Performing Jonathan Newman's "Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are A City"

Joseph Corey Francis
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PERFORMING JONATHAN NEWMAN’S
SYMPHONY NO. 1: MY HANDS ARE A CITY

by

Joseph Corey Francis

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

August 2013
ABSTRACT

PERFORMING JONATHAN NEWMAN’S

SYMPHONY NO. 1: MY HANDS ARE A CITY

by Joseph Corey Francis

August 2013

The purpose of this document is to provide analysis for interpretation of and rehearsal suggestions for Jonathan Newman’s Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City (2009). This document serves as the first significant scholarly work on the entire composition and is intended to be a resource for musicians seeking to gain information about the work. Included in the document is a biography of Jonathan Newman, as well as history concerning the commissioning of Symphony No. 1, a formal analysis of the work, and insight to conducting concerns. Information was gathered through formal interviews with Jonathan Newman, Jeff Gershman (Associate Director of Bands at Indiana University, and consortium head), review of literature from the Beat Generation, and communication with conductors who have rehearsed and performed the composition in part or in full.
The University of Southern Mississippi

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Jonathan Newman has been writing for winds and wind ensemble since 1999 and has quickly gained recognition in the repertoire for this genre. Although Newman has composed several works for winds, little research has been published about his compositions.

Newman began composing for wind ensemble with *OK FEEL GOOD*, which was premiered by the University of Nevada – Las Vegas (UNLV) Wind Orchestra, Thomas Leslie, conductor. One of Newman’s best known and most performed works, *Moon by Night*, followed in 2001, and was premiered by the Sterling Municipal Symphony Band in Sterling, Illinois. This composition received the National Band Association/Merrill Jones Memorial Young Band Composition Award in 2003.

The successful relationship Newman established with Thomas Leslie and UNLV led to the performance of another new work, *Uncle Sid* (2002), and the commissioning of *Chunk* (2003). Following these works, Newman has written ten additional works, all initiated by domestic and international commissions. Four Japanese wind ensembles commissioned Newman to compose *Climbing Parnassus* (2008), which reflects international interest in Newman’s compositions. Many university ensembles, including the University of Georgia, the University of New Mexico, the Rutgers University, and UNLV have recorded Newman’s works for winds. A total of fifteen published recordings are available featuring Newman’s music.

His *Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City* was the result of two separate commissions organized by Jeffery D. Gershman, Director of Bands at Texas A&M
University-Commerce. The first commission resulted in the creation of *My Hands are a City* (2008), which became the third and final movement of the full *Symphony No. 1*. Gershman and the Texas A&M-Commerce Wind Ensemble premiered the work on February 28, 2008. The other two movements, *Across the groaning continent* and *The Americas* (2009), completed the 27-minute symphony. In all, a total of 29 high school and collegiate wind band programs joined the consortium to commission Newman’s *Symphony No. 1*.

This document serves as the first significant research treatment of Jonathan Newman’s *Symphony No. 1: My Hands are a City*, and is intended as a source for musicians seeking information about the work. The document includes a biography of Jonathan Newman, the history and commissioning of the work, an analysis of the full score, and rehearsal considerations.

Currently, no scholarly documents are available for the full *Symphony No. 1*. Information for this document was accumulated through interviews with Jonathan Newman and Jeffery Gershman, as well as through correspondence with conductors who have performed the work. Brief information on the third movement can be found in a dissertation by David Montgomery titled “The Growth of Third Stream Music in the Wind Band Repertory: A Study of Jazz Influences in Three Selected Compositions,” published in 2011.¹ Information for this document was accumulated through interviews with Jonathan Newman and Jeffery Gershman, as well as through correspondence with conductors who have performed the work.

Review of Related Literature

Jonathan Newman is quickly becoming a significant and prolific composer in the wind band genre. Although he is gaining more commissions, there is a lack of scholarly research about him and his compositions. Connections of the available literature to this document are discussed in this section.

The primary sources of research for this document are the musical score to Symphony No. 1 and interactions with the composer. Additionally, the score to Rivers of Bowery has also been studied, as motives from the composition are used in Symphony No. 1.

Newman supplied the author of this document a draft of the article “Jonathan Newman” written by Christopher Koch for the book A Composer’s Insight Vol. 5, published in April 2012. The article is divided into several sections including a biography of Newman, his compositional approach, and analysis of Symphony No. 1 and two other works. This source provided essential information regarding Newman, and insight into the full composition.

As stated previously, David Montgomery constructed a D.M.A. dissertation using the symphony’s final movement, My Hands Are a City; however, it is not an analysis of the full work. The purpose of Montgomery’s document was to focus on the jazz influences on compositions for wind ensembles. This material served primarily as a guide to analysis of the third movement, as well as background information on the composer and composition.

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Stuart Sims presented a lecture recital on *Symphony No. 1* on February 4, 2010, at Arizona State University. This lecture, titled “The 21st Century Symphony” provides discussions on themes of the entire composition as well as full recordings.\(^3\) The video and audio of the lecture are linked from Jonathan Newman’s website. Additionally, Newman forwarded the author of this document correspondence between Sims and himself regarding the analysis of the composition. All information was used as a guide to analysis of *Symphony No. 1*.

Data regarding the composition was also gathered by presenting surveys to conductors who have studied and performed parts or all of *Symphony No. 1*. The comments provided by the conductors supplied data regarding rehearsal considerations, as well as crucial analysis. Any information from those conductors involved in the consortium was also used to establish the history of the work’s creation. Furthermore, an interview with consortium host Jeffrey Gershman was conducted, with permission.

Lastly, additional materials regarding Newman’s biography, compositional output and process, and the history of *Symphony No. 1* were accumulated through the composer’s personal website. This information includes a transcription of an interview given by Peter Stanley Martin.

Method

History and Conception of Work

In this document, the history and conception of *Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City* is primarily obtained through conversations with Jonathan Newman. Questions asked included the following:

1. What contacts were made regarding the request to compose *Symphony No. 1* and by whom?
2. What was the compositional/creative process for the work?
3. What was the source material and inspiration for the work?

Additional information was provided by consortium leader Jeffrey Gershman. Interviews with Jonathan Newman and Jeffrey Gershman were recorded.

Rehearsal and Performance Considerations

This document includes a section concerning rehearsal considerations and strategies. Information for this section was provided by conductors who have studied and performed the work, through replies submitted by way of electronic survey or personal conversations through telephone or face-to-face interview. Questions asked to these conductors include the following:

1. What drew you to consider performing the work?
2. What issues did you face in rehearsing and performing the work?
3. How did you meet these challenges?

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4 Jeffrey Gershman, interview by author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.
Accessibility

The work *Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City* is accessible to the most advanced wind ensembles. Issues concerning the work’s accessibility include instrumentation, length of work, and technical difficulty. Information in this document includes the number of times the work has been performed and by what level of ensemble. Discussions with the composer and conductors of ensembles that have performed the work, in part or in whole, will provide information for this topic.

Outline of Document

The flow of this document is as follows:

1. Chapter II presents a brief biography of Jonathan Newman and discusses his compositional process. This information was gathered from various scholarly resources, including personal interactions with the composer and information provided on his website.

2. Chapter III describes the genesis and history of *Symphony No. 1*, including discussions of the Beat Generation and the significant works from this era. Information was gathered through interviews with Jonathan Newman and Jeffrey Gershman, reviews of Beat Generation literature, review of the scores to *Rivers of Bowery* and *Symphony No. 1*, and through scholarly works previously mentioned.

3. Chapter IV presents the origins and analysis of all three movements of *Symphony No. 1*. Information presented was accumulated through score study, interviews with the composer, and from other scholarly works. Diagrams and musical figures are provided as needed.
4. Chapter V presents discussion of rehearsal and performance considerations. This information was gathered from the available conductors who have performed the work and who responded to questions, as well as the results of personal score study. Additionally, the document provides discussion concerning the accessibility of the work.

Purpose of Study

The composition is one of the most significant pieces in the band repertoire and is the premier work of Jonathan Newman to this point. Newman is gaining acclaim from conductors of wind ensembles and orchestras around the world. Symphony No. 1 is also gaining more performances from advanced ensembles. This author met Jonathan Newman in 2005 and it was this introduction, and through performance of three of his works (Avenue X, OK Feel Good, and Moon By Night) that the author became interested in Newman’s compositions. His compositional voice and blend of timbres is unique among composers, not only of wind band music but all genres. He actively writes works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and choirs. Additionally, he arranges works by other composers for various ensembles.

The purpose of this study is to provide information on Jonathan Newman and on Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City. The composition is demanding both technically and musically, and thus there is a need for in-depth study of the work. After all data is collected-through research, interaction with the composer and conductors, and personal score study-the result is a document that will be a resource for more conductors to access in preparation to perform Symphony No. 1. By constructing this document, it is the author’s desire for more musicians to perform works by Newman and consider him for further commissions.
CHAPTER II

JONATHAN NEWMAN

Biography

Jonathan Newman was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1972. He grew up in a nonmusical family, but received essential support in his musical pursuits. His interest in music came early; he begged for piano lessons at the age of six. Diversity in musical interests was evident by his study of piano, singing in choir, and playing trumpet and trombone during his elementary and high school years. Newman’s focus on music became more serious in high school, and he became especially interested in jazz ensembles. Jazz was an exciting genre for him, evidenced by his saying “the first theory” he learned was jazz theory.\(^5\)

Newman also showed interest in composition at an early age, though he was not very prolific. “I would write things for my band to play. I remember I wrote a trombone quartet that I rehearsed with my trombone friends to play at regional bands, that kind of thing.”\(^6\) He also composed works for his high school chorus, among others, thereby creating a small portfolio. After graduating from high school he attended the Boston University Tanglewood Summer Institute. It was during this time that he began to consider himself a composer.

Newman enrolled in Boston University after graduating high school and studied composition with Richard Cornell and Charles Fussell. While enrolled at Boston, Newman focused on studying classical and standard repertory. His studies at Boston

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\(^6\) Ibid.
included a conservative approach, learning the conventions of major composers of western art music. While writing jazz styles was not discouraged, it was not part of his training at Boston.

The year 1993 provided important experiences that would shape Newman’s future. It was then that he attended the Aspen Music Festival to study with George Tsontakis and discovered the Julliard School. After earning a Bachelor of Music in Composition from Boston University, he enrolled as a graduate student to study composition at Julliard. While he studied with David Del Tredici during his first year, it was his time with Pulitzer Prize winning composer John Corigliano that left a lasting impression. Newman found his teacher’s style distinct and, like many of Corigliano’s students, he still tries to incorporate Corigliano’s method into his own writing.\footnote{Jonathan Newman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.} At Julliard, jazz became part of his compositional voice, and is still prevalent today.

Newman graduated from the Julliard School in 1996. After graduate school, he composed a work using similar instrumentation to Arnold Schoenberg’s \textit{Pierrot Lunaire} for the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, entitled \textit{OK Feel Good}. This piece became the cornerstone work for Newman and his compositional voice. “I try to make every work stylistically distinct, and I enjoy progressing as a composer, but ultimately I think I did find a ‘way’ I wanted my music to sound.”\footnote{Ibid.} The persuasion by friend and fellow Corigliano student, Eric Whitacre, led Newman to arrange \textit{OK Feel Good} for wind ensemble. Newman recalls Whitacre saying, “Listen, these guys (wind ensembles) love new music. They have no literature and they are an entire musical culture based on new
This led to a yearlong collaboration with Thomas Leslie, conductor of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas wind ensemble, and the commissioning and recording of many more works for winds. Today, Newman’s catalogue includes sixteen works for wind ensemble. He is also a founding member of the composer-consortium BCM International that includes Whitacre, Steven Bryant, and Jim Bonney. He currently lives in Portland, Oregon, after moving from the Lower East Side of Manhattan in New York City in 2012. Additionally, he is the owner of OK Feel Good Music.

Compositional Approach

Newman is truly a pan-stylistic composer. His compositional approach reflects an interest in all the accumulated sounds of current music culture and, in particular, the sounds of American musical tradition. Concerning wind ensemble music, his interest is to write music that sounds “good” with woodwinds, brass, and percussion, and that also artistically interests him. He often expands the color of the ensemble, adding instruments to flex the color-spectrum of the instrumentation.

Commonly for Newman the writing process starts with research and immersing himself in a style, figuring out how it works, and then applying that to his compositional voice. Style, or using a particular musical or cultural style as a starting point, also plays a role in Newman’s compositional process. The styles can range from specific (funk music in Chunk) to esoteric (early 20th-century French Chamber Wind Music in the Flute


Concertino) to the extremely broad (mid-century American be-bop and Beat culture in Symphony No. 1). Most recently, he composed a percussion ensemble piece (Stereo Action) based on the swanky swing of the Space-Age Bachelor Pad and Pops Percussion records of the 1960s.

Newman also tries to concentrate on pacing, structure, and architecture, a trait that results from his studies with Corigliano. One compositional step that Corigliano encourages is writing of music free of bar-lines, allowing for more natural streams of music. This focus on the ebb-and-flow of the work is something Newman and other students of Corigliano use as a composition technique.

I do that a lot and I think a lot of people do. It’s much more natural. Being slave to the bar line is dangerous and you can write some very square and hoky music that way. If you want to be free of the bar line, you write the music and you figure out how to bar it later because the bar lines are equal. . . . actually it’s funny you mentioned Steve [Bryant] because we started with the same teacher [Corigliano]. . And who I think was very adamant about that. Just write the music, figure out how to notate it later, was common—and I still think about that.

Before pen struck page for Symphony No. 1, Newman spent the better part of a year immersing himself in the poetry, literature, and photography of the Beat Generation. From the program notes of the full work, Newman says:

In my neighborhood on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, the musicians and poets and characters of our mid-century “Beats” are still very active ghosts. I walk past the tenement where Allen Ginsberg wrote Howl, stroll across “Charlie Parker Place,” and over the city streets rapturously described in prose and verse, captured in era photos and film. Surrounded by these spirits, I structured the work in three movements, each taking on a different aspect of the sensory experiences I collected from my months of immersion in the novels, poetry, and photographs of these artists…


\footnote{Jonathan Newman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.}

When it comes to composing for the wind ensemble, Newman’s interest focuses on constructing music that sounds appealing and is artistically interesting. To achieve this he finds ways to expand the color palette of the ensemble by incorporating, through addition or replacement, other common instruments in the wind ensemble. This attempt to broaden the color-spectrum of the instrumentation is shown clearly in *My Hands Are a City*. First, instead of using a harp, which is common in the wind ensemble’s instrumentation, Newman replaces it with an electric guitar. Furthermore, in the work’s final movement, Newman uses a bass clarinet to state the melody, which is derived from tenor saxophonist Lester Young’s’ solo on “Lester Leaps In.” This is discussed in greater length in Chapter III. Finally, Newman uses the entire percussion section to create the feel of a single drum set performer used in jazz combos.

*Place in Wind Band*

Jonathan Newman is quickly becoming an established composer in the area of the wind band. As of January 2013, he has composed or arranged sixteen works for the ensemble, nine of which have been completed in the last six years. However, his works are not as widely performed as other composers, such as John Mackey and Steven Bryant. To this, Jeffrey Gershman offered this reasoning:

The thing with Jonathan’s music is that like with most good composers there’s a little bit of like visceral kind of connection. But his pieces take multiple listenings to get it, to really get it. He just happens to be at a time where he’s writing band music with good friends of his that their music tends to jump out and get audiences much more quickly. You know, the amazing part about John Mackey, who of course you know, we’re all friends. And he and Jonathan are very, very good friends. John’s pieces viscerally grab an audience. Always. And just on a first hearing they love his [John Mackey] music and. . . . its highly energetic. The rhythm thing really kind of gets them and it’s just-He [Mackey] is the perfect storm of this great blend of contemporary composer and really good compositional craft. And he [Mackey] just touches a nerve. That’s what John
[Mackey] does. Jonathan Newman is not that person. His music is different. Steve Bryant is the same kind of way. He’s a little bit more straight ahead. And I think he just grabs people. Jonathan’s music is I think much more sophisticated. It’s much more cerebral. So I think that is something that has prevented him getting immediate play. Like the symphony, I think the people would say “Well that’s a really good piece.” But because nothing viscerally jumps out at you right away, that might be an issue. With this piece in particular, I think they’re terrified of the length.  

Several characteristics establish Newman as a unique compositional voice in the band world. First of all, he constructs slower music beautifully. The lush melodic motives in combination with supple harmonic accompaniment is uncommon amongst today’s compositions. Whether it is his As the scent spring rain... or “The America’s” from Symphony No. 1, his lyrical works have a “kind of eerie, unique, beautiful, haunting” character. Another characteristic is his use of American styles into classical mediums.

In short I’d like to think I’m most interested in color, rhythm, counterpoint, and incorporating American styles (pop, blues, jazz, folk, and funk) into what would otherwise be considered classical models, like string quartets and symphonies. Much of my music is grooved-based, at least some of the time, and I do find that I think about rhythmic counterpoint more than pretty much anything else.

For Symphony No. 1, Newman goes as far as to quote chord progressions and solos from standard jazz works. The first movement is filled with rhythmic and melodic fragments that imitate Charlie Parker and Lester Young. The final movement takes a Lester Young solo and stretches it out over four minutes.

Additionally, Newman’s use and expansion of the percussion section plays a significant role in his compositional voice. In Symphony No. 1, Newman creates the sensation of a full trap-set through various instruments in the section. Finally, as stated

\[15\] Ibid.
before, Newman also has an interest in expanding the color of the wind band. He often attempts this by adding instruments into the ensemble to flex the color spectrum of the wind band instrumentation. The addition of keyboards and guitars are examples of this expansion of the color spectrum.

**Conclusion**

Jonathan Newman’s background and education has given him opportunities to work with many significant composers and ensembles. His connections with Eric Whitacre and the UNLV Wind Ensemble encouraged him to compose for winds. His study of jazz music as well his interest in expanding the timbre aspects of ensembles makes his voice unique. Finally, with the amount of research he undertakes prior to composing, the resulting works have a musical depth that allows his works to stand out.
CHAPTER III

THE BEAT GENERATION AND THE INFLUENCE ON

SYMPHONY NO. 1

The Beat movement began after WWII, as a reaction by the younger generation to the new materialistic way of life and the closed-mindedness they found to be taking over American society. The shared experience for the Beat writers was historical and political, based on the tumultuous changes of their times: the atomic bomb and the Cold War.\textsuperscript{17}

The Beat Generation advocated rediscovery of the self through drugs, sex, and jazz music (specifically through bop musicians Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Lester Young). The term “beat” was first used by jazz musicians as a slang term meaning down and out, poor, exhausted. Mezz Mezzrow, a jazz clarinetist and saxophonist, combined the term “beat” with other words, like “beat-up” or “dead beat” in his book \textit{Really the Blues}.\textsuperscript{18} It was Columbia University student Jack Kerouac who first began to refer to their counterculture as the “Beat Generation.”

The central figures of the Beat Generation included Kerouac, writers Allen Ginsberg and John Clellon Holmes, poet Gregory Corso, and photographer Robert Frank. While the ideals of the culture eventually spread to San Francisco, many of the original Beats lived in New York City and attended Columbia University. The movement was not a rebellion as it was described by many media outlets of the time, but a journey to find

“how to live.” The idea of searching pervaded the writings of this time, most notably the prose of Kerouac. His novel On the Road can be viewed as a journal of Kerouac’s travels across the “groaning continent,” hitchhiking and experimenting with drugs.

In 1955, the famous poetry reading “6 Poets at 6 Gallery” introduced Beat poetry to the American public, and marked the beginning of the Beat Movement. The event was held in an art gallery converted from an old garage. It was organized by Kenneth Rexroth to promote the Beat poets. Philip Lamantia read poems by John Hoffman, a late friend who had died of an overdose. Michael McClure, Philip Whalen, Garry Synder and Allen Ginsberg also read that evening. At the event Ginsberg read his poem Howl for the first time and stole the show. He was cheered on by the audience and a drunken Jack Kerouac yelling, “GO, GO, GO” while he recited. Lawrence Felinghetti, the famous publisher of City Lights books, was so impressed by Howl that he went straight home and wrote a telegram to Ginsberg that echoed the famous wire from Ralph Waldo Emerson to Walt Whitman, upon the publication of Leaves of Grass. The telegram read, “I greet you at the beginning of a great career. When do I get the manuscript?” Since then, Howl has become the best-known poem of the Beat Movement. It is a free verse poem written in a hallucinatory style wherein the long lines are based on the breath. The breath is an

20 Jack Kerouac. On The Road (357)
element that Ginsberg continued to explore in future poems. The poem relates stories and experiences of Ginsberg’s friends and contemporaries and frankly addresses sexuality, specifically homosexuality, and accurately depicts the American disillusionment. Due to the frankness of the poem’s sexuality, in 1956 Ginsberg was charged with obscenity. The charges were dismissed. However, the trial further widened the scope of public recognition for Ginsberg and the Beat Generation.24

By the early 1960s, rock and blues music became more dominant, and the more contemporary anti-establishment movement of the Hippies eventually replaced the jazz-inspired Beat Movement. During the Vietnam War, it was the outspoken anti-war Hippie on whom the media tended to focus, and the Beats slowly disappeared. The influence of the Beat writers’ practice of holding poetry readings is still seen in today’s performance poetry, in which the poem is to be performed aloud by spoken word artists. The next generation of writers would be influenced to exhibit a freer type of verse and a sharper political consciousness due to the influence of the Beat poets.25

Influence on Symphony No. 1

A musician wanting to perform and study Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City needs look no further than the program notes of the full score to find a starting point for researching the influence of the Beat generation. Newman gives the following information in the score:

In 2005 I wrote The Rivers of Bowery, a short work celebrating a verse from Allen Ginsberg’s Howl. I soon discovered that both the musical and extra-musical

themes were much larger than the length allowed, and so I designed this *Symphony* as a complete expansion, both in thematic scope, and in musical material.

In my neighborhood on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, the musicians and poets and characters of our mid-Century “Beats” are still very active ghosts. I walk past the tenement where Allen Ginsberg wrote *Howl*, stroll across “Charlie Parker Place,” and over the city streets rapturously described in prose and verse, and captured in era photos and film. Surrounded by these spirits, I structured the work in three movements, each taking on a different aspect of the sensory experiences I collected from my months of immersion in the novels, poetry, and photographs of these artists.

Titled after a line from Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road*, the first movement opens the *Symphony* with the restlessness and constant drifting of a young generation terrified of stagnation. As a short burst of agitated motion, this *moto perpetuo* reflects Kerouac and his characters “performing our one and noble function of the time, move. And we moved!”

The second movement takes its title from Beat photographer Robert Frank’s powerful collection, *The Americans*. In 1955, Frank traveled the country taking extraordinary photos of a nation that is actually many nations. This movement does not “describe” any of the individual photos, but rather is an attempt at an overall musical picture of the paradoxical America Frank saw: diverse, yet uniform; determined, yet lost; sated, yet unsatisfied.

The final movement, *My Hands Are a City*, titled after a 1955 Gregory Corso poem, overflows with mid-Century American vernacular. Altered progressions from be-bop tunes, and stretched out, frozen, and suspended solos from Lester Young and Charlie Parker recordings all fill out the work. In its larger scope and breadth, the movement is a summing up of the symphony’s themes, both poetic and musical.

In all of it, taking material from *The Rivers of Bowery* happened quite naturally. The process was much like approaching my finished piece as if it was my sketchbook, and using that once-final material as the cells and harmonies to then spin out. But where in the overture I concentrated on capturing Ginsberg’s singing of the lost and outcast mobs of his counter-culture, in the expanded work I was intrigued with the ever-present cloud of sadness hanging over much of the work of The Beats. It’s a quiet sadness I hear even in the frantic bebop of Bird and Miles, and in my re-reading of the classic literature of the period—perhaps adding a tinge of darkness to the colors of this *Symphony*.26

After study of these notes, one can understand that there are three influences on the work: 1) geography, 2) literature, and 3) jazz music, specifically be-bop. The

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geographical connection is important to consider. Knowledge of the places where the characters of the Beat Generation lived and worked provides tangible insight on their lives. In an interview with Christopher Koch, Director of Orchestra and Wind Symphony at Drury University, Newman discussed his connection to the Beat Generation both in a geographical sense and through the kinship of the creative process, expanding upon the same thoughts found in the program notes to *Symphony No. 1*.

Emersion into the community of the Beats provided a unique perspective for the composer. Walking streets familiar to Ginsberg and Kerouac helped Newman see the world through their eyes more clearly. Walking the same streets as those in this culture allowed Newman to experience similar events and stimuli to those experienced by the Beat Generation.

Literature of the Beats also played a central role in composing *Symphony No. 1*. These works promoted the values of spontaneity, emotional openness, visceral engagement, and a zest for living. From the program notes, a conductor wanting to study and perform the composition finds that an understanding of Ginsberg’s *Howl*, Kerouac’s *On the Road*, Frank’s photography collection *The Americas*, and Corso’s poetry would be beneficial. Newman spent over six months studying these works before composing; doing similar study provides the conductor with a foundation for musical interpretation. For example, reading *On the Road* helps to discover the journey of Kerouac and his friends in an effort to perform their “one and noble function – move.”

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prose. The driving groove and the rhythmic intensity propel the music along as if one were on a road trip.

Reviewing the literature cited in the program notes does provide a foundation for the work, but it is important to go a step further and investigate other works of the Beat Generation. Specific recommendations include the novel *Go* by John Clellon Holmes (the first novel of the Beat Generation) and the poetry of Herbert Huncke. Additionally, this author suggests studying the letters between Ginsburg and Kerouac, and their friend Neal Cassady. These writings provide the true stories behind their travels.

Be-bop jazz music was also influential on the symphony and the Beat Generation, and its vernacular permeates Newman’s work. Ginsberg and Kerouac often speak of listening to the music of Charlie Parker and Lester Young in their writings. Newman stated in an interview that while he was researching and figuring out what the Beat poets were listening to, he found that it was be-bop. “I thought that Ginsberg must have been listening to Charlie Parker when he wrote *Howl*, but he wasn’t—he was listening to Lester Young, to “Lester Leaps In.” The solo performed by Young became the first four minutes of the final movement, *My Hands Are a City* for Symphony No. 1.

The most overt reflection of the be-bop style is the opening of the full symphony. The rhythmic drive and the musical inflections are reminiscent of Parker and Dizzy Gillespie performing together in the clubs of Manhattan. The chord progression in *Scrapple from the Apple* also appears in the final movement of the symphony.

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CHAPTER IV

ORIGINS AND ANALYSIS OF SYMPHONY NO. 1: MY HANDS ARE A CITY

Origins of Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City

Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City is a three-movement composition for wind ensemble. The genesis for the symphony came after Newman completed the work The Rivers of Bowery and realized that the musical and extra-musical content could be expanded into a multi-movement work.

The third movement, titled My Hands Are a City, was the first to be completed, commissioned by a consortium of seventeen schools led by Jeffrey Gershman (currently Associate Director of Bands, Indiana University). Initially presented to Stuart Sims (Director of Bands at California State University at Stanislaus), Newman was encouraged to contact Gershman, who was at Texas A&M-Commerce at the time.

Jonathan talked about writing something big for a long time and we had talked about it in passing. But really it came from Stuart Sims from California State at Stanislaus, and Stuart was supposed to organize this consortium to get this thing going. It was just a little dormant because Stuart was really busy and he finally admitted to Jonathan, “Look, I don’t have time to do this. You should give Jeff Gershman a call. Maybe he can run with it.” And, so, at that point I was still at Texas A&M-Commerce which is right outside of Dallas.\(^{31}\)

Originally, Newman had the idea to complete the full work but, at Gershman’s suggestion, he completed only the third movement due to concerns about the ability to sell the entire work at once.

We agreed to do it and he said that he wanted to write a symphony and he wanted it to be something substantial because the band repertoire doesn’t have big, substantial pieces like this. And I said that was great and I really like the idea. And he said, “Well I’m thinking of something like 25 minutes.” Terrific. You

\(^{31}\) Jeffrey Gershman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.
know can we do this? And so, great. And the issue that I was worried about was obviously we wanted to pay Jonathan fairly. And to buy in on a $25,000 commission is a substantial thing. And so I came up with the idea of “Hey, let’s do this in parts. Let’s do like, half or one movement now and get people to buy in.” And then once that begins to get played and there’s some buzz generated off of that, we’ll commission the second part of it which would be the other part of the symphony.” Now in my mind, at first I was thinking he would write the first movement and then write the final two movements.\textsuperscript{32}

This plan worked. After \textit{My Hands Are a City} (the movement) was completed in 2008, interest grew for completion of the full symphony. The other two movements, \textit{Across the Groaning Continent} and \textit{The Americas}, were commissioned by a second consortium of twenty-two schools, also led by Gershman, and completed in 2009. The original proposal from Newman to prospective members of the consortium confirmed Newman’s intent to create a work that reflects the Beat culture. A copy of this proposal is included in the Appendix of this document, as are other documents from the consortium process.

Analysis

\textit{Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City} provides many challenges when analyzing. Newman’s symphony presents several musical motives and develops them throughout the work. The first and third movements contain motives that are used to provide their structural foundations. The work as a whole takes ideas from Newman’s 2005 composition \textit{The Rivers of Bowery},\textsuperscript{33} using it as a sketchbook. About this process, Newman says in his program notes:

In 2005 I wrote \textit{The Rivers of Bowery}, a short work celebrating a verse from Allen Ginsberg’s \textit{Howl}. I soon discovered that both the musical and extra-musical themes were much larger than the length allowed, and so I designed this

\textsuperscript{32} Jeffrey Gershman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.
Symphony as a complete expansion, both in thematic scope, and in musical material. In all of it, taking material from The Rivers of Bowery happened quite naturally. The process was much like approaching my finished piece as if it was my sketchbook.

One of the most important devices derived from The Rivers of Bowery is the “tetra-chord” A-flat, D-flat, G and E-flat, with the B-flat at the end of the work (Figure 1). This chord is used throughout the symphony and provides the key relationships of all the movements (Mvt. I is centered on A-flat, Mvt. II around D-flat and B-flat, and Mvt. III around E-flat).

![Figure 1. Tetra-chord from The Rivers of Bowery.](image)

An example of the direct use of this tetra-chord can be found in the first movement of the Symphony No. 1. At rehearsal letter A (measure 9), the vibes perform alternating chords of A-flat-seventh and D-flat-seventh. The tetra-chord is also used in the third movement, again in the vibraphone, at rehearsal letter Q (Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Vibraphone tetra-chord, Rehearsal Letter Q, measure 171.](image)

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Another prominent motive from *The Rivers of Bowery* is a short lyric melody that can be found throughout the symphony. Stated by the piccolo in measure 26 of *Bowery* (Figure 3), this motive is first performed by the first French horn in the opening movement at measure 105 (Figure 4).

![Figure 3. Bowery Motive from *The Rivers of Bowery*, Measures 26-28, Piccolo.](image)

![Figure 4. Bowery Motive, Movement 1, Measure 105, Horn in F.](image)

**Movement I: Across the groaning continent**

The opening movement of *Symphony No. 1* is entitled *Across the groaning continent*, and is based on a line from Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road*. The restlessness and constant drifting prompted by a young generation’s need to avoid stagnation is perpetuated in the movement by means of driving rhythmic figures and short bursts of energy. With the tempo marking of “Moto perpetuo, with incessant speed,” the movement depicts Kerouac and his characters’ “performing our one and noble function of the time, move.”

*Across the groaning continent* is fueled with the mid-century vernacular that was prominently consumed by the Beats. Be-bop jazz figures flourish and provide forward motion. The use of walking bass lines that was common in the combo ensembles of the

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1940s and 1950s function in a similar fashion in the first movement. The extended harmonies, such as D-flat9 (omitting the third), provide harmonic flexibility to support the bluesy motives in the melodic voices while also reflecting back to *The Rivers of Bowery* by featuring the notes of the tetra-chord.

Movement I is 205 measures in length and can be divided into five sections, an ABAB-Coda structure. Newman, being composer and publisher of his own works, assists those performing *Symphony No. 1* by labeling sections and points of change with rehearsal letters. Each of the sections is delineated by motivic material. The opening A sections is composed of the four motives that follow:

![Motive 1, “Be-bop Motive” Movement I, Measures 1-2, Piano.](image)

*Figure 5. Motive 1, “Be-bop Motive” Movement I, Measures 1-2, Piano.*

![Motive 2, “Gliss Motive” Movement I, Measure 9, E-flat Clarinet](image)

*Figure 6. Motive 2, “Gliss Motive” Movement I, Measure 9, E-flat Clarinet*

![Motive 3, Movement 1, Measure 9, Trombone, Bass Trombone, Euphonium parts.](image)

*Figure 7. Motive 3, Movement 1, Measure 9, Trombone, Bass Trombone, Euphonium parts.*
Across the groaning continent opening A section comprises measures 1-40, covering rehearsal letters A, B, C, and D. Initiating and dominating this section is Motive 1, which will be referred to as the “Be-Bop Motive.” The contrabass clarinet, baritone saxophone, piano, and marimba perform this motive entirely; however, other instruments join in with the passage as well. This motive reflects the heads (main melodic sections) of be-bop jazz music and the often intricate rhythms performed in this style. The motive shown is just a fragment of the entire melodic line performed, but given the length and future use of this material, speaking about it in terms of motive is most important.

At rehearsal letter A, starting in measure 9, Newman introduces three new motives to be used within the movement. Motive 2, named the “Gliss Motive” is stated in the E-flat soprano clarinet. This rising minor third performed with a Glissando is another representation of the influence of jazz on Newman’s music, as the extended technique is characteristic of jazz style. Accompanying this motive is Motive 3, the notes of the tetra-chord from The Rivers of Bowery performed rhythmically (dotted-quarter/eight tied to a half note). The trombones and euphonium most commonly perform this motive, and the chords produced are A-flat-minor seventh and D-flat dominant seventh in first inversion. Additionally, Motive 4 is also stated. While rhythmically similar to Motive 3 and often stated simultaneously, the interval of an ascending major second makes Motive 4 different. The flutes, oboes, and English horn first perform this motive in measure 13.
Concerning motives and musical content, rehearsal letter B is similar to letter A, as the motivic material from the prior section is used again. Pairs of sixteenth notes in the trumpets now punctuate Motive 3. Also, within the “Be-bop motive” are now cascading sixteenth note scales. While both of these figures are noteworthy, they do not occur with the frequency of the other motives. The material starting at rehearsal letter C follows suit with the rest of the A section of the first movement, but it does introduce one important motive. Motive 5, also called the “Motor Motive,” functions as the rhythmic drive for the entire movement, and is seen in all large sections of the work with exception for the coda. First performed in the trumpets, this motive consists of repeated and driving sixteenth notes propelling the music forward, much like Kerouac and his friends driving across the country.

Figure 9. Motive 5, “Motor Motive” Movement I, Measures 28-29, Trumpet 1 and 2.

The tetra-chord from Bowery dominates the material from measure 34-40, which is rehearsal letter D. No other previously stated motivic material appears. This section serves as a transition into the second large structure of the first movement.

The large B section of Across the groaning continent begins in measure 41 and extends to measure 93 (rehearsal E to J). To distinguish this section from the A section is the introduction of two new motives and the omission of the “Be-bop Motive.” All the other motives are stated sporadically throughout the section. The first new motive in this section is Motive 6, the “Walking Bass-Line.” The walking bass-line technique is commonly used in jazz for harmonic structure and tempo. With a brief exception later in
the movement, the “Walking Bass-Line Motive” is exclusively used throughout the B section. It is shown here in a brief excerpt from rehearsal letter E:

![Figure 10. Motive 6, “Walking Bass-Line Motive” Movement I, Measures 41-44, Contrabass (String Bass).](image)

The second motive used solely in the B section is Motive 7. Based on the tetra-chord from *Bowery*, this motive is rhythmic in nature, being constructed of a dotted-quarter followed by an eighth note. It is only stated in the French horn parts in the first movement, presented first at rehearsal letter F. This motive also appears later in the third movement, unifying the work as a whole. This motive is seen here:

![Figure 11. Motive 7, Movement I, Measure 54 French horn parts.](image)

Along with these new motives at letter E and F, Newman utilizes Motive 4 and the “Motor Motive.”

Rehearsal letter G starts at measure 66, and contains the “Gliss Motive” from the A section, as well as Motive 4 and the “Walking Bass-line Motive.” Missing from earlier sections is the fragmented “Motor Motive;” however, in its place is repeated D-flat sixteenth notes in the marimba and a rising quarter-note trumpet line. These figures propel the musical energy to rehearsal letter H. The “Motor Motive” and Motive 4 performed at letter F are also stated at letter H, with a thickening of texture produced by adding the saxophones to the “Motor Motive” and first clarinets and glockenspiel to Motive 4.
Rehearsal letter I closes the B section using the “Gliss Motive” and the “Walking Bass-Line Motive” from letter G. The most noted difference is that the rising quarter note figure originally performed by the trumpets is now found in the saxophones, third and fourth French horns, and the left-hand of the piano. When it is stated in the trumpets, it now consists of dotted-quarter notes juxtaposed with the quarter notes in other instruments previously stated. This elongates the segment to ten measures, doubling the length of the original material.

The energy built at the end of the B section of the movement is followed by an immediate thinning of texture at letter J, leading to the restatement of the A section. The presentation of two new motives aids in the musical development of the movement and symphony as a whole. The first motive to be inserted is the Rivers of Bowery melody, which was discussed in the introduction to this chapter (See Figure 3). The second new motive, Motive 8, is established in this section, foreshadowing the third movement. This motive is stated at letter K in the flutes and piano.

![Figure 12. Motive 8, “Foreshadowing Motive” Movement I, Measures 115-116, Flute 2 part.](image)

The restatement of the A section begins at letter J with Motive 3 performed in the piano and the “Motor Motive” in the high hat. Additionally, the “Be-bop Motive” is presented in fragments by the saxophones. At letter K, the first flute and oboe state Motive 4, while the “Be-bop Motive” passes from clarinets and tenor sax, through percussion and double reeds. The saxophone family performs Motive 3, now offset by two beats, concurrently with the new Motive 8. The trumpets perform the isolated pairs
of sixteenth notes that accent the tetra-chord. Finally, in measure 105, the first instance of
the Rivers of Bowery melody is presented.

Rehearsal letters L through O present a problem for analysis. The lack of either
the “Be-bop” or the “Walking Bass-Line” motives makes it difficult to associate this
material with the A or B sections. These facts, in concert with prominence of Motive 8,
create a new structural area, the C section. The material performed at letter L consists of
the “Gliss Motive” between the alto and soprano saxophones. Accompanying this motive
is the “Motor Motive” in the percussion and rhythmic punctuation of the tetra-chord.

The following ten measures are divided into two five-measures segments, letters
M and N, respectively. These two segments are mirror images of each other. Both feature
Motive 8, the “Gliss” and “Motor” motives, and the Rivers of Bowery melody. The
addition of the flutes and piano to the “Motor Motive” is the only variance. Another five-
measure segment follows at letter O. It is similar to letters M and N, this time with the
“Be-bop” motive foreshadowing the return of the A section.

The A section occurs again at letter P, characterized by the “Be-bop Motive” and
cascading sixteenth notes being featured. The “Gliss Motive” is traded between the first
clarinet and the soprano and alto saxophones, as well as being supported by the French
horns. The paired sixteenth note punctuation of the tetra-chord fill the trumpets, flutes,
first oboe, electric guitar, and cymbals parts. The material from measures 135 through
138 is taken from measures 30 to 34, earlier in the movement; however, what follows at
letter Q is an overlapping of contents from both the A and B sections. The “Be-bop
Motive” in the low reeds and marimba, in addition to the “Gliss Motive”, dominates these
five measures. But the rising quarter note material from the B section is also performed. This, much like the ending of the C section, builds to the return of the B section.

As before, the “Walking Bass-Line Motive” delineates the formal structure. The overlapping of other motives shows the constant drifting of the Beats, as they moved from one place to another in search of spiritual fulfillment. Beginning at letter R, the B section’s return features the “Motor” and “Walking Bass-Line” motives, with the French horns performing Motive 7. Motive 8 is also stated but in augmentation of the original statement. Rehearsal letter S is similar to letter H. The “Walking Bass-Line” motive accompanies Motives 4 and 6. Motive 8 is stated again in augmentation. Closing this segment of music is a fragment of the “Be-bop” motive.

The movement builds to its climax beginning at letter T. This ten-measure episode is generated by a juxtaposition of the materials from the A and B sections. The “Be-bop” and “Gliss” motives are performed simultaneously with the “Walking Bass-Line” and Motive 3 featured in the B section. Helping to drive to the climax is the rising quarter note material in the trumpets.

The climatic moment of the movement occurs at measure 178, also labeled rehearsal letter U. This section is similar to the transition at letter D; however, the texture is thicker with the addition of more players and the tutti dynamic of fortissimo helps to create the high point of the movement. In addition to these items, Newman overlaps three statements of the Rivers of Bowery melody. It is first stated in the upper French horn parts, followed by the lower French horns and guitar. The final statement of the melody is in the upper French horns, the second flute, third clarinet, and in the tubular bells.
The movement closes with a Coda starting at letter V. This section presents a jazz combo feel by using the “Be-bop Motive” in pairs of instruments with the “Walking Bass-Line Motive,” as well as the “Gliss Motive”. The snare drum and cymbal parts fill the role of the trap set of the combo. As the Coda concludes the movement, it represents the end of the journey for the Beats.

*Musical Concepts of Movement I*

Driving the musical content of the opening movement of *Symphony No. 1* is the be-bop style of jazz. Syncopated riffs are featured throughout the movement, as well as walking bass-lines and characteristics of jazz music as discussed previously. Performing in the correct style is crucial. Articulations must be light and not clipped, and accents must not be heavy. The rhythmic drive of the movement must be consistent.

Letter U is initiated with a dynamic of fortissimo, but the musical energy, through crescendo and repetition, builds until one bar before letter V. Due to this measure beginning with an eighth-note rest, it is important that the release into this point is clean and together. The silence that follows must be full of life, thus any irregularity in the release will diminish the climax.

**Movement II: The Americas**

The large scale of the ensemble from the first movement is contrasted with the small orchestral winds setting for the second movement. *The Americas* is a musical reflection of the book and series of photographs with the same title produced by Robert Frank. In this series, Frank crossed the United States on many road trips from 1955 to 1958, taking pictures of the people that inhabited the various cities and states he visited.

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The culmination of the project showed an America that was truly many Americas combining to create one nation. The project was a result of a grant from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.\textsuperscript{37}

Musically, Newman does not attempt to depict or describe any of the individual photos within the series, or compose a film score to them. His desire is to paint an overall musical picture of the America Frank saw, “one that was diverse, yet uniform; determined, yet lost; sated, yet unsatisfied.”\textsuperscript{38} To do this, Newman draws from the scores and compositional styles of mid-century American composers, such as Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson.\textsuperscript{39}

I was thinking more–more Virgil Thomson and less Copland because it’s a little more counter–it’s a lot of counterpoint. And Copland isn’t so counter pointing. Whereas Thomson is. And so I was thinking it more like the ballet that–the ballet music that Virgil Thomson never wrote, you know that kind of thing. So, a little more angular, a little more contrapuntal–and that equals that sound to me. So, that I was definitely thinking along those lines. That was the exact purpose and also Copland, I mean, I would sit—I remember when I was writing this movement, I would sit down and I have a piano score of–guess it’s from—I guess it’s \textit{Rodeo} and I played through it and sort of get that sound in my head and then I go and continue writing.

The second movement of the \textit{Symphony No. 1} is a stark contrast to the opening movement. The driven nature presented through the use of several motives gives way to a calm and reflection. \textit{The Americas} is an ABABA structure with an introduction and is filled with fragments of the \textit{Rivers of Bowery} motive. Most of these fragments are disguised or hidden within the texture of the movement.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Jonathan Newman, \textit{Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City}, (New York: OK Feel Good Music, 2009). 1
\textsuperscript{39} Jonathan Newman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.
The movement opens with an eleven-measure introduction that establishes the tonal center of D-flat, which is part of the Bowery tetra-chord. During this section, Newman utilizes the concertante manner by writing families or groups of instruments together. For example, both the clarinets and the bassoons are used in the first measure and will commonly play together.

Three new motives are initiated during the introduction and are important to this movement. First, the English horn performs a three-note motive (E-flat, C, E-flat) in the fourth measure. This motive becomes the melodic foundation for the B sections within the movement. Additionally, the intervallic relationship of the notes proves important to the melodic material throughout.

![Figure 13. English Horn Motive Movement II, Measure 4.](image)

In measures 7 and 8, the flute performs a short motive that is initiated by a descending major second. This interval creates the feel of a sigh due to its downward motion, and thus this motive will be called the “Sigh Motive.”

![Figure 14. “Sigh Motive” Movement II, Measures 6-9, Flute 1.](image)

In measures 9 and 10, the first clarinet, first horn, and piano perform a rhythmically free ascension of pitches. Newman refers to this material as a “pillar”
because it functions as a quasi-transition or a moment of musical suspension prior to a new section.  

Following the pillar comes the presentation of the A section of movement two, which is characterized by the use of the meters of 6/8 and 7/8, as well as tempo marking of *quasi Adagio* (eighth-note at 132 beats per minute) and B-flat as the tonal center. The opening segment of this section begins at measure 11 and goes through measure 17; it is repeated and expanded from rehearsal letter B to C. The “sigh” motive is performed by the flute and oboes in measure 23, linking this section to the introduction of “The Americas.” During the repeated portion, Newman presents two short fragments of the *Rivers of Bowery* melody, first in the third horn then both soprano clarinet parts.

![Figure 15. Bowery Fragment 1, Movement II Measures 22-23, French Horn 3.](image)

![Figure 16. Bowery Fragment 2, Movement II, Measures 24-25, Clarinet 1 and 2.](image)

The “Wipe Motive” helps to transition to new material that is only seen at rehearsal letter C. Here, Newman composes a brass chorale centered on D-flat. Of this section, the composer states that the material was the first music composed for the movement. This material is only presented in this section, but since it was composed first, the intervalllic relationships of thirds and fourths are heard throughout the movement.  

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The English horn motive from the introduction is featured melodically in the B Section of the movement, starting at rehearsal letter D (see Figure 17). Newman states that while writing this section he was imitating the composer Virgil Thomson, stating this was “the ballet music that Thomson never wrote.” In particular, Newman gained influence from Thomson’s *Filling Station*, drawing from the use of counterpoint within Thomson’s composition. The B section is characterized by straightforward 4/4 and 5/4 meters at a slightly more brisk tempo, and is center around D-flat tonally. Additional emphasis on tempo is created by alternating D-flat and E-flat quarter notes in the bassoons and string bass.

![Figure 17. English Horn Motive now a melody, Movement II, Measures 37-40.](image)

The melody is repeated at measure 43, this time echoed by the second flutes and followed by a full statement in the oboe. The alternation of the D-flat and E-flat is expanded to more substantial chords. Fragments of the *Rivers of Bowery* are rhythmically altered in the flute (Figure 18) and the trumpets (Figure 19).

![Figure 18. Altered Bowery Motive, Movement II, Measure 44, Flute.](image)

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42 Ibid.
A third performance of the English horn melody is composed at rehearsal letter E with the melody being performed in unison. Newman also writes a new line of music that is derived from *Rivers of Bowery*. In measure 22 of *Bowery*, Newman composed a soprano saxophone solo consisting of descending intervals of minor second, minor third, major second, perfect fourth (Figure 20). In *The Americas*, this is stated in the flutes, oboes, French horns, and right hand of the piano (Figure 21).

At measure 54, material from the introduction is presented followed by a pillar. A reoccurrence of the A section is then composed at measure 58. This segment is very similar to the initial statement with the addition of a metronomic line in the French horns. As before, this section is centered tonally on B-flat.

Newman restates the introduction at measure 6. While much of the material is reused, the order of presentation is in retrograde. For example, the “Sigh Motive” that was used at the end of the introduction is now performed first. Following the restatement of the introduction comes the second statement of the B section. While the meter and
tempo are the same as before, the French horn presents the motive that established the section as a structural pillar. The English horn first states a fragment of the *Bowery* motive before assuming the role it performed previously.

Rehearsal letter H recalls material from the introduction and the A section. The “Sigh Motive” is used in measures 79 and 80, while at the same time the English horn, bass clarinet, and trombones perform figures similar to the contra bass in measure 13 from the A section. The trumpets perform grace note figures that help to build energy to the climactic moment of the movement at rehearsal letter I.

The repetition of the B section melody is presented at measure 83 (letter I), with the English horn once again taking the lead while being supported by the clarinets. The flutes, oboe, and piano once again perform material based on the soprano saxophone solo from *Rivers of Bowery*. Fragments of the *Bowery* melody are performed by the bassoons, bass clarinet, French horns, and left-hand of the piano.

Closing the movement is the final statement of the A section, beginning at measure 91 (letter J). Following the climax, this section helps to calm the energy created by the previous section. The metronomic figure is now written in the clarinets, leaving the horns to play the “English Horn Motive” from the introduction. The final nine measures reflect the introduction as well with the pillar leading into the *attacca* final movement.

*Musical Concepts of Movement II*

Unlike the opening movement, the second movement uses the layering of new material and the repetition of a motive to increase energy. Music in this movement
requires great control of tone and pitch and legato articulation. Vibrato in flute and double reeds is encouraged.

The climax of the movement happens at letter I, outlined by the dynamic levels of *forte* and *fortissimo* (also seen at letter E) and the amount of material presented. Here, the “English Horn Motive” is performed again, this time accompanied by trumpets and a new counter-melody based on the “Bowery Motive” in the bass clarinet, bassoons, and French horns. This is the thickest musical texture of the movement.

**Movement III: My Hands Are a City**

The final movement of *Symphony No. 1* is filled with mid-century vernacular, including altered progressions from be-bop jazz, expanding solos from Lester Young and Charlie Parker, and materials derived from *Rivers of Bowery*. After finding that Allen Ginsburg was listening to saxophonist Lester Young while writing his controversial poem *Howl*, Newman found inspiration in the music of Lester Young. The bass clarinet melody constructed in the beginning of the movement is a portion of a transcribed solo of Lester Young performing “Lester Leaps In” with the Count Basie Orchestra. Newman used the notes and elongated them, which makes them “sound like Gershwin.” Motives derived from this segment will be referred to as the “Lester Young Motive.”

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Newman does not limit the use of the Lester Young solo strictly to the bass clarinet. In measures 14-16, the flutes, oboes, and bassoons feature another fragment from “Lester Leaps In.”

In addition to the “Lester Young Motive,” Newman uses four different derivatives of the Rivers of Bowery melody. Prior to the initial melody from the Lester Young solo in
the beginning of this movement is a statement of the first Bowery motive, which will be referred to as “Bowery 1.” The other motives will be addressed within the discussions of the structural areas where they are composed.

![Figure 26. The Rivers of Bowery (Bowery 1) melody stated in bass clarinet Movement III, Measures 2-4.](image)

It is important to point out that there are many fragments of both the “Lester Young” and Bowery motive used throughout the movement. The intervals between notes is the telling point for which motive is being used. For the “Lester Young motive,” fragments are depicted by the use of a perfect fourth interval, the interval between the second and third notes within the melody. The versions of the Bowery motive feature an interval of either a major second (distance between the first two notes in the melody) or a perfect fifth (distance between notes two and three of the melody).

The formal structure of My Hands Are a City is divided into seven larger sections, two of those sections being repeated. The full structure is ABCDBC-Coda, with delineations in tempo and motive use. The opening A section (measures 1-83) is the longest of all the sections and is designated by the use of the Lester Young solo transcription discussed previously. The full statement of this material, in addition to fragments of the solo and Rivers of Bowery, is written from the opening measure to rehearsal letter A (measure 12). From here, the music consists primarily of insertions of the Lester Young fragment or the Bowery fragment. Also, the soprano saxophone plays a solo that is another portion of the Lester Young derived solo melody.
Figure 27. Soprano saxophone derived from “Lester Leaps In,” Movement III, Measures 19-22.

Figure 28. Lester Young solo transcription of “Lester Leaps In.”

Rehearsal letter B presents the first of four statements of the “Chime Motive” interruption within the opening A section, rudely intruding on the Lester Young inspired melody. The pitches for these interruptions are F, E, C, and D, respectively. This is yet another portion of music taken from the Rivers of Bowery melody, this time from the second half of the melody.

Figure 29. “Chime Motive” (all notes represented), Movement III, Measures 64-67, Vibraphone.

After each of the interruptions Newman returns to materials from the beginning of the movement, stating portions of the Lester Young solo sections and the fragments from Bowery. The second interruption (pitch of C) is composed at letter C and is followed by both the previously stated fragments. Newman hides the third interruption (pitch of B-flat) within the texture at letter D. It is here that we have the second full statement of the Lester Young derived melody. The full statement of the opening actually begins at
measure 38 in the bass clarinet. A Bowery fragment is now performed in the bassoon part; however, it still leads to the full Lester Young melody led by the bass clarinet.

The cycle seen in the previous portions of the opening A section continues at letter E, where we find the fourth interruption (pitch of D). The material following is similar to that performed at letter A, the main difference being that the music performed in the woodwinds is now stated in unison as opposed to the staggered fragments as before. The soprano saxophone solo is also performed, as it was earlier.

Measure 64 provides several important ideas. First, the materials from all the interruptions are now concentrated into one section. While the pitches are not exactly the same, the direction of notes suggests that the melodic material in the flutes and clarinets is taken from the interruptions. The oboes and mallets percussion have the same pitches in the new melody, performed in syncopation, further solidifying its derivation from the “Chime Motive.”

Two other important musical items are expressed in measure 69. First, the guitar part performs another motive from Rivers of Bowery. This version is an intervallic match to the original “Bowery 2” version, unlike the one presented in the opening bass clarinet motive.

![Figure 30. “Bowery 2” Motive, Movement III, Measures 69-73, Guitar.](image-url)
The main harmonic progression for this movement is performed simultaneously with the Bowery 2 motive. This be-bop jazz progression is taken from Charlie Parker’s *Scrapple from the Apple*.46

![Figure 31. Chord progression from *Scrapple from the Apple*.](image)

The A section closes with one more statement of the full opening measures, this time led by the euphoniums and French horns. Finally, at letter G, Newman states the full Lester Young melody, and ascending runs stagger through the woodwinds, transitioning the music to the next section.

The B section of the third movement is initiated through an ostinato that reflects back to *The Rivers of Bowery*. In the original work, starting in measure 39, Newman composes a dream-like mixed-metered episode by layering instruments over a lyric arpeggio, which repeats several times. Similarly, starting at letter H in *My Hands Are a

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City, the dream-like feel is used as the basic accompanying figure. Also like the source material, brass instruments sustain notes of the ostinato, while the piano and woodwinds perform them continually.

*Figure 33.* Ostinato from *The Rivers of Bowery*, Measures 39-43, clarinets 2 and 3, bass clarinet parts.

In measure 90, we are presented with Motive 7 from the first movement. In hindsight, this material is foreshadowing, because Movement III was composed and performed first. While this presentation is not a complete rhythmic copy, the intervals are exactly as before.

*Figure 35.* Motive 7 from Movement I, Movement III, Measures 90-92, Soprano Saxophone.

As with much of the movement, the B section draws heavily from *Bowery*. The oboe, English horn, and clarinets perform the third motive drawn from *The Rivers of*
Bowery melody. This time, the intervallic relationships are as the original, but the rhythm is altered. This is referred to as “Bowery 3.”

Figure 36. Bowery 3 Fragment, Movement III, Measure 94-95, Oboe.

The second half of the Bowery melody is composed at letter I (measure 95) over the continuing ostinato from the segment just prior. Newman continues the pattern of using these motives in the B section. One measure before letter J, the dotted-quarter and eighth note rhythmic motive from the opening movement enters, but this time it is foreshadowing the return of the B section. The fourth and final new Bowery motive is found in the upper clarinets and saxophone in measure 116. This motive is longer than the other versions.

Figure 37. Bowery 4 Fragment, Movement III, Measures 116-119, Clarinets 1 and 2, Soprano Saxophone.

Before the close of the B section, Newman juxtaposes much of the music from the opening two sections with a new centered on B-flat, foreshadowing the coming key change. Newman refers to this progression as the “shiny progression,” as it brings a moment of bright timbres.\(^{47}\) A short phrase taken from the Lester Young solo is performed over the ostinato while the piano, piccolo, first flute, and marimba have an eighth note figure in the upper tessitura. This is followed by the “Bowery 3 Motive” with the interruption seen in the A section.

The increased rhythmic activity from the close of the B section spins its way into a groove to open the C-section of the final movement. This new section begins at measure 136, which is also letter M. Here, the bass clarinet continues to be featured, playing a solo groove that evolved from the ostinato. The upper woodwinds accompany this with the chord progression based on *Scrapple from the Apple*. After the initial statement, these parts are repeated with reinforcement from the horns and trombones. The groove matures into a consistent eighth-note pulse just before letter N.

The “shiny progressions” found in measure 121 through 123 is presented again at letter N (measure 144). The groove pulse can now be heard in the marimba, giving a feel of movement, while the wind instruments sustain notes of the progression. At measure 147 the groove is stated in the brass, passing from trumpets and trombones to the horns and back. As Newman states in his manuscript, this is the “Adams’ effect” inspired by composer John Adams.48

While the groove is being developed, a new melodic figure is created based on the tune *Scrapple from the Apple*. The chord progression from the tune accompanies this new melody. This segment propels forward into letter O. A new countermelody is composed in the soprano saxophone and first trumpet and is derived from the opening measure of *Scrapple*. The measures that follow feature the “shiny progression” once again, but with a new counter line in the E-flat clarinet and piano. The groove re-enters in the guitar in measure 159.

\[\text{Figure 38. “Shiny Progression,” Movement III, Measures 121-124, Vibraphone.}\]

48 Ibid
Letter P contains the final segment of music within the C section. It is at this point that Newman uses any of the Bowery motives in this section, and in this case it is “Bowery 4.” It is not stated in a straightforward manner; it is offset from the three-measure chord progression by 4 beats. The groove remains constant in the marimba and guitar until it passes to the saxophones to close the section.

The material presented at letter Q serves as a textural transition. Like many of Newman’s works, this section features aleatoric writing to create a dream-like quality through improvisation. Stopped French horns perform with the vibraphone in measure 171, sounding the tetra-chord from Rivers of Bowery. The opening “Bowery 1 Motive” is restated during this transition. What is new during this area is the material in the clarinet family, which performs an arpeggio in differing rhythms. According to the notes in Newman’s short score, this figure comes from Igor Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring. This figure serves a similar purpose to the pillars in The Americas.

The dream-like quality continues to consume the content of the D section, which commences at measure 176. The tempo is the same as the B section’s, but there are no meter changes here. Newman creates a tenor saxophone line that is reminiscent of Charlie Parker and follows it with a walking bass figure. The texture becomes thicker at letter R, as the flutes enter with an aleatoric eighth-note pattern based on the tetra-chord. At the same time, the trumpets and tenor saxophone perform a Miles Davis inspired triplet figure. The interruption chords make a return in measure 184, as does the Stravinsky arpeggio in measure 186. This figure allows for a key area shift to now focus on A-flat.

The rhythmic intensity strengthens at letter S with a hemiola (Figure 39), 2 versus 3, between first flute, oboe, and right-hand celesta and second flute, E-flat clarinet, and
left celesta, respectively. The first group alternates between the pitches of A-flat and G, while the second group plays D-flat and E-flat. All pitches are part of Newman’s tetra-chord. Short flurries in the clarinets and euphoniums, along with some dramatic dynamic shifts, fill the texture and move the musical energy along into the next segment. At letter T, the hemiola continues as before, but the triplet figure is again stated, juxtaposing the two previous segments. In measure 194, Newman foreshadows the return of the B section by the addition of the dotted quarter-eighth note figure in the lower instruments.

![Figure 39](image)

*Figure 39. Hemiola excerpt, Movement III, Rehearsal Letter S, Celesta.*

The B section returns with enough changes for it to be considered B-prime (B’). First, the meter is now a straightforward 5/4, a contrast with the mixed meters used before. The lyrical ostinato used before gives way to the dotted quarter-eighth note rhythm stated just prior to this section. The music is re-barred in order to fit the new meter, but the duration largely remains unchanged. The percussion’s more active role helps to create a groove that will evolve into constant eighth note pattern in B’.

There is one major change in the construction of the B’ section. Instead of closing the section with the same harmonic progression as before, Newman copies the music from measures 64 through 67 in the opening A section. This is the same section where interruption number three was stated; the same interruption is quoted at this point in the original B section.
Letter Y brings the return of the C section; however, it does not start exactly as before. The beginning of the C’ section omits the first twelve measures of its predecessor with one exception: the groove stated in the bass clarinet is again performed. The rest of the material is from measure 148. At measure 176, Newman presents the tenor sax and string bass performing fragments of the solo and Rivers of Bowery motive. The combination itself is of interest as it is a short homage to his teacher, John Corigliano, who used the saxophone and string bass combination in Circus Maximus. The presentation of the “shiny progression” at measure 247, which is the same at measure 156 in the earlier section, now includes the upper woodwinds and piano. The music at letters P and Z (original and new sections, respectively) are identical, with the addition of percussion performers in the latter.

The apex of My Hands Are a City comes at measure 260 (letter AA) with the full instrumentation of the ensemble performing. The main melodic figures are all derived from the Rivers of Bowery melody, and are layered throughout the winds. The bassoons, saxophones, guitar, and piano continue with the eighth-note groove, with the saxophones and piano playing in syncopation. This pattern continues until the Coda.

The movement closes with a Coda section, beginning at measure 271 (rehearsal BB). Fragments of material from all sections are performed throughout the section. The first several measures recall the D section, using aleatoric writing, arpeggios, and the triplets in the trumpets. The alternations of the pitches A-flat and G from the C-section fill the accompanying textures. As Newman brings the symphony to a close, he inserts the original Rivers of Bowery melody in the trumpets and French horns at measure 277. The “Chime Motive” interrupts the music at measure 282, and evolves into the eighth-
note grove. Closing the work is a return of the “Gliss Motive” from the opening
movement in the trombones leading to a final tetra-chord. The sound of this chord is
reminiscent of the closing chord of the “Chaconne” from Gustav Holst’s First Suite in E-
Flat, and that was Newman’s intention.

I probably asked somebody-give me a good E flat scoring I want to look at it,
and probably somebody said with the last chord, of the E-flat suite. I wouldn’t
have known, I don’t know that much band music. So I would have-I knew it
existed and-but I don’t know it intimately like somebody who studied it would.
So I didn’t even have a score and I asked Steve [Bryant] if he had a score. And so
he took-I remember he took a photo of the last page and send it to me and I
worked for that. And so that’s how that happened.

Musical Concepts of Movement III

The closing movement is the most challenging musically of the entire work. From
the long introduction to the delayed climatic movement, the musical content pushes the
conductor and performer to be mentally sharp. The overall length of the movement only
compounds issues.

The introduction of the final movement stays at piano for a majority of the
section, which goes all the way to letter H. The true musical challenge of this movement
is the climatic moment. The other two movements reach a climax before their conclusion
and decay afterward. In My Hands Are a City, the musical energy builds until the final
chord of the entire work, the “Holst” chord. A secondary climax can been achieved at
letter BB, but the use of the “Chime Motive,” repeated notes in the brass, and the
crescendo in the percussion leads to a true climax at the end of the work.

49 Gustav Holst, First Suite in E-Flat for Military Band, ed. Colin Matthews,
51 Ibid.
CHAPTER V
PERFORMANCE CONCERNS IN SYMPHONY NO. 1

Introduction

As with any musical composition, Jonathan Newman’s Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City presents several concerns that must be addressed prior to performance. The wide range of these issues not only affects the individual musicians in the performing ensemble, but the conductor as well. The contents of this chapter will discuss the performance concerns in movement order and present solutions.

The discovery of these concerns comes from three sources. First, Newman being a living American composer made it possible to correspond with him in person, via email, phone calls, and video conferencing technologies. These interactions allowed for direct discussions with the creator of the work and provided first hand insight on many issues.

Second, discussions with conductors of wind bands in the United States who have performed the work are important. Associate Director of Bands at Indiana University Jeffrey Gershman helped to commission the entire composition, and premier the third movement at the College Band Director’s Nation Association Conference in Kansas City in 2008. Gershman made himself available to meet with this author on several occasions and provided original manuscripts, short scores, and notes on the work. John Lynch, Director of Bands at the University of Georgia, and Milt Allen, Associate Director of Bands at Ohio State University, also assisted in the commissioning consortium and also produced the first recording of the symphony’s final movement, My Hands Are a City. Phone conversations with each conductor, as well as Brian Doyle,
Director of the Crane Wind Ensemble at SUNY-Potsdam, proved helpful in establishing rehearsal concerns with the composition.

Finally, personal knowledge of the work through score study and review of source materials provide the third means of discovery. The analysis discussed in the previous chapter along with the conversations with the composer and conductors work hand-in-hand to provide key insights on the accessibility of the work.

Movement I: *Across the groaning continent*

Before a note is even performed, the conductor recognizes the inherent challenges of the unique instrumentation required for the composition. While most of the instruments are common to the wind ensemble, the electric guitar is rare. Newman often tries to find new sounds to add to ensembles. In *Symphony No. 1*, he replaces the often-used harp with the electric guitar. This presents an issue of balance with the use of an amplifier with the guitar. The instrument must be placed where its sound does not dominate the ensemble. In order to assist the ensemble in understanding the role of the guitar, Brian Doyle, conductor of the Crane Wind Ensemble at SUNY-Potsdam, had the amplifier and performer face the ensemble during rehearsal. At the performance, the amplifier was placed in the crook of the piano facing the audience at a slight angle. Dr. Doyle also suggests having a small speaker monitor next to the conductor to hear the guitar part clearly during performance.\(^{52}\)

\(^{52}\) Brian Doyle, interview with author via Skype, Feb. 15, 2012.
As Newman states in the performance notes of the scores, the guitar is an ensemble instrument and it should blend and balance with the ensemble. He also requires a “bluesy” overdrive sound, much like guitarist Jeff Beck.

Adding to the instrumental concerns is the extensive percussion section. There are 23 percussion instruments distributed among six players (not including timpani which is its own part for an additional player).

Player 1:
Glockenspiel, Guiro, Claves, Large Tam-tam, Snare Drum, Ride Cymbal Set

Player 2:
Xylophone, Crotales, Snare Drum (with wire brushes), Crotales, Suspended Crash, China Cymbal, Crash Cymbal, Tubular Bells

Player 3:
E-flat-4 Tubular Bell, Vibraphone

Player 4:
Tubular Bells, Bass Drum 1, Crotales, Egg Shaker, Hi-hat, Ride Cymbal, High and Low Timbales, Sandpaper-blocks, Piatti

Player 5:
Marimba, Bass Drum 2, Large Tam-tam, Snare Drum, Ride Cymbal Set

Player 6:
Ride cymbals, Suspended Cymbal, Crash Cymbal, China Cymbal, Splash Cymbal, Suspended Triangle, Small Tam-tam, Woodblock, Egg Shaker, 3 Metal Mixing Bowls (Medium, Large, Extra Large)

Allowing time for the players to plan and setup their instruments is a must, and clear diagramming of their positions is encouraged. Player 1 and player 4 share

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53 Jonathan Newman, Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City,
54 “Jeff Beck Bio.” Jeff Beck (b. 1944) is a guitarist from England, and one of three notable guitarists to play with the group The Yardbirds (Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page being the other two). More information on Jeff Beck can be found on his group’s webpage: www.jeffbeck.com.
instruments with player 5, and player 2 also shares with player 4. The following set-up is encouraged, from left to right of the conductor:

| P3 | P5 | P2 | P4 | P1 | P6 | Timpani |

This set-up allows sharing of instruments, which allows the marimba to be placed towards the outside of the ensemble. As is with any group, set-up will depend on space in rehearsal area and on stage. Since each player is using multiple instruments, the conductor should program this piece to allow for ample setup time. It is this author’s recommendation, as well as Jeffrey Gershman\(^{55}\) and Jonathan Newman\(^{56}\) that the piece be performed after an intermission.

Since the musical focus is on jazz and be-bop, there are several sections of the opening movement that feature the sounds of a trap set; however, there is no trap set listen in the instrumentation. The individual percussion parts must meld together in order to provide the feel of the drum set in a jazz combo. Many, but not all, of these sounds are written in the percussion 4 part, increasing the emphasis on the player’s set-up.

The opening movement of the symphony proves to be the most technically demanding of the entire work. Emulating the styles of be-bop jazz artists, Newman utilizes quick, flourishing runs that are highly syncopated, which are not commonly repeated. Making the music more challenging is the layering in and out of instruments. The movement begins with the marimba, piano, baritone saxophone, and contrabass clarinet performing the complicated be-bop figures. The latter instruments are rarely featured in such a way, thus adding to the level of difficulty. During rehearsals, it is suggested that the conductor work solely with the instruments that perform the be-bop

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\(^{55}\) Jeffrey Gershman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.

motives, possibly without others in the room. The focus on the small ensemble will enable the performers to hear each other more easily, aiding them to work together more efficiently. As with any technical passage, the conductor is also encouraged to use a metronome in rehearsal, having the performers play at a piano dynamic in order to align the rhythms.

From a conducting standpoint, the movement is fairly straightforward. The tempo is constant (132 beats per minute), and the meters are 4/4 and 3/4. The focus of the conductor should be to cue important entrances and monitor the overall balance of the ensemble.

Movement II: The Americas

The second movement is a stark contrast to the opening movement of Symphony No. 1. Orchestrated for orchestral winds and piano, the texture is simpler, which helps cleanse the ear from the thick, driven music of the opening movement. There are several concerns, however, within the movement that affect the overall performance of the symphony.

One of the prominent concerns with the movement is its pacing. The Americas is half as fast as the first movement (66 beats per minute instead of 132 beats per minute). In addition to this, there are several changes in meter and tempo throughout the movement. Compounding the issue, the final movement is the same tempo as the second movement. Pacing for this movement must be clear from the outset. The first segment of music is in the meters of 3/4 and 4/4 but, after a rallentando, the meters become mixed. The 7/8 meters change from divisions of 3+2+2 and 2+2+3. Additionally, rhythms are often in a duple feel as opposed to the triple nature of the meters. Careful and constant
study is essential for performance to be at its highest level. The lack of a defined metronomic pulse in this section, requires the conductor to focus more closely on tempo than before. When discussing the study of this movement, Gershman states:

In order for me to actually really conduct it, the first thing I did was just put 8th note on 132, on a metronome. And I just laid out 8th notes and I sang every single line. I didn’t read it out. I actually sang the line to make sure that I can accurately place where everything was going to be. Then I would, still with the 8th notes on, would sing and conduct it. Because so often what you are conducting doesn’t go with what you’re singing with duple in particular. And then once I was able to sing every line, then I can teach it. I was able to come and take a step back and internalize. And the problem with this is, when doing it, (again because I had such a short time) I just need to play a traffic cop because there’s so many lines going on that I just basically just laid out very distinct time and get really que when I needed to. Just let the musicians take it.  

One section of the music that is often hard to comprehend is from measure 30 to 35. Being a section of music between two different large sections, it is easy to hear it as a transition; however, Newman states that this section is actually a brass chorale. Isolating this section of music and treating as a chorale will help the performers understand the function of this music.

The section starting at measure 37 presents another tempo concern. Here, the music is 10 beats per minute quicker than the section prior with no accelerando. Going too fast or too slow in this section causes the music to lose the energy within the notes. Working with the metronome individually as the conductor and then with the ensemble will allow for tempo accuracy and proper musical flow.

Balance can be a concern at measure 78 if it is not addressed with the ensemble. Though upper woodwinds, French horn, and right hand of the piano play the melodic figure, the trumpets perform a grace-note figure that pays homage to Newman’s teacher,

57 Jeffrey Gershman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.  
58 Ibid.
John Corigliano and his work *Circus Maximus*. In Corigliano’s composition, the trumpets perform fanfare-like grace-note figures that are reminiscent of ancient Rome. Newman uses a similar figure in *Symphony No. 1*, but unlike *Circus Maximus*, other instruments are performing at the same time. The trumpet figure can dominate the texture, but should only provide energy to drive the music to the climactic moment in measure 83.

The final pacing concern comes at the end of the movement. The second movement is *attacca* to the final movement, but with the tempo for both being the same, there must be some added contrast. Newman does write in a *rallentando* in the final six measures of *The Americas* but the bass clarinet solo performs the opening of the final movement. Much of this pacing concern can be controlled in the final movement, but care during the close of the second movement will benefit the overall work. Since the piano closes the movement with the “pillar” as discussed in the previous chapter, it is crucial that the musical energy is not allowed to decrease.

**Movement III: My Hands Are a City**

Pacing of the final movement *Symphony No. 1* is also crucial. The entire symphony is approximately 27 minutes in length; the final movement is thirteen minutes by itself. The climax of the entire work comes late in the final movement. Attention to the pacing of the entire work will help prevent mental and emotional drain for the musicians and the audience. Jeffrey Gershman, reflecting on the length of the work, stated:

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The other thing that I didn’t anticipate because the second movement and the third movement are attacca, just from a conducting standpoint, it’s exhausting. You’re just mentally on for that second movement to get into shape, the beauty of it. And then you had this bass clarinet solo that serves as a transition, and then you’re 14 minutes in. And I remember on the premieres, I got to like kind of a recap after the tenor sax solo and I remember thinking “Good God, I’m exhausted!” Like I just, because band conductors don’t do big pieces. And then we do all three movements so it’s nine movement or nine measures or—Sorry. Nine minutes or ten minutes. This is an 18-minute chunk. That’s mentally demanding and physically demanding. That was tough.\textsuperscript{62}

The opening of the movement consists of four minutes of music derived from the Lester Young solo from “Lester Leaps In” as performed with Count Basie. The length of time along with the sparse orchestration can cause a lull in musical energy. If the entire symphony is performed, the ensemble has performed and the audience has heard thirteen minutes of music, the last seven or eights minutes being a slower tempo, before the beginning of the final movement. As Newman suggests, the opening of the movement “has got to move.”\textsuperscript{63}

As in the opening movement, the instrumentation is for the full ensemble. The guitar is again an ensemble instrument, though there are a few coloristic moments. Newman notates four distinct tones for the guitar to produce; all are described in the performance notes. They are as follows:

\textsuperscript{62} Jeffrey Gershman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.
\textsuperscript{63} Jonathan Newman, interview with author, Chicago, IL, December 15, 2011.
I. A medium overdrive, with moderate reverb

II. A clean jazz tone, with heavy reverb, in the style of Pat Metheny’s *Electric Counterpoint*[^64]

III. A heavy spring reverb (“surf guitar” sound), in the style of Dick Dale[^65]

IV. Extremely heavy distortion, but at low volume

Newman spent time with several guitarists with various ensembles, including those conducted by Jeffrey Gershman and John Lynch, to find the appropriate sounds for the guitar and has provided detailed sound descriptions in the guitar part.

For the conductor, the constant changing of meters (from 5/4, 2/2, ¾, for example, starting in measure 84) requires focus on controlling gestures to allow for a stable tempo. During the dreamlike section starting in measure 184, the conductor must provide clear cues for entrances of instrumental parts. The upper woodwinds, guitar, and percussion perform aleatoric parts in a free tempo. With the rhythmic accuracy needed for the other performers, using clear and simple motions will provide security.

The other major concern for the final movement is textural clarity. There are moments where many or all instruments performing at the same time, with a few instruments performing melodic content in alternating measures. For example at measure 260, the piccolo and trumpets 1 and 2 perform a rising half-note figure based on the *Rivers of Bowery*, alternating with the flutes, English horn, trumpets 3 and 4, and French horns 1 and 2. The former of these groups will tend to be softer than the latter due to

[^64]: “Pat Metheny Bio.” Pat Metheny is an American jazz guitarist and composer. More information can be found on his webpage, www.patmetheny.com.

number of performers. While this is being performed, the rest of the ensemble plays accompanying material together, with each measure starting soft followed by a crescendo. In order to allow the melody to be heard at the same dynamic, the first group must perform slightly louder and the accompanying figures must control their dynamic ranges.

Accessibility of *Symphony No. 1*

Many factors play into the accessibility of *Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City*, and the combination of these factors leads to this work being accessible only to advanced or professional ensembles. These factors include ensemble size, instrumentation, range requirements, length of work, and technical demands.

The ensemble size of *Symphony No. 1* is not necessarily larger than that for most other works, but the fact that specific instruments are required increases the demand of the work. For example, the contrabass clarinet performs much of the be-bop motive in the beginning of the first movement. While other instruments often double the contrabass clarinet, there are moments where it is alone or prominent. This makes it difficult to perform the work without contrabass clarinet. The use of electric guitar and the size of the percussion section require musicians proficient on these instruments.

When speaking of instrument ranges, most conductors focus on the first trumpet parts. With *Symphony No. 1*, attention must be paid to the trumpet section as a whole, in addition to the French horns, oboe, and tuba. The trumpet parts all perform above the staff. The first trumpet plays up to an E-flat above the staff, while the rest of the section is required to perform C above the staff in the opening movements. In the second movement, the second trumpet has to play a high C at a *pianissimo* dynamic, while
muted. This takes extreme control of air, sound, and embouchure. The French horn also performs above the staff, frequently required to reach a B-flat or C. There is a passage in the final movement (measures 52-54) that demands the first horn to play a C in the staff then slur up to a B above the staff, an interval of a major seventh. Although it is only performed a few times in the entire work, the tuba plays up to a C-flat above the staff.

The oboe part is also very demanding in range. In the opening section of the first movement, Newman constructs a sixteenth note run from C-flat in the staff to F above the staff. In the second movement, the oboe often doubles the first flute, starting passages on high E-flat about the staff. It is rare for the first oboe to play below a C in the staff in this work.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the length of the work is very taxing on both the performers and the audience. The total length is approximately 27 minutes, 20-21 minutes of which are at a slower tempo. There is plenty of contrast in musical materials throughout, but similarity of tempo from the second and third movements, in addition to the connection between them, makes for a long stretch of constant music. The ensemble and conductor must have the ability to mentally focus on the work for the duration of the performance. Slight lapses of focus could be detrimental to the overall musical experience. Both Newman and Gershman agree that each movement could standalone.

There has been a one or two performances of the first movement alone, which I like. I think the first [can stand alone] more than the second. A couple of performances in the first movement alone, which is great. . . I rather like the first one which is setting on its own, I think it works fine. I would love to see-and it hasn’t happened yet-someone perform just second movement. . . And it could be an orchestra playing, anything other than what you got. It’s that very similar orchestration to Symphonies for Wind Instruments [Stravinsky].

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Lastly, the technical demands on every musician are high, especially in the opening movement. Every part is required to have technical virtuosity, including low reeds. All brasses and flutes need to be able to double tongue, and the saxophones would benefit from this technique as well if possible. The intervallic relationships in many parts are expanded above a fifth with much of the work being filled with disjunct motion. This forces woodwind and brass players to control air stream and embouchure throughout.

All these factors place this work in a category of accessibility for only the most advanced ensembles. Many universities can perform the entire work given adequate rehearsal preparation, including universities with no graduate music programs. If the movements are separated and performed alone, the range of ensembles capable of performing them increases, though each movement is still very demanding.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The wind ensemble is a young but viable medium for musical expression. While there is a great wealth and variety of repertoire for this ensemble, works of serious merit are rare. Finished in 2009, Jonathan Newman’s Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City proves to be one of the most artistic and substantial works for winds. While technically and musically demanding, performing single movements of this symphony makes this work approachable. The full work is accessible only by the most advanced ensembles.

What makes the work significant is the orchestration and motivic development. Newman’s use of materials from a variety of sources—from his own works to transcriptions of jazz solos from Lester Young and Charlie Parker—provides musical interest and energy. His use of timbres and variety of styles is unique in today’s band writing.

While Symphony No. 1 has been the focus of this document, the elements of Newman’s writing can be found in his other works. To date, he has written 16 works for winds, but is continually composing works for chamber, vocal, and orchestral ensembles. These works range in difficulty from Grade 2 (middle school level) to Grade 6 (professional level). He is welcoming of conductor’s conversations and questions in assisting his works to be performed. Additionally, he has formed relationships with conductors through the commissioning of new works. All of these ideas, including his composition style and voice, have established Jonathan Newman as an important composer and Symphony No. 1 as his most significant work.
APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW WITH JONATHAN NEWMAN

Corey Francis: Okay. So, I’m sitting here at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago on December 15th, 2011, with Jonathan Newman, composer of “Symphony No. 1, My Hands Are a City”. And we’re going to discuss some of the thematic things you were doing just to make sure – one so I know what you are thinking, but two just to get an idea of you’re taking the ideas of the Beat Generation-Ginsberg, Kerouac, Corso, and those authors in artist in that time-and applying that to the work overall, Robert Frank and some others. And so getting, I’m just – I want to get an idea of how you did that? I know you read and read some of the material and a lot of materials, On The Road, Howl, The Americas which are obvious by your program notes but how would – how did you go about incorporating that or depicting that generation or their style, their ideas through the piece?

Newman: Well, I mean it’s the million dollar question whether I’m not really sure, I mean there are some tangible ways that I can point and say this is that and this is that, but the amount it’s hard to say when you do six months or a year’s worth of research whatever I did…

CF: Yeah.

Newman: …you know, was over a quite a long period of time, thinking about it and just sort of immersing myself in the novels and poetry and films and all the rest of it that you mentioned. It’s hard to say how that ever translates to music, I mean, we heard Don Juan today.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: Supposedly that’s you know about Don Juan that I mean it’s only because we impose that upon it.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: So there is some element of that, there is a certain point where you just take a leap of faith and you just start writing notes. Of course it’s sort of ridiculous to assume that B flat translates into anything that has to do with Howl.

CF: Yeah, absolutely, yeah.

Newman: But you just have to assume that that stuff just kind of seeps in, informs whatever you are doing and hope for the best and it – or not even hope, you just, it is what it is. So it sort of has to do with that stuff because I say it does and not really and because of other things that I can point to, but mostly because I just add because I say it does. And there is – and I can feel a connection between those things.
CF: Yeah. I think in the first few minutes, for me it’s pretty obvious, I’m going through reading the original scroll of “On the Road” by…

Newman: Is that cool?

CF: That is awesome.

Newman: Is that cool?

CF: I mean, no paragraphs, just one long thing.

Newman: Yeah. It just keeps going the long thing, yeah. I’ve seen that in the museum. I think it was a – there’s a describing.

CF: That have a – they have the text published now, where so it’s a history of it.

Newman: Yeah, could buy, yeah.

CF: Yeah. And so I’m actually going through that and I listened, I’m also listening to the audio book, because they’ve written scroll and the book, it’s the edited book are not quite the same.


CF: And so I’m listening to the audio book just to kind of, as I’m studying few things to get that idea but I’m also reading the original scroll and seeing the differences. And the book he is – he is going across the continent, and then of course you say “Across the growing continent” here and then – and the – for the title of the movement. And it just seems like it’s – you’re driving, you’re traveling, this, this – the constant saying of…

Newman: There was the idea of doing a kind of driving music, yeah, because there’s a lot of speeding and driving.

CF: Yeah, yeah.

Newman: And also a general sense of restlessness that comes across in that book where they just were – they just get itchy, they just say is if they’re sitting in one place for too long, they just have to move, they just have to go.

CF: Yeah, yeah.

Newman: And so that was the idea of – it sounded like a first movement to me. I mean, it sounded like a perpetual motion to me.
CF: And during that time we have Charlie Parker, Lester Young, these Jazz musicians and is obviously I feel a bebop especially at the very beginning with these – with the rhythms and the things going on, and reading some of the correspondence you had with Stuart Sims that played an important role. And the structure of – the chord structure of this piece, I think it was, used lot of – almost “Au La Cha” which listen to quite a bit, you mentioned that.

Newman: Right.

CF: “Scrapple From The Apple”.

Newman: “Scrapple…

CF: Third movement, there’s another one think you said there was a Jazz – a chord progression you used in the first one, I can’t remember what it was off the top of my head.

Newman: Let me think about this because I haven’t thought about it in a while. “A Scrapple From The” – yes, there was a…

CF: Trying to find, I’ve got an email that you forwarded me from Stuart.

Newman: I mean.

CF: Yeah. It says, – you don’t – and I thought better bebop example of if you want to know “Ko-Ko” was one, it was mesmerizing, also there will be a particular number with “Au-La-Cha” the head of which is just spectacular. I say that – I was definitely thinking those things more than “Scrapple From the Apple”, regarding first movement.

Newman: Well, you’re right because “Scrapple From The Apple” was the – was which I think is also the chord progression from – I’m not positive or from “How High the Moon”, I think it shares.

CF: They are very similar

Newman: Yeah, I – that I took that progression and that became the main progression in the third movement, which I agree wrote first obviously, not obviously but I wrote before that first. So, I think when I got to the first movement, I didn’t want and I so used the same progression. I think it’s just bounces back and forth basically between A flat, A flat and D flat or something like that.

CF: Yeah, yeah. That’s a majority of it, yeah.

Newman: And probably occasionally it goes up to E flat or something like that.

CF: Yeah.
Newman: Yeah. And so I was thinking more of less of the progression, more of the sound, more the bebop movement. And so that’s probably where “Au-La-Cha” and “Ko–Ko” come in, yeah.

CF: The – in contrast, the second movement seems to have more of this classical American composer, as in Copland. If I remember something out there is another piece I had never heard of that, you know, as a symphony I listened to that and I very found out – I can’t remember what it was, I wish I had it now with me now but it’s definitely some American composer set to it.

Newman: Like Will Schuman or – no, that’s later.

CF: It was...

Newman: Well, what I can tell you what I was thinking of was more Virgil Thomson than it was.

CF: That’s what it was. There is an – that English horn writer sounds very much like Copland. That’s why I...

Newman: Yeah. I mean, well anything with this open fifth, you know, but I wanted-definitely wanted something Americana soundingish, which I’ve done stuff like that before, but never quite so overtly but I was thinking more – more Virgil Thomson and less Copland because it’s a little more counter – it’s a lot of counterpoint.

CF: Yes.

Newman: And Copland isn’t so counter-pointy.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: Whereas Thomson is. And so I was thinking it more like the ballet that – the ballet music that Virgil Thomson never wrote, you know that kind of thing. So, a little more angular, a little more contrapuntal – and that equaled that sound to me. So, that I was definitely thinking along those lines. That was the exact purpose and also Copland, I mean, I would sit – I remember when I was writing this movement, I would sit down and I have a piano score of – guess it’s from – I guess its “Rodeo” and I played through it and sort of get that sound in my head and then I go and continue writing.

CF: That kind of translates in, you get that flavor in your head and all that.

Newman: Yeah, right.

CF: It’s kind of like – I don’t know if you ever, I don’t if you’d much one thing – much of soft drinks that I have ever been, the Pibb Extra, I never realized this, and looking
while I was drinking and I was – and in a soda can it says spicy cherry drink. And I don’t know every time I will – I think that spicy cherry, you know, much tasty. You know, it’s kind of like you get double the flavor.

Newman: Once you see it you feel right.

CF: Yeah, right. So, you used to get that Copland image or some other image in your brain and kind of translate through.

Newman: Well, that’s a good lesson because you could name, it’s like a title. You can name something “Raining on a summer day” and people would say it sounds like “Raining on the summer day”.

CF: “Summer day”, yeah.

Newman: They same exact piece you title with, you know, “Mountains on a cloudy winter afternoon” and they’ll – you say it sounds like just like, right.

CF: Now, the second movement, is part of the hardest in regards to me and as well speaking with Jeff this morning, he have a greatest, kind of the hardest thing to conceptualized, because it is often the Robert Frank with “The America’s”. The photographs he took of America as he was going across the country and you change your program not to depict any of the pictures but kind of a overall feel of what you got from that. The piece itself…

Newman: Have you seen the book?

CF: I have seen the book, yeah. We actually have it at Southern Miss in the library.

Newman: That’s good.

CF: So I’m able to go through and look through while I was there. And you know, I get this sense when I’m looking through, it is a very diverse culture, many nations put together, you can’t even say in your program – just were one nation, not many a nation, smaller nations.

Newman: Right.

CF: It’s also kind of a – and is black and white which kind of maybe enhance the fact that has this overwhelming sense of – I’ll say impression but the dark kind…

Newman: Kind of sad.

CF: Yeah. It’s very sad.
Newman: Yeah. And nobody, I mean, there is a preface to that book, the Kerouac road, that’s something like, you know, it’s something along the line, so Jesus can anybody make a – what a bar – an empty bar looks sadder than Robert Frank. Nothing, well you know.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: And it’s true. Like our juke – like a jukebox in an empty bar, he makes looks sadder than somebody – in somebody’s funeral. Which is true, lot of its – it looks – is very quite dark.

CF: And this is during the time, you know.

Newman: But then there is some…

CF: 40s and 50s, I guess, that was just in.

Newman: 50s, with 50s.

CF: It’s kind of like June Cleaver, *Leave It to Beaver*.

Newman: Yeah.

CF: Like resigned, you know. So, we get this idea of America just the post war high that we’re going through. This is kind of depicting the darker side of America. I guess, you could say they’re more sad inside, that we didn’t typically see.

Newman: Well, I think that was a general but there were also some celebratory, there was also the – there was a quite a mix-up there.

CF: Yeah, yeah.

Newman: It’s very happy – looking, the judge’s position is very – it’s quite disturbing. And so I wanted to generally, you know, dark movement in – but there is some gloriousness in there that it – that I try to build in. You know, I have, I will say after it was all – after it’s finished, I would like – quite through it and look at the pictures at the same time to see if it worked – it doesn’t. But I can’t, like, for me I can flip through the photos and you listen to “The Americans” by Jonathan Newman, it does not work.

CF: See, I tried that too. You know, it’s like going on my – not quite getting, you know, but.

Newman: It doesn’t work as a film score. But, you know, it sort of pleases me.

CF: Yeah.
Newman: It’s not about that, it’s just, you know, it’s – I went, looked at those photos and then did this. It’s more of a response.

CF: Right. I mentioned this as Jeff has wanted to, as I’m looking through and in we’ll get some of the themes stuff that you’re doing in here in here too. But it seems like anytime there is this little transition or there’s going to be a change in themes, there is like the – there is this ascending line that happened, to me, you know, it’s like – it was all audio books that I had when I was a kid and it says “when you hear the sound, turn the page” – seeing that.

Newman: The – very…

CF: So, that’s kind of like this going on and then you get to, you know, it’s – that theme – this section’s, you know, you have this going here at the beginning or it’s a little bit more straightforward. I mean, it here you have the mix meter and that’s a little bit more obscured.


CF: And you get going again and here this is and you’re getting closer to the English form lines.

Newman: Yeah.

CF: Just like and – as in like there’s anytime that you were, well is – this way I saw it, it – this is in my brain.

Newman: I felt, well, that’s a perfectly reasonable thing to think of. I got it.

CF: Out into that little space down there, all right, thank you.

Newman: The – I call – and in structure the lines are pillars. That’s all, this is the pillar from this section of this section may access – transition served.

CF: Now, if you were to describe this – the formal structure of the second movements.

Newman: Yeah, a good one.

CF: Yeah, I know. I’m going to ask you a deep question here, I want a deep question but it seems like I want to say a Rondo, but it seems like you had these little themes that are coming back. I mean, got this opening section that kind of gets back to with that later on, obviously you have the cultural line and stuff that happened a couple of times. This comes back afterward the section at A comes back with afterwards and it seems almost like this – appears this made here and then…

Newman: Yeah. There is an – there is an A prime and there is a B and it is a B prime.
CF: Yeah.

Newman: Yeah. There is other things that – but they’re not – this is his own – this is something I remember Stewart had trouble with and he did it differently, with the upside down. (Looking at Letter C) This is not a transition. This is a choral, its own thing.

CF: Okay.

Newman: It doesn’t transition from one thing to another, it just is.

CF: It just is it.

Newman: Yeah.

CF: Okay. And it seems like at major points of these, where something else is coming and you might you actually in your scores you have another rehearsal letter but can I – I know if that’s an editorial thing or not, but…

Newman: Yeah – no. The rehearsal letter’s a musical – they – you can look at those as structural points.

CF: Yeah. So, that’s right. Yeah, because I mean – if – you know, here you’re getting…

Newman: Unless, I mean, don’t – they don’t take a stone, because some of this is if is – if a section is long enough, I could – I stick one in the middle just because you need a rehearsal letter somewhat there.

CF: Yeah, yes – yeah. But it’s common I notice, especially when if you get to the last movement, you could see where that letter Y something new has happened, a letter AA something new happened.

Newman: Right.

CF: And so, the – the landmarks help kind of say good things, up a little bit. But now that I’m seeing, I was kind of wondering what this section was like, well, I know there’s something going on here at D.

Newman: Yeah.

CF: But what was this and you are saying this is a choral.

Newman: It’s not a transition, it’s a choral.

CF: And is that the crown that you wrote yourself, or is...
Newman: Yeah.

CF: Okay, I do not feel, it’s still like something else like – instrument E.

Newman: It’s a brass crown, that if I remember correctly, it was one of the first things that I wrote in the piece. It might have been the first thing that I had.

CF: Does it come back and – does that have in – and point throughout the rest of the piece?

Newman: No. I don’t remember. Yeah, might be some – there might be some – it’s been a while...

CF: Yeah.

Newman: There might be some motivic – there always is.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: With me. There might be no typical things that happened. Let’s see what it means, thirds – Yeah, it’s all, its thirds.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: It’s the same thing with the thirds.

CF: Okay.

Newman: [Music] you know, it’s all thirds and there is third, you know, thirds beginning to, yeah, it’s, so it’s more of third.

CF: Yeah. So, it all – yes, yeah. I didn’t know if there were – four – than it’s like.

Newman: I probably had, I know I had this first and then I probably took for thirds and then ran with it.

CF: Okay. Makes a little bit more sense to me on that, so, and you said Steven had some conceptualization with that, so that, you know?

Newman: Yeah. It wasn’t being played right.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: And I – and I don’t – couldn’t put my finger on why and I think I said something like it’s not a transition, it’s just a choral and like a light bulb went off, and then they played it better.
CF: Okay. Have to remember that. Then we have this – again the – the English horn “Copland” theme – that – that all what I’m calling and coming back.

Newman: Yeah. That’s – I mean that’s a – right, that’s a reiteration of the same thing.

CF: This stuff is like I said, some were the letter A, you see this coming back.

Newman: It’s an A prime.

CF: Fragments.

Newman: B prime, I would say, because this is A, the Copland stuff at the beginning is A.

CF: A.

Newman: And then the mixed meter stuff.

CF: Well, this is while, I was just saying this was that – I feel like at the rehearsal mark, I mean, it just was at like for me and to make sure, okay this – this section at F tossing the letter A here. So, you call this…

Newman: You are using the rehearsal letters, so I was using.

CF: Using the reversal of that. Just to make sure I’m not being…

Newman: Yeah.

CF: The – okay, these two sections are similar, so I can look and see what’s going on between them or typically.

Newman: Yeah. There – this say – should be very much the same. There is a little bit difference here.

CF: Yeah. You have this metronome, the – almost a metronomic thing. This is – and it’s another like Jeff now talked about this morning, there’s no real metronome here.

Newman: Yeah.

CF: And you go between the duple and triple field. Get over here, there’s a little bit more on the horn line, where you stated later on, it’s even more. I think the – second clarinet.

Newman: Well, did Jeff tell you that there – this was originally scaled, he very – it was all bar’ed differently?
CF: He didn’t mention that.

Newman: He probably forgot. And with the initial, the first version of this was like – 15/8 – but these were really big bars.

CF: Okay.

Newman: And these said, you can’t get, it – killing me there, you got to – that’s – not being right.

CF: Had to break it down some more.

Newman: So, because I was thinking in much larger – if I was thinking much larger phrases.

CF: Okay.

Newman: And I was like – okay, just – they are just – keep a quite of an eighth note in your head and do it. But I didn’t – wasn’t – I wasn’t thinking in 7/8 or whatever it is, I can’t see there was a seven eight, six or eight, seven…

CF: Yeah. Let’s say six or eight, seven, eighths, yeah, off notes.

Newman: Or then thinking in those – I had a phrase and then I just had to figure out how to be – how to more eight.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: I wasn’t metronomically…

CF: So, it sounds something like Steven Bryant when he was doing and he mentioned this with I think “Ecstatic Waters”, he’d written the opening part and then just whatever melody came out and then took bars to afterwards, since.

Newman: And bar’ed, I do that a lot and I think a lot of people do. It’s a much more natural – you get this – to be slave to the bar line is dangerous and you can write some very square and hokie music that way. And if you want to be free of the bar line, you right the music and you figure out how to bar it later because the bar lines are evil.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: So, I mean, I think it all go away, I’d have them all go away.

CF: I would love if they went away.
Newman: Right.

CF: That’s fine, because that’s where people see bar lines, as a musician, with the bar lines we go – “breath” – and break phrase that way. So, your idea of doing the whole lot of phrase…

Newman: Right, right. Yeah. So, it’s the tyranny of the bar line as – if you write that way and actually it’s funny you mentioned Steve because we started with the same teacher.

CF: Yeah, I was going to say.

Newman: And who I think who was very adamant to that, about – that. Just write the music, figure out how to notate it later, was a common – fine, and I still think about that. I should also try and do that. You can always – you always figure out how to notate it later.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: Forget about the notations, just get it down.

CF: Just get it down.

Newman: And make it in the shape and space that it wants to be and then figure out how to bar it. And there is always another way to do it. I mean, and we figure out the best way to bar it.

CF: Wind instruments could do the same thing, with the Symphonies of Wind instruments. You had to – you went through, got on one way and then had to rewrite it.

Newman: Having those was popular.

CF: Yeah. Well, there are some other things in that. There are some other things too, for ease of playing, but I mean its like – it’s not uncommon for a composer to go through and figure out when.

Newman: Yeah. Bernstein – rebarred “The Rite of Spring”, didn’t he?

CF: I want to say so.

Newman: I think he did.

CF: I think so. But it’s not uncommon but us performers, we just see and we, – I wish we will think more linearly in regards to phrasing as what you’re talking about, think about the overall picture as opposed to bar line one, bar one.
Newman: Well, those were larger bars, initially.

CF: That is interesting. I have to remember that, once I start working on this later on. The third movement actually is the most intriguing to me because you’re taking the Lester Young – yeah, Lester Young solo and pretty much augmenting it, lengthening it out over space, time, and range is sort of being tenor Sax’s and Bass Clarinet, which is a similar instrument – same kind of key area but different timbre. I just love the overall Jazz feel of – taking that Jazz feel and bringing it into this piece. How did that come about? There was a – did you just – did – obviously you had to do on purpose is you – you got notes note on and so?

Newman: I did do. I mean in this movement, specifically, there is not really a note that doesn’t come from either the source material that I used, like, that we talked about some of and – or from the original piece–from that – from – “Rivers of Bowery”.

CF: “Rivers of Bowery”, yeah.

Newman: So, there’s – there is even, I mean there is a little “Rivers of Bowery” in every movement. I can put a little bit in the second movement, it’s really hit in. It’s like, as in – I think it’s in this big – it’s this hit – this counter tune – is actually a bit of “Rivers of Bowery” [Music, Letter I Mvt. II] or something like that. It’s – there is a Sax solo at the beginning of “Rivers of Bowery” and I think – and it’s kind of a tune that coincides with something. I don’t do things like that but it’s something having – it’s the tune transformed in some way and it’s basically that – yeah, but it made for a good tap counter too.

CF: Yeah. That was a – one of the other questions I was to ask.

Newman: Yes.

CF: How much of that did you actually pull into the other and when it gets here and…

Newman: I did it on purpose, I had the score open and every so often I do like, I think I need some more and I would find something.

CF: So, you said – well, as a sketch book almost?

Newman: Yeah. But this, it was – it started with Howl and I read somewhere that Ginsberg said, you know, everybody think because they would put on jazz and write – get high and write poetry. And in some of the interview he had said everybody thinks that Howl is – is Charlie Parker – it’s not, it’s Lester Young, I was listening to “Lester Leaps In”, I mean, that sounds square, when I was doing that. So, I thought, okay. So, I listened to “Lester Leaps In” and started playing around with – I got the transcribed solos, there are books you can get at the transcribed solos. And I started dueling around with them and it’s amazing, you know if you slow that stuff down, it sounds like Gershwin all
of a sudden. Like if you slow down fast blues, suddenly you have the sound of American classical music. So it worked beautifully.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: So I would slow down and – just playing at the piano and holding certain notes and that’s how this whole four minutes came about. And then of course – it just was the – I’ve this huge piece of paper that I would – this huge piece of manuscript paper that I would write on and I told myself – part of the thing of the piece was that I told myself that was it going to worry about the time.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: How long it was. I was just going to write the thing and it would be as long as it is. And so I did that, I took – I take the bits of the tune and I stretch it out, hold it and I put in my own little thing…

CF: Yeah.

Newman: …then it was The “Rivers of Bowery” tune being chimed out in various because I do that stuff and makes me feel wonky and like I’m in controls. It feeds my little control thing. And I added it all out and got to the end of it and got to the shape that I wanted, and I’d no idea how long it was. And I played through it and it was like four – four and a half minutes. It was something like that I might – and it was only the first section of the piece. I knew this was just going to be the beginning and I was like…

CF: Yeah.

Newman: …all right, here we go.

CF: But that’s four and a half – that’s four and a half minutes right after you do second movement which is attaca, so there is no really break in between.

Newman: I didn’t know that this was happening yet.

CF: Yeah. Oh, yeah. I’m saying like now as a performer…

Newman: Well, this is a performance issue with this piece…

CF: Yeah, yeah.

Newman: …which is – which I didn’t know when I wrote this. I didn’t know whether the other two movements were going to happen. So I decided, all right, I’m going to do it with as much of this idea as I can. So I do what ends up being two movements worth of stuff in this one movement, and it started slow. But when you do, when you perform this on its own when you perform “My Hands Area A City” by itself. You can take your time
with this – this conductor’s piece, you can be relaxed, start out slow, stretch and everything, but when you perform this after hearing already 15 minutes of music, seven of which was slow, this has to move.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: It can’t just be – and it actually works better if it moves along.

CF: Moves along with that.

Newman: Yeah. I find especially if it’s in the context of the whole piece.

CF: Now, one thing that I’ve noticed with your writing especially in here it is that you’ll state a theme, will state you know, actually the first four or four and half minutes is all of this Lester Young solo, but little snippets of – little fragments of it come back all the way through like almost doing motivic development as well as a thematic development because if I’m working through this, I’m seeing like…

Newman: Yeah.

CF: …there is a little bit more of this Lester Young solo and then now just back a little bit more underneath something just, maybe a little bit change, but I’m still hearing that motive come back.

Newman: Yeah. That’s what I – it’s a more Beethovenish kind of thing.

CF: Yeah, as opposed to…

Newman: Yeah. I don’t think in tune so much as I do in motives.

CF: That’s good.

Newman: I’ve written entire pieces that have no tunes.

CF: I teach music appreciation classes, so I’ve started to – I’ve to describe all this to my students the difference between Mozart and Beethoven and it goes on now, and so – but yeah, I mean – and those things come back. I want to think a little bit – I don’t know, maybe I’m hearing this and I don’t know I’m actually right. But this little [Music] pizzicato kind of thing you got going on with the contrabass I think some other people play into that. It’s almost a feel in the first movement because you’ve this little undercurrent…


CF: …yeah, coming back as well, so…
Newman: Of course this is written first.

CF: Yeah. Well…

Newman: So it went back the other way.

CF: But it feels like being the whole piece now.

Newman: Right. I’ve pretty heard of that to make – to put ties from one to three. It took three years.

CF: And if you’re not really listening – and well, I know it’s – I think it’s three year well worth it. I mean I think it’s a very well done piece overall and definitely needs to get more play, and hopefully it will. What’s with the – I’ve this feeling as well several times, this little chime motive, is there any importance to that? I call it a chime motive, like, first I hear the E and then it goes C.

Newman: [Music] if you play all of them in a row its “Rivers of Bowery”.

CF: I should know that. I should know, but that’s great.

Newman: It’s a section of it. It’s not completely in tact, but it’s a section.

CF: Yeah. And that’s – so the notes are taken from that, but the rhythm, the character of it is the bell tolling, this chime, is there certain significance for that or is that just…

Newman: It just works, it just seem to work. I don’t think I was trying to make it be chiming. I mean I wasn’t trying to sound bell – I mean bell like yes, but there wasn’t anything bell specific.

CF: And that seems to also play another important role throughout the tying of this movement together. The repeated tolls, I mean, it comes back here the letter F a little bit. I mean, it’s kind of…

Newman: Well, this is all of them together. If you did them on E and then it does them on…

CF: It says F and you’ve got – and there is still F up there.

Newman: All right, let me see. Yeah. What are the – yeah, [Music].

CF: Okay, okay. That makes more sense now.

Newman: Yeah. I just compacted them all together.

CF: I know – now that you’re saying that that make you want to look at some of the…
Newman: Before I forget, because I sometimes forget this, there is also in from The “Rivers of Bowery” there is also a tetra chord that I used – basically “Rivers of Bowery” is one chord over and over again in various – it’s just basically one tetra chord. It’s probably be a tetra chord in – it’s something like D flat, E flat, G, A flat, and then I think I added B flat in later. And that is D flat.

CF: D flat, E flat…

Newman: G, A flat.

CF: …which, if I’m not mistaken, plays in the first movement as well.

Newman: Yes, exactly.

CF: Because I was looking as like, how would I analyze that and I think came out to be like an A flat, minor 4-2. I think I’m trying to put some sort of Roman numeral thing on it, but…

Newman: Well, I made it bluesy and I did like a few – the reason this is in A flat is because all of the key’s relationships in the piece are in that tetra chord as well. So there is a section, obviously this is A flat.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: A flat. There is the last movement, which is E flat and this third…

CF: E flat, G flat, right? I’ve seen the second one was in D flat. I don’t know why…

Newman: Yeah. There is D flat and there is also another key in the second line. If you go through the keys I actually have a sketch in my sketch book somewhere I lay it all out with each section and it’s basically D flat, E flat, G, A flat, and B flat. There is – it is D flat and B flat in the second movement.

CF: Okay, which ties in too because I think in some of these – in some of these chords you are using B flat.

Newman: In “Rivers of Bowery”, it’s that chord, it’s C flat, E flat, G, A flat, and at the end of the piece I added B flat…

CF: Speaking off end of the pieces. And this I’ll get back to the other stuff here in a second.

Newman: Oh, the – what’s…

CF: Then the – it sounds a lot like the – into the Holst Suite in E flat…
Newman: That was supposed to be.

CF: Yeah. Started off, you’re drawing from that particular or…

Newman: I got – I don’t remember the circumstances of why I wanted to copy. I didn’t copied exactly, but it’s awfully close.


Newman: Well, he did that after I did this. I told him and he said what a great idea and he copied it like exact…

CF: Yeah, he did…

Newman: But as like – you know as now much. I’m doing because I’ve different instrumentation and whatever, but…

CF: There is still – as now.

Newman: I remember asking, I asked – I don’t remember why I thought about that piece. Maybe somebody told me that that’s like the greatest E flat scoring. I think I said that I probably asked somebody if I – give me a good E flat scoring I want to look at it, and probably somebody said with the last chord, of the E-flat flat suite. I wouldn’t have known, I don’t know that much band music. So I would have – I knew it existed and – but I don’t know it intimately like somebody who studied it would. So I didn’t even have a score and I asked Steve [Bryant] if he had a score. And so he took – I remember he took a photo of the last page and send it to me and I worked for that. And so that – that’s how that happen.

CF: Okay. That’s like you said end piece not like – not all about be brought back to mind. So – but I’m guessing how you are back into the original thing, I’m guessing this has to be with Rivers as well because it’s kind of – I’m kind of associated with the chime thing because it’s the repeated note, so it’s just broken out in sub division. I don’t know if I am accurate on that or not since it seems more chordal.

Newman: No. I think it’s more – that’s more of a motor – create a motor motion.

CF: Just to give – some support maybe because we kind of its lot of tempi change and…

Newman: I don’t think that there was anything extra musical with that or that came other than me wanting to put a little – I found it. There was – I mean there is some direct – in The “Rivers of Bowery” there was a kind of a flowing eighth note E section in middle.

CF: Yeah.
Newman: And that comes in the third movement twice.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: That I kind of did sort of a – where that was the only part of The “Rivers of Bowery” that I actually expanded on. Like basically took the same idea and expanded it.

CF: I think that I called that my “lyric motive”.

Newman: With the horns doing…

CF: Kind of trying to – conductors and musicians and theorists that were trained to try to be – as always if you try to analyze a piece from a composer and see what they’re kind of getting to their brain. And – but I’m thinking from these things. This is what I call – I think I was calling the lyric motif – you know, it used to be much more smooth and…

Newman: As The “Rivers of Bowery”.

CF: Yeah, yeah. Okay, so that’s just starting to make more sense.

Newman: [Music] whatever it is. It’s hard to look at this upside down. I don’t really know where I’m…

CF: All right. So in regards to this piece, you’ve done a lot of stealing from – not a stealing, but…

Newman: Yeah, yeah, stealing is fine.

CF: Yeah. Using of Jazz influence, “Rivers of Bowery”, a little bit of the Holst at the end with that chord. Are there other things in there that might depend on somebody else or any other…

Newman: Yeah. I think of – yeah, I mean there is always stuff. You always – I mean when I write my sketches I write up the – their names in them. Sometimes all the sketches or things like you know, Adams you know, Sibelius, then I think I know what that means. Do you know what I mean?

CF: Yeah.

Newman: So yeah, there is always stuff. But specifically – yeah, you’re looking for…

CF: Well, I don’t know – if you remember any other little things that you did and…if I hear something, I can always come back and say, hey, what about the section here. But as I’m going through the end there was a full analysis.

Newman: You mean besides the ones we talked about.
CF: Yeah, if anything extra that might be of importance that I haven’t heard yet or…

Newman: Well, this is…Do you know Steve Reich “Electric Counterpoint”?  

CF: I’ve heard it before, yeah.  

Newman: That’s exactly what I was thinking of. I was thinking specifically strings like [Music] and other stuff happens.  

CF: Okay.  

Newman: With that it’s – that’s – I couldn’t gear up the stuff on top of it, then he faces it like…  

CF: Yeah, well.  

Newman: It’s a different thing, but I was thinking of that exact “Pat Metheny” kind of sound.  

CF: Okay. That was another question – that I have is about the guitarist what type of sounds – I mean I was Jeff about this, this morning, like, when was putting together because he help with the premier and all that, when he was putting together, struggles of having guitarist, the sounds with the guitarists that – in Indiana and actually set there and started to describe, get more details about the sounds you were looking for.  

Newman: Right. Yeah, I’ve…  

CF: You mentioned Pat Metheny. Any other influences on that like…  

Newman: There was – Jeff Beck. I mean there is different – there is all different tones that they’ve to use throughout the piece especially in the third movement. The first movement, it’s almost an optional part, the second movement they don’t play…  

CF: Yeah. There is rather this expansion in the third movement.  

Newman: Yeah. In the third movement it becomes a thing. And there were practical reasons for that. I wanted to make sure that parts of the piece could at least be played if you did have a guitarist.  

CF: Yeah.  

Newman: And if you did then it could be shining moment. It could be a thing. So he plays all different – he or she-plays all different kinds of tones throughout. I’m trying to be pretty clear about…
CF: Yeah.

Newman: Okay about that, I always have to find that I’ve to still deal with it. They range from you know, surf guitar sounds to jazz guitar sounds to heavy distortion. It’s just another way of getting color…

CF: Yeah.

Newman: …so it’s just color changes if not anything having to do with the piece. Just color changes. I thought of it as – I think of the guitar as like the harp only a much more colorful version where you can change…

CF: Yeah.

Newman: You’ve a lot more – much wider palette to deal with. But orchestrationaly it’s treated like a harp.

CF: Yeah, okay.

Newman: It serves the same function.

CF: I guess the last question you said no you’ve some places to go and your things. Since the – since it was played at CBDNA, I know there was a good response after the performance there and people started to listen to it a little more. Have there been more people approach you about performing – or even select movements of it at this point in time or…excuse me. I mean obviously the third one that can standalone, the first one we can also I think they can have…

Newman: Yeah. There has been a one or two performances of the first movement alone, which I like. I think the first – more than two. A couple of performances in the first movement alone, which is great…

CF: Yeah.

Newman: I rather like the first one which is setting on its own, I think it works fine.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: I would love to see and it hasn’t happened yet, someone from just second movement, which is orchestral winds.

CF: Yeah.

Newman: And it could be an orchestra playing, anything other than what you got. It’s that very similar orchestration to symphonies for wind instruments
CF: Yeah.

Newman: And there have been some enquiries, but nothing has been – has happened yet.

CF: I certainly it does get played more. I mean I saw Frank Wickes this morning, and he asked me what score I was studying. I told him Newman Symphony and he say “He’s starting to rise up a little more, get a little more play.” I certainly hope so. So…

Newman: That’s very nice.

CF: It seems like your…

Newman: I send that piece to him. I think he was looking at it for his final concert whenever he retired…

CF: I think it was two years ago at this point.

Newman: Yeah.

CF: They’ve a year without him and then they had – this year’s McKinney’s first year there, so he was complimentary of what we were doing too and – because I got exposure with you and Avenue X and Okay Feel Good with Bob Ambrose and…

Newman: Here, I’ve a question for you. Do you see the connections between those pieces, I guess?

CF: I hear a little bit. I think you’ve this – I can definitely hear connections between the piece this morning [Blow it up, Start Again] and Avenue X.

Newman: Yeah.

CF: So some connections there. I think there is the – what line is that, I think it’s like the trombone very Sax line, and OK Feel Good. I think considering the first movement a little bit, it’s a little fragment, its 16th note like same going on.

Newman: Yeah, yeah.

CF: Of course you don’t sit there and saying “OK Feel Good.” There is some little bit of a layer trumpet thing in there, I remember right [Music].

Newman: Yeah, yeah.

CF: There is a – as you hear a little bit of that coming through and I think you actually hear some of that in the second and this is a little more lyrical, that’s not orchestrated in the same way obviously. But I can hear some similarities. But I think this one – I think
this piece kind of from what I heard of yours goes a little bit direction than some of the other ones have, at least from my perspective.

Newman: I tried for it to be something different. Every piece you try and make it to be just stretch yourself a little bit.

CF: But I definitely think this is one of my favorite works of yours.

Newman: Thank you.

CF: And hopefully in the near future I’ll be able to get – I’m working on trying to do the third movement next semester sometime.

Newman: Oh, wow.

CF: Indiana State, which we were talking about it. We don’t know, say, I have a tour coming up as well. So we’re trying to figure out all that. But if I don’t up to this year it’s certainly going to happen next year.

Newman: Great.

CF: And…

Newman: You’ve a guitarist.

CF: We do. We’ve a couple of good guitarists in the area, and if that doesn’t work, are you familiar with the Zac Brown Band, have you heard of that group?

Newman: I think so.

CF: I think they’re a country band or whatever, their guitarist Koy Bales was actually a friend of mine from Grammy State University.

Newman: Oh, okay.

CF: So he actually – they’re a Grammy award winning group, and he plays with them. And then you might have heard of Chris Thile, mandolin player…

Newman: Yeah, yeah.

CF: He and I once worked our undergrad together for each state, so I know him. And he plays a little bit of string.

Newman: Isn’t that the kid from Nickel Creek?
CF: Yeah. Yeah, his dad was actually a string-based pianist – piano guy at Murray State University and ran the recording studio. I worked in the recording studio, then, Chris came along. He did – he played with the marching band and violin one time. We did a river show and then he played mandolin and violin in jazz ensemble. So he blows away the plan whatever song he ever said and what are the key, so he came over and play…

Newman: I am a huge Nicole Creek fan.

CF: Yeah. They’re fantastic. So definitely I’ve some options if I need to bring someone in. So but definitely want to look at doing that although will do the whole thing, I don’t think we could handle the first movement in this point technically.

Newman: Is there anything else to hear, there is a lot of post-its

CF: No. Well, this is – a lot of this is just saying, okay this theme came from – this has been – this is going through to say okay, here is the “Lester Leaps In” theme, and it comes back you know, Lester Young…

Newman: Right.

CF: This has been – making sure I’ve my points went back and forth, so I’m not sitting there looking like I don’t know what I’m talking about at some places. So like you said I like to have the larger scores I could write my notes in. But I wanted to make sure I’ve everything right before I solve the mind mapping before I wrote everything in. So that – and you’re a trombonist, right.

Newman: I was.

CF: You don’t write a lot of trombone…

CF: You mean I don’t write a lot of trombone solo stuff.

CF: Well, I don’t say that’s solo stuff, but…

Newman: You heard the piece today, right?

CF: Oh, yeah. I heard that – this piece like…

Newman: Yeah, trombone part after that.

CF: Yeah. Well, and it seems particular. It seem like it’s…

Newman: This piece, is it a trombone piece?

CF: I know Mackey said at one point in time, I wish to write my trombone part first. It was like obvious how it sounds. But, yeah, I mean the other Avenue X and Ok Feel
Good has got some stuff and the pieces weren’t coming across. Yeah. I think that’s trombone writing.

CF: I appreciate your time.

Newman: What time is it?

CF: It’s got to be close to five. Is it? It is 4:30.

Newman: Oh, we’re fine.

CF: Well. I’ve done asking questions anyway, so…Thank you.

Newman: You are welcome. Good luck on the paper.
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW WITH JEFF GERSHMAN

Corey Francis: All right. Let the recording begin. So I’m sitting here with, make sure I get the name right, it is Jeffrey Gershman.

Jeff Gershman: Correct.

CF: And you are the Associate Director of Bands at University of Indiana. Is that right?

JG: Indiana University, uh-huh.

CF: Right, Indiana University. Sorry.

JG: Oh, it’s okay.

CF: You know. I’m a Kentucky boy. I have to give it to you where I can.

JG: Uh-huh.

CF: And we’re at the Midwest Clinic. You have an interesting perspective on Symphony No. 1 for Jonathan Newman because you are actually the consortium leader and it’s also dedicated to you.

JG: Right, right.

CF: So, and we’ll get into a little bit of that here in just a minute. But how did this whole thing come about?

JG: It came about that-Jonathan talked about writing something big for a long time and we had kind of in passing talked about it. But really it came from Stuart Sims from California State at Stanislaus, and Stuart was supposed to organize this consortium to kind of get this thing going and it kind of, if I remember this right it was a couple of years ago. It kind of just was a little dormant because Stuart was really busy and he finally, I think admitted to Jonathan, it’s like, “Look, I don’t have time to do this. You should give Jeff Gerschman a call. Maybe he can run with it”. And so, at that point I was still at Texas A&M-Commerce which is right outside of Dallas.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: And Stuart contacted me or Jonathan contacted me and said “This is where we are with it. This is what I want to do. Would you take it on?” And I had not ever done a consortium before. So before taking it on I just made sure that I, you know, one I had the time to do it and two like, “How do I even do this?” So I contacted Doug Stotter to see
how hard it would be, who would handle the money, and it’s very, very easy to do a consortium now.

CF: Yeah.

JG: So we agreed to do it and he said that he wanted to write a symphony and he wanted it to be something substantial because the band repertoire doesn’t have big, substantial pieces like this.

CF: Yeah, yeah.

JG: And I said that was great and I really like the idea. And he said, “Well I’m thinking of something like 25 minutes.” Terrific. You know can we do this? And so, great. And the issue that I was worried about was obviously we wanted to pay Jonathan fairly.

CF: Yes.

JG: And to buy in on a $25,000.00 commission is a substantial thing. And so I came up with the idea of “Hey, let’s do this in parts. Let’s do like, half or one movement now and get people to buy in.” And then once that begins to get played and there’s some buzz generated off of that, we’ll commission the second part of it which would be the other part of the symphony.” Now in my mind, at first I was thinking he would write the first movement and then write the final two movements.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: But as it turned out it was basically the opposite. Right?

CF: Yeah.

JG: And so then I worked in kind of the incentive planned it that if you bought into the first one, that you would get the second one. I can’t remember what the discount was. It was like in half or something like that. And then if you were new to the second one, you will pay it full price and all that sort of stuff.

CF: And there’s a big difference between the list of ensembles that were in the first one, and then it actually grew quite a bit the second time around.

JG: Right. And so the idea definitely worked. And when I did it, you know now to get a $25,000.00 commission, it will probably would be a lot easier with Jonathan but at the time, because I mean we started this years and years and years ago, he was somewhat of a known commodity but not huge.

CF: Yeah.
JG: And I was just worried that I wouldn’t be able to get enough schools to buy in on a whole symphony.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And so I think actually the plan worked really, really well. And so what happened was at-You see he wrote the first movement and we met at Midwest Clinic and kind of tweaked out some things.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: And the whole idea was his about writing the big poetry stuff. And we premiered the “My Hands Are a City”, what would be the third movement at the regional CBDNA in Kansas City with my group.

CF: Okay.

JG: And that’s where he got his initial performance. And then I went to Indiana the next year. We worked out the second part of the consortium. And then once he was done the first two movements, then I did the premiere on our final concert my first year.

CF: So the premiere of “My Hands Are a City,” the third movement, came in 2009? Is that right?

JG: No. It was certainly earlier because I’ve been in Indiana. I started in 2008 and it would been 2008. This is like March of 2008 was the premier of “My Hands Are a City.”

CF: Okay.

JG: And then Spring of 2009.

CF: Right. Came the -

JG: It would have been the full set.

CF: Okay. I’m trying to remember all my dates and everything here. Now it’s dedicated to you and is there a certain relationship you’ve had with Newman for several years?

JG: Yeah. I’ve known Newman. Actually again, it’s funny we’re talking at Midwest. I’ve known Newman since, was it ‘01? It was somewhere right around the beginning, 2001 to 2002, something like that. That’s, I had done -how did this all work-I had done a transcription John Corigliano’s Tarantella for my doctoral project. And John had come out to Texas and he really, really liked it. And I kind of done a really quick workup of-I mean I should did like a manuscript score and had a friend do the part to just kind of get him out.
CF: Yeah.

JG: So it was kind of slapped together thing but it went very, very well and Schumer was interested of picking it up. But they wouldn’t accept the parts as is because they were kind of a mess.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: And so it just so happened that on that performance of the Tarantella, Eric Whitacre who was a student of John Corigliano.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: They were doing “October.” So Eric came down and we got to talking. We got to be friends and he loved the transcription. So I was talking this and I was telling him about this and he said, “Well Jonathan Newman does phenomenal copy work. So you should talk to Newman about this.” And I kind of knew Jonathan a little bit but just by name, not really -

CF: Yeah.

JG: By him. And so Eric introduced us at Midwest and we just started talking, and we have a lot of things in common. We’re both at the east coast. We’re both Jewish and we both-And very much felt comfortable with each other and we just kind of became friends. And then I had played some stuff with my ensembles in Commerce like I played “Moon By Night”. And I just-I became a big advocate of his music because I didn’t think it was getting enough play.

CF: Yeah absolutely.

JG: And then when this opportunity came, I was like “Well, this is a unheralded composer that should be better known.” And so we just started to work together. So it just started as a business relationship and turned into a friendship. And you know, he and I have been I would say very good friends ever since. He’s one of my favorite people. He’s great.

CF: I was actually introduced to him at Georgia State. We’re doing “Avenue X” and he and Bob are from both from that Boston area.

JG: Right.

CF: We did some time together up there. Of course. And then your transcription of the Corigliano became pretty important too if I remember right because Corigliano heard that and that’s when he started to get into band world and hear how things went.

JG: Yeah.
CF: And Circus Maximus came out of all this and -

JG: That is an unbelievable coincidence.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Because I mean I was honestly just trying to get a doctorate. And I had known that Corigliano piece when I taught high school. I was so moved by that whole symphony and the fact that it was at band tie-in with gazebo dances, that made it very important to me. Uh, and so, like, John wasn’t even supposed to be there. When I originally said I was going to do it, it was just going to be a premiere in the Spring that year and Jerry called me, like the summer I got the job at Commerce and say “Corigliano is going to be here. Can we finish it in by, like, August.” which is, like, two months away.

CF: Yeah, yeah.

JG: Um, “Sure. “ Um -

CF: Can you say no to that?

JG: Well I did not. And so, so I did that and, I mean, people have been waiting on, on John to write a band piece for years. And Jerry had told me about this and I had no idea that that piece would be the outlet to inspire him to do that. I mean I can tell you with great certainty that I’ll probably teach for another 20-25 years.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: My impact on the band world will never be greater than this weird coincidence, John hearing that and then getting John Corigliano to write a band piece.

CF: Yeah. And that was, the reason why I bring that up is my original piece when I was doing for my dissertation was going to be Circus Maximus.

JG: Oh, okay. So did you do it?

CF: And of course. Well, Mary Schneider did it.

JG: Mary, yeah.

CF: Yeah. She got it done before I had a chance. It’s like “Oh well”. So our paths really crossed no matter what.

JG: See! Nice.
CF: So that’s pretty nice. When you first got the third movement is the first thing, the first part of this symphony that was published and you’ve started working on it, what were your initial reactions to what you were hearing, what you were seeing in the score and how the ensemble, when you presented it to the ensemble, how their reaction was?

JG: It was interesting. I, I got sneak previews along the way. I mean Jonathan told me what was it about, told me what things were going to be. I was knocked out on how tightly conceived it was going to be, how it really kind of grew out of a select amount of motives. I’ve been getting is terrible midi mock-ups for a while, um, which are miserable which she knows.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And so at Midwest, he played me the midi and I kind of had, like, a short score I was following and because the midi sounds were just okay, I was like “Huh. This is going to be a tough sell”.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And “How are we going to do this?”

CF: Yeah.

JG: But once you have orchestrated it out, I just looked at it. I was like “Okay. Well this will float. We’ll just take some pacing along the way.” It’s really hard. The beginning is hard to conduct and very exposed and it. That interpretively is the hardest thing to do.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: Because it’s about four minutes, five minutes of that slow introduction.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And how do you pace that out so it somehow has a forward motion to it but yet still seems kind of improvisatory. That one I battled with for a while. And I did a pretty good job the first time. I think I did a much better job the second time and I think Jonathan liked it very much. Once you get kind of going on the groove -

CF: Um-hum.

JG: That wasn’t all that hard.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Because that, you just like, well, this needs to come out, this needs to come out.
CF: Yeah.

JG: We need to lock this in. And so once you get going to the groove that was fine. It’s just hitting your transitions and making sure it’s okay.

CF: Yeah.

JG: My kid loved it. It read terribly as much of as music does.

CF: Yeah.

JG: It was just a train-wreck and we got it really late. We got it like, we only had about three or four weeks to put it together.

CF: Ooh, wow.

JG: And, I mean my kids at Commerce, really wonderful musicians and really wonderful kids but they were maturing musicians.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And so we killed ourselves to get that piece ready. It was very, very quick preparation and very close, and it just took a lot of repetitions to finally get them into it.

CF: Now when you’re preparing for this, you’re hearing his stuff. Were you also exposing yourself to, I mean I know a lot of it comes from Rivers of Bowery.

JG: Right.

CF: And then also you know, the Lester Young solo that he extends out at the very beginning.

JG: Right.

CF: Had you, it’s been uh, researching some of those things? [overlap] stuff like that?

JG: A little bit, yeah. I mean it came so late that I didn’t have a lot of time to do the research when I really wanted to. I did that more the second time.

CF: Yeah.

JG: I-Definitely I had a score to Rivers that I kind of checked out and I was like “this motive goes here and I have that.” The Lester Young solo, not so much because that became-originally actually, that was a much greater part of the piece and then both John Mackey and I were like “This, I think we can make this smaller.”
CF: Yeah.

JG: And that’s what that middle section became, which I love. That’s one of my favorite sections. So that initial preparation for that week and a half was “Okay here are the main motives like where do they come out, where are they augmented, and where are they this.” And so my initial markup with the score was very much where this all this happened so I can explain it to my kids so that they have a better understanding of like how motivically it kind of grows out.

CF: Yeah.

JG: So there was a lot of very quick study on that but not the time to really expose them to it because, I just had to teach the piece. Thankfully I had a phenomenal percussion section. That helped a ton.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Because the percussion instructor at Commerce is really fine. And I think they ended up very much liking it. They love-We brought Jonathan out and they loved meeting him and working with him and that became a very special thing.

CF: Yeah. I can understand that. I remember meeting him for the first time, and having him come in to Georgia State. I’m really enjoying the way he interacted and -

JG: He’s really good with that.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Yeah.

CF: So you get the third movement. You’ve played that one. And then the first two movements come in and-First reaction to hearing what he had?

JG: The first reaction was, again it was like Midwest and he had written some of it. The first movement came, if I remember this right. The first movement came before the second movement. The second movement took a lot longer than I think he intended it to. I loved the first movement even with crappy midi mockup. I loved that right away. I was like “This is a homerun.” Like, people will like this instantly out of the gate. You could even like take this out of symphony and people will do it.

CF: Yeah. It can stand alone. Yeah, absolutely.

JG: Yeah. So I thought this is absolutely a homerun. And then he played me the second movement with midi. I was like “This one I don’t get so much. This is a harder to wrap my head around.” And then, so that was the midi, and then he sent me the short scores, like, “Oh my God, this is really hard with the mix meter and the tempo and -”
CF: Um-hum.

JG: So that-I killed myself to try to internalize it too because the first movement honestly from a conducting standpoint is not terribly hard.

CF: No, no.

JG: You just get the tempo going. The hardest part is the very end with the little fragments.

CF: Yeah.

JG: So that, that I knew I can teach quickly.

CF: Yeah.

JG: The second movement I knew I couldn’t teach until I have internalized it. And the problem was that he got that music to me very, very late. Like we ended up putting the whole symphony together for the premiere in two and a half weeks. Yeah.

CF: Wow.

JG: And see, I knew the third movement so at least I didn’t have to map up my-My students certainly didn’t. So it was immersive and amazingly fast for 2 and a half weeks.

CF: Yeah. The technical demands of just the first movement alone would you know, would take more than two and a half weeks for a lot of ensembles.

JG: Thankfully I have really talented- Once I got to Indiana I had really, really talented, very technical group of musicians so that made that part easier. Um, but they had to get comfortable with it, because, again it’s a fragment and dove tail that they needed to be really confident with what they were doing. So I wish I would’ve had-In listening to that recording, it’s a miracle that it turned out as well as it is. I wish I would’ve had a month or six weeks to do it.

CF: Absolutely.

JG: Because I think I could have really done it justice. I think Rick ready did it justice. I think Rick performance was probably the best one.

CF: I have to agree with you on the second movement. That’s the one I still have problems trying to get. Right now I just kind of have it segment it up with okay, this theme kind of comes over here again and this sounds like Aaron Copland on the English horns. And so I’m kind of like trying to piece it all together. I know it’s dealing with the
frank pictures of the Americas and it’s not really describing any of the pictures but it’s kind of over -

JG: It’s an overview.

CF: It’s an overview of it. And that’s where I’m trying to go from, in the music and kind of go back and forth between those and the pictures and get an idea of how it all fits.

JG: To me, and Jonathan’s very gracious, he actually gave me a gift of that book. He had told me about the book and he actually bought me a copy and so before I’d start doing it. And so I just was- Do you have a copy of the book?

CF: I have seen it. Yeah, I have had.

JG: It’s really. They’re amazing, amazing pictures. And just like, leaping through them, so much of it, there’s just kind of this innate sadness in so many of the pictures.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Even if it’s not a very, it’s just there’s this-It’s this kind of grim, sad, which just kind of permeates you a little bit. And so that’s what finally drove me, none of that movement doesn’t really encompass one picture. It’s just this overall feeling of there’s some kind of hope a little bit which is that second theme. But there’s just this kind of almost wistful nostalgic kind of sadness about it that I just -

CF: Yeah. That seems to permeate the whole regeneration. As I’m going through it, reading, I’m reading On the Road right now. I actually have the original scroll where it’s not even separated into chapters. It’s just, it’s just the whole thing -

JG: Oh wow. Great.

CF: It’s just the whole thing and that’s kind of how he originally wrote it. I did some research on that and it’s a 120-foot scroll that he typed it all on.

JG: Wow.

CF: And he took it to a publisher and rolled it across the floor and they had to go though and divide it up.

JG: Oh my gosh. Wow.

CF: So, I’ve got the original version I’m going through and reading right now and it’s pretty amazing because you know, the kind of questioning, the overall sadness, just almost the spiritual journey -

JG: Right.
CF: In regards to that. And then with the pictures on what you’re saying, there’s this kind of almost I won’t say oppressive but just this you know, again, beat down feel to everything.

JG: Right.

CF: And you know, that does kind of go through the entire second movement. I have to agree to on that.

JG: The second movement is one of the best things I’ve ever heard for band. I think it’s just an extraordinary piece of music that I wish more people would-There’s nothing band about that -

CF: Yeah.

JG: In any way. And I wish orchestras will do it and they could because it’s orchestral winds.

CF: Yeah.

JG: It’s really, really wonderful. And the thing I liked so much about that book and I think it captures beautifully is that 1950 is, it tends to get kind of glossed over a little bit as-Well that was you know, this Renaissance in America. It was post-war and Eisenhower was great. It’s I Love Lucy and it’s this just clean, “leave it to beaver” kind of thing.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And then right under the surface is this kind of gritty, sad, desperate. And that’s what that book does. I love that and I think that movement is the one that identify with it the most, the second movement. Just because it’s just I don’t know. I think he just nailed that. It’s wonderful.

CF: So part of the questions that I have for conductors that I have done is, is going through and discussing the challenges as a conductor in trying to get the ensemble to play and do the work justice. I mean this is a fantastic work.

JG: Right. Every -

CF: Of course if you know, if you don’t go through it and really pay attention like with any other piece really, you’re just going to play music. It is not going to have any type of emotional factor in terms of that effect.

JG: Right.
CF: What are some of the biggest challenges that you face with your ensemble in trying to perform this? Other than I mean, as first I know obviously you only had it for like two and a half weeks but that was a big part.

JG: Both sides that’s the problem. I mean, with Jonathan’s music and there are other composers that—I think this is really very true. Frank Ticheli comes to mind.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: ...is you have to get at, this is true with all music. But with Jonathan and Frank, you have to get past the notes and rhythms. You have to get like that has to be absolutely internalized before you can begin to scratch off the music.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And this piece is a really good example of that. You have to have everything well under your technical command on all the movements for you get to the music part. And that was to me the biggest challenge of it. Just trying to get them to learn their parts quick enough that we could do something nice and musical with it and give it that kind of shape that it needs.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: The first movement I think has natural peaks and valleys that even if it’s not technically perfect, that movement will play itself.

CF: Yeah.

JG: No doubt. The second movement will not. And the third movement doesn’t either. It does once you kind of get in to the groove part, you have to kind of tweak the ending a little bit but again, it’s that beginning that’s so tough. So that’s the first thing. It’s just getting your players to absolutely internalize all the technical demands so they can begin to actually bring out that kind of greater music. The other thing that I didn’t anticipate because the second movement and the third movement are attacca, just from a conducting standpoint, it’s exhausting because those were the hardest movements to conduct.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: And you have to, like you’re just mentally on for that second movement to get into shape, the beauty of it. And then you had this kind of like, bass clarinet solo that serves as a transition, and then you’re 14 minutes in.

CF: Yeah.

JG: And I remember on the premieres, I got to like kind of a recap after the tenor sax solo and I remember thinking “Good God, I’m exhausted!” Like I just, because again,
because band conductors don’t do big pieces. And then we do there are movements so it’s nine movement or nine measures or-Sorry. Nine minutes or ten minutes. This is an 18-minute chunk. That’s mentally demanding and physically demanding. That was tough. Like I tried so hard to convince him to not do the attacca, not because of the physical thing, because I thought that the second movement was so damn haunting the way it ended, that I wanted that kind of sadness to just settle before the bass clarinet started but he wouldn’t buy it. So -

CF: Yeah. You kind of mentioned something like that yesterday with your talk about programming everything that even the listeners might need a little bit of a break between because it’s such a long chunk and everything. And I remember doing when I was doing the *Ecstatic Waters* back in March you know, that whole piece is just 22 minutes of straight through. And you get to that fourth movement is just, you get this big and bold stuff going on and then you got to get to just the reference of that fifth movement. You’re just tired and mentally you’re thinking about the-You’re trying to listen to the audio track as well and keep everything going. And by the time you get to the last part you’re just like “Okay.” [Exhales] That’s I mean, even though it’s probably the easiest movement of all of [overlap].

JG: You’re just shot.

CF. You’re just shot. It’s done. And if you’re off just a little bit it ruins the affect.

JG: Right. Well and then you have to be exactly, yep. You have to be exactly on. So -

CF: So I can definitely agree with the whole that’s a 14-minute chunk right there that you have to-”

JG: And it’s a hard 14 minutes.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Yeah.

CF: I mean emotionally and physically demanding. Just all the stuff you have to do throughout the conducting.

JG: And on the players too.


JG: Yes, it’s a mental workout for the players. So from a conducting standpoint, that definitely is something I didn’t anticipate, and something that was tough. So those are the two biggest things. I don’t think it’s a hard sell. Well the first movement is not a hard sell. They loved the first movement.
CF: Yeah, yeah.

JG: The second movement, because it reads miserably, they don’t get, they don’t like. They’ll like the more 4/4 the English horn solo, that kind of thing. That works really well.

CF: Yeah, yeah.

JG: Yeah, but the mix meter stuff is a little harder. But once we got it, we can play it through it and they began to really kind of grow into it. They were like “Oh, yes. This is really beautiful music!” But it’s not something you put in front of them and they’re like “I love this right away.” The third movement is also like that. It’s not something they really love right away but you just trust in how good the piece is and it turns around.

CF: It takes some time. And I’m sure by the time they get through the finished product and start to mentally grasp everything, the students start to really buy in and really enjoy -

JG: Definitely, but it took a long time. The other thing that really is a challenge is the guitar thing.

CF: Yes. I was going to ask about that too.

JG: The guitar thing is a giant, I won’t say pain in the ass. I’ll say challenge. First of all I have to find a guitarist that really knows how to play guitar, one, and read music.

CF: Um-hum.

JG: Which sometimes is hard to do. And then once you even get that person, then just the sounds that he’s asking for, he has a really specific sound in his head.

CF: Yes.

JG: Then I think we’ve honed down to a better descriptions because I know we worked with Jim Bonney a lot on the initial guitar part to make sure it’s playable and all that sort of stuff.

CF: And Jim Bonney, he’s another composer with a BCM area but he’s also a guitarist.

JG: And a real good guitarist, yeah. A very fine guitarist. So and I know that Jonathan worked very exclusively with him to try to make sure the guitar was idiomatic and doable. But it was just a matter of coordinating the sounds and all of that. And so just coordinating with a guitarist is tough and it’s just getting the balance right is tough.

CF: Yeah.
JG: And all that. Because he has to be or she has to be very virtuosic in the first movement. And in the third movement, it is very independent and it’s very more effect-timbral driven which is a totally different thing.

CF: Um-hum. Yeah, I’m going through it and listening to it and look at the score, I’m kind of like, you know, that would be the trickiest thing for most of wind band conductors because it’s not very often we put electric guitar in an ensemble. Maybe there’s some pieces that have you know, an acoustic part in there. I know the Susato have that you know.

JG: Yeah. It’s kind of an amplified acoustic. But that’s a much different thing because that’s just more of a percussion instrument than a keyboard instrument.

CF: Yeah, but, like you said there’s some technical things in the first movement. There’s timbre effect in the third. You have to be spot-on with every last part of it.

JG: Yep.

CF: And just to try to get those sounds, especially if you’re not familiar with the styles he is asking for, I was going to ask you. I mean of course you spoke with Newman and he had some ideas coming from Jim Bonney and everything. For another conductor who hasn’t experienced you know, having electric guitar, having not known something with electric guitar, are there certain things you would recommend them listening to or doing or researching in and on trying to figure out what sounds to put in there or what you know.

JG: You know I’ve been spoiled because I always had Jonathan there with me so I didn’t have to really worry about that so much. That I could just say Jonathan-And each time I were, I get Jonathan had a sectional with the guitarist himself. So that worked out just fine. I think once you got done with the Indiana, I actually have a very good guitarist, I think he and the guitarist worked out like, “Use this sound. This is the sound I’m trying to get”. And he was very specific with that. It would just be following his directions in the score and kind of following this kind of sound. The other thing in thinking about the guitarist is that, much like harpist or a pianist, guitarists don’t follow conductors.

CF: Yeah.

JG: This is not something that they’re accustomed to. And this is not a straight ahead kind of be, especially the third movement. So they have to get very accustomed to getting used to queues and three-twos and that’s not something they normally play.

CF: And what I think is well, it’s not one of those instruments you’re going to hide in the back because you want people to see that there’s a guitarist up there. So -

JG: Right.
CF: From a conducting view that you know, they’re amp would probably be up here as well so just getting the balance for you as the conductor, you have this sound over here. You’re going try to blend with that.

JG: Right.

CF: Maybe louder out there. You have no idea.

JG: It’s really difficult. Yeah. That was very, very hard.

CF: And you didn’t have any type of monitor or anything like that that you were using?

JG: No.

CF: Okay.

JG: And which was hard. Like if I did it again, I would like to have a monitor for the guitar. That would help a lot. Yes, that would help a lot. But the guitarist is obviously very integral and that was a tough thing to coordinate for sure.

CF: What do you think is, um, this piece is starting to get a little bit more play, a little bit more talk since CBDNA from my understanding. But what is - I guess the question I really want to ask is what are some things that you think we need to do as conductors in order to get more of this played, more of his stuff played? Because just like you said, and I agree with you, it’s a new composer and it’s not often played. This stuff is not played as much as it should be.

JG: Right.

CF: And you know obviously having them play at conferences, just doing the piece here with Chicago Youth Symphony, that was actually kind of fun. I enjoyed listening to that. But what are some things as conductors you would say, encouraging them to look at this piece and do this?

JG: I would say that-The thing with Jonathan’s music is that like with most good composers, there’s a little bit of like visceral kind of connection. But his piece, it just takes multiple listenings to get it, to really get it. You know he just happens to be at a time where he’s writing band music with good friends of his that their music tends to jump out and get audiences much more quickly. You know the amazing part about John Mackey who of course you know, we’re all friends, and he and Jonathan are very, very good friends, is that John’s pieces viscerally grab an audience. Always. And just on a first hearing they love his music and -

CF: Yeah, highly energetic.
JG: Highly energetic. The rhythm thing really kind of gets them and it's just-He is the perfect storm of this great blend of contemporary composer and really good compositional craft. And he just touches a nerve. That's what John does.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Jonathan Newman is not that person. His music is different. Steve Bryant is the same kind of way. He's a little bit more straight ahead. And I think he just grabs people. Jonathan’s music is I think much more sophisticated. It’s much more cerebral. So I think that is something that has prevented him getting immediate play. Like the symphony, I think the people would say “Well that’s a really good piece.” But because nothing viscerally jumps out at you right away, that might be an issue. With this piece in particular, I think they’re terrified of the length.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Because if you’re going to do a 25-minute-I mean, that’s your program. You know, it’s like a Maslanka symphony. But a Maslanka symphony again, because it’s much more mainstream, people will tend to do that quicker because that has more initial accessibility than this one does.

CF: And there seems to be, and this is maybe just me, I don’t say stereotyping Maslanka, but it seems to be a little bit more repetition of some of the things that he does. I mean, I’ve done some of his work as well.

JG: Right.

CF: And this. There is repetition but it seems to be not as often as you would see in others. So it makes it demanding.

JG: Yeah. I mean there is repetition. It’s not verbatim repetition. You know it’s at a different key level or it’s a different, it’s imitation. And so why thematically, you know it’s repeated, you’re still teaching.

CF: Yeah.

JG: So I think the first thing is that his music is not as instantly accessible as a lot of his peers. His music is really hard to put together because it’s so independent. I think that scares people off a little bit. I think of Steve Bryant, of John Mackey, of Eric Whitacre, of Jonathan Newman, Jonathan’s pieces, Newman’s pieces require the conductor to actually know what they’re doing more than the other ones do. And that’s not a slam on anyone or his music.

CF: Yeah, oh yeah.
JG: There’s some music just—Even somebody who is a pretty good conductor or kind of gets the piece, I think their pieces go on their own.

CF: Yeah.

JG: His music doesn’t. I think because Jonathan is so cerebral. I think it takes somebody to really dig in and get it. But it’s like real music. It’s not like band music. It’s like real music. And I think the people who’ve done Jonathan’s music get that. Rick Clary gets it. And just other ones that have done Jonathan’s music get it.

CF: Stuart Sims. Another very cerebral person—

JG: Yeah.

CF: I mean seeing some of the notes that Jonathan had on his blog about meeting Stuart and everything makes me feel like I’m not smart, you know.

JG: Well, no, no. Stuart makes everyone feel like that. I mean Stuart is such an idea guy anyway. He’s just such a big picture guy. Yeah, it’s always good to hang out with Stuart. Those two things in particular I think have limited his playability. Even when he writes a groove thing like what we just heard.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Right? Or when he writes Chunk or when he writes Avenue X or any of the groove-oriented pieces, because you know when Mackey writes groove, the percussion lays it out. There’s ostinato there. You can hear because it’s so fragmented. It’s hard. Eventually it will sound good but it doesn’t sound good initially.

CF: Yeah.

JG: You work hard to get to like that.

CF: Yeah.

JG: So I think Jonathan’s greatest gift, Newman’s greatest gift is I think he writes stunning slow music. Like really kind of eerie, unique, beautiful, haunting slow music. I think Spring Rain is like that. I think Moon by Night is like that. The second movement is like that. And so I mean, sometime soon I would love for him to write a slow piece that is, maybe a little bit more accessible, maybe a little bit easier and not as hard and independent, because I think if he can get like a grade 3 piece that people would do, I think a lot more people would explore.

CF: Yeah, absolutely.

JG: Kind of explore his music.
CF: Absolutely. I’m trying to think if there’s any other real questions that I, that you know, because you have – you have the unique perspective on this because of the consortium and also work on the premieres and everything.

JG: Right.

CF: But we’ve kind of covered most of all the important information. Are there any tips on conducting the second movement? Because you know, like you said, that’s kind of the-You know that’s where my grade-I have my post-it notes in here right now. I’m going through and I’m looking at it and it’s like you know, I always see-I remember when I was a kid, I had these books like you know, when you hear the dean turn the page?

JG: Right.

CF: And I kind of hear this little theme as a, when you hear this little theme, it’s coming to a new little thematic area or another. Like here, I noted there’s another little thematic area coming across and here it is again, and coming back to this, and you know. So I’m kind of like “Okay, I can kind of see that. That makes sense to me.” But you know, you’re going back and forth between the sixth eight and the seventh eight and you’ve got the duple subdivisions and the triple subdivisions, and it’s layered, and you know it’s-You know you have all this stuff going on here you know with the-It’s just -

JG: It’s really hard. How to do it?

CF: Yeah.

JG: Here’s how I did it. Because I do a quick-I had to do a-Really quick. This will play itself. What I found in the very beginning is that you just need to have people be confident in their part. It’s chamber music.

CF: Yeah, yeah.

JG: This actually plays itself much better that I thought it would ever would and that actually comes together very quickly.

CF: Yeah. You ever give them space to do something? When you give space to your instrumentalist to do something like that they do it your thoughts. It’s fine. You know?

JG: What I do with this is, in order for me to actually really conduct it, the first thing I did was I just put 8th note on 132, on a metronome. And I just laid out 8th notes and I sang every single line. I didn’t read it out. I actually sang the line to make sure that I can accurately place where everything was going to be.

CF: Yeah.
JG: And then I would, still with the 8th notes on, I would sing and conduct it. Because so often what you are conducting doesn’t go with what you’re singing with duple in particular. And then once I was able to sing every line because then that way I can teach it. Then I was able to come and take a step back and internalize. And the problem with this is, when doing it, again because I had such a short time, I almost thought like in the section, I just need to play a traffic cop because there’s so many lines going on, that I just basically just kind of laid out very distinct time and get really in queues when I needed to, and just kind of let the musicians take it. Balance is also an issue with this because there’s some register things.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Like the trumpet being a little bit high even though its cup muted and just what you want to come out.

CF: Yeah.

JG: That the hard stuff. And then, yeah. And then that’s the hard one with that. And then just some of this transitional work because I remember it being harder than it needed to be. I’m not sure why that was. And then you finally get to the kind of the -

CF: Which on? Yeah, the English horn “Copland” theme.
JG: Right.

CF: And then at least here, you have this little bit of-The metronome.

JG: Right.

CF: Kind of you know -

JG: This is strange.

CF: You got this other contra base. You know

JG: Yes it is. This is fine.

CF: You got that stuff going outside and that really helps you out. And then it kind of gets back to this again, again.

JG: Right. But it’s kind of like a wipe. It is what it is. Yeah.

CF: Yeah.

JG: Uh-huh. And then this comes back. This one is actually a little easier because there’s more metric feel to it. You know you kind of have this idea of the [Humming].
CF: Yeah.

JG: It actually has a little bit more of a rhythmic feel because thank God, of the horn line. So the first one is a little bit more tricky than this one. This one, I kind of go with that.

CF: Okay.

JG: But the hardest thing was the buildup. And you have the English horn thing again. This is hard. To actually get this idea of this big, epic build up, because this is a little awkwardly written for the trumpet.

CF: Yeah.

JG: That was hard to kind of pace out to make sure that we really got to this, and had it be heroic.

CF: Yeah. Okay. And then we get back, and then everything from there is kind of closing, reprising some themes to close it up.

JG: Right. The unique part is that something-I don’t remember. This has been years since I’ve done it. Right. This at Letter J, this is harder because there’s a little bit of play at the beginning when it comes the first time because no one has a steady pulse.

CF: Yeah.

JG: So even if you kind of, it’s okay.

CF: Yeah.

JG: This is harder because -

CF: Because you have that clarinet line.

JG: You have the clarinet line and it runs consistently so there can’t be any play or else it tears.

CF: Yeah.

JG: This one was actually harder to put together because everyone had to be exactly accurate.

CF: Now this is again somewhere to the beginning sections, the beginning themes. I think I was A or whatever.
JG: Right.

CF: So would it be advisable maybe to look at, when you’re rehearsing and just start at J because you had to -

JG: If I were to do it again, with J and say this is the way. And then when you go back to the beginning-

CF: Go backwards.

JG: They already know how it would feel. And just kind of internalize that ruling.

CF: Because I had seen that too and I was like “Oh, well you know, if I was to rehearse maybe I’ll look at this because you have the metronome note there so -”

JG: Right.

CF: And then I think you know and a lot like you said with Mackey’s work, there’s always that kind of rhythmic drive. There’s always that kind of that underlined metronome within every measure.

JG: Right.

CF: And here, you don’t get it until the last few bars you know.

JG: So I would do exactly that. If I had to do it over again, I will teach it that way. And then the ending is just devastating. I listen to the recording of the second movement and it’s as proud of anything as I’ve ever done. I just listen to it and I told Newman this. The very first time that I listened to this and I’m – everyone is hypercritical on recording when listening to themselves.

CF: Yeah.

JG: I listened to this and I got to the end and I remember crying. I remember thinking “Oh my God. This is the first time I’ve ever actually made myself cry conducting something that -”

CF: Yeah.

JG: Because I just thought it was so aching, and so sad, and so beautiful.

CF: Yeah.

JG: I just remembered being moved by it.
CF: And then you have the last movement which again, the little, there’s no change. It’s just-it goes right from here to there and it just seems like this moment we just kind of need a -

JG: I’m still -

CF: Kind of, you know.

JG: You should talk, he’s wrong. He is. He’s wrong. It gets so beautiful that you just want the audience to go [Sighs].

CF: It already has this moment of just kind of suspending itself anyway and you just want to kind of let it -

JG: It just like evaporates and you’re just-it’s so moving and then you just want to just- And you don’t even need to-It doesn’t need to be long or moving. You just wait. Just 15 seconds. Just let it settle and then, that’s what I wish I could do. But he was adamant. And since he was there I had to do it.

CF: Well.

JG: And he wrote the piece. And he wrote it attacca and I figured I -

CF: Yeah. But how many times as conductors do we always, do we change what the composer says? Anyway. And then you have the last movement which I, actually I think it’s one of my favorite.

JG: Pacing the end is actually the hard part.

CF: Yeah. I was going to say you know this pretty much-You know it’s pretty straightforward. You got your Lester Young theme going off in the solo and it kind of goes on forever, and you had these little “Chime” motive coming back and forth, and you know, some other things happening. And then you get to the end and it’s just-it seems like it’s almost like the second movement again in regards to just-It’s kind of suspending some things out and it’s just- Of course it sounds like Holst here -

JG: Right.

CF: Which we talked about.

JG: Yeah. Which originally I think he had added colored notes. I think Mackey talked to him into making it a E flat major cord. I think his actual purpose was “Jesus, just write a major cord”.

CF: Yeah.
JG: And...

CF: I can hear him doing that.

JG: Yes.

CF: But it seems like the pacing from you know, pretty much the-I have the Coda written here

JG: Right. As soon as-Yes.

CF: ....come back at the end. As soon as you get past [overlap].

JG: It has such a wonderful and natural build. Yeah, you have all this again. I love this thing. This is so good.

CF: Yes, a beautiful thing.

JG: This, this whole kind of growing canonic thing, that builds really beautifully. The problem is that when you get to this, working the slowdown, that’s right, this is my favorite part. This whole “throw everything and the kitchen sink,” I love this part. And so it has such a great build to it. The hard part for me is like you have the entire ensemble just going at it, and then all of a sudden it all goes away to brass And so how do I maintain the energy to get to the end and not have it feel anticlimactic?

CF: Yeah.

JG: That was the hardest thing for me. And to me it was making them really open up and play and moving along just a little bit, and then just really hammer off these chimes and make sure that it’s good. And then just really kind of milking these final chords.

CF: Yeah. Okay. I think-Is there anything else you have to say?

JG: No.

CF: I think they covered a good portion of everything.

JG: It’s a really wonderful piece. I wish more people would do it or at least movements of it because I think every single, it can be done fine. It’s better as a whole but I think every movement can be done fine.

CF: And that’s part of my hope. I was listening to it. You know I first got exposed to it. I really enjoyed you know, it took me a while to kind of get into the first movement. You know, the first movement caught me right off the bat. I’m like “All right.” Kind of the bebop feel.
JG: Right.

CF: Because I’m a saxophonist so I love the -

JG: Oh okay, great.

CF: The jazz aspect of things. And you know, one of my things with writing this dissertation is I wanted to find a piece that people haven’t played as often. Give them a resource to go back and say “Oh, this maybe is a little more accessible now that I have -” That’s why I’m asking about these conducting problems like this and there. And now we have the Christopher Koch article coming out in the next book as well, so I’m hoping that this book -

JG: Would get them...to get more play.

CF: Yeah, yeah. Especially some of those other pieces too. Moon By Night I know probably gets a little more played than some others just because it’s a little bit-I mean it’s still Newmanesque but it’s a little bit more accessible by highschoolers I think.

JG: I think so, yeah. And I think it’s lovely. I did it with a choir when I did it and I think it worked really, really well.

CF: And then having you add something uh -

JG: Probably that one probably gets the most played I would say.

CF: Yeah. Yeah those two.

JG: But like you know, Uncle Sid. I think it’s really, really funny. And Spring Rain is beautiful. I haven’t done Sowing Youthful Truths yet. That’s kind of on my short list to do. I just couldn’t find a slot to do it. I’ll tell you the piece I think is actually one of his best pieces and no one plays. It’s De Profundis. De Profundis is awesome. And I was in on that one too because that was a premiere or a consortium from an honor band and Jonathan had me conduct that. And I think that piece is a solid grade 4 and it’s brilliant. So I wish more people would do that.

CF: And that’s about how long? Is it about a 10 minute?


CF: Nine, okay. Because I saw that one too and that’s another one of those pieces I was thinking about. If I had an honor band, would I consider doing that? But it’s 10 minutes long and it’s I don’t know if it can be -

JG: And it’s full of aleatory
CF: Yeah.

JG: And so, and I told him yesterday in the room, if I do this, and I will do it again. If I had a week-long camp like a week-long summer camp, that is a total homerun of a piece.

CF: Yeah.

JG: But having done it in two days, it’s terrifying.

CF: Yeah.

JG: But I think actually, accessibility-wise, that’s his most successful piece. Because it has like code of drumming and it has like really angry trombones, and it’s really visceral. I loved it. I really like that piece a lot. So -

CF: Well I definitely appreciate the time and the comments and knowing that you’re about an hour and a half away. I might have to drive over and talk to you some more and [overlap].

JG: Yeah, please do. And anytime you want to come up or we can meet halfway, I’m happy to do that. Anything that gets more play

CF: There’s nothing halfway between Bloomington and Terre Haute.

JG: Oh, that’s true.

CF: Yeah. You just go 46 and get over there. It’s pretty much it. That’s I think is how it goes. Right?

JG: It’s a terrible drive on 46.

CF: Yeah. Maybe we just go to Indy and we hang out there.

JG: Yeah. That’d be much better.

CF: Bring the kids. I’ll get my two. You get yours.

JG: Yeah that’s true.

CF: So all right. Thank you very much sir.
APPENDIX C

CONSORTIUM IDEA PRESENTED BY JONATHAN NEWMAN

Jonathan Newman

Jeff’s and my idea is to expand upon my existing piece, *The Rivers Of Bowery*, which is an overture touching on expansive themes. To give you an idea, here’s what I’ve written in the past about that work:

*The Rivers Of Bowery* is an overture with a triumphant vision of the City as complex machine, capable of incubating the lowest in human nature as well as harnessing the best of Man’s intentions. The title comes directly from Allen Ginsberg’s glorious chronicle of Beat counterculture, *Howl*. Written in 1956, in a tenement about 2 blocks from where I live on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, *Howl* celebrates the Beat counterculture by breathlessly rejoicing in the underdog grit of Ginsberg’s beloved bohemia. The image is extracted from the liner:

...who ate the lamb stew of the imagination or digested the crab at the muddy bottom of the rivers of Bowery.

Ginsberg’s river is a rush of people, and not the usual sunny city dwellers of an E.B. White essay or an O’Henry story, but his specific anti-community of the lost, the drugged, and the outcast. Ginsberg presents his city as possessing a triumphant spirit, neighbors piled on top of each other, never letting each other down despite being torn apart by society and by themselves.

These are huge ideas, encompassing mid-century counter-culture, “Beat” poetry & bohemia, and the celebration of the human spirit over the crush of modern urbanity. With that in mind, we propose a discursive, multi-movement piece, eventually 20 minutes+, exploring the musical (and extra-musical) language of the short overture, but with more development and breadth. The first step would be a 10-11’ standalone movement, to be one movement (likely the 3rd) of this future larger symphonic work.

Musically, there would be significant harmonic and melodic links to the overture, applying a Sibelius/Britten-like broad brushstroke to the material. I’ve also been thinking a lot about Bee-bop, as a good musical link to the 50’s-poetry-themes.

The work would also explore Beat poetry in general, incorporating quotes and poetic themes from some of the most intriguing poets of the era, like Gregory Corso, and Harold Norse. Specifically, here’s a short Gregory Corso poem I’ve been considering for the title, and flavor of this proposed movement:

*My hands are a city, a lyre*  
*And my hands are afire  
And my mother plays Corelli  
while my hands burn*

Whatever the expression of this will be, my desire is to create something expansive and luxurious, expanding on the elements of 50’s Beat Poetry, *Howl*, Ginsberg, Bee-bop, and the otherwise gritty urban subjects I’ve been pooling together.

—JN August 3, 2006

OK Feel Good Music
55 Avenue C, #4 • New York, NY 10009
Phone: 917 676 1858 • okmusic@jonathane Newman.com • www.jonathane Newman.com
Colleagues,

I wanted to make you aware of an opportunity to join an interesting new commissioning project involving Jonathan Newman. Jonathan is set to begin writing a new composition that would allow him to expand the musical and extra-musical ideas in his piece *The Rivers of Bowery*, which was premiered by Bill Berz and the Rutgers Wind Ensemble at the 2004 National CBDNA convention in New York. This new work would further explore the program of *Bowery*, which Jonathan explains in his notes on the piece:

*The Rivers Of Bowery is an overture with a triumphant vision of the City as complex machine, capable of incubating the lowest in human nature as well as harnessing the best of Man’s intentions. The title comes directly from Allen Ginsberg’s glorious chronicle of Beat counterculture, Howl. Written in 1956, in a tenement about 2 blocks from where I live on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, Howl celebrates the Beat counterculture by breathlessly rejoicing in the underdog grit of Ginsberg’s beloved bohemia. The image is extracted from the line:

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Ginsberg’s river is a rush of people, and not the usual sunny city dwellers of an E.B. White essay or an O’Henry story, but his specific anti-community of the lost, the drugged, and the outcast. Ginsberg presents his city as possessing a triumphant spirit, neighbors piled on top of each other, never letting each other down despite being torn apart by society and by themselves.

Jonathan envisions this new work as a three-movement composition that would develop the themes in *Bowery*, in addition to the Beat poetry movement in general, incorporating quotes and poetic ideas from some of the most intriguing poets of the era, like Gregory Corso and Harold Norse. Jonathan included this Gregory Corso poem, as an example of the mood of this proposed piece:

*My hands are a city, a lyre
And my hands are afire
And my mother plays Corelli
   while my hands burn

Because of the breadth of the project, the work will be divided into two separate commissioning projects. The first project will be a 10-11 minute standalone movement
scheduled to be completed in September 2007. The work will be financed by a consortium of sixteen institutions that would each contribute $750. The cost would include a score and a set of parts and exclusive performance rights through September 2008. Participating institutions have the option of paying their consortium fee during this current academic year or waiting until the start of the coming 2007-2008 academic year.

There are only a few remaining spots left in the consortium, so if you are interested, I ask that you contact me as soon as possible. As a courtesy to those institutions participating in the first consortium, if you choose to participate in the second project (which will include the final two movements), you will be asked to pay a smaller amount than those schools new to the project.

To further explore Jonathan’s music, I invite you to visit his website at www.jonathannewman.com. If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at jeff_gershman@tamu-commerce.edu or call me at 972.998.3936. For those attending, both Jonathan and I will be in Ann Arbor this week for the national convention and would be happy to answer any questions or offer additional information. Best wishes on the remainder of your semester and I appreciate your consideration of this new commission.

Jeff

Dr. Jeffrey D. Gershman

Director of Instrumental Activities

Texas A&M University-Commerce
APPENDIX E

CONSORTIUM LETTER FOR MOVEMENTS I AND II

FROM JEFFREY GERSHMAN

Colleagues,

I wanted to make you aware of an opportunity to join an exciting new commissioning project involving Jonathan Newman. Last year, Jonathan completed his largest wind ensemble work to date, *My Hands Are a City*, a fourteen minute composition inspired by the Beat poetry movement of the 1950’s and musically derived from his overture, *The Rivers of Bowery*. Since its premiere in February, the work has been enthusiastically received at performances throughout the country and will be featured on the upcoming Naxos recording of The University of Georgia Wind Ensemble (John Lynch, Conductor), scheduled to be released later this year.

Jonathan is set to begin two new pieces that, when combined with *My Hands Are a City*, will comprise his Symphony No. 1. These two works will serve as the symphony’s first and second movements. The inspiration, character, and length of the proposed movements are provided by Jonathan:

**Movement I**
The plans for this movement include exploring a kind of uneasy motion—taking off from the energetic agitation of something like Kerouac’s “On the Road.” This may even be a type of *moto perpetuo*—opening the symphony with a short burst of restless movement. I plan on using the same (or very close to the same) instrumentation as Movement III (*My Hands Are a City*). Estimating the length at 4-5 minutes.

**Movement II**
While researching all things mid-century “Beat” last year, I fell in love with a (quite famous) book by a German-born photographer and friend of all the usual Beat suspects, Robert Frank. Frank traveled around the country in 1955 and 1956, and in 1958, he published the resultant photographs in a collection called *The Americans*. Every single image is stunning and illuminating, and I knew when I was writing *My Hands Are a City* that they must be involved in the overall project somehow. Taking the title for my own, Movement II (“The Americans”) will not necessarily “describe” individual photos, but rather attempt an overall musical picture of the America Robert Frank saw in 1955…quiet, calm, determined, and more than a little sad. Estimating the length at 5 minutes and the plan right now is for an instrumentation of winds (possibly orchestral), some brass, and piano.

For both Movements I and II, the plan is to continue the “expansion” of *The Rivers of Bowery*, expanding on musical material from the shorter work, so that eventually, all
three movements of the symphony, as well as the original overture, are musically related to each other.

The two new movements are scheduled for completion by February 1, 2009, which would allow for spring performances of the complete symphony. The work will be financed by a consortium of institutions that would each contribute $750. Payment would be due by December 15, 2008. The cost would include a score and a set of parts and exclusive performance rights through February 2010. In addition, as a courtesy to those institutions participating in the consortium, the rental fee for the final movement (My Hands Are a City) will be reduced if the institution performs the entire symphony. To further explore Jonathan’s music, I invite you to visit his website at www.jonathannewman.com. If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at jgershma@indiana.edu or call me at 812.856.4591. Best wishes on the beginning of your school year and I appreciate your consideration of this new commission.

Jeff

Dr. Jeffrey D. Gershman
Associate Director of Bands
Jacobs School of Music
Indiana University
APPENDIX D

SYMPHONY NO. 1: MY HANDS ARE A CITY FORMAL CHARTS

Movement I

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**Movement II**

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**Movement III**

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<td>Coda</td>
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<td>Chime, Bowery</td>
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Single (2013)
From the outset I knew I wanted to do something “Pop” music-related ... and even more specific than that...the “Bubble Gum Pop” of Top 40 lists and American Idol auditions. And so I wrote a wordless pop song with as many hook-y tunes as I could muster. “SINGLE” IS that song, extended out into an orchestrated classical-style movement, where those ear-worming tunes are put in counterpoint with each other, and blown up into concert proportions. In a phrase, it’s MY single, were I ever to release one. And so the work has all the structural elements of a pop song, in the proper order... verses, choruses, a bridge, even a modulation with a “horn section” in the final chorus. (The latter was impossibly fun to write).

Blow It Up, Start Again (2012)
If the system isn’t working anymore, then do what Guy Fawkes tried and go anarchist: Blow it all up, and start again.

3 O’Clock Mix (2012)
Open instrumentation and groove-based percussion on desks and chairs combine for a Grade 2 educational piece fit for any young school ensemble. All that is required is a large ensemble of student players. It’s 3 O’Clock; Mix it up.

Sowing Useful Truths (2010)
In 1802 Thomas Jefferson noted to his Attorney General that he considered letters to his constituents a decent opportunity for “sowing useful truths & principles among the people, which might germinate and become rooted among their political tenets.” This always struck me as exactly what all artists do: “seeding” the world with expressions of personal Truth, and very much hoping they take “root”. To that end, this work proclaims my own musical Principles, celebrating the elements of counterpoint, color, groove, and style I consider undeniable, and True. Sowing Useful Truths was commissioned by my alma mater, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Young Artists Wind Ensemble.

Symphony No. 1: My Hands Are a City (2009)
Program note previously stated within this document.

De Profundis (2009)
I’ve respectfully borrowed the term massed winds from the 1932 masterwork Angels And Devils (“for massed flutes”) by the great Henry Brant, but the title itself is from Psalm 130 (de profundis clamavi ad te Domine), a Penitential psalm sometimes incorporated into the Latin Requiem, and set to music by composers for hundreds of years.
Commissioned by the Central Oklahoma Directors Association—for an ensemble of some 110 souls—the work is designed to use the largest (massed) ensemble possible to its greatest possible effect.

The medieval *de profundis* plainchant incipit, a gorgeous modal tune lamenting “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD” winds its way throughout the work, transforming from lyrical chanting to the core of angry chorales. For much of the work the percussion consists mostly of different kinds of drums (2 bass drums, 2 sets of detuned timpani, 4 tom-toms, and 3 roto-toms). The drums lead a sound-world of ritualism, which the ensemble often realizes from aleatoric notation: improvisatory gestures played at the discretion of the players. Like a classic *chiaroscuro*, these aleatoric textures shift us between the worlds of darkness and light.

**Climbing Parnassus (2008)**

In *Aeschylus*, Creon speaks of “the double peaks of snow-clad Parnassus”—the ancient site of the Oracle of Delphi, and the mountain most sacred to Apollo. As the home of The Muses, Parnassus is the spiritual source of music, poetry, and art. Centuries ago, when Greek and Latin were an integral part of a Western education, the phrase “Climbing Parnassus” meant the pursuit of a career as a poet, writer, composer, or artist. Dreamlike and spacious, *Climbing Parnassus* presents an imagined chorale fragment, ascending and transforming through an expanse of sound.

**Concertino for solo flute, chamber winds, and piano (2007)**

This *Concertino* takes the lively French chamber wind literature of the early 20th-century as its starting point, but this piece views the “French” style through an odd lens, twisting and bending the language of that neo-Classical genre in order to run the music through very different stylistic approaches. In the later movements, the Franco-survey is expanded to other inspirations—to not only the techniques of other French nationals, but also of those I consider “French” in spirit, such as Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu.

In writing the piece, I was particularly excited to explore these styles while juxtaposing the virtuosity of the soloist with the delicate intimacy of the chamber ensemble.

Practically, the work comes out of the efforts of my friend and colleague Robert Ambrose, a champion of new music who encouraged me to write for chamber winds, and flute in particular, and who shepherded the project with infectious enthusiasm. The *Concertino* is dedicated to flutist Sarah Kruser Ambrose, for whom it was written.

**Avenue X (2005)**

*AVENUE X* derives its title from my neighborhood subway line, and its labeled final destination: “Ave X”. As I reside on Avenue C (and the highest letter in Manhattan itself is D), this always seemed a fantastic and otherworldly location to me. Turns out it’s in a
pretty trippy place anyway: Brooklyn’s Coney Island -- home of an ancient and creaking wooden roller coaster (frightening only because of the fear of the entire structure collapsing at any moment), the country’s last existing “side show”, and of course (my favorite), the Nathan’s Famous annual hot-dog eating contest. The piece is a journey there of sorts ... via a pentatonic blues progression and driving bass power chords more appropriate to a metal “hair” rock band chart-topper, AVENUE X takes a convoluted path of dreams, subways, roller coasters, freak shows, and edge-of-the-world fantasies.

The Rivers of Bowery (2005)
The Rivers of Bowery is an overture with a triumphant vision of the City as complex machine, capable of incubating the lowest in human nature as well as harnessing the best of Man’s intentions. The title comes directly from Allen Ginsberg’s glorious chronicle of Beat counterculture, Howl. Written in 1956, in a tenement about 2 blocks from where I live on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, Howl celebrates the Beat counterculture by breathlessly rejoicing in the underdog grit of Ginsberg’s beloved bohemia. The image is extracted from the line:

...who ate the lamb stew of the imagination or digested the crab at the muddy bottom of the rivers of Bowery.

Ginsberg’s river is a rush of people, and not the usual sunny city dwellers of an E.B. White essay or an O’Henry story, but his specific anti-community of the lost, the drugged, and the outcast. Ginsberg presents his city as possessing a triumphant spirit, neighbors piled on top of each other, never letting each other down despite being torn apart by society and by themselves.

1861 (2004)
1861 is a lyric hymn-fantasia for concert band, accessible to all levels of high school ensembles, and based on the beautiful 19th-century Anglican Hymn Lead Me, Lord (written in 1861 by Charles Sebastian Wesley). I was very attracted to that work’s gorgeous line above biting harmonies and striking counterpoint, so the hymn itself provides the work’s pillars: first presented soloistically, then with dramatic full-band tutti, and finally through evocative humming—all framed by choral textures and colorful improvisatory accompaniment. The work is dedicated to the commissioner, Amy M. Knopps and Center High School of Kansas City, Missouri.

As the scent of spring rain... (2003)
As the scent of spring rain... comes from a translation of the evocative first line of a love poem by Israeli poet Leah Goldberg. The poem itself was introduced to me by a good friend of mine a number of years ago, and I have a strong memory of how much the beauty of the original Hebrew and the imagery in her translation touched me. Because of
that I deliberately did not work from the poem itself but only from my memory of it, which was so special to me that I didn’t want to disturb it with a re-reading which would create a new and different experience. As a result, the harmonic language, structure, and orchestration all aim to conjure the intense juxtaposition of sweetness and sadness which I most remember from the poem.

**Chuck (2003)**

Funk is all around us. It has permeated every aspect of popular music and culture. What was born as a 70’s counter-culture movement has grown to become the heart of any music with a beat. Sit in a coffee shop, listen to top-40’s radio, shop in a department store -- it doesn’t matter if it’s a hip 90’s club tune, or a contemporary concert music work -- you can’t escape the funk. *Chunk* owes major favors to George Clinton and the Parliament Funkadelic, Stevie Wonder, James Brown, Prince, and Beck, just to name a few. We steal, because we love.

**Uncle Sid (2002)**

*Uncle Sid* bears a family resemblance to a puny nephew, a little ditty born of one long and feverish collegiate night. It was a night of passionate desperation, the fruit of which was a namesake who never quite lived up to his family’s unreasonable expectations. His *Uncle Sid*, however, lives life on a much grander and appropriate scale. *Sid* is crass, obnoxious, and uncaring of anyone’s feelings. Traveling the wedding/bar mitzvah circuit, *Sid* performs a hora for the horrified crowds. Sure, *Sid* sounds like fun, but wait till you get to know him. *Uncle Sid* first reared his ugly head in public on October 10, 2002, introduced by the UNLV Wind Orchestra, with the composer conducting. *Sid* is dedicated to my brother, with familial understanding.

**Moon by Night (2001)**

*Moon by Night* is a modular work, as it is performable as a work for band and chorus, band alone, chorus and piano, or chorus a cappella. The text is the King James translation of Psalm 121, and the title is an image directly quoted from the psalm. The theme of the work is not sacred, however---it should be more like a hymn-like tone poem; a simple, straightforward chorale with long unending lines, where the text serves only to create an evocative mood. *Moon by Night* was premiered by the Sterling Municipal Symphony Band in Sterling, IL, on June 27, 2001, with Eric Whitacre conducting.

**OK Feel Good (1999)**

*OK Feel Good* is the result of an opportunity to write for the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble. The friendship and camaraderie I experienced that summer imposed itself onto my writing—so the work grew into a colorful rhythmic playground, presented with a grin and a wink. In 1999, at the request of Eric Whitacre, I transcribed the work for
winds and percussion. My wish is that the original sense of glorified game-show music has been unaltered, and hopefully even amplified.
APPENDIX F

DISCOGRAPHY

**Fascinating Ribbons**
University of New Mexico Wind Symphony  Summit Records (2009)  Tracks include: As the scent of spring rain...

**Millenium Canons**
University of Georgia Wind Ensemble  Naxos (2009)  Tracks include: My Hands Are a City

**New Year, New Music**
Gotham Wind Symphony  ArtistShare (2009)  Tracks include: Avenue X

**Virtuoso: JWECC 2009 Gala Concert**
Nagoya Wind Symphony / Mamoru Nakata, conductor Brain Music (2009)  Tracks include: Concertino

**Climbing Parnassus**
JWECC Festival Wind Orchestra Brain Music (2008)  Tracks include: Climbing Parnassus

**Raritonality**
Rutgers Wind Ensemble  Mark Masters (2006)  Tracks include: The Rivers of Bowery

**JJCM-Men of Industry**
University of North Texas Symphonic Band, Tarleton Winds, UMD Symphonic Wind Ensemble, UNLV Wind Orchestra, TAD Wind Symphony, Tokyo Symphonic Band, OSU Wind Ensemble, and Ensemble X BCM Records (2004)  Tracks include: As the scent of spring rain..., 1861

**Caricatures**
Rutgers Wind Ensemble  Mark Custom (2004)  Tracks include: Uncle Sid

**3 Steps Forward**
UNLV Wind Orchestra Klavier (2004)  Tracks include: OK Feel Good

**Spiritual Planet**
TAD Wind Symphony Basic Video Arts (2004)  Tracks include: As the scent of spring rain...
**Chunk**
University of Nevada Las Vegas Wind Orchestra Mark Masters (2003) Tracks include: Chunk

**TAD Steps**
TAD Wind Symphony Basic Video Arts (2003) Tracks include: Moon by Night

**BCM Saves the World**
University of Nevada Las Vegas Wind Orchestra Mark Masters (2002) Tracks include: OK, Feel Good, Moon by Night, Uncle Sid

**American Images**
Rutgers Wind Ensemble Mark Masters (2002) Tracks include: Moon by Night

**Equus**
Tokyo Symphonic Band Basic Video Arts (2001) Tracks include: OK Feel Good
APPENDIX G

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JONATHAN NEWMAN

February 7, 2012

J. Corey Franch
Director of Athletic Bands
Indiana State University
200 North Seventh Street
Terre Haute, IN 47802

Dear Corey:

I am pleased to give permission for any reprinting or recopying of score excerpts from my work Symphony No. 1, "My Hands Are a City" for your current academic work and dissertation.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Newman
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