Wandering into the Dusky Plains for Winds, Percussion, and String Quartet

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University of Tennessee - Knoxville

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Kenneth A. Jacobs, Major Professor

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Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

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Wandering Into the Dusky Plains
for
Winds, Percussion, and String Quartet

A Thesis Presented for the Master of Music Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Jess Hendricks
August 2007
ABSTRACT

*Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* is a work composed for winds, percussion, and a string quartet in seven movements. It was written to fulfill a portion of the requirements to receive a Master’ degree in Music Composition from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. The composition of the work was completed in December of 2006. All of the orchestration was done during the process of composition and edited later by the composer using Finale 2007. The MIDI realization of the score was completed using Logic Express 7.2, Garritan Personal Orchestra sound software library, and Virtual Drumline sound software library.

This paper will present an analysis of this work and compare it to several pieces of music in recent history that provided some influence on the construction of this piece. The form of the piece, along with melody, harmony, rhythm, and texture will be examined and compared to the following works: Béla Bartók’s *Concerto for Orchestra* and *Bagatelle Op.6, No. 2*, Claude Debussy’s *Nocturnes: No. 1*, *Nuages* (Clouds), Gunther Schuller’s *Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee*, Paul Hindemith’s *Mathis Der Maler*, Maurice Ravel’s *Bolero*, Serge Prokofiev’s *Symphony No. 5*, and Darius Milhaud’s *La Création du Monde.*
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

*Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* is a seven-movement work composed in 2006 for alto flute, clarinet in Bb, bassoon, horn in F, tuba, 3 percussionists, and string quartet. The title of the work is not meant to convey any programmatic intent, but rather a feeling one gets when exploring new territory either physically or within their own psyche. Each movement is created using a different compositional technique, but at the same time, they are bound together through various stylistic considerations such as harmony and orchestration.

Different compositional techniques will be examined for each movement including form, melody, harmony, texture, and rhythm. Additionally this work will be compared to works by well-known composers of the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. The works to be examined are *Concerto for Orchestra* and *Bagatelle Op. 6, No. 2* by Béla Bartók, *Nocturnes: No. 1, Nuages* (Clouds) by Claude Debussy, *Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee* by Gunther Schuller, *Mathis Der Maler* by Paul Hindemith, *Bolero* by Maurice Ravel, *Symphony No. 5* by Serge Prokofiev, and *La Création du Monde* by Darius Milhaud. These works’ influence on the composition of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* will be explored to demonstrate any similarities. Specifically their relationship to the different compositional elements of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* will be examined.
CHAPTER II

Form

The form of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* most closely resembles the suites of the baroque period in that it does not adopt the sonata-allegro form that became popular in the eighteenth century. But its relation to the suites of this period is limited. In the late nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries, works came about with movement schemes different than the standard three or four-movement plan of sonatas and symphonies of the eighteenth century.

*Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* is seven movements, each with a different character. The composer intends the work to be performed as a whole, but each movement can exist independent of the rest of the piece. Although each movement has a different character, several movements are related by their strongest compositional element. The first movement, “I. The Groove” has techniques employed in all of the remaining six movements. The dominant element in the two “Air” movements (movements II. And IV.) is the melody. These are the most traditional of the other movements. Movements III. and VI. focuses on texture and orchestration. In these movements melody and rhythm are overshadowed by color and harmony. In movements V. and VII., rhythm is the primary focus. The order of the movements is meant to put climactic moments at the end and around two-thirds of the way through the work.
Nothing can be more harmful to a work’s overall effect than a poorly placed climax. The point of greatest tension is usually well beyond the middle of the work. If it appears too early, there is an excessively long anticlimax; and if it is too close to the end, the music may appear to stop prematurely.\footnote{Ellis B. Kohs, \textit{Musical Composition: Projects in Ways and Means} (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1980), 7}

Figure 1 shows an outline of each movement’s form and mood. Although some traditional forms are mentioned, they are rarely unaltered.

Gunther Schuller composed \textit{Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee} as homage to, and at the same time, a programmatic representation of seven different pictures by the artist. As a result, each movement uses radically different compositional techniques in an effort to musically paint each different picture. Figure 2 outlines the basic form and structure of each movement of this work.

Several of the movements are entirely based on texture, such as the first movement, “Antike Harmonien”.

In \textit{Antike Harmonien – 1925} (Antique Harmonies) tried to preserve not only Klee’s auber, ochre, and brown colors, but also the block like shapes with which in constant variation, Klee builds this remarkable painting. Over a dark, dense background, blocks of lighter colored fifths gradually pile up, reaching a climax in the brighter yellow of the trumpets and the high strings. A repeated cadence common in the 14\textsuperscript{th}-century music and the organum-like open fifths establish the “antique” quality of the “harmonies”.\footnote{Gunther Schuller, \textit{Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee} (London: Universal Edition, 1962), ii}
I. The Groove - Mysterious, rhythmic
- A  Bars 1-21
- B  Bars 22-49
- a Bars 50-53 (very short, almost transitional)
- C  Bars 54-78
- D  Bars 79-103
- A  Bars 104-124

II. Air - Lyrical, building throughout
- Ternary Form
- A  Bars 1-34
- B  Bars 36-75
- A  Bars 76-98

III. Dreams of Debussy - Dreamlike and nebulous
- One section, almost interlude-like feeling.

IV. Air II - As if sung longingly
- Ternary form
- A  Bars 1-16
- B  Bars 17-34
- A  Bars 35-57

V. Toccata - Driving and frantic
- Altered rondo form
- A  Bars 1-17
- B  Bars 18-27
- a Bars 28-36
- C  Bars 37-46
- Transition:  Bars 47-55
- a Bars 56-63

VI. Soundscape - Very reserved and atmospheric
- Ternary Form
- A  Bars 1-11
- B  Bars 12-27
- A  Bars 28-36

VII. Coda - Dance-like and fast. Hopeful and excited.
- Ternary Form
- A  Bars 1-13
- B  Bars 14-38
- A  Bars 39-55

Figure 1. Wandering Into the Dusky Plains movement and form outline.
I. Antike Harmonien (Antique Harmonies)  
One section movement with building then waning texture.

II. Abstraktes Trio (Abstract Trio)  
Also one section. Until the end instrumentation is always in little trios.

III. Kleiner blauer Teufel (Little Blue Devil)  
After the introduction, the piece is divided into a nine-bar version of 12-bar blues. 
Solo contrabass plays a 'walking' bass line while the percussion lays out a swing 
rhythm.  
Introduction Bars 1-12  
A Bars 13-33 -- 2 choruses of "9 bar blues" then trumpet/flute playing melody.  
B Bars 34-43 -- more improvisatory.  
C Bars 44-54 -- Vibraphone solo  
D Bars 55-64 -- Buildup and climactic material  
A Bars 65-end -- The main theme returns.

IV. Die Zwitschermaschine (The Twittering-machine)  
Programmatic, pointillistic movement. Starts with wavering, tremolo passages. 
Then is purely pointillistic until it dies down, the tremolo section returns and the 
piece is pointillistic until the end.

V. Arabische Stadt (Arab Village)  
Binary form  
A Bars 1-49 -- solo flute (off-stage) and oboe are featured playing free and 
improvisatory-sounding melodic lines.  
B Bars 50-end -- 1 oboe, harp, and solo viola play a monophonic melodic line, 
that uses quarter-tones to imitate middle-eastern scales.

VI. Ein umheimlicher Moment (An Eerie Moment)  
Another one-section textural movement.  
Schuller describes this movement as: "The strange, ominous tension of the 
opening finally finds sudden release in two terrified outbursts, only to sink back 
into oblivious calm."

VII. Pastorale  
Although this movement has two distinct sections, separated by a solo clarinet, 
both sections only slightly different orchestrations of the same material.

Figure 2. Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee by Gunther Schuller movement and form outline.
Figure 3. Measures 1-11 of “I. Antike Harmonien” from Schuller’s *Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee*. 
Figure 4. Measures 40–42 of “V. Arabische Stadt (Arab Village)” from Schuller’s *Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee*. Much like *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains*, Schuller’s piece features very different techniques for each movement. “Arabische Stadt (Arab Village)” (Figure 4) includes melodies with quartetone intervals to imitate the sound of traditional Arabic music, and the third movement, “Kleiner blauer Teufel (Little Blue Devil)” is interspersed with jazz-type stylistic features including a “walking” bass line played by a single contrabassist. Schuller uses serial techniques in the composition of the movement titled, “Die Zwitschermaschine (The Twittering Machine)”. A piece based on Klee’s famous *Die Zwitschermaschine* – 1922 (The Twittering Machine) should, it seems to me, do primarily one thing: twitter. The mathematical constructive element in present-day serial techniques seemed to lend itself logically to such a pointillistic musical representation.3

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In the first movement of *Wandering Into Dusky Plains*, all harmonies and melodies are derived from a four-note set of pitches: C, Db, F, Gb. Using Allen Forte’s system of analyzing the structure of atonal music this pitch class set would be labeled as 4-8. The pitch class set (A set of distinct integers representing pitch classes where a pitch class includes all octaves of a specific pitch) is 0, 1, 5, 6 in its prime form (a set in normal order, transposed so that the first integer is 0). “I. The Groove” is the only movement of the work to use these serial techniques, although it must be noted that most pieces using serial techniques often contain many more than one pitch class set.

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5. Ibid., 210
6. Ibid.
CHAPTER III
Melody

*Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* presents melody in several different aspects. In different movements the melodies were constructed diatonically, as it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was modal, as in the Renaissance and more recently by composers such as Béla Bartók. Melody was drawn from the perspective of the serial style that was popular in the early twentieth century, although not with the intent of atonality but rather the idea that with limited intervals, music can still have a tonal center. Melody is even relegated to the background in movements that explore sound and texture.

In the movements which feature melodic lines the most prominently, “I. Air” and “IV. Air II”, the shape of the piece is dictated by where the line rises and falls. Because of melody’s natural prominence in music, the movements where melody was not meant to have as much prominence were a challenge. In “III. Dreams of Debussy” and “VI. Soundscape”, the melodic structures that are present are repetitious, overlapped in different instruments, and often at a softer dynamic than the surrounding harmonies and textures. “V. Toccata” and “VII. Coda” feature more prominent melodic material, but the dominant feature of these movements is rhythm.

The one similar feature of melodic lines in the entire work is their construction from small motives. Each movement’s melody is based on a rhythmic
motive, an intervallic motive, or a combination of both. These motives act as a “seed” from which all of the melodic material in the movement grows.

“I. The Groove”, as stated earlier, is constructed from a four-note motive. This motive is purely interval-based. (Figure 5)

One aspect of this motive is that it is symmetrical. In other words, an implied tonal center exists by dividing the pitch set in half on a circle of all 12 pitch classes. (Figure 6) This is a method of giving the sense of a tonal center without resorting to the standard harmonic practices of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. By transposing the pitch set, there is feeling that the piece is modulating.

In the Bagatelle Op. 6, No. 2, Béla Bartók uses symmetry to create a tonal center of A in the opening bars. (Figure 7) The repeated eighth notes in the right hand are each a half step away from A, which is not played until later in the piece. When the left hand comes in each successive pitch moves an equal interval in the opposite direction of the A. This gives emphasis to the A even though it is never played.

Figure 5. “I. The Groove” pitch-based motive.

![Figure 5. “I. The Groove” pitch-based motive.](image)

Figure 6. The motive of “I. The Groove” as expressed on a “pitch wheel” showing tonal centricity on the A/Eb axis.

10
The title of both the second and fourth movements of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* is “Air”. This title was chosen for its implication of a lyrical melodic structure that is often described as “song-like”.

From at least the early 17th century the word ‘air’ was also widely applied to instrumental pieces. Like many of their vocal counterparts, such pieces tend to be of the lighter type, and some are dance-like – witness the Courtly Masquing Ayres (1621) of John Adson. But the term is generally used for simple pieces which, like vocal airs, are of a predominantly melodic cast and can indeed be seen as instrumental songs rather than dances. The inclusion of such a piece in a suite may have been prompted by a desire on the composer’s part to offer contrast to the surrounding pieces in specific dance rhythms. -- The many melodic airs in suites by later Baroque composers include one of the most celebrated movements by Bach – the air in the Suite no.3 in D bwv1068.\(^7\)

Although the motive for “II. Air” is primarily rhythmic in nature; some elements of the interval skips are also used. At other times the rhythm is used with different intervals. In Béla Bartók’s *Concerto for Orchestra*, this is also true of his motivic development techniques. (Figure 8)

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Figure 8. The main motive and an example of how the intervals are reused later, but the rhythm is changed in *Concerto for Orchestra* by Bartók.

The “B” section of the “Ii. Air” consists of a melody and counter-melody played simultaneously that rise to the climactic moment of the movement. (Figure 9)

“Iv. Air II” has a similar melodic construction to “Ii. Air” in that the motive is both rhythmic and interval-based. (Figure 10) The motive in this movement, even more than in the second movement, is often fragmented, inverted, or expanded.

The third and sixth movements of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* both focus on texture rather than melody or rhythm, but the simple melodies are still part of the texture that are derived from interval-based motives. In “Iii. Dreams of Debussy”, the melody is entirely in the winds. It provides movement in the background against the sustained harmonies that pervade the movement. (Figure 11)

To lessen the prominence of the melody in this movement, it is often overlapped with other instruments playing the same melodic figures. (Figure 12) Also the melodies are at a lower or equal dynamic level than the rest of the ensemble.

Similarly, the melodic figures in “Vi. Soundscape” are interval-based and intended only to add some movement in the background of the texture. These melodies are based on a similar motive to “Iii. Dreams of Debussy”. (Figure 13)
Figure 9. Measures 46-55 of “Ii Air” from Wandering Into the Dusky Plains.

Figure 10. The motive from “Iv. Air II”.

Figure 11. “Iii. Dreams of Debussy” interval-based motive.
Figure 12. Measures 12-19 of “lii. Dreams of Debussy”.

Figure 13. “Vi. Soundscape” interval-based motive.
“V. Toccata” and “Vii. Coda” are studies in rhythm, and as such, melody does not play the most prominent role, although it is much more prominent than in the third and sixth movements. These movements also do not use the strict seed-motive technique of the other movements. The melodies take on a more improvisatory nature. In the fifth movement, there is a recurring theme (Figure 14) that is introduced in the first two bars that bind the piece together melodically. In the final movement, “Vii. Coda”, the improvisatory melodies are related by the use of a combination of two modes: Lydian and Mixolydian. This is referred to as the “lydian/Mixolydian” scale, the “overtone” scale, or the “lydian/dominant” scale by jazz theorists. (Figure 15)

In Béla Bartók’s *Concerto for Orchestra*, a small motive is used in the first movement that when expanded, transformed, inverted, transposed, or some combination of these methods, accounts for most of the melodic material. Sometimes rhythmic elements of the motive are used, other times intervallic elements are used, and often both are employed. The skip of a fourth and step away from that by a major second that is present in the motive is used in the opening of the movement. The motive in its full form is seen in measures 76 and 77 of the Violins I and II. (Figure 16) For the rest of the movement, this motive in its entirety (or a fragment of it) is the building blocks of the rest of the movement.
Another example of this technique of taking a very small motive and turning it into a much larger work is *La Création du Monde* by Darius Milhaud. Two motives are used to build almost all of the melodic structure for the entire 16-minute piece. The first motive that appears is a repeating quarter note ostinato figure. This will recur many times throughout the work and happens often enough that it should be considered the main theme. (Figure 17) The secondary motive occurs later in the piece and is introduced by a contrabass solo. It is an extreme contrast to the quarter note motive in that it is a much more syncopated, almost jazz type melody. (Figure 18)

The motives of each movement of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* are the one thing that binds each movement together more than any other compositional element. The development of small motives into large works is also one of the primary techniques of this composer’s musical language.
Figure 16. Measures 76-85 from the first movement of Bartók’s *Concerto for Orchestra* demonstrating the motivic development in Violins I and II.
Figure 17. The first eight measures of *La Création du Monde* by Darius Milhaud showing the quarter note motive in the violins, violoncello, and piano.

Figure 18. The contrabass solo at the beginning of the I. section introduces the second motive of *La Création du Monde* by Milhaud.
CHAPTER IV
Harmony

The harmonic language of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* is the one thing that is constant throughout every movement with the exception of the first. In “I. The Groove”, all of the harmonic structure is derived from the pitch class set 4-8 (0, 1, 5, 6 – C, Db, F, Gb). For most of the movement, these notes are spaced vertically far apart so that more dissonant intervals are avoided such as minor seconds. (Figure 19)

In measure 79, the strings have an entrance that appears to defy the rest of the harmonic structure when they move in parallel minor chords. This is meant as an orchestration effect with no harmonic function because of the short durations of each chord. Additionally, each instrument is outlining the pitch set. (Figure 20)

Throughout the rest of the movements of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains*, the harmony is a mix of tertian and quartal harmonies. The quartal harmony is used to either mask the tonal center for a short time or to facilitate smoother voice leading. When quartal harmony is used, modulating between tonal centers is facilitated because a chord stacked in fourths or fifths has an “indeterminate”\(^8\) tonal center. Often this composer used quartal harmony as a way to avoid tritones, which can create, in the listener’s ear, a sense of dominant harmony and a need for resolution. Paul Hindemith was a strong proponent of this type of harmonic structure in his book, *The Craft of Musical Composition*, and employed these techniques in his own music. (Figures 21 and 23)

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Basing his theories on the overtone series, Hindemith outlined a system of composition based on strengths of intervals either melodically or harmonically. (Figure 22)

“Ii. Air” begins with an open fifth as the first harmony in the “A” sections. The harmony is derived largely from counterpoint, but instead of the restrictive rules of eighteenth century counterpoint, the chart in Figure 22 above is a guide to which intervals will provide shape to the harmony. At the end of each section there is a seven-note tone cluster that is stacked in major seconds. This type of chord has no tonal centricity at all, creating the maximum tension before moving to a new section. The harmony in the “B” section is similar to the “A” section, but for texture, there are many more 9ths, 7ths, and 2nds added to standard tertian harmonies.

In the third movement, “Iii. Dreams of Debussy”, harmony is one of the main factors that drive the texture of the piece. Harmonies are usually in closed positions and move gradually over extended periods of time so that harmonic changes are much more subtle than usual. The harmony in “Vi. Soundscape” is closely related to what is done in the third movement. Both movements feature tone clusters that very slowly “morph” into other harmonies. Typically one voice of the harmony changes at a time, so if that voice is doubled between two instruments they will change simultaneously to avoid unintended dissonances. (Figure 24)
Figure 19. Measures 1-4 from “I. The Groove” showing harmony based on pitch class set 4-8. In the opening chord it is transposed down a perfect fourth. (G, Ab, C, Db)

Figure 20. Measures 79-82 from “I. The Groove” demonstrating parallel minor chords in the strings.

Mms 1-6  Ms. 7  Ms. 8

G major  G with added 2 and 6  Quartal harmony stacked in 4ths, 5ths, and 2nds.

Figure 21. Harmonic progression in measures 1-8 of *Mathis der Maler* by Paul Hindemith.

Figure 22. Chart showing harmonic and melodic force as theorized by Hindemith.9

9. Ibid., 87
Figure 23. Measures 1-8 of *Mathis der Maler* by Paul Hindemith.
Figure 24. “Vi. Soundscape”. Measures 8-14 showing gradually changing harmonies in the strings.

Figure 25. “IV. Air II”. Harmonic progression in measure 1-6.

The harmony in the fourth movement, “IV. Air II”, is even more quartal than the first “Air” movement. Chords stacked in seconds or fourths and fifths accentuate a lot of the tension in this movement. (Figure 25)

The fifth movement’s harmony is more contrapuntally based than the other movements. It still is guided by the principles of harmonic force laid out by Hindemith, but there are quicker harmonic rhythms than the rest of the work.

The final movement, “VII. Coda”, while having the same harmonic language as the other movements, uses a different method to modulate to different tonal centers. There are chords stacked in 3rds and 5ths for the most part, although quartal harmonies and even augmented chords appear. Transposing the lydian/mixolydian scale being used for the melodic writing changes the tonal center. Although the harmonies during each instance of a tonal center are not necessarily constructed from notes in that particular scale, the mode is ever present in the melody during the time
the music is focused on a specific tonal center. With this technique, the movement is able to progress through several tonal centers: In measures 1-6 the mode is built from the Bb tonal center (Bb, C, D, E, F, G, Ab). In measures 8-13 it modulates up a major second to the C tonal center (C, D, E, F#, G, A Bb), going back to Bb in measures 14-38 then back up to C for measures 39-44. The tonal center rises to D (D, E, F#, G#, A, B, C) in measures 46-51 before coming back to Bb for the final bars. (Figure 26)
Figure 26. Measures 1-13 of “V. Toccata” showing two tonal centers.
CHAPTER V
Rhythm

A large portion of Wandering Into the Dusky Plains features rhythmic elements in the foreground of the structure. Unlike the tendency of some modern composers, there is not an overabundance of grossly complicated rhythms or polyrhythms. One of the intentions of this piece is to incorporate elements of jazz rhythms and ostinato-type patterns to give the piece a solid rhythmic feel. The title of the first movement, “The Groove,” is meant to instantly convey to the listener that they are not going to hear the normal style of modern music. “Groove,” as defined by Grove Music Online is:

In the realm of jazz, a persistently repeated pattern. More broadly, Feld (1988), studying groove from an ethnomusicological perspective, defines it cautiously as “an unspecified but ordered sense of something that is sustained in a distinctive, regular and attractive way, working to draw the listener in.” Connections to dance are important, and the statement that a performance has, or achieves, a groove, usually means that it somehow compels the body to move. Still more generally, the term has a sexual origin and connotation which is obvious, requiring no explanation.10

Various forms of the “groove” return throughout the different movements and are often defined by repeated rhythmic figures in the percussion, specifically the congas. It should be mentioned that the composer ran into the problem, with conga notation, of a lack of standardization. After discussing it with a percussionist, the composer decided to go with the notation outlined in Figure 27 for the entire piece.

In the first movement of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains*, the ostinato “groove” pattern is introduced right away in the congas and pervades most of the movement. For contrast the “B” (mms. 22-49) and “D” (mms. 79-103) sections have looser more improvisatory rhythms. The rhythmic intensity reaches its pinnacle in the “C” section (mms. 54-78) when the pizzicato strings, marimba, bass drum, and tuba establish the main pulse while the congas play a more soloistic part as demonstrated in Figure 28.

In Darius Milhaud’s *La Création du Monde*, the composer uses a very similar technique to achieve rhythmic intensity. The pizzicato strings in this setting act as percussion instruments without using any unusual techniques, and the simple rhythms make the pulse able to be felt strongly. (Figure 29)

The two “Air” movements (Ii. and Iv.), although focused on the development of lyrical material, have strong rhythmic, dance-like elements that will occur at various points, often near climactic moments in the music. In “Ii. Air”, the congas and pizzicato strings enter at measure 56 and provide rhythmic pulse all the way to the climax at measure 68. In “Iv. Air II”, the dance rhythms are present in almost the entire movement as an obvious contrast to the lyrical, flowing melodic structure. There is a similar section of pizzicato strings and percussion to what occurred in the first movement that was described above.
Figure 28. Measures 57-61 of “I. The Groove”.
Figure 29. The first seven measures of “IV.” in Milhaud’s *La Création du Monde*.
Figure 30. Measures 19-27 of “Vii. Coda” showing ostinato patterns in the woodwinds while the horn in F, viola, and violoncello play the melody in unison.

Movements III. and VI. push the focus away from rhythm, and as such have the simplest rhythmic figures of any of the other movements. When a pulse occurs it is likely an ostinato at a low dynamic for effect and color.

By far the most rhythmically driven movements are “V. Toccata” and “Vii. Coda”. “Toccata” focuses on the syncopated rhythmic figure introduced in the first two bars (Figure 14 on page 14). Contrast in these movements is achieved by occasionally interrupting the steady eighth note pulse with rests or accented quarter notes.

One predominant rhythmic feature of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains* is the ostinato figure. An ostinato is a repeating rhythmic figure in the accompaniment that was often used in the music of Serge Prokofiev and Igor Stravinsky. Sometimes fast ostinato accompaniment existed as a contrast to a slower rhythmic duration melody.
In the final movement of *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains*, this technique is used in the “B” section (mms. 14-38) and is shown in Figure 30.

In the *Symphony No. 5* by Serge Prokofiev the ostinato is present in the horns and accentuated by pizzicato strings as seen in Figure 31. Prokofiev used ostinato figures frequently and often demonstrated great imagination in how the patterns were constructed. In the pattern shown in Figure 31 which occurs 5 bars after rehearsal marking “80”, the horns essentially have the same figure, but each is offset by one beat creating a constant eighth note pulse. The melody is in the clarinet (which is later joined by the bassoon) and it tends to hover and dance above this ostinato pattern.
Figure 31. Five measures after rehearsal 80 in Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 5.
CHAPTER VI
Texture

One of the main advantages of composing a piece for unusual ensembles, such as the one used in *Wandering Into the Dusky Plains*, is that the composer has the opportunity to work with new, interesting colors and textures. Orchestration has become a much more important part of composition since the late Classical period when orchestras started to get larger. “Our epoch, the post-Wagnerian age, is the age of brilliance and imaginative quality in orchestra tone colouring,”¹¹ said Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov in his book *Principles of Orchestration*.

The composer employs different instrumental combinations in each movement, although there are similar sections in some movements. A lot of the textures found in the work as whole are present in the first movement, “I. The Groove.” Contrast between the different sections of this movement is achieved primarily through orchestration. The “A” sections of the movement have the string quartet mostly playing long, sustained harmonies while the crotales, horn in F, and alto flute have the melodic material. The congas provide the constant ostinato pulse for these sections. The “B” section begins with unaccompanied alto flute playing and improvisatory-sounding melodic line, which is soon taken by the clarinet, then the marimba. The percussion during this section is much more subtle than in the other sections to give it a more mysterious mood than the rest of the movement. The “C” section immediately follows this improvisatory section with a well-defined pulse as

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described in the previous chapter building to a climactic finish at bar 77. The “D” section is introduced by the strings, which up until this point have been primarily accompanying the other instruments, taking on the main thematic pitch set in a strong, parallel structure. The horn then plays the melody with snare drum, bass drum, crotales, tuba, and the woodwinds carrying the accompaniment. Eventually the viola joins the horn in playing the melody. After this the “A” section returns to round out the movement.

“II. Air” presents the melodic line against percussion and pizzicato strings playing the harmonies in a very short, sporadic fashion. Crotales emphasize the pizzicato notes, and this sound is used in the sixth movement as well. In the “B” section the clarinet and horn present the first melody. This section has a melody and a counter-melody; the first melody actually is relegated to being the counter-melody by the more active second melody that is introduced in the viola. In measures 56-64 the alto flute, clarinet, and horn play the melody in parallel fifths. This technique is famously used by Maurice Ravel in Bolero, and is based on the overtone series. Rather than hearing it as harmony, it is perceived as a single line much like adding stops on a pipe organ. Two measures after rehearsal “8” in Bolero, solo horn, and celesta play the melody starting on a C. Two piccolos play it also, but one starts a perfect fifth plus an octave above the horn and the other starts three octaves and a major third above the horn. This is shown in both a full score (Figure 32) and just the melody instruments (Figure 33) below. Figure 34 shows measures 56-64 of “II. Air” where a similar technique is used.
Figure 32. *Bolero* by Maurice Ravel two measures after rehearsal 8.

Figure 33. The melody instruments in *Bolero* shown in concert pitch.
Figure 34. Measures 56-64 of “II. Air” showing parallel melodies in the alto flute, clarinet, and horn in F.
“Iii. Dreams of Debussy” is one of two movements, with “Vi. Soundscape,” where the dominant element is texture. The strings maintain long, sustained harmonies the entire movement, while the woodwinds interject light, quiet melodies above. The marimba plays an ostinato pattern throughout the entire movement, and the other percussionists have brief interruptions of sound from patio chimes and crotales.

In the fourth movement, “Iv. Air II”, this time the melody is in the violin, and the short chords are played by the woodwinds and marimba, and these are accented by light snare drum hits. In the second half of the “A” section the percussion performs a dance-like pattern contrasting with the lyrical melody. The “B” section is contrasted to the “A” section by the pizzicato strings playing the accompaniment. The clarinet takes the melody here and is soon joined by the alto flute a fifth below moving in parallel motion. When the “A” section returns at measure 35, the bassoon plays the melody and sustained notes in various other instruments accent some notes lightly. (Figure 35)

The fifth and seventh movements take on a very similar textural quality, as the percussion come to the forefront of the orchestration. In addition to the heavy use of percussion, the melodies are more staccato and percussive than in the other movements. There is also more of a contrapuntal quality in the “A” section melodies of the “Toccata”. “Vii. Coda” is devoid of any of the “traditional” orchestral percussion instrumentation. Percussion 1 continues playing the congas and Percussion 2 is entirely on marimba. In addition, Percussion 3, who has had most of the
“traditional” orchestral percussion instrument parts up to that point, now plays the bongos, giving this movement a very festive mood.

Much like the third movement, “Vi. Soundscape” explores what different colors can be achieved without regard to melodic content, although melodic figures are present in the movement. In the first movement of Nocturnes by Claude Debussy titled “Nuages (Clouds)”, the orchestra is used to create a mood, and melody is put in the background to texture and color. Subtle changes in color are achieved by giving the same figure to other instruments as seen in Figure 36 where the strings’ figure is moved to the oboes to create a contrasting effect.

A similar idea is used in the third and sixth movements of Wandering Into the Dusky Plains. It is an attempt to create music that is simply sound, devoid of traditional melody and rhythm. In effect, this creates a more abstract piece of music that, at the same time, is not harshly dissonant or without form and structure.
Figure 35. Measure 37-41 of “Iv. Air II” showing the bassoon playing the melody while other instruments accent various notes.
Figure 36. “Nuages (Clouds)” from Claude Debussy’s *Nocturnes*. 
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Wandering Into the Dusky Plains Recording and Technical Notes

MIDI rendered recordings of Wandering Into The Dusky Plains are available at http://www.fupduckonline.com/small-ens.html. Each movement was rendered using Finale 2007, Garritan Personal Orchestra, Virtual Drumline 2, and Logic Express on Macintosh computers. The files are in the Mp3 format.
APPENDIX B
Wandering Into The Dusky Plains

OPUS 36

Jess Hendricks

INSTRUMENTATION

Alto Flute
Clarinet in Bb
Bassoon
Horn in F
Tuba
3 percussionists
2 violins
Viola
Violoncello
Stage layout and percussion instrumentation

Percussion 1
- Congas
- Sizzle Cymbal
- Concert Bass Drum
- Cristales (Mv. 3)
- Cymbala
- Concert Tom-tom
- Rain stick

Percussion 2
- Marimba
- Cristales

Percussion 3
- Wind Gong 30"
- Concert Bass Drum
- Snare drum – snare on
- Snare drum with snare off
- Finger Chimes
- Hi-hat
- Bell Tree
- 12" Chinese gong
- Bongos with mallets

Conductor
Wandering into the Dusky Plains

I. The Groove

Laid back... groovy \( \frac{4}{4} \)  \( \frac{1}{4} = 140 \)

Alto Flute

Clarinet in Bb

Bassoon

Horn in F

Tuba

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Percussion 3

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

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A. Fl.
Bb Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tuba
Perc. 1
Perc. 3
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
Perc. 2

Congas:
Crotales:
Pizz.

Wind Gong 30°
With a hint of mystery and stillness  \( \cdot = 68 \)

Alto Flute

Clarinet in B♭

Bassoon

Horn in F

Tuba

Percussion 1

Percussion 3

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

With a hint of mystery and stillness  \( \cdot = 68 \)
Suddenly withdrawn and fearful $= 56$

\[\begin{array}{llllllllll}
\text{A. Fl.} & \text{Bb Cl.} & \text{Bsn.} & \text{Hn.} & \text{Tuba} & \text{Perc. 1} & \text{Perc. 3} & \text{Vln. 1} & \text{Vln. 2} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Perc. 2} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Hn.} & \text{Tuba} & \text{Perc. 1} & \text{Perc. 3} & \text{Vln. 1} & \text{Vln. 2} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Perc. 2} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Perc. 3} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Vln. 1} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Vln. 2} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} & \text{Vla.} & \text{Vlc.} \\
\end{array}\]
Iii. Dreams of Debussy
Iv. Air II

Slow at first \( \dot{=} 66 \)

Alto Flute

Clarinet in Bb

Bassoon

Horn in F

Tuba

Percussion 1

Marimba

Percussion 2

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello
Even Faster \( \text{\textit{-}} \text{=} 86 \)


Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster

Even Faster
A. Fl.
B. Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tuba
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.

95
Vii. Coda

Presto $\frac{\cdot}{\cdot} = 168$

Alto Flute

Clarinet in Bb

Bassoon

Horn in F

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Marimba

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello
VITA

Jess Hendricks (b. 1972) is a composer and arranger living in the Nashville, Tennessee area. While studying composition with Dr. Charles W. Smith at Western Kentucky University, he composed three award winning works: Piano Sonata No. 1, String Quartet No. 1, and Phase II for Unaccompanied Clarinet. All three pieces won the Kentucky Music Teachers National Association Composition Competition in 1992, 1993, and 1994. Recent premieres of works include the performances of Celebration and Chorale for Percussion Ensemble, op. 24 by students at the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music in San Juan during the College Music Society Conference on February 10, 2006 and String Quartet No. 2, op. 15 by the Araya Quartet at Converse College in Spartanburg, SC during the Southeastern Composer's League Conference on March 16, 2006. On April 24, 1998 the Bassoon Concerto No. 1, op 9, was premiered by Dr. Jefferson Campbell (who also commissioned it) and members of the North Carolina School of the Arts Student Orchestra. Other premieres include the Elegy for Woodwind Quartet, premiered by the Western Arts Quartet, the Phase II for Unaccompanied Clarinet, op5, premiered by Todd Kerstetter, and Piano Sonata No 1, op 3, premiered by Dr. Janet Bass Smith. On April 5, 2006 at 8pm in the University of Tennessee Music Hall, Lunar Reflections for Vibraphone and Piano was premiered at a Composition Concert by Charles Brooks on vibes, and the composer on the piano. There was also a performance of a new piece for the Old South New Music Ensemble entitled Sat Gamaya, op. 32.

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