A Spectacle of Dance, Fantasy, and Time: Notes on Select Works for Clarinet

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A SPECTACLE OF DANCE, FANTASY, AND TIME: NOTES ON SELECT WORKS FOR CLARINET

by

Sarah Faltz

B.M., B.S., University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, 2020

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Music

School of Music
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
May 2023
RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

A SPECTACLE OF DANCE, FANTASY, AND TIME: NOTES ON SELECT WORKS FOR CLARINET

by

Sarah Faltz

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Music
in the field of Music

Approved by:

Dr. Eric P. Mandat, Chair

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Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 14, 2023
AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

Sarah Faltz, for the Master of Music degree in Music, presented on April 14, 2023, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: A SPECTACLE OF DANCE, FANTASY, AND TIME: NOTES ON SELECT WORKS FOR CLARINET

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Eric P. Mandat

This paper provides extended program notes on works for clarinet from the late twentieth century, giving historical context and analysis for each of the four pieces. These pieces were prepared and performed for the author’s Master’s Recital given on April 22nd, 2023. The first piece, Dancing Solo, was composed by Libby Larsen in 1994 for solo clarinet. The second piece is Fantasy (... those harbor lights), composed by Joan Tower in 1983 for clarinet and piano. The third piece is Time Pieces by Robert Muczynski composed in 1983 for clarinet and piano. The fourth is Tricolor Capers by Eric Mandat composed in 1980 for solo clarinet.
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CHAPTER 1

DANCING SOLO – LIBBY LARSEN

Libby Larsen was born in 1950 in Wilmington, Delaware and moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota as a young child and quickly started learning piano. She went on to study music at the University of Minnesota, where she shifted from performance to composition, earning her Bachelor, Master, and Doctor of Philosophy in Composition there.¹ She has composed over 500 works for various ensembles and solo instrumentalists and has held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony. She has received commissions from many major orchestras and universities throughout her career. Recently, she served as Artistic Director of the John Duffy Institute for New Opera.²

In 1973, Larsen co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, later the American Composers Forum, with Stephen Paulus while studying at the University of Minnesota.³ Larsen has been a long supporter of other composers, performers, and music educators. She has advocated for music and music education for many years, aiding in the ongoing fight for stronger support in musical fields. She served as the Harissios Papamarkou Chair in Education and Technology in the John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, advocating for music education and working between music educators and performers to bring these issues to light.⁴

³ Larsen, Dancing Solo.
⁴ Moorehouse, 24.
Larsen’s compositional style features a mixture of contemporary techniques and American elements. She focuses heavily on rhythmic ideas, creating a flowing melody that blurs time and meter. With her commissioned works, Larsen works with other musicians to inspire the music and to create a scene. This hands-on approach creates a strong sense of unity between the composer and performer and produces a product that shows off the best of both parties.

*Dancing Solo* was composed in 1994 under the commission of clarinetist Caroline Hartig. Hartig is an accomplished solo performer and teacher, having performed all over the world. She has collaborated with many composers to create new clarinet works, such as *Dancing Solo.* Hartig studied and holds degrees from The Ohio State University, New England Conservatory, and the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Hartig currently serves as the Professor of Clarinet at The Ohio State University.

Hartig commissioned the piece from Larsen and gave the premiere performance at the Weill Recital Hall of Carnegie Hall in New York City on March 11, 1994. Larsen writes in notes about the piece,

> “Dancing alone – improvising with the shadows, the air, on an inner beat, upon a fleeting feeling – has always enthralled me. With *Dancing Solo,* I am making a dance for clarinet, a dance composed of color, rhythm, beat implied and explicit, and breath: the music is the dance and the dance is the music.”

Larsen categorizes many of her pieces into themes. These themes connect her works and give both performers and listeners something to think about and focus on. *Dancing Solo* focuses on a theme of energy. In a video describing her use of energy as a theme, Larsen discusses her

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5 Larsen, *Dancing Solo*, 1.
view of energy as a tool of connection and a means of capturing emotion. She compares the two together, sharing how she believes that emotion captures energy and guides the emotional connection of a piece, whether it’s peaceful or treacherous.  

*Dancing Solo* consists of four movements, each with a unique style and focus for the performer. There is an overlying theme of dancing alone, which Larsen describes in her program notes listed on page 2. Each movement explores different elements of the clarinet and its unique approach to color and technique, highlighting these key elements in unique ways. With each movement focusing on different styles and techniques, it allows the performer to explore the various “dances” that Larsen creates in her composition.

The opening of the first movement, “with shadows,” flows without time, with a floating feeling with the clarinetist. The clarinet is dancing with the shadows, improvising with grace into the next figure. The beginning gestures are gentle with stark contrasts between the first and second statements, the first being fortissimo and the second pianissimo.

Figure 1.1, Larsen, *Dancing Solo*, “with shadows,” line 1.

As the movement continues, interjections from the lower range of the instrument interrupt the floating melody in the higher range. These interjections act as the accompaniment and give a new voice to this dance. Starting in the 6/8 section, Larsen beams the two parts

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separately to help show the distinction between melody and accompaniment. These interruptions help establish the meter briefly before changing to 4/4. The two voices continue throughout the rest of the piece, changing character and tension throughout the various sections.

Figure 1.2, Larsen, Dancing Solo, “with shadows,” line 2.

Larsen utilizes the major-seventh interval throughout this movement, starting with the first two notes. This interval is featured throughout the entire range of the clarinet with various pitches, stabilizing a harmonic pattern throughout the different sections of this movement. Each theme in this first movement sets up a melodic idea in the later three movements. While this movement has an improvisatory feel, every move is intentional in finding its way back later in the performance.

In the second movement, “eight to the bar,” the dance shifts to a jazz style. The primary melodic line features swung triplets with interjections of cadenza-like sections and straight sixteenth-note clusters. The runs of straight sixteenth-notes create a sharp contrast to the swung groupings, with stronger accents that break up the sixteenth-note rhythm. With the abrupt changes, the performer has to adjust to keep the flow of the movement steady without interfering with the dance.

The cadenza-like sections float out of time from the square nature of the rest of the movement, creating an improvisatory feeling similar to that in the first movement with more direction and drive leading back into the melody. These sections are based on the jazz blues scale.
and lean on the “blue” notes that act as anchors for the performer. These anchors are notated longer than the spirals surrounding them with a tenuto, as shown below.

Figure 1.3, Larsen, Dancing Solo, “eight to the bar,” m. 14.

Larsen features pulsated long tones throughout this movement, ranging from a dotted half note to two whole notes tied together, to keep the tempo stable and manipulate the tension in the phrase. These pulsated moments often arrive as beginnings and endings to phrases, adding a new texture unlike what’s heard before. The pulses are marked to be performed as quarter notes, rather than a traditional vibrato that would be performed more irregular and faster than notated.

Figure 1.4, Larsen, Dancing Solo, “eight to the bar,” mm. 7-8.

This movement is clearly defined in its style and technical demands. This change in style takes the dance from a lyrical duet to a swinging solo, showcasing the technical abilities of the performer.

The third movement, “in ten slow circles,” focuses on the color and control of the clarinet. The tempo is marked “Slowly, freely, legato,” with each of the ten “circles” marked under a slur, each a separate phrase. Compared to the other movements, this movement has a much slower tempo and more simplified rhythmic ideas. Each phrase has a unique color and set
of challenges. Larsen gives freedom with each phrase itself, allowing the performer to decide on the tempo, dynamics, and color of each section.

While each of the ten circles is a separate phrase, Larsen uses tenutos throughout the long phrases. They’re often placed around large leaps, giving some aid to the performer and it helps the performer guide the phrasing to show points of interest. In some places the tenutos help to show the meter while in other instances they land on the weaker beats, altering the natural flow. Figure 1.5, Larsen, *Dancing Solo*, “in ten slow circles,” mm. 11-19.

This movement is metered, primarily in 3/4 and 4/4. There are two spots where this differs, first at the end of the fifth stave where there is a bar of 5/4, and then in the seventh stave with a bar of 2/4. Along with the tenutos, this helps guide the phrasing and musicality of these lines for the performer.

Following the fast-paced beginning, this third movement shifts the focus to the pure sound of the clarinet and the delicate nuances of the instrument. Performers have to make decisions regarding their execution of this movement to preserve their stamina while taking into consideration their own limitations.

The last movement, “flat out,” is a wild race from the beginning to the end. The movement acts like a rondo, with a repetitive theme returning throughout marked both “easily” and “as fast as possible”. While there are clear distinctions between sections, the piece flows in and out of the different themes with the same bright energy throughout.
The recurring theme, or the A theme, is an eighth-note melody with a syncopated idea that helps to create some rhythmic variation. The syncopation starts on the “and” of 2 in each of these repetitions. This theme acts as a transition throughout the movement, almost like the repeated A theme in Rondo form. It allows a chance for the performer to establish a groove while helping to regain momentum following the more technical sections used intermittently.

Figure 1.6, Larsen, Dancing Solo, “flat out,” mm. 1-8.

The first deviation of this theme starts with a circular chromatic passage and leaps of a diminished seventh, jumping from A-natural to G-flat and finally E-flat, with the G-flat acting as an enharmonic to F-sharp. This quickly moves towards a new melody, still featuring large leaps and interjections of trilled quarter notes marked “furiously.” This contrasts with the “easily” marking at the beginning of the movement and calls back to the first movement. This section ends with the same melodic pattern seen in the first movement one whole step higher. This leads back into the repeated “easily” section again before introducing the next melodic idea.

Figure 1.7, Larsen, Dancing Solo, “flat out,” m. 13.
Larsen continues to use material heard in the earlier movements throughout this section, transposing those melodies into new key areas to help propel this movement forward. Another iteration of the A theme is presented before the first of many sixteenth-note runs, with chromatic figures sequencing throughout the range of the instrument. In the first two bars of this run these chromatic ideas are in groups of three starting with an accent on the lowest note, seen below. This section grows in intensity and dynamic as the run moves back up the range of the clarinet before another brief interlude of the A theme. This repetition only has four repeats of the theme, whereas many of the others consist of eight repetitions. A new interjection of a detached eight-note melody reminiscent of the first deviation appears with another run that leads back into the A theme.

Figure 1.8, Larsen, *Dancing Solo*, “flat out”, mm. 35-40.

The “detached” theme returns, expanding on the ideas heard briefly before. This section is also marked “furiously” and features split beaming. Referencing back to the two voices in the first movement, this section has the two voices interacting with each other to build an upper and a lower melody. These melodies help to build the intensity yet again before another sudden shift into the A theme. After another repetition, the jazz-like sixteenth notes return. Similar to the detached melody, this section develops on the runs heard throughout both this movement and the
entire piece. This expansion of the melody lends to the improvisatory feeling created throughout this piece while bringing back the harmonic ideas heard before.

The piece ends in a back-and-forth between the A theme and the sixteenth note run melody, moving swiftly and driving towards the very end. The intensity switches with the themes, with the A theme still marked as “easily” with the runs marked “furiously.” The piece ends with one final burst, wrapping up all of the spent energy throughout the piece.

Larsen used her compositional voice to amplify the many nuances of the clarinet with a rousing set of dances. With the connective tissue between the four movements and the sharp changes, this piece allows performers to showcase all extremes of their abilities and to groove along with the music.
Chapter 2

Fantasy (… Those Harbor Lights) – Joan Tower

Joan Tower (b. 1938) is a highly awarded American composer and performer. She spent her childhood in South America, which is where she was exposed to the indigenous percussive rhythms that have characterized many of her instrumental compositions. She moved back to the United States and studied music at Bennington College and Columbia University. She’s worked with many solo musicians, including David Shifrin and John Browning. She has also been commissioned by many major orchestras, including Chicago, New York, and Nashville among others. Recently, she was awarded the Richard J. Bogomolny National Service Award by Chamber Music America in 2020. The Nashville Symphony’s recording of her piece, Made in America (2006), won three Grammy awards including Best Contemporary Classical Composition. She was the first woman to receive the Grawemeyer Award for her piece Silver Ladders in 1990 while she was composer-in-residence for the St. Louis Symphony.

Tower’s compositional style is intricate and emotionally complex, with many performers confirming this idea and searching to understand the complex language Tower has invented. Her style developed from her time performing piano with the Da Capo Chamber players, a group that often performed contemporary pieces. As a performer, Tower has been able to take what she

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learned from these experiences and translate them into her own style. Her compositions are primarily for instrumental soloists, chamber groups, and orchestral works. She often worked with performers throughout the compositional process to not only gain insight into composing for that specific instrument but also to create a more hands-on experience for her.

Tower has a strong relationship with nature and uses the elements as inspirations for her works, using these scenes to create a strong sense of imagery. She includes elements throughout her works to represent moments in nature, such as waves from the ocean, birds singing, or the wind moving throughout the scene.

She incorporates melodic themes from the composer or piece that is being referenced and manipulates them in her own style, utilizing those famous works as inspirations for her pieces. One example of this is her work Petroushskates, which is a chamber piece for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano, that is inspired by compositions of Stravinsky.

Tower has written many works for the clarinet, including Breakfast Rhythms I and II (1974-1975), Wings (1983), her Clarinet Concerto (1988), and Fantasy (...those harbor lights)(1983). She has a long history with the clarinet, first being inspired by Laura Flax, the clarinetist Tower performed with in the Da Capo Players. During this time, Tower learned about the wide flexibility with dynamic range and the many unique colors achievable on the clarinet. ¹⁰

Fantasy (...those harbor lights) was composed for clarinet and piano in 1983 for Richard Stoltzman. Stoltzman is a highly regarded clarinetist who has performed all over the world. He is a leader in the world of clarinet performance, having given the first clarinet recitals in the Hollywood Bowl and Carnegie Hall. He has a wide range of recordings spanning classical

standards, contemporary works, and jazz works. He has won many awards, including two Grammy Awards, and has worked with musicians from all over the world. His style pioneered a resurgence in not only recordings of works for clarinet but a newfound interest and admiration for the instrument. While Stoltzman was creating a recital program featuring fantasies, Tower was recommended to him by word of mouth to compose this piece.

The subtitle of the piece, “... those harbor lights,” references the song *Harbor Lights* by Jimmy Kennedy. The song was first recorded in 1937 and has been covered by many artists, including the popular vocal group The Platters. The song tells the story of a young woman who was left by an American soldier, a story Tower experienced early in her life with a U.S. Marine that she left behind in Peru. During the time that they dated, the two had a special connection to *Harbor Lights*. Tower includes references to the song in many places throughout the piece and inspired wavelike motion throughout the piece.

This piece is one movement and moves seamlessly through its many sections. A musical fantasy, or fantasia, is “a composition free in form and inspiration.” Pieces composed in this style rarely follow a formal structure and focus more on the virtuosity in the music. This allows Tower to manipulate the theme from *Harbor Lights* however she desires without the guidelines of a formal structure. Each section blends into the next, and Tower works to disguise these

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12 Janssen, 161.

13 Janssen, 29.

moments of change and blend them seamlessly.

Tower uses rhythmic intensity as a different way to categorize sections in the formal structure. As the rhythmic ideas become shorter, the intensity of the piece rises and as the rhythmic ideas become longer the intensity falls and evens out. This creates waves in both the music and the form, adding to the theme of the piece and the inspiration.

Tower has many unique characteristics in her compositions, and many are seen executed in *Fantasy*. One of the biggest themes is Tower’s use of imagery. In this piece, Tower guides performers to imagine a large boat being rocked by the waves of the sea, in some moments slow and calming and other moments thrashing and dangerous. She uses many techniques to create this imagery, such as altering the texture, repeating rhythmic ideas, and dynamics to create this effect. The dynamics specifically create an underlying motion that can be lost without intention. This dynamic motion pushes the piece into new places, and the performers build this slowly while leading into the climactic point of the piece.

Tower builds the musical material in what she deems as an “organic structure.”15 The melodies are built note by note, starting with small ideas and building on from that. Tower’s melodies are unique in the shapes they create. Rather than long flowing melodies, Tower connects short sporadic ideas throughout the piece. These ideas change and grow to add to the imagery and texture. Texture is an important characteristic of Tower’s writing. Rather than connecting texture with form, Tower uses texture to further develop motion throughout her piece and create a sense of progression.

15 Janssen p. 24
There are two primary themes throughout this piece. The first, starting in measure 12, is slow and lyrical.

Figure 2.1, Tower, *Fantasy*, Theme 1, mm. 12-21.

With these themes guiding the motion of the music, this first theme is calm and represents stability in this piece. The piano and clarinet work together to create very slight motion, acting as calm waves. There is still some movement, but it’s subtle and complements the thematic ideas. The dynamics also show the relationship in intensity throughout, with the soft dynamic aiding in the intensity.

The second theme, starting in measure 146, is much sharper in contrast.
The first theme was comprised primarily of slurred half notes and dotted half notes, and the second theme is marked *staccato sempre* and is comprised primarily of eighth and sixteenth notes alternating between 3/8, 2/4, and 6/16. It gradually grows to a louder dynamic, aiding the intensity of this section.

These themes are varied throughout the piece and are sampled in transitional areas. The transitions often feature trills and octatonic scales, helping to transition throughout sections while developing the other themes. The octatonic scale, which is an alternating pattern of whole and half steps, grew to popularity throughout the Twentieth Century and takes away the importance
of the leading tone. This scale is found throughout the piece, often in repeated patterns in the piano seen below.

Figure 2.3, Tower, *Fantasy*, Octatonic Scale, m. 54.

With the lack of tonal security by removing the importance of the half-step leading tone found in western scales, the octatonic scale removes the idea of a tonic and dominant key areas. Tower also uses the whole tone scale to give this same effect. The whole tone scale is a collection of eight pitches, each a whole step apart, and also rose to popularity throughout the twentieth century. These scales show the pulses in the waves, smooth and connected while creating a pulsated feeling.

Figure 2.4, Tower, *Fantasy*, Whole Tone Scale, m. 56.
Tower’s compositions often act as chamber works more than solo works. *Fantasy* is a collaborative work for clarinet and piano, with each performer acting as both the soloist and support. Each part plays many roles throughout the piece and adds to the development of the form and intensity.

The highlight of this piece is the clarinet cadenza starting in measure 351. The cadenza starts freely with the theme from “Harbor Lights,” taking the motives heard earlier and connecting those ideas here.

Figure 2.5, Tower, *Fantasy*, Clarinet Cadenza Opening, m. 351.

The next barred measure starts a new section, starting a gradual growth of intensity with the use of triplet eighth notes and sixteenth notes. This section is barred but not metered, with the implied time signature changing frequently, with the return of meters in measure 364.
Figure 2.6, Tower, *Fantasy*, Clarinet Cadenza Section 2, mm. 352-375, Page 30 line 4.
The tempo gradually increases and rises up the range of the clarinet, only to low down right at the very end before the beginning of the third section. The third section immediately returns to the intense feeling from before. In the clarinet melody, the line rises in range in sixteenth-note runs and moves back down with accented triplets repeated in different tonal areas, as seen below:

Figure 2.7, Tower, *Fantasy*, Clarinet cadenza, p. 30 line 5.

The climax of the cadenza with the clarinet marked fortississimo and marcato. This section is reminiscent of the theme heard at measure 146, seen in Figure 2.2, and later in measure 268, but now with the contrast of the dynamic and style. In the other iterations of this melody, Tower marks it to be staccato and quiet, with a gradual crescendo lasting until the end, while the iteration in the cadenza is fortississimo and marcato.

Figure 2.8, Tower, *Fantasy*, Clarinet Cadenza, p. 30 line 7-8.

As the cadenza ends, the tempo slows and relaxes into the coda, ending the piece as delicately as it began. The piano joins the clarinet once again and brings the piece to a delicate end.
Tower gives performers the freedom to do as they want with her complex music and to make their own interpretations in their performance.\textsuperscript{16} Her music allows the performers to create deep and personal connections to it, a trait that many contemporary works don’t feature. With the open freedom, Tower has created a piece that draws in listeners to explore what the music means to them.

\textsuperscript{16} Janssen, 22-23.
CHAPTER 3

TIME PIECES OP. 43 – ROBERT MUCZYNSKI

Robert Muczynski was an American composer, born in Chicago in 1929 and passed in 2010. He studied composition at DePaul University with Alexander Tcherepnin. Along with composition, he was a pianist and performed all over the world. He was the director of the piano department at Loras College from 1956-1959. Following his time there, he served as composer-in-residence at the University of Arizona until 1988.\(^\text{17}\)

His compositions were primarily for piano or chamber groups, but he composed orchestral and choral works as well. As a pianist, he wrote many works that feature piano and often performed them himself either in concert or in recordings. His style was influenced by other major composers of the time, such as Béla Bartók, Barber, and Bernstein, with strong neo-romantic and neo-classical elements in his compositions.\(^\text{18}\)

*Time Pieces* op. 43 was commissioned by Mitchell Lurie (1922-2008). Lurie was the principal clarinetist for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra before teaching clarinet at the University of Southern California (USC). He started teaching at USC in 1952 while continuing to perform. He started to work with various Hollywood studios and performed piano for many film scores while working there. He also

\(^{17}\) Anne Marie Thurmond, "Selected woodwind compositions by Robert Muczynski: A stylistic and structural analysis of Muczynski’s Sonata, Opus 14, for flute and piano, Sonata, Opus 29, for alto saxophone and piano, "Time Pieces", Opus 43, for clarinet and piano, and "Moments", Opus 47, for flute and piano,“ (DMA diss. University of Georgia, 1998), 1-4, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

developed his own brand of clarinet reeds, ligatures, and mouthpieces that are used to this day.\textsuperscript{19}

\textit{Time Pieces} was composed in 1983 and premiered in London at the Clarinet Congress of the International Clarinet Society in 1984 with Lurie and Muczynski performing. In notes about the piece, Muczynski stated that it represents “an awareness of the fact that everything exists in time: history, our lives and … in a special way… music.” \textsuperscript{20} The piece consists of four movements, each highlighting specific characteristics of the clarinet. These characteristics include the instrument’s range, technical properties, color, and expressiveness.\textsuperscript{21}

One defining feature of this piece is Muczynski’s use of the octatonic scale throughout all four movements. Similar to Tower’s use of the scale from Chapter 2, Muczynski utilizes this scale to easily move through tonalities and melodies. This lends to Muczynski’s use of tonal centers, allowing for more harmonic and melodic freedom. These sections don’t fit in a traditional “major” or “minor” key, so labeling them as tonal areas better fits the harmonic language used.

The first movement, \textit{Allegro risoluto}, is energetic and showcases constant rhythmic ideas to propel the piece forward. This movement is comprised of primarily sixteenth-note passages in both the clarinet and piano, alternating between more lyrical runs and heavily accented moments. Many times, the clarinet and piano go back and forth to create compound rhythms, most often creating constant sixteenth notes. Figure 1 shows an example of this in the score:

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Robert Muczynski, \textit{Lurie and Baker Play Muczynski}, Performed by Mitchell Lurie, Julius Baker, and Robert Muczynski, recorded 1984, Laurel Record LR-131, 33 1/3 rpm.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Muczynski, \textit{Lurie and Baker Play Muczynski}.
\end{itemize}
There are also many points where the two parts don’t line up rhythmically and create moments of unevenness. This rhythmic idea causes a disruption in the constant duple idea that the audience has heard before, and Muczynski did this by writing for one part to play a duple rhythm with the other playing a triple rhythm. This is established at the beginning of the piece, with the piano performing a triplet rhythm with the clarinet’s sixteenth-note melody, as seen below.

Figure 3.2, Muczynski *Time Pieces* “Allegro risoluto,” m. 3.

The clarinet and piano share these moments and switch voices throughout the piece to create a disjunct feeling. It isn’t seen too often but makes an impact when it’s used. In this first
movement, the polyrhythmic rhythm gives a break for the constant sixteenth-note subdivision and allows for some spots of openness. In m. 65, this motive is seen again following a run of sixteenth notes in the clarinet.

Figure 3.3, Muczynski *Time Pieces* “Allegro risoluto,” m. 65.

The form could be considered ternary, with the B section expanding the rhythmic ideas from the A section while moving through various tonal centers. The A theme returns in the original tonal center with a brief coda at the end.

The second movement is slow and lyrical. The form of this movement, *Andante espressivo*, would be ternary with a coda and a cadenza before the return of the A theme. The tempo fluctuates throughout the movement and gives the performers opportunities to push and pull the tempo as they desire, adding to the improvisatory feeling with the embellished melody.22

This movement features many of the same techniques as the first, such as the use of tonal centers, compound rhythms between the two voices, and moments of duple against triple. These techniques are often found in neoromantic music to create musical variation. This movement

22 Thurmond, 74.
allows for more freedom for the performers, with many spots where they can push and pull the tempo however they see fit.

The melody is quite repetitive, with each iteration adding more ornamentation to the melody. The beginning of the movement acts as a sentence with each repetition becoming more complex. Each section has its own melodic voice and tempo, with the first theme returning throughout the A sections and the cadenza between the A and B sections. In the cadenza, Muczynski composed the clarinet to perform both the melody and accompaniment, shown below.

Figure 3.4, Muczynski, *Time Pieces* “Andante espressivo,” Cadenza, mm. 48-49.

To accentuate this to the clarinetist, Muczynski beams the melody opposite of the accompaniment and adds tenutos on these notes to give the performer landing spots amidst the flurry of sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The clarinetist plays both roles in reintroducing the original melody before returning to the A section. The melody ends in the piano during the coda before slowly fading to nothing.

The third movement, *Allegro moderato*, introduces a new character. This movement is much lighter in comparison to the other three and also has more symmetrical phrases and melodies. This movement is in binary form, ABA’ with a brief coda at the end. The melody of the A section is first introduced in the piano and repeated in the clarinet in D major. The last two bars of the melody shift the tonal center, lowering the F-sharp and C-sharp to naturals and adding B-flat and E-flat, as seen below. These “blue notes” add a new harmonic texture that helps maintain the fluid tonality that Muczynski utilizes throughout the piece.
Figure 3.5, Muczynski, *Time Pieces*, “Allegro moderato,” mm. 16-17.

The B section shifts the character from light and aloof to a driving force in 6/8. The piano transitions into the new meter and new tonal center of F. The clarinet joins in measure 27 with a new melody that is more pointed than the A theme, not only in articulation but in dynamic as well. This theme continues to develop throughout the 6/8 section, all while staying in the tonal center of F.

The A theme returns with the same initial statement from measure 10 before the tonal center shifts back to B while the piano briefly initiates a transition into the coda, a frantic octatonic scale racing to the end of the piece centered on D-flat. This moment takes the listener out of the symmetrical nature of this movement and gives a hard reset on the momentum.

The fourth movement, *Andante molto – allegro energico*, starts with unaccompanied clarinet, a slow introduction that vastly differs from the rest of the material in this movement. This beginning section calls back to the second movement with its improvisatory feel, flowing through the various registers of the instrument. At the end of this introduction, the clarinet transitions into the new theme, shifting the time signature from duple into two measures of 3/8 and one of 2/8.
The piano takes over from the clarinet and introduces the A theme. This melody shifts between two measures 3/8 and 4/8, sequencing the melodic line throughout and leading into a new variation of the melody that sits a perfect fourth above the piano. This theme uses these alternating time signatures to create a rocking feeling throughout this theme.

The B theme starts in measure 70, stabilizing the melody in 4/4. Muczynski takes small moments from this theme and develops them throughout this section, using both micro and macro variations of these phrases.

The music transitions back into the alternating time signatures of 3/8 and 4/8 at the end of the B section. The piano features a variation on the A theme while the clarinet sits above that moving through a sixteenth-note countermelody.
The recapitulation of the A theme starts again in measure 114, with the clarinet performing two measure fragments of their first melody in this section from the beginning. The octatonic scale serves as a tool to create elisions between the various subsections, offering some connective tissue throughout.

The cadenza develops on the themes from earlier in the movement and sequences throughout, allowing the clarinet to explore various harmonic areas with ease. The first section is marked *furioso*, continuing with the rhythmic pattern from the A theme. The melody sequences up the C minor scale, starting on a concert C and ending on an A-flat, shown below:

Figure 3.8, Muczynski, *Time Pieces*, “Andante molto – allegro energico,” mm. 151-159.
This first section ends in 6/8 with a string of sixteenth based on the theme first introduced in measure 75 from this same movement. This figure ends in a descending perfect fourth and is found throughout this movement in both the piano and clarinet parts.

Figure 3.9, Muczynski, Time Pieces, “Andante molto – allegro energico,” m. 74.

The second section of this cadenza, starting in measure 165, acts as a variation of the material from the beginning of the cadenza. This section gradually grows in tempo and intensity to lead to the end of the piece. The intervals grow wider throughout, spanning the greater range of the instrument. The piano returns in measure 183, providing support for the clarinetist with one final octatonic scale.

Time Pieces masterfully combines the abilities of the clarinet with neoromantic techniques to provide a technical and musical challenge for clarinetists. With an understanding of the history, the techniques used by Muczynski, and an awareness of the tonal centers used, performers can bring out the special nuances of Muczynski’s composition.
CHAPTER 4

TRICOLOR CAPERS – ERIC MANDAT

Eric Mandat (b. 1957) is an American clarinetist and pioneer in the use of extended
techniques for the clarinet in his compositions. Mandat studied clarinet at the University of North
Texas, Yale University, and the Eastman School of Music. He started his teaching career in 1981
at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where he is Visiting Professor of Clarinet and
Distinguished Scholar. 23

In his compositions, Mandat developed a curiosity in nonconventional techniques early in
his life and explored new sounds in his performance. With influences from jazz, folk music, and
contemporary harmonies he is able to explore new universes with his compositions. His
compositions are primarily for clarinet but has composed works for various chamber ensembles
and wind ensemble as well.

As a major inspiration in his compositions, Mandat also utilizes the idea of improvisation
in his performance and composition. He performed with the Tone Road Ramblers for 27 years,
an improvisation-based chamber group with members from Champaign, IL, Carbondale, IL San
Diego, New York, and Chicago. While performing with this group, Mandat experimented with
musical ideas that he was able to translate into his written compositions. 24

*Tricolor Capers* was composed and premiered in 1980 as part of Mandat’s Master’s
recital at Yale University. He describes in the program notes:

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24 Gregory Oakes, “Eric Mandat’s Style and Compositional Process for Solo Clarinet
“I composed *Tricolor Capers* while I was completing my Master’s degree at the Yale School of Music. Moving out of my rural upbringing in Colorado and from undergraduate school in Texas to go to Yale was a big cultural change for me. Living in the shadow of New York City in the era of disco and designer jeans, I was struck by what seemed to me at the time a very intense and unhealthy focus on materialism, and *Tricolor Capers* was my comment on the world around me as I saw it. Portent is an exposition of the material which is to be used in the second and third movements. Sway was a parody on the concept of being drunk on the fads of the times. Bop was my way at laughing it off. I gave the premiere of *Tricolor Capers* on my Master’s recital at Yale on January 22, 1981.”

This piece utilizes many extended techniques throughout, such as multiphonics and quarter tones. These techniques are accompanied by a variety of symbols throughout this piece to guide the performer and to help create an understanding of the piece. These symbols, featured below, are placed throughout each movement. He also includes specific fingerings for the various quarter tones and multiphonics throughout the piece.

In many of Mandat’s early works, he incorporates half steps frequently, especially when repeating melodic ideas. One technique is that he will repeat melodic ideas a half step away from the original. Another is in the second movement, “Sway.” The start of this movement features a half step, going from the throat tone A-natural to the clarion A-flat, clearly showing the importance of that relationship in Mandat’s compositions.

The first movement, “Portent,” introduces ideas found in the latter two movements, slowly presenting melodic ideas in an augmented way. This movement works in an arch form, with the first three lines being repeated at the end in the opposite order. As with many contemporary pieces, the first movement doesn’t contain time signatures and rather opts for the performer to use seconds in places of rest or repetition. In the places where this is not dictated there is a general tempo marking as a guideline, but the performer has the freedom to decide the final length of phrases.

The beginning has a haunting effect, with the use of multiphonics and an underlying rocking between two notes, notated as so:

This melody continues, growing more complex with dynamics and upper melodies. Sudden outbursts disrupt this melody and move the audience into a new idea, harsher and more jaded than what was heard before. The first departure is a collection of sixteenth notes, the first collection of notes not being used in combination with multiphonics. This grouping starts loud and gradually diminishes in dynamic, while the second iteration moves in the opposite direction, starting at *niente* and growing to *forte* before relaxing before the next section.
Figure 4.3, Mandat, *Tricolor Capers*, “Portent,” Sixteenth Note Figures, lines 5 and 8.

The next theme introduced is a short figure with trills, repeated five times and seen later in the third movement. The first two statements of this idea are soft and pointed, while the last three are instantly louder and overblown, with a gravely overtone of a twelfth heard at the same time as the foundational note.

Figure 4.4, Mandat, *Tricolor Capers*, “Portent,” Overblown Melody, page 1 line 7.

After one more sixteenth-note interruption, the multiphonic idea returns with melodic bursts at the beginning. Combining many of the elements from the beginning of this movement, this section gives some direction to the music. By the end of the movement, the rhythmic ideas return to the themes from the beginning and face away to nothing.

The second movement, “Sway,” twists and turns throughout. This movement moves throughout many different meters, adding to the swaying idea. Mandat also creates this effect
with the use of microtones. He first introduced this idea in the first movement but shines as the star of this second movement. Microtones are “any musical interval or difference of pitch distinctly smaller than a semitone.”

Many Eastern traditions feature the use of microtones and grew to popularity in the Western tradition throughout the 20th century, settling into the use of quarter tones on many woodwind instruments such as the clarinet. The form of this movement is ABA.

In creating the swaying motion, Mandat uses a variety of time signatures that move to alter the beat of emphasis in the themes. The beginning of this movement and the A theme, shown below, establish this motion.

Figure 4.5, Mandat, *Tricolor Capers*, “Sway,” A Theme, mm. 1-15.

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Despite the constant changing of time signatures, Mandat also uses metric modulation to keep the eighth note and sixteenth note consistent throughout this movement. He shows this with tempo markings throughout, noting how the tempo relates to the previous, as seen below.

Figure 4.6, Mandat, *Tricolor Capers*, “Sway,” Metric Modulation, m. 7.

Throughout this movement, Mandat interjects the swaying motion with marked “expressionless” motives that stagnate the momentum. These spots represent the consumers being hypnotized by whatever is new, shiny, and deemed desirable by manufacturers. These figures appear throughout, alternating between two notes.

Figure 4.7, Mandat, *Tricolor Capers*, “Sway,” Expressionless Motive, m. 7.

The B theme continues in the same style as the A theme. It continues using quarter tones and a frequent change of meter, but this section is marked “singing” and incorporates many elements from the A theme. In leading out of the B theme, the music starts to transition back to the A theme. Mandat interrupts the transition to include a reference to the popular theme of “The Twilight Zone.” This show, which is a sci-fi themed show that explores many unnatural phenomena, encapsulates the unnatural behavior that Mandat is observing in his own life.
After this interjection, the A theme returns to end out the piece. Another compositional technique Mandat uses is to make a noticeable change when a theme is repeated. In creating some variation from the initial statement of this theme, Mandat changes the rhythm slightly in the last part of this melodic idea. He also changes the time signature between the two versions, shifting the beat of emphasis between the two.

With the constant changing of meters, metric modulation, and the use of quarter tones, this movement creates a unique flow that feels unsteady and constantly changing. Along with this, there is a constant change of meters that contradicts the concept of metric regularity.

The final movement, “Bop,” expands on the musical ideas from before in a way. This movement has a prominent groove to it that takes elements from the first two movements and
expands on them in a new way with high energy and swift motion. The rhythmic ideas mimic that of the second movement, light and sharp with strong accents throughout. This movement follows a modified rondo form, with a focus on the A and B themes with a brief interruption of the C theme.

The A Theme uses accents throughout, particularly on off-beats during sixteenth note runs, to help give this theme give energy to the melody. The theme is steady and is seen throughout this movement in various iterations.

Figure 4.10, Mandat, *Tricolor Capers*, “Bop,” A Theme, mm. 1-6.

The B theme, first seen at the beginning of page 2, starts as a sixteenth note idea repeated with accented anchors on beat 1 and the “and” of 2. This theme develops, gradually adding more
notes to each beat with the accented notes in the same spot as the beginning. This idea gradually increases the number of notes per beat, starting with four and ending with ten.

Figure 4.11, Mandat, *Tricolor Capers*, “Bop,” B Theme, mm. 23-28.

The overblown theme from the first movement is seen again in this movement. In this movement, this idea is expanded into a full phrase rather than a segment. This iteration has a slightly larger range than the first movement and has more rhythmic variation with new meters as well. This is followed by a brief variation of the A theme before moving back to the B theme.

In the second iteration of the B theme, it is expanded and moves through different tonal areas than before. It starts on the clarinet’s low E and begins an upward cycle of modulations throughout the repetitions of this theme. Starting in the tenth measure of this section, it moves up the half step to F, then to F-sharp, G, A-flat, and finally A before ascending chromatically into the return of the A theme.

A third theme, or C Theme, is reminiscent of the second movement with the frequent changes of time signature and use of quarter tones. This sharply contrasts with the other themes of this movement, which are both primarily in duple meters such as 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4, while this theme moves between duple and triple and features uneven meters like 17/16.
In this return, the theme shows a resemblance to the second movement, with the use of quarter tones and rhythmic functions. It starts with the A theme from the third movement, and quickly transitions into one of the many jazz-like figures found throughout the second movement.

The end of this piece alternates back and forth between the two main themes, first with the B theme and the modulating figures seen earlier in this movement. This time, it starts on F and moves up chromatically before the theme starts to vary and the foundational note moves back down chromatically from C-sharp. The A theme returns, with one last splice of the B theme snuck into the mix.

This piece explores many new worlds for the clarinet and helps to propel the expansion of the technical abilities of the clarinet. Mandat tells a story of the times and showcases the clarinet in a new and modern light, utilizing the extended techniques naturally and effectively to tell the story.
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Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, December 2020

Research Paper Title:
A Spectacle of Dance, Fantasy, and Time: Notes on Select Works for Clarinet

Major Professor: Dr. Eric P. Mandat