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Train of thought

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TRAIN OF THOUGHT

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Music and Dance

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Annick Danielle Crawford

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ABSTRACT

TRAIN OF THOUGHT

By Annick Danielle Crawford

This thesis was created for the Landini Dance Company. The piece has been created for an intermediate ensemble consisting of flute, clarinet in Bb, vibraphone, and cello. *Train of Thought* represents a moment in the unspoken conscious mind. Motivic variations represent thoughts that develop from an initial thought. Each new motive encountered in the work represents either a refined version of the original thought or a completely new idea in and of itself. The structure of the work is based on a series of variations and transitions between primary motives. Each motive is based on either the interval of a second or third. Alterations in rhythm, tempo, dynamics, articulations, and key create the many variations of each motive. The piece ends with a total deconstruction of the original central motives.

TRAIN OF THOUGHT

INTRODUCTION

This thesis was inspired by an article written by Kyle Gann titled, “A Forest from the Seeds of Minimalism: An Essay on Postminimal and Totalist Music.” Gann discusses the beginnings of minimalism in music, post-minimalism, and a new genre he refers to as “Totalism.” He describes minimalism as an “energizing electric shock” to students trapped in the academic music of the 1960’s.

The music schools, the established composers, had been telling youngsters that music, to be valid, should be complex, dissonant, difficult to understand. Throughout the ‘60’s the world of musical composition had been hermetically cut off, by its own choice, from the rest of society....And what gradually dawned on the young composers was the bald-faced truth that, contrary to what their elders had told them, music was not like stomach medicine: it did not have to taste awful to be food for you.¹

This piece explores the idea that academic music does “not have to taste awful to be food for you.” The music is appealing to lay audiences, yet also provides enough underlying complexity to intrigue sophisticated musicians. More over, *Train of Thought* is intended to be approachable and motivating for choreographers. Consonance, tonality, rhythm, instrumental skill, and choreographic adaptability were key factors in this thesis.

¹ Gann, K. (1998). Written for the program of a 1998 Minimalism Festival of the Berliner Gesellschaft für Neue Musik [Electronic version]. <http://home.earthlink.net/~kgann/postminimalism.html>

This piece was created for dancers from the Landini Dance Company of San Francisco. There are several dance elements needed in order to function for choreography: repetition, balance, contrast, emphasis, and variety. Each motive has been developed to inspire movement. Every variation and repetition has been created for the purpose of dance.

It is important not to lose musical integrity when writing for dance. Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* maintains a sense of absolute music apart from dance, yet the music suggests a total integration of the element of movement that fits the nature of dance. Balance and contrast are key factors in achieving this goal. Melodic, harmonic, and orchestral techniques enable the music to stand on its own as well as inspire movement.

In *Train of Thought*, measure 177, the clarinet and cello have a "balanced" duet. Two dancers will mirror one another or dance in unison at this point. Later, during the solo passage at measure 190, one dancer will solo. Contrast is demonstrated throughout the piece through the textural variety of contrapuntal passages and variations.

One key element necessary to focus a work for dance is emphasis. Emphasis is formed by musical events, which in turn cue movement. These musical events are demonstrated through a variety of musical accents, pauses, dynamic alterations, and intervallic leaps.

Form flexibility is a key component for choreography. Any specific passage can be eliminated from the piece or relocated with ease. This style of writing creates a middle ground for the choreographer and composer to compromise length, style, and mood. The form created by *Train of Thought*, A¹, A², A³, is consistent with the needs of the choreographer. Each section is

comprised of up to eight variations of the original motive presented. Due to the limitations of this form, underlying complexities are created through orchestration, dynamics, articulation, rhythm, and counterpoint.

The title of the piece, *Train of Thought*, suggests the idea of constant motion. The motion is derived from the subconscious and conscious unspoken mind while processing an idea. The musical devices used to represent this physiological process are rhythm, repetition, and variation. Steve Reich's *Variations for Winds, Strings and Keyboards* uses simple motivic ideas that repeat obsessively until the end of the piece. I have incorporated this simplicity and obsessive repetition into a set of three main motives. Each motive is based on the interval of a second and third. I have used these simple motives to represent the formation of ideas that are constantly being processed in a "train of thought."

The opening ostinato emphasizes this idea of constant motion. There are periods where the ostinato drops out to transition to a new idea. Inevitably, one of the instruments returns to a repeating rhythm underneath a new idea. The new motive then begins its process of repetition through variation. When the mind wanders, thoughts often are incomplete and never come to full fruition. The variations represent the concept that every thought that wanders through the mind is either rejected or processed.

Another aspect of rhythm that varies the movement throughout the piece is the use of syncopation and agogic accents. (Mm. 229-237) This creates a level of ambiguity within each section. Accent displacements and inconsistencies in melodic form create a sense of infinite motion.

John Adams' *Clouds of Forgetting*. *Clouds of Unknowing* inspired the slow reflective section beginning in measure 177 in *Train of Thought*. This passage highlights the Bb Clarinet's chalumeau register while paired with the cello. This section maintains the simple motivic structure of the piece yet explores an entirely new tone color and tempo. The chalumeau passage is then followed by a new color with the high register flute solo. (Mm. 190) This solo repeats with the added harmonies of the ensemble and inevitably gets carried back into a gentle repetitious rhythm.

Train of Thought is scheduled to be performed in the fall of 2004. The work may be altered to suit the needs of the choreographer.

TRAIN OF THOUGHT

Annick Crawford

Flute

Clarinet in B $\flat$

medium mallets

Vibraphone

Violoncello

$J. = 95$

6

mf

6

mf $\rightarrow$ *p sim.*

Fl. 10 14 18

Cl. 10 14 18

Vib. 10 14 18

Vcl. 10 14 18

Dynamic markings: *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *p*, *p sim.*

Articulation: accents (>), slurs, ties.

22 26

Fl. Cl.

22 26

Vib. Vcl.

mf f mf

mf f mf

f mf mf

mf f mf

Fl. 30 34 38 $\text{♩} = 95$
 Cl. 30 34 38 $mf < f$
 Vib. 30 34 38 $f > mf$
 Vcl. 30 34 38 $mf < f > mf$

The musical score is written for four instruments: Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Vibraphone (Vib.), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The score is organized into four systems, each corresponding to measures 30, 34, and 38. The Flute part includes a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 95$. The Clarinet part features dynamics of mf , f , and mf . The Vibraphone part features dynamics of f and mf . The Violoncello part features dynamics of mf , f , and mf . The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Fl. 42 *mf* *f* *mf* 46 *mf* *f* *mf*

Cl. 42 *mf* *f* *mf* 46 *mf* *f* *mf*

Vib. 42 *mf* *f* 46 *mf* *f*

Vcl. 42 *mf* *f* *mf* 46 *mf* *f* *pp* *flotando*

Fl. 50 54 58 $\text{♩} = 140$

Cl. 50 54 58 *pp* *p*

Vib. 50 54 58 *pp*

Vcl. 50 54 58 *p* *mp* *p* *pizz.* *mf*

Fl. 62 66 *mf*

Cl. *mp* *fp*

Vib. 62 66 *mp*

Vcl. 62 66 *mp* *mf* *mp*

Fl. 70 74 78

Cl. 70 74 78

Vib. 70 74 78

Vcl. 70 74 78

mf *sfz* *mf* *f* *mf* *sfz*

mf *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

82 86

Fl. *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Cl. *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

82 86

Vib. *mp* *mf* *f* *mp*

82 86

Vcl. *arco* *mf* *mp*

The musical score is written for four instruments: Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Vibraphone (Vib.), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 82 to 86, and the second system covers measures 86 to 90. The Flute and Clarinet parts are in treble clef, and the Violoncello part is in bass clef. The Vibraphone part is in bass clef. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (mf, mp, f). The Flute and Clarinet parts have a melodic line with some grace notes. The Vibraphone part has a more rhythmic line with some grace notes. The Violoncello part has a melodic line with some grace notes.

Fl. 94 *ord.* *mf* 98

Cl. 90 *mp* *mf* 94 *mf* 98

Vib. 90 *mp* *f* 94 *mp* *f* 98

Vcl. 90 *mp* *f* 94 *mp* *f* 98

Fl. 102 106

Cl. 102 106

Vib. 102 106

Vcl. 102 106

f *sfz* *ff* *mp* *p*

f *sfz* *ff* *mp* *p*

f *sfz* *ff* *mp* *p*

f *sfz* *ff* *mp* *p*

110 114 118

Fl. *sfz* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Cl. *sfz* *mf* *mp* *mf*

110 114 118

Vib. *sfz* *mf*

110 114 118

Vcl. *sfz*

This musical score is for measures 122-126 of 'The Swan' from The Nutcracker. It features three staves: Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), and Violoncello/Vibraphone (Vcl./Vib.).

- Flute (Fl.):** Measures 122-126. Starts with a *rit.* (ritardando) and *a tempo* marking. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).
- Clarinet (Cl.):** Measures 122-126. Starts with a *rit.* and *a tempo* marking. Dynamics include *mf* and *p* (piano).
- Violoncello/Vibraphone (Vcl./Vib.):** Measures 122-126. Starts with a *rit.* and *a tempo* marking. Dynamics include *p*, *mf*, and *mp*. Pedal points (ped.) are indicated at measures 122, 124, and 126.

The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings to guide the performance.

Musical score for four instruments: Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Vibraphone (Vib.), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The score spans measures 130 to 138.

Flute (Fl.): Measures 130-138. Dynamics include *mf* and *mp*.

Clarinet (Cl.): Measures 130-138. Dynamics include *mf* and *mp*.

Vibraphone (Vib.): Measures 130-138. Dynamics include *mf* and *mp*. A *ped.* (pedal) marking is present in measure 130.

Violoncello (Vcl.): Measures 130-138. Dynamics include *sfz*, *mp*, *mf*, and *f*.

Musical score for four instruments: Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Vibraphone (Vib.), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The score covers measures 142 to 146.

Flute (Fl.): Measures 142-146. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *mf*.

Clarinet (Cl.): Measures 142-146. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *mf*.

Vibraphone (Vib.): Measures 142-146. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *mf*.

Violoncello (Vcl.): Measures 142-146. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*.

Fl.
 150 *mf*
 154 *mf*
 158 *mf*

Cl.
 150 *mf*
 154 *mf*
 158 *mf*

Vib.
 150 *>mf*
 154 *mp*
 158 *mf*

Vcl.
 150 *mf*
 154 *mp*
 158 *mf*

[illegible]

Musical score for measures 170-178 of "The Swan" from The Nutcracker. The score is written for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked "Allegretto" (♩. = 85). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings (p, mp, mf, sub.). The Flute part has a trill in measure 170. The Clarinet part has a trill in measure 170. The Violoncello part has a trill in measure 170. The score is divided into three systems, each containing three staves (Fl., Cl., Vcl.). The first system covers measures 170-172, the second system covers measures 173-175, and the third system covers measures 176-178. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 178.

Fl. 182 186

Cl. 182 186

Vib. 182 186

Vcl. 182 186

mp < *mf* *mp* *mp* *mp*

mp > *p* *mp* > *p* *mp* > *p* *mp* > *p*

> *p* < *mp* *mp* < *mf* *mp* *mp*

The image shows a page from a musical score, specifically measures 190 through 194. The score is written for three instruments: Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), and Violoncello/Viola (Vcl. Vlb.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a variety of notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The Flute part has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Clarinet part has a more rhythmic, staccato-like pattern. The Violoncello/Viola part has a melodic line with slurs and accents. The dynamic markings include *mf*, *mp*, *p*, and *ord.* (ordinario). The page number 194 is visible at the bottom right.

Musical score for four instruments: Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Vibraphone (Vib.), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The score covers measures 210 to 214. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

Flute (Fl.): Measures 210-214. Dynamics include *mf* (measures 210-211), *mp* (measure 212), and *mf* (measure 213). A slur covers measures 210-211.

Clarinet (Cl.): Measures 210-214. Dynamics include *mf* (measures 210-211), *mp* (measure 212), and *p* (measure 213). A slur covers measures 210-211.

Vibraphone (Vib.): Measures 210-214. Dynamics include *mp* (measures 210-211), *p* (measure 212), and *mp* (measure 213). Pedal markings (*ped.*) are present in measures 210, 212, and 213.

Violoncello (Vcl.): Measures 210-214. Dynamics include *mp* (measures 210-211), *pp* (measure 212), and *mp* (measure 213). Pedal markings (*ped.*) are present in measures 210 and 212.

Fl. 226 230

Cl. 226 230

Vib. 226 230

Vcl. 226 230

f *mf* *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf*

[illegible]

242 246

Fl. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

242 246

Vib. *mp* *mf* *ped.*

242 246

Vcl. *mp* *mf* *ped.*

Fl. 250 254 *f*

Cl. *mf sfz*

Vib. 250 254 *mp sfz*

Vcl. 250 254 *mf mp*

Fl. 266 270
 Cl. 266 270
 Vib. 266 270
 Vcl. 266 270

Fl. $mf < f > mf$
 Cl. $mf < f > mf$
 Vib. f mf mf
 Vcl. f $pizz.$

$\text{♩} = 100$

Fl. 274 278

Cl. 274 278

Vib. 274 278

Vcl. 274 278

Musical score for Flute, Clarinet, Vibraphone, and Violoncello. The score is divided into four systems, each corresponding to a different instrument. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 100$. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, dynamics (f, mf, mp), and articulation marks (accents, slurs).

Fl. 282 *mf* *mp* 286 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Cl. 282 *mf* *mp* 286 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vib. 282 *mp* 286 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vcl. 282 *arco* *mp* *mf* 286 *mf*

Fl. *poco a poco a c c e l.* 290 294 *f*

Cl. *poco a poco a c c e l.* *mf* *mf* *p* *p* *mf* *f*

Vib. 290 294 *mf* *f*

Vcl. 290 294 *mf*

Fl. 298 $\text{♩} = 90$ 302

Cl. 298 302

Vib. 298 302

Vcl. 298 302

This musical score page contains four staves for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Vibraphone (Vib.), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The music is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score covers measures 306 to 310.

- Fl. and Cl. (Measures 306-310):** Both parts play a melodic line starting on G4. Measure 306 has an accent (>) and a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 307 has a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 308 has a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 309 has a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. Measure 310 has a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic.
- Vib. (Measures 306-310):** The vibraphone part is mostly silent, with a few notes in measures 306, 307, and 308.
- Vcl. (Measures 306-310):** The cello part is mostly silent, with a few notes in measures 306, 307, and 308.

Fl. 314 *f* 318 *mf* *f* $\text{♩} = 85$

Cl. 314 *f* 318 *mf* *f*

Vib. 314 *f* 318 *mf*

Vcl. 314 *mf* 318 *f*

Fl. 322 326 *f* *mf* *f*

Cl. 322 326 *f* *mf* *f*

Vib. 322 326 *f* *mf*

Vcl. 322 326 *mf* *f*

Fl. 330 *f* 334 *f*

Cl. 330 *f* 334 *f*

Vib. 330 *f* 334 *mf* *f*

Vcl. 330 *f* 334 *f*

ped. ped. ped. ped.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

[illegible]

Fl. Cl. Vib. Vcl.

Fl. 362 *mf* 366 *f* *mf*

Cl. 362 *mf* 366 *f* *mf*

Vib. 362 *mf* 366 *f*

Vcl. 362 *mf* 366 *f*

Fl. 370 374

Cl. 370 374

Vib. 370 374

Vcl. 370 374

Fl. 378 *f* 382 *mf* *f*

Cl. 378 *f* 382 *mf* *f*

Vib. 378 *f* 382 *mf* *f*

Vcl. 378 *mf* 382 *f* *mf*

385 390

Fl.

Cl.

Vib.

Vcl.

f *ff* *mf* *p* *mp* *mp* *mf* *f* *ff* *mf* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *ff* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

ped.

sul pont.

394 398 402

Fl.

Cl.

394 398 402

Vib.

394 398 402

Vcl.

p

mp

p

pizz.

p

Fl. 406 410 *fade* *ppp*

Cl. *p* *pp*

Vib. 406 410 *p* *ppp* *fade*

Vcl. 406 410 *p* *arco* *ppp* *fade*