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# An Analysis And Overview Of Selected Original Compositions

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AN ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW OF  
SELECTED ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS

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ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW OF SELECTED ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS

by

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THESIS

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# **Chapter I**

## **Introduction**

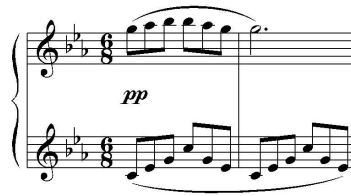
The following chapters present an overview of the compositions completed as part of my studies toward the Master of Music degree. They are presented chronologically in the order in which they were composed. The analyses of these works are intended to offer insight into the process of their composition, as well as to draw attention to their important musical elements. These pieces involve a wide range of instrumental and vocal settings, as well as a variety of traditional forms. The goal of my studies in composition was to understand more fully the perspective of the composer, in contrast to that of the performer, and to learn and apply the traditional craft of composition in developing my own musical ideas.

## Chapter II

### Initium

*Initium* is a one-movement solo piano piece in sonata form written in the fall of 2006. The title *Initium*, meaning ‘beginning’ in Latin, was inspired by the beginning of my formal academic studies in composition, a great challenge that I looked forward to fulfilling.

The first theme begins in C minor with a melody consisting of a motive made mainly of stepwise motion. The texture is thin, and the accompaniment is rhythmically active with constant eighth-note arpeggios (Ex. 1).



Example 1. *Initium*, Mm. 1-2.

The long, lyrical melody of the first theme builds upon this motivic idea. After the first theme, a short transitional theme begins with a four-part chorale-like setting, with clear and simple tonal harmony in a homorhythmic setting. It quickly turns more chromatic and becomes more rhythmically active in the accompaniment (Ex. 2).



Example 2. *Initium*, Mm. 30-38

Before the final cadence of this transition, the first theme briefly returns, set over a dominant pedal in the key of  $E\flat$  major, the second key area. The imitative rhythmic texture between the accompaniment and the melody (Ex. 3) leads to a strong half cadence that sets up the second theme area.



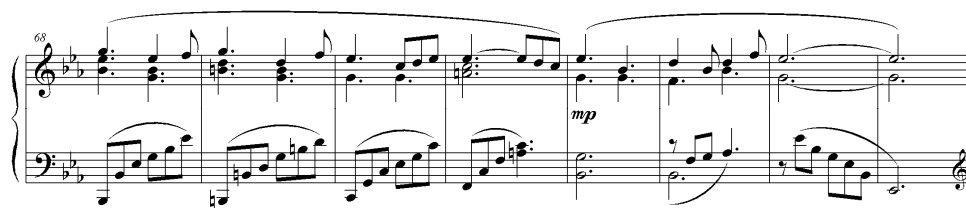
Example 3. *Initium*, Mm. 40-46.

The second theme, as expected in a minor-key sonata form movement, is in  $E\flat$  major. The accompaniment no longer uses the arpeggiated pattern that was prominent in the first theme, while the change in key helps create a different mood (Ex. 4).



Example 4. *Initium*, Mm. 52-56.

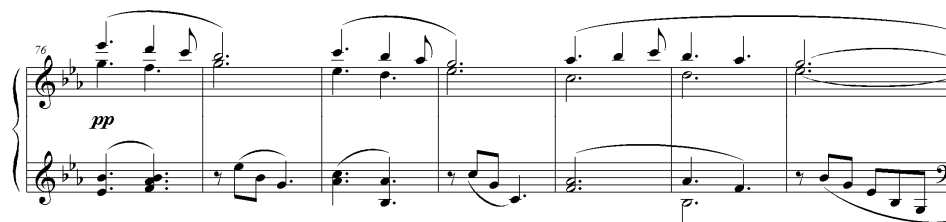
To further strengthen and thicken the sound, the chordal accompaniment is replaced by ascending and descending arpeggios, resulting in a fuller texture (Ex. 5).



Example 5. *Initium*, Mm. 68-75.

The accompaniment slows and softens as a perfect authentic cadence arrives, signaling the end of this melody.

The transitional theme returns, but in E $\flat$  major and in a much higher register with a slightly more active accompaniment (Ex. 6).



Example 6. *Initium*, Mm. 76-82.

After a brief move to G minor, featuring a development of the transitional theme motive, a more rhythmically active accompaniment and gradual *crescendo* leads to the climactic point of the section, as the main melody of the second theme returns in m. 101. Here the melody is in octaves and occasionally thickened by full chords. Also, the accompaniment becomes much more intense and more rhythmically active, with widely arpeggiated sixteenth-note patterns (Ex. 7).



Example 7. *Initium*, Mm. 101-104.

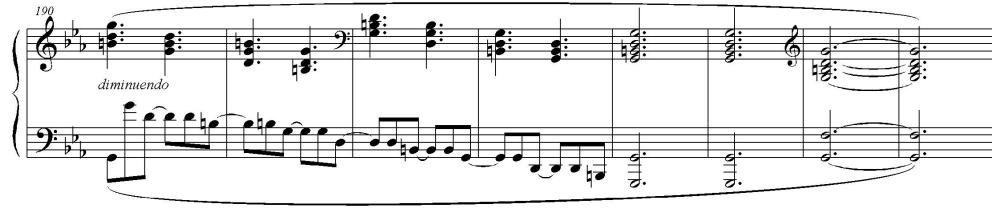
A long *diminuendo*, a slowing of the rhythmic motion, and the descent of the melody into a lower register help create a sense of closure as the exposition concludes.

The development section begins with the motive of the first theme in E $\flat$  major in an imitative texture. A shift to the parallel key begins to move the tonality to keys distant from the movement's home key, eventually leading to a plagal cadence in B major. This harmony becomes the dominant of the new key area that begins the next main part of the development section. In this new part, the focus of development is the second theme, now set in E minor with arpeggiated sixteenth notes in the accompaniment (Ex. 8).



Example 8. *Initium*, Mm. 152-155.

This melody and accompaniment are set in varying registers and move through minor keys in descending 5ths (A minor, D minor), and eventually E $\flat$  major and F major are tonicized quickly in sequence. The opening motive of the first theme is then presented in G minor, with an imitative texture similar to the opening of the development, but still with a very active rhythmic texture in the accompaniment. This pattern is repeated in the key of F minor, and then it is broken to bring back the transitional theme. This theme is now set in A $\flat$  major with a richer, fuller chordal texture that relieves the rhythmic tension built up since m. 101. The generally active rhythmic motion of the development eases as the dominant harmony of the home key arrives. The dynamic level decreases and the chordal texture descends to a lower register, leading to a strong half cadence in C minor, setting up a recapitulation (Ex. 9).



Example 9. *Initium*, Mm. 190-197.

The recapitulation begins with the opening phrase of the first theme presented homorhythmically in block chords with the melody doubled in octaves, in contrast to the exposition, which featured a more rhythmically active accompaniment (Ex. 1). The *rubato* marking also provides contrast to the presentation of this theme in the exposition. Eventually the faster pace in the accompaniment returns with the original eighth-note arpeggios in m. 209. The second phrase of the first theme's main melody returns as it was originally presented in the exposition. The transitional theme now features a thicker texture and expanded range. It is adapted to allow for a move to C major, the tonality of the second theme.

The second theme area is condensed in comparison to the exposition and quickly transitions from the simple melody with the chordal accompaniment pattern to the dramatic full texture, with the melody in octaves and sixteenth-note arpeggios in the left hand.

The coda begins with first-theme material in an imitative texture over a tonic pedal in C major. The second theme is then introduced, followed by a modulation to E $\flat$  major for a last statement of the transitional theme. This tonality serves as a reminder of the importance of keys closely related to C minor that occur throughout the movement. The transitional theme modulates back to C major, the concluding tonality. The rhythmic motion slows down with a *diminuendo* and *ritardando* bringing the movement to a peaceful close.

## Chapter III

### Sextet for Wind and Strings

The *Sextet* is scored for three winds (flute, clarinet, and horn) and three strings (violin, viola, cello). This ensemble allows for exploring different timbral possibilities, either using each instrumental family type alone or in mixed combinations. It is set in three movements, each with a distinct character.

#### I. Pensamiento

The opening movement, *Pensamiento* ('Thoughts'), begins in a soft, gentle, and dream-like manner. The introduction opens with a single line played by the flute, which is imitated in successive entrances in other instruments. This opening will serve also as transitional material later in the movement to connect the movement's other main sections (Ex. 10).

Andante

The musical score for the opening of 'Pensamiento' is written for six instruments: Flute, Clarinet in Bb, Horn in F, Violin, Viola, and Cello. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The time signature is common time (C). The score shows the first seven measures. The flute plays a single line in the first measure, which is then imitated by the clarinet, horn, violin, viola, and cello in subsequent measures. The dynamics are marked 'p' (piano) for each instrument's entrance.

Example 10. *Sextet*, I. *Pensamiento*, Mm. 1-7.

The A section is set in *andante* tempo and starts with a straightforward melody in G minor at m. 8, played by the flute with the strings accompanying. The harmonic progression features a descending stepwise bass line in whole notes. In the first four bars, the leading tone is avoided, with the minor dominant chord in m. 12 providing a modal coloring (Ex. 11).



Example 11. *Sextet, I. Pensamiento*, Mm. 9-12.

At the pickup to m. 17, the clarinet takes over the melody, now accompanied by a more rhythmically active bass line and set with a quicker harmonic rhythm. This phrase is repeated a second time at m. 20, this time doubled at the octave by the flute. The horn enters, helping to fill the harmony and build the texture. This increase in intensity helps lead to the return of the main melody at m. 26, now presented in full ensemble (Ex. 12).





Example 12. *Sextet, I. Pensamiento*, Mm. 20-26.

Here the melody is played by the horn and flute in octaves. The clarinet plays a short counter melody derived from the main melody, creating a call-and-response effect. The eighth-note accompanimental pattern slows down as the final cadence arrives. While the final chord is held out, the introduction motive returns, concluding this section.

Beginning at m. 37, the B section provides a distinct contrast to the A section, with its *allegro* tempo giving it an almost double-time feel. In C minor, the opening of this section features the strings alone for the first time. Along with the faster tempo, the more rhythmically active melody, the *non legato* articulation, and syncopation in the accompaniment create an excited character (Ex. 13).



Example 13. *Sextet, I. Pensamiento*, Mm. 37-42.

When this melody is repeated, it is now presented with a *legato* articulation, with a full-ensemble texture. The melody is now played by the flute and clarinet in octaves, which is echoed a measure later by the horn and the cello in unison in the lower octave. The harmonic rhythm gradually becomes faster, building up to the climactic point of the movement. The flute plays a long trill, while the clarinet plays the opening motive of the B section and is echoed by the violin and the viola (Ex. 14).

Example 14. *Sextet, I. Pensamiento*, Mm. 50-56.

As in the A section, the rhythmic activity slows down, leading to a strong half cadence in the key of C minor.

The introductory material appears in C minor, though now it is adapted to serve as a transition, eventually modulating back to the original key of G minor and ending on a half cadence as it did at the beginning of the movement.

The return of the A section begins with the cello playing the melody in a high register, accompanied by the winds. In the repeat of this melody, the viola joins in playing *pizzicato*

chords. The remainder of this section is similar to the first, with slight ornamentation and changes in orchestration and rhythmic texture. The last statement of the main melody includes the most rhythmically active texture, with sixteenth-note figures in the upper strings and a slightly more active cello part (Ex. 15).

Example 15. *Sextet, I. Pensamiento*, Mm. 89-92.

The introduction motive is used one last time, this time ending on a perfect authentic cadence to bring the movement to a close.

## II. Rondando

Cast in traditional ABACA rondo form, the second movement, *Rondando* ('Wandering') presents a very different character. Its main theme has playful mood and dance-like quality. With its 'oom-pah-pah' rhythmic accompaniment and its sense of one beat per measure, the A section has a typical waltz feel, while the B section, though still dance-like, features a more *legato* articulation. The C section provides a greater contrast, with more rhythmic changes and syncopation, a very *legato* articulation in the melody throughout, and an overall darker mood.

The A section begins with a clarinet solo accompanied by the strings, who provide the waltz rhythm. The melody is light and bouncy and is derived from the basic chords of the harmony with some passing tones. The harmony is based on a C major tonality, though the use of borrowed harmonies from the parallel key and the cadences give it a distinctly modal sound. At the important cadences of this section, a  $\flat VII - I$  modal progression avoids the traditional  $V - I$  authentic-cadence sound (Ex. 16).

**Tempo di Waltz**

B $\flat$  Cl. *mf*  
 Vln. *mp*  
 Vla. *mp*  
 Vlc. *mp*

Example 16. *Sextet*, II. *Rondando*, Mm. 1-9.

The B section opens in F minor without a transition, with the C's played on the open string by the viola and cello in m. 29 becoming the new dominant. The section highlights once more the strings of the ensemble, with the violin playing the melody, the viola the countermelody, and the cello the bass line. Here the melody is smoother and more *legato* than in the A section (Ex. 17).

29

*mp*  
*pp*  
*pp*

Example 17. *Sextet*, II. *Rondando*, Mm. 29-37.

In the second statement of this section's main theme at m. 38, the horn takes the melody, while the rest of the ensemble accompanies. Eventually this part leads to the climactic area of this section. The harmonic rhythm quickens, and the melody, which is now played by the flute and clarinet, is made up of smaller motivic fragments, with the pattern moving up in register (Ex. 18).

Example 18. *Sextet*, II. *Rondando*, Mm. 38-50.

Finally the harmony resolves to a half cadence in C major at m. 53, with an abrupt rest setting up the return of the A section.

The A section repeats with slight variations and embellishments. The clarinet and flute solo are repeated as before, but the strings are more rhythmically active. The cello bass line is also more active with larger leaps. The most noticeable difference in the last part of this section is that in the last statement of the theme, the woodwinds play in their highest register, while the horn has the countermelody and the strings are playing double stops. The ending of this A section is slightly longer and less abrupt, repeating the modal cadence several times, with groups of instruments echoing one another. A transition follows at m. 88, modulating from the modally-

colored C major to A minor. The pivot chord in this modulation, a B $\flat$  major chord, functions as  $\flat$ VII in C major and as the Neapolitan chord in the new key (Ex. 19).

Example 19 is a musical score for a sextet, specifically the second movement, 'Rondando', measures 83-96. The score is written for five staves. It begins at measure 83. The key signature changes from C major to A minor. The dynamics are marked as *pp* (pianissimo), *f* (forte), and *dim.* (diminuendo). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.

Example 19. *Sextet*, II. *Rondando*, Mm. 83-96.

The C section provides a contrast to the previous parts in many musical elements. The articulation of the melody is primarily *legato*, duple quarter-note figures in the prevailing  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter are used extensively, the accompaniment is more sustained, and the harmonic rhythm is slower. The melody begins with a lyrical flute solo with a soft *pianissimo* dynamic level at m. 98 (Ex. 20).

Example 20 is a musical score for a sextet, specifically the second movement, 'Rondando', measures 98-104. The score is written for three staves. It begins at measure 98. The key signature changes from C major to A minor. The dynamics are marked as *pp* (pianissimo) and *f* (forte). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.

Example 20. *Sextet*, II. *Rondando*, Mm. 98-104.

Later the clarinet answers the flute motive in m. 116 during a circle-of-fifths progression that leads to a PAC at m. 128, concluding the first part of this section.

A short developmental section begins when the strings play a fragment of this section's main motive repeatedly in a call-and-response manner over a dominant pedal (Ex. 21).

Example 21 shows a musical score for measures 132-142. The score is in 3/4 time and features a call-and-response pattern between the strings and woodwinds. The strings play a repeated eighth-note figure in the bass register, while the woodwinds play a melodic line in the treble register. The dynamics are marked *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Example 21. *Sextet*, II. *Rondando*, Mm. 132-142.

Eventually, all instruments join while playing the duplet motive simultaneously in a higher register. The dynamics, rhythmic tension, and overall activity build toward the return of the main melody in m. 160 (Ex. 22).

Example 22 shows a musical score for measures 151-159. The score is in 3/4 time and features a simultaneous playing of the duplet motive by all instruments in a higher register. The dynamics are marked *cresc.* (crescendo) and *fp* (fortissimo).

Example 22. *Sextet*, II. *Rondando*, Mm. 151-159.

Now the main melody is played by the flute and horn in octaves, though the heightened rhythmic activity, dynamics, and fuller texture create a more intense sound (Ex. 23).

Example 23. *Sextet, II. Rondando*, Mm. 160-166.

In the transition back to the A section, there is a progression of chromatic harmonies with a descending bass line that, while giving a feeling of harmonic tension, eventually leads smoothly to a half cadence in the main key of the movement (Ex. 24).

Example 24. *Sextet, II. Rondando*, Mm. 186-193.

The A section repeats one last time with no major changes from its second statement.



### III. Calma

As its title suggests, this movement has a restful feel, like the ‘calm after the storm’. The D minor tonality gives it a somewhat somber feeling, but the relaxed texture and rhythmic pace provide a more peaceful mood. The melody in the opening theme has a recurring motive, based on a descending line ending with a leap, which is used throughout the movement. The beginning of the movement features the strings, as the cello plays the melody in a higher register, while the viola and violin provide the harmony. The horn enters at strategic points to fill out the texture in the lower register. Later, the violin breaks from the pattern of the accompaniment and plays a countermelody with the cello at m. 5 (Ex. 25).

Andante

Horn in F

Violin

Viola

Cello

Example 25. *Sextet*, III. *Calma*, Mm. 1-8.

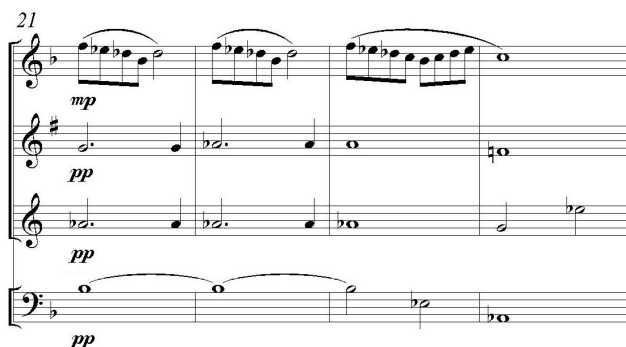
The melody repeats, this time with the violin taking the lead and the other strings playing the same accompanimental pattern. The clarinet enters for the first time, joining the violin with the motive, now ascending. This is followed by an echo played by the flute and viola at m. 13 (Ex. 26).



Example 26. *Sextet, III. Calma*, Mm. 13-20.

The register expands, and the rhythmic activity and intensity increase before the conclusion of the theme at m. 20.

Starting at m. 21, the first four measures of the theme are developed, as they are presented in distant keys. The first tonality is B $\flat$  minor, a chromatic mediant relationship from the home key, and is reached by a direct (phrase) modulation. The flute takes the melody, while the accompaniment is played by the clarinet and horn, with the cello sustaining the bass note. Along with the striking harmonic change, this change in instrumentation provides a new texture and sound that helps delineate a new section (Ex. 27).



Example 27. *Sextet, III. Calma*, Mm. 21-24.

When this phrase repeats, it is set in A $\flat$  minor, and the clarinet takes over the melody. At m. 29, there is another statement of the melody, now in F $\sharp$  minor, with the horn taking the lead line and the full ensemble accompanying. The repetition of shorter units with different orchestration and motion through distant tonalities make this part more developmental in nature than the opening part (mm. 1-20), which remained in D minor throughout.

The modulations through minor keys by descending major 2nds continue, reaching E minor at m. 31. At this point, there is a restatement of the main motive of the B section of *Pensamiento*, the first movement of the suite (Ex. 28).

Example 28. *Sextet, III. Calma*, Mm. 31-34.

The texture is fuller and the dynamic is *fortissimo*. Unlike the first movement, the presentation of this thematic material remains in the original tempo of the piece, and its articulation is now *legato*. Here the expanded range, the greater rhythmic activity, the double-stops in the string parts, and the percussive effect of the accompaniment all contribute to the intensity of sound, which gives this part a climactic feel. A quick harmonic shift to the dominant of the home key sets up the return of the opening theme.

The return of the movement's opening theme, in D minor, is shorter in length than its first presentation. As at the beginning, the cello has the melody, but this time the winds provide the harmony. There is a brief codetta, in which there is a final swell in dynamic level and fuller orchestration to create one last intense moment. The melody descends stepwise, resolving to tonic in m. 52. At this point there is one last statement of the main motive, though it is set now in D major (Ex. 29).

Example 29. *Sextet, III. Calma*, Mm. 50-58.

This move to the major mode helps to provide a sense of closure to the movement, with its 'Picardy-third' effect. Furthermore, the lowered seventh degree is used in the harmony, resulting in a modal coloring that recalls the same Mixolydian coloring used in the second movement.

## Chapter IV

### Two Songs on the Sonnets of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

#### I. A su retrato

*A su retrato* ('to her portrait') is a poem written in the Baroque era by Mexican poet Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695). In this poem, the author rejects the vanity she sees represented in her portrait. This text is set for solo soprano voice with piano accompaniment. The song's musical form is ABCA, reflecting the poetic structure of the 4 stanzas, which are composed in the style of the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish sonnet. The song is set in E minor, giving a somber feel to express the reflective and melancholic mood of the text, though it moves through various tonalities to match the changing thoughts and feelings of the poet.

The introduction begins rather calmly in a high register and a relatively thin texture, focusing on the opening motive of the main melody. As the piano part descends, the falling thirds progression and Neapolitan harmony in m. 4 give a feeling of tension and discontent (Ex. 30).



Example 30. *A su retrato*, Mm. 1-9.

As the voice enters it is doubled by the piano, drawing attention to the vocal line and providing a chant-like feel. After the piano breaks off into harmony, the voice remains primarily in its middle range throughout the first stanza. The more restricted range of the vocal part and the

emphasis on the modal sound of the minor dominant chord help create an overall subdued tone. To highlight the word '*colores*' (colors), the Picardy third is used in m. 21. However this brightening quickly returns to the minor mode in m. 23 as the stanza concludes (Ex. 31).

Example 31. *A su retrato*, Mm. 19-26.

A short instrumental interlude follows, bringing the first main part of the song to a close.

The B section begins with a sudden change in dynamic and an abrupt move to the much brighter key of A major. The ranges of the vocal and piano parts expand greatly, and the rhythmic activity in the accompaniment increases (Ex. 32).

Example 32. *A su retrato*, Mm. 38-41.

Several bars later the dynamic level decreases, but the tempo then increases. A slow and steady *crescendo* builds up to the climactic point of this section at m. 59. Emphasis is placed on the word '*triunfar*' (triumph) starting at m. 52, which is repeated several times in A minor. The brief

shift to minor and the slowly rising vocal line signify the seeking of triumph, until finally the high point is reached with a ‘triumphant’ move back to major and a skip to A5 in the soprano, accompanied by an intense *fortissimo*, a much thicker texture, and syncopation in the piano part (Ex. 33).

52

trium - far triumph - far triumph - far triumph - far

*ff*

Example 33. *A su retrato*, Mm. 52-59.

After the intensity of the B section, there is a contrasting new section that has a much thinner texture and a more delicate sound. The piano drops out from the final cadence as the voice sings the word ‘*olvido*’ (forgotten) in m. 70. While the progression clearly implies a strong PAC, without the piano, there is less of a sense of conclusiveness and finality, highlighting this text. After only a short pause, this new section begins with a sustained F major chord, a chromatic mediant away from A major. In this stanza, the text becomes more somber and reflective. The more restricted range, softer dynamics, and sudden slowing of rhythmic activity contribute to the quiet mood of the opening of this part. Eventually the accompaniment becomes more active, yet remains quite delicate, helping to convey what is expressed in the text. At m. 78, the text describes a delicate flower vulnerable against the wind; the piano plays in the higher register with arpeggiated eighth notes. At m. 85, when the text refers to the wind, the piano helps word-paint the wind’s effect by playing shimmering sixteenth-note triplets against eighth notes in the left hand (Ex. 34).



Example 34. *A su retrato*, Mm. 85-88.

The keys of B $\flat$  major and E $\flat$  major are briefly tonicized, which take the tonality further away from the home key. This helps convey an image of the wind as it blows away the petals of the rose. The music expresses an irritated character when the piano part descends to a lower register and strongly strikes block chords, emphasizing the word ‘*inútil*’ (useless) three times at m. 92 (Ex. 35).

Example 35. *A su retrato*, Mm. 92-98.

At this point, the lesson of the poem, that “vanity and praise are useless against fate”, is highlighted musically with the driving rhythm, block chords, and more chromaticism. Eventually this climactic section leads to a dramatic cadential six-four chord of the piece’s main key in m. 99, preparing for a return to the opening material.



For the last stanza, the musical setting draws upon the opening A-section material, though it is modified and condensed. The opening melody returns in the voice, but now is harmonized right away with block chords in a higher register. The chromatically descending bass line underscores the mood of discontent, which is further expressed on the word ‘*errada*’ (mistaken) at m. 111, with an F $\sharp$  dominant 7th chord that sounds almost out of place in the context of the chord progression. The piano part echoes this event a measure later (Ex. 36).

Example 36. *A su retrato*, Mm. 108-116.

In this stanza, there is no Picardy third as in the first stanza, further expressing the feelings of sadness. The last word of the poem, ‘*nada*’ (nothingness), is presented in a bare texture with only the solo voice highlighting the feelings of emptiness. The introduction material is expanded in the postlude, in which the piano part gradually descends, bringing the song to a close.

## II. A una rosa

The second song of this set involves another sonnet by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *A una rosa* (‘To a rose’). Its message is similar to that of *A su retrato* in that it emphasizes woman’s vanity and pride as a fault. In *A una rosa*, the poem relates a woman’s life to the manner in which a rose lives and dies. In this poem, the woman is beautiful like a rose, but Sor Juana

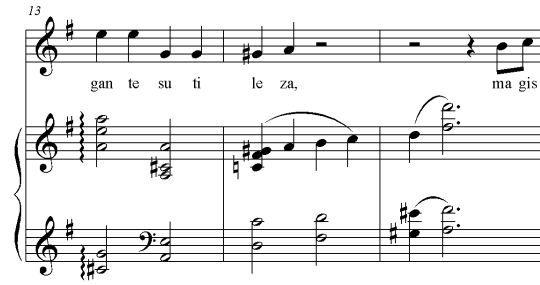
recognizes the woman's desire to remain so beautiful in the eyes of man while forgetting that she will someday wilt and be seen in all her truth in the eyes of God. The musical setting often has harp-like arpeggios ascending and descending creating a spring-in-bloom effect which represents the image of beauty. The beginning is tender in mood and flows like a kind-hearted story to reflect the life of a rose (woman). The middle section becomes serious to represent a warning, with the music becoming much more dramatic and intense. It ends with a more reflective feel focusing on the moral message of the poem.

The song is in G major and opens with flowing *legato* arpeggios in the piano part. The lyrical melodies and generally light texture create a gentle atmosphere, reflecting the delicate rose. The motive used at m. 1 in the introduction is representative of the rose and is used throughout the movement, including the interlude and postlude (Ex. 37).



Example 37. *A una rosa*, Mm. 1-6.

As the voice enters, the accompaniment moves to a higher register while keeping the same rhythmic flow, creating an even lighter texture. An emphasis is placed on the word 'sutileza' (subtlety) by breaking the eighth-note arpeggios and adding chromatic embellishments in m. 13 (Ex. 38).



Example 38. *A una rosa*, Mm. 13-15.

The accompaniment and harmony help accentuate the word '*belleza*' (beauty) in m. 18 by introducing triplets for the first time and using a German augmented-sixth chord (Ex. 39).

Example 39. *A una rosa*, Mm. 18-22.

The second verse begins in a similar fashion as the first verse. At m. 28, the mood and accompaniment change, with the harmony focusing on borrowed chords from G minor. At this point the poet expresses her idea that it is human nature to succumb to vanity. The music begins to have a greater sense of urgency, underscored by the syncopation with block chords in the right hand, chromaticism with a descending bass line, and faster harmonic rhythm (Ex. 40).



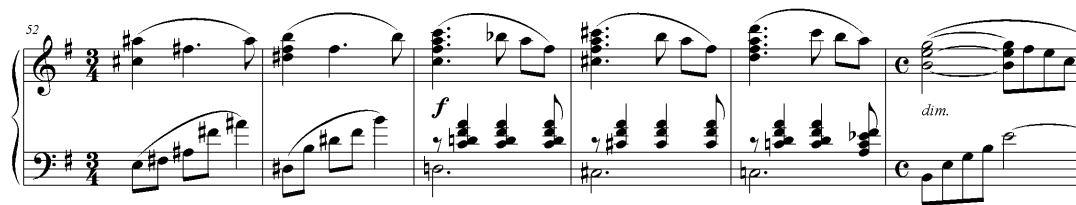
Example 40. *A una rosa*, Mm. 28-31.

This motion slows down again and the texture becomes thinner, helping to word-paint the text ‘*la cuna alegre*’ (the happy cradle) at m. 34 with arpeggiated quarter notes in the high register of the piano, suggesting the sound of a lullaby. Throughout this section, the harmony tends toward the minor mode, creating a darker sound. On the text ‘*y triste sepultura*’ (sad sepulcher), the accompaniment slows down rhythmically, allowing more emphasis on declamation of the text (Ex. 41).

Example 41. *A una rosa*, Mm. 34-42.

The slower rhythmic activity and minor mode bring this stanza to a sad close.

The interlude that follows begins with the opening ‘rose’ motive set in different keys beginning at m. 44. It begins in the closely-related key of C minor, followed by a statement in F minor. As the interlude continues, the harmony becomes more chromatic while the dynamic level and overall intensity increase (Ex. 42).



Example 42. *A una rosa*, Mm. 52-57.

Finally this section resolves to E minor, with a slowing of the rhythmic motion and an arrival at a half cadence at m. 57.

The following new section is a significant contrast to the other parts of the song. The tempo is faster, the accompaniment is heavier, and the texture is thicker, taking up a wider range with the use of octaves and full chords (Ex. 43).

**Agitato** ♩ = 126

63 *f*

¡Cuán al-ti-va en tu pom-pa,— pre-su-mi da, pre su mi da, pre su-mi da y so-ber-bia, el

*f*

Example 43. *A una rosa*, Mm. 63-66.

The section begins with a *staccato*, syncopated accompaniment at m. 61, underscoring the agitated text of ‘¡Cuan altiva en tu pompa’ (how arrogant and pompous). The word ‘presumida’ (aspect of arrogance meaning to show off) is repeated several times to bring attention to the problem of vanity and pride. At m. 65, the bass line chromatically descends as the soprano sings the text ‘el riesgo de morir’ (at the risk of dying), expressing feelings of agitation and anger about the vanity that she is criticizing (Ex. 44).



Example 44. *A una rosa*, Mm. 67-72.

After this climactic point, the intensity and motion fades at m. 73 as the word ‘*morir*’ (death) is declaimed three times and the harmony comes to a half cadence. To finish this section there is a short unaccompanied recitative-like statement in which the singer expresses that death has arrived (Ex. 45).

Example 45. *A una rosa*, Mm. 73-78.

There is a short transition which begins in B minor, using the main motive of the rose and thematic material of the first verse to transition back to G major, the main key of the song.

The last verse of the song begins with the ‘rose’ motive as in the beginning, but quickly the harmony shifts to the parallel key. Overall the mood of this stanza is reflective, which contrasts greatly the tormented feeling of the previous section. The music accentuates this feeling with the emphasis on the minor mode and generally less rhythmic activity, allowing for greater attention on text declamation. This helps to underscore the final lesson expressed in the

text ‘*viviendo engañas, muriendo enseñas*’ (you live a lie, by death you instruct). The piano has a brief postlude, with one last statement of the motive of the rose returning to G major through a iv – I plagal cadence and ascending to a higher register (Ex. 46).



Example 46. *A una rosa*, Mm. 106-112.

After the emphasis on keys related to G minor, ending on a G major chord signifies the positive conclusion to a tragic lesson, that in death one will no longer be consumed by vanity and materialism.

## Chapter V

### All Praise to Thee, Eternal God

*All Praise to Thee, Eternal God* is a work for SATB choir with piano accompaniment. It has five stanzas of which the first stanza comes from a German hymn composed in 1370, with the remaining stanzas written by Martin Luther. The English translation first appeared in the *The Sabbath Hymn Book* published in 1858.<sup>1</sup> This public-domain text can also be found on many websites.

The overall musical style of this work was inspired by the title of the text, which suggested a lively feel of praise and energetic worship. There are contrasting sections which maintain the original tempo, but with slower rhythmic activity, giving them a broader feel. These softer and gentler sections balance the more intense and faster-moving sections at the beginning and end of the piece.

The harmonic style of this piece is similar to that of the second movement (*Rondando*) of the *Sextet*. The main key of the piece is C major, though there is an extensive use of mode mixture, as well as a Mixolydian coloring in the repeated v – I chord progressions that are used for the *Hallelujah* motive that concludes each stanza. The general musical form of this piece is AA'BCA". The use of borrowed chords is so extensive, that a C minor key signature is used, though all of the prominent cadences to tonic end on a major chord.

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<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1993), p. 33.



The opening verse begins in unison in the choral parts with block-chord harmonies in the piano, providing a strong and clear sound. In m. 10, the unison breaks off into harmony, arriving at a strong V – I cadence in m. 13. The setting of the stanza is concluded by the *Hallelujah* motive that involves a strongly modal sound (v – I) and that occurs throughout the piece (Ex. 47).

The musical score for Example 47 consists of four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Dost take a\_manger for Thy throne, While worlds on worlds are\_ Thine a-lone. Halle - lu - jah! Halle - lu - jah!". The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The piano part features block-chord harmonies in the left hand and a more melodic line in the right hand. The vocal parts enter in unison in m. 10 and then move into harmony.

Example 47. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 10-15.

The *hallelujah* motive is repeated in the short interlude which follows the first verse.

The setting of the second stanza is similar to the first, except that it begins clearly in C minor. The main melody is repeated, with only minimal changes. When the *Hallelujah* motive is sung a second time at m. 28, sometimes the traditional major dominant chord is used, although the modal sound of the v – I is still prominent (Ex. 48).

Example 48. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 27-33.

The intensity and excitement quiet down as the new section begins with a piano interlude in E $\flat$  major at the pickup to m. 35. This section features a much thinner piano texture and a *legato* melody, while quarter-note triplets provide a slower-moving feel. At m. 43, the soprano and alto enter with this same melody, continuing in a lighter texture. This delicate sound helps to accentuate the emphasis on the text ‘*this little child*’, which focuses on the infant Jesus (Ex. 49).

Example 49. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 42-47.

A short transition follows, with a modulation to G minor setting up the entrance of the men's voices. The texture thickens slightly, with block chords and arpeggios in the triplet pattern and with more motion in the bass line. At m. 65, as the text describes how Jesus' incarnation allows humanity to rise to heaven, the melody rises to a high point (Ex. 50).

Example 50. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 61-68

The *hallelujah* motive that punctuated the previous stanzas returns as the women's voices enter. The men echo this motive, and then the third time everyone sings together homorhythmically.

Starting at m. 71, there is a longer transition, based on the *hallelujah* motive (Ex. 51).

Example 51. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 74-80.

Quicker changes in harmony, texture, and harmonic rhythm build up tension until finally there is a resolution to a cadential six-four harmony in E $\flat$  minor at m. 82, followed by a half cadence.

A new section follows at m. 87, where the arpeggiated eighth-note accompaniment and the vocal lines moving slowly in a lower register provide a mysterious and dream-like feel. The

E $\flat$  minor tonality, a doubly chromatic mediant relationship with the tonic key of C major, contributes to its darker quality, helping to word-paint the text ‘*Thou comes in the darksome night*’ (Ex. 52).

87 *p*  
Thou \_\_\_\_\_ comes in the dark - some \_\_\_\_\_ night \_\_\_\_\_

*p*  
Thou \_\_\_\_\_ comes in the dark - some \_\_\_\_\_ night \_\_\_\_\_

*p*  
Thou \_\_\_\_\_ comes in the dark - some \_\_\_\_\_ night \_\_\_\_\_

*p*  
Thou \_\_\_\_\_ comes in the dark - some \_\_\_\_\_ night \_\_\_\_\_

*p*

Example 52. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 87-91.

In the next line, there is a shift to the parallel major to word-paint the text ‘*light*’ at m. 94, which contrasts the previous minor mode that represents the dark. On the word ‘*divine*’ at m. 99, there is a resolution to a C major chord, which helps to signal a return to the home key. An extended half cadence focuses on the *hallelujah* motive. Then, at m. 108, material from the first interlude of the piece returns in a lower register followed by a final punctuation with the *hallelujah* motive on a half cadence, preparing the last stanza.

The last verse is a modified repeat of the opening verse. The vocal parts begin in harmony, and the piano accompaniment uses fuller chords and spans a wider range. Along with the more active bass line, these elements create a grander, more orchestral sound (Ex. 53).

113 *f*

All this for us Thy love had done; By This to Thee our love is

*f*

All this for us Thy love had done; By This to Thee our love is

*f*

All this for us Thy love had done; By This to Thee our love is

*f*

All this for us Thy love had done; By This to Thee our love is

Example 53. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 113-118.

At m. 116, as the choir sings the words ‘*songs we raise*’, the melody moves up to its highest point yet. After this high point, the intensity calms down briefly before the closing *hallelujah* is repeated several times. At this point, the melody gradually rises in register. Although the word ‘*Amen*’ is not in the original text, it has been added to provide a firmly conclusive ending. At m. 127, ‘*Amen*’ is repeated several times, as the texture thickens. Here the choir is divided into eight parts. As the upper voices hold out the final chord, the men sing the *hallelujah* motive, which is then echoed one final time in the accompaniment (Ex. 54).

130

lu - jah! A - men, A - men, A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

lu - jah! A - men, A - men, A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

lu - jah! A - men, A - men, A - men. Ha lle-lu - jah! \_\_\_\_\_

lu - jah! A - men, A - men, A - men. Ha lle-lu - jah! \_\_\_\_\_

Example 54. *All Praise to Thee, Eternal God*, Mm. 130-136.

## Chapter VI

### Brass Quintet

The *Brass Quintet* has three movements, each having a distinct character, though unified through some common musical elements. The first movement features crisp *staccato* articulations which, along with the quick tempo, create an exciting flow. The slow second movement has more lyrical *legato* lines and clear harmonies, which contributes to its calm, gentle feel. A faster pace returns in the third movement, with more active rhythms favoring triplets, fanfare-like motives, and quick-building lines and full textures. All three movements have elements of syncopation in the accompaniment, though varying in degrees of intensity. They all make prominent use of imitative textures and echo effects.

#### I. Allegro

The first movement is in C minor with very *staccato* moving parts and a brief contrasting middle section with a more *legato* flowing melody. This movement has a very exciting, forward-moving feel. At the beginning, the opening motives that make up the main melody are presented successively in all the parts. The leading tone is avoided, giving a modal feel until m. 10, at which point there is a standard tonal half cadence. Starting at m. 11, the melody repeats at m. 11, but this time it cadences to a B $\flat$  major chord. The first exchange of echoes occurs at m. 17 in the second trumpet, horn, trombone, and tuba (Ex. 55).



Example 55. I. *Allegro*, Mm. 17-19.

To close the first section, a fragment of the motive is exchanged between the instruments in a call-and-response manner and then is repeated with all instruments playing together, ending on a v – i modal cadence (Ex. 56).

Example 56. I. *Allegro*, Mm. 24-26.



The middle section, in E $\flat$  major, features one *legato* moving line against a *staccato*, syncopated accompaniment (Ex. 57).

Example 57. I. *Allegro*, Mm. 28-31.

The melody is now presented as a whole in one instrument at a time, without being fragmented within a phrase. In contrast to the opening part, the harmonic rhythm in this section moves more slowly. At first, the horn has the melody, followed by the trombone, and then the first trumpet, which takes the melody to its highest point at m. 39. Here it resolves to E $\flat$  major, the tonic chord of the section, with a fanfare-like gesture in the upper parts (Ex. 58).



Example 58. I. *Allegro*, Mm. 36-40.

After this brief motivic exchange, the melody continues in the trombone, and then is repeated and doubled by the tuba in the lower octave. As a short transition, a fragment of the movement's main motive is played successively in all instruments at different times, creating a pyramid effect. This pattern repeats three times, changing key each time. The third statement arrives at a G major harmony, which is held out for five measures and eventually settles as dominant harmony of the main key, preparing the return of C minor with a half cadence.

To round out the movement, the opening theme, as presented in m. 11, returns with minimal changes. The same fragment of the main motive which finishes the first section is repeated with a quick dynamic buildup to *fortissimo*, while the range expands even more than previously, providing a sudden, though firm and conclusive ending.

## II. Andante

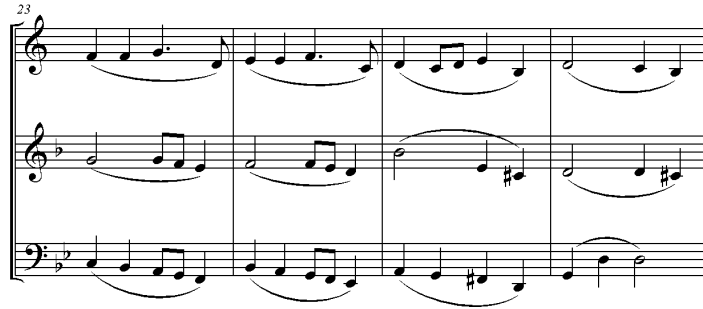
The slower second movement begins in G minor with a very lyrical feel. The movement is in ABA' ternary form with a middle section that has a more forward-moving feel due to the *moderato* tempo, more active rhythm, and more distant tonalities from the home key. The return A section is a reharmonized version of the first A section.

The melody of the first section has a melancholy feel throughout. Even though the dynamics are soft overall, the texture is fuller, with all parts playing by m. 10 (Ex. 59).

The musical score for Example 59, II. Andante, Mm. 9-14, is presented on five staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (F major or D minor). The second staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The third staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The fifth staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The dynamics are marked 'p' (piano) throughout. The music features a melancholy feel with a lyrical melody and a more forward-moving feel in the middle section.

Example 59. II. *Andante*, Mm. 9-14.

After the first theme is presented (mm. 1-18), this full texture thins out to a duet between the horn, which plays a new theme, and trombone. Four bars later, the second trumpet enters with the melody, as the horn and trombone now accompany in a trio texture (Ex. 60).



Example 60. II. *Andante*, Mm. 23-26.

The statement of this second theme is repeated again at m. 28, now with a thicker texture, as all parts play in a wider range. At m. 32, there is more motion in the bass, as well as triplet rhythms in the accompaniment, which further develops the texture (Ex. 61).

Example 61. II. *Andante*, Mm. 31-35.

This section concludes with a descending motive similar to the material used in closing of the A sections in *Pensamiento*, the first movement of the *Sextet* (Ex. 62).



Example 62. II. *Andante*, Mm. 38-42.

At m. 44, there is a short transition which smoothly modulates to D minor, using motivic fragments of material of the upcoming B section softly imitated in different instruments.

The *moderato* tempo of the B section and the use of more syncopated accompaniment contribute to this new section's faster-moving feel. A chromatic descending bass line helps support harmonies that will eventually become more distant from the home key (Ex. 63).

51 **Moderato** ♩ = 108

Example 63. II. *Andante*, Mm. 51-56.

At m. 62, quarter-note triplets that were an important part of the transition are introduced in imitation in several parts. The chromatic progression finally resolves to a half cadence in the distant key of B $\flat$  minor.

In the second statement of the theme, beginning at m. 70, the rhythmic drive is intensified with syncopated eighth notes in the accompaniment. The melody is played by the second trumpet and is imitated by the first trumpet, creating an echo effect. This imitation breaks off with the trumpets playing in octaves and the accompaniment becoming more active with sixteenth notes. The faster rhythmic pattern then broadens, as the quarter-note triplet pattern returns in the melody played by trumpets in alternation with the horn and trombone (Ex. 64).



Example 64. II. *Andante*, Mm. 80-82.

The climactic point of this section features an ascending line with eighth-note triplets, a *crescendo*, and an expansion and thickening of the texture. This build up eases, with the harmonic rhythm slowing and the melody descending, finally resolving to a PAC in F minor at m. 94.

The transition back to the A section begins immediately after the resolution to this F minor chord. It starts with an imitative texture between the trombone and horn, with a *legato* line in quarter notes. The trumpets accompany with eighth-note and eighth-note triplet rhythms (Ex. 65).

Example 65. II. *Andante*, Mm. 94-100.

Later, the quarter notes in the melody are replaced by eighth notes, and the imitation is taken up by the first and second trumpets. The tension continues to increase, as the harmony here becomes more chromatic, the harmonic rhythm quickens, and rhythmic energy intensifies. Eventually the progression leads toward the main key of the movement, and the section concludes with an extended half cadence in G minor.

The return of the A section has a similar texture and accompaniment pattern as the beginning of the piece; however, it is shorter and reharmonized to delay a conclusive return to the tonic chord until the very end. There are only slight changes in the rhythmic patterns of the accompaniment, now with the quarter-note triplet patterns used to recall some of the rhythmic motives of the B section. The culmination of this section differs from that of the first A section,

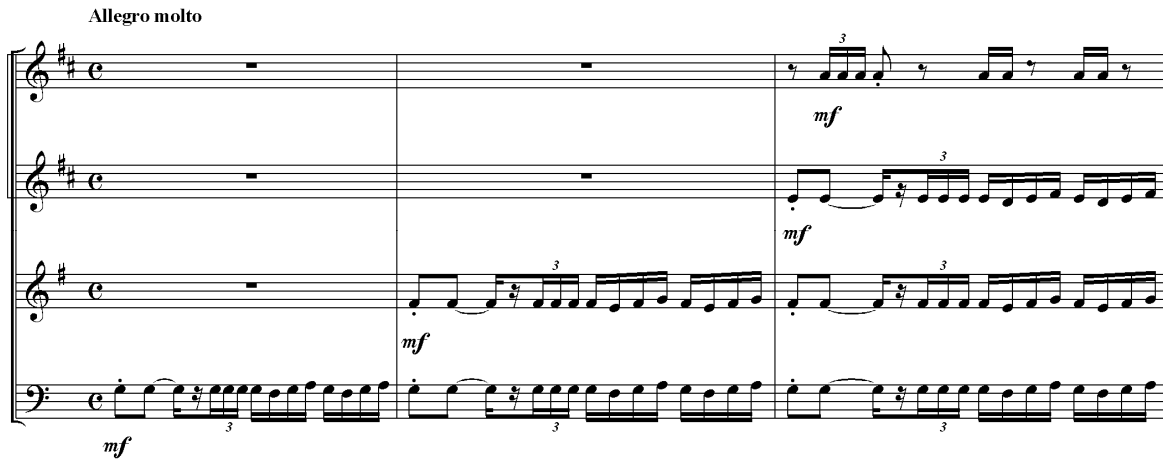
with an ascending line of quarter notes reaching a intense high point, which is sustained for two bars before a dramatic pause. Beginning with the horn, the top three instruments enter in imitation and are followed by the trombone and tuba to fill out the texture. At this point, the rhythmic values of the melody become broader, creating the effect of a written-out *ritardando*. The final conclusive PAC occurs at m. 147, followed by the descending motive from the end of the first A section. The quarter-note triplet motive, which was prominent in the B section and the return of the A section, punctuates the end of the piece.

### **III. Allegro Molto**

This movement is the most up-tempo piece of the Quintet, as an exciting fanfare motive predominates. The whole movement is based on three main ideas: the introductory fanfare motive and two main themes. Throughout the movement, these elements are presented in different key areas with different orchestration. The first A section has a very ‘busy’ feel, with an active rhythmic texture in both the melody and the accompaniment. The B section features a more relaxed rhythmic feel and a considerably thinner texture. The return of the A section brings back the animated rhythmic patterns, now with different orchestration and a march-like accompaniment.

The fanfare introduction suggests the Mixolydian mode, as the traditional leading tone is avoided. Later the usual major dominant chord is established, confirming that G major is the main key. However, throughout the piece, there are modal harmonic implications. The opening features a pyramid effect in the texture, as has been used in previous movements. The homorhythmic pattern, syncopations, and triplets contribute to the fanfare-like effect. This idea is then used as an accompaniment throughout the entire piece (Ex. 66).





Example 66. III. *Allegro molto*, Mm. 1-3.

After reaching the dominant chord, the main melody of the first theme is introduced by the trumpets (Ex. 67).

Example 67. III. *Allegro molto*, Mm. 8-10.

The first statement of the melody ends on a half cadence followed by a condensed version of the buildup on the dominant chord, preparing a return of the melody, with slight differences, in the key of D major. The first trumpet presents the main melody, while the second trumpet plays a countermelody based on the fanfare motive from the introduction. A run of

quick sixteenth-note triplets takes this section back to G major. The main theme is presented again, though eventually it spins off into distant key areas beginning at m. 26. The tuba is now considerably more rhythmically active with *staccato* eighth notes in a polka-like bass line (Ex. 68).

Example 68 shows a musical score for five staves, measures 26-28. The key signature is G major (one sharp). Measure 26 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measures 27 and 28 transition to mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamics. The music features sixteenth-note triplets and staccato eighth notes in the bass line.

Example 68. III. *Allegro molto*, Mm. 26-28.

There is a quick shift in keys, from A $\flat$  major to G $\flat$  major to C minor. This motion through distant keys creates a slightly strange harmonic effect, though the transitions into and out of these distant keys are rather smooth. The A section concludes with the fanfare motive on G, though this time functioning as the dominant of C minor.

The B section begins with a new theme that has a slower and calmer feel and is repeated often in different key areas (Ex. 69).

Example 69 shows a musical score for two staves, measures 36-37. The key signature is G major (one sharp). Measure 36 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 37 continues the *p* dynamics. The music features a new theme with a slower and calmer feel.

Example 69. III. *Allegro molto*, Mm. 36-37.

It begins in B $\flat$  major with pairs of instruments in alternation. There is a shift to C major before B $\flat$  major returns and sets up a strong cadence in G minor, the parallel key of the movement's main key. This section has a more developmental quality, as the statements of the motives are shorter, and more rhythmically active accompanimental material from the first part is incorporated into this section. A motivic call-and-response texture is developed before eventually the slower, calmer second theme returns, this time in D major. This leads to a transition using the fanfare motive with more chromaticism, finally arriving at the dominant chord of the movement's main key in m. 69 (Ex. 70).



Example 70. III. *Allegro molto*, Mm. 69-73.

At this point the initial fanfare motive is fragmented significantly. Finally, in m. 72, one motive of the fanfare is presented successively in higher registers and in rhythmic diminution to build the texture and increase the rhythmic motion to return to the rhythmic feel of the original A section.

A modified return of the A section begins at m. 75. At first, the main theme is presented in lower registers, first by the trombone and then doubled by the tuba. Unlike the first A section,

when the theme was repeated in the dominant key, here it remains in tonic. As in the first A section, there is a short detour to distant keys, though here the quicker harmonic rhythm creates even a slightly quirkier effect. The coda is based on the fanfare introduction, building up with a full-ensemble texture to a *grandioso* finish to the piece (Ex. 71).

Example 71. III. *Allegro molto*, Mm. 99-102.

## **Bibliography**

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## Curriculum Vitae

Born on November 14, 1981 into a musical family in Ciudad Juárez, México, Miguel Soto has been active for many years as a pianist and composer. He is the youngest of three siblings, the son of Jose Soto and Margarita Lechuga. Miguel began his musical studies in theory, aural skills, and piano at age 9. He has performed widely as a soloist and accompanist, and in various ensembles at many different venues in the El Paso and Juárez areas. Miguel graduated *cum laude* from the University of Texas at El Paso in May of 2006, earning the Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance. His principal piano teachers include Dr. Arryl Paul, Dr. Dena Kay Jones, and Dr. Oscar Macchioni. During his undergraduate studies, he was a recipient of the Mutnick Piano Scholarship. In the summer of 2006, Miguel began studies toward the Master of Music degree in performance with an emphasis in composition. His primary composition teacher was Dr. Dominic Dousa. While earning his degrees, he has continued to play with local performing groups and church organizations, and has participated in various charity events and fundraisers. He also has taught piano privately, as well as piano classes for children and adults through the Professional and Continuing Education Program at UTEP. Currently, he is the band and choir director at Fabens Middle School and an assistant band director at Fabens High School.

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