mm. 2, 3, and 4 respectively, all outline the various voicings of the Muczynski chord.

¹⁴ Muczynski, 9.

Figure 4: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43, III*, mm. 1-6.¹⁵

The musical score is for measures 1-6 of Robert Muczynski's *Time Pieces Op. 43, III*. It is in 4/4 time, marked 'Allegro moderato' with a tempo of 116-120. The score is written for piano and melody. The piano part is marked 'mp' and 'sempre legato', with a 'poco' marking at the end. The melody line is marked 'gracefully'. The score includes various musical notations such as dotted quarter notes, eighth notes, and slurs. A 'Ped. simile' marking is present in the piano part.

On a middle-ground level, the chord is outlined by the dotted quarter notes in the melody line. The second D in m. 1 is connected to the C-sharp and A in m. 2, creating the characteristic trichord. The same pitch collection is present in mm. 5-6 with the slight change of the A leaping up an octave and out of the texture. Measures 3 and 4 feature the trichord of [D, E, A] respectively, creating a fourth between the D and A with the E functioning as the major second neighbor.

In addition to the melodic outlining of the trichord there is an abundance of vertically stacked Muczynski chords on strong metric points in this section. Beginning on the upbeat of beat 2 in the second measure, the harmonic areas of the melody and accompaniment are temporarily out of sync before reconvening on the downbeat of

¹⁵ Muczynski, 14.

m. 3. This harmonic disagreement results in the appearance of the trichord in various iterations on metric strong points. On the down beat of m. 2 the chord [B, C-sharp, F-sharp] occurs, and on the downbeat of m. 4 the chord [B, E, F-sharp] occurs. It is also possible to interpret the chord occurring on the upbeat of beat two in both mm. 2 and 4 as the Muczynski chord [E, F-sharp, A]. The significance of at least two of these trichords [F-sharp, B, C-sharp] and [E, F-sharp, A] is made clear later in this section when the piano clearly articulates those trichords in m. 13 shown in figure 5.

Figure 5: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43, III*, m. 13.¹⁶



The final prominent ways by which Muczynski incorporates his characteristic trichords into this movement are in the transition into the B section, as an ostinato figure throughout the B section at m. 20, and as dramatic punctuations during a sudden textural change from mm. 48-53. The above three examples can be seen in figures 6 and 7 respectively.

¹⁶ Muczynski, 15.

Figure 6: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43*, III, mm. 20-23.¹⁷



Figure 7: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43*, III, mm. 48-53.¹⁸



The fourth movement of *Time Pieces* incorporates the Muczynski chord in a variety of ways, many of which have appeared in previous movements. In the *Introduction: Andante molto* section which features the clarinet alone, the trichord presents itself melodically at the end of several phrases. The most prominent example of this occurs in the section from mm. 8-10 shown in figure 8. Throughout this phrase descending arpeggios articulate this trichord, beginning in m. 8 [A-flat, G, D] followed by [F, E, B] then in m. 9 [D, C-sharp, G-sharp], [B, B-flat, F], [E, B, B-flat] and finally [A-flat, G, D].

¹⁷ Muczynski, 15.

¹⁸ Ibid., 17.

Figure 8: Robert Muczynski, *Time Pieces Op. 43, IV*, mm. 8-10.¹⁹



During the second section of this movement, *Allegro energico*, the trichord appears in various ways as seen and discussed in previous movements. The chord appears as the primary material for an ostinato accompaniment once again in m. 70 much like it is in figure 6. In m. 72 the chord is presented in its full primary form as [D, G, A] with the G doubled in the bass creating the perfect fifth interval on the bottom. As an accented punctuation, the chord [F, B-flat, C] and a few transpositions of it are present in the accompaniment beginning in m. 76. The context of this example is like that of the role of the chord shown in figure 7.

This characteristic trichord labeled as “the Muczynski chord” by Gregory Kastraba is clearly present throughout much of *Time Pieces*. Muczynski’s compositional language includes the used of pentatonic and octatonic scales from which these trichords are easily synthesized. The fact that these chords appear repeatedly and in significant places, such as the very first articulation of the piece, demonstrates their structural importance to the piece, supporting the assertion that they are not simply a by-product of the modes in which Muczynski writes.

¹⁹ Muczynski, 19-20.

CHAPTER 2

DEREK BERMEL'S *THRACIAN SKETCHES*

Derek Bermel (b.1967) is an American born composer and clarinetist whose musical vocabulary spans a plethora of styles and genres. Bermel has studied with numerous composers across the United States including William Bolcom, William Albright, and Henri Dutilleux as well as several ethnomusicologists and folk musicians around the world including André Haju and Nikola Iliev. Bermel has received many awards ranging from Fulbright fellowships to commissions from the Koussevitzky foundation.²⁰

Bermel's vast background in such a wide variety of musical styles provides him with a broad palate of music devices. He is praised in a review of his record *Soulgarden* by Mic Holwin as being "Equally at ease in a New York City nightclub or a dusty village in West Africa and with a keen enthusiasm for rap, Messiaen, klezmer or Monk, Bermel is comfortable with any manifestation of the human soul."²¹ An examination of Bermel's cataloged works reflects just such a claim. Bermel has performed on stage at Carnegie Hall as the soloist for his own clarinet concerto *Voices* in addition to regularly performing the front man for an R&B group Peace by Piece.

Frank Oteri, another native New York composer, addresses a growing

²⁰ Derek Bermel, Biography, Derek Bermel: Composer, Clarinetist, 2013, accessed February 27, 2018, derekbermel.com/biography.

²¹ Derek Bermel, *Soulgarden: Derek Bermel: Chamber Works*, The Borromeo String Quartet, Paul Neubauer (viola), Fred Sherry (cello), Tara Helen O'Connor (flute), Bob Ingliss (oboe) Derek Bermel (clarinet), Heleen Hulst (violin), and Christopher Taylor (piano), Composers Recordings, Inc. NWCR895, 2000, compact disc, notes by Mic Holwin. 1.

phenomenon of composers having this multiplicity of musical identities in an article titled *21st Century Schizoid Music*. In the article he cites several contemporary composers who have achieved success in multiple styles of musical composition including Evan Ziporyn and Mason Bates. Oteri is critical of the tendency of early 20th century composers to circumscribe their output to a single or very few styles. In contrast, he praises the more contemporary trend of composers having more versatility and ultimately a more unique compositional voice by drawing from a wide variety of influences either within one work or between several. Oteri refers to this trend for numerous musical identities as “schizoid music”.²²

With reference to the musical identity of Derek Bermel, Oteri describes the following:

Derek Bermel is schizoid music personified. He’s a rising star in the world of contemporary chamber and orchestral music whose virtuosic, occasionally sardonic works... His two musical identities as well as the audiences for them are quite distinct, although soul inflections occasionally surface in his sextet ‘Soul Garden’.²³

This excerpt provides a clearer concept of the points Oteri was making in his article regarding musical identities. Bermel is at home in several styles and genres of music performance and composition. The piece that will be discussed here, *Thracian Sketches*, is an example of one such style.

Thracian Sketches is a piece inspired by the time Bermel spent studying Thracian folk music with Nikola Iliev in Bulgaria. Thracia is a region of Southern Bulgaria

²² Frank Oteri “Twenty-Frist Century Schizoid Music: Not a Manifesto,” *World Literature Today*, (March-April 2006): 13.

²³ Ibid.

which extends into Greece and borders Turkey's western edge. Bermel studied the folk music of the region, referred to as *Thracian*, by spending hours transcribing and memorizing songs in a variety of meters and modalities played by Iliev. Following his time in Bulgaria, Bermel was commissioned to compose a piece for the Westchester Philharmonic Orchestra for which he drew on what he learned studying with Iliev, this piece he titled *Thracian Echoes*.²⁴

Bermel composed *Thracian Sketches* after being asked to give a recital while he held a residency in Brazil. On his approach to creating the piece, Bermel says "I revisited the material upon which I had based the orchestra piece and began experimenting with phrases from several faster instrumental songs..."²⁵ Bermel goes on to list the songs he used to create *Thracian Sketches* along with their time signatures. They are the 5/8 *Payduchko Xhoro*, 7/8 *Mizhka Richenitza*, 9/8 *Daychovo Xhoro*, and the 11/16 *Krivo Pazardzhishko Xhoro*.²⁶

Stylistically, *Thracian Sketches* is minimalist. Formally, the piece functions as an extended crescendo of intensity beginning slowly and distantly, with a soft triple-piano dynamic marking and a relatively simple metric configuration of 5/8 [2+3]. The beginning melodic material shown in figure 9 is an example of the *Payduchko Xhoro* Bermel used throughout this composition. By the end of the piece, the tempo has drastically increased with the last marking being "Più vivo possibile" at a triple-forte dynamic. The

²⁴ Derek Bermel "Thracian Sketches: Program notes," Derek Bermel: Composer, Clarinetist, 2013, accessed March 2, 2018, <http://www.derekbermel.com/thraciansketchnotes>.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

metric organization during the second half of the piece becomes significantly more complex as the meter changes from one measure to the next, obscuring a sense of pulse. Figure 10 shows an example of this complex rapid metric modulation.

Figure 9: Derek Bermel, *Thracian Sketches*, mm. 1-4.²⁷



Figure 10: Derek Bermel, *Thracian Sketches*, mm. 238-240.²⁸



Bermel includes several instructions for ornaments as well as several atypical character markings to assist a performer with Thracian style of this piece. Figure 9 includes the marking *growloso* which is not a standard musical term. By this marking Bermel intends for the performer to occasionally growl into the clarinet as they play, creating a moderately distorted and harsh tone. A note on the first page of the score gives the following three directions. “All mordants, reverse-mordants, and grupetti are whole-tone unless otherwise noted”, “Embellishments should be played toward a note’s end”, and “The performer may choose to circular breath, or may cut short selected

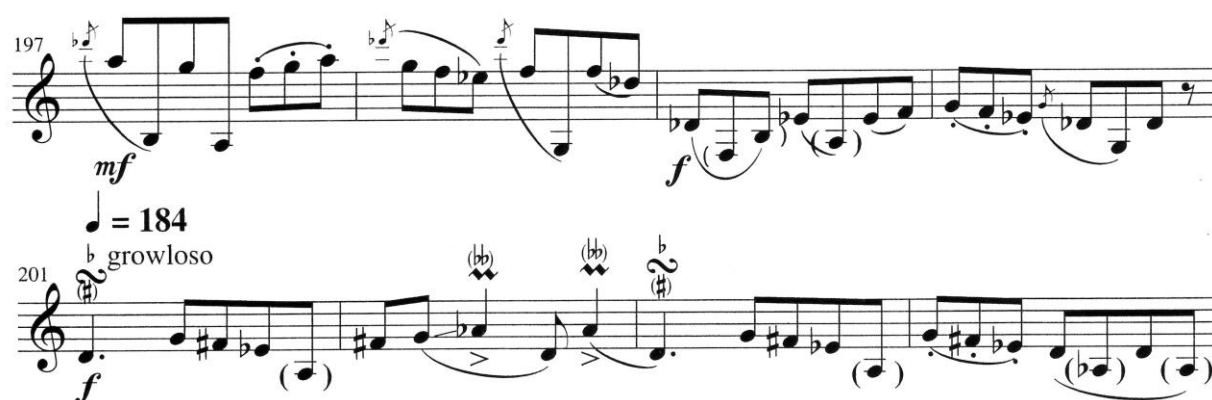
²⁷ Derek Bermel, *Thracian Sketches* (New York: X Pyre Music, 2003), 2.

²⁸ Ibid., 8.

notes”.²⁹ The whole-tone mordents are necessary because Bermel slightly altered the mode of some of the original materials in favor of a whole-tone scale.

In other sections he makes use of a double-harmonic major scale, also known as the Byzantine scale, and the Hungarian minor scale to alter the character of the piece and move the music forward. Figure 11 shows an example of one such modal shift from using a whole-tone scale to a D Hungarian minor scale. Bermel adds accidentals to the ornamental figures to reflect the modal shift.

Figure 11: Derek Bermel, *Thracian Sketches*, mm. 197-204.³⁰



The placement of the ornaments towards the ends of notes is an important feature of this style. In a discussion of his music at the Behind the Music Forum, Bermel describes how in the Thracian style downbeats are often obscured by ties and ornaments held across bar lines. This characteristic element of the style can be seen in both figures 9 and 10 above. The placements of the mordants towards the end of these tied notes serves to obscure the placement of the downbeat even more.³¹

²⁹ Bermel (2003), 2.

³⁰ Ibid., 6.

CHAPTER 3

ROBERTO SIERRA'S *TEMA Y VARIACIONES*

Roberto Sierra (b.1953) is an American composer of Puerto Rican decent. Sierra's primary musical studies took place at the Puerto Rico Conservatory and the University of Puerto Rico before he traveled to Utrecht and eventually Hamburg where he studied with György Ligeti. Sierra was appointed as the composer-in-residence of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra after gaining recognition for his orchestral works, and was later appointed to a position at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.³²

Sierra's compositional style is best described as a hybrid of the modernist traits of Ligeti and the more rhythmic, folk, and jazz elements of Puerto Rican and Latin-American music.³³ The blending of these two influences can be clearly seen throughout one of Sierra's early clarinet works *Cinco Bocetos* (1984). Each of the five distinct movements of *Cinco Bocetos* juxtaposes characteristics of Puerto Rican folk music such as tonal, songlike melodies, with atonal and rhythmic modernist traits from Europe.³⁴

³¹ The Institute for Advanced Study, *Behind the Music Forum: Derek Bermel and Rossen Milanov*, Youtube, (Princeton, NJ: 2011) accessed February 18, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ANbxmvA3RQ>

³² Laurie Shulman, "Sierra, Roberto," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001-), accessed March 3, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.siu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000042553>.

³³ Alejandro Lozada, "Roberto Sierra's Compositions for Solo Clarinet," (Diss., University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 2008), 6.

³⁴ Ibid., 10.

Sierra refers to the combination of more abstract compositional processes with strong jazz elements as the "tropicalization" of European modernism.³⁵ The term is appropriate for Sierra's style; the addition of energetic rhythms and Latin-jazz oriented harmonic materials conveys a sense of cultural influence from Central American and Caribbean cultures while remaining firmly abstract. In discussing his own compositional voice, specifically about his works for clarinet, Sierra states "I relish melody, while at the same time I don't shy away from dissonant or complex sound".³⁶

Tema y Variaciones (1999) is a high energy chamber work for clarinet and piano that was commissioned by Franklyn Esenberg. Esenberg was familiar with Sierra's work from his time with the Milwaukee Symphony and *Tema y Variaciones* was composed for the bass clarinetist of the MSO at the time, William Helmers.³⁷ The opening statement of the theme shown in figure 12 features a highly syncopated asymmetric rhythm indicative of Sierra's Caribbean influence. These rhythmic cells used at the beginning of *Tema y Variaciones* are derived from Sierra's previous works for clarinet, specifically his *Sonata* and Movements I and V of *Cinco Bocetos*.³⁸ The opening material from *Cinco Bocetos* Movement I: Preludio is shown in figure 13. While the rhythms are not identical, there are clear similarities between the two.

³⁵ Shulman.

³⁶ Richard Faria (clarinet), with Xak Bjerken (piano), Robert Bridge (percussion), and Heidi Hoffman (cello), *Roberto Sierra: Clarinet Works*, Fleur de Son Classics, 2007, compact disc, notes. 1.

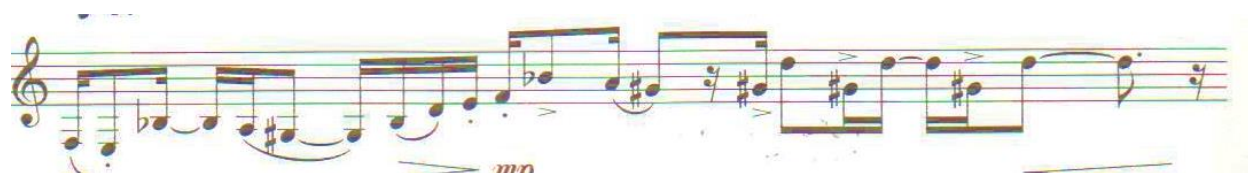
³⁷ Lozada, 72-73.

³⁸ Faria, 2.

Figure 12: Roberto Sierra, *Tema y Variaciones*, mm.1-6.³⁹



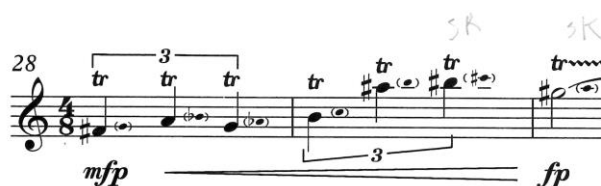
Figure 13: Roberto Sierra, *Cinco Bocetos*, I "Preludio," m.1.⁴⁰



The theme of this piece is presented in its entirety in the first two measures of the piece. The first seven notes in the clarinet from the D to the E comprise the primary thematic material which is varied throughout the rest of this work. Figure 12 shows several transpositions of the theme during the first six measures. The theme appears between the A and B in m. 2, the C and D, in m. 3, the F-sharp and the first G-sharp in mm. 4-5, and the second G-sharp and B-flat in mm. 5-6. Throughout the highly syncopated introduction section the theme appears in inversion, retrograde, and is occasionally fragmented as collections of three or four pitches. The opening section concludes with a clear presentation of the theme shown in figure 14. The theme is found in the primary notes of the trills with the final 3 pitches leaping an octave higher out of the texture.

³⁹ Roberto Sierra *Tema y Variaciones* (Verona, NJ: Subito Music Publishing, 2003), 1.

⁴⁰ Roberto Sierra *Cinco Bocetos* (Verona, NJ: Subito Music Publishing, 1984), 1.

Figure 14: Roberto Sierra, *Tema y Variaciones*, mm. 28-30.⁴¹

An important trait of this theme is that it fits within a fixed setpachord, Forte name 7-1. Throughout *Tema y Variaciones*, Sierra will often abandon the intervallic organization of the initial theme but remain rooted within a transposition of the 7-1 pitch-class set. Examples of how he varies the theme while remaining in the 7-1 PC set are shown in figures 15 and 16.

Figure 15: Roberto Sierra, *Tema y Variaciones*, mm. 133-134.⁴²Figure 16: Roberto Sierra, *Tema y Variaciones*, mm. 164-175.⁴³

⁴¹ Sierra (2003), 1.

⁴² Sierra (2003), 6.

⁴³ Ibid., 7.

The theme can be heard with differing amounts of clarity depending on the variation. In one of the clearest examples, the variation beginning in m. 75, the theme is presented with the same intervallic organization as at the start of the piece. The only deviation is an abundance of accented grace notes belonging to the specific transposition of 7-1 used in that variation.

In other variations the theme can be more obscured and in some cases as shown by figure 17. The theme is presented in its prime form while simultaneously being presented in retrograde. Beginning on the downbeat of m. 143 in the piano part, the theme is outlined by the accented notes ending on the c-sharp in the third beat of m.146. Juxtaposed against the pianos theme, the clarinet has the theme with the in the same transposition presented in retrograde also punctuated by accent marking.

Figure 17: Roberto Sierra, *Tema y Variaciones*, mm. 143-146.⁴⁴

143 **Veloz, ♩ = 126+**

146

Tema y Variaciones is a representative work of Sierra's compositional style blending modernist European harmonic practices with traditional Puerto Rican and jazz elements. The atonal nature of this piece is complemented by an abundant use of a variety of asymmetric dance rhythms derived from Caribbean folk music throughout.

⁴⁴ Sierra (2003), 12.

CHAPTER 4

BÉLA BARTOK'S CONTRASTS

Béla Bartók (1881-1945) was a Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist, and pianist. During his life, Bartók acted primarily as a performing musician. His primary source of income was performing and teaching privately, and it was not until near the end of his life and after that Bartók became recognized for his compositions and contribution to the cataloging of the folk music of Eastern Europe. In contemporary discourse, Bartók is widely recognized as one of the foremost Hungarian composers and musical pioneers of the 20th century.⁴⁵ In 1961 Pierre Boulez asserted that Bartók is among the “Great Five” of contemporary composers along with Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern.⁴⁶ Many of his works remain popular, spanning numerous genres from solo piano works to orchestral pieces.

Bartók was exposed to music performance at an early age. Being the child of two amateur musicians, he was encouraged to begin playing the piano and after learning several simple folk dances on the piano began studying actively with his mother. The young Bartók quickly improved, learning increasingly challenging dance pieces.⁴⁷ It warrants noting that some of Bartók’s earliest studied pieces were dance forms that were heavily influenced by his Hungarian culture. This early immersion in the music of

⁴⁵ Malcolm Gillies, “Bartók, Béla,” in *Groves Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001-), accessed March 5, 2018, <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.siu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40686>

⁴⁶ Leon Botstein, “Out of Hungary: Bartók, Modernism, and the Cultural Politics of Twentieth-Century Music” in *Bartók and His World*, ed. Peter Laki (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 5.

⁴⁷ Gillies (2001).

his native culture may have influenced his decision later in life to collect and catalog many authentic Hungarian folk melodies.

Bartók actively began collecting Hungarian folk material shortly after meeting Zoltan Kodály, another Hungarian composer with strong interest in ethnomusicological history of their homeland. Prior to the early 20th century, many aspects and aesthetics of Hungarian culture, including the music, reflected traits of by western European countries such as France, Austria, and Germany. Bartók's initial interest in the "peasant music" of his home country stemmed from his desire to reform Hungarian culture. His goal was to help cultivate a sense of unity through a stronger national identity in Hungarian culture.⁴⁸ In 1944 Bartók said on the subject of his folk music interest "As modern Hungarians... we felt the mighty power of the rural music in its most undisturbed forms: a power... from which to develop a musical style imbued... with emanations from this virgin source".⁴⁹

Contrasts was a piece commissioned by clarinetist Benny Goodman in 1938. Goodman wanted the piece to be composed specifically for himself and Hungarian violinist Joseph Szigeti for whom Bartók also wrote his *Rhapsody No. 1*. Composing for an acclaimed clarinetist provided somewhat of a challenge for Bartók as he had little experience writing for the clarinet as a chamber instrument. Notably, *Contrasts* is the only chamber work composed by Bartók to include a wind instrument.⁵⁰ Initially,

⁴⁸ Botstein, 22.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 23.

⁵⁰ Malcolm Gillies "Final Chamber Works," in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. Malcolm Gillies. (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1993), 332-333.

Contrast was composed as a two-movement piece consisting of what are now the first and third movements. This was a deliberate choice by Bartók in his desire to foster Hungarian national identity. In his time spent researching the folk music of Hungary Bartók noticed a common structural trait. He writes on the subject "... the playing of a slower and a faster piece in succession – a composite structure of higher order is, or was, in frequent use on Hungarian and Rumanian soil".⁵¹ Bartók added the middle movement, *Pihenő*, after the premiere performance in January of 1939.⁵²

Contrasts was one of only a few of Bartók's works to gain popularity in the United States during his lifetime. Partially due the fact that Benny Goodman and Joseph Szigeti retained exclusive performance rights to *Contrasts* for three years after the premiere, it is believed that much of the early interest in the work is due to its ties to Benny Goodman.⁵³ Following the premier performance, Bartók went on tour with Szigeti and Goodman performing *Contrasts* around the United States. During the tour he did not receive much recognition for the work as many of those who attended the concerts seemed to be there to see Goodman perform.⁵⁴

Having been commissioned in 1938, *Contrasts* was composed during a period of prodigious output by Bartók. This era of Bartók's compositional output features

⁵¹ Vera Lampert "Violin Rhapsodies," in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. Malcolm Gillies. (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1993), 282.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Michael Tippett, Sir, ed., *Béla Bartók Letters* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1971), 272.

⁵⁴ Botstein, 11.

prominent use of the folk idiom he and Kodaly studied earlier in their careers.⁵⁵ In addition to *Contrasts*, Bartók composed his *Violin Concerto No. 2*, *Sonata for 2 Pianos & Percussion*, and his *Music for Percussion, Strings, & Celesta* in the late 1930s. These works all share characteristic Hungarian folk music elements.

Contrasts draws heavily on Hungarian folk tradition and reflects that folk-informed style of Bartók in several ways. The most apparent is in the style and titles of the individual movements, especially the first and third which were the two movements of the initial composition. In addition to the folk elements, there is a general theme of contrast in a musical sense throughout the work, the final title of *Contrasts* supports this concept. The work was originally *Rhapsody* and was later changed to *Two Dances* and *Three Dances* after the addition of the second movement. Eventually Bartók settled on *Contrasts*.⁵⁶

Malcolm Gillies discusses the idea of musical contrast throughout the piece at some length.

The tone colours of the three instruments always remain distinct, and only reluctantly convey a sense of ensemble... In formal terms the contrast is built into the original slower-faster dance concept of the rhapsody and only heightened by the interpolated slow and flexible 'relaxation'. Bartók's unusual ending of the third movement in B-flat, and not the first movement's A, further emphasizes contrast at the expense of cultural unity.⁵⁷

The idea of contrast presents itself in a few more specific ways throughout the work in the form of juxtaposed rhythms and Bartók's use of mixed-modality throughout.

⁵⁵ Tippett, 182.

⁵⁶ Gillies (1993), 332.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

The first movement is titled “*Verbunkos*” which translates to “Recruiting Dance”, a dance form Bartók had incorporated into earlier compositions. Many of his early works make use of *verbunkos* dismissed as peasant music by Bartók’s peers.⁵⁸ Despite early criticisms Bartók continued including *verbunkos* in addition to other elements of Hungarian folk music in his compositions to realize his goal of developing a stronger cultural identity for Hungary.

The rhythmic materials of the first movement make frequent use of dotted figures to create a march-like character that has a very strong duple feel. Figure 18 illustrates how Bartók establishes this “rugged” and “heroic” character as described by him. Shortly after establishing the march feel, Bartók begins to deviate from the duple feel by juxtaposing triplets against the dotted figures. Figure 19 shows an example of this rhythmic layering. The piano maintains a higher-level pulse with constant quarter notes while the violin plays triplets against the clarinet *verbunkos* figure. This excerpt also serves to demonstrate the theme of musical contrast throughout the piece.

⁵⁸ Sándor Kovács, “Final Concertos,” in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. Malcolm Gillies. (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1993), 541.

Figure 18: Béla Bartók, *Contrasts*, I, mm. 1-4.⁵⁹

Moderato, ben ritmato, ♩ = ca 100-94

Violin

Clarinet in A

Piano

Figure 19: Béla Bartók, *Contrasts*, I, mm. 33-35.⁶⁰

The third movement is entitled “Sebes” and in the critical score has the translated subtitle of “Fast Dance”.⁶¹ This movement features two primary folk components. The violinist must use a second violin with an altered tuning with the E string being lowered

⁵⁹ Béla Bartók, *Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano*, ed. by Nelson Dellamagoire and Peter Bartók (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 2002), 2.

⁶⁰ Bartók, 6.

⁶¹ Bartók, 17.

a half-step and the G string being raised a half-step, the tuning which was used by Hungarian fiddlers.⁶² The second prevalent folk aspect of “Sebes” is the use of asymmetric Bulgarian dance rhythms shown in figure 20.

Benjamin Suchoff describes the various types of Bulgarian rhythms present throughout Bartók’s music and labels this rhythm as a combination of a [3+2+3] structure he labeled *8b* the the [2+3] *paidushko* rhythm.⁶³ The resulting composite beat structure is {[3+2+3] + [2+3]}. This asymmetric dance structure differs greatly from the very strong duple meter which the movement begins in further developing the theme of contrast in the all three movements.

Figure 20: Béla Bartók, *Contrasts*, III, mm. 132-134.⁶⁴

The image shows a musical score for Béla Bartók's *Contrasts*, III, measures 132-134. The score is for piano and features a complex asymmetric rhythm. The tempo is marked "Più mosso, ♩ = 330 (♩ = 25)". The rhythm is indicated as (3+2+3)+(2+3) over 8. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes dynamics like "mf" and "mp", and a "change to A" instruction. The bottom staff has a "Red." marking.

⁶² Eric Tishkoff, *Contrasts by Béla Bartók*, ET's Clarinet Studio, (2001) accessed March 27, 2018. <http://www.tishkoff.com/articles/bartok.htm>

⁶³ Benjamin Suchoff, *Béla Bartók: Life and Work* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2001), 211.

⁶⁴ Bartók, 24.

CHAPTER 5

ERIC P. MANDAT'S *CHIPS OFF THE OL' BLOCK*

Clarinetist and composer Eric P. Mandat (b.1957) has been a pioneer of contemporary clarinet performance since he began composing in the early 1980s. Building upon inspiration drawn from fellow clarinetist and composer William O. Smith, Mandat incorporates a variety of extended techniques for the clarinet and bass clarinet into his compositions such as quarter tones, multiphonics, flutter tonguing, and glissandi.⁶⁵

Dr. Mandat studied clarinet at the University of North Texas with O. Lee Gibson, at Yale University with Keith Wilson, and at the Eastman School of Music with both Stanley Hasty and Charles Neidich as a clarinetist, and with Robert Morris and Warren Benson as a composer.

In addition to an active performance and composition career, Dr. Mandat has taught clarinet, improvisation, as well as various courses in music theory and analysis at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale since 1981. In 1999 he received the University's Outstanding Scholar award granting him the title of Professor and Distinguished Scholar, the highest academic title at the Southern Illinois University Carbondale.⁶⁶ Several dissertations and even more theses have been produced with

⁶⁵ Suzanne M. Crookshank, "Selected Music of the Clarinetist/Composer Eric Mandat: A Performer's Perspective," (Diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2007), 1-2.

⁶⁶ Eric Mandat, *Eric Mandat: Professor, Distinguished Scholar, Faculty Biography*, SIU Carbondale School of Music, (2018) accessed February 28, 2018. <http://cola.siu.edu/music/faculty-staff/faculty/by-alpha/mandat.php>

their primary focus on Mandat's unique compositional style and contributions to the clarinet repertoire.

As a solo instrument, the bass clarinet has not received the same amount of attention throughout the 20th century as other members of the clarinet family. Traditionally the bass clarinet served a supportive role in large and chamber ensembles with occasional solos emerging from the texture like that in the third movement of Ferde Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite*. In the latter half of the 20th century composers have begun to experiment more with the bass clarinet as a solo instrument which has given birth to a robust repertoire for the bass clarinet.

When Mandat composed *Chips Off the Ol' Block* (1999) he had a goal in mind, to explore how some of his own compositional idioms would sound and feel on the instrument. This piece was precipitated by the purchase of a bass clarinet with a range to low C by Southern Illinois University. Mandat previously had not had access to such an instrument, so once he did he began to explore the virtuosic possibilities of the instrument. Through experimentation with extended techniques and simply playing "what felt fun", Mandat came up with the thematic materials for *Chips Off the Ol' Block*.⁶⁷

In the program notes included in the score, Mandat describes the premise behind *Chips Off the Ol' Block* in the following way "... a little motive is introduced and begins to develop, but suddenly the development is either interrupted by or morphs into a new motive".⁶⁸ When composing this piece, Mandat aimed to contrast the motivic material

⁶⁷ Eric Mandat. Personal interview with author, March 1, 2018, Carbondale, Illinois.

⁶⁸ Eric Mandat, *Chips Off the Ol' Block* (Cirrus Music, 1999), i.

between each section creating unique characters throughout the piece. After each character motive has been presented, the motives begin to coalesce and become a “super motive”.⁶⁹ As the motives begin interacting with one another they dissolve from retaining the rhythmic and intervallic integrity to becoming rhythmically elided with one another, retaining their character only through their intervallic content.⁷⁰

Mandat describes one reoccurring motive that occurs throughout *Chips Off the Ol’ Block* which he refers to as the “Tarzan” motive, shown in figure 21, which appears in the third measure of the piece. This Forte, 3-2 pitch-class set is present at several structural levels in the opening section of the piece. According to Mandat this motive is also often used as transitional material between sections with different characters. Figure 22 illustrates one such moment of transition. After the repeat is broken in m. 25, the “Tarzan” motive appears between the G, A-flat, and B-flat. Two measures later the motive is once again present in an inverted form between the F, G, and A-flat. After a few more measures of transition material a new multiphonic character motive is introduced in m. 31.

Figure 21: Eric Mandat, *Chips Off the Ol’ Block*, mm.1-3.⁷¹

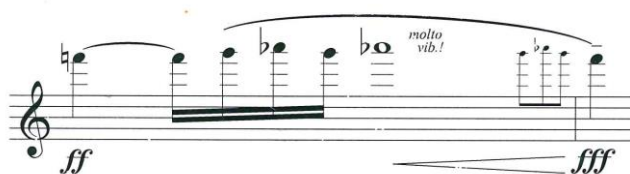


⁶⁹ Mandat (1999), i.

⁷⁰ Mandat (2018).

⁷¹ Mandat (1999), 1.

Figure 22: Eric Mandat, *Chips Off the Ol' Block*, mm. 25-28.⁷²



Another characteristic element of Mandat's compositional language present throughout *Chips Off the Ol' Block* is his use of alternating perfect fourth and tritone intervals.⁷³ The ascending sixteenth note line in m. 2 demonstrates this particular element. The rest of the introductory section features a high number of tritone and perfect fourth leaps, which in turn prominently reappear in the final section of the piece.

In speaking on his own compositional process, Mandat says "Generally in all my music, and it is true here in this piece, when I have a couple of strong intervals early on, I'll try and find ways of using them, like this perfect fifth."⁷⁴ The fifth being referenced here is between the G and low C in the initial repeated materials of m. 1, see figure 21. Mandat incorporates the fifth in several ways, most prominently in the ascent of the thirty-second note flourish in m. 15 and as the low ostinato in the fourth large section of the piece starting near the top of page three shown in figure 23.

The third and fourth sections feature an octatonic modality, however Mandat differentiates the two sections through textural differences. The third section features multiphonic phrases and monophonic phrases alternating on after another shown in

⁷² Mandat (1999), 2.

⁷³ Mandat (2018).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

figure 23. The following section establishes the ostinato accompaniment of a fifth and mixes melodic figures in while maintaining the ostinato figure.

Figure 23: Eric Mandat, *Chips Off the Ol' Block*, mm. 34-45.⁷⁵

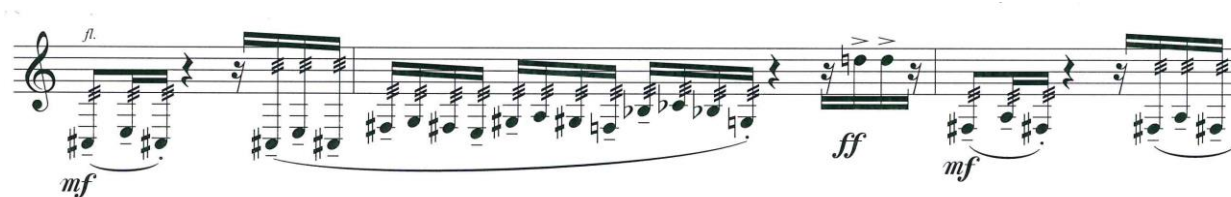
The musical score for Figure 23 consists of three systems. The first system features a treble staff with a melodic line starting on G4, marked 'p' and 'ord.', and a bass staff with a bass line starting on G2, marked 'pp'. The second system continues the bass line with a 'simile' marking. The third system repeats the first system's structure. Dynamics include 'p', 'pp', 'ord.', 'espress.', and 'p'.

The next major section of the piece features a swung motive which is constructed using a blues scale and is then sequenced through a blues progression. After several phrases in this strictly blues idiom, Mandat morphs the blues motive into what he refers to as the “motorcycle” motive by adding a flutter tongue to the low register notes creating a sound reminiscent of a motor. Along with the motorcycle motive, Mandat includes “car horns” as accented strait sixteenth notes punctuating the swung motor ideas.⁷⁶ Figure 24 shows the interplay of both the motorcycle and horn motives.

⁷⁵ Mandat (1999), 3.

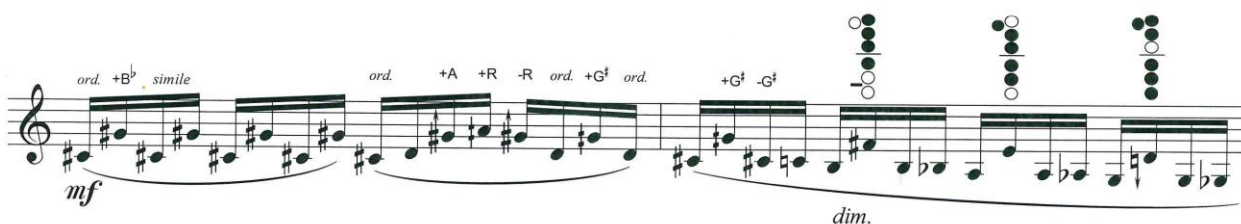
⁷⁶ Mandat (2018).

Figure 24: Eric Mandat, *Chips Off the Ol' Block*, mm. 93-97.⁷⁷



The final large section containing new materials features Mandat's signature use of quarter tones and artificial fingerings, shown in figure 25, to create atypical colors on the bass clarinet. This section is also the most intense of the piece with regards to tempo. The section is almost entirely straight sixteenth notes occasionally punctuated by a staccato eighth note at the end of a crescendo. Towards the end of this section the rhythmic activity slows and the dynamics become very soft before transitioning back to the motorcycle motive.

Figure 25: Eric Mandat, *Chips Off the Ol' Block*, mm. 116-117.⁷⁸



Chips Off the Ol' Block concludes with what Mandat describes as a "fiery cauldron of reckless abandon."⁷⁹ This climactic section blends all of the motives presented in the various other sections of the piece until they have lost all of their individual rhythmic integrity and exist only as their intervallic relationships. The very end

⁷⁷ Mandat (1999), 4.

⁷⁸ Mandat (1999), 5.

⁷⁹ Ibid, i.

of the piece features a quadruple forte quotation of the motorcycle motive. The final note is a half-step lower than it was previously, relative to the complimentary pitches of the motive. This slight alteration sounds a bit like a wrong note, yet it also creates a sense of finality to the overall work.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

*Southern Illinois University
School of Music
presents*

The Graduate Recital of
Nathan Balester, *clarinet*

featuring

Erinn Komschlies, *clarinet*

Jenny Kirby, *piano*



Series 2017-2018. No. 67.

Saturday, April 7, 2018. 7:30 p.m.

Old Baptist Foundation Recital Hall.

*The School of Music at Southern Illinois University
is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music.*

Mr. Balester presents this recital in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Music in Clarinet Performance.

Please turn off all cellular phones, pagers, and alarms throughout the length of the performance.

PROGRAM

Sonata for Two Clarinets and Piano (1998)

Allegro moderato
Adagio non troppo
Allegro vivo

GARY SCHOCKER
(b.1959)

Erinn Komschlies, *clarinet*
Jenny Kirby, *piano*

Thracian Sketches (2003)

DEREK BERMEL
(b. 1967)

Tema y Variaciones (1999)

ROBERTO SIERRA
(b.1953)

Jenny Kirby, *piano*

INTERMISSION

Chips Off the Ol' Block (1999)

ERIC P. MANDAT
(b.1957)

Time Pieces for Clarinet and Piano Op. 43 (1983)

Allegro risoluto
Andante espressivo
Allegro moderato
Andante molto – allegro energico

ROBERT MUCZYNSKI
(1929-2010)

Jenny Kirby, *piano*

Program Notes

Flutist and composer **Gary Schocker** is an internationally recognized performer and prolific composer. Beginning his musical studies as a toddler, Schocker's debut as a soloist came at the age of 15 when he performed in front of both the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. As a performer, Schocker continued to attract attention while studying at The Julliard School by winning a variety of competitions both in the United States and Internationally.

As a composer, Schocker has published nearly 300 works, several of which have won recognition and awards from organizations like the National Flute Association and the International Clarinet Association. His *Sonata for Two Clarinets and Piano* won first-prize in the 1996 International Clarinet Association composition contest. Schocker's compositional style is highly melodic and reminiscent of French composers such as Poulenc and Francaix, incorporating a sense of humor and drama alongside virtuosic technical passages.

The *Sonata for Two Clarinets and Piano* reflects these compositional traits quite clearly. The piece is in the standard 3 movement layout with the first and last movements being livelier and the middle movement slower and more lyrical. In all three movements the clarinets are heard both in dialogue with one another, occasionally seeming to argue, and playing in harmony as a duet. The melodic interplay of the clarinets creates a theatrical scene on stage where one can imagine the narrative taking place.

Derek Bermel (b.1967) is an American born composer and clarinetist whose musical vocabulary spans a plethora of styles and genres. Bermel has studied with numerous composers across the United States including William Bolcom, William Albright, and Henri Dutilleux as well as several ethnomusicologists and folk musicians around the world including André Haju and Nikola Iliev. Bermel has received many awards ranging from Fulbright fellowships to commissions from the Koussevitzky foundation. Bermel's vast background in such a wide variety of musical styles provides him with a broad palate of music devices. He is praised in a review of his record *Soulgarden* by Mic Holwin as being "Equally at ease in a New York City nightclub or a dusty village in West Africa and with a keen enthusiasm for rap, Messiaen, klezmer or Monk, Bermel is comfortable with any manifestation of the human soul."¹

Thracian Sketches is a piece inspired by the time Bermel spent studying Thracian folk music with Nikola Iliev in Bulgaria. Much of his time with Iliev was spent transcribing a variety of asymmetrically metered folk-dances Iliev would play. These dances and their meters included the 5/8 *Payduchko Xhoro*, 7/8 *Mizhka Richenitza*, 9/8 *Daychovo Xhoro*, and the 11/16 *Krivo Pazardzhishko Xhoro*.² Bermel embellishes these melodies with various ornaments such as mordents and grupetti and included other techniques representative of the Thracian style such as glissandi and growls.

Formally, *Thracian Sketches* is minimalist in composition. The piece grows from a soft, seemingly distant melody, increasing in intensity and volume until it reaches a frenzied climax with a restatement of the initial *Payduchko Xhoro* theme.

Roberto Sierra (b.1953) is an American composer of Puerto Rican decent. Sierra's primary musical studies took place at the Puerto Rico Conservatory and the University of Puerto Rico before he traveled to Utrecht and eventually Hamburg where he studied with György Ligeti. Sierra was appointed as the composer-in-residence of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra after gaining recognition for his orchestral works and was later appointed to a position at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.³

¹ Derek Bermel, *Soulgarden: Derek Bermel: Chamber Works*, The Borromeo String Quartet, Paul Neubauer (viola), Fred Sherry (cello), Tara Helen O'Connor (flute), Bob Ingliss (oboe) Derek Bermel (clarinet), Heleen Hulst (violin), and Christopher Taylor (piano), Composers Recordings, Inc. NWCR895, 2000, compact disc, notes by Mic Holwin. 1.

² Derek Bermel "Thracian Sketches: Program notes," Derek Bermel: Composer, Clarinetist, 2013, accessed March 2, 2018, <http://www.derekbemel.com/thraciansketchnotes>.

³ Laurie Shulman, "Sierra, Roberto," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001-), accessed March 3, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.siu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000042553>.

Sierra's compositional style is best described as a hybrid of the modernist traits of Ligeti and the more rhythmic, folk, and jazz elements of Puerto Rican and Latin-American music.⁴ Sierra refers to the combination of more abstract compositional processes with strong jazz elements as the "tropicalization" of European modernism.⁵

Tema y Variaciones (1999) is a high energy chamber work for clarinet and piano that was commissioned by Franklyn Esenberg. Esenberg was familiar with Sierra work from his time with the Milwaukee Symphony and *Tema y Variaciones* was composed for the bass clarinetist of the MSO at the time, William Helmers.⁶ The opening statement of the theme features a highly syncopated asymmetric rhythm indicative of Sierra's Caribbean influence. The theme of this piece is presented in its entirety in the first two measures of the piece and is repeated several times in succession at various transpositions.

Clarinetist and composer **Eric P. Mandat** (b.1957) has been a pioneer of contemporary clarinet performance since he began composing in the early 1980s. Building upon inspiration drawn from fellow clarinetist and composer William O. Smith, Mandat incorporates a variety of extended techniques for the clarinet and bass clarinet into his compositions such as quarter tones, multiphonics, flutter tongue, and glissandi.⁷ Dr. Mandat studied clarinet at the University of North Texas with O. Lee Gibson, at Yale University with Keith Wilson, and at the Eastman School of Music where he studied with both Stanley Hasty and Charles Neidich as a clarinetist, and with Robert Morris and Warren Benson as a composer.

In addition to an active performance and composition career, Dr. Mandat has taught clarinet, improvisation, as well as various courses in music theory and analysis at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale since 1981. In 1999 he received the University's Outstanding Scholar award granting him the title of Professor and Distinguished Scholar.

When Mandat composed *Chips Off the Ol' Block* (1999) he had a goal in mind, to explore how some of his own compositional idioms would sound and feel on the instrument. This piece was precipitated by the purchase of a bass clarinet with a range to low C by Southern Illinois University. Mandat previously had not had access to such an instrument so once he did, he began to explore the virtuosic possibilities of the instrument. Through experimentation with extended techniques and simply playing "what felt fun", Mandat came up with the thematic materials for *Chips Off the Ol' Block*.⁸

Mandat aimed to contrast the motivic material between each section of the piece, creating unique characters. After each character motive has been presented, the motives begin to coalesce and become a "super motive". As the motives begin interacting with one another they dissolve from retaining the rhythmic and intervallic integrity to becoming rhythmically elided with one another. Mandat describes this concluding sections as a "fiery cauldron of reckless abandon."⁹

Robert Muczynski (1929-2010) was an American composer and scholar who produced almost fifty published works during his lifetime. Walter Simmons describes Muczynski as "...a member of the third generation of 20th century American traditionalists..."¹⁰ citing the fact that his music is reminiscent in a variety of ways to earlier American composers such as Leonard Bernstein, Walter Piston, and Samuel Barber.

⁴ Alejandro Lozada, "Roberto Sierra's Compositions for Solo Clarinet," (Diss., University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 2008), 6.

⁵ Shulman.

⁶ Lozada, 72-73.

⁷ Suzanne M. Crookshank, "Selected Music of the Clarinetist/Composer Eric Mandat: A Performer's Perspective," (Diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2007), 1-2.

⁸ Eric Mandat. Personal interview with author, March 1, 2018, Carbondale, Illinois.

⁹ Eric Mandat, *Chips Off the Ol' Block* (Cirrus Music, 1999), i.

¹⁰ Walter Simmons, "Muczynski Flute Sonata, Duos for Flute and Clarinet, Cello Sonata, Fantasy Trio, Time Pieces," *Fanfare: The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 41, no. 1 (1998): 320.

Time Pieces (1983) was composed for Mitchell Lurie, a world-renowned clarinetist and long-time teacher at the University of Southern California.¹ The work was premiered by Lurie and Muczynski at the 1984 International Clarinet Association Clarinet Congress in London.¹¹ Since its premiere performance, *Time Pieces* has become an immensely popular chamber work among clarinetists.

There is not much information directly from Muczynski discussing his *Time Pieces*. However, in the liner notes of a record album of his music, Muczynski is quoted as saying with regards to the piece:

This composition is a suite of four contrasting pieces, each highlighting some specific characteristic of the clarinet in terms of range, technical prowess, color, and expressiveness.... The title of the work, *Time Pieces*, has nothing to do with mechanical clocks or watches. It is not a play on words but rather an awareness that everything exists in time: history, our lives and...in a special way...music.¹²

In *Time Pieces*, Muczynski draws from both pentatonic and octatonic scales for melodic and harmonic materials. As a result, there are many sections of the piece that reflect elements of jazz and blues due to the abundance of tri-tones and minor thirds existent in the octatonic realm.

Program notes by Nathan A. Balester.

¹ Robert Muczynski, "Interview with Bruce Duffie," Bruce Duffie: Lecturer, Producer, 1987, accessed February 22, 2018. <http://www.bruceduffie.com/muczynski>.

¹¹ United States Marine Band, "Chamber Music Series: Sunday, October 8, 2017," United States Marine Band, 2017, accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.marineband.marines.mil/Portals/175/Docs/Programs/171008.pdf?ver=2017-09-18-100846-160>, 5.

¹² Marine Band, 5.

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Research Paper Title:
Spirited Aberrations: Scholarly Program Notes for Graduate Recital

Major Professor: Eric P. Mandat