

ROGER J. HENRY, D.M. RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

Project 5: Symphony 3

Abstract

Symphony 3 is scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in B Flat, 2 bassoons, 2 horns in F, 2 trumpets in B Flat, 2 trombones, euphonium, percussion (timpani, bass drum, snare drum, cymbal, table), steel pan ensemble, and strings. The work contains four movements:

I: *Fanfare*, 4/4, A flat major

II: *Dirge*, 4/4, F major

III: *Promenade*, 10/8, G major

IV: *Jam*, 2/2, A flat major

The full run time is roughly 40 minutes.

Context

Outside of Panorama Pieces, Trinidad and Tobago does not have a sustained cultural tradition of formal composition. In his symphonic writing, the composer explores elemental aspects of the local musical traditions – melody, rhythm, harmony, texture, and colour – in the context of a formal symphonic structure.

Purpose and Significance

This symphony is the third of this genre by composer Roger J. Henry. The composer's symphonic work seeks to extend and enrich a neglected tradition of formal symphonic composition by local composers. The work itself is an archive of constructs and practices derived through close study of the tropes of local composition, of folk, popular, and other musical styles.

Methodology

N/A

Theoretical Approach

This work, currently untitled, explores motives, rhythms and textures drawn from the sound-world of Trinidad and Tobago spaces, which can be noisy, boisterous, uncoordinated, but also reflective, contemplative, a combination of traffic noise and birdsong. The composer experiments with the doubling of tenor pan with violins or violas as part of crafting a symphonic sound that is particularly Trinidadian.

The composer uses chorale texture (typically in the brass family) as a transitional or bridging device between main segments in each movement. The rhythmic motif of a triplet followed by a duplet appears in accompaniment figures in each movement.

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The composer makes use of the *Lee Mack Fragment* as the source of secondary themes and accompaniment figures, as well as for transition between main segments in the music. Figures 1 through 3 show the Lee Mack Fragment and two important permutations.

Figure 1: The Lee Mack Fragment



Figure 2: The Lee Mack Fragment, Permutation 1

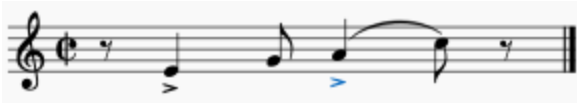
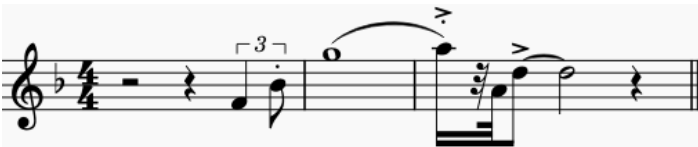


Figure 3: The Lee Mack Fragment, Permutation 2



The fourth movement (Jam) is composed following the formal layout of a Panorama Piece: it is a five-part structure consisting of Introduction, Exposition (verse and chorus), Development (variations), Recapitulation, and Conclusion. The composer uses many of the compositional tropes and melodic devices common to Panorama genre.

This movement is based on a rhythmic motif that can be expressed as four eighth-notes followed by a quarter note.

Figure 4: Rhythmic Motif, Movement 4



This motif is used directly, as well as in rhythmic augmentation and rhythmic diminution throughout the movement.

Review of Resources

N/A

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