ROY HARRIS' AMERICAN SYMPHONY - 1938: A PERSPECTIVE ON ITS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND AUTOGENETIC ELEMENTS WITH A PERFORMANCE OF A RECONSTRUCTED MODERN WIND ENSEMBLE EDITION

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American composer Roy Harris began writing a symphony for the Tommy Dorsey band in 1938, but the piece was never completed. This dissertation project chronicles the events surrounding the interesting collaboration between the composer and the bandleader, including problems incurred during the rehearsal process, the eventual abandonment of the project, and the discovery of the little-known band work.

The paper includes information on the composer's life and works, an in-depth discussion of the compositional technique that Harris called "autogenesis," and a detailed analysis of the two surviving movements of the band piece. The piece is also discussed comparatively with other significant works in Harris' symphonic *genre*, most notably his *Folksong Symphony*, also known as his Fourth Symphony.

A significant portion of the research and preparation for the project was spent reconstructing a modern wind ensemble edition of the two surviving movements. A complete score of the reconstructed edition is included as part of this project.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Discovery of Roy Harris' American Symphony - 1938

On July 3, 1998, the author heard on National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" that an interesting musical project was being undertaken by a freelance trombone player in New York City. It seems that as he was reading Meryle Secrest's biography of Leonard Bernstein, *Leonard Bernstein: A Life*, trombonist James Pugh discovered that Roy Harris had written a piece of music for the Tommy Dorsey band. Pugh pursued additional information regarding the work, thinking that it might be significant to find a piece written for trombone by a composer of Harris' stature. Roy Harris' biographer Dan Stehman had part of the score in question, and directed Pugh toward the Library of Congress for the rest of the piece. Pugh intended to recreate the work in its original form, and he enlisted the help of some of his fellow studio musicians to make a recording of the piece. ¹

The interest of this author was immediately piqued, not because the piece might be a significant contribution to trombone literature, but because it could be a very important landmark in Roy Harris' compositions for band, having been written three years before the commissioning of *Cimarron - Symphonic Overture for Band*, which has long been thought to be Roy Harris' first piece for band. After numerous attempts to reach James Pugh by telephone, letter, answering service, and e-mail, with no response, the author consulted Dan Stehman's *Roy Harris, a Bio-Bibliography* for information

¹Elizabeth Blair, reporter, *National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," July 3, 1998*, Bob Edwards, host, audio recording and complete transcript (Largo, MD: National Public Radio, Inc., 1998), 5-6.

regarding the piece. The bio-bibliography included three notations referencing the first or second movements of an incomplete piece written for the Tommy Dorsey band, along with two listings in Appendices. The notations cited the Library of Congress as the probable location of the manuscripts.²

Anxious to find a score for this unknown band work, the author traveled to Washington, D.C. in December of 1998, having been given permission to access the Roy Harris archives in the Library of Congress by Louise Spizizen, curator of *The Harris Project* in Tucson, Arizona. The manuscript score for the complete first movement of *American Symphony - 1938* was found, along with the first page of a rough sketch score for the second movement.

Encouraged by these findings, the author contacted noted Roy Harris scholar and biographer Dan Stehman. Stehman was very helpful, and shared some insightful information about the entire Harris/Dorsey collaboration. He thought that he had in his possession the parts to the intended second movement of *American Symphony - 1938*, and although he was missing the piano part, he was willing to send copies of what he had. Stehman was convinced that he had seen, at one time, a score to the second movement, and he thought it was in the Library of Congress, but this author could never find a complete score.³ In fact, Stehman thought that the score to the second movement was listed somewhere as "Symphony Number 4, Second Movement," and in the Harris bio-bibliography, Stehman lists the movement as "Sad Song," and writes that at one point Roy Harris had given permission for the second movement to be performed alone, but

²Dan Stehman, *Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1991) 125, 190.

³Dan Stehman, interview by the author, tape recording, 9 July 2000, Southwest Baptist University Library, Bolivar, Mo.

Stehman could find no record of that performance.⁴ However, in his article on Roy Harris for *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Donald Cobb lists a band arrangement, written in 1940, of *He's Gone Away*.⁵ This is either a mistake, or it is the second movement from *American Symphony - 1938*, which Stehman has called "Sad Song."

Louise Spizizen was a long-time friend and *confidante* of Johana Harris, Roy's wife, who was in her own right, a virtuoso pianist of the highest order. In fact, Spizizen's responsibilities as curator of *The Harris Project* consist mainly of cataloging the compositions and musical activities in which Johana was involved. In a telephone interview with the author, Spizizen provided some information from Johana's perspective, regarding the events surrounding the writing of *American Symphony - 1938* and the collaboration with the Tommy Dorsey band. Spizizen thought that the piece was originally intended to be a three-movement work, with the first movement featuring a piano solo and the middle movement highlighting a trombone soloist. Harris intended for the piano soloist to be his wife, Johana, and he obviously intended that the trombone soloist would be Tommy Dorsey. Johana Harris had traveled to New York to rehearse the piece with the Dorsey band at the conclusion of one of their regularly scheduled performances at the Rainbow Room. The players must have been exhausted after the

⁴Dan Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 125-126.

⁵Donald Cobb, "Roy Harris," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 6th ed., vol. 8, ed. Stanley Sadie (MacMillan: London, 1980), 252.

⁶Louise Spizizen, interview by the author, tape recording, 27 December 1998, Southwest Baptist University Library, Bolivar, Mo.

⁷Ibid.

9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. dance job, and the early morning hours were not conducive to a productive rehearsal. According to Spizizen: "From about 2:00 to 4:00 a.m. one morning, Johana read the first two movements of the piece with the band, and then returned to her hotel room to draw a warm bath and write a letter to Roy, informing him that the rehearsal had not gone well, and Tommy Dorsey would not be pursuing the project." Roy Harris was very discouraged that the Dorsey band would not be able to perform the piece, and he actually wrote on the first page of his manuscript score that the piece was "never completed because the band had no rehearsal time to devote to a new project." Spizizen also felt quite confident that a piano part to the second movement of the piece would not be found, because Johana Harris was quite an accomplished classical improviser, and she would not have had a written part for that rehearsal. No piano part would have been necessary until the piece went to press. With a copy of the manuscript scores from the Library of Congress, and the copies of the second movement parts from Dan Stehman, this author was convinced that all of the existing pieces of this unfinished symphony had been found.

The Significance of the Piece As It Relates to Harris' Other Compositions

There are many interesting aspects regarding this relatively obscure and unknown band composition, not the least of which is the title that Harris chose for the work,

American Symphony - 1938. Did he approach this commission from the Tommy Dorsey*

⁸Elizabeth Blair, NPR's "Morning Edition," 5.

⁹Spizizen, interview by the author.

¹⁰Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 190.

¹¹ Spizizen, interview by the author.

band as if this piece would truly be his next symphony?¹² He began the work shortly after completing his *Third Symphony*, a composition which was to become one of his most popular.¹³ One must assume that Harris intended that his fourth contribution to the major genre of "symphony" would be a multi-movement work for winds, and this author is now convinced that the only reason this did not come to pass was because the Dorsey band was not successful when they rehearsed the piece.

In an attempt to gain a greater understanding of how *American Symphony - 1938* relates to other works in Harris' symphonic *oeuvre*, the author began to study the *Folksong Symphony*, a seven movement work for orchestra and chorus, which is now commonly referred to as Roy Harris' fourth symphony. Roy Harris completed his *Folksong Symphony* in 1940, two years after he began *American Symphony - 1938*. The *Folksong Symphony* fifth movement, which is an orchestral interlude, is based almost entirely upon thematic material found in the first movement of *American Symphony - 1938*. Although there is some rearranging and development of this theme, which is based on the folk song "Jump Up, My Lady," large melodic sections of the fifth movement of *Folksong Symphony* are identical to the second theme of the first movement of *American Symphony*. In even more convincing fashion, the fourth movement of *Folksong Symphony*, which Harris titled "Mountaineer Love Song," is based entirely upon melodic and harmonic material from the second movement of *American Symphony*, which he had at one point titled "Sad Song." In fact, with the exception of the choral parts, most of

¹²Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 190.

¹³Patricia Ashley, "Roy Harris," Stereo Review 21, no. 6 (December, 1968): 70.

¹⁴Dan Stehman, "The Symphonies of Roy Harris: An analytical study of the linear materials and of related works," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1973, University Microfilms: Ann Arbor, 1977), 324.

¹⁵Ibid., 319.

that is different in the *Folksong Symphony* could provide a vital clue as to what material might have been included in Johana Harris' piano part to the *American Symphony* second movement. This music called "Sad Song" from *American Symphony - 1938* and "Mountaineer Love Song" in the *Folksong Symphony* is actually based on the folksong "He's Gone Away." Harris completed an arrangement of *He's Gone Away* for *a cappella* SATB Chorus in October of 1938, which he offered to Schirmer for publication, so he must have been working on this choral setting of the folksong concurrently with his work on the second movement of the Dorsey piece. These two settings, conceived simultaneously, were combined to form the fourth movement of the *Folksong Symphony* four years later. Although it is not uncommon in much of Roy Harris' music for him to reuse themes and folk song ideas, it is unique that these two pieces share so much thematic material in identical form. This is yet more evidence to support the author's opinion that Harris had at one time intended for his fourth symphony to be a major multimovement work for winds.

The Significance of the Piece As It Relates to Band Literature

In 1941, when the University of Chicago Band commissioned Roy Harris to write a piece commemorating their fiftieth anniversary, the composer was enjoying a period of tremendous popularity and acclaim.¹⁸ In fact, the commission was an effort, in part, to get a composer who had made some significant contributions to the orchestral repertoire to compose for symphonic band, and just perhaps develop an affinity for that

¹⁶Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 89-90.

¹⁷Marshall Bialosky, "Roy Harris: In Memoriam (But Keep Your Hats On)" *College Music Symposium, Journal of the College Music Society*, 22, no. 2 (1982): 14.

¹⁸Ashley, 70.

compositional medium. The resulting piece was *Cimarron - Symphonic Overture for Band*, and one of the intended results of the commission was accomplished: in the following 35 years, Roy Harris wrote no less than 15 works for band.¹⁹

For nearly 60 years, band conductors and historians have agreed that *Cimarron* was the first piece of music that Roy Harris had envisioned and composed for band.²⁰ With the recent findings cited in this document, and the research of Dan Stehman that has been published within the last ten years, it is now known that Roy Harris' first piece for winds was composed for Tommy Dorsey and his band in 1938. It is also known that the size and personnel of the Dorsey band left Harris with some parameters that necessitated an approach to wind scoring that was much different than the large symphonic band scoring that can be found in *Cimarron*.

Although Harris was working within the personnel limitations of the Dorsey band--which included three trumpets, four trombones, a rhythm section of piano, bass, and drums, and five woodwind players--by utilizing the doubling capabilities of the woodwind players in the band, he was able to write for a variety of woodwind timbres and tone colors, including flute, clarinets, bass clarinet, alto and tenor saxophones. However, he could not write for all of these woodwind instruments at one time. So, it seems that his instrument selection was based not only on timbral colors, but also with some attention given to the instruments' ability to balance what was happening in the rest of the ensemble. Perhaps the most revolutionary and *avant garde* aspect of his wind scoring in *American Symphony - 1938* was the idea that he was writing for one player on a part. When he was writing *Cimarron* for a symphonic band, Harris did not know how

¹⁹Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 48-49, 426.

²⁰Frank Battisti, *The Twentieth Century American Wind Band/Ensemble* (Fort Lauderdale: Meredith Music Publications, 1995), 7.

many of each instrument would be in every band that performed the work. It would be normal to assume that different groups would have multiple players on each part, and the doubling would change from one symphonic band to another. This means that the sound of the piece would not have been the same each time it was performed. As he was writing *American Symphony - 1938*, Harris knew that he was working with a very controlled timbral palette, and this was a revolutionary concept in 1938. In his book, *The Twentieth Century American Wind Band/Ensemble*, Frank Battisti lists 17 important original compositions for band written between 1939 and 1945. Roy Harris' *Cimarron Overture* (1941) is at the top of the list, which includes pieces such as William Schuman's *Newsreel* (1939), Morton Gould's *Jericho* (1940), Samuel Barber's *Commando March* (1943), Arnold Schoenberg's *Theme and Variations, Op. 43a* (1943), and Darius Milhaud's *Suite Francaise* (1945). None of these established pieces of the repertoire were intended for one-on-a-part playing.²¹

American Symphony - 1938 is not really a "swing" or jazz piece. It is based almost entirely upon folk song material or Harris' original variations of folk themes. This may actually be a reason for the Dorsey band's difficulties in reading and rehearsing the piece. Although this may have been one of the first attempts by an American composer to write a complete symphony for a wind group of this size, there was already some precedent for using this instrumentation for a legitimate concert piece. George Gershwin had used a similar instrumentation for his original version of *Rhapsody in Blue* in 1924, and similar groups were being used in new works for ballet, theater, and film, by such composers as Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Paul Bowles, and Leonard Bernstein.²²

²¹Battisti, 7.

²²Meryle Secrest, Leonard Bernstein: A Life (New York: Knopf, 1994), 128.

A Justification for the Project

From these conversations with Dan Stehman and Louise Spizizen, the author began to focus on two particular aspects of the piece that provided the motivation for pursuing the project. First, if Roy Harris had at one time listed the second movement as part of "Symphony Number 4," then American Symphony - 1938 becomes much more than just a significant piece of band music. It becomes the fourth entry in the symphonic genre of a composer, who at the time, was heralded as a genius by his teacher, 23 and by John Tasker Howard as "the white hope of the American nationalists."²⁴ Had this piece become known and performed in its completed form, it might have made a major impact on the wind repertoire. If Harris had been successful in his first attempt to write for winds with one-on-a-part scoring, he may have produced more works in a similar vein, and others may have followed his lead. The second important piece of information was that Roy Harris had granted permission for at least one of the two movements to stand alone in performance. This, coupled with the innovative scoring necessitated by the personnel limitations, provides a legitimate justification for a reconstructed modern wind ensemble edition, and a performance of the two surviving movements--in effect, an incomplete work-- would not conflict with the composer's wishes or intentions.

The central component of this dissertation is a reconstructed modern band edition, prepared by the author, of Roy Harris' *American Symphony - 1938*. Because some of the problems the Dorsey band had in reading and rehearsing *American Symphony - 1938* might have been alleviated with the use of additional woodwind players, and because the compositional style of the piece is more characteristic of a wind ensemble than a jazz

²³Arthur Farwell, "Roy Harris," *Musical Quarterly* 18/II, no. 4 (1932): 18.

²⁴ Ashley, 68.

band, this reconstructed edition is for a modern wind ensemble, eliminating the need for woodwind doubling. A performance of this edition will be totally consistent with the sounds and timbres that Roy Harris must have originally imagined when he composed the piece.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LIFE OF ROY HARRIS

Early Years and Education

Roy Harris was born as LeRoy Ellsworth Harris on February 12, 1898, in a home outside Chandler, Oklahoma, a parcel of land that had been a part of the Cimarron runs of the early 1890s.¹ He shared his birthday with Abraham Lincoln, was born in Lincoln County, and like the former President, was also born in a log cabin. This series of coincidences laid the foundation for a strong affinity that the composer would have for the famous President for the rest of his life. Although he only lived in Oklahoma for five years, Harris, as an adult, would fondly recall his memories of his shepherd dog, his strong father, and a mother who constantly sang. It was a matter of pride to him that his family had been settlers in a young new territory, clearing the land, killing rattlesnakes, and farming the soil. Despite the limited residency, 62 years after his birth, Harris was elected to the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and also inducted into the Ponca Indian Nation as "Big Chief Music Maker."²

Harris had three brothers and a sister. All three of the brothers died in infancy, two of them from malaria, which attacked young LeRoy as well. It was his mother's continuing respiratory problems that led to the family's move to southern California in 1903, when LeRoy was only five years old. They made their new home on a farm in the San Gabriel Valley.³

¹Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 1.

²Ashley, 65.

³Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 1.

Harris' interest in music resulted from a home environment where his mother and father often sang folksongs and played the guitar. His mother also taught him piano lessons, and he eventually became familiar with Mozart sonatas and other works of the standard repertoire. He attended public schools, and played the clarinet in the Covina High School band and orchestra. His memories of public school mostly center around the problems he incurred as a smart, piano-playing boy, who was small of stature, until he reached high-school and grew eight inches in a single year. At that point, he became quite involved in athletics, playing football, baseball, and tennis. In his later years, he claimed to have been offered a contract with the Chicago Cubs, which he rejected, because he did not think he was advanced enough to play at that level.⁴

Harris' college education lacked consistency, continuity, and completion.

Stehman cites evidence that Harris attended the University of California-Southern

Branch, which later became the University of California at Los Angeles, and the

University of California-Berkeley. The only record Stehman could find of any formal

music education is a single Ear Training Class, among other courses in English, German,

Biology, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology, Jurisprudence, Military Training,

Hygiene, Physical Education, and Penmanship. Harris enlisted as a private in the

American Expeditionary Forces near the end of World War I, and received training in

heavy artillery. Stehman could find no record of active duty.⁵

Harris recalls his formal education with a much different perspective. After the end of World War I, he returned to Berkeley as a special student. He recalls writing a large work for chorus and orchestra "in the fullness of my ignorance." His philosophy

⁴Stehman, *Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography*, 1; and Ashley, 65.

⁵Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 2.

⁶Ashley, 67.

professor gave the piece to Alfred Hertz, whom Harris thought of as a "great Wagnerian conductor." Hertz sent a telegram, requesting that Harris come to his home for an appointment. He recalls that the conductor encouraged him in pursuing a career in composition, and urged him to "leave anything faintly resembling a university as quickly as possible." Hertz suggested that Harris should study privately with Albert Elkus, but Elkus discouraged Harris, saying that European students in composition had already perfected their technique by the time they had reached Harris' age, and he would never catch up to them. It was this rejection from Elkus that really provided a motivation for Harris to pursue a career in composition, and it was then that he began to study with Arthur Farwell in Los Angeles.8

While Stehman documented Harris' education as "sporadic," Harris remembers his time at Berkeley as a very intense period of his life. It was there that he read all of the plays of Ibsen, Shakespeare, and Shaw, along with the works of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. He studied Hindu philosophy, and developed an interest in the labor movements around San Francisco. He socialized in study groups that engaged in intense discussions relating history and sociology to different philosophies, and Ashley quotes Harris as saying, "Only one conviction saved me from becoming a highly trained worker in the field of labor administration--this conviction has been strengthened as the years accumulated: that mankind is essentially an emotional organism, not a rational one; and that all progress is achieved out of the distress of necessity, not out of the obvious logic of reason. This conviction guided me ever more deeply into music..."

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

It was also during his time at Berkeley that he met Charlotte Schwartz. They were married in 1922 and divorced by 1924. The marriage did produce one child, a daughter by the name of Jean. By early 1925, he had met another woman, Sylvia Feningston, and she became his second wife in 1926. Roy Harris' marriages merit attention for two reasons. First, his younger years were filled with instability and constant fluctuation of jobs, studies, and even partners. Second, the relationship with his fourth wife, Johana, a trained and accomplished musician, proved to be a significant influence on Harris, bringing stability to his career and collaboration on many musical compositions and projects, including *American Symphony - 1938*.

It was during these years when his first marriage ended and his second relationship began, 1924-25, that Harris studied composition with Arthur Farwell in Los Angeles. The extent of Harris' studies with Farwell are not well documented, but it is known that Farwell influenced Harris to look at aesthetics and the elements of music from a fresh perspective, and it appears that Farwell was excited by his student's work in these rudiments. It was also Farwell that made Harris aware of the poetry of Walt Whitman, whose words carried a tremendous influence on many of Harris' compositions and settings in the ensuing years. ¹¹ It seems that his teacher also had a hand in Harris obtaining his first professional jobs in the musical arena, as a critic for the *Los Angeles Illustrated Daily News* and a teacher of advanced harmony at the Hollywood Conservatory of Music and Arts. ¹² Farwell also conducted the first documented

¹⁰Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 2.

¹¹Ibid., 3.

¹²These were probably part-time jobs, because in his interview with Patricia Ashley, Harris related that he made money during those years as a truck driver, and Stehman verifies that Harris made deliveries for a dairy while he was studying with Farwell.

performance of a Harris work, when he led the Pasadena Community Chorus in a performance of the *Fantasy for Chorus and Trio*.¹³

While he was studying with Farwell, Harris also wrote an *Andante* for orchestra which was submitted to Howard Hanson, who conducted the piece at the Eastman School of Music's 1926 American Composers' Concerts.¹⁴ The piece also won a competition in which the prize was a performance by the New York Philharmonic at the Lewisohn Stadium Concerts in the summer of 1926.¹⁵ Harris had not left the state of California since he moved there at age five, but he quit his truck-driving job and borrowed some money so he could go to New York and hear the piece in performance.¹⁶

Harris had expected to return to California in two weeks, but things did not work out as he had planned. While he was in New York, he spent time at the MacDowell Colony, where he met Aaron Copland. Stehman describes the events of Harris' sojourn to New York:

Following the Lewisohn Stadium performance of the *Andante*, he (Harris) was invited to a party at the home of Alma Wertheim, of the Morgenthau family. Mrs. Wertheim offered the young man financial assistance to study abroad, a windfall Harris agreed to accept only with the understanding that he would repay her if he did not feel he had achieved to his expectations. Aaron Copland recommended Nadia Boulanger, with whom he himself spent a rewarding period of study, and Harris and Sylvia (his second wife) left for France before the end of the summer. 17

¹³Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 3.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵While Ashley reports that this piece was written when Harris was under Farwell's "tutelage," Stehman points out that Farwell had recommended Harris work with composer-conductor Modeste Altschuler on the orchestration of this piece.

¹⁶Cobb, 251.

¹⁷Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 4.

Harris and Sylvia settled at first in Chatou, which is by the Seine river. Later they moved to a house on the estate of a Madame Boudin in the village of Juziers. Harris would commute to Paris on weekends for his lessons with Boulanger. These studies continued from the summer of 1926 through 1929. He was initially supported by the money from Alma Wertheim, but later received two Guggenheim Fellowships which made his extended stay in France possible. While he was in France, Ashley relates that his life must have been one of "idyllic introspection and creativity," for in her 1968 interview with Harris, he did not relate any memories of actual events that took place during his stay. He did say that his concepts of time changed, in that the dimensions of each day became longer, while the dimension of each year seemed to diminish. 19

Harris was quite the independent student while he was working with Boulanger. In fact, Boulanger called Harris her "autodidact." He insisted that he develop his own course of study, which included the examination of selected passages by Bach, Palestrina, Lassus, and the string quartets of Beethoven.²⁰ Of the studies in Paris, Stehman says that, "by his own account, Harris resisted what he called Boulanger's 'Academie Francaise' approach to disciplined, systematic musical study, likening the results it produced to the neatly-manicured grounds of the Palace of Versailles."²¹ One can begin to see a distinct pattern of independence in all aspects of Harris' life, his late start in formal music training after a period of uncertainty, his relationships with women

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ashley, 68.

²⁰Cobb, 251.

²¹Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 4.

and lack of commitment to marriage, and his strong sense of individuality in his studies with respected and renowned composition teachers.

It was during this period of study in France that his marriage to Sylvia began to crumble. It appears that Sylvia wished to pursue a career in acting, and the two became more and more incompatible with each other. Stehman claims that during this period, Boulanger "supplemented her role as musical mentor with the duties of matchmaker," when she introduced him to a French woman to whom he eventually became engaged. When that relationship did not develop, Boulanger brought in a young student of architecture, Hilda Hemingway.²²

During his time in France, Harris completed several important works, which included the *Concerto for Piano, String Quartet, and Clarinet*, the *Piano Sonata 1928*, a symphony, *American Portrait 1929*, and he had evidently planned a second.²³ However, the period of study in Paris with Boulanger was never brought to formal closure. Instead, Harris suffered a tragic fall at his residence outside of Paris, and he broke his back. After a period of recuperation in France, he returned to New York, where he underwent the Albi operation and received a spinal graft.²⁴ He could not play the piano for nearly six months, and it was during this time that he learned to compose away from the keyboard. Harris acknowledged this event as a watershed in his development, because it caused him to refine his concepts of melody, harmony, and texture, which in turn broadened his

²²Ibid. Patricia Ashley claims in her 1968 interview with Harris that Hilda Hemingway was a niece of the poet, George Bernard Shaw, but Stehman refutes this, saying there is no documentation to support such a claim.

²³Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 5.

²⁴This procedure usually involves harvesting bone from the patient's hip (or possibly using a donated bone) to use as grafting material to reconnect or reinforce the fractured or severed spine. The calcium in the bone graft promotes natural growth and fusion in the damaged area. Recovery involves an extended period of immobilization.

compositional technique. After the surgery in New York, he returned to California, where he was joined by Hilda, and they were married in Pasadena.²⁵

The marriage did not last long, however, and noting that Hilda disliked almost everything about the United States except her husband, Ashley reports that Hilda's father made a trip to California, requesting that Harris bring "home" his daughter. Harris explained that he simply must live in the United States, and Hilda returned to Britain to be with her family. Harris plunged himself into teaching, maintaining a position at Mills College in Oakland, while benefiting from a Creative Fellowship of the Pasadena Music and Arts Association.²⁶

A defining moment in Harris' young career came in 1931, when his teacher, Arthur Farwell, introduced him as a "genius" to the international music community in a now-famous article in the *Musical Quarterly*. Farwell's assertions and insights into Harris' music and methods are discussed in Chapter 3 of this paper. This article plunged Harris into the popular American musical scene, and when Serge Koussevitsky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, extended a call for a "great symphony from the west," it led to a collaboration between the composer and the conductor. The result was the *First Symphony 1933*, which Koussevitsky commissioned and later premiered in Boston.²⁷

Johana, Wife and Musical Partner

Because of his increasing popularity, Harris had the opportunity to accept a teaching position at the Juilliard School in 1934.²⁸ While he was in New York, he also

²⁵Ashley, 68.

²⁶Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 5.

²⁷Cobb, 251.

²⁸Ashley, 70.

taught at the Westminster Choir College in Princeton. During his time at Juilliard, he met and fell in love with the pianist Beulah Duffey, and Harris recalled that she was known as the "Queen of Juilliard." Duffey was a child prodigy in both piano performance and composition, and she had joined the Juilliard faculty at age fifteen, as its youngest member. They were married in October of 1936, and Harris renamed his new bride Johana Harris, in honor of Johann Sebastian Bach.²⁹ Stehman describes the partnership that changed Harris' inability to commit to a long-term relationship:

The couple formed a close personal and artistic partnership that, occasional marital strains (especially during the early 50s) notwithstanding, was to survive for nearly forty-three years...She proved to be an extraordinarily rare individual who was able not only to weather the peregrinations and storms of a hectic, at times seemingly nomadic existence, but also to maintain a balance between the dual concerns of career and family, serving as a devoted, virtually revered, mother to the five children who arrived between the mid-40s and mid-50s: Patricia (1944), Shaun (1946), Daniel (1947), Maureen (1955), and Lane (1957).³⁰

Harris' accomplishments during the decade of the 1930s outlined those years as perhaps the most crucial period in his career. He experienced great popularity, and emerged as a compositional figure of national prominence. The introductory article by Farwell and the relationship with Koussevitsky that produced premieres of his first and third symphonies must have played a tremendous role in his rise to acclamation. But of equal importance was his marriage to Johana, because he finally found "the artistic companionship of a mate of comparable genius, a spur to his creative work, and a measure of domestic stability." Harris said it was during the early years of his

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 6.

³¹Ibid., 7.

relationship with Johana that he "became less apprehensive about the future and more deeply devoted to the present."32

One aspect of the marriage that may have contributed to its longevity is that, no matter the responsibilities and commitments that Roy brought to the partnership in terms of his composing or teaching, Johana never ceased to be a performing artist. The three previous wives seem to have given up their identities to assume the identity of Mrs. Roy Harris. Although having enough influence over his fourth bride to completely change her name seems to suggest that their relationship would be just like the first three, Johana provided Roy with inspiration, and they shared in the responsibilities of many of his teaching positions later in life. Johana's collaboration with the Tommy Dorsey band's reading and rehearsal of American Symphony - 1938 was not an exceptional event. Actually, it was quite typical for Johana to perform the piano parts on most of Harris' ensemble works, and it appears that after their marriage, the piano was included as an ensemble instrument in a higher percentage of his pieces. In her documentary and research work with The Harris Project, Louise Spizizen has become convinced that Johana actually helped Roy compose, or at least complete, many of his works involving piano.³³ In a Roy Harris discography included in the December 1968 Stereo Review, Johana Harris was listed as the pianist on nine of the twenty-nine recordings, almost all of the recordings that called for piano.³⁴

Teaching Positions and Recognition

³² Ashley, 69.

³³Spizizen, Interview by the author.

³⁴David Hall, "Roy Harris: The Music on Records," *Stereo Review* 21, no. 6 (December, 1968): 73.

It is interesting to note that Roy Harris held a great number of prestigious teaching posts in his career, and yet he never completed a formal degree program of any kind. Despite this paradox, Harris took the responsibilities of his teaching positions very seriously, and he was deeply committed to the craft of teaching. In a 1968 interview, he prefaced his remarks about his teaching posts with some comments he called his "convictions about teaching."

- 1. People should not teach something which they have not themselves done. Why? Because they are apt to become unreasonable task masters-requiring and expecting too much--even that which is not practical or possible.
- 2. It is a great handicap for teachers to rely solely on teaching for a livelihood. Why? Because their dependence puts them at the mercy of those they teach; which would make their teaching an act of fear rather than of sharing.
- 3. Everybody does not possess the capacity to learn at a certain given time in his life; and many can never learn certain workable principles for a great variety of reasons; one of the strongest being desire; another interest; another concentration; another enthusiasm; etc., etc.³⁵

In addition to the previously mentioned teaching positions at the Juilliard School and Westminster Choir School, Harris taught at Cornell University from 1940-42, under the auspices of a Carnegie Creative Grant. Simultaneously, he maintained a professorship and an El Pomar Creative Grant at Colorado College, from 1940-48. In 1945, he became the Director of Music in the United States Office of War Information, and he held that position through the completion of World War II. From 1948-49, he was the Composer-in-Residence at Utah State College. He left Utah State in 1949 to become Composer-in-Residence and professor of music at Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1951, he became the recipient of a five-year Mellon Educational Trust,

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³⁵Ashley, 69.

which took him to the Pennsylvania College for Women. While he was there, he also served as the Executive Director of the Pittsburgh International Contemporary Music Festival in 1952. He was on the faculty at Indiana University from 1956-58, and he was the Founder and Director of the International String Congress from 1958-1961. He returned to California to accept a position as Composer-in-Residence at The University of California at Los Angeles, where he remained from 1961-70, and from 1970-76, he was on the faculty at California State University, Los Angeles.³⁶

Several important details should be noted, regarding this itinerant lifestyle. Many of Harris' positions were funded partially or entirely by grants or fellowships, and most of these teaching positions included duties shared with Johana, and although he had more of these "creative grant" and "composer in residence" posts than regular professorships, there was almost always some form of teaching duty or festival organization responsibility that went along with the residency. Johana also taught at separate institutions on occasion, including Lebanon Valley College in Annville, Pennsylvania, and California Institute of the Arts. Even more amazing is the amount of composition that Harris was able to accomplish in the midst of all of these moves. Harris' composition output consists of 178 completed works, not including incomplete works such as the *American Symphony - 1938*, and over 80 percent of those works were written on commission. So, one could assume that not only did Harris work well under pressure, but that pressure must have pushed him to always work at capacity.³⁷

Among his students were William Schuman, Peter Schickele, John Vincent, Reuel Lahmer, George Lynn (who became director of the Westminster Choir during the 1960s), Robert French (who founded the

³⁶Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 7.

³⁷Ashley, 69.

Louisville Academy of Music), James Niblock, Wray Lundquist (who served as one of his most important copyists), and composer/conductor Keith Clark. Some (*e.g.* Schuman, Lynn, and French) maintained warm feelings toward and a continuing esteem for Harris in the decades following their studies with him, while others grew apart from their former teacher, occasionally, as with John Vincent, even coming to regard him as a dangerous rival.³⁸

Harris maintained a great deal of professional and honorary affiliations, among them the American Society of Composers, Arrangers, and Publishers (ASCAP), and Broadcast Music, Incorporated (BMI). He was also a member of the American Composers Alliance, the Composers' Forum-Laboratory, the Fellowship of American Composers, and several other professional organizations. Among his recognitions and awards are three Guggenheim Fellowships, an Intercollegiate Fellowship for composition, teaching and lecturing, and the Pasadena Music and Arts Association Fellowship. He was also a recipient of the Award of Merit from the National Association of Composers and Conductors, an award from the National Committee for Music Appreciation (for the Folksong Symphony), a citation from the United States Treasury Department, an Honorary Doctor of Music from Rutgers University, the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Medal for eminent services to chamber music, and a second honorary Doctor of Music from the University of Rochester. He was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, recognized as Man of the Year by the Pittsburgh Junior Chamber of Commerce, and received additional honorary doctorates from the Philadelphia Academy of Music, and Westminster Choir College. He was knighted in Britain and in Sweden, and recognized as the Honorary Composer Laureate of California, to name but a few of his many honors.³⁹

³⁸Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 8.

³⁹Ibid., 10-11.

Roy Harris lived a very vital and vigorous life. In addition to the fall in France that broke his back, the composer had survived a near-fatal automobile accident on the Pennsylvania Turnpike in 1955, and a serious bronchial viral attack in late 1963. However, during his last decade, the 1970s, his health and most noticeably his memory, began to show signs of decline. But even after finishing his last work in 1976, Rejoice and Sing, he continued to plan projects and sketch out symphonies, even though they never really progressed past the draft stage. Although he had witnessed a real decline in popularity during the 1950s and 60s, he enjoyed a renewed interest in his works and music during the last few years of his life. Important elements in this rise in popularity were the establishment of the Roy Harris Collection at California State University, Los Angeles, and the formation of the Roy Harris Society, which was influential in the recording of several of Harris' works on the new Varese Sarabande label, and the publication of several works by Belwin Mills. During the summer of 1979, Harris suffered a fall in his studio. Although he seemed to be recovering from the injuries received in the accident, his general condition continued to deteriorate, and he passed away in October, after being moved to a rest home in Santa Monica.⁴⁰

⁴⁰Ibid., 12.

CHAPTER 3

THE MUSICAL STYLE OF ROY HARRIS

General Observations

Some time around Harris' period of study with Boulanger in Paris, he sent an undated letter to his former teacher, Arthur Farwell, outlining a plan that he had laid out for an eight-to-ten year course of self-study. Stehman actually calls the letter "one of the seminal documents of his (Harris') career."

In the letter, he expressed the intention of making "a fresh survey of music's resources--that is what can be done in the way of melodic invention--how form can become. . . an autogenetic unfolding--an organic growth melodically, rhythmically, harmonically--how counterpoint can be used to really suggest the harmony and rhythmic design." This plan was to comprise "2 years to study only melodic contours--2 years for a contrapuntal substitution of harmonic research--2 years for form and orchestration. . . and I will undertake about 8 new compositions simultaneously and work each composition out in its phase. . .then harmonizing my melodic contours--then a contrapuntal substitution for the harmonic coloring, being at the same time further study in melodic augmentation. Then, a study of form in relation to climax--rhythmic, tonal, and orchestral fatigue. At the same time I shall examine and keep examples from all early Italian, Flemish, early Spanish and early German and French music that I can gain access to. At the end I shall have gained... such a technique... as does not exist today... and a critique of musical formulas with copious notes and examples toward arousing fresh voung talents to a new standard of composition and new values. Then I shall have 20 years left in which to write and teach composers. I shall somehow get a small ranch in California and live on and work the soil, and insist that my pupils do the same part of the time."1

It was a great plan. But as was often the case with many Harris projects, the plan was never completed; there was no balance between his sense of idealism and actual reality. Nevertheless, as Stehman points out, the plan does reveal much of Harris'

¹Ibid., 5.

"attitude toward and dissatisfaction with the existing musical literature and aesthetics, and points the way toward some of the fundamentals of his mature style and technique."²

The letter may have actually worked against Harris in a strange sort of way, for it was in 1931 that the previously mentioned article by Farwell introduced Roy Harris formally into professional music circles, and the plan that Harris had so carefully outlined in his letter to his teacher had an obvious influence on some of the material that Farwell included in his article:

Gentlemen, a genius--but keep your hats on! I am aware that Mr. Harris has already had a measure of acclaim from different quarters, but I am equally aware that what has been said of him has been rather wide of the mark and has not brought forward those matters concerning his work which should demand our attention. Already a peculiar feeling of vitality attaches to the mention of his name, which in a fugitive way is coming to be regarded as a symbol of the most advanced modern musical thought...Aside from his manifest talent, my grounds for this belief lay in his mental vitality and breadth, in his insistence upon the subjecting of every accepted musical dictum and tradition, technical and spiritual, to a searching scrutiny, and a determination to work out a new, vital and creative way in every musical sphere and relation. That he is now steadily and rapidly coming to the fore is no mere chance of fluctuating musical styles and opinions. It is the result of a premeditated and thoroughly prepared attack upon the entire front of musical issues and resources.3

In this manner, Roy Harris was presented to the musical community with great acclaim by his teacher, but this praise was not based as much on his accomplishments, as on the potential that he demonstrated for future successes. In many ways, Harris was his own greatest protagonist. Some 52 years after the Farwell article, and two years after Harris' death, Marshall Bialosky writes in a tongue-in-cheek memorial, "How many composers of today do we know whose careers were launched by such comments from

²Ibid.

³Farwell, 18.

important personages in the world of music? What went wrong then? Some of Harris' enemies say that if he spent ten percent of the time with his music that he spent promoting it and 'operating,' he could have realized his potential."⁴

Walter Piston supported the idea that Harris was a self-promoter. In a 1934 issue of *Modern Music*, he wrote:

Whatever may be the difference of opinion in regard to his compositions, it seems that everyone agrees that to be shown a score by Harris himself is a real experience. His personality is contagiously enthusiastic and his honest appreciation of the beauties of his own work is refreshing. His playing and singing both have that kind of sketchy inaccuracy one expects in composers, but one is somehow left with the impression that a great work has been revealed.⁵

Even Harris' critics acknowledged that there was something new and different about his music, and it was not necessarily the musical features that Harris espoused as being uniquely his that created the attraction to the music. In that same article, Piston continued:

It is doubtful whether Harris is aware of the exact nature of the most expressive and telling qualities in his music. The slightly uncouth awkwardness, the nervous restlessness, he would undoubtedly consider defects rather than qualities. If these characteristics are due, as some think, to a lack of technique, let us hope the man can in some way be prevented from acquiring a technique which would rob his musical language of some of its valuable attributes.⁶

Almost all who write about Harris' musical style note a difference between his early style and his "mature" style. In his entry in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Donald Cobb says that, "Harris' early works are stark and primitive with an abundance of open 4ths and 5ths, and long spans which are almost completely

⁴Bialosky, 11.

⁵ Walter Piston, "Roy Harris," *Modern Music*, (January-February, 1934): ??.

⁶Ibid

monodic." However, he continues to point out that, "As Harris' music fell more under the influence of folk idioms, his harmonies became much richer and his melodies grew more clearly defined in shape." Rapid shifts in meter, which Cobb thought were very common to many composers from the 1920s through the 1940s, gave way in Harris' mature works to irregular accents and stresses within a more constantly maintained meter. The works that received the greatest acclaim were his *Third Symphony* and his *Folksong Symphony*, and these just happen to be the works that surround *American Symphony* - 1938. With these popular works, Harris had at least reached a style that was mature enough to appeal to the likes of Koussevitsky, and also to the American concertgoing public, as evidenced by the fact that in 1940, his *Folksong Symphony* won a citation from the National Committee for Music Appreciation.8

Harris' Autogenetic Compositional Techniques

Harris' compositional approach was based on an underlying principle that he called "autogenesis," meaning that a melodic design or a harmonic pattern flowers from a seed motive, with each phrase following the first and relating back in one of two ways. It could either "launch" itself from a figure in the last measure of its immediate predecessor, or it could refer back to a seed motive. Harris' aim was to produce the effect of gradual, organic growth. This often gives his music the impression of unfolding in an additive fashion in "autogenetically-generated blocks of texture." The next logical step in developing this autogenetic style would be to include in the unfolding process, anticipations of one or more elements of the new material.

⁷Cobb, 251.

⁸Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 10.

⁹Ibid., 19-20.

Because of the relationship between melody, harmony, rhythm, and form in Harris' concept of "autogenetic" composition, it is extremely difficult to address these elements separately; and in the discussion that follows, there is a great deal of unavoidable overlap between each of these compositional building blocks.

Melodic Characteristics

In his 1968 thesis, Sidney Thurber Cox, a composition student of Harris at Cornell, described the significance of Harris' autogenetic principles:

That aspect of the art of Roy Harris which, to the critical and creative mind, has made him one of the most important figures in modern music. . . is his ability to devise melodic lines of such extent and subtlety that a true organic growth can be perceived, in which each succeeding part extends or varies each preceding one until a fully matured and satisfying whole is developed.¹⁰

Farwell thought that after form, "melody is unquestionably Harris' next strongest stand, though these two aspects must be taken together, since there is no use contemplating a form unless there is first a melody which it is to present and develop." Harris thought that a great melody should have a curve, it should have direction, and it should have balance, although balance was to have nothing to do with symmetry. Harris desired balance between pitch space, the intervals created between melodic notes, and rhythmic design. Most of Harris' melodies do not have symmetrical phrase-sequences, being constructed in odd numbered measure groupings or patterns. Harris feels comfortable mixing modes or shifting modes in the middle of a melodic line, if it adds to the variety of his melodic contour and curve. The greatest authority on Harris' melodic concepts would have to be the composer himself. In a letter to a student, he explained:

¹⁰Sidney Thurber Cox, "The Autogenetic Principle in the Melodic Writing of Roy Harris," (M.M. thesis, Cornell University, 1948), 1.

¹¹Farwell, 24.

Melody is two-dimensional. It proceeds upward or downward in pitch space and forward in time. Its time-space qualities, therefore, can be graphed like the contour of mountains or a city skyline, or, for that matter, the stock exchange. This we call melodic contour. It is comprised of two elements: the pitch design and the rhythm design.¹²

The first of Harris' two melodic dimensions, pitch design, can be understood in relation to the curve, or the succession of curves, created by a melody. The outline of a melody, like a story or drama, can be understood in terms of rise and fall, ascent and descent, climax and resolution. Approaching melody from this contour perspective, one could infer that a straight-line curve would promote a sense of monotony, while intervallic leaps would promote a heightened sense of interest.¹³

The second melodic dimension that Harris describes, rhythm design, controls the breadth and size of the melodic curve. If, as Harris suggests, the rhythm of the melody satisfies the dimension of time, then rhythm controls the duration and intensity of the melodic motion. In this sense, tempo would be a component of the element of rhythm. In the same letter quoted earlier, Harris discusses the balance between pitch design and rhythm design in his melodies:

- 1. If the pitch design is complicated, the rhythm design should be relatively simple.
- 2. If the rhythm design is complicated, the pitch design should be relatively simple.
- 3. If both the rhythm design and the pitch design are complicated, the melodic contour is apt to be incomprehensible.
- 4. If both the pitch design and the rhythm design are simple, the melodic contour is apt to be uninteresting. ¹⁴

¹²Roy Harris, in a letter to Sidney Thurber Cox (April 28, 1948), quoted in Sidney Thurber Cox, "The Autogenetic Principle," 2.

¹³Cox, 3-4.

¹⁴Harris, quoted in Cox, 6.

This balance between rhythm and pitch design was very evident to listeners and critics in describing the difference between Harris' early works and his mature style, clear evidence that the composer's efforts led to the desired result. The rapid shifts in meter, common in Harris' works of the 1920s and early 1930s, gave way in his later writing to irregular stresses within more constantly maintained minim meters. Cox supports this observation, noting that rhythmic complications in Harris' early works tended to be expressed by changing time signatures, but in his mature style, he used accents and articulation patterns, often connecting patterns across bar-lines within a constant time signature.¹⁵

A very clear example of this melodic approach can be found in *American Symphony - 1938*. In the first major formal section of the piece, measures 6-73, the piano is the main melodic instrument. For the first "curve" of the melody, the pitch design is very disjunct, emphasizing the intervallic leap of a 4th. However, the rhythm design remains very simple, centering on groupings of 8 eighth-notes, with each grouping beginning and ending with the interval of a fourth. In measure 17, the rhythmic design becomes much more complicated, with accents and groupings that begin to pair the eighth-notes into groups of 3 and 6, interspersed with groups of 4 and 2, creating syncopations and accents on weak beats or up-beats. However, this complicated rhythm design only takes place after the listener has become acclimated to the disjunct pitch design (see Example 1).

¹⁵Cox, 6.

Example 1: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 6-38



The "autogenesis" of this melody reflects Harris' opinion that, "The development of melody depends on two factors: (a) Reiteration; and (b) Variation.

- 1. If there is too great an adherence to reiteration, development is apt to be uninteresting.
- 2. If the variation is too remote from its antecedent, it may be incomprehensible. 16

Harmonic Characteristics

In his essay , "Feminism, Politics, and the Ninth," Pieter Van den Toorn discusses the unique relationship that exists between an emotional connection with a piece of music

¹⁶Harris, letter, quoted in Cox, 7.

and the desire or need that arises from that emotional connection to analyze and dissect the piece, perhaps to even discover the reasons for the emotional rapport:

The assumption here is that the source of the attraction, the source of our conscious intellectual concern with music, is the passionate nature of the relationship that is struck. But this relationship is given immediately in experience and is not open to the inquiry that it inspires. . . . Moments of aesthetic rapport, of self-forgetting-at-oneness with music, are immediate. The mind, losing itself in contemplation, becomes immersed in the musical object, becomes one with that object. . . . Thinking in and thinking about music may be mutually exclusive propositions, and the nature of their interaction may be indirect. ¹⁷

In a philosophical way, this explains the diverse opinions regarding Harris' music that are expressed by the composer, his teacher, his students, and his critics. Nowhere is this diversity of opinion more prevalent than in discussions regarding Harris' harmonic style. The composer Harris, the teacher Farwell, and the student Cox, each experienced an emotional connection to Harris' unique ideas and autogenetic principles, but many of his critics could not *hear* the uniqueness in Harris' music, and they attempted to describe his harmonic style in traditional terms. As Farwell announced, "His harmonies do not sound as they look on paper." 18

Henry Cowell wrote about Harris' harmonic style in a 1932 essay:

He began by writing in the crudest manner I ever remember seeing from anyone who thought that his products were compositions: unbelievable commonplaces of harmony, like a schoolboy's first exercises. . . . To talk with Harris, one would gather that his music must be radical. On hearing the music, one finds it sounding quite conventional. . . Modernism and originality have been so associated with harmony that if one performs for a sophisticated audience a work with new harmonies it is taken for granted as modern; but if one performs for them a work with old types of harmony but with real innovations in

¹⁷Pieter C. Van den Toorn, *Music, Politics, and the Academy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 12-13.

¹⁸Farwell, 28.

rhythm, form, or even melody, it will be called old-fashioned, and the newer elements will pass unnoticed.

Harris has suffered from this lack of perception. His harmony is apt to be of a familiar sort; once in a while he uses simple polychords effectively, but his is usually content with ordinary triads or secondary seventh-chords. . . Also, his music is founded, in a certain way, on this commonplace harmony. That is to say, he lacks a natural use of polyphony. What little polyphony there is to be found in his works seems a bit forced, as though he felt the lack of it, and put it in willy-nilly. And even this little counterpoint is based on chords; it is not conceived from the standpoint of melodic line first and harmonic combination second, but the reverse. ¹⁹

A contrasting opinion is enthusiastically presented in Farwell's article. One would scarcely believe that these two men were writing about the same composer:

What shall be said of Harris' re-constitution of harmony? Nothing less than a treatise would suffice. He had discovered a new harmonic ocean in the years 1924-25, into which I was privileged to peer a bit, and he has now had seven years more in which to navigate and chart it. I have caught up with his conception of form, I have grasped his melodic scheme, but while I have dipped a considerable distance into his harmonic waters I have as yet found no plummet long enough to sound its ultimate depths. I have assembled the elements of its science, but we are here on the inscrutable borderland of intuition. It seems that no composer has hitherto found so familiar, consistent and logical a use of remote harmonies in close association, so complete a harmonic emancipation evolved in a symmetry and order which defies the disintegrating effects of license and chaos, and at once so intuitive as to defy analysis.²⁰

Harris declared that he never thought of harmonic units larger than the triad. In an effort to move away from the harmonic conventions of the 19th century, he revalued triad harmonies and their inversions. For example, he did not think of a seventh chord as such. He thought of that harmonic grouping, instead, as two overlapping triads, each of

¹⁹Henry Cowell, "Roy Harris" in *American Composers on American Music*, ed. Henry Cowell, (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., Inc., 1962), 64-66.

²⁰Farwell. 27.

which could move away from that sonority in its own tonal direction in harmonic progression, as long as each triad follows its own rules.²¹

In order to develop and understand these rules, he explored deeply the effects of all the positions of the major and minor triads, and how through a common tone method, a single triad could be related to many more triads than are taught in conventional harmony. Conventional function and relationships are expanded when each pitch in the triad is treated as a possible root, third, or fifth of other major or minor chords. C for example, could be the root of C major or C minor, the third of A-flat major or A minor, or the fifth of F major or F minor. When Harris carried this plan out with the third and fifth of a chord, and applied the same technique to triads of the subdominant and dominant, he could draw relationships between a tonic and virtually any other triad.²²

Harris' concepts of a bottom voice, or bass line, were founded on the overtone series, with the most important intervals being the perfect 4th and 5th, what he called the "organum" sonorities. Principal chord types were major and minor triads, often overlapping to create 7th-chord and "stacked thirds" harmonies. In his mature style he generally used triads as building blocks in his construction of polychordal structures.²³

Harris also developed an overtone-based classification of polychords within a harmonic "color" spectrum, extending from "savage dark" to "savage bright," the harmonies being placed on his spectrum according to the degrees to which the notes of the upper triad of each polychord are reinforced by the overtones of the bottom note of

²¹Ibid., 28.

²²Bialosky, 16.

²³Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 18-19.

the lower triad. He used the series in a similar manner to rank by color the three positions of the simple triad.²⁴

In Harris' own words:

Harmony should represent what is in the melody, without being enslaved by the tonality in which the melody lies. At the same time, harmony should center around a tonality sufficiently to indicate that tonality, because tonality is absolutely essential to form, and to harmonic contrast. Harmony should be considered from three standpoints, as serving three different functions: first, for the architecture of tonalities; second, for melodic delineation; third, for dynamic resonance.²⁵

It is important to note that while Stehman quotes Harris' descriptions of his harmonic ideas, he also observes that Harris never fully elaborated on these ideas. Stehman believes that of the three functions Harris mentioned in the previous quote, the first seems related to his frequent practice of writing an entire formal section of a piece over a harmonic structure that had been sketched out first. The second function seems to refer to Harris' ideas on the relationship between harmony and melody, noting that in Harris' works, there is often a noticeable tension "involving support and contrast between the harmonic implications of the melody, with its prevailing modal mixtures, and the supporting chords." The third function most likely refers to Harris' orchestrations, and his voicings, registrations, and doublings.²⁶

The introductory section of *American Symphony - 1938* highlights several harmonic features that are characteristic of Harris' writing. The introduction lasts from the beginning only through the downbeat of measure 6, but in this short span of only eleven beats, Harris outlines the harmonic language of the entire movement. The most

²⁴Ibid

²⁵Harris, quoted in Farwell, 27; and in Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 19.

²⁶Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 19.

noticeable facet of this unique harmonic construction is the "curious tension," to borrow Stehmen's phrase, between the harmonies implied in the melodic material and the harmonies created in the supporting voices. In fact, the overlapping triadic harmonies are so prevalent in the trumpets and trombones, that one is more likely to notice the thick harmonic texture than the actual melodic line. This polychordal harmonic texture is significant to the formal construction of the piece. With only a rare exception, one triad is scored in the trumpets, and the other triad is scored in the trombones. Pitch location is the result of melodic design and voice leading; therefore, the inversion of the triad is of little or no consequence (see Example 2). When there is a pitch that is a "common tone" to both sounding triads, it usually occurs in the first trombone part. The chord qualities of the overlapping triads in the polychords are outlined on the following musical example.

Example 2: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-6



The penultimate polychord and the chord preceding it contain 3 stacked triads

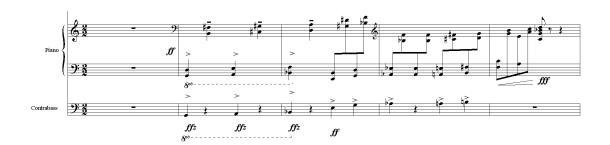
When the melodic voices in the polychordal texture are combined with the supporting voices, there appears to be harmonic tension and ambiguity. The rhythmic design and voicing in the piano part make it seem independent of the brass lines. Through the first four measures, Harris very clearly uses quintal harmony in the piano, with the string bass reinforcing the lowest pitch in the left hand part. When the perfect fifth in the left hand is combined with the fifth in the right hand, it creates the texture and sound of a major seventh chord. For example, the G and D combined with the B and F-sharp provide the four pitches for a G major seventh chord: G, B, D, and F-sharp. Although Harris professed that he never thought beyond the triad,²⁷ this chordal quality gives the piano part energy and drive, and that forward motion is emphasized when the

^{*} denotes a quartal or quintal harmony in lieu of a complete triad

²⁷Farwell, 27.

rhythm compresses from quarter notes to eighth notes. This quintal accompaniment appears to be in contrast to the polychordal texture created in the brass, but a closer analysis reveals that the piano part is actually very carefully coordinated with the brass polychords. The interval of the fifth that occurs in the left hand always reinforces one of the triads found in the brass polychords. For example, in measure 2, the G and D on beat 1 outline the G minor chord in the trumpets, and the A and E on beat 3 outline the A major chord found in trumpets and trombones. The intervals in the right hand that do not reinforce the polychordal texture happen during the rests in the brass line (see Example 3).

Example 3: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-5



The element that Harris uses to unify the polychordal texture with the quintal accompaniment is the harmonic supporting line found in the woodwinds. The woodwind parts appear to be simple ascending and descending arpeggios, when in reality the pitches used in this harmonic supporting line fulfill a very specific vertical function. Each time a note in the woodwind line occurs simultaneously with the brass, the woodwind notes reinforce at least one of the triads in the polychord. The woodwind notes that occur during the brass rests integrate the quintal harmonies in the right hand piano part (see Example 4). The simple overlapping eighth-note rhythmic pattern creates a flowing

countermelody, which will serve as the formal basis for the first extended melodic section in the piece.

Example 4: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-6



Rhythmic Characteristics

In the first half of the 20th century, when there was a strong focus on nationalistic styles and traits, Harris truly felt that there were remarkable differences between the way that American and European composers expressed rhythmic impulses.²⁸ In his 1932

²⁸Ashley, 69.

essay, "Problems of American Composers," Harris describes his impressions of American rhythmic originality:

Our sense of rhythm is less symmetrical than the European rhythmic sense. European musicians are trained to think of rhythm in its largest common denominator, while we are born with a feeling for its smallest units. That is why the jazz boys. . . are continually breaking out into superimposed rhythmic variations which were not written in the music. This asymmetrical balancing of rhythmic phrases is in our blood; it is not in the European blood. . . . We do not employ unconventional rhythms as a sophisticated gesture; we cannot avoid them. . . . Our problem is not to invent new rhythms and melodies and forms; our problem is to put down into translatable symbols and rhythms and consequent melodies and form those that assert themselves within us.²⁹

Harris attributed this "inborn" ability to the energy and ambition of a new generation of native Americans, commenting that the energy is reflected in American conversation, manner of speech, lifestyles, and even in the way children skip or play games. He felt that if a healthy balance was struck between rhythm, melodic content, and form, no one musical element would be particularly noticeable at the expense of the others. In other words, melody can only be overshadowed by rhythmic action if the rhythms are not an organic part of the unfolding melody and resulting form.³⁰

Farwell describes Harris' American rhythmic characteristics:

Throughout his rhythmic scheme, continual variation and poignant insistence on unexpected accents reign supreme. His orchestral scores bristle with rhythmic innovations. In the recent past, alternations of barlengths have been frequent enough, but now the bar itself is divided into a dizzying array of unexpected accents. Such effects give much of Harris' music an overflowing restless energy which stirs the blood and lifts the hearer, if indeed he can follow, to new levels of vitality.³¹

²⁹Roy Harris, "Problems of American Composers," in *American Composers on American Music*, ed. Henry Cowell, (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., Inc., 1962), 151.

³⁰Ibid., 153.

³¹Farwell, 30.

In addition to this rhythmic variation that was described in the opening piano melody of American Symphony - 1938 (see Example 1), Harris sometimes overlapped his rhythmic subdivisions--not necessarily to create aspects of hemiola, with rhythmic emphasis displaced in one particular meter by a different series of groupings or articulations. Harris' overlapping of subdivisions had a layering effect, creating two different simultaneous rhythmic pulses. In the third major formal division of the first movement of American Symphony - 1938, measures 170-260, the melody occurs in the saxophones. Though the alla breve rhythmic notation has remained constant throughout the entire movement, through the use of notated triplets Harris has placed this melodic material quite clearly in a compound duple meter. The trombones have melodic interjections and accompaniment figures during this section that reinforce the compound duple feel. The trumpets create a different rhythmic layer with their entrance in measure 186. Under the quarter-note triplets of the saxophones, the trumpets' combination of eighth-note triplets and the driving quarter-note/quarter-rest rhythms creates more than a simple duple subdivision. The effect is of a four pattern--not alla breve--but twice as fast as the melodic pulse (see Example 5).

Example 5: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 231-237



Formal Characteristics

It is not difficult to understand Roy Harris' goal to relate all of the musical elements of melody, harmony, and rhythm to each other, and analysis of his music has yielded some obvious examples of how he accomplished these relationships. It is, however, a challenge to explain the effect of autogenetic principles on the musical element of form. Autogenesis changes the classical understanding of formal development. There is no longer an "A theme" or a "B theme" in two different tonal areas, because all of Harris' themes are interrelated and can be traced back to the original seed motive. It would be rare to find a section in Harris' music that could be labeled "development," because the melody, harmony, and rhythmic patterns are constantly developing from the first statement. Likewise, there is no need for material that is created for the sole purpose of connecting one section of music to the next, so one ingredient that is completely absent from Harris' formal language is transition material.

To the listener, this can make the move from one formal section of a piece to the next seem abrupt, but to Harris it clarifies the elements that are related between the sections.

In his article announcing Roy Harris as a genius, Farwell attempts to deal first with the element of form in Harris' compositions:

We shall scarcely follow him without revising basically (or intelligently following his revisal of) the whole scheme of rhythm, melody and harmony, but more especially, we shall not do so without grasping the immense significance of his attack upon the problem of form.³²

Farwell continues to explain this new approach to formal construction, as he discusses Harris' *Piano Sonata, Opus 1*:

If we are looking for a proper quasi-classical sonata form in this first movement, with its nicely contrasted first and second themes and more or less appropriate padding, we shall be disappointed. But if we look for the *principle* of form, a unity in which every element is related and subsidiary to the whole, and for a concrete form representing that principle with severest logic, we shall find it in a degree and quality not only convincing in itself, but which fundamentally challenges in no uncertain terms that loose and flabby conception of form into which a century of romantic laxity has subtly and gradually seduced us.³³

It is not difficult to find *form* in Roy Harris' compositions. This does not mean that all of his pieces have *a* form, but each definitely has a clearly defined shape, which is usually obvious at a first hearing or glance at the score. Major formal divisions are not merely separated by a cadence and the start of a new melodic phrase or idea. Because Harris thinks transition sections are not necessary, in much of his music formal divisions are marked by a combination of changing tonal centers, meters, tempos, rhythms, or thematic materials. Again, to the listener, this can make the move from one formal section of a piece to the next seem abrupt. Farwell also addresses this issue:

³²Farwell, 18.

³³Ibid., 20.

This astonishing capacity for re-constituting the germ-theme in infinite variety in respect to melodic line, rhythm and harmonic reference, is one of the most outstanding elements of Harris' achievement, and places him on a very high level with regard to the faculty of invention. Repetition is so completely, disturbingly absent from his movements that I can well imagine many hearers trained in the obvious will fail to perceive this organic continuity. . . . Here we have a glimpse at the principle of germination and organic growth, which we shall discover is to reach out, embrace and determine the formal character of every composition of Harris from its first note to its last, and for all his pungent originality and modernism, is to strike deeply into the springs of form-generation.³⁴

An example of this autogenetic unfolding can be found in the opening measures of American Symphony - 1938. The "seed" of this opening section is the very simple step-wise motion in the brass parts. Only two eighth notes in duration, the seed figure is descending by whole step in the first trumpet part, by half step in the two lower trumpet parts, and ascending by half step in the trombones. The "seed" is immediately germinated by adding an anacrucis to the very next statement on beat 3. This now leaves a figure in measure 1 that can be altered slightly in measure 2, with the descending seed transposed down by a step (with one exception), and the ascending seed transposed up by a step. The second portion of the measure remains the same. Through measures 3-4, the two-note seed is developed through a series of rhythmic and pitch variations, and by measure 5, the seed is stated with the anacrucis before the downbeat; and interestingly, in the second half of the measure, a three-note anacrusis precedes the motive, and a downbeat is added after it, making the seed motive itself a preparation for an important arrival (see Example 2). As one would expect with Harris' ideas of autogenesis, this arrival will return in a significant way later in the piece, beginning the second major formal division of the movement in measure 74 (see Example 6).

³⁴Ibid., 22.,20

Example 6: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 69-75



His "American" Sound

There must have been an America once such as was seen by Walt Whitman, and later, by Carl Sandburg. And if Whitman's and Sandburg's America did not exist before Whitman and Sandburg existed, then surely it existed afterward in imitation. For the two poets took it upon themselves to show America--and the world--just what America was. Walt Whitman heard America singing, and Carl Sandburg heard the people, and yes, Vachel Lindsay heard Abraham Lincoln walking at midnight. And Roy Harris was born in a log cabin on Lincoln's birthday in 1898, and Roy Harris heard Walt Whitman's America and Carl Sandburg's people and Vachel Lindsay's Lincoln walking at midnight and at noon.

Roy Harris' music tends to give a feeling of leisurely motion through time, a motion that is so gradual that one must listen for a long time to observe what the direction is. His music is never in a hurry; if it is the music of America, as has so often been said, then his muse's America is of an earlier time, from before the jetliner and the direct-dial telephone.³⁵

Thus began Patricia Ashley's well-researched article on Roy Harris in 1968.

Ashley corresponded with Harris for well over a year, forming a unique relationship with the composer as she prepared for her article and gathered her research. After many interviews, meetings, and much correspondence, when she finally put the pieces together,

³⁵Ashley, 63-64.

her article was not so much about a composer, as it was about a person she knew who composed. She emphasizes an important issue when she mentions how frequently Roy Harris' music is described as "the music of America." While the author found many occasions where critics and colleagues described Harris' compositional style as being characteristically American, no articles were found containing music examples that illustrated exactly how Harris' music embodied an American sound.

Aaron Copland addressed the same issue in 1941, also without musical examples:

Anyone who follows what is written in the press concerning the American composer and American music will surely have noticed a marked reluctance on the part of writers to be specific on the subject. They deal for the most part in generalities, but warily avoid naming names of composers or their pieces. . . . One thinks of this in relation to the music of Roy Harris. For if the critics wish to discuss American music--its merits and shortcomings--the work of Harris is one of its principal manifestations; for better or worse, it is part of the mainstream of American music today. In short, this music, instead of vague generalities, is what the critics should be writing about. But I have never seen a single newspaper column that sums up and critically estimates the work of a man who, at the moment at least, is more frequently played, more praised, and more condemned than any other living American composer. . . . Among those who know his music well, there is wide divergence of opinion in estimating its value. This ability to arouse strong reactions among admirers and detractors alike is a sign of its vitality. For whatever else we may say about it, Harris' music must be set down as vital in today's American scene ³⁷

Copland continues to add that Harris' music, "has real sweep and breadth, with power and emotional depth such as only a generously built country could produce." Farwell thinks that Harris emerges as a great American composer because, "he is a

³⁶Ibid., 69.

³⁷Aaron Copland, "Roy Harris" in *Our New Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1941), 162-163.

³⁸Ibid.

product of a deep rebellion of the general human soul, though more especially the Western American soul." His music is emotional and dynamic, and yet it is the result of purposeful and determined thinking about where music has been and where Harris would like to go differently.³⁹

Perhaps Harris' American sound came from his use of folksongs as melodic material. Perhaps it was a result of the rhythmic characteristics that Harris himself described as uniquely American, constrasted with the European tradition. Perhaps it was not so much that his music sounded American, but that during this time of nationalistic pride, while American concert-going audiences were accustomed to the great classical and romantic literature of the 18th and 19th centuries, Harris' music simply did not sound European. By the early Forties Harris' name was so synonymous with American music, that an article about the *Folksong Symphony* in *Time* magazine said that his music was, "like the American continent rising up to say, 'Hello'."

Patricia Ashley makes what might be the most convincing argument regarding the deep association between the music of Roy Harris, and an American style that had previously been undefined:

What happened was that, having been told that his music was like America, Harris worked this idea into his mystique until he was able to believe that America was like his music. His rhythms and forms, based on irregular increments rather than subdivisions of the whole, may have had their origins in (besides truck driving) a study of Hindu philosophy, Gregorian chant, and very likely the music of Igor Stravinsky, but now he became convinced that these were the natural rhythms and forms of America. The assumption was not hard to make, for he was told often enough that it was true. Another generation has sincediscarded the idea of

³⁹Farwell, 19.

⁴⁰"Folk-song Symphony." *Time* vol. 37, no. 1 (January 6, 1941): 34.

naturalness in a "national style," but Harris--who has frequently been an internationalist in other respects--is loyal to nationalism in the arts.⁴¹

Aaron Copland summarized his reflections on Harris' compositional style by saying, "We can let posterity concern itself with the eternal aspect of Roy Harris' music, if there is any. The important thing is that it has something for us here and now."⁴²

⁴¹Ashley, 68-69.

⁴²Copland, 175.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN ANALYSIS OF AUTOGENETIC RELATIONSHIPS IN ROY HARRIS' AMERICAN SYMPHONY - 1938

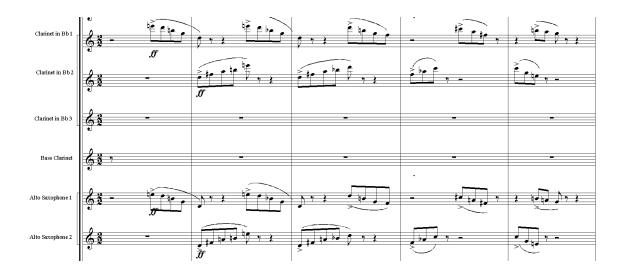
Movement One

The opening six measures of the first movement of *American Symphony - 1938* contain all of the motivic and harmonic materials used to generate each significant thematic, harmonic, and formal section of the entire movement. In addition to the six-measure introduction, there are four major formal sections in the movement. The start of each of these sections is clearly delineated by a change in melodic material, and the changes in tonal centers are significant to the autogenesis of the form, as well. Within each formal division, the concept of melodic repetition and variation is important to the formal development. As has been established in the description of Harris' autogenetic approach to composition, each new musical idea either evolves out of the material immediately preceding it, or it relates back in some way to important motivic material that has already been presented.

The introductory section in measures 1-6 has already been discussed in some detail, but reemphasizing the important thematic and harmonic elements that occur in the opening six measures will facilitate the analysis of the rest of the movement. The important elements that are established in the introduction are: the evolution of the opening seed motive and the polychordal harmonic structure found in the brass parts (see Example 2), the quartal and quintal supporting harmonies in the piano and bass (see Example 3), and the harmonic countermelody found in the woodwinds (see Example 4). Because it will be developed in such a significant way throughout the movement, the opening motivic material found in the brass parts will be labeled x.

The woodwind countermelody forms the most obvious link between the first formal section of the movement and the introductory material. During the melodic autogenesis in the brass parts, the woodwind lines create a harmonic texture that serves two functions. The woodwind notes fulfill a very important vertical function, integrating the quartal and quintal harmonies in the piano with the polychordal texture of the brass. The listener, however, will probably be drawn more to the linear function of the woodwind parts, which establishes some tonal sonorities, but remains a bit ambiguous in defining a clear tonal center for the movement. This ambiguity results from the fact that the woodwind lines not only emphasize the intervals of fourths and fifths, but they also include two overlapping triads. In Example 7, in the first descending woodwind line, E-D-B-G-D, there is a descending fourth between the first and third notes, E and B, and the final two notes, G and D. Also, there is a descending fifth between the second and fourth notes, D and G. In a reference to the polychordal harmonic structure, two overlapping triads are also found in the line: a G major chord, G-B-D, and an E minor chord, E-G-B. The ascending woodwind line, D-F#-A-B-E, has the same features: a major triad, D-F#-A, and a minor triad, B-D-F#; two ascending fifths, created by the first, third, and fifth pitches, D-A-E; and two ascending fourths, created by the second and fourth notes, F#-B, and the final two notes, B-E. Perhaps even as significant as the vertical and linear harmonic function of the woodwind parts, is the rhythmic pattern created by the overlapping lines. This is the autogenetic link that connects the introductory material to the first thematic material. The intertwined woodwind lines quickly create a smooth pattern of 8 eighth-notes, beginning on beat 3 in each of the first three measures (see Example 7).

Example 7: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-5



The first major formal division of the piece begins with the bass line in measure 6. The melody, stated in the piano, beginning on the third beat of measure 7, is "launched" out of the rhythmic pattern that was created in the woodwind parts. This entire section of the movement, measures 6-73, includes two statements of thematic material, with rhythmic and harmonic variation on the repeated section. The first statement of thematic material for this A section is essentially found in measures 6-38 in a three-phrase extended thematic passage in the piano with bass accompaniment. In measures 39-73, the A material is repeated, with the added accompaniments and variations. Although the prevalence of fourths and the use of polymodality creates some tonal ambiguity in the melodic line, the bass line outlines D as the tonal center of this section, through a series of implied upper and lower neighbor relationships, and the outline of chordal structures that suggest a cadence from A to D (see Example 8). The piano melody is made up of three phrases. The first melodic phrase, measures 7-16, establishes the significance of the fourth as a melodic unit within a very consistent

rhythmic texture. The second phrase, in measures 17-28, begins the unique and energetic rhythmic groupings in the melodic line, and this rhythmic invention is continued in the third phrase, measures 29-38.

Example 8: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 6-38



The trombones and trumpets have a very significant statement of the *x* motive in measure 38. The motive here is expanded by two additional eighth-notes from its original statement in measure 1, and the polychordal harmony is still a very important element. This particular statement in measure 38 begins with the overlapping triads of D major and G major, with D as the common tone between the two chords, and it ends on the same polychord upon which the introductory material ended in measure 6: a B-flat major triad combined with an F major triad. The tonal centers outlined in these polychords will prove to be very important to the formal design of the movement.

The woodwind accompaniment figures that are added in measures 39 through 69 during the repeat of the first major melodic theme, not only bring variation and add harmonic texture, but they also outline the tonal center of D, again using an implied upper and lower neighbor relationship that emphasizes the leading tone motion from C-sharp to D. This accompaniment material is first stated in the clarinets in measure 39, and the figure ends in measure 42 with the rhythm from the *x* motive, stated as it was last heard from the brass in measure 38, but emphasizing the melodic interval of a fourth. The bass clarinet and tenor saxophone then answer the clarinet accompaniment figure with an inversion of the same line. It is not an exact intervallic inversion, but it is an exact inversion of melodic contour. At the end of the four-measure accompaniment line, the bass clarinet and tenor saxophone play the *x* motive in descending parallel fifths, which relates back to the opening piano figure. The clarinets answer with another statement of the opening motive, and after a measure of rest, the low woodwinds answer with another descending statement of the *x* motive in parallel fifths (see Example 9).

Example 9: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 39-50



In measure 51, the woodwinds begin an accompaniment figure that is derived from their harmonic countermelody in the introductory section. During the syncopated rhythmic groupings in the piano melody, the clarinets begin an ascending five-note figure, which is unison for the first four notes, and then ends on a triad. The bass clarinet

and tenor saxophone complete the overlapping rhythmic figure, with a descending fivenote figure, which begins on a unison note each time, but quickly moves to parallel fifths.

By measure 54, the overlapping woodwind lines are compressed from five notes to three,
still overlapping. Rhythmic energy and drive are created by this accelerated linear
motion, where the woodwind material is now outlining triads, and contributing a
polychordal texture to the piano melody (see Example 10).

Example 10: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 51-57



In measure 60, this triadic woodwind accompaniment figure undergoes a very significant thematic transformation, as the three-note triadic outline figure becomes combined with elements from the *x* motive. There are several interesting and important developments to this thematic material in measures 59-73. Where the clarinets were in unison before, beginning in measure 59, each part is an independent voice in a triad. The bass clarinet and tenor saxophone are still moving in parallel fifths. In measure 61, the

three clarinets, the tenor saxophone, and the bass clarinet all begin moving in rhythmic unison, but the two lower voices are in contrary motion to the clarinets. These two lower voices, the tenor saxophone and bass clarinet, are still moving in parallel fifths, while the clarinets are creating triadic harmonies on every note. This is directly related to the opening six measures, where the trumpets and trombones moved in contrary motion, and the triadic harmonies in the brass were supported by quintal harmonies in the piano (see Example 11).

Example 11: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 59-65



By measure 66, this transformation of the *x* motive has become an important sixnote thematic unit, stated three times in the woodwinds, offset by the value of a quarternote on each statement. This variant of the *x* motive has actually become a closing theme for the first formal section of the piece, and in measures 69-73, the closing motive is stated three times, once in trumpets and trombones, reminiscent of the opening, the second time with trumpets and woodwinds, and the third time with brass again. The motive becomes fragmented in measure 72, and a portion of the six-note motive becomes the autogenetic link to the next section, as the fourth and fifth notes in the melodic line, F-sharp and E, become the anacrusis to the next formal section, with the sixth note in the motive, D, becoming the downbeat of the new section (see Example 12).

Example 12: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 66-73



The second major formal section of the movement is also centered around the piano soloist and features the folksong melody, "Jump Up, My Lady," which Harris probably learned from his wife Johana; or perhaps it was a tune he learned through his association with folk singers and entertainers such as Burl Ives, Alan Lomax, and "Leadbelly." The B section of the piece begins in measure 74, when the beginning of the piano melody grows right out of the ending motive from the A section. The first eight-measure phrase is presented in a very straightforward manner in the piano, measures 74-81 (see Example 13).

Example 13: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 73-81



This folksong melody is clearly in the key of D, so the tonal center of the movement has not yet shifted in Harris' formal development. As discussed above, some of Harris' melodic characteristics include mixing modalities to create shifting tonal centers, and constantly widening the arch of the melodic curve through changes in either the rhythmic design, the pitch selection, or both. Both melodic compositional tendencies are prevalent in this section of the piece. In the second statement of the folksong tune, measures 82-89, the rhythmic design is altered, creating a melodic variation that is characterized by moving eighth-notes (see Example 14). Additional rhythmic variation

¹Dan Stehman, "The Symphonies of Roy Harris," 267. "Jump Up, My Lady" is the same folksong that Aaron Copland used in "Hoedown" from *Rodeo*.

and mixed modalities occur during the third statement of the melody in measures 90-97. In measure 91, eighth-note triplets are introduced into the melody; and in measure 92, with the addition of the B-flat, the melody moves from D major to D minor for a moment.

Example 14: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 87-89



Taking into consideration Harris' thoughts on repetition and variation in melodic development, one would expect that the fourth statement of this folksong would involve some striking development. Harris achieves this variation through the three mechanisms already introduced in the previous two statements: continually moving eighth-note patterns, eighth-note triplets in variation, and polymodal melodic lines. Harris also varies the phrase sequence with this fourth statement, which is now twelve measures long rather than eight. The most obvious variation occurs as a result of the polymodal melodic writing. In measure 100, the melody moves abruptly to G major for two measures, with a move to F major in measure 102 that lasts for two measures. Measure 104 brings a move through F minor on the way to A-flat major in measures 106-108, and a two-measure passage that leads to the arrival of G minor for the phrase that begins in measure 110. Harmonic support during this section is still very sparse, so these tonal shifts are implied melodically, with minimal chordal accompaniment (see Example 15).

Example 15: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 98-109



The final statement of the folksong in the piano, measures 110-117, is in G minor for the first 4 measures and G major for the second half of the phrase. This completes the first statement of the B material, which consists of an opening 8 measure phrase in the key of D from "Jump Up, My Lady," followed by another symmetrical phrase that introduces eighth-note rhythmic variation to the folksong melody, and then a third phrase, which introduces triplet rhythmic variations and shifting modal centers. This is followed by the fourth phrase, where the melody is expanded and developed, moving through several key areas. The final phrase returnes back to the original shape and contour of the folk tune, but not to the original tonality, because it is in G minor for the first half of the phrase and G major for the second.

The tonality of this entire folksong section is supported by chordal punctuations in the muted brass, beginning in measure 78. Through the first two statements of the melody, the chordal statements are fairly sparse, but they gradually increase in frequency and activity, so that by the end of the first statement of the B material, the chordal punctuations have actually become more than an accompaniment figure, they have become almost thematic. In another autogenetic gesture, each pattern of brass chord

punctuations grows out of the phrase before it. The development of the chord punctuation rhythmic patterns can be seen in the following chart:



These chordal punctuations consistently reinforce the tonal areas and modulations that are implied by the shifting melodic modes, but not in the manner of a traditional chord progression. They function within the parameters of Harris' unique harmonic language. Sidney Thurber Cox describes this situation in his 1948 thesis. Because Harris had a predilection for the interval of the third and the fourth, there was often a fair amount of chord-spelling in Harris' melodies. These chordal melodies were also characteristics of some of the folksongs that he used as melodic material. When the melodies were rather ordinary in effect, Harris compensated by choosing harmonies that were not the roots of the triads so spelled and by juxtaposing the triad spellings in such a way that any traditional chord relationships would be avoided. Cox goes on to say, "An outstanding characteristic of Harris' chordal writing is the combination of consonant triads in such untraditional fashion that the effect is startlingly new."²

 $^{^{2}}$ Cox, 4-5.

The two triads heard in the muted brass during the first melodic phrase, measures 78 and 80, are D major and G major, both of which serve a traditional function in the key of D major as tonic and sub-dominant. However, it becomes obvious in the second melodic phrase that Harris is choosing his chords because the root of the tonal center, in this case D, is merely one of the pitches in the harmonic triads that he uses. This supports the tonal center implied in the melody without creating a traditional harmonic progression. The triads heard during the second and third phrases, measures 82-97, in varying combinations are G minor, B minor, D major, B-flat major, and G major. In the fourth phrase, measures 98-109, when the melody implies several modulations through modal shifts, the chords support those implications within Harris' harmonic style. The phrase starts in D major, and the supporting triads are B minor and G major. When the shift to G major occurs in measure 100, the supporting chords are C major, followed by A minor. With the implied move toward F major in the melody, supporting triads are Bflat minor, D minor, and F major, and the move to F minor uses B-flat minor and D-flat major as harmonic support. In the fifth phrase, measures 110-117, when the melody begins in G minor and ends in G major, the accompanying triads are G major, E-flat minor, G minor, E-flat major, and C minor.

Just as the A section was repeated with added variations and accompaniments, so is the B section repeated in measures 118-169, with variation in its treatment. The melody is now heard in the clarinet solo, in the key of B-flat major. The melody is stated in its original form for the first half of the phrase, but measures 5 and 6 of the folksong are missing from this clarinet statement, creating an irregular phrase length; and in measure 122, the clarinet plunges directly into the final two measures of the tune. During the clarinet solo, the piano plays the opening four-note motive from the folksong as an echo to the clarinet part. This happens three times, and then the motive is expanded in

measure 124 as an ending figure to the first phrase. Perhaps this "echo" of the opening motive accounts for the missing motive in the clarinet solo (see Example 16).

Example 16: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 117-124



The clarinet's second statement of the phrase, in measures 125-132, corresponds directly to the second phrase of the piano which occurred in measures 82-89, repeating the now familiar moving eighth-note variation of the melody, still in the key of B-flat major. There is one interesting exception to this restatement, when the clarinet solo eliminates the anacrusis and the downbeat to measure 131, which would be the fifth and sixth scale degrees in the key of B-flat: F and G. This may have been done to allow another piano echo to sound through the texture, or it may have been done simply to create variety. Whatever the reason, it is significant, because it happens again in the next melodic statement.

The chordal punctuations in the brass continue to grow and develop through the first two phrases of the repeated B section, and by the third phrase, measures 133-141, that element emerges as almost the musical equal to the clarinet solo and the piano. Also, the very brisk eighth-note triplet arpeggiated figures in the piano are prominent at this point. Beginning in measure 133, the clarinet solo states the third phrase in nearly the same fashion that the piano did in measures 90-97, except that an extra half-rest is

inserted after the opening four-note motive, and the melody resumes on the downbeat of the following measure. An extra half-rest is again inserted after the second statement of that four-note motive, and the melody resumes on beat 2 of the following measure, in *alla breve* notation (see Example 17). This creates, in effect, a rhythmic stutter in the melodic line, allowing the brass chord progression to emerge from the melody momentarily, and grouping the arpeggiated piano line with the solo clarinet in a call-and-response framework. The inserted rests in the melody also create an interesting phrase structure for the repeat of the B section. Where the B section was originally stated with three eight-measure phrases before the extended and developed fourth phrase, the repeated B section has a seven-measure phrase, followed by an eight-measure phrase, and then a nine-measure phrase.

Example 17: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 132-141



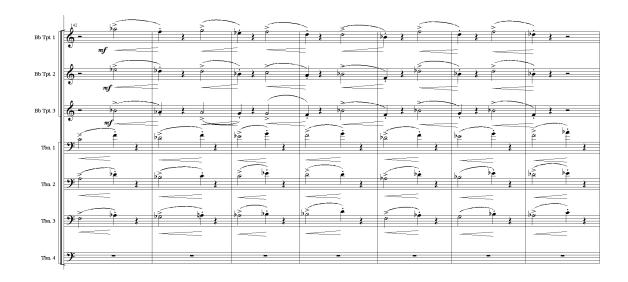
In the first statement of the B section, although the variation elements had been subtly introduced through the second and third phrases, the fourth phrase was the first to undergo significant thematic transformation with extended melodic content and changing modalities. In the second statement of the B material, the first three phrases have shown significant transformation, preparing the fourth phrase as the autogenetic culmination of the thematic and harmonic elements that have been developed in the B section.

The clarinet is still the main melodic voice, but the piano has now been established as a significant duet voice. The phrase begins in measure 142 with the octave leap in the solo clarinet that has been so indicative of the folksong melody. However,

after the octave leap, there is not a continuation of the melody in the clarinet. Instead, the piano continues the call-and-response interaction with an echo variation of the melodic material that ended the third phrase. In essence, this overlapping of melodic material from the piano and missing melodic material in the clarinet creates a phrase elision. But one could not possibly miss the beginning of the fourth phrase in measure 142, because the brass chordal accompaniment emerges here as a significant formal element.

After being in a supportive accompaniment role throughout all of the B section, the brass harmonic material may be the most salient feature of this fourth melodic phrase. Rhythmically, the trumpets and trombones have offset half-note chords with overlapping quarter-note resolutions (see Example 18). Timbrally, the instruments are no longer muted; they are brighter, with more presence. Harmonically, the trombones have triads in root position on each of their half-notes, and the trumpets have stacked fourths on each of their half-notes. The trombones move upward from their half-note triads to quarter-note triads in weaker inversions, and the trumpets move downward from their half-note quartal harmonies to quarter-note triads. This passage is related in many ways to the introduction of the movement. The contrary motion is reminiscent of the brass scoring at the beginning, and the woodwind accompaniment during the repeat of the A section. The polychordal harmonies mixed with the quartal harmonies are also important features from the introduction, and the offset scoring between low brass and high brass is related to the left and right hand piano scoring at the beginning of the movement.

Example 18: *American Symphony - 1938*, Mvt. 1, mm. 142-148



Above the brass chords, the clarinet resumes the melody in the third measure of the phrase, measure 144, and goes through several keys implied by modal shifts: E-flat major in measures 144-145, D-flat major in measures 146-147, with a brief foray into D-flat minor in measure 148, before emerging in A minor at measure 149. The extended phrase continues with the call-and-response interplay between the clarinet and piano soloists, while the brass briefly return to their previous harmonic status, with a chordal punctuation in each measure, 152-154.

Like a prototype for autogenetic compositional style, the fifth and final phrase of the B section begins at measure 155 in the same manner that the fourth phrase began. The trumpets and trombones resume the offset half-note and quarter-note chords, the clarinet is missing the octave leap at the beginning of the folksong tune, and the piano continues the echo from the previous section. This fifth phrase also has the rests interjected into the melody, which was originally a feature from the third phrase in the B section. Now, the purpose of the rests is evident, with the piano responses occurring

during the breaks in the melodic line. The added rests make this a nine-measure phrase, and it ends, like the first statement of the B theme, in G major/minor -the ambiguity is caused by the B-flat and B-natural in the same closing figure. In measure 164, the brass begin a six-measure pattern of descending triads. Not only does each instrument voice descend, but the scoring of each triad progressively descends lower in the brass tessitura. The first triad is voiced in the four upper voices, trumpets and first trombone, and the final triad is voiced in the four trombone parts. Although it is not nearly as rhythmically active or as syncopated, this six-measure harmonic pattern is analogous to the agogic accents in the brass parts during the six-measure introduction. The clarinet and piano melodic interaction has been reduced to motivic interplay during this transitional passage.

The third formal division in the movement, the C section, begins in measure 170, and is strikingly different from most of the material that has been used thus far in the piece. As discussed above, Harris' autogenetic ideas allowed each phrase or section of music to relate to previous material in one of two ways. The new music could either unfold from a figure in the preceding section of music, or it could refer back to a motive from an earlier section. This approach eliminates most transition material, and some new formal sections in Harris' music seem abrupt. This is one of those sections. Through the use of quarter-note triplets in the *alla breve* notation, there is a blunt meter change from simple-duple to compound-duple subdivision. The timbre of the ensemble immediately changes color, with the absence of the brass, clarinet and piano, and the addition of unison saxophones with a string bass accompaniment. While the A section unfolded out of the introductory material, and the B section launched out of the final measure of the A section, this C section relates to previous motivic materials, and some of those relationships are rather remote.

Harmonically, the first phrase of the C section is in G major, measures 170-176, and the second phrase moves to G minor, measures 177-184. This parallels the tonal centers in the final phrase of the B section, measures 155-163. The bass line is stated three times through the first six measures of the phrase, with each pitch occurring on a downbeat, G, A, B, C. This is a harmonic motion that would traditionally imply motion of dominant to tonic in the key of C; but in Harris' non-traditional fashion, this harmonic line moves from the first scale degree to the fourth in the key of G. The bass line eventually goes through significant development during this section of the piece.

Despite its apparent contrasts, the melody that begins in measure 170 can be related to two previous motivic ideas from the folksong "Jump Up, My Lady." Because the melody begins in the key of G major, the musical example will be shown in G major as well (see Example 19).

Example 19: "Jump Up, My Lady" traditional folksong



The eighth-note triplet in measure two is most likely the origin of the pitch and rhythmic design for this C section material. This motive is essentially an ornamentation of the pitch B, beginning on an upper neighbor C, moving back through the B to a lower neighbor A, and returning to B on the following downbeat. This same melodic motion happens three times in the opening melodic phrase of the C section, in measures 170,

172, and 173 (see Example 20). The first interval in the new melody is a perfect fourth, which has been significant melodically and harmonically throughout the entire movement, and the final three notes of this melody are F#-E-D, the same pitches that created the autogenetic link between the *x* motive at the end of the A section, and the beginning of the folksong melody in the B section.

Example 20: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 169-175



Although this new melody is "folk-like," it is not a folksong, but Harris' might have intended for the lilting folk qualities of this original melody to be another link to the previous section. This must be an example of the Harris melodic approach that Farwell described:

If we would get at the melodic rationale of Harris, we must throw over every melodic convention, and follow him to his early life in the West. There are his teachers of melody--the broad horizon, the long undulations or the craggy lines of mountain contours, winding streams and the gracious curvature of tree branches. This is not fiction, but fact, and the melody of Harris, as well as much else in his music, is not to be understood without a recognition of it. What is the uniform quality, the common denominator, of these nature elements? It is asymmetry existing integrally with purpose and proportion, unfolded out of the Nature-urge. The difference, then, between Harris' melody and most of the melody which we hear is the difference between a range of hills and a row of trees trimmed as in an Italian garden.³

³Farwell, 25.

Both phrase sequence and phrase construction are asymmetrical in the C section, and the form is much less persuasive than in the previous two sections. There is clearly melodic repetition and variation, but melodic phrases are elided, and the melodic development is often independent of the harmonic development. Although the melodic phrases can sound repetitive and monotonous, the phrase endings and pitch selection are anything but predictable.

During this C section of the piece, every melodic phrase is separated by a harmonic motive in the trombones. This motive, like the melody, is in compound-duple subdivision, and it is interjected into each phrase at the end of the phrase ending. The trombones are scored in rhythmic unison, and each note voices a major or minor triad. This is reminiscent of the brass scoring in the introduction and the harmonic function of the chordal punctuations in the B section, but the trombones are not in a polychordal setting here; they always play a single triad. The first statement of this trombone motive in measures 175-177 begins on a D major triad and moves through B-flat major and E-flat major triads to end on a G minor triad, the tonal center of the second phrase (see Example 21). Although this is not a traditional perfect authentic cadence from V to I, it does have cadential implications. The location and function of this trombone motive help to define its role in the C section. This cadential motive is a formal anchor, framing the beginnings and endings of phrases and wandering melodies.

Example 21: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 1, mm. 175-177



Once the few motivic relationships to the folksong have been established in this new melody, its autogenetic unfolding happens in relation to itself. The motivic origins of the first phrase, measures 170-176, have been established. The second phrase, with modal implications of G minor, begins in measure 177 with the same melodic rhythm from measure 174. The tonal area of G minor is reinforced by the bass line, where the B has been replaced by B-flat. Instead of continuing stepwise motion in the bass line, the line is developed by expanding the ending to a third. This happens in measure 178 with the move from B-flat to D, and it is expanded by another third in measure 179-181, when the bass line is: G-A-Bb-D-F, which is, incidentally, very similar to the bass line in the introduction. This second phrase, eight measures in length, is a measure longer than the first phrase. Again, the cadential motive in the trombones begins on a D major triad, but moves through B-flat major and C major to an A major triad. At the end of the first phrase, the cadential motive ended on the same beat that the second phrase began, both in G minor. This second cadential motive is separated from the next phrase by a quarter rest.

The third phrase, measures 185-197, begins on beat one with the same rhythm and pitch selection from beat two of the second phrase, measure 177. This phrase moves

through F major for two measures, and into D major for two measures, outlined by the expanding interval in the bass line, where the final interval in the first ascending series is a third, like the previous phrase, but the following ending interval outlines a fourth: F-G-A-C, and then F#-G-A-D. The unison trumpet rhythmic interjections, previously discussed in chapter three, begin during this section of the phrase, highlighting the intervals of a major second and a major third in the triplet figure. The remainder of the third phrase, through measure 197, shifts back and forth between F major and F minor. The trombone cadential motive is fragmented and inserted twice during this phrase, in measures 190 and 193, but the final cadential motive that frames the phrase, measures 196-197, outlines the triads of D major, G major, B-flat major, G major, and C major.

The bass line gradually develops toward an expansive ascending and descending line. A first step in that progression is the intervallic idea that is begun in measures 191-193, with the pitch selection of F-C-F-Bb-F (see Example 22). This creates a descending line with a stable lower pitch. It also decreases the intervals that were expanded in the bass line up to this point. This may seem like a small example of a big idea, but this development is continued at the beginning of the fourth phrase, which is in measures 198-206, when the stable pitch becomes the upper voice, and the diminishing intervals create an ascending line (see Example 23).

Example 22: *American Symphony - 1938*, Mvt. 1, mm. 191-193



Example 23: *American Symphony - 1938*, Mvt. 1, mm. 198-200



Continuing in the mixed modal setting of F major and minor, the fourth phrase of the C section occurs in measures 198-207. In measures 202-203 the trumpet interjection motive is expanded by one statement, and the intervals in the triplets are a major second, a minor third, and a minor second. The cadential motive in the trombones is fragmented once again and inserted in the middle of the phrase, during a rest in the melodic line. The motive frames the phrase ending with a cadence that starts on a C minor chord, moving through three voicings of E-flat major, and ending on a B-flat minor triad in measure 207.

The fifth melodic phrase of the C section begins with material from the final three measures of the preceding phrase, another example of autogenetic unfolding. The tonal trumpet interjections are no longer unison; they begin with the interval of a perfect fifth. The first and last notes of the triplet are still unisons, but the middle notes emphasize various intervals. In this particular phrase, the trumpets highlight a perfect fourth from B-flat to E-flat in measure 210, and a major third in measure 212 with a C and E. There are only two trumpet interjections during this phrase. The trombone cadential motive in measures 213-214 has been extended to its longest duration thus far, nine chords in all, beginning on B-flat major and moving through the chords of D-flat major, E-flat major, E-flat minor, E minor, and ending with two D major triads. During this phrase, the bass line shows further development toward the extended ascending and descending lines with an ascending line in measures 209-213.

Just as the A section and the B section made use of melodic phrase repetition while other musical elements underwent continual development, so do the second five phrases of the C section highlight repeated melodic material. However, unlike the first two formal divisions of the movement, there is no formal pattern or sequence to the repeated material. The second half of the C section definitely relates back to the first half; but while the four elements that make up the C materials--melody, trumpet interjections, trombone cadential motive, and bass line--all experience growth and thematic expansion, they are developed more independently than the musical elements of the earlier sections. The melody in measures 223-229, is the same melody that was used in measures 207-213, but the other three elements are not the same. The melodic material in measures 231-237, is identical in interval and contour, transposed up a whole step from the melody in measures 177-183. The trumpet interjections reach their peak of formal development during this passage (refer back to Example 5), and the extended descending bass line happens during this phrase, the eighth melodic phrase of the C section. The bass line emphasizes pairs of half-steps in the descending line, which is related motivically to all the pairs of eighth-note half-step groupings during the x theme at the beginning of the movement (see Example 24).

Example 24: *American Symphony - 1938*, Mvt. 1, mm. 231-236



The melodic material in measures 238-251 is almost identical to that found in measures 189-202, with only a few minor alterations: measure 243, part of measure 244, and measure 247 are transposed up a half-step. This interesting and unpatterned

repetition takes melodic material encompassing from the middle of the third phrase to the middle of the fourth phrase, places it with melodic material taken from the first half of the second phrase, and combines the material to create the eighth and ninth phrases of the section. The tenth and final melodic phrase, measures 254-259 is the same melodic material that was used in the fifth phrase, measures 207-213, used here for the third time in this section. Perhaps by using the same melodic material again, Harris is letting the development of the ascending bass line subtly emerge from the texture of the other elements. In measures 240-242, the bass line ascends in a five-note pattern. In measures 243-245, the bass line is an ascending six-note pattern. An eleven-note pattern ascends from A to E-flat in measures 247-252, and the final climactic thirteen-note ascent in measures 254-260 moves from F to D, signaling the return of the original tonal area of the movement and the beginning of the final formal section (see Example 25).

Example 25: *American Symphony - 1938*, Mvt. 1, mm. 240-260



The final section of the movement, the D section, functions quite simply as a perfect example of Harris' harmonic style. The entire section, from measure 260 to the final measure of the movement, 389, emphasizes the tonal center of D, and shows all of the chordal relationships to D that have been used in the movement. There are three main phrases to this section, measures 260-292, 293-324, and 325-354. Each phrase begins on a unison D, and expands triadically away from D. The bass line that was

developed during the C section into an expansive descending and ascending line, was merely a foreshadowing of the chordal scoring in this final section of the work. The ascending line occurs in the upper trumpet voice during each of these three phrases, and the descending line can be found in the lowest trombone voice, often supported by the string bass. The first harmonic phrase has the brass muted, analogous to the muted brass chordal accompaniments to the folksong "Jump Up, My Lady" in the B section. Each of the phrases ends with a brief woodwind interlude that is derived from the woodwind accompaniment material in measure 39, first heard at the repeat of the A section material. The following musical example will outline the harmonic progression in the first phrase of the D section, measures 260-292. It includes triadic harmonies; quintal harmonies, which have been significant in the movement; and in a few instances, polychords, which relate back to the very first measure of the movement (see Example 26). Ironically, the piece began with the brass section outlining the entire harmonic language of the movement, but the voicings were so thick, the rhythms so syncopated, and the accompaniment texture in the woodwinds, bass, and piano was so busy, that one could hardly process all of the information at one time. The movement ends with the brass outlining the harmonic language of the movement, and the scoring is so transparent, the rhythms so simple, that one can easily recognize the relationship to all that has been heard before it.

Example 26: Chord progression in American Symphony - 1938, mm. 260-289

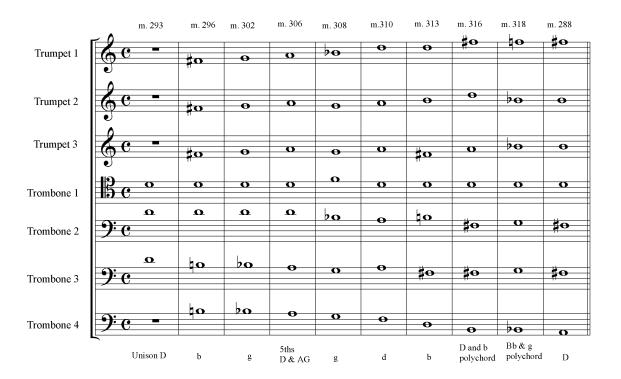
	٥ ــ	m. 260	m. 263	m. 269	m. 272	m. 275	m. 277	m. 280	m. 282	m. 285	m. 288
Trumpet in Bb 1	6	, -	O	O	ю	Θ	0	О	•		#**
Trumpet in Bb 2	80	•	0	#0	0	Þo	0	0	0	0	0
Trumpet in Bb 3	80	-	0	#0	0	Þo	0	0	0	0	0
Tenor Trombone 1	19 15 (0	0	0	0	0	O	0	0	0	0
Tenor Trombone 2	9: 0	Ω	Ω	Ω	ţο	Ω	0	0	0	0	0
Tenor Trombone 3	9: 0	Ω	þo	0	‡o	þo	0	0	0	0	‡o
Tenor Trombone 4	9 : 0	-	þo	О	0	0	0	О	0	70	0
		Unison D	Bb	D	G	Bb	5ths D & A	G	d & F polychord	d & Bb polychord	l D

The first phrase, measures 260-292, explores all of the major triads to which D is related. D can be the root of D major, the third of B-flat major, or the fifth of G major. Combining one triad with another triad that has one or more common pitches, creates even more remote pitch relationships. An example of this would be the combination of a D minor triad with an A major triad, because both chords have A as a common tone.

The second phrase of the final section, measures 293-324, explores the minor triads that are related to D (see Example 27). The brass are no longer muted during this phrase, which creates a curious timbral development during this middle statement. The brass sound brighter in tone color without the mutes, but the chord colors sound darker,

exploring minor triadic progressions. The piano enters during this second phrase, emphasizing D in five octaves. The woodwinds also enter as part of the harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment, with simple arpeggios reinforcing and supporting the chordal outline in the brass. This woodwind accompaniment figure is related rhythmically to the harmonic countermelody that the woodwinds played in the introductory material. The woodwinds end the phrase with a closing figure based on their accompaniment figure in measure 39, heard during the repeat of the A section material. In measures 323-324, the woodwinds outline parallel triads: D major, E major, B-flat major, C major, and D major.

Example 27: Chord progression in American Symphony - 1938, mm. 293-324



The final phrase of the D section, measures 325-354, revisits the major triad chordal progression, but with the woodwind accompaniment, the D reinforced by the

timpani and mallet instruments, and the piano adding arpeggiated solo lines that are reminiscent of the interaction with the solo clarinet in the second half of the B section. Each of these supporting elements is added subtly during the course of the D section, effecting a gradual build and development over the D ostinato in the middle brass voices. The woodwind figures are short and repetitive, and the texture grows in additive ways. The section has a very minimalistic character about it, but this is almost twenty-five years before Steve Reich, Terry Riley, and Philip Glass emerged as great composers employing these techniques.

The closing material which begins in measure 355 is based on the combination of a trombone chordal accompaniment and a trumpet and woodwind motive that emerges from the accompaniment figure found in measures 290-292, and 323-324. As discussed earlier, the woodwind figure is related to the accompaniment material that began at measure 39. The trombone chordal accompaniment and rhythmic pattern is directly related to measure 142, the fourth phrase of the repeated B material, and the chordal accompaniment that emerged significantly from the texture during the clarinet solo on the folksong melody. Incorporated into these two motives is the diminishing interval pattern that was an important characteristic of the bass line during the C section. This pattern of diminishing intervals was originally mentioned in conjunction with Examples 22 and 23. Also during the C section, the descending line that was expanded in the bass line eventually featured pitches paired in descending half-steps (see Example 24). These ideas of diminishing interval and chromatic descent are integrated fully with the woodwind motive and trombone chordal accompaniment during this closing material.

The trumpet and woodwind figure features seven parallel triads in a repetitive call-and-response pattern with the trombone. The seven triads include six major triads, with the pattern always ending on a minor triad, with the root a fourth lower than the root

of the previous major triad. In every pattern, there is a descending half-step relationship between the second and fourth triads, and an ascending half-step correlation between the third and fourth triads and the fifth and sixth triads. For example, the first time the woodwind and trumpet motive is stated, the chords spelled out in measure 356 are G-A-G-Ab-Bb-B-f#. This motive is repeated two measures later, and the next time the motive occurs the pattern is the same: F-G-F-Gb-Ab-A-e (see Example 28). The trombones highlight the descending chromatic line every time they resolve their half-note triad to a quarter note. In measures 355, 357, and 359, the trombones play a C major triad on the downbeat, which moves to a B minor triad, then a B-flat minor triad, and then an A minor triad, respectively. The next three trombone chordal statements move the static element to the second triad, the minor triad. For example, in measures 361, 363, and 365, the chord progression is B major to G minor, B-flat major to G minor, and A major to G minor. In these three statements, the major chords outline the same chromatic line: B-Bb-A (see Example 28).

Example 28: *American Symphony - 1938*, Mvt. 1, mm. 355-365



As one might expect, the movement ends with the *x* theme from the introductory material in measures 1-6. However, the theme has been altered to incorporate the autogenetic development of integral motivic features (see Example 29). The highest trumpet voice, the highest trombone voice, and the lowest trombone voice all have a descending chromatic line as melodic material. Also, the quarter note triplets--used in Harris' original folk-like melody in the C section--are incorporated into the *x* theme. The woodwinds have an accompaniment figure during the closing, in measure384, that is very similar to the opening theme and supportive of the chordal harmonies in the brass. The brass harmonies are not polychordal in the closing section as they were in the opening, which must be related to the triadic harmony that emerged so clearly in the D section. The movement ends softly, with the bass line highlighting the feature of diminishing interval, and ending on a D. The last interval in the movement, serving both a harmonic and melodic function, is a fourth.

Example 29: *American Symphony - 1938*, Mvt. 1, mm. 383-386



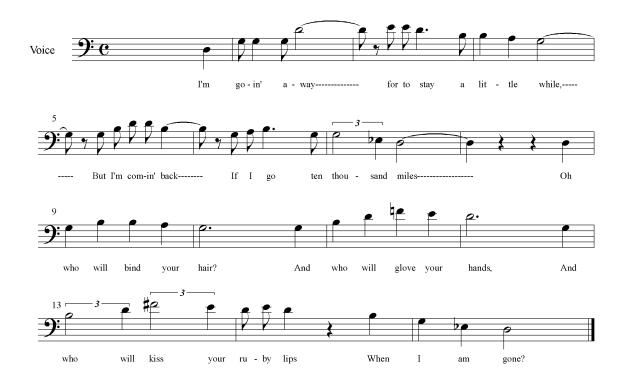
Movement Two - "Sad Song"

The second movement of *American Symphony - 1938* is based on the folksong "He's Gone Away," which Harris probably found in Carl Sandburg's *The American Songbag*. Stehman included an example of the melody and lyrics in his dissertation (see Example 30). Although the asymmetry of the melodic phrase-lengths and the expanding arch-like pitch design would have obviously been features that appealed to Harris, the tonal stability of this folk tune created some unique challenges for Harris' harmonic language. In discussing these challenges, Stehman writes, "Harris' principles of melodic expansion through internal development of component phrases can be applied to a pre-existing, self-contained melody." Harris used his ideas of melodic expansion quite successfully in this movement, utilizing some motivic elements from the melody to develop into accompaniment figures. "In fact," Stehman points out, "the tune, built primarily in thirds, seems made for a characteristic treatment in common-tone related chords."

⁴Stehman, "The Symphonies of Roy Harris," 266.

⁵Ibid., 313-314.

Example 30: "He's Gone Away," traditional folksong

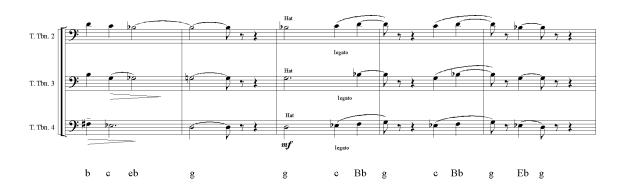


(Dan Stehman, "The Symphonies of Roy Harris: An Analytical Study of the Linear Materials and of Related Works," 1130)

The movement begins with an eight-measure introduction, and as is typical with Harris, most of the thematic and harmonic ideas for the movement are laid out in the opening section. There are two important melodic elements in this opening section: the first melodic motive, which is in the second trombone at the very beginning; and the flute melody that emerges as the prominent voice in measure 3. The melodic motive scored in the second trombone is taken directly from the eighth and ninth measures of the tune, and it implies B-flat as the tonal center (see Example 30). In the third measure, the flute enters with a melodic theme that is an extension of the motivic idea introduced in the trombone. There are also two significant harmonic progressions in this introduction.

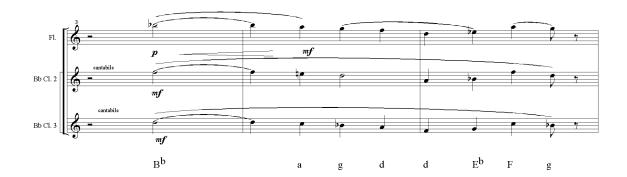
Harmonies are introduced to the opening trombone motive in an additive fashion, with two trumpets entering on beat 4 with melodic contour similar to the trombone, two additional trombones joining on the next downbeat with the low reeds, and the second and third clarinets entering on the following beat. The three trombones continue with a chordal harmonic progression through measure 6, highlighting several triads related to the tonal center of D. The related flute motive in measure 3 is supported harmonically by the second and third clarinets. This expanded melody is also supported by simple triadic harmonies, but they are not the same triadic harmonies found in the trombones. Both harmonic progressions occur over a pedal G in the string bass. The trombone chords progress through the following chords and qualities:

Example 31: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 2-6



The woodwind chord progression is shown in Example 32. The combination of these two triadic chord progressions establishes the polychordal harmonic environment for the movement.

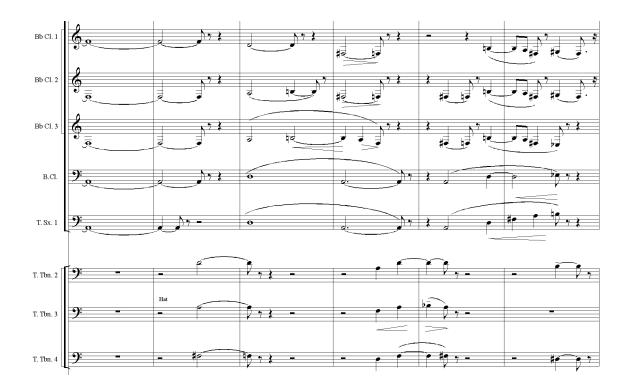
Example 32: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 3-5



There are five sections to this movement, which correlate to the five phrases in the B section of the first movement. The folksong melody is prominent in all but the fourth formal section, giving the movement a strophic feeling in the treatment of the tune. During the A section, measures 9-33, the melody is stated in its entirety in the solo trombone. As was established in the introduction texture, the flute continues countermelodic material. With a pre-existing melody, adding a motivically inspired countermelody is one of the few ways that Harris can introduce his concept of autogenesis into the composition. Another technique that proves to be significant in this movement is that of melodic expansion, with extended phrases inserted into the melody.

The harmonic texture that was introduced in the opening eight measures is very subtly transformed for this first statement of the folksong melody. During the introduction, as was described above, the trombones and clarinets created a polychordal harmonic texture. For the A section of the movement, Harris retains this timbral setting by using the same instrumental voices scored in the same registers, but he carefully weaves the chordal progression between the woodwinds and trombones to create one common triadic progression, rather than a polychordal one. All of this is integrated with the string bass line, giving this harmonic texture a seamless quality (see Example 33).

Example 33: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 9-14



It has become obvious through detailed analysis, that Harris' harmonic language, which includes the use of any chord that has a triadic relationship with his intended tonal center, implies the mixed modality of major and minor. This characteristic trait of polychordal writing is evident in the trumpet interjections during this section, which outline an F-sharp minor triad, moving to an F major triad (see Example 34). Commontones between the F-sharp minor and D major triads would include F-sharp and A, while F and A create the common-tone link between F major and D minor.

Example 34: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 15-17



The harmonic passage that ends the A section has an interesting relationship to events of the first movement. The trombones and woodwinds continue their overlapping harmonic progression in measures 30-33, leading toward the second statement of the melody in the tonal center of B-flat in measure 34. The first and second trombone lines show an obvious link to the trumpet motive used during this section (see Example 34), but the rhythmic scoring of the trombones and woodwinds is reminiscent of the dramatic chordal exchange between the trumpets and trombones in measures 142-148 of the first movement (see Examples 35 and 18).

Example 35: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 29-33



This chordal exchange between the trombones and woodwinds continues as the harmonic backdrop for the B section of the movement, measures 34-50, where the second verse of the folksong is stated in the solo trumpet in B-flat. Creating an even stronger correlation between this harmonic scoring and the accompaniment to "Jump Up, My Lady" in the first movement, the triadic overlap begins to result in polychords, which even hints at a common link to the introduction of the first movement. The chord qualities of the overlapping triads in measures 36-44 are as follows (see Example 36):

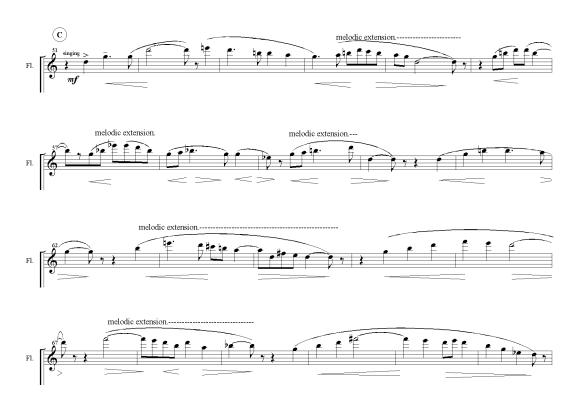
Example 36: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 36-44



The C section, or the third song verse, in measures 51-73 of the movement, is climactic in several ways, which creates a large arch-form that is an important feature of Harris' compositional style. Where the previous two statements of the melody were solo voices, the folksong here is scored for tutti woodwinds. The melodic line, which implies the key of G major/minor here, is duplicated in three different octaves by the flute, two clarinets, and the bass clarinet. Also, for the first time in the movement, the melody is harmonized in triads, with the saxophone harmonic voices moving in parallel motion and rhythmic unison with the other woodwinds. Another important melodic feature of this

section, and perhaps the most significant one, is the melodic extension created by the added original material at the end of each melodic phrase (see Example 37).

Example 37: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 51-72



There is a haunting trumpet countermelody interspersed throughout this section of the work, and the original statement of the trumpet countermelody in measure 53 begins with the same intervals as a countermelody heard in the second clarinet in measure 24. This trumpet solo is part of the material that Harris later reused in his *Folksong*Symphony (No. 4), and in describing the trumpet countermelody in an analysis of that piece, Stehman writes, "The ostensibly free counterpoint in solo trumpet can, upon close

examination, be revealed as an expansion of the arch design of the second phrase of 'Gone Away'."5

An important harmonic motive is scored for the trombones during this middle section, and it is based on the trombone material at the end of the A section, which was related to the trumpet interjections during that same melodic statement (see Example 34). The harmonic motive occurs eight times during this C section, and each time, it outlines parallel triads which support the tonal center of G major/minor. The eighth time the motive is heard, in measure 73, it is the transition element to the D section, modulating from G minor to D major.

The fourth section of the movement, measures 74-101, presents the greatest analytical challenge. This is the longest formal section of the piece, and there is no statement of the folksong melody. Although the autogenetic relationships between this D section and the rest of this movement are a bit vague and obscure, it is interesting to note how strong the connection is between this section of the slow movement and the first movement. The bass line is highlighted at the start of the section, doubled in the string bass and the tenor saxophone. The prominence of the bass line is striking in comparison to the rest of the movement, because the initial intervallic motions are octave leaps. This octave motion reinforcing the tonal center of D is directly connected to the final section and the closing material of the first movement, when the incessant D was heard in the trombone through every common-tone chord possibility, and while it was emphasized and reinforced by the timpani and the octave motion in the piano and the mallet

⁵Ibid., 314.

instruments. After the third octave in the bass line, the motion is expanded to an E-flat, and a chromatic descending line from E-flat to A-flat is embedded in the bass line through the use of octave displacement, from measure 74-80 (see Example 38). The bass line is then repeated in identical form in measures 81-87. This descending line has several possible connections to the previous movement. The expansive descending line in measures 231-236 was an important developmental event in the C section of the first movement, and like this section of the second movement, the bass line highlighted the feature of diminishing interval. The chromatic motion of the line can be related to the evolution of the x motive throughout the first movement, from the introduction to the closing material, which resulted in a descending chromatic line in the brass voices (see Example 29).

Example 38: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 74-80



In every section of Harris' music there always seems to be some component of the musical structure that is written in triadic harmony. The triad component for the D section can be found in the trombones and saxophones. This motive, which will be labeled y, is derived from the third measure of the folksong, where the text is "stay a little while" (see Example 30). When that part of the melody first appears in the trombone solo, measure 11, it is immediately followed in measure 12 by a countermelody based on that same rhythm in the flute. The flute countermelody has D as its highest and lowest

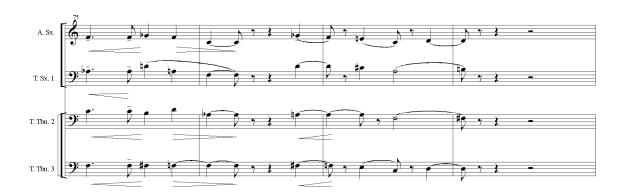
notes--an octave apart--with chromatic motion from B to B-flat in between (see Example 39). This countermelody is part of the autogenetic link between the melodic fragment and the thematic motive that it becomes in the D section of the movement.

Example 39: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 12-14



Each time the *y* motive is stated, it begins on an F minor triad and ends on a B minor triad. The motive is developed through extension in measures 77-78, where the extended line in each of the four voices is made up of quarter notes, eighth notes, and eighth rests. There are no spaces or silences during the melodic extension, because of two ties in measure 77: one in the second trombone between beats 1 and 2, and the other in the tenor saxophone and second trombone between beats 4 and 1 (see Example 40). This is very important, because the next time the *y* motive is developed through repetition and extension in measures 80-84, again moving from an F minor triad to a B minor triad, the melodic extension is in rhythmic unison in all four parts, and the resulting rhythm is significantly related to the *x* motive in the introduction of the first movement (see Example 41).

Example 40: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 75-78



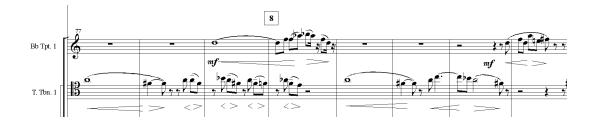
Example 41: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 80-84



During the development and extension of the *y* motive in measures 75-84, the first trombone and first trumpet have intertwined solos that are somewhat imitative in style and content. The interval of the minor third is integral to the melodic construction of both solos. Because these solos are supported by the harmonic framework of the *y* motive, the significance of the minor third probably originates from the same melodic material. The descending minor third from A to F-sharp is the interval that is heard in measure 11, where the lyrics would be "stay a little while." These same pitches begin the trombone solo in measure 77, and in that first solo idea, the trombone repeats that

descending interval from A to F-sharp four times, followed by a descending minor third from A-flat to F. The trumpet solo begins on a D in measure 79, and moves away from that D with two ascending minor thirds to F and A-flat. The trumpet phrase ends with the descending motion from F to D. The trombone's second entrance begins again in measure 81 with the descending slur from A to F-sharp, but it is followed by an ascending minor third from A to C, and the phrase ends once again on A to F-sharp. The trumpet solo then highlights the ascent from D to F and the descent from A to F-sharp in measure 84 (see Example 42).

Example 42: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 77-84



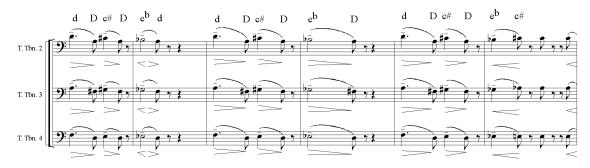
These two solos, built around the minor third, propel the motion forward to the most dramatic rhythmic moment in the movement, with the trumpets and first trombone playing no less than a fanfare in measures 85 and 86 (see Example 43). In addition to its growth out of the preceding solo lines, the absence of any supporting voices save for the bass line, and its dramatic rhythmic contrast to the rest of the lyrical movement, one of the factors that contributes to the effectiveness of the fanfare is that it contains no triads. Minor thirds are significant, and there are unisons, fourths and fifths, but without the triadic harmony to which the listener has become accustomed, the fanfare lacks tonal stability. That stability is effectively reached in measure 87, when the *y* motive returns, harmonized in triads that move from B major to D minor.

Example 43: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 85-88



As the D section continues, the y motive is developed further in the trombones. It is stated in a much more repetitive fashion than is usually characteristic of Harris' music, but it is not repeated without variation. The triad harmonies outlined in this y motive are the same in each of the three statements in measures 88-93, except for the ending triad; that chord changes with each statement. The triad progressions for each of these three y motivic statements are as follows (see Example 44):

Example 44: American Symphony - 1938, Mvt. 2, mm. 88-93



Above this fairly stable harmonic treatment of the *y* motive, there are two interwoven trumpet solos, creating in essence a single descending solo line. While adding rhythmic variety that is reminiscent of the C section in the first movement, the random triplet patterns in the solo lines almost disguise the chromatic descent that is at the heart of the trumpet line.

In measures 94-101, the trombone solo material that was originally heard in measure 77, emphasizing the minor third from A to F-sharp, returns as closing material for the D section. It is scored in the first trombone, string bass, and bass clarinet, and emphasizes the interval of D to B, a fifth lower than before. This leads to another descending line in measures 97-99, based on the melodic extension in the flute in measure 3 of the introduction to this movement. This line is also scored for three players: flute, bass clarinet, and trumpet.

It is difficult to explain the musical material that happens in the piano part in measures 100-101. The piano has not played a note in this entire movement, and then, a piano passage emerges, based on lush quintal harmonies. This may create a link to the opening movement, when the quintal harmonies at the beginning of the piece were so characteristic of the piano part. The only place in this movement that bears rhythmic resemblance to the piano solo is the countermelody in the second clarinet part in measure 25. Since this piece was never completed, one could only speculate as to what types of materials Harris envisioned for the other movements. The author suggests that perhaps this piano material was to relate to another movement of the work. Stehman points out that this piano figure originated in Harris' *Concerto for Piano, Clarinet, and String Quartet* during his Paris years.⁶

⁶Ibid., 319.

The final statement of the folksong melody in the E section, measures 102-123, is calm and resolute. The melody is once again stated by the solo trombone in the key of D over a backdrop of common-tone chord progressions in simple triads; there are no polychords during this final verse. The harmonic tapestry of this section is carefully woven between all of the separate woodwind voices. Each individual woodwind line seems disjunct, but when combined, they create a simple triadic progression that moves and changes on each beat. Buried in this overlapping progression is what may be the most subtle autogenetic relationship in the piece. The bass clarinet, during this carefully constructed harmonic progression, contains the rhythm of the x motive in augmentation, in measures 102-105. The bass line centers around D and emphasizes some modal shifts created by the interplay of F-sharp and F-natural. In measures 106-107 and 113-114, the trumpets have interjections that are reminiscent of the A section, and the flute has simple countermelodies in measures 107-108 and 117-118. The piano motive returns between the phrases of the melody in measure 111. Continuing the interplay between major and minor modality up until the very end of the movement, the final note of the melody in the trombone solo is harmonized by the other trombones in a D minor chord in root position, measures 119-120; but the melodic fragment that began the y motive returns in the final four measures of the piece--in D major. It is played by the flute, just as the melodic extension was originally stated in measure 3. The trombone solo ends the movement with an arpeggiated ascent through a D minor triad, and then descends from an A to an Fsharp--a significant interval in the development of this movement--and the piece ends on a D major seventh chord, or the combination of a D major triad and an F-sharp minor triad.

CHAPTER FIVE

MUSICAL ELEMENTS COMMON TO BOTH AMERICAN SYMPHONY - 1938 AND FOLKSONG SYMPHONY (NO. 4)

When the manuscript score to the first movement of American Symphony - 1938 was discovered in the Library of Congress, this author was immediately excited by the potential discovery of an "unknown" piece for band--a contribution to the repertoire, and a piece with some historical significance. Initial ideas and preparation for this dissertation project centered around a comparison of the newly discovered work and Cimarron: Symphonic Overture for Band, which most band scholars believe to have been the first piece that Harris had written exclusively for winds. Because American Symphony - 1938 was written three years before Cimarron, the author's intention was to discover similarities or differences in style, form, scoring, and the like, and present an informed discussion of those findings. But a sense of intrigue continued to develop regarding the title of the work, and Harris' classification of the piece as a "symphony." The score said, in the composer's own handwriting, "First Movement of Symphony for Tommy Dorsey's Band - never completed because the band had no rehearsal time to devote to a new project." If there are already two surviving movements, and the composer describes the project as "never completed," then perhaps this was originally intended to be a much larger work in scope. Of course, this is pure speculation on the part of the author, but since speculation is often the motivation for scholarly inquiry, the score study expanded to include Harris' *Third Symphony* and the *Folksong Symphony*

¹Roy Harris, *American Symphony - 1938*, manuscript score, Library of Congress.

(No. 4), works written before and after the new band piece, to see how the scope and style of the band work would compare to other works in Harris' symphonic genre. In the score to Harris' Folksong Symphony (No. 4), evidence was discovered to support the speculation.

Significant amounts of thematic material from both movements of *American Symphony - 1938* are used in movements four and five of the *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*. Stehman was well aware of the common musical elements between the second movement of *American Symphony - 1938* and the fourth movement of the *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*, and there are several citations of the second movement of *American Symphony - 1938*—which Stehman lists as "Sad Song,"--in his bio-bibliography on Roy Harris. In his dissertation analysis of *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*, Stehman mentions the band version of the fourth movement and even quotes some examples from it, but nowhere could this author find any information or citations that would indicate that the first movement of the incomplete band work had been reworked or reused in the symphony. The *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)* is seven movements in length, so it may be possible that Harris had envisioned additional band movements with much of the material that eventually found its way into the *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*.

Folksong Symphony (No. 4) was composed in late 1939 and early 1940. It is scored for orchestra and chorus, and Harris intended it to be accessible for high school, college, and community choral groups. His hope was that professional symphony orchestras would use the piece as an opportunity to collaborate with vocal groups in their communities. It has been one of Harris' more popular works over the years, and in 1940 the piece won the Award of Merit "for outstanding contribution to American Music" by

the National Association of Composers and Conductors, and it won the first award granted by the National Committee for Music Appreciation.²

The fifth movement of *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)* is titled "Dance Tunes for Full Orchestra." The material from the first movement of *American Symphony - 1938* that is used in the fifth movement of *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)* is the thematic material based on "Jump Up, My Lady" in measures 74-117, the B section in the analysis above. The melody appears in almost exactly the same form in both pieces. In the *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*, the melodic line is in the piano, just as it was in the band piece, but it is doubled in the strings and woodwinds, scored almost in a hocket fashion.

The harmonic supporting material is constructed differently in the two movements. The band version utilizes the chordal punctuations in the brass, based on a variety of common-tone triads, sparsely at first, but increasing in frequency and intensity as the section progresses. The orchestral version uses a pizzicato quarter note progression in the strings, which creates a great deal of forward energy, but not as much harmonic interest, because for the most part, the supporting pizzicato bass line stays in the key area of D major (see Example 45).

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² Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 78-79.

Example 45: Folksong Symphony (No. 4), Mvt. 5, mm.79-87



Before the common thematic material occurs in *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*, in measures 80-115, there is a statement in the orchestral version of the first phrase of the melody, measures 13-20, which is never really stated in its pure form in the band version (see Example 46). This "missing" first melodic phrase illustrates the probable origin of the rhythmic design of the *x* motive in the introduction of *American Symphony - 1938*.

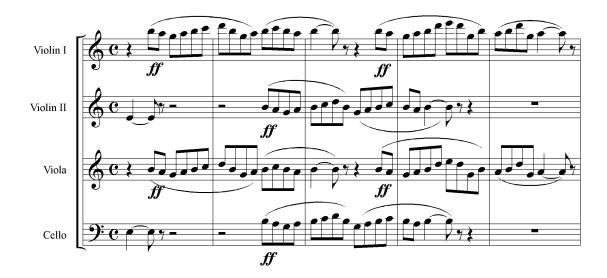
Example 46: Folksong Symphony (No. 4), Mvt. 5, mm.13-20



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There is some formal similarity between the two movements. In each setting, a motive from the tune is developed before the actual folksong melody is heard in its entirety. In the first movement of *American Symphony - 1938*, the *x* motive is developed from the beginning of the piece until measure 73, at which time the transformation of the *x* motive provides the autogenetic link for the anacrusis to the folksong melody. In *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*, the developed thematic material in measures 48-77 is more closely related to the tune, and easily recognized as a derivative of the melody (see Example 47).

Example 47: Folksong Symphony (No. 4), Mvt. 5, mm.56-60



Both of the movements are quite different in length. The fifth movement of the Folksong Symphony (No. 4) was designed to be an orchestral interlude, and the duration of the movement is not as long and developed as the first movement of American Symphony - 1938. As was revealed in the analysis, each large-scale section of the first movement of American Symphony - 1938 relates to the introduction material and the x motive. The development of the x motive, understanding the polychordal texture, and the integration of the quartal and quintal harmonies are complicated and involved. Knowing that the Dorsey band had not been successful with American Symphony - 1938, Harris probably decided to make the Folksong Symphony (No. 4) movement more accessible to performers and audiences alike, focusing on recognizable motives from the folksong melody to work out his compositional treatments.

The fourth movement of *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)* is titled "Mountaineer Love Song," and in a program note provided for the symphony, the composer writes that the

movement is "a love song from the life of the mountain folk of the South, based on the tune, 'He's Gone Away,' possessing both the pathos and the strange wildness which characterizes these passionate people."³ In describing the movement, Stehman writes:

This movement is the heart of the *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*, in placement, in depth of utterance, and in the complexity of working-out. Possibly Harris' finest choral folk-tune setting, the muted intensity of its melancholy appears to be the goal toward which the previous movements, in their diverse ways, have been aiming.⁴

The amount of musical material that is common to both "Mountaineer Love Song" and the second movement from *American Symphony - 1938*, "Sad Song," is significant. Not only are two extensive passages of music used in *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)*, but they are used in the same essential form. This *verbatim* duplication of material implies that all of the "pathos and strange wildness" that Harris attempted to capture in this movement was intended to be expressed by Tommy Dorsey and his band.

The first section of music from "Sad Song" that is used in "Mountaineer Love Song" is the opening introduction and statement of the first half of the melody in measures 1-18. The music is retained in almost its identical form, rhythmically, harmonically, and melodically. In the more recent work, the trombone melody at the beginning is rescored for violas, and the chordal harmony found in the trombones is stated in the strings, but the woodwind parts retain a similar scoring, with additional woodwinds added. In "Sad Song," the introduction of the movement lasts through measure 8, and the solo trombone enters with the melodic theme in measure 9 at the beginning of the first formal section of the piece. In the orchestral version, the trombone

³Harris, quoted in Stehman, "The Symphonies of Roy Harris," 271.

⁴Stehman, "The Symphonies of Roy Harris," 310.

solo is written for horn, and the horn soloist states the first phrase of the folksong "He's Gone Away" through the first half of the melodic material.

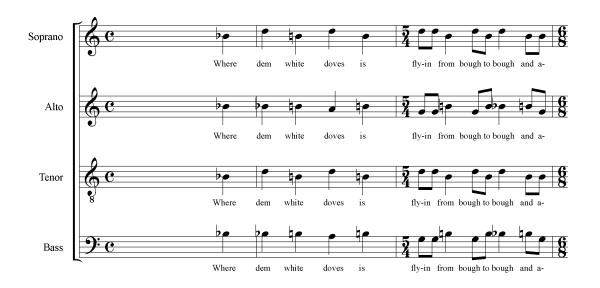
The two settings diverge in measure 18, where the band version continues with the second half of the melody, and in the orchestral version, the chorus enters with the first statement of the melody. From the point that the band version trombone soloist begins the melody, there are two complete statements of the verse, but from the point where the chorus enters in the orchestral version, there is one full statement of the verse, and then a statement of the second half of the verse.

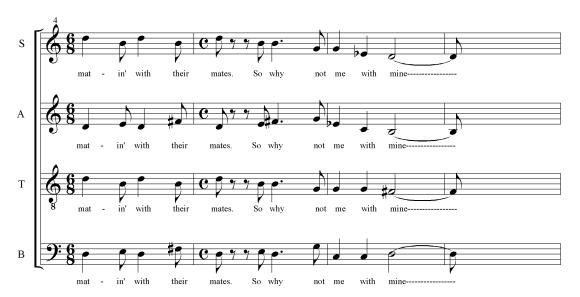
The middle climactic arch sections of each movement are nearly identical as well, the only difference being that the melody, with its melodic extension and expansion that is stated in the band version in measures 51-73, is offset by two beats when it occurs in the orchestral setting. The band melody begins on beat 2 in measure 51, and the orchestra melody, in measures 50-71, begins on beat 4 as an anacrusis to the downbeat of measure 50. Rhythmically, harmonically, and melodically, the middle passages are the same. This section also serves as an instrumental interlude in the orchestral version, because the chorus does not sing. This means that the most significant passage of music from *American Symphony - 1938* that was retained in its original form in *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)* was the climactic middle section of the middle movement--the centerpiece of the symphony.

The last two verses of each of the movements are only slightly similar, but almost out of necessity. The chorus has to return in the orchestral version to sing the bridge and the final verse, and in the band version, the motivic material that relates to the first movement and the *y* motive are developed during the D section. There are two common musical elements shared during the two final verses of the movements. There is a climactic bridge in the chorus in measures 83-87 that correlates to the brass "fanfare" in

the band setting, measures 85-86 (see Examples 48 and 44). In the setting for chorus and orchestra, the rhythmic accents are accomplished by changing the meter.

Example 48: Folksong Symphony (No. 4), Mvt. 4, mm.83-88





The prominent bass line in measures 74-87 of the band version occurs before and during the brass fanfare, or bridge theme (see Example 38). In the orchestral version, this line takes on even greater importance. It occurs after the mixed meter section in measures 87-99, and it is not just a bass line; the entire orchestra has this thematic material in unison, and it is used as harmonic support, leading to the final verse of the chorus.

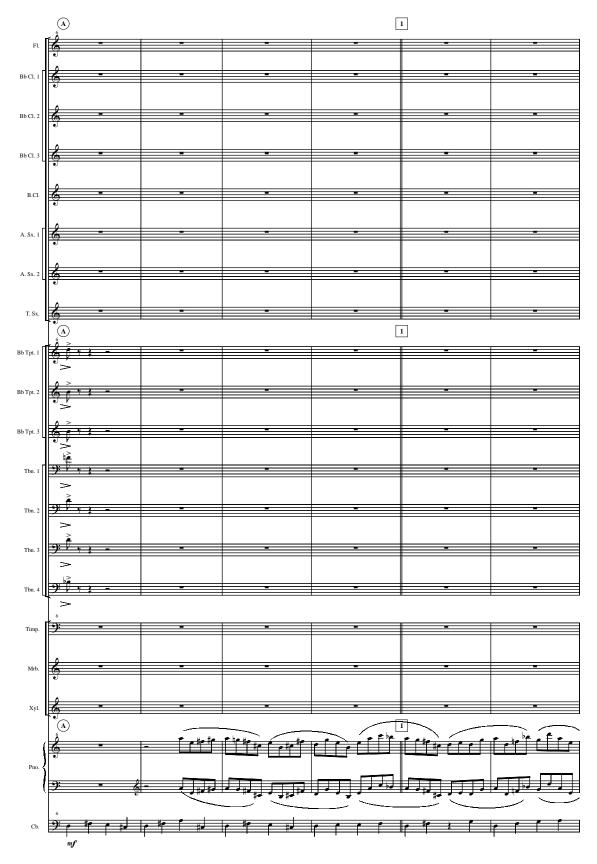
CHAPTER SIX

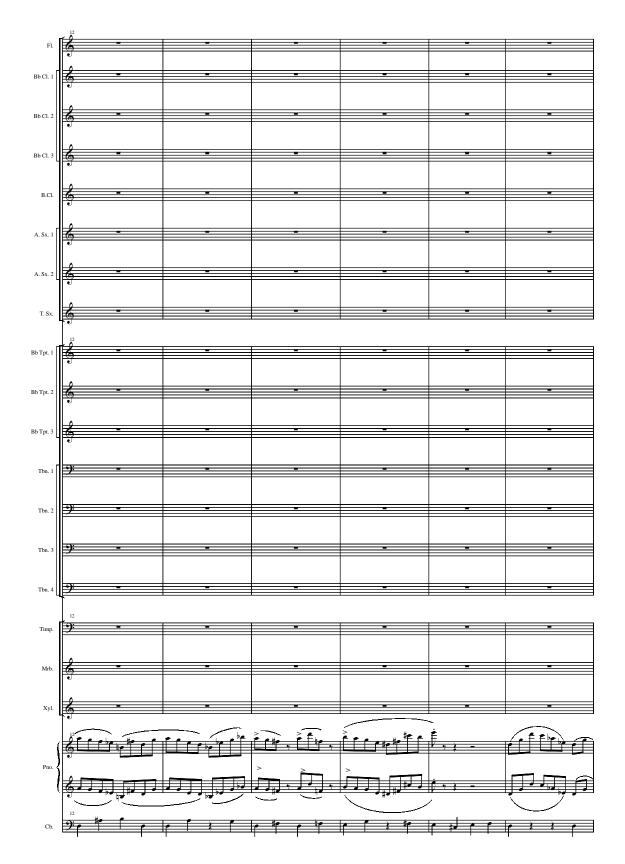
CONCLUSIONS

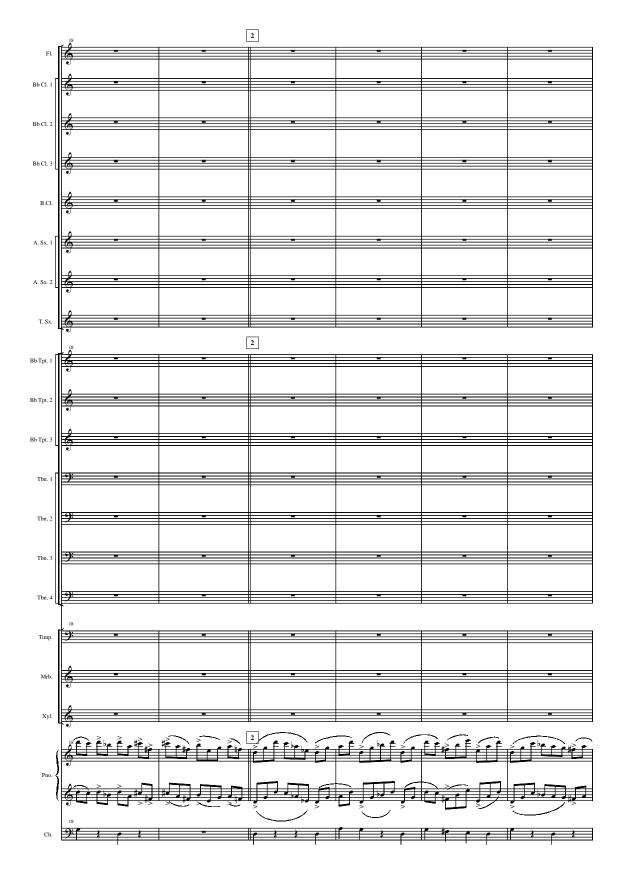
Roy Harris' *American Symphony - 1938* was supposed to be his fourth symphony. The original heading that Harris himself put on the manuscript score of the second movement was "Symphony Number Four, Second Movement." The material that he had planned to include in the multi-movement band work was significant to the composer, and there are several notable sections of common musical material shared by American Symphony - 1938 and Folksong Symphony (No. 4). Although speculation led to this analytical discovery, the discovery itself leads to more speculation. If Tommy Dorsey's band had rehearsed at a feasible hour, when the players were refreshed and alert, perhaps they would have experienced initial success with this piece. If the band had been more successful rehearsing the piece, perhaps Roy Harris would have completed American Symphony – 1938, and had he completed the work, Roy Harris' "Fourth Symphony" might be known today as a major multi-movement work for band. Perhaps there is more musical material in *Folksong Symphony (No. 4)* that Harris originally intended to put in his band piece. Harris' innovative one-on-a-part scoring, within the parameters of the Dorsey band's personnel structure, might have made a major impact on other American composers, had they had the opportunity to hear the piece performed. The author suggests that all of these are possibilities, and hopes that the availability of this modern wind ensemble edition for study and performance might stimulate further research and a greater appreciation for Roy Harris' work.

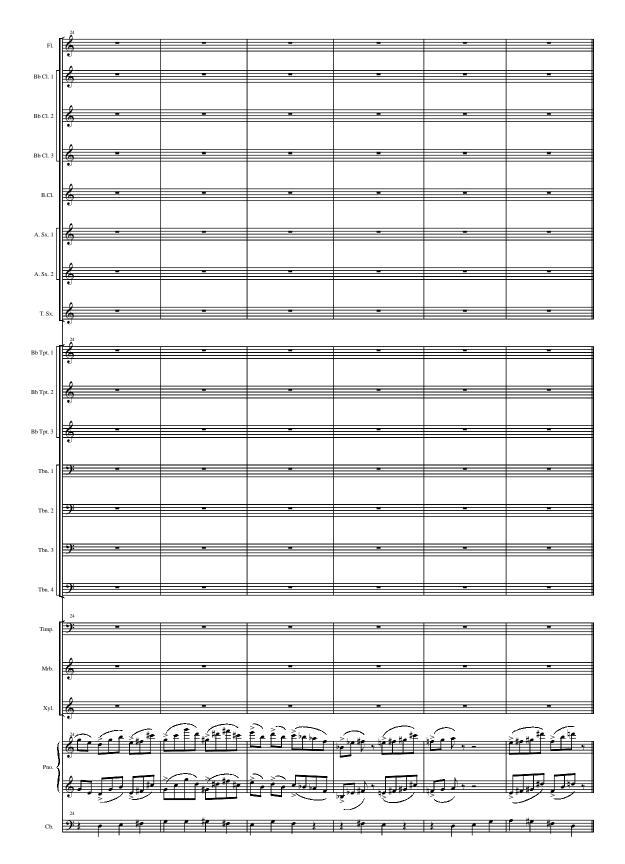
¹Stehman, Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography, 190.

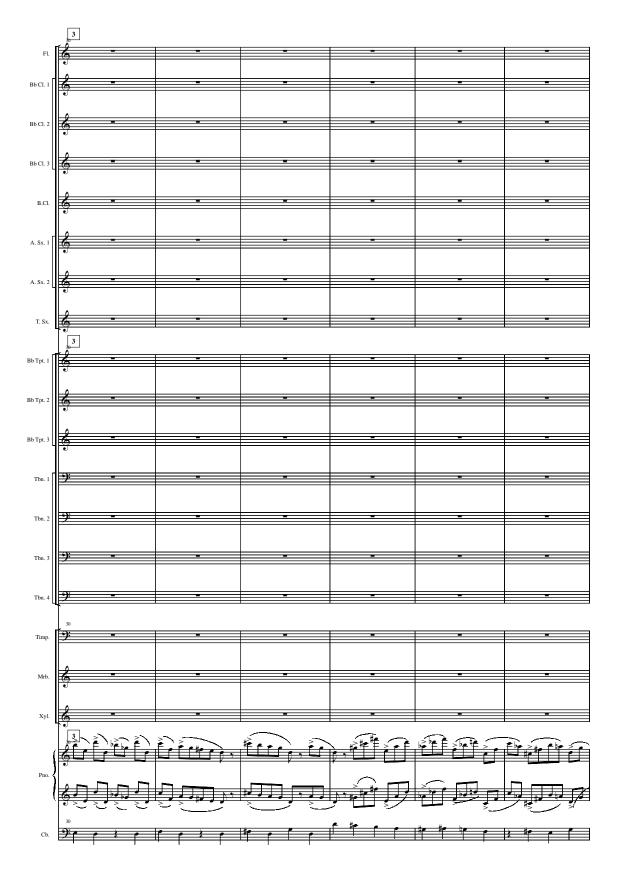










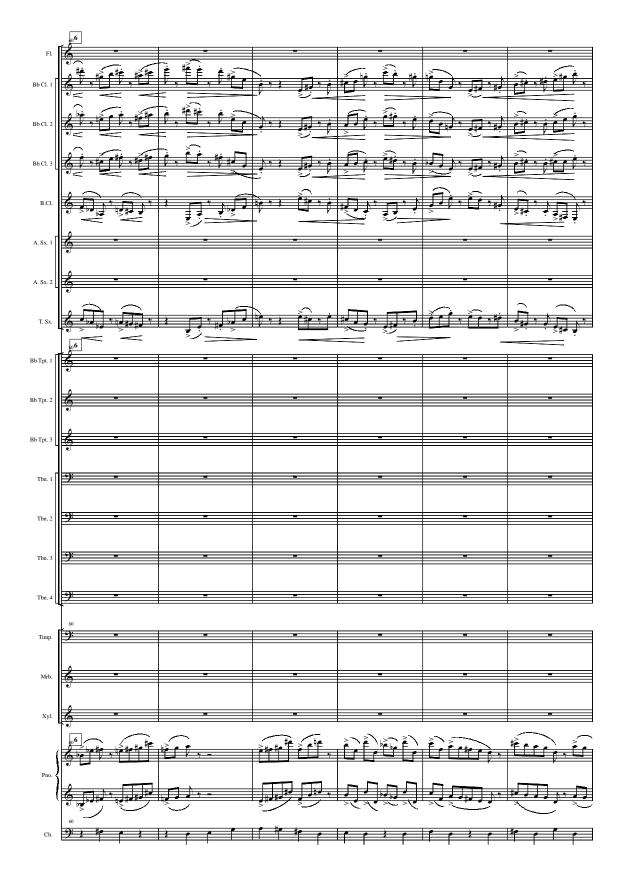


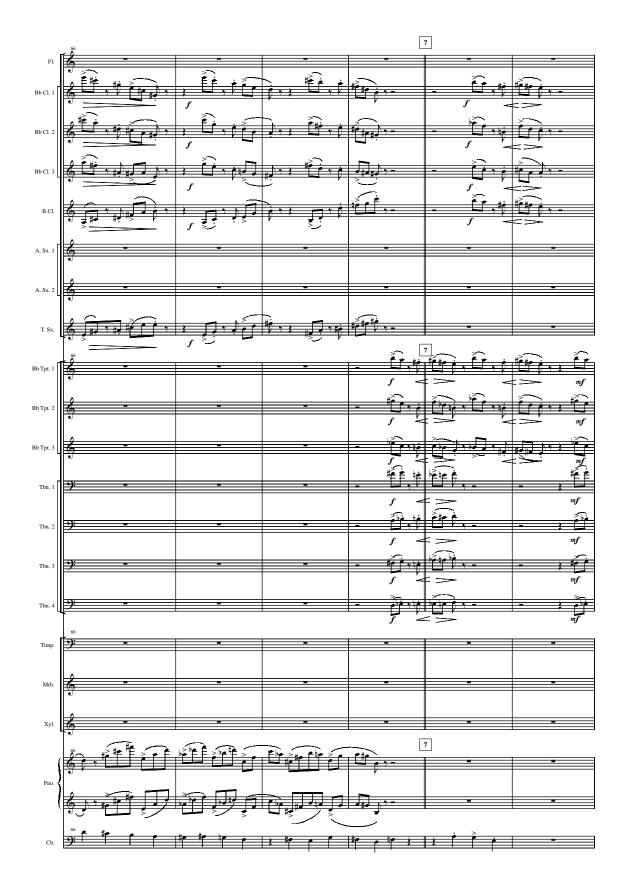


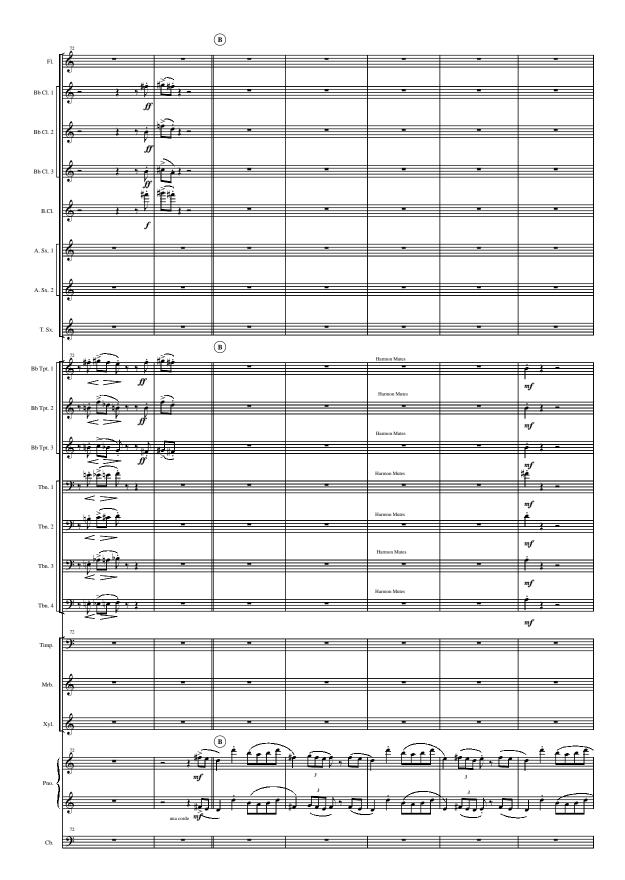


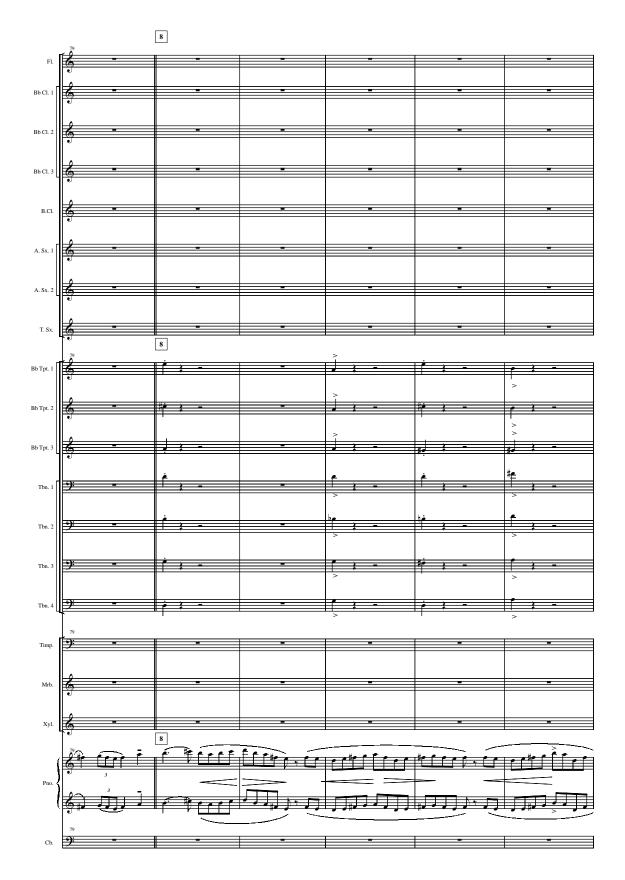


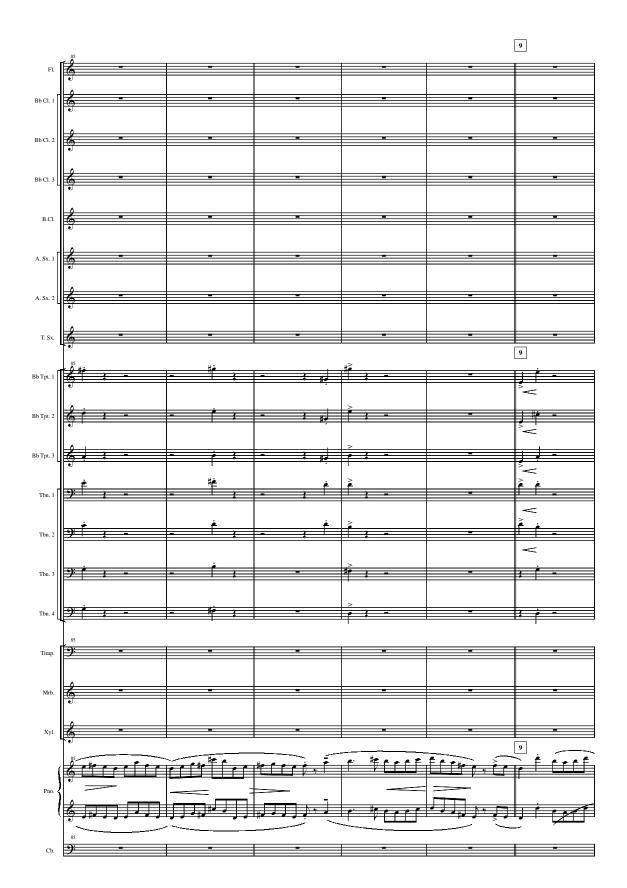


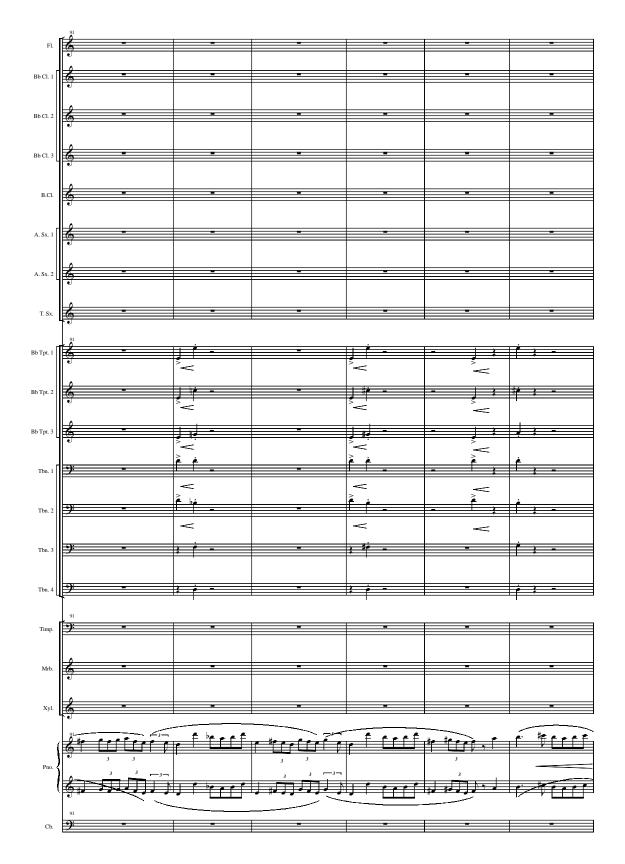


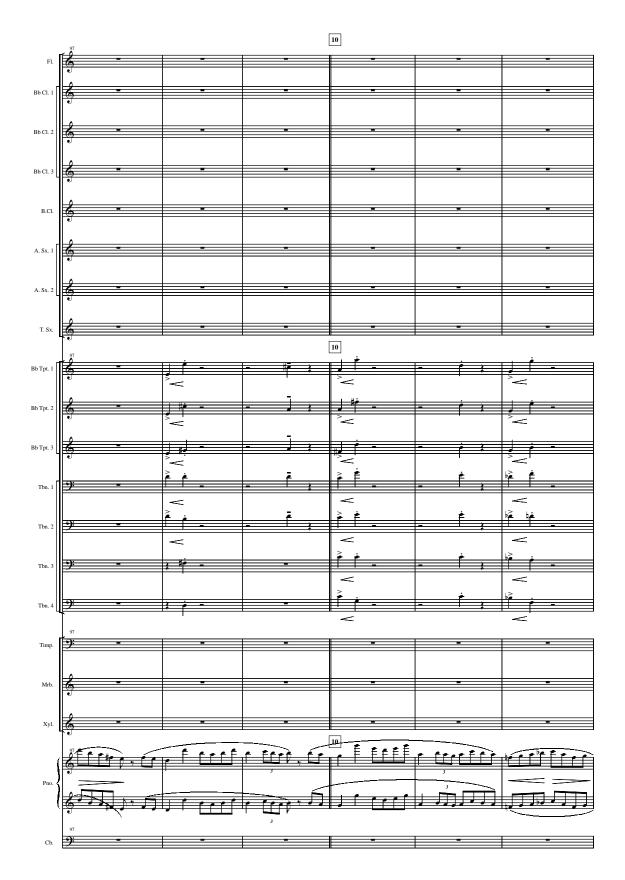


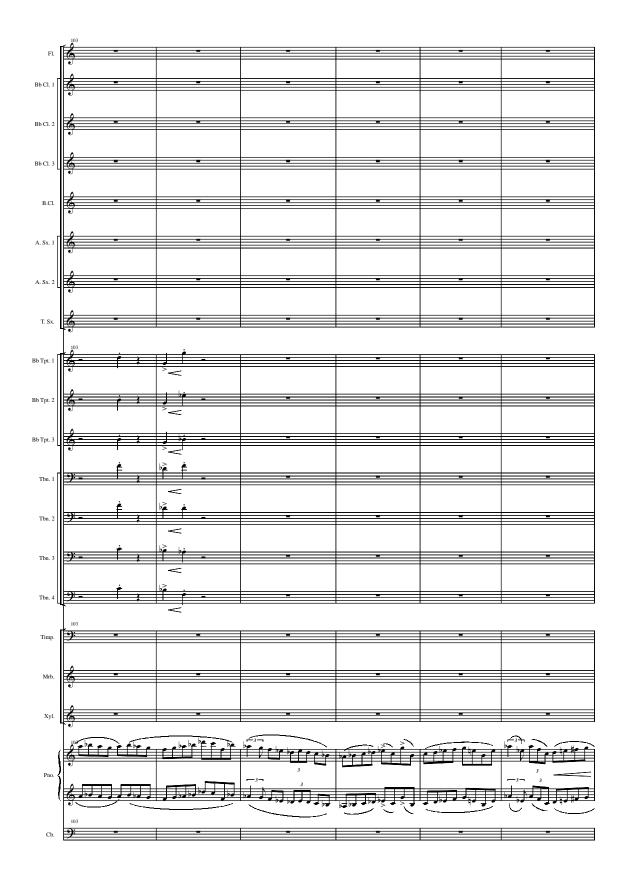


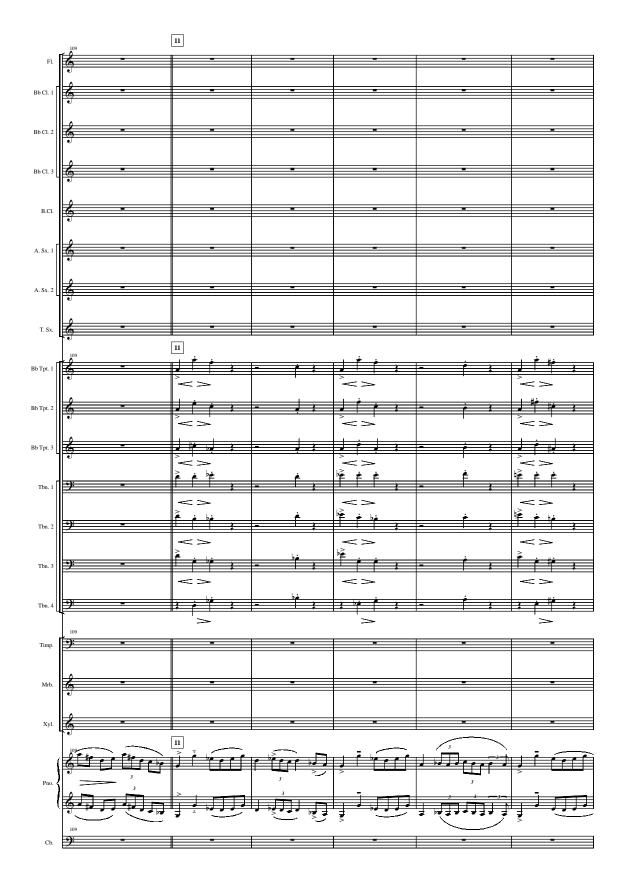


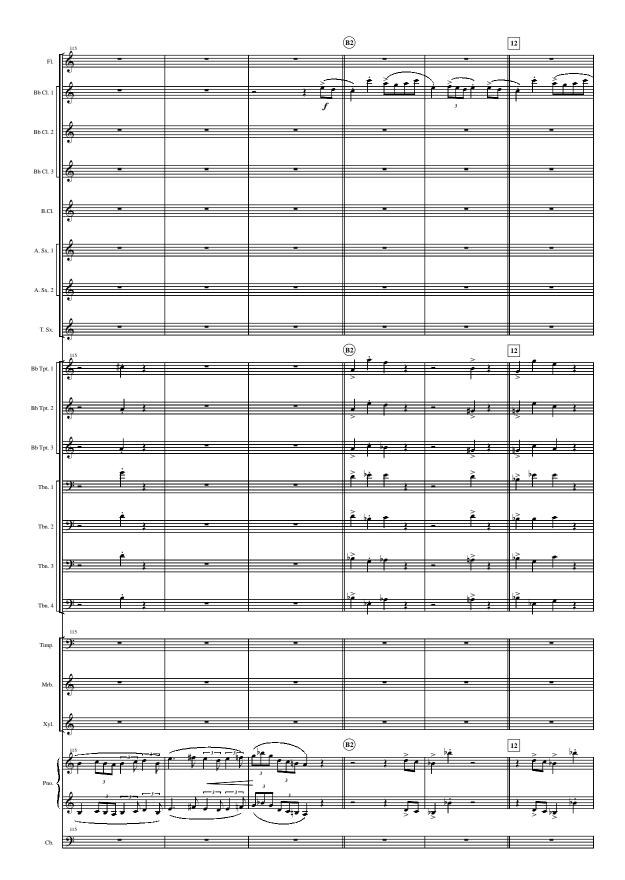


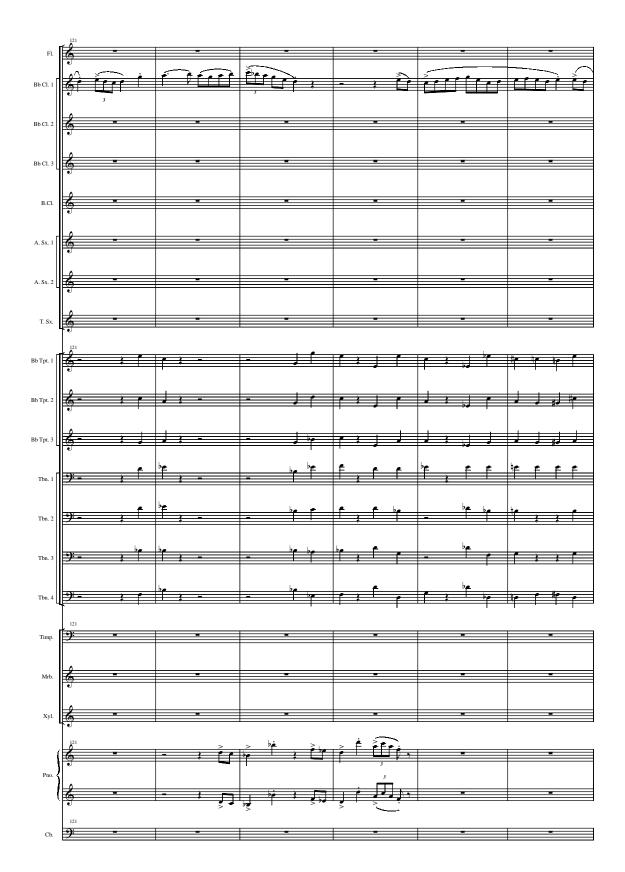


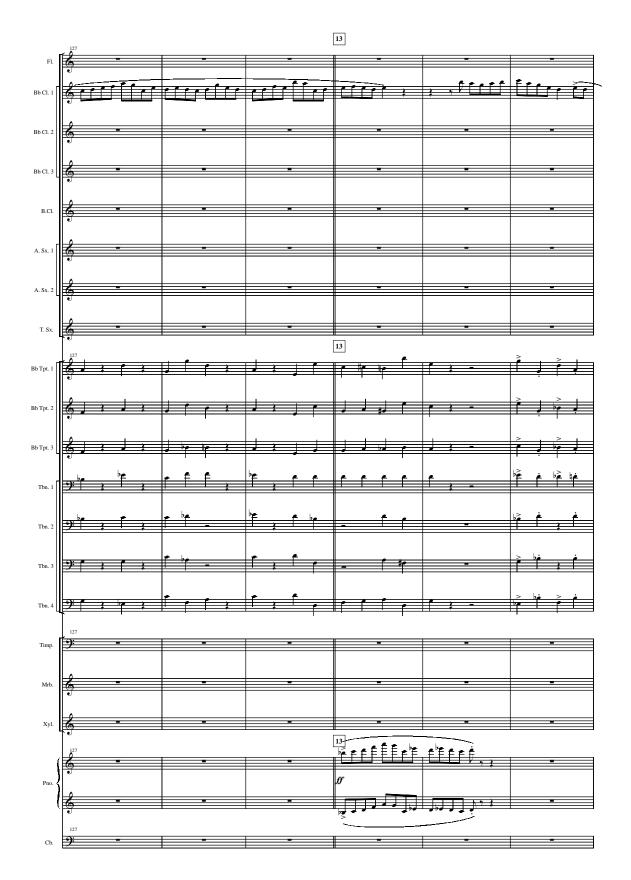


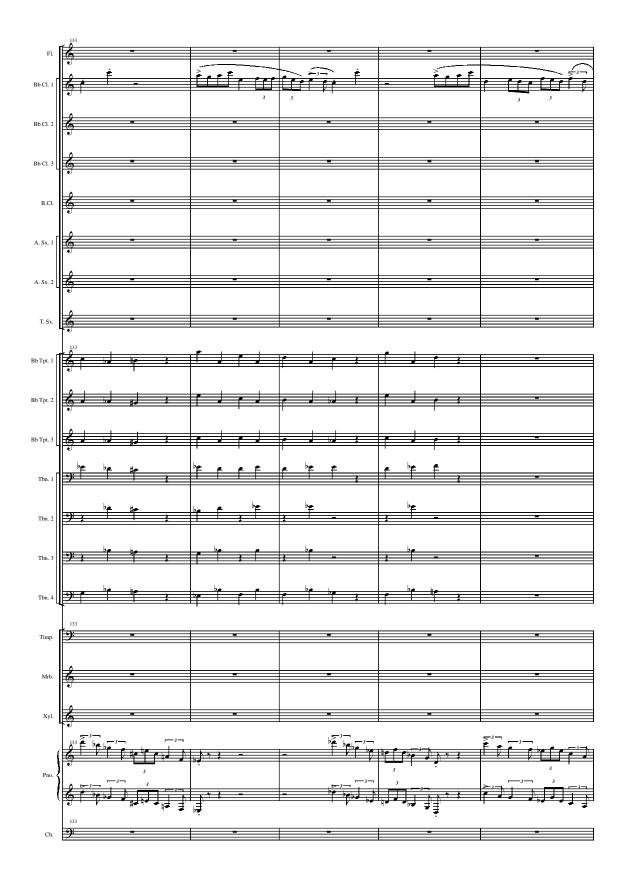




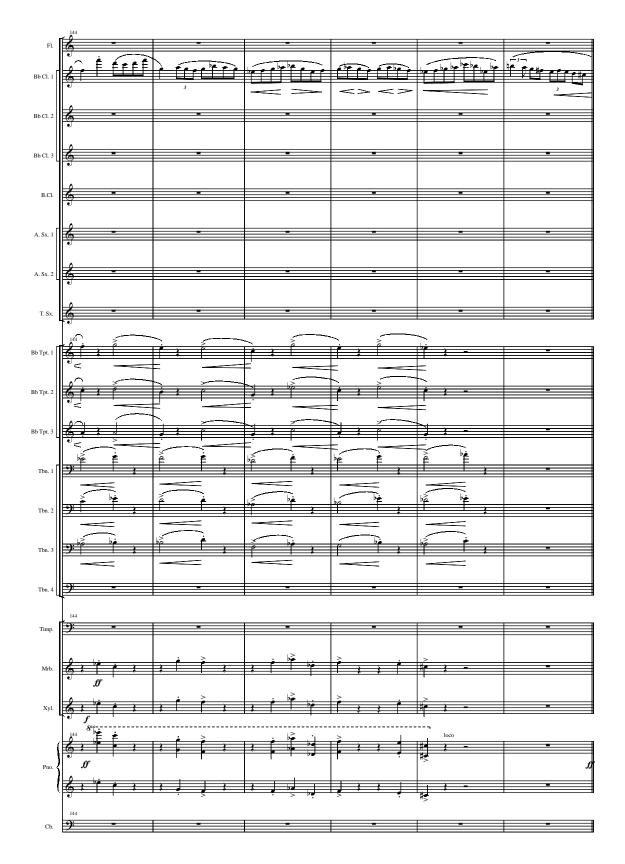


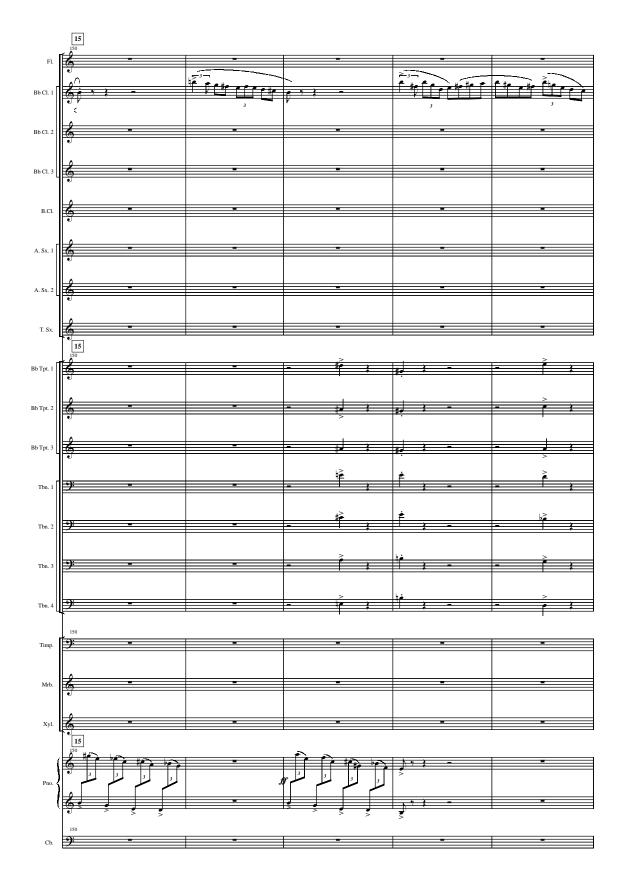


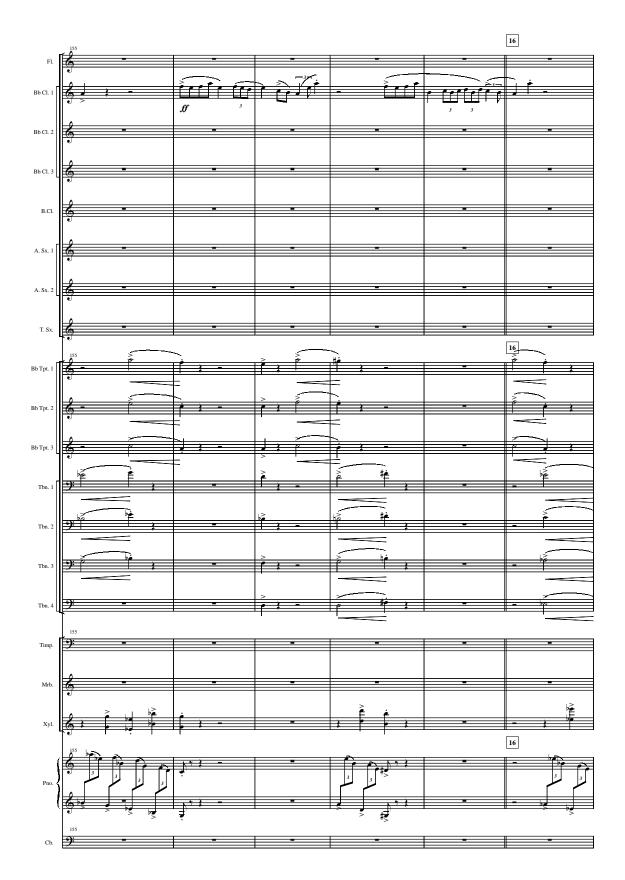


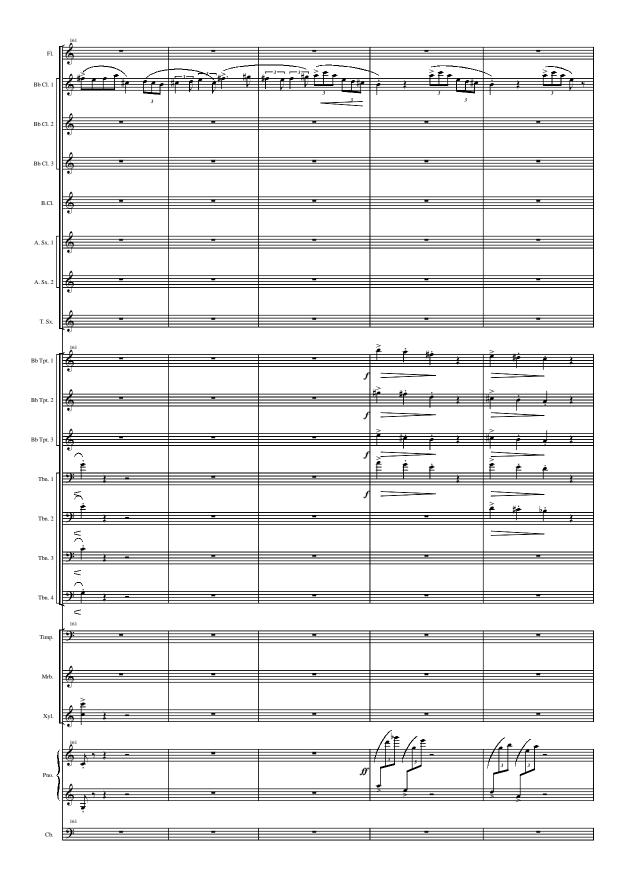


































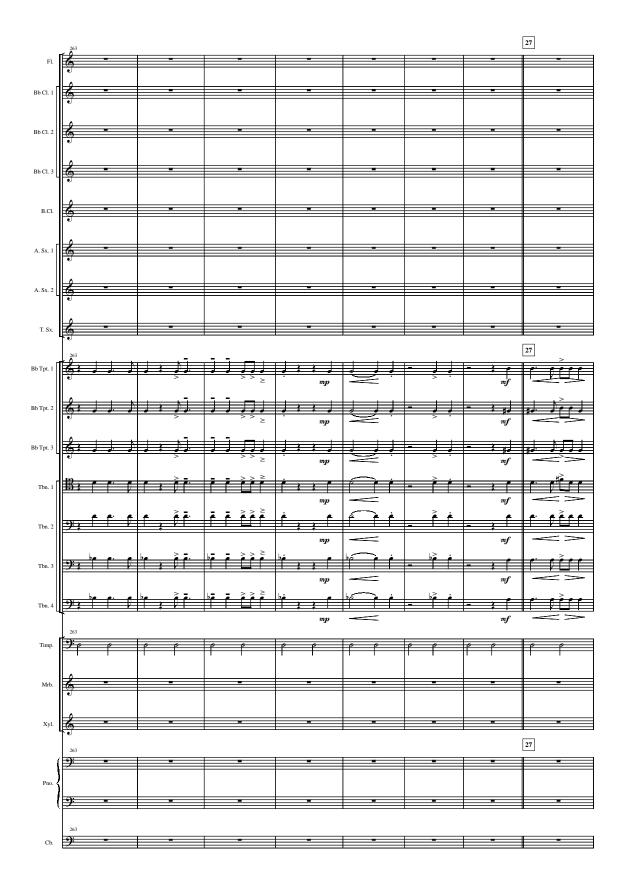


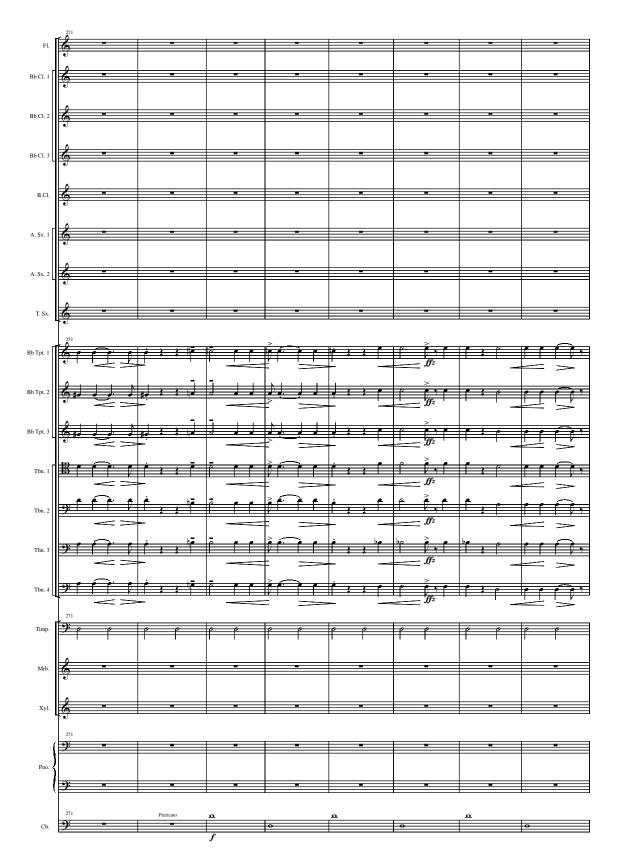


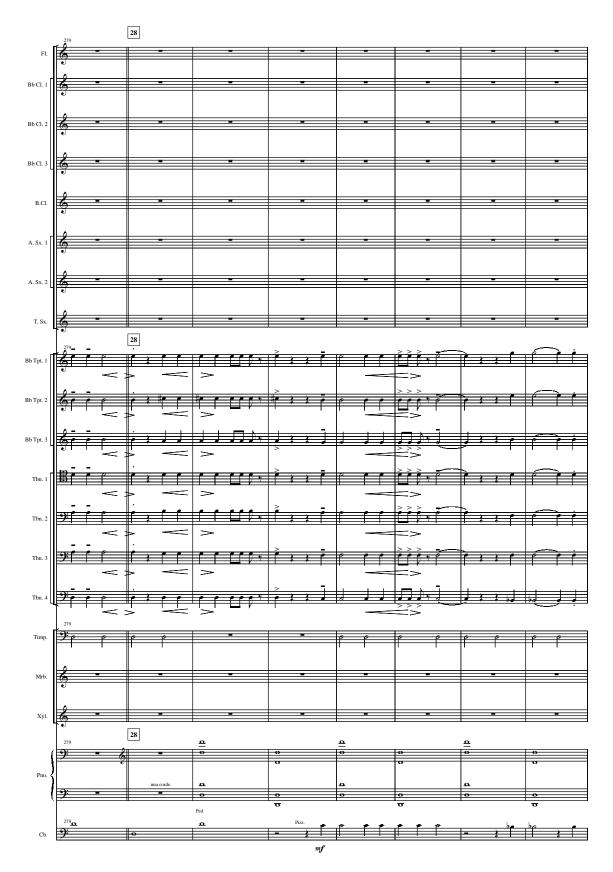








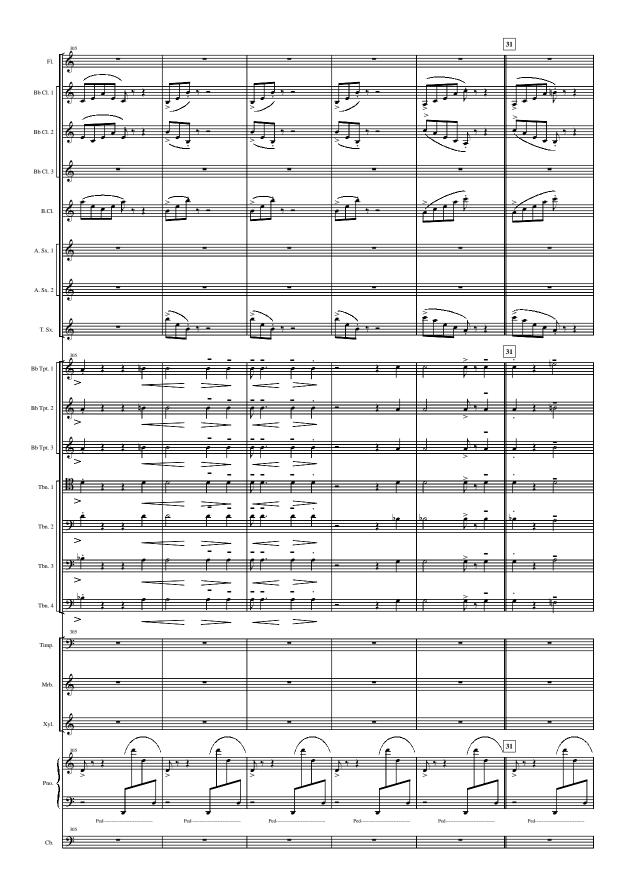














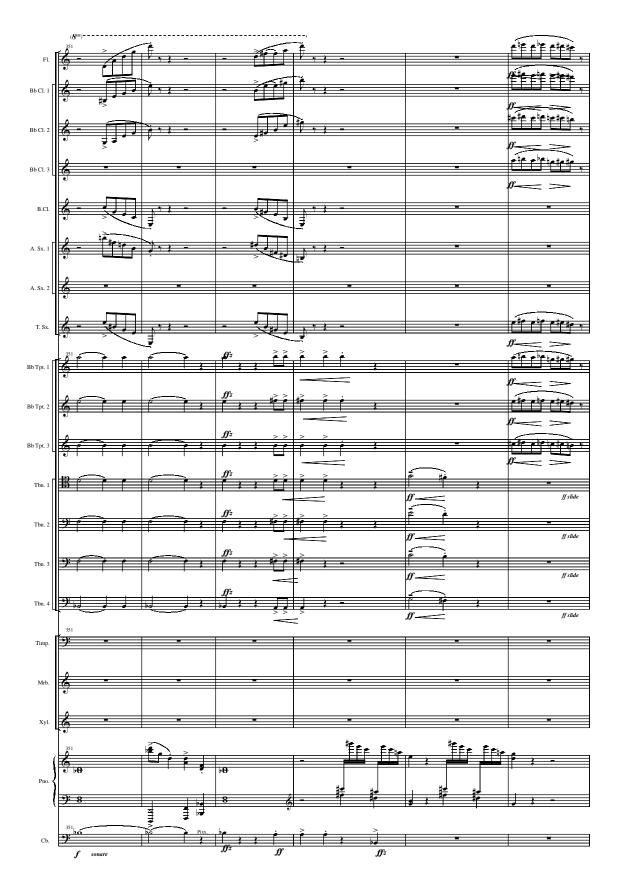


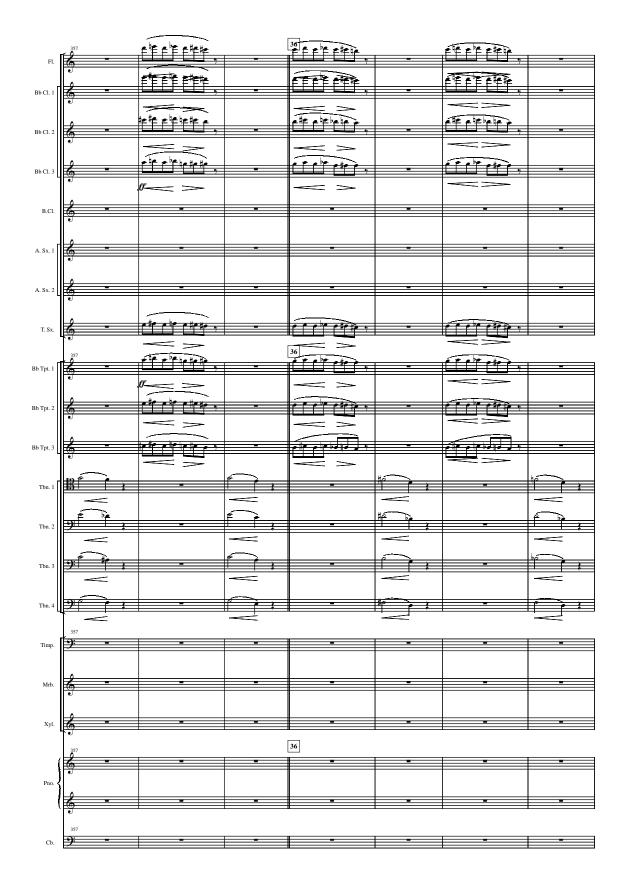


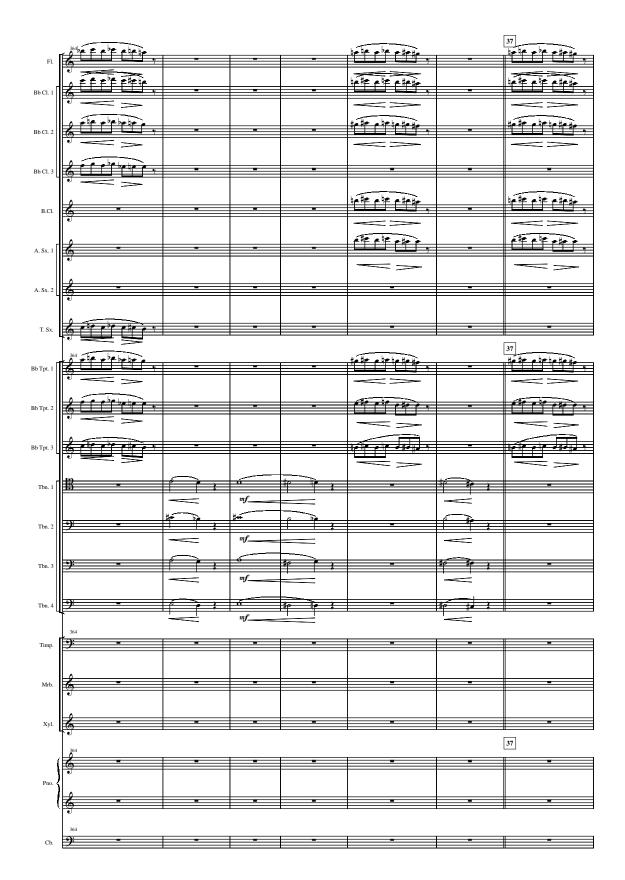


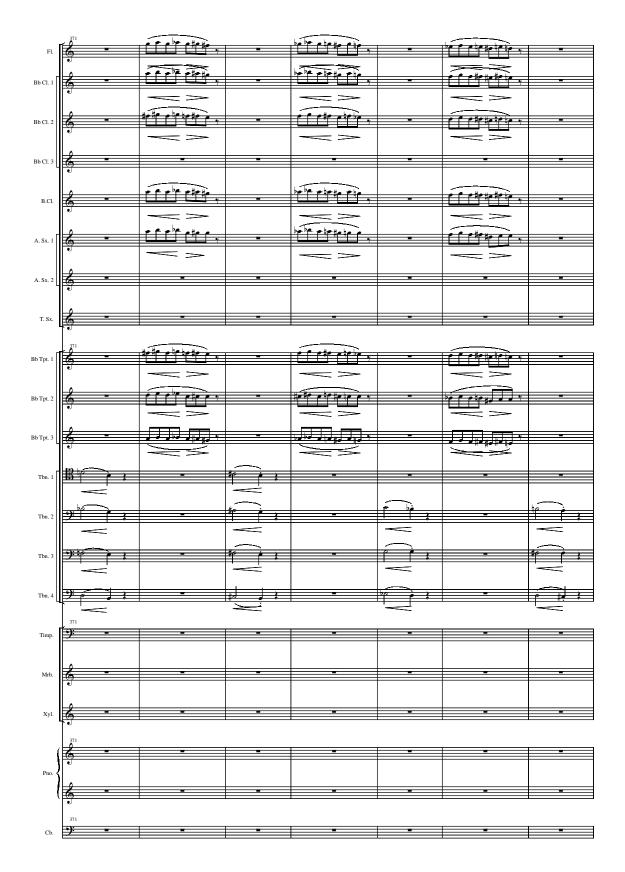


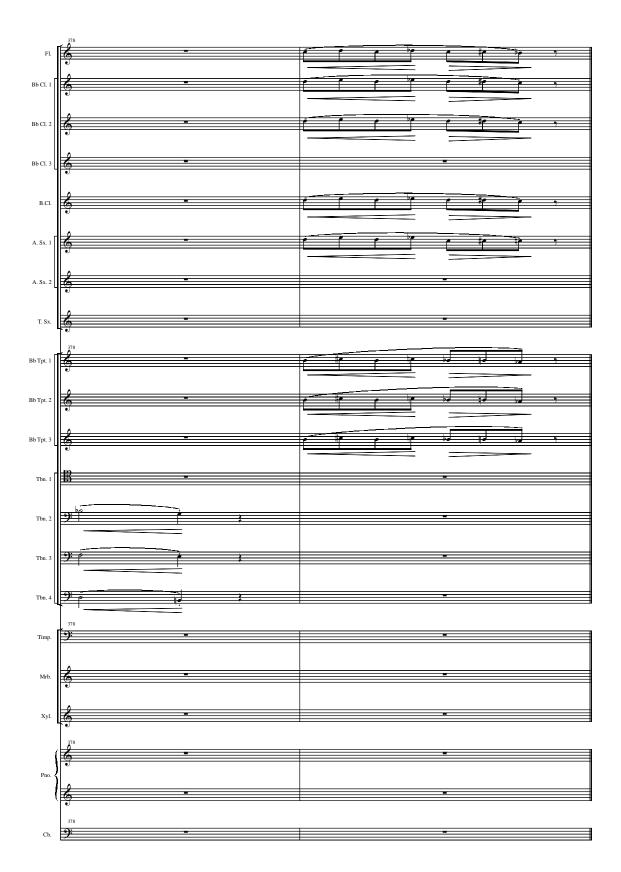




























Sonor

































APPENDIX A

LETTER OF PERMISSION TO ACCESS THE ROY HARRIS ARCHIVES IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

LOUISE SPIZIZEN

2540 Camino La Zorrela Tucson, Arizona 85718-3122 Ph. (520) 299-2399 Fax: (520) 577-9321

E-mail: Lspizizen@aol.com

Fax:: 202-707-0621 Attention: Brian Lamb

Please give Brian Lamb access to the Roy Harris Archives. He is a reliable scholar, and I will gladly vouch for his scholarly intentions.

I am recommending him to Wayne Shirley, if he is in the Library today.

Thankyou for helping Mr. Lamb with his project.

Founde M. Spingen

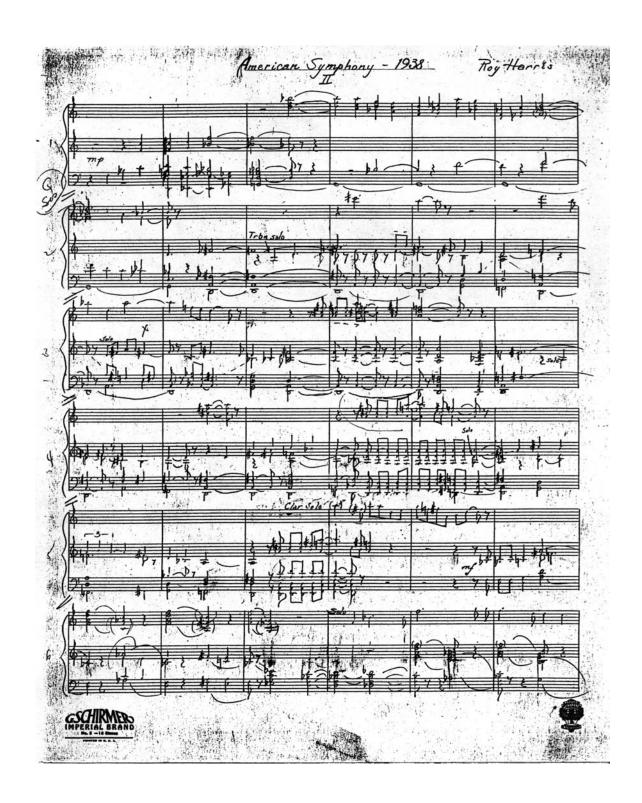
Louise M. Spizizen

APPENDIX B MANUSCRIPT SCORE TO MOVEMENT ONE



APPENDIX C

MANUSCRIPT SKETCH FOR MOVEMENT TWO, "SAD SONG"



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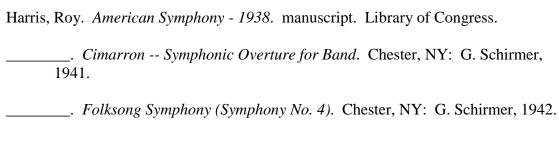
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