

DAVID MASLANKA'S SYMPHONY NO. 7:
AN EXAMINATION OF ANALYTICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SPIRITUAL
CONNECTIONS THROUGH A "MASLANKIAN" APPROACH

MUSICAL ARTS PROJECT

A monograph submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the
College of Fine Arts
at the University of Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF MUSICAL ARTS PROJECT

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With a composition career spanning from the early 1970s to the present, David Maslanka (b.1943) has earned wide recognition as an important and respected composer of music for nearly every setting. While he has contributed significantly to chamber music, solo literature, vocal settings, and works for symphony orchestra, his compositions for percussion and wind band have arguably provided his most universal acclaim.

All six of Maslanka's band symphonies are considered noteworthy compositions. His distinctive musical voice emerges in each of these works as he explores the gamut of emotional impact from the darkest pain to the most euphoric joy. Such wide ranging scope is not limited solely to the musical moods Maslanka paints, but also includes the means he employs to paint them.

Maslanka's compositional method is rather unique and quite spiritual in nature as each work is produced through a great deal of subconscious exploration and meditation. His meditations often result in dream images that he translates into musical material. These translations typically are not a moment-by-moment, image-by-image retelling of the meditation, but instead are musical impressions motivated by the impulses of energy Maslanka perceives. Maslanka takes great interest in connecting with the commissioning party and ensemble while composing, at times meditating over some personal effect such as a baton or hymnal. With such a deeply personal approach, Maslanka's music can touch the very essence of humanity and humanness.

This research is focused on assisting others in preparing and presenting powerful and meaningful performances of Symphony No. 7. More specifically, the author wishes to establish a "Maslankian" approach to the music – a way of relating to the music that reflects the philosophical and spiritual nature of Maslanka and his compositional methodology. Those who wish to consider this "Maslankian" approach may apply it in

combination with this document's formal musical analysis as a means to achieving more emotionally and spiritually connected results.

KEYWORDS: David Maslanka, Symphony, Conducting, Wind Ensemble, Band

Student's Signature

Date

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Director of Musical Arts Project

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Date

To Elizabeth, Luke, Grace, and Daniel with lasting gratitude to David Maslanka.

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Above all I am thankful to God. Somehow, in the wisdom of His strange and wonderful grace, He has allowed me to make a living as a musician. There is no doubt in my mind that music itself is His gift. It is too powerful, too magical, too beautiful to have come from the hand of man alone. Some say God is a crutch for the weak. I disagree. He is a stretcher for the broken, and I can do nothing apart from His love and power. Of that I am not ashamed.

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Introduction

With a composition career spanning from the early 1970s to the present, David Maslanka (b.1943) has earned wide recognition as an important and respected composer of music for nearly every musical medium. While he has contributed significantly to chamber music, solo literature, vocal settings, and works for symphony orchestra, his compositions for percussion ensembles and wind band have arguably provided his most universal acclaim.

Among his works for winds Maslanka's six band symphonies – Symphony No. 2 (1985), Symphony No. 3 (1991), Symphony No. 4 (1993), Symphony No. 5 (2000), Symphony No. 7 (2004), and Symphony No. 8 (2008) – are each considered noteworthy compositions. His distinctive musical voice emerges in each of these works as he explores the gamut of emotional impact from the darkest pain to the most euphoric joy. Such wide-ranging scope is not limited solely to the musical moods Maslanka paints, but also includes the means he employs to paint them. Within his symphonies, performers and audience experience a composer with full control of the wind band's range of forces and palette of colors. His impact is felt through some of the most technically challenging literature ever written for wind band yet also through incredibly powerful moments comprised of surprisingly simple gestures.

Maslanka's compositional method is rather unique and quite spiritual in nature as each work is produced through a great deal of subconscious exploration and meditation. His meditations often result in dream images that he translates into musical material. These translations typically are not a moment-by-moment, image-by-image retelling of the meditation, but instead are musical impressions motivated by the impulses of energy Maslanka perceives. Maslanka takes great interest in connecting with the commissioning party and ensemble while composing, at times meditating over some personal effect such

as a baton or hymnal. With such a deeply personal approach Maslanka's music can touch the very essence of humanity and humanness.

The symphony seems to resonate powerfully with a wide variety of audiences. Perhaps this widespread connection is best explained in an excerpt of the composer's program notes. Maslanka states, "I think of this Symphony as 'old songs remembered.' With one exception all the tunes are original, but they all feel very familiar."¹

It is the author's perspective that Symphony No. 7 deserves scholarly attention and a document that will provide a means for conductors, performers, and audiences to connect emotionally, intellectually, and – at the composer's suggestion – spiritually to Maslanka and this music.²

Goals

This research is focused on assisting others in preparing and presenting powerful and meaningful performances of Symphony No. 7. More specifically, the author wishes to establish a "Maslankian" approach to the music – a way of relating to the music that reflects the philosophical and spiritual nature of Maslanka's compositional methodology. Those who wish to consider this "Maslankian" approach may apply it in combination with this document's formal musical analysis as a means to achieving more emotionally and spiritually connected results.

Therefore, the goals of this research are to: (1) create a more informed and effective performance, (2) better connect the conductor, performers, and audience to the composer and this composition on an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual level (3) provide insight into Maslanka's creative process in general through the platform of Symphony No. 7, (4) add to the collective body of research into Maslanka and his music.

Methodology and Organization of the Study

David Maslanka has a reputation for being very approachable, helpful, and thorough with anyone seeking information on his music. He has stated: "I am happy, eager in fact, to respond to anyone who gets in touch. I sometimes feel like I've reached

¹ David Maslanka, Symphony No. 7.

² David Maslanka, email correspondence with author, January 12, 2011.

the ‘dead composer’ stage. People say, ‘He wouldn’t be interested in what we’re doing’ or ‘He’s probably too busy to talk to me.’ Not so!”³ Through personal interviews and email exchanges, the composer himself is a primary resource in this research.

Symphony No. 7 was commissioned by Stephen Steele, Director of Bands at Illinois State University and director of the Illinois State University Wind Symphony. Maslanka and Steele have enjoyed a long friendship and collaborative history with many of Maslanka’s compositions receiving their premier under Steele’s baton. A telephone interview with Steele provides important background information on Symphony No. 7 as well as the perspective of someone very familiar with the composer and the history of the composition.

Alternative views and thoughts on Maslanka, a “Maslankian” approach, and Symphony No. 7 have been gathered through email exchanges and telephone conversations with several other leading wind band conductors. These include Eugene Corporon, conductor of the Wind Symphony and Regents Professor of Music at the University of North Texas in Denton; Timothy Mahr conductor of the St. Olaf Band and professor of music at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota; and Gregg Hanson, director of wind bands and professor of conducting at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Both Corporon and Mahr have recorded Symphony No. 7 with their ensembles. Hanson headed consortia that commissioned and recorded Maslanka’s Mass and his *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble*. Moreover, all of these conductors have recorded and performed several other Maslanka works.

Because the author believes that the composer’s history and uniquely meditative and subconscious approach to composing provides important insight into the music and how it was created, the author will first present Maslanka and his methods as foundational elements of the study in Chapter Two. With over a dozen doctoral documents and other publications addressing Maslanka’s work, many researchers have already provided well-constructed insights into Maslanka’s general biography and

³ Beth Antonopulous, “David Maslanka,” *A Composer’s Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, vol. 2, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 106.

compositional methods. This author consolidates that material into a form useful for those new to Maslanka's music, especially as such information applies to Symphony No. 7 and the goals of this project. Updated biographical information and insight into Maslanka's compositional method that supplements the specific study of Symphony No. 7 has been gathered directly from the composer. Chapter Two also includes an examination of Maslanka's compositional approach with input from previous doctoral documents and updated sources including interviews and email conversations with the author and an online video posted on the composer's web site. The author covers many elements of Maslanka's style and voice, the influence and use of Bach chorales, a current look at his compositional periods, and commentary on the role of Maslanka's philosophical views on the idea of transformation.

The commissioning of Symphony No. 7, according to the retelling of Maslanka and Steele, and a general overview of the piece is presented in Chapter Three. Drawing heavily from the composer and balanced by the views of the panel of interviewed conductors, the chapter also presents the concept of a "Maslankian" approach and offers general suggestions for applying this approach to Maslanka's music.

Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven each study individual movements of the symphony, first through an analytical examination and then through consideration of connection points useful for effective preparation and performance. The author assumes and trusts that conductors and performers wishing to embark on this work have the musical training required to faithfully execute the basic "black and white" elements of the printed music such as accuracy of entrances, rhythms, pitches, and intonation. As such, the analytical aspect of this monograph is not intended to be a note-by-note rehearsal guide for Symphony No. 7. Instead the analysis is presented as a mechanism for better understanding the formal and theoretical elements of the composition. In addition to helping the reader understand Symphony No. 7's formal and theoretical elements, the author's presentation of the music's formal structure provides a mechanism for progressing through the analysis.

Though Maslanka draws from traditions found in all periods of western music, his compositions rarely follow traditional principles. Certain elements of formal principles may be, and are, applied in this study; however, attempting to force standard theoretical

or formal practice on this composition would prove frustrating and futile. Further, the author believes such efforts would be counter to how Maslanka's music is created. In his 1999 examination of Maslanka's marimba concerti, Michael Varner reveals the composer's thoughts on traditional analysis:

If you want to do analysis along those lines you're perfectly free to do so and you'll discover stuff which is there that I don't even know about. This has happened every time people have analyzed my music. They invariably come up with a theory of how the piece works which is a surprise to me. I just say, "Oh yeah, that could be. That's a good idea."⁴

This perspective is confirmed by the composer again in Robert Ambrose's 2001 doctoral document on Maslanka's Symphony No. 2:

You can do a specific analysis if you want, and I'm sure that you will find an explainable connectedness, but I don't compose that way. My sense of rightness for something is primarily intuitive, although as I have said before, I am trained in theory and analysis, and can recognize when I am using certain forms or methods. But I never start with a form or method.⁵

Though Maslanka does not preplan the formal design of his music, he does acknowledge that form is critical to the emotional impact of a piece.

So I would think that for me the qualities of objective form have a lot to do with how forcefully the music can express an emotional issue. The objective form gives a backdrop, if you want to think of it that way, for emotion to bounce off of. The emotion is not just flopping randomly in front of you and screaming [laughter], it has a quality of intent because of the formality....When you talk about emotional expression, it rests on strictly formal elements....I always think of formal arrangements, and particularly beat structure, as a grid pattern upon which other things are laid

⁴ Michael L. Varner, "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble* and *Concerto for Marimba and Band*, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burrirt, J. Serry, and Others" (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999) , 119.

⁵ Robert Joseph Ambrose, "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's Symphony No. 2" (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 108.

so that you have a way of perceiving them in a forceful way.⁶

Within the analytical framework, the author has provided stories, insights, and other accounts that offer examples of how the composer, conductors, and performers have connected emotionally and spiritually to Symphony No. 7. It is hoped that these may be a springboard that others may use to seek or discover similar connections. Whenever discussion of theoretical elements or presentation of musical examples and figures aid in this quest, they have also been incorporated into the study.

Finally, Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven offer further thoughts for interpretive consideration drawing from Maslanka's compositional sketches, conversations with the composer and the panel of interviewed conductors, outside musical sources, and other means. Chapter Eight recaps the study, summarizes its findings, and offers suggestions for further study.

The author has included several appendices as resources for preparation of Symphony No. 7 and additional research. Appendix A provides a quick-reference formal outline of each movement. Appendix B is a select thematic catalog for the symphony. The remaining appendices are transcriptions of interviews with Maslanka, Steele, Corporon, and Hanson, with the exception of Appendix F which lists twelve discussion points for approaching Maslanka's music provided by Hanson. In addition to the material used in this monograph, these interviews include information and perspectives that go beyond than the scope of this research. The author found that such appendices in other doctoral documents yielded valuable discoveries that were often excluded from the main body of the paper. Entire interviews are included here in hopes that they might be similarly helpful to future researchers.

Results

This monograph provides conductors, performers, and any other readers interested with a resource to better understand Maslanka and Symphony No. 7. The method of examination combines formal and theoretical elements and current musical

⁶ Keedy, Nathan Andrew. "An Analysis of David Maslanka's Chamber Music for Saxophone" (Doctor of Arts dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 2004), 227.

perspectives from the composer and others familiar with Maslanka and the piece. The author synthesizes and joins these elements to produce the first scholarly document on Maslanka's Symphony No. 7.

Significance

Over the last thirty years Maslanka has established himself as an important American composer. His music is highly praised among conductors and performers, and his significant contributions to wind band literature as well as music as a whole is impressive. Because of the unique nature of his music, philosophy, and compositional methods, any good examination of his work is worthwhile. Currently, all five of Maslanka's other symphonies for wind band have received such attention. Symphony No. 7 deserves nothing less. The author hopes this document will be a critical contribution to the complete examination of Maslanka's wind band symphonies as well as deeper contemporary understanding of the composer and his work as a whole.

Literature Review

Dissertations and Doctoral Documents

To date the majority of published research regarding Maslanka's music has come in the form of thirteen doctoral dissertations and documents written in the last seventeen years. Of these, ten have proven useful to this study. The author has reviewed these documents in chronological order according to publication date in order to gain perspective on how the study of Maslanka has evolved over time.

In 1994 David Booth provided the first dissertation on Maslanka's wind band music with his analytical study of *A Child's Garden of Dreams* (1981). This research established foundational information on the composer's history, exploration of the subconscious mind while composing, and penchant for referencing elements of American folk and popular culture. His analysis of the piece is described as a "free-flowing narrative"⁷ and spends much of its time dealing with Maslanka's use of harmonic

⁷ Booth, David Martin. "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's *A Child's Garden of Dreams*" (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 8.

transformation instead of traditional functional harmony. It is very much a “blow-by-blow” account of the composition. Booth’s appendices include a list of Maslanka’s complete works and discography at the time of publication. This document provided a starting basis for the current project.

In 1995 Patrick Brooks wrote an analysis of Maslanka’s *Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion* (1976), the composer’s first widely recognized and performed wind band setting. Brooks takes a traditional approach with specific discussion of melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, textural, and technical elements. He also establishes the important influence that a wide variety of composers from the Baroque era through the twentieth century have had on Maslanka. Additionally, his work was useful to this research by establishing the relationship of Maslanka’s work to the logic and organization of Baroque and Classical form, even though the composer typically does not apply these principles in a strict sense.

The next foray into Maslanka’s wind band music was completed by Michael Varner in his 1999 examination of the composer’s marimba concerti including the *Concerto for Marimba and Band* (1990). Varner’s research provides helpful insight into Maslanka’s identity as an American composer and further explores the influence of popular American Music. Through interviews with the composer Varner sheds light on Maslanka’s view of the commissioning process and his thought process when writing for percussion. Since Maslanka has made his living on commissions since 1990 and is well-known for his use of percussion in solo and ensemble settings, this information assists in painting a more complete picture of the composer. The transcribed interviews prove valuable to this study with information on Maslanka’s use of Bach chorales, connecting with performers on an intuitive level, and establishing engaged participation from both performers and audience.

In 2000 Roy Breiling completed his doctoral research into *In Memoriam* (1989). Though the traditional fields of melody, harmony, rhythm, and form take a prominent role in his research, this relatively brief document’s greater focus is on understanding Maslanka’s use of Bach chorales as major components of composition. Although Bach chorales appears in the first and third movements of Symphony No. 7, the value of Breiling’s work to the monograph at hand is found in understanding how Maslanka’s

ideas materialize in his compositions and the potential meaning behind such occurrences. Breiling was also the first to provide insight into the composer's relationship to the commissioning body and ensemble.

In 2001 the first of Maslanka's wind band symphonies, Symphony No. 2 became the topic of Robert Ambrose's doctoral document. Ambrose provides a detailed analytical examination of the work, but the opening chapters of this lengthy, thorough, and extensive study are the most important to this author's work. These chapters provide an excellent look into the composer's compositional perspective and style largely via Maslanka's own words. It is a valuable resource in understanding how Maslanka views his own musical voice. Ambrose also provides an updated list of Maslanka's works for band, each with a brief analysis commenting on shared concepts and ideas.

The second doctoral research document to address a Maslanka symphony was completed by Stephen Bolstad in 2002. His study of Symphony No. 4 provided more insight into the composer's relationship to the commissioning body and ensemble, which provided inspiration for a similar examination in this research on Symphony No. 7. Bolstad's analysis focused on the unifying elements that tie the work together as a whole and also created an updated list of Maslanka's wind band works and discography.

Although it does not deal specifically with wind band music, Nathan Keedy's analysis of Maslanka's chamber music for saxophone from 2004 presents a valuable source of information for further understanding the composer's emotional and spiritual perspectives on music. A transcript of an interview with Maslanka offers insight into the composer's move toward increasingly simple gestures, defining emotional characters or moods within the music, and relating form to emotion. Each of these ideas is touched in this author's study.

Also dating from 2004 is Brenton Alston's work on Maslanka's Symphony No. 3. While incorporating commentary and analysis of each of the five movements, the most interesting part of this research is Alston's insight into the symphony as a whole from the commissioning process through final product. Using the composer's meditation notes, the reader is afforded a look into the images that came to Maslanka's subconscious while he was in the initial stages of exploring the symphony. This exploration of meditation

images prompted similar queries from this author regarding Symphony No. 7. Alston's work adds significantly to the understanding of Maslanka's composition process.

An atypical approach to the examination of a wind band work by Maslanka was completed by Christopher Werner in 2005. Using Symphony No. 5 as a backdrop, Werner draws heavily on Maslanka's meditative process and combines it with the multi-disciplinary conducting technique of Carolyn Barber, the subconscious and psychoanalytical work of Carl Jung, and the dream research of Steven LaBerge to create a conducting method termed "Lucid Analysis Technique." Werner describes his technique as "a process initiated at the point of score study and then brought to bear on real-time conducting through which the conductor's subconscious is activated to engage both the score at hand and stored human experiences to enrich the real-time performance situation."⁸ Werner encourages several subconscious and dream-oriented mental exercises to access the subconscious and create an active imagining state in hopes of performances and interpretations that intentionally apply the greater human experience to conducting and performance. Once "Lucid Analysis Technique" is defined and explained, Werner applies it to Symphony No. 5. This research aided in establishing the importance of dreams and dream imagery for the current document.

In 2010 Lauren Wright completed her doctoral study of *Give Us This Day* (2005). Drawing from interviews with the composer, her experience preparing this piece with Maslanka in attendance, an interview with Eric Weirather (who led the commissioning consortium), and a transcription of a rehearsal by Gary Green (Director of Bands at the University of Miami), Wright presents her suggestions on performance and interpretation. She also touches briefly on the commissioning process. Her research and transcriptions of Maslanka's comments during rehearsals provide more insight into what the composer values and how he guides ensembles as they prepare for performances. These notes along with the Hanson telephone interview confirmed the importance of performing Maslanka's music according to his intention. Wright closes her document with another updated listing of Maslanka's wind band works.

⁸ Christopher Werner, "Maslanka Symphony Number Five: Conducting Via Lucid Analysis Technique" (DMA dissertation, University of Nebraska, 2005), 32.

Three other doctoral documents examining Maslanka's music exist. Two concern vocal, solo and chamber music by Maslanka and have limited direct impact on this study. The third is a semiological structural and performance analysis of Symphony No. 8 by David Jacobs at the Eastman School of Music. The author learned from Maslanka that this study has just recently been completed and, therefore, was unavailable for examination at the time of this writing.⁹

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Though doctoral documents have provided the bulk of sources for this author's research, two articles and three book chapters dealing directly with Maslanka have been consulted for this research.

An article by Barney Childs in *Perspectives of New Music* from 1977 provides the earliest documentation of Maslanka's interest in connecting composing to "quasi-dream" states.¹⁰ A review of Maslanka's *Three Pieces* for clarinet and piano by Jerome Rosen in the March 1986 edition of *Notes* comments colorfully on Maslanka's transformation of musical material and "very personal" harmonic style.¹¹ It is an article that sets the stage of earlier Maslanka research and helps provide a starting point for this document.

In *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* series, Thomas Wubbenhorst provide a pedagogically-oriented look at *A Child's Garden of Dreams*.¹² His chapter addresses some of the common concerns in performing Maslanka's music, foremost of which is the formidable technical challenges that frequently appear in the composer's work. Wubbenhorst also provides valuable perspective on performing with a "Maslankian" mindset, which is quite helpful to the current project. He offers several practical suggestions that include abstract ideas, such as lucid dreaming, and guidelines to more concrete musical elements such as tempo and dynamics. It is a helpful starting point for anyone interested in performing a Maslanka composition.

⁹ David Maslanka, live interview by author, June 20, 2011, Missoula, MT.

¹⁰ Barney Childs, "Time and Music: A Composer's View," *Perspectives of New Music* 15 (Spring – Summer, 1977): 201.

¹¹ Jerome Rosen, [Untitled Review] *Notes* 42 (March 1986): 649.

¹² Thomas M. Wubbenhorst, "A Child's Garden of Dreams," *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*, vol. 3, ed. Richard Miles (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2000), 592-611.

In her chapter on David Maslanka for the second volume of *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis, and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, Beth Antonopulos employs Maslanka's own words to connect his music to performers.¹³ This very useful chapter serves as a valuable introduction to performing and understanding Maslanka and music in general. Antonopulos offers insight into Maslanka through the composer's discussion of abstract elements such as active imagining. She further explores the spiritual aspects of commissioning and offers practical musical advice in areas such as blending of colors, balance, and overcoming technical challenges. Perhaps some of the most valuable information in this author's work comes in a discussion of the emotional investment necessary to perform Maslanka's works and creating an atmosphere where the conductor and performers function together as a part of the creative process. The chapter is relatively brief at twenty-five pages and provides a helpful frame of reference for anyone wishing to experience and perform Maslanka's works. In the author's opinion, Antonopulos provides an important initial reading for those wishing to begin an exploration of Maslanka.

The final book chapter used in this study comes from the pen of Maslanka himself in his contribution to the second volume of *Composers on Composing for Band*.¹⁴ Here readers have the most direct line to Maslanka's thought process on composing. He comments on how he perceives the conscious and unconscious realms, his relationship with commissioning parties, and the human commonality of musical feeling and expression. He also gives specific advice for conductors preparing his music and provides brief insight into his other creative outlet of pastel drawing. If Antonopulos provides the primary resource for discovering Maslanka, the author believes this entry is a close second.

¹³ Beth Antonopulos, "David Maslanka," *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, vol. 2, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 95-119.

¹⁴ David Maslanka, "David Maslanka," *Composers on Composing for Band*, vol. 2, ed. Mark Camphouse (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004), 197-224.

Electronic Media

Two electronic sources are considered important to this study. The first is Maslanka's web site, <http://www.davidmaslanka.com>.¹⁵ In addition to biographical information, the site provides a complete list of Maslanka's works along with program notes and premier information. Another source used in this research is a six-minute interview of the composer posted on <http://www.youtube.com> and linked to Maslanka's site.¹⁶ This video source provides another peek into the composer's composition process in his own words.

Summation of Sources

Research into Maslanka and his music has blossomed in the last two decades demonstrating the impact he has had in the world of music. All of the sources listed above rely heavily on interviews and interaction with the composer. This confirms Maslanka's willingness to address his music with interested parties in great detail. While these writings reveal a great deal about the composer's perspective on music and composing, nothing of a scholarly nature has been written on Symphony No. 7 to date.

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¹⁵ "David Maslana – Composer." <http://www.davidmaslanka.com/> (accessed December 3, 2010).

¹⁶ "YouTube – David Maslanka Composer Shares His Thoughts on Music." <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPTfcnato4o> (accessed December 6, 2010).

CHAPTER TWO: David Maslanka

The tightrope walker cannot “think” about walking the tightrope for if ego intrudes on the tightrope walker, down he goes! The good composer and performer suspends ego; holding it in balance with all the other parts of his psychic system, thereby allowing full power to come through. Good musical thinking stops time, and lets a whole psychic landscape unfold. When this balance is successful, it automatically takes the listener “beyond.”

~ David Maslanka¹⁷

Biography

David Henry Maslanka was born on August 30, 1943 in New Bedford, Massachusetts, to a father who was employed at Revere Copper and Brass and a mother who spent her time as a housewife raising Maslanka and his two older brothers.

Early musical influence came through his mother who “had musical talent, but no training” and his mother’s side of the family.¹⁸ His maternal grandfather was a violinist and made violins as a hobby.¹⁹ He would often find time to play with one of Maslanka’s maternal great-uncles who was a clarinetist. Despite a lack of formal training, Maslanka’s mother did provide an early musical influence for him through her modest collection of classical records which the future composer listened to while growing up.

Maslanka began playing clarinet in the New Bedford public schools at the age of nine. He began private study the following year, but recalls that his experiences as a young musician were rather pedestrian. “The school music programs were not

¹⁷ David Booth, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*” (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 149.

¹⁸ David Maslanka, “David Maslanka,” *Composers on Composing for Band*, vol. 2, ed. Mark Camphouse (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004), 197.

¹⁹ Robert Joseph Ambrose, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *Symphony No. 2*” (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 11.

particularly distinguished; my best memories are of whacking away at Sousa and King marches in junior high.”²⁰

As he grew older Maslanka’s musical horizons expanded. In high school his abilities as a clarinetist began to emerge, and he started private study during his junior year with Robert Stewart of the New England Conservatory. Maslanka’s senior year was marked by membership in the Massachusetts All-State Band as well as a position with the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra. His experiences in this orchestra left a notable impression.

Marvin Rabin was the conductor when I was there. He was a good musician and a good conductor. He was the first real musician that I ran into as a conductor and the music we played was real music. We did the “Prelude to Act III” of *Die Meistersinger*, we did *Russian Easter Overture*, and the Sibelius Violin Concerto. We did the *American Sinfonietta* of Morton Gould....We had a joint venture with the Manhasset Long Island high school choral group and we did a performance [of the Verdi *Stabat Mater* for chorus and orchestra] at Carnegie Hall.²¹

Though little result came at the time, it was during his high school years that Maslanka began dabbling in composition. He also began the exploration of his spiritual side.

As a teenager I was a member of a small evangelical church in Westport, Massachusetts. They had Sunday morning and Sunday evening services, and the youth group was quite active and enthusiastic. After the Sunday night meetings a bunch of us would go out to a local restaurant and hang out for a while ordering French fries (with vinegar – a Massachusetts thing that came from England I think) and Cokes.

Mrs. Smith was a local piano teacher, and she did pre-service improvisations, usually around hymn tunes. She also accompanied hymns in the service, and any vocal numbers that were brought in. She had a very fluent,

²⁰ David Maslanka, “David Maslanka,” *Composers on Composing for Band*, vol. 2, ed. Mark Camphouse (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004), 198.

²¹ Robert Joseph Ambrose, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *Symphony No. 2*” (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 13-14.

embellished kind of playing manner....She was 60-ish then, and I am sure has been gone for many years.²²

Years later this particular early church music influence would prove to be very important to Symphony No. 7 as the author will explore in Chapter Four.

Maslanka graduated from high school in 1961 and, based on his academic and musical ability, he was awarded a scholarship to the Oberlin Conservatory in Oberlin, Ohio. While pursuing a degree in music education, the serious desire to compose surfaced, and Maslanka began studying with Joseph Wood during his sophomore year. During his years at Oberlin, Maslanka had the opportunity to observe major living composers such as Elliot Carter and Igor Stravinsky. Stravinsky's visit to rehearse and conduct a performance of his *Symphony of Psalms* was especially influential on the young Maslanka.²³

Maslanka's junior year was spent abroad at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. He continued his composition study with Cesar Bresgen, an Austrian who was known well in his home country but little elsewhere. In addition to performing with the Salzburg Chamber Orchestra and developing further as a clarinetist, in Austria he gained confidence as a composer and "confirm[ed] his own beliefs in being a composer."²⁴

Upon completing his time at the Mozarteum, Maslanka returned to Oberlin to finish his degree in the spring of 1965. Knowing at that time that he did not want to teach, he applied to graduate school at Michigan State University and the University of Illinois and was accepted to both programs.

Maslanka chose to attend Michigan State University and studied theory and composition with Paul Harder and H. Owen Reed. He also continued clarinet study with Elsa Ludwig. Through his exposure to the history of theory and composition at Michigan State, Maslanka began his life-long interest in J.S. Bach. Reed was a fatherly figure to

²² David Maslanka, interview by author, February 2, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

²³ Stephen Paul Bolstad, "David Maslanka's Symphony No. 4: A Conductor's Analysis with Performance Considerations" (DMA dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2002), 2.

²⁴ Robert Joseph Ambrose, "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's Symphony No. 2" (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 16.

the young Maslanka and exposed him to a wide variety of modern and time-honored compositional trends. Maslanka also began work as a copyist for Reed, which eventually led to twenty years of intermittent copyist work and exposure to the techniques of an array of composers including Michael Colgrass.²⁵ Maslanka's terminal composition for his masters degree was a piece for orchestra titled *Double Visions*. He was awarded his masters degree in 1967.

In 1968 Maslanka married his first wife, Suzanne, and in 1970 secured a faculty position at the State University of New York – Geneseo. The following year he completed his doctoral degree in composition from Michigan State with his final project consisting of two pieces – Symphony No. 1 and a string quartet. Symphony No. 1 is a large-scale work requiring two conductors; it has never been performed.²⁶ The first piece that Maslanka describes as having a sense of “mastery,” *Duo* for flute and piano, was written in 1972.²⁷

Maslanka's first composition for wind band was written between 1972 and 1974, the *Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion*. Though it marked an important time of growth as a composer, this was also a tumultuous time in Maslanka's life. His marriage ended in divorce, and the composer recounts that, “following the Piano Concerto I had a time of serious mental stress, and went into therapy. I didn't write any music for over a year.”²⁸ Maslanka's position at Geneseo ended in 1974 prompting a move to New York City in the fall of 1974. Shortly after the move he was hired for a part-time position with the Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York. He held the position until 1980.

Once Maslanka began composing again in 1977 much had changed. His therapy led to the discovery of self-hypnosis and the examination of the subconscious mind with

²⁵ Stephen Paul Bolstad, “David Maslanka's Symphony No. 4: A Conductor's Analysis with Performance Considerations” (DMA dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2002), 2-3.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁷ David Maslanka, interview by author, March 22, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

particular interest in the work of Carl Jung.²⁹ As Maslanka's approach to composition came to rely on his development of meditative imaging techniques, the nature of his music was transformed. He relates that, "When I started again (1977) the music had changed. It was very tonal and melodic. The period in therapy began a time of new exploration of the unconscious."³⁰ It was also during the late 1970s that Maslanka met and married his second wife, Allison.

Moving on from Sarah Lawrence College in 1980, Maslanka spent a year teaching at New York University. This was followed by a nine-year appointment at Kingsborough College of the City University of New York from 1981 to 1990, which proved to be another important time in the composer's growth. He shares, "I had my greatest development as teacher and composer while at Kingsborough, and this prepared me to take the step into freelance work."³¹ His first widely-embraced major work to be produced through meditative composition, *A Child's Garden of Dreams*, was completed in 1981. Other important works from this period include *Arcadia II: Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble* (1982), *Symphony No. 2* (1985) and *In Memoriam* (1989).

In 1990 Maslanka and his family made a major lifestyle change and moved to Montana. Details behind the move were provided by the composer in an interview for David Booth's 1994 dissertation on *A Child's Garden of Dreams*.

...the move to the west was, I think, probably fueled by my wife first. She grew up in the east as well, in New York, but she always had the feeling that she wanted to move out there. The west was part of her world somehow or other. She was interested, quite interested, in fact, in horses and wanted to go into horse training...[W]e both began to think about it, because we were living in New York City, and we both began to do what I do when I start composing or anything. I used to start imaging – start imagining what the future was like, and we both, in our

²⁹ Brenton Alston, "David Maslanka's Symphony No. 3: A Relational Treatise on Commissioning, Composition, and Performance" (DMA dissertation, University of Miami, 2004), 23.

³⁰ David Maslanka, interview by author, March 22, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

³¹ David Maslanka, "David Maslanka," *Composers on Composing for Band*, vol. 2, ed. Mark Camphouse (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004), 198.

imaging work, began to see the same kinds of pictures – that is mountains, pine trees, and open spaces. And so we began to try to find out, by conscious exploration, where those places were. So, we looked at tracing down where to go in the west, and Missoula was on our list for several very non-rational reasons, and for several rational ones as well. But the non-rational reasons included the fact that as I looked at a map of Montana, I noticed that the western end of Montana looked like a face. The outline of it is a profile of that face, and Missoula looked like the eyeball on the face. [laughter] So I said, “Oh, look at that!” [laughter] Part of it sounds dumb, and maybe it is. Also, we were looking for what Missoula offered in terms of its proximity to mountains and to a university. We wanted that for its character; a good library close by. And so, my wife and daughter made a visit out west, looking at several places. One of them was Pocatello, Idaho, but after visiting there they went up through Missoula. When they got to Missoula they said, “Yep, this is it.” And so, on the strength of that we picked up and left New York City. So this is how we turned out to be there. It is an absolute transplantation from foreign territory. We knew nobody there. We packed everything into a truck in New York City, and drove for six days, and got to Montana.³²

Since moving to Montana, Maslanka has made his living as a composer through commissions and working with ensembles around the world as they prepare to perform his music. He says, “the 20-plus years in Montana have seen an explosion of work. So I would say that the move represented my composing career kicking into high gear.”³³

Compositional Approach

For any successful composer the compositional process is an interesting amalgamation of individual history, musical training, personal preference, outside influence, inspiration, discipline, experience, and a myriad of other potential persuasions. Maslanka is certainly no exception. Like most other composers, he is well-trained in the formal academic discipline of musical composition. Like most other composers, he has

³² David Booth, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*” (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 160-1.

³³ David Maslanka, interview by author, March 22, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

experienced certain events over the course of his life that drew him to a vocation in music. Like most others, he counts many other composers among those who have influenced his musical development. Like many, his music finds source in poetry, nature, liturgy, sciences, and other non-musical entities. He is also very disciplined in the practice of his craft. However, unlike many, if not most other composers, Maslanka's compositional method is contingent on an active exploration of the subconscious mind that reveals a very interesting and engaging approach to writing music.³⁴

Maslanka discovered the connections between the subconscious and composing during a period starting in 1975, during which he sought counseling and therapy. As part of his therapy Maslanka was encouraged to explore self-hypnosis and Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung's study of the subconscious mind.³⁵ These efforts yielded positive change and growth in Maslanka's personal life, and subsequently allowed him to incorporate meditative approaches into his music. The first piece written using this approach, *A Child's Garden of Dreams* (1981), was a multi-movement work for band based on Jung's study of the fascinating and vivid dreams of an eight-year-old girl.

Over the years Maslanka has developed a self-styled, or "homegrown" kind of meditation that he describes as "something similar to the act of daydreaming, the

³⁴ For those interested in further study of Maslanka's compositional style, the author recommends the following publications: Ambrose, Robert Joseph. "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's Symphony No. 2." DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001. Alston, Brenton Franklin. "David Maslanka's Symphony Number Three: A Relational Treatise on Commissioning, Composition, and Performance." DMA dissertation, University of Miami, 2004. Varner, Michael L. "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble* and *Concerto for Marimba and Band*, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burritt, J. Serry, and Others." DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999. Antonopoulous, Beth. "David Maslanka." In *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, vol. 2, Timothy Salzman ed., Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003.

³⁵ Christopher Werner's 2005 dissertation, "Maslanka Symphony Number Five: Conducting Via Lucid Analysis Technique" through the University of Nebraska presents a compelling study of the connections between Maslanka, Jung, and dream researcher Steven LaBerge.

exploration of the imagination or fantasy life.”³⁶ These meditative dreams hold great meaning for Maslanka as do sleeping dreams.

Dreams are the source of all our creativity. A musical composition is merely the dreaming process made conscious. In fact, all composition is the dreaming process made conscious. All composition begins below the unconscious level, and then flows up to the conscious. That is why dreams are so vitally important to pay attention to – they are an outward manifestation of messages from your inner self and provide the composer with a unique source for musical creativity.³⁷

Through his meditation process Maslanka descends into “the archetypal level of his unconscious mind.”³⁸ Within the depths of his subconscious terrain he discovers mental energies that are not necessarily musical or aural in nature. These energies are often associated with visual images and are not perceived specifically as musical sound. Maslanka believes his work is to transform these energies into music using his skills and training as a composer.

Maslanka’s meditations frequently take place outside a studio setting and often encourages ideas to emerge through long walks. Though walks take place throughout the composition process, they are especially important at the outset.

There’s a very long and old tradition about walking and creativity, that walking helps you solve problems. And any number of people who have written books or done any other kind of artwork have done this – long walks. And in those long walks I will simply go into my meditative mode and ask for internal help. I will ask the forces that be, that manifest themselves in my mind, and say, “Let me know something here, show me what I need to know in order to let this music go forward.”³⁹

Over the years Maslanka has grown to have several favorite walking places, some in large green spaces near his home and some in the foothills and mountains overlooking

³⁶ David Booth, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*” (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 154.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 155.

³⁸ David Booth, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*” (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 31.

³⁹ “YouTube – David Maslanka Composer Shares His Thoughts on Music.” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPTfcnato4o> (accessed December 6, 2010).

Missoula. Rarely during these walks do motives, rhythms, or other musical elements present themselves. Instead this is usually a time for discovery of larger and deeper concepts through images having to do with the commissioning party or the piece's reason for existing.

In addition to actively seeking such connections, Maslanka also allows himself to be open to ideas whenever they might emerge.

I have worked for years at making the active connection through meditative exploration. This has opened channels that allow an energy that becomes music to come into my mind system. I can go searching, and it can also show up on its own. For instance, getting out of the shower the other day I suddenly realized how the structure of a whole movement had to go.⁴⁰

Although Maslanka is technically the creator of the music, he is just as likely to credit himself as simply being the conduit through which subconscious energy becomes music. It is a process which Maslanka himself has difficulty describing in specificity.

I think of myself not merely as the source, but as the channel – I am a kind of channeling structure. Energy comes through me, and produces something that surpasses my own personal understanding. It is not uncommon for me to be surprised by my own music.⁴¹

The composition process, therefore, is one of discovery, not decree. As energies bubble up from his subconscious mental landscape, Maslanka allows the piece do “what it wants to do,” and be what he feels it is supposed to be.⁴² Outside of knowing what forces for which he is writing, he typically does not preplan what structure or form the music will take. He believes his job is to “listen internally as closely and faithfully” as

⁴⁰ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 26, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

⁴¹ David Booth, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*” (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 158.

⁴² Brenton Alston, “David Maslanka’s Symphony No. 3: A Relational Treatise on Commissioning, Composition, and Performance” (DMA dissertation, University of Miami, 2004), 25.

possible and then to “accept what happens. Intellectual understanding comes later, and analysis maybe never.”⁴³

As more and more images and energies reveal themselves, Maslanka begins knitting them together into musical sound and form. The composer describes the process and how the music makes itself known to him in its own time:

The musical spark, it’s hard to define what that is. I will for no good reason have something...in my head – some musical push, some tune. It often happens when I’m in a relaxed place like the shower that a melody will come into my mind, a little bit of a tune, some rhythms, and I’ll start to see them and to play around. So, other times musical ideas come while sitting at the keyboard. They also come while walking, and it depends on where the composition is in the process. If I am far enough along in it, I will in my walking most usually have the musical things connect up, that is large ideas connect with other large ideas or the whole reason for being for a piece of music shows up suddenly. Why that should happen I have no idea. It’s just part of the thinking process that I was born with and that I have trained over a very long time.

I can have a good idea and have no idea how to use it, I can have no idea how to extend it or what its position is in a piece of music. And at a certain point for no good reason just like a phone number might show up in your head after thinking about it for a day or two days – or the name of a friend you had in high school that shows up. And...so there’s a deep working that’s going on, out of sight in the unconscious mind which is putting things together, and when that’s ready to show itself then that will rise to the surface. So things that I’ve been staring at for days and days and days may on the next look suddenly fall into place.⁴⁴

Maslanka does not use a computer to write but prefers to sit at a piano with paper and a pencil. At his home in Missoula he has converted an old woodworking shop into a studio. His initial sketches are in type of short hand that he says only he can decipher.⁴⁵

⁴³ David Maslanka, interview by author, November 4, 2010, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

⁴⁴ “YouTube – David Maslanka Composer Shares His Thoughts on Music.” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPTfc nato4o> (accessed December 6, 2010).

⁴⁵ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

Although he may write at other times during the day, mornings are normally a productive time with individual sessions lasting up to two hours. During these sessions he is not always in a constant state of deep meditation. However, his mind is tuned in such a way that, if necessary, he can approach the meditative space in a very short amount of time.

Though Maslanka works on one composition at a time, he is always developing ideas for subsequent works. Over the years he has compiled what he refers to as his “compost heap,” which is “the hundreds of pages of sketches that haven’t made it into a composition yet. Something is always cooking in there.”⁴⁶

A wide spectrum of influences may color and influence the ideas that form in Maslanka’s mind. He freely acknowledges the influence of many classical composers, most notably J.S. Bach, but also Brahms, Stravinsky, Berlioz, Prokofiev, Ives, Milhaud, Gershwin, Varese, Cage, Messiaen, Glass, and several others.⁴⁷ Maslanka also does not close his ears to the voices of non-art music. In fact, he sees these as an important part of who he is as a musician. Jazz, rock-and-roll, and other music found in popular culture, are all available to him as possible sound sources that may work their way into a composition through his subconscious. In Maslanka’s words:

All these influences are very real. You tend to incorrectly think of composers and concert composers as somehow being abstracted from popular culture. My eyes have been open to the TV and other popular media forever, and all that stuff is in there.⁴⁸

He also relates:

Things happen and people hear them and then these are absorbed into how you think about things and how you feel about them. I don’t write rock-and-roll music. I don’t write jazz and I’m not making imitations of those things. And yet the colors and feelings that those things produced

⁴⁶ David Maslanka, “David Maslanka” *Composers on Composing for Band*, vol. 2, Mark Camphouse ed., (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004), 201.

⁴⁷ J. Patrick Brooks, “An Analysis of David Maslanka’s Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion” (DMA dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1994), 14.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

in me as a child, and in fact for all of my life, are the language sources that mean something to me.⁴⁹

Examples of popular culture influence in Maslanka's music include an extended jazz-tinged setting of the "Old Hundredth" hymn tune in the fourth section of Symphony No. 4, drumming patterns drawn from the Northwestern University basketball pep band in the third movement of *A Child's Garden of Dreams*, a quote of the Bert Parks "Miss America" theme in the second movement of the *Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion*, and the Sunday evening church services from Maslanka's youth recalled in the opening piano statements in the first movement of Symphony No. 7.

Another important influence on Maslanka's music is nature and place. Because he believes not only that "everyone is spiritual," but that "everything is spiritual," he feels strong connections to his surroundings and acknowledges the impact environmental energy has on his music.⁵⁰ Though he doesn't enjoy being on the water, growing up near the Atlantic Ocean fostered a strong affinity for the sea. Water-influenced themes and impressions often work their way into his music with the Atlantic Ocean inspiring motives in *Symphony No. 2* in particular.⁵¹ Maslanka also notes the differences that living in New York City and Missoula have had on his composing.

I often think of New York City as a pressure cooker in which everything is compacted and condensed. Missoula has precisely the opposite effect. The psychological effects here are of expansion and the simple physical size of the place, particularly Montana....New York had about it that pressure kind of thing, and as a composer I respond with a certain kind of pressure back.

...the effect of [the move to Montana] on my life has been dramatic. The thing that happened is that I can still write music of great energy, but the kind of pressure that comes from the city is gone and there is a chance here for

⁴⁹ Michael Varner, "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble and Concerto for Marimba and Band, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burrett, J. Serry, and Others.*" (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999), 2.

⁵⁰ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 26, 2010, email correspondence, Hays, KS. Emphasis provided by Maslanka.

⁵¹ Robert Joseph Ambrose, "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's Symphony No. 2" (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 12.

contemplation and the enlargement of what I call simply “the beautiful.” In my music, although it happened in New York, it happened by my pushing and elbowing things aside to make space for it. And here it now begins to flow more naturally.⁵²

Despite the large role that the subconscious plays in Maslanka’s work, his conscious mind is not excluded from the composition process. He believes that the purpose of the conscious mind is to “assist in the formation of [the music], rather than to dictate what it’s supposed to be.”⁵³ It is the author’s opinion that decisions and statements Maslanka has made reveal particular conscious preferences. On the most basic level the commitment to incorporate meditation and subconscious exploration into his composition process over such a long period of time would seem to be a conscious choice to which he returns to each time he composes. Maslanka has further acknowledged that he is “most comfortable” staying rooted in music that has “tonal leanings,” and unashamedly enjoys melody and incorporating elements of traditional forms.⁵⁴ He provides the following regarding tonality and melody:

I’ve been through the middle of the twentieth century as a composer at a time when language was being literally thrown out so that the old language of tonality and the old rhythms and the old forms and the old media were challenged. Assertive statements made that the old is no longer of importance or consequence, let it go because we’re now doing the new. And I never moved in that direction, even when melody was in [indicating quotes with fingers] “respectable” circles, melody was out....

So there were choices to be made. Many people who went ahead and worked purposefully in non-tonal materials arrived at their own musical language through those means, through electronic means, through computer means and all that. The jury is still out on a lot of stuff. And I’m not making statements here that say, “My music is

⁵² J. Patrick Brooks, “An Analysis of David Maslanka’s Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion” (DMA dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1994), 84-85.

⁵³ “YouTube – David Maslanka Composer Shares His Thoughts on Music.” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPTfcnato4o> (accessed December 6, 2010).

⁵⁴ David Booth, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*” (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 16.

better than...,” and my way of going about it is *the* way to about it. I can only speak for what I do....

The thing that I needed to do was to find a music which would first off satisfy me deeply then would communicate something powerful to other people as well.⁵⁵

As energy flows up from his subconscious Maslanka is able to use his training as a composer to transform the energy into written music. The author is of the opinion that conscious decisions are also involved in this process, though they may be secondary to or occur after the impetus of the subconscious. As the music evolves, if any element seems to be headed in a certain direction, Maslanka has the technical ability to make that to happen. The composer explains how this can occur in the important musical element of form:

Intentionality is a very difficult thing to talk about, but let’s talk about it in terms of musical forms. I’ve talked about a musical flow or energy flow which I experience, which then becomes translated through my brain into music and of being able to go along with it and allowing it to flow. And at the same time, I have a lot of training in traditional musical forms, and I know what they are, and my brain is activated in those forms.

...it is possible to start with the idea of a formal element and then to produce a profound, moving piece of music. My way has always been to allow the music to tell me what it wants to be, and then, if it begins moving in the direction of such a form, I have the equipment to allow it to do that.⁵⁶

Maslanka’s Style and Voice

Although the subsequent chapters of this document examine the individual movements of Symphony No. 7, a general overview is valuable at this point.

Just as those with a modest knowledge of classical music can differentiate Mozart from Copland, or Beethoven from Bernstein, those who have had moderate exposure to Maslanka begin to hear characteristic voices and gestures that distinguish him from other

⁵⁵ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

⁵⁶ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

band composers. Gregg Hanson believes Maslanka's voice stands out above many of his composing colleagues.

I think David is one of the few – and I will really say this freely – one of the very few wind composers that has accomplished that. I think a lot of them sound like everybody else. There are lots of clichés in the band repertoire, and they get recycled over and over and over again, but not true with him. He has created his own voice.⁵⁷

Because he values the whole of his musical encounters, he has allowed all of his experiences to flow together into a veritable melting pot bubbling in his subconscious mental landscape. Maslanka draws from all these experiences in his writing, and his own unique voice emerges from the sum of his experiences.

My music, because I grew up here, has an American speech, is an American speech, an American musical speech. It has all the information of the European experience because we grew up in, and were trained in that. We learn all those forms of music. That forms a background but we speak it differently. That's what's really important to me. I'm not trying to imitate anything but rather absorb into my own musical language what these things are.⁵⁸

It is difficult to classify any artist's work with a few lines of text. However, there are some general statements that may be made of Maslanka's music. Two of the more readily apparent aspects in his music are tonality and melody. As referenced above, Maslanka prefers settings with strong tonal roots. In most instances there is a convincing sense of tonic with the composer using departures from and arrivals at tonal centers in powerful ways. Shifts in key centers are often accomplished through tonal or harmonic transformation techniques such as common tone modulation rather than by using traditional tonic-dominant relationships. Melodically, Maslanka's gestures are often

⁵⁷ Gregg Hanson, telephone interview by author, May 31, 2011, Hays, KS.

⁵⁸ Michael Varner, "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble and Concerto for Marimba and Band, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burritt, J. Serry, and Others.*" (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999), 3.

lucid and simple with well-defined boundaries. The composer attributes this in part to his extensive work with J.S. Bach's 371 four-part chorales. He believes his study of the chorales has produced "a clear relationship to melody, to clear melody, to clear phrases. When enough is enough, it's enough. And, clear, clear, clear expression has been the whole idea."⁵⁹ The influence of the Bach chorales on Maslanka's music is further discussed below.

Maslanka's music also draws from the widely varying nature and technique of Romantic music. Such variety is readily observed through the multiplicity of textures the composer employs. At times the thickest moments are accomplished by layering several active lines on top of one another. In many instances during these thick textures, the technique required of the players and conductor is very difficult and foreboding. Timothy Mahr believes Maslanka's symphonies specifically to be "much more involved and demanding than the standard fare within the repertoire," and that "more time than usual is needed to get past the technical demands so that all the musicians (including the conductor) can have enough time to wrestle with the musical demands."⁶⁰ Thomas Wubbenhorst has said that players and conductors must be "highly competent, fearless, and well-focused" in order to "get past the notes to the music."⁶¹

At other times intensity is found in thoughtfully-scored, powerful homophonic settings. Maslanka relates the following regarding the "big" moments in his music:

I've always been fond of Berlioz and that big kind of sound – big sounds and what they do and what they mean. We talked this morning about folks who are devoted to a smaller sound aesthetic and get upset with big sounds. I think that there's a place for everything...There is something in me that is huge and it's not satisfied unless there is a full thing attained, whatever it might be. And so it's not a matter of choosing. It's a matter of being chosen I think, of feeling this thing that has to be expressed in some way. It's shouting in its own way and it's not going

⁵⁹ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

⁶⁰ Timothy Mahr, interview by author, May 27, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

⁶¹ Thomas Wubbenhorst, "A Child's Garden of Dreams." *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*, vol. 3, Richard Miles ed. (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2000), 593.

to be satisfied with mezzo forte in three instruments [laughter].⁶²

Although it is possible to find moments of traditionally-oriented harmonic relationships and concepts in his music, Maslanka does not feel tied down to particular harmonic constructs. He explains the foundation of his harmonic language:

My tonal orientation is entirely intuitive, and not allied with any particular theory or technique. Old fashioned [*sic*] Ear. Sometimes minor, sometimes modal. The issue for me always is does it work. If so, (to my ear) then there is probably some coherent underlying theory.⁶³

Additionally, Maslanka feels that harmonic rhythm – the rate at which harmonies change – is a foundational concept for his composing.

[Harmonic rhythm] is, however, the fundamental breathing rhythm in any piece of music....The rate at which harmonies change is a fundamental look into the qualities of movement in a piece, and offers the possibility for a deep look into formal process, and the way in which a piece affects the listener. It is about the perception of time, how it relates to the quality of deep attention that we have found to be so important in music making....I don't have a conscious theory of proportions, but I do have a fundamental sense of what is right. I rely on this absolutely. I call it the "click of rightness." When I feel this, I know the music is right and don't fuss with it anymore.⁶⁴

Maslanka is well-known for his technically difficult passages, yet he is also able to effectively use open and sparsely-scored settings. At times just one or two voices carry the entire weight and emotion of a piece. Stephen Steele feels that, despite the presence of extremely challenging technical passages, the less technical moments can be the most challenging.

The first thing that jumps out at me when I look at the score is the technique, because it's so black. The other thing that

⁶² Robert Joseph Ambrose, "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's Symphony No. 2" (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 51.

⁶³ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

⁶⁴ David Maslanka, interview by author, June 10, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

jumps out at me when I look at his scores are the white pages, I mean, there's just tons of white pages. And, I've come to know, and believe, and trust the fact that the white pages are where the difficulty lies. Being a band director, I used to only look at the technique and go, "How are we going to make that happen?" And, now I understand that's easy. I mean, in our recording session the technique usually isn't even edited....But, the hard part is all the white pages. That's where the difficulty has come.⁶⁵

Mahr agrees.

The most powerful moments for me within [Maslanka's] symphonies are the most intimate, quiet moments. Incredible quiet intensity, made all the more so by the paths taken to get there through his amazing highly-charged music.⁶⁶

Another hallmark of Maslanka's music is rhythmic vibrancy underscored by a strong sense of pulse. Though there are exceptions in which the composer will displace the perceived pulse by values as small as a sixteenth note, these instances typically are temporary detours that add interest or build emotional tension. When Maslanka approaches important musical impact points, he often reinforces the arrival with strong homorhythmic textures and augmentation of rhythmic motives. The result can have a dramatic effect on the emotional flow of the work.

Along with rhythmic vitality, tempo and tempo relationships are extremely important to Maslanka. Exact relationships are so critical that he often works out tempo ratios mathematically in the margins of his composition sketches. Maslanka provides perspective:

Rhythmic flow is probably the strongest factor of coherence for me in a piece of music. Tempo, tempo relationships among sections, and rhythms large and small are the most important things in composing and in performance. Pitch is certainly important, but wrong notes are less critical in performance than wrong or loose tempo conception.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

⁶⁶ Timothy Mahr, interview by author, May 27, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

⁶⁷ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

Gregg Hanson speaks of how modifying the marked tempi interferes with the essence of Maslanka's music.

If you mess with [tempo], you start to lose the center of it. You lose the focus of it. By messing with it I mean anything to do with a tempo change. I mean, there are tiny variations within it – maybe a little tiny bit faster, maybe a little tiny bit slower. But, essentially, the tempos that are marked, I've discovered, are absolutely right. The music works at that tempo, and the tempos are all related to the whole of the music in a very large way, so that if you follow the tempo markings exactly, and you make the tempo changes exactly as they are indicated, you discover that the large architecture of the music works perfectly.⁶⁸

Hanson expands the thought of how musical flow across time affects the nature of the music to moments of repose and silence.

[A] *fermata* and the silence that follows it sometimes are means of letting the energy dissipate. And, you think of the sound energy, which is the vibrational energy, everything is set in motion and sometimes you've got an extreme amount of it, you've got an extreme amount of rhythmic energy in which things are very fast or something, and it comes to a screeching halt, and then there's silence. In order for the silence to be effective, you have to give all that built up energy time to dissipate in the silence. That's huge. And, in the score very often it will say, "Take your time," "Be patient," "Don't hurry." Those silences sometimes feel like they're forever unless, as I said before, you are in the moment. You can allow that to dissipate, and it's almost in your head. As the conductor you wait for it to completely go away. You're hearing it, and it's crashing around in your head, and then you just kind of wait for it to be gone, so that it's no longer in your head before you go on, rather than trying to time it out or say it's this many seconds, or it's this long. Let that energy dissipate and give it the time to do that, and that's a wonderful, wonderful thing to be able to do.⁶⁹

It is the opinion of the author that Maslanka has tremendous command of the tone color possibilities within the wind ensemble. The traditional color palette is frequently

⁶⁸ Gregg Hanson, telephone interview by author, May 31, 2011, Hays, KS.

⁶⁹ Gregg Hanson, telephone interview by author, May 31, 2011, Hays, KS.

expanded through non-traditional playing techniques such as playing on a flute's head joint and sliding a finger in and out to change pitch. Color options are further expanded through use of non-western instruments or instruments not traditionally found in a band setting. This is manifested in Symphony No. 7 through the use of a hammered dulcimer, hand chimes, log drums, and Buddhist meditation bells. A color area important to Maslanka is the keyboard percussion. Eugene Corporon, Director of Bands at the University of North Texas and one of the most widely recognized wind band conductors in the world, explains:

I also think one of the things that makes him sound so great is that he's embraced the whole idea of the "fourth element," I call it, in wind music that the late twentieth century identified. You know, we have woodwinds, brass, percussion, but he's identified woodwinds, brass, percussion, keyboards. And that addition of celeste, piano, harp, vibraphone, crotales, marimbas, xylophones, things that are pitched that kind of create a new resonance and offer optional resonance.⁷⁰

While the number of available tone colors seems endless and the combination of the colors infinite, certain shades do seem to emerge more often than others under Maslanka's hand. Beth Antonopolous provides a well-conceived description.

When quizzed about the challenges of writing for winds, Maslanka reveals that much of his experimentation has been in the attempt to create a flexible, expressive soprano voice in the wind ensemble, a role normally filled by the violin section in works for orchestra. Very often he orchestrates melodic ideas by using a large clarinet section as the melodic core, augmented by traditional groups such as flutes, saxophones, and trumpets. Another highly effective hallmark of his melodic technique is the addition of mallet percussion (marimba, vibes, and/or bells), to the wind melodies. This important inclusion adds precision to melodic passages and ultimately helps to blend the disparate wind voices. Maslanka has also cited similar issues in finding a powerful bass voice in the wind ensemble. Study of the wind symphony orchestration reveals a particular emphasis on low reeds (bassoons, contra bassoon, baritone sax, and bass and contrabass

⁷⁰ Eugene Corporon, telephone interview by author, May 17, 2011, Hays, KS.

clarinet), instruments which add a characteristic depth, both melodic and harmonic, to the lower registers.⁷¹

The quote immediately above mentions the use of percussion as a means to add clarity to wind voices. While true, this view only scratches the surface of the potential Maslanka sees within the percussion section. He feels the wide variety of percussive colors and timbres contain the ability to touch the full emotional spectrum in a way independent of what is possible with the woodwinds and brass.⁷² The author would add that the euphonium also emerges as an important solo voice with notable regularity and emotional power. This will be discussed further in Chapter Seven.

Formal structure in Maslanka's work is at times very clear and at other times quite difficult to classify. As referenced above, the composer's training allows him to work in traditional forms; however, he tends to apply the principles of these forms rather than impose a strict formal realization on the music. For example, if a sonata-like form emerges, Maslanka may present one or more themes in the "exposition," but will probably not place secondary material in a closely related key such as the dominant or relative major or minor. A second section may employ development concepts, but is just as likely to be an entirely new set of ideas and motives. A recapitulatory return to the primary material may be an exact restatement in the original key, or may recall only snippets before ending or moving to a coda-like section of entirely new material. Exploration of a modified sonata form found in the third movement of *Symphony No. 7* will be explored in Chapter Six.

Similar to other elements of his compositions, Maslanka allows formal structure to flow up from his subconscious. As energy is shaped into musical ideas by his mind, he believes the subconscious is arranging the formal structure without any conscious preplanning. Though he admits he keeps coming back to certain formal constructs –

⁷¹ Beth Antonopoulous, "David Maslanka." In *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, vol. 2, Timothy Salzman ed., (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 98.

⁷² Michael Varner, "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble and Concerto for Marimba and Band*, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burritt, J. Serry, and Others." (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999), 6.

ABA form specifically in Symphony No. 7 – Maslanka does not spend much energy thinking through form.

Of course, I don't know precisely what that function is, or how it works. I just know from my own composing over all these years that I'll write large pieces of music that obviously have formal coherence, and I haven't a clue as to what that form is or what the procedure is. This is not abdication, but simply an attempt to recognize that there's something else at work here in the unconscious formulation. So, I think that that's a real necessity, to attempt to recognize this phenomenon at work as one moves their way through this piece.⁷³

Maslanka also sees the framework of form as key to the emotional impact of music.

So I would think that for me the qualities of objective form have a lot to do with how forcefully the music can express an emotional issue. The objective form gives a backdrop, if you want to think of it that way, for emotion to bounce off of. The emotion is not just flopping randomly in front of you and screaming [laughter], it has a quality of intent because of the formality.... When you talk about emotional expression, it rests on strictly formal elements.... I always think of formal arrangements, and particularly beat structure, as a grid pattern upon which other things are laid so that you have a way of perceiving them in a forceful way.⁷⁴

For all the challenges and difficulties in Maslanka's music, it is ironic that much of his work, especially melodic gestures, is made of relatively simple constructs, sometimes strikingly so. Melodies are often triadic or scalar in nature. Indeed, Symphony No. 3 opens with the wind ensemble playing an ascending and descending C Major scale, a gesture Maslanka calls, "either a foolish thing to do or an act of daring."⁷⁵

⁷³ David Booth, "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's *A Child's Garden of Dreams*" (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 86.

⁷⁴ Nathan Keedy, "An Analysis of David Maslanka's Chamber Music for Saxophone." (Doctor of Arts dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 2004), 227.

⁷⁵ Brenton Alston, "David Maslanka's Symphony No. 3: A Relational Treatise on Commissioning, Composition, and Performance" (DMA dissertation, University of Miami, 2004), 34.

Maslanka feels that even though simple writing is often dismissed by other composers as immature or naïve, it can also have a certain “glow” about it that incorporates a “whole world of feeling.”⁷⁶ He feels it is the composer’s job to explore the simple idea and reveal in it all its musical and emotional potential.

One particular way that the idea of simplicity seems to emerge with significant regularity in Maslanka’s work is through repetition of rhythmic and melodic motives in a way that some interpret as minimalistic. Maslanka has acknowledged that minimalistic-type moments do appear in his work, but that he is not seeking to champion or promote the minimalist aesthetic.⁷⁷ Instead, he desires to paint sounds in broad strokes that are often made up of repeated groups of smaller gestures. He feels that through repetition these broad strokes give people a moment in which they can find powerful connection and in which “elements of the conscious and the unconscious are engaged.”⁷⁸ Maslanka offers an explanation of repetition framed in terms of Catholic tradition:

I think that’s probably a foundational thought here. The deep, continual meditation on the same spot. So, like any kind of ritual practice, if you have a religious practice at all – and we’ll just take for instance Catholic religious practice, and I’m not a practicing Catholic, but that’s by way of example. If you go through the mass as a religious practitioner again and again and again and again, or if you say the Hail Mary that is sheer, no intellect repetition of a particular thing. “Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus...” and so on. Why say that? But, if you say it literally thousands of times, it opens a pathway in your soul, and it brings forward an energy which you can’t bring forward in any other way.⁷⁹

Some critics of Maslanka point to the idea that his motives and ideas can become too repetitive and cliché. In a review of Symphony No. 3 James Altena made note of

⁷⁶ Beth Antonopoulous, “David Maslanka.” In *A Composer’s Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, vol. 2, Timothy Salzman ed., (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 99.

⁷⁷ Robert Joseph Ambrose, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s Symphony No. 2” (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 46.

⁷⁸ David Booth, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*” (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 21.

⁷⁹ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

Maslanka's "tendency to rely at certain points upon clichéd, overly busy figurations of rapid notes in accompaniment parts."⁸⁰ However, Maslanka makes no apology for returning to ideas. He holds at arm's length those of a modern bent that believe music must be different or unlike anything else previously written to be of any artistic value.⁸¹

For all the time spent describing the various aspects of his writing, it is the author's opinion that the element standing out above all is the potential of Maslanka's music to draw out the full spectrum of emotions in conductor, performer, and audience. Though it may be expressed in spiritual, emotional, psychological, or other inwardly-focused terms, the author believes the realities of day-to-day living reflect a universal personal brokenness and a deep need and desire within all people to find healing for what is torn. Powerful emotional impact is clearly not a trait exclusive to Maslanka. However, because Maslanka writes from such an intensely personal space, and because many grant music the ability to deeply touch the inner soul, audiences often find strong connections to his work and are noticeably moved. This can occur whether or not a person agrees with Maslanka's personal views on spirituality and religion.

Such subjective statements are admittedly difficult to quantify, and the author concedes that many musicians and conductors do not hold Maslanka's music in similar regard. However, the following recent exchange between the author and Stephen Steele illustrates an example of Maslanka's music affecting a strong emotional reaction and Steele's perspective on the subject:

LW: ...what is "Maslanka" music?

SS: I don't know. That's a straight answer. I don't know. I know that – let me give you an example, and we're talking about depth and breadth of not surface music, not jingles, but actual art. When we started our process on the trombone concerto, we read it with the soloist there. We

⁸⁰ James Altena, "Maslanka: Symphony No. 3, Gillingham, Magnuson/Steele, Illinois State University Wind Symphony." http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/album.jsp?album_id=503716 (accessed April 22, 2011).

⁸¹ Beth Antonopulous, "David Maslanka." In *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, vol. 2, Timothy Salzman ed., (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 99.

read it down, and I had to stop because half the ensemble was crying....

LW: Hmm. Wow.

SS: That's in a first read. [laughter]

LW: That's a powerful moment, I'm sure.

SS: It is, and those moments come extremely frequently in David's music and very seldom in anybody else's music. And I'm not talking about the aesthetic response to perfect pitch, or a ringing chord, or a balanced sound that do come. They do. But the music itself.⁸²

Again, Mahr concurs:

We've presented his music at Lincoln Center and in the gymnasiums of rural high schools. The site didn't matter – Maslanka's music speaks directly to the heart of each listener, it seems. The reaction to it, strongly moved and approving, in fact was more emphatically shared in the rural settings. Maslanka has opened himself up to the human condition and situations so many of us face today. He gets it. And he shares it in a powerfully unique way - sensitive, nurturing moments of serene peace counterbalanced with incisively raw pain. Few can experience one of his symphonies without being profoundly moved.⁸³

The Bach Chorales

No discussion of Maslanka's compositional approach would be complete without acknowledging the strong influence of J.S. Bach's 371 Harmonized Chorales. Since the early 1990s they have become a source for the composer's daily warm up, study, and development. He has worked through his edition of the Bach Chorale book, which is

⁸² Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

⁸³ Timothy Mahr, interview by author, May 27, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

printed with no text other than the chorale titles, seventeen times.⁸⁴ Because no text is present, Maslanka works primarily with the melodic and harmonic elements of the chorales with little extra-musical influence. The chorales have indeed had profound impact on Maslanka's work, and the author feels it is best to let Maslanka explain their importance in his own words.

What the chorales have done for me is to open up the whole idea of the evolution of a musical statement in a very short space. The chorales are between a dozen and twenty measures for the most [part] that's it. You have a single tune which guides the whole thing phrase by phrase and then you have the intertwining of the voice parts. In the best of these chorales of Bach, you've got four beautiful melodies working in that tightly restricted style to create a harmonic fabric. It is absolutely fascinating to me to feel how these lines move together.⁸⁵

I got into singing the Bach chorales, and then I got into writing chorales in the old style, and that turned into twenty years of self-training which still goes on. I hadn't intended it to be a deep study but it certainly turned into that. But when I got into that I just thought, well, I'm doing something to help myself feel better in order to be able to write music. And I started singing these chorales, and then just out of simple curiosity – like people do Sudoku or crossword puzzles – I said, well, let me write chorales. And what that did over a long period of time was to deeply root me in the fundamentals of tonal music. I've been through all that theory stuff. I have a doctorate in theory, but this is what really grounded me in the study – the repetition, going back again and again and again and again and again to the same old language.⁸⁶

I'm taking the melody and writing three other beautiful melodies to go with it. That's a terrific thing to do. Sometimes the chorales show up in my music because I

⁸⁴ According to email correspondence between Maslanka and the author on May 18, 2011, he uses an edition distributed by Associated Music Publishers that he purchased as a college freshman in 1961. The chorales have titles in German and no text.

⁸⁵ Michael Varner, "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble and Concerto for Marimba and Band, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burritt, J. Serry, and Others.*" (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999), 121.

⁸⁶ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

find them to be very powerful. They have influenced my melody writing which is now most often quite simple and direct. The chorales exist both as things that I bring into the music and as a deep background to my writing.⁸⁷

Maslanka also sees the Bach chorales as a bridge to the subconscious realm.

These Chorales are...a huge access to dream space. The feeling is one of opening an unmarked door in a nondescript building, and suddenly thrust into a different world. The Chorales are those mysterious doors to other worlds.⁸⁸

Though they do not appear in all of his compositions, one does not have to look too far into Maslanka's music before a Bach chorale surfaces. As is the case in the first and third movements of Symphony No. 7, Maslanka will often borrow a chorale melody and treat it with various styles, his own harmonization, fractious quotation, or rhythmic variation. Maslanka considers it "meaningful" whenever a Bach chorale emerges and fits into the material of his composition.⁸⁹ Even so, he prefers to focus on the musical elements of the chorales and generally does not try to assign textual significance to his compositions.

In everything I have ever previously said or written about my use of the chorale melodies I have always downplayed the values expressed by the titles. I have taken the melodies as things that showed up when I needed them, and never verbalized the "why" to any extent.⁹⁰

Maslanka has created a series of wind arrangements of the chorales. As part of their warm up routine, Stephen Steele and the bands at Illinois State University use Maslanka's chorale arrangements. Steele relates that because of this exposure, his

⁸⁷ Michael Varner, "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble and Concerto for Marimba and Band, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burrett, J. Serry, and Others.*" (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999), 121.

⁸⁸ Robert Joseph Ambrose, "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's Symphony No. 2" (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 36.

⁸⁹ Roy Breiling, "David Maslanka's Use of a Chorale Tune in *In Memoriam.*" (DMA dissertation, University of Arizona, 2000), 12.

⁹⁰ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

students will often recognize a chorale quote in a new Maslanka piece long before he does.⁹¹

Compositional Periods

In his 1999 dissertation on Maslanka's marimba concerti Michael Varner separated Maslanka's work into four compositional periods. The first period began with Maslanka's appointment at the State University of New York – Geneseo and extended through the first part of his time in New York City. The second period began with his marriage to his second wife and ended with the move to Montana in 1990. The third period started in Montana and ended with the completion of his *Mass* in 1996. The last period began his post-mass work.⁹²

Recently, Maslanka offered an updated perspective on his compositional periods. It is as follows:

Beginning of my composing (1961) to the sense of first mastery, and the production of a piece that I still keep in my catalogue, the *Duo* for flute and piano, written in 1972. I would extend this first period to include the *Concerto for Piano, Winds and Percussion* – my first wind ensemble piece – written between 1974 and 76. Two major efforts from this time period have never been performed: Symphony No. 1, and a chamber opera, *Death and the Maiden*. Neither is in a condition to be performed, so I am not pining away for them. Both have been a source of ideas for other music. Interestingly, the story (by science fiction writer Ray Bradbury) of the opera is about transformation, which has been the primary focus of my whole life's work....

The period in therapy (1975-83) began a time of new exploration of the unconscious, and started the way of work that resulted in *A Child's Garden of Dreams*. This period carried through the 4th Symphony, and culminated in the *Mass* (1995-96). The fundamental theme of the *Mass* is transformation. My whole sense of self was, and continues to be, the laboratory for transformation. What

⁹¹ Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

⁹² Michael Varner, "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble and Concerto for Marimba and Band, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burritt, J. Serry, and Others.*" (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999), 7-17.

has transformed in me is inseparable from what has happened in the music.

The move to Montana was extremely consequential, but I don't see a sharp break in style, rather a long transition to a quality of mental relaxation. The energy of the land very definitely speaks through the music – pieces such as the *Concerto for Marimba and Band*, and Symphony No. 3. Symphony No. 4 is a definite high point of this time, and it set the stage for the Mass....

The *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* (1999), Symphony No.5 (2001), and *Song Book* for flute and wind ensemble (2001) represent the start of a mature period of very big pieces. There are two fundamental elements in my music – a fierce edginess, and a serene calm – and these have been there from the start. In this time they are coming to a really mature expression. I think I would count Symphony No. 7 in this period.

With Symphony No. 8 (2008) I think I have entered an “early late” period. I wrote No. 8 during a time of extreme fatigue, which came about from not paying close attention to the fact that I was getting old! I have come through a several-year period of change in body and mind that I can only think of as the movement out of middle age. I am still physically vigorous, and I think quite at the top of my mental abilities, but a clear change has taken place. I am altogether calmer, and the music has a deeper sense of quiet to it. The pieces that best represent this are *Eternal Garden* (2009) for clarinet and piano, *This is the World* (2010) for two pianos and two percussion, *Liberation* for wind ensemble and chorus (2010), and *O Earth, O Stars – Music for Flute, Cello and Wind Ensemble* (2010).⁹³

While the author will not speculate about Maslanka's personal views of his compositional periods, it is clear that the composer's style has evolved over the course of his career. This is particularly evident in Maslanka's migration toward melody.

Transformation

A final element to consider with Maslanka and his music is the concept of transformation, the idea of being moved in mind and spirit from one situation or way of

⁹³ David Maslanka, interview by author, March 22, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

being to another. This notion has become an overarching principal that encompasses his work and life.

Transformation and its philosophical application can take on a wide variety of meanings among the masses. What it means specifically to Maslanka is important in seeking a deeper understanding of how he applies it to life and music. The composer provides the following broad characterization:

The issues of transformation, whether from one stage of life to another, or from life to death, are of profound importance and interest to every individual. In the broadest sense, our human culture and our planet are undergoing profound transformation at this time, and my musical work is a small reflection of this process. My hope is that individual players and listeners will be affected by their contact with this music and that their own inner search will either begin or be in some way facilitated. Of course, this is what art is all about anyway!⁹⁴

Maslanka recently expanded on this thought with more direct application to music:

My understanding of the idea of transformation, apart from the specific issues of my life journey, is about the opening that takes place when people pay full attention to something. It can happen in any aspect of life, but music has the capacity for powerfully directing attention. I have to be immediately present in composing, or else nothing good can happen. You know from experience that it is possible not to be completely attentive to the sound of a given moment when conducting or performing. In fact a whole lot of music making is done at that level. Experience and maturing of mind and spirit take place even without full attention. People do grow and change, and the transformation process is a lifetime thing. Full attention to the moment is a powerful tool for transformation. You know the nature of that experience. A single powerful musical experience can change a life, can initiate a transformation process in all areas of the life, including for people who don't become musicians. It alters the way of thinking, of receiving information, of synthesizing new

⁹⁴ David Booth, "An Analytical Study of David Maslanka's *A Child's Garden of Dreams*" (DMA dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1994), 149.

ideas. In other words it is fundamental to creativity in a life, which is the core issue of transformation.⁹⁵

Maslanka acknowledges that “elements of transformation” emerge in his writing, however, he cautions that they are not necessarily an “attempt to illustrate the idea of transformation” in musical form.⁹⁶ In this document’s musical analysis, the author explores instances where he sees the transformative aesthetic emerge. In many cases simple musical gestures are stated and developed over a significant period of time. At times they are playfully infused with stylistic variety. Other times they are obscured and treated in ways that are not always obvious on a first listening. Eventually motives emerge and are ultimately presented in a powerful, transformed setting. As an example, Maslanka has “[referred] to the final gesture [of Symphony No. 2] as cleansed, hinting at the cathartic nature of the transformative experience.”⁹⁷ Transformative principles can also be applied to the composer’s harmonic language and the means he sometimes uses to build harmonic progression. Examples of both will be included in the chapters examining the movements of Symphony No. 7. It must be noted that in these instances the application of the transformation principle is done strictly as the author’s opinion, and should be taken as such and not misinterpreted as Maslanka’s conscious intent.

On a larger scale, entire works can be an exercise in transformation. For this reason, Maslanka strongly prefers his multi-movement works to be performed in their entirety. He feels a journey takes place and meaningful change occurs over the course of moments and movements. Completing only a portion of the journey leaves the flow of transformation unresolved. In a recent interview following a live performance of the first movement of Symphony No. 7, the author expressed to Maslanka a compelling desire to hear the rest of the piece. The composer responded with the following:

Well, let me jump in because I think I feel what you’re trying to say that, yes, you are identifying that a transformation quality has taken place through that whole journey. Now, it’s something you can’t speak about very

⁹⁵ David Maslanka, interview by author, June 9, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Robert Joseph Ambrose, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s Symphony No. 2” (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 33.

well. But, you feel the satisfaction, if you want to put it that way, of having been through a large process....

Now, that experience of itself is a starting point for people. If the piece is powerfully played and powerfully attended to, that's one of those memorable moments that you take with you, and it doesn't go away. And, I'm thinking that we're sitting here talking about this because that happened to you with this piece of music. And so, you have a thing in you which is, I would think of it simply as a single point of universal energy, which is the cumulative effect of that symphony. I've thought of it this way, that that's what the true effect of a powerful musical experience is....It leaves just that point of powerful energy in the system, which, the way I could speak about it, becomes a conduit for creative force which wants to move through a person. That point is one element of a transformative energy.

When people accumulate these through powerful musical experiences, then that is the engine, if you want to put it that way, the engine of transformation begins to be at work in that person. It doesn't mean that suddenly everything is fine. It means that this has started, and it is a grand spiritual journey which may take a lifetime.⁹⁸

Maslanka's compositional history can also be seen as decades-long transformational experience. A brief look into this idea and where Symphony No. 7 falls in the process is appropriate.

Despite the beginning of an "early late" period with Symphony No. 8, Maslanka sees significant transformational connections between his fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth symphonies and the personal journey that has take place across the compositional timeline of these pieces.⁹⁹ He describes Symphony No. 5 as a "a very hard-edged piece and full of a kind of rough energy, which was very hard to contain."¹⁰⁰ Following three very emotional movements that touch on the fierce and the beautiful, the last movement of the piece draws from J.S. Bach's Chorale "*Christ lag in Todesbanden*" in a setting that leaves the listener and performers unsettled. In the composer's words it is "very stark and dire....It leaves you in darkness...and it's just finally a kick in the head when you get

⁹⁸ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

⁹⁹ *Symphony No. 6: Living Earth* is set for orchestra and was completed in 2003.

¹⁰⁰ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

down to the end of it.”¹⁰¹ The process of writing the symphony was mentally challenging and very draining. Maslanka recalls that, “[I] felt like I was being banged around by that symphony. And when I finished it, finally, I had the sensation that I had been used by something and not very nicely.”¹⁰²

Although Symphony No. 5 descended into the imagery of death and the grave, Maslanka does not see an arrival at a point of ending but rather a point of transformation. The next piece that followed was the *Song Book* for flute and piano. It “begins with the hymn melody ‘Christ is Risen,’ [and the movement is] filled with a gentle light and a gentle kind of transformed energy.”¹⁰³ Maslanka sees this energy or “quality of smile” continuing into his subsequent compositions including Symphony No. 7.

And you can say [Symphony No. 7] has its references to what it’s gone through, and we have a quality of the huge, settled smile that things are ok. The eighth symphony goes through another level of thought.

There’s a big movement here which has to do with being settled, and in the process of all this between five, six, seven, and eight, that I am becoming settled. I’m beginning to see life from a clear and objective standpoint. I have my passions and my stuff still, and yet there are considerable times when I’m simply present, and I’m not being pushed around by my mental stuff. So, that character of being present, and simply being present as an open center through which things can move, is the thing which seems to be coming into play. And what that implies for another symphony and other music, we’re going to see.¹⁰⁴

In terms of compositional approach, style, and history, Maslanka is a complex and intriguing musical figure who draws from extensive sources, experiences, and influences to produce a wide variety of music stamped with his unique sound signature.

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¹⁰¹ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE: Symphony No. 7 and a “Maslankian” Approach

Commissioning is a grand adventure, a great leap of faith. It is hard to imagine buying anything of comparable expense that you can’t look at, test drive, touch, taste, or smell before you commit to it.

~ David Maslanka¹⁰⁵

The Commission

Maslanka has made his living writing music by commission since he moved to Montana in 1990. The products of these commissions have added significantly to the band, vocal, and chamber music repertoire. At the time of this writing he estimates that he has completed seventy commissions and has four more “in the queue.”¹⁰⁶

All but the first of his symphonies have been commissioned either through individual behest or by consortia. In several instances these pieces were not commissioned specifically as symphonies. *Symphony No. 2* was commissioned by the Big Ten Band Directors Association to be some type of significant concert piece, and, according to Maslanka, the piece was given its title upon completion because it “looked symphonic.”¹⁰⁷ It was premiered in February of 1987. Four years later Gary Green, then director of bands at the University of Connecticut, commissioned a work that was to be a substantial concert piece around twenty minutes in length. It became *Symphony No. 3*, a five-movement work lasting nearly fifty minutes. *Symphony No. 4* began as a 1993 commission from Jerry Junkin, the Director of Bands at the University of Texas at Austin. Junkin was looking for something around ten-minutes in length; however Maslanka produced twenty-nine minutes of music arranged in five continuous movements.

¹⁰⁵ David Maslanka, “David Maslanka,” *Composers on Composing for Band*, vol. 2, ed. Mark Camphouse (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004), 206.

¹⁰⁶ David Maslanka, interview by author, April 30, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹⁰⁷ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

In 2000 Stephen Steele led a consortium that requested Symphony No. 5. This was the first time Steele asked Maslanka for a piece and the first time that anyone had asked specifically for a symphony. The project began a string of commission projects in which Steele was either a consortium head or member that continues to the time of this writing. Symphony No. 5 was premiered by the Illinois State Wind Symphony under the direction of Steele in 2001 at the College Band Directors National Association National Conference in Denton, Texas.

By Steele's account the impetus for *Symphony No. 7* began while Symphony No. 5 was still in the process of being premiered and recorded.¹⁰⁸ In addition to Maslanka's new work, the commissioning project included two other pieces, *Cycles* by Samuel Zyman and *Concerto for Flute and Wind Ensemble* by Matthew Halper. Steele provides the following account:

When we were in the process of performing and recording No. 5, we started talking about No. 7. And, at that time we also tried to build what we thought would be an exciting package of new music. Matt Halper and Sam Zyman were two other composers that we were familiar with, and we commissioned them all three at the same time. No. 7, a flute concerto from Halper and a piece by Sam Zyman to open the concert. And, we did that with the notion of just doing a tour across I-80 to New York, playing in Lincoln Center, and then coming home and, I think, producing a CD. That all came about during No. 5.... The consortium was actually a gigantic consortium because all three pieces were part of the consortium.... So, that's the genesis of No. 7, and it was specifically requesting a symphony knowing that we were going to go to New York, knowing that we were going to do a CD, and all of that stuff.¹⁰⁹

All three works were premiered by Steele and the Illinois State Wind Symphony on March 10, 2005, at Illinois State University. The ensuing concert tour from March 15 to March 20 included stops at Bowling Green State University, Ithaca College, the University of Hartford, and Hunterdon Central Regional High School (Flemington, NJ).

¹⁰⁸ Symphony No. 6, an orchestral piece commissioned by James Anderson for the Appalachian Symphony Orchestra in Boone, North Carolina, was composed between these pieces in 2003.

¹⁰⁹ Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

The tour culminated with a performance in Alice Tully Hall at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City.

Maslanka embraces the commissioning process with the same type of mental focus that marks his compositional approach. Commissions are an important source of creative energy and drive for the composer. Maslanka feels the projects bring together two forces of energy – the ideas he has “bubbling” in his mind and the desire of the commissioning party to bring about a new work of art.¹¹⁰

To me, the commission is like a rock in the pond - the pond is just lying there until somebody throws a stone in it, and this tremendous rippling takes place. So the fertilization of the moment in the mind takes place by someone asking you to write. The commission suddenly focuses your thoughts and then something forms around that point. I really love this because then there is a reason for me to come into the work, and people who have asked for it want it. That’s truly important to a composer to have the music be wanted.¹¹¹

Maslanka’s holds his relationship to the commissioning party with great significance. He believes those who ask for his music do so because of an underlying “spiritual issue” of which they may or may not be consciously unaware, and because of this, “there is a need for movement and resolution of some kind.”¹¹² Not surprisingly, Maslanka seeks a spiritual connection with those asking for his music. To aid in focusing his meditative concentration, he has been known to ask for a personally significant object be sent to him. In the case of Symphony No. 3 he received a baton from Gary Green, and for his wind ensemble piece *In Memoriam*, commissioned by Ray Lichtenwalter in memory of his wife Susan, Maslanka received a hymnal that Susan used in her role as a church organist. Because of the depth of his relationship with Steele, Maslanka did not require a similar object when working on Symphony No. 7.

¹¹⁰ Michael Varner, “An Examination of David Maslanka’s Marimba Concerti: *Arcadia II for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble and Concerto for Marimba and Band, A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of K. Abe, M. Burritt, J. Serry, and Others.*” (DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999), 4.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹¹² Beth Antonopulous, “David Maslanka.” In *A Composer’s Insight: Thoughts, Analysis and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, vol. 2, Timothy Salzman ed., (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 97.

When ready to begin work on a piece, Maslanka will focus his thoughts and meditations on the commissioning party and the performing ensemble in a very intentional way.

What I have to do is to look inward and to see the people in the performance situation for whom the piece is being written. I do a meditative process and what I simply do is evoke the image of the person who has asked me to write the piece and I look at them in this meditative way. Then some things are shown to me. There is a sense of awareness of how that person is and how that person feels and to what the musical ensemble feels like. When I am composing a piece, all the time I am referring back to the mental image that I have of the performance actually taking place.¹¹³

While meditating on Steele for Symphony No. 7, Maslanka envisioned several vivid, sometimes disconcerting images. The description of these meditations is best left to the composers own words.

In my meditation on him at that time I saw him as approaching the end of his life. This is a difficult thing. Steve has had some medical issues and things which were potentially life threatening, but I could see it as the end of his life. Literally I saw the tomb with his name and the dates of birth and death, and I couldn't shake it, and I couldn't make it do any differently than that. I saw numbers.

And then in another meditation, again focused on him – there are several here that are very important – I saw in my meditation image a farmhouse. It looked like mid-America prairie area farmhouse. And entering the farmhouse I see him – now you have to understand that this is something of a dream image, but it's in [*sic*] conscious mind, and, when I have images like this, they are images of the condition of the person in a deep way. There is a direct contact from my mind to that person's energy, and the image comes forward as a way of expressing the nature of the energy. The image was of a person extremely ill but in this farmhouse and essentially shackled, wrists and ankles, to a wall. My movement in this dream – dream, well, meditation – was to release him at which point there was

¹¹³ Stephen Paul Bolstad, "David Maslanka's Symphony No. 4: A Conductor's Analysis with Performance Considerations" (DMA dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2002), 19.

the presence of a bear. A bear is a protective spirit. A bear is one of the images of the divine. A bear moves toward the divine. I assist in placing Steve on the back of the bear, and off they go to places that I don't know anything about.

The very next image in this meditation is of the tomb of Christ, and it is opened and the figure of Christ emerges carrying Steve, literally tosses him in my direction and says, "Here, you have him back. Do some work." And, ok. So, over the course of time he's still alive, and he's now healthy as far as I know and past the date that was on my little....So things changed for him. He moved toward his own health, did specific things to help himself out and is working powerfully in music making.

Another dream which is associated with this area, not specifically with this symphony, although it is implied by the dream, this is a sleep dream that I had some years ago related to Steve. In the dream I am in his "office" with quote marks around it. And it is a very primitive place with a very flimsy wooden door leading immediately to the outside. And the outside is a river bottom. It's a flat plain leading toward a river, and as you get closer to the river you see mud, and then the river is flowing by in the distance. In this dream out of the mud flat there there sprang an entire family of elephants. [laughter] And I began meditating on this dream and I began to realize the elephants were the projects we were doing together. With this large line, and there's a whole series of them. There a whole family of elephants.

So those kinds of images are part of the background for No. 7.¹¹⁴

Some specific moments of association between these images and the music of Symphony No. 7 will be explored in the chapters covering each individual movement below.

As an interesting aside, Steele looks at his health issues from a different angle.

He's shared [his meditative images] with me, and he predicted some health problems and they came true, but he also predicted some serious health problems that haven't come about yet. And, I'm knocking on my desk, which is solid oak! [laughter] But, I made some drastic changes, personal changes in my life, and one of them is a marriage to a woman who's an amazing musician and a complete

¹¹⁴ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

supporter of what I do and [is] part of what I do. And, I think that in his estimation has cleaned up my health. That's his impression of where I am. My doctor says I'm fine. [laughter] And I go to the doctor, you know? I don't just listen to David Maslanka. [laughter] I have complete trust in David, but I still go to the doctor.¹¹⁵

General Overview

Symphony No. 7 is a reflection of Maslanka's affinity for hymns and American folk songs. The composer sees it as a "songful piece and particularly an old song kind of piece."¹¹⁶ Maslanka also refers to the work as having an "earnestness" which he defines as a "heartfelt quality that is unembarrassed about being that."¹¹⁷ The following is excerpted from the symphony's program note:

I am strongly affected by American folk songs and hymn tunes, and I think of this Symphony as "old songs remembered." With one exception all the tunes are original, but they all feel very familiar....Each song has a bright side and a dark side, a surface and the dream underneath. Each is a signal or call which evokes an inner world of associations.¹¹⁸

Symphony No. 7 is scored for a traditional wind ensemble with some notable additions and doublings. The second flute doubles on piccolo; second bassoon doubles on contrabassoon, and first trumpet doubles on piccolo trumpet. Maslanka specifies seven clarinet players (two on first, two on second, and three on third), suggests a fifth horn and fourth trumpet to assist first players, and calls for two tuba players. The piano plays a prominent role in the symphony, and the composer suggests that the lid be removed and the piano "placed at the front of the ensemble to the left of the conductor in 'concerto' position."¹¹⁹

Maslanka augments standard percussion instrumentation with the addition of the following: a small Buddhist meditation bell, a large Buddhist meditation bell, a small

¹¹⁵ Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

¹¹⁶ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

hammered dulcimer, a small metal bell, an anvil (specifically, a suspended iron theatre or stage weight), a rain tree, log drums, and a small shaker. As is his usual practice, Maslanka organizes the percussion parts with great care (Table 3.1). Some instruments common to multiple parts may be shared. However, Maslanka indicates on the score's instrumentation page that two vibraphones are required. Though it is not listed with the same clarity, two marimbas, two xylophones, and two sets of orchestra bells are also required. All instances of multiple like keyboards occur in the third movement. Maslanka is very intentional about mallet choice and frequently writes specific instructions on technique such as how to articulate and how and when to dampen.

Table 3.1: Symphony No. 7 percussion instrumentation and organization.

Percussion 1	Percussion 2	Percussion 3
Vibraphone Xylophone Small Buddhist Meditation Bell Small Hammered Dulcimer (optional)	Marimba Orchestra Bells Crash Cymbals Chimes Hand Chimes (optional)	Small Suspended Cymbal Vibraphone 2 Large Suspended Cymbal Small Bell Snare Drum Tenor Drum Marimba

Percussion 4	Percussion 5
Bass Drum Tam Tam Anvil (iron theatre weight, suspended) Large Suspended Cymbal Large Buddhist Meditation Bell Crotales Temple Blocks Rain Tree Bongos High Toms Orchestra Bells	Bass Drum Tenor Drum Sand Paper Blocks Crotales Log Drums Orchestra Bells Tam Tam Small Shaker

Instructions written into the score denote that piano may be substituted for the hammered dulcimer and hand bells, vibraphone, or crotales may be used in place of hand chimes.

Symphony No. 7 is set in four movements with the composer indicating on the score that it “should be played without significant pause or relaxation of musical tension between movements.”¹²⁰ Total performance time is approximately thirty-five minutes. The score is written in C with piccolo, contrabassoon, double bass, xylophone, bells, and crotales retaining their usual octave transpositions. Maslanka signed the score’s final page on September 24, 2004.

A “Maslankian” Approach

Though the view may not be held by all, one would assume that most conductors wish to present music in a way as close to the composer’s original intent as possible. Determining that intent can be a challenging task, particularly if a score’s expressive indications such as dynamics, tempi, articulation and the like are left in very general terms. Knowing of the composer’s history and compositional approach, as well as the piece’s backstory, can be useful in establishing a foundation on which to build the preparation and presentation. Ultimately though, the question at any given point of a rehearsal or performance becomes, “How does the composer want this particular moment of music to sound?”

To this end the author sought to determine what might be a “Maslankian” approach to music, or if it was even possible to establish such. After numerous conversations with the composer and significant input from important wind band conductors, the author believes that there is indeed such an approach. However, like most aspects of “Maslankian” philosophy and thought, its essence takes some effort to capture.

Contrary to the author’s initial suspicions, and perhaps surprising to those with a basic familiarity of Maslanka’s meditative approach, the composer’s initial concern regarding the performance of his work does not lie in a quest for a personal, subconscious, or spiritual connection to the music.¹²¹ For him the entire business of

¹²⁰ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹²¹ This document does not make any attempt to define spiritual connection nor spirituality. It is the author’s personal belief that all people have a spiritual nature and that each person is to determine for himself or herself how spiritual connections are manifested musically.

making music comes down to “notes, rhythms, tempo, and dynamics.”¹²² In other words, Maslanka simply wants the music to be played correctly. He has a definitive concept of how he believes the music should sound, and, because of this, he is very meticulous in his writing. Every mark on the page, whether pitch, articulation, dynamic, tempo, or rhythm, means something and is intended to be honored completely and achieved to its fullest extent. Once such attention to detail is sufficiently addressed, the channel for the music’s emotional and/or spiritual impact is opened. In other words, it is a matter of the music giving life to that which is emotional and spiritual instead of the emotional and spiritual giving life to the music. At this point it is worth noting that Maslanka and the author both acknowledge that some conductors choose to work exclusively with musical values with the expectation that the musical energy will emerge and do not necessarily explore the same spiritual depths as the composer. Maslanka feels such connections are useful to explore but understands that there is a diversity of ways to approach preparation and performance.

Maslanka recently illustrated the importance of meticulous musical focus in an interview with the author that took place at the 2011 Kansas Music Educator Association In-Service Convention. At the convention the Washburn University Wind Ensemble under the direction of Mark Norman performed the final movement of Maslanka’s Symphony No. 2. The composer was brought in a few days before to work with the ensemble and accompanied them to the performance in Wichita. He described the process of addressing the fundamental elements of music as follows:

I’m working with Mark Norman’s group. They’re doing the finale from the second symphony, and he’s done a wonderful preparation of this. They can lay out the piece, but they haven’t quite found themselves in it yet. They don’t quite know how to go about this. My job is to go, and – this is what I do – to simply listen to what they’re doing and to say how to go further with things like dynamics. So, there’s one particular spot in the movement where it comes out to a few wind instruments and the wood block and the piano and it’s marked *pianissimo*. Well, they banged into it at *mezzo forte/forte*. Well, I stopped them right there and said, “No. It’s marked *pianissimo* for this group, see? So let’s do it *pianissimo*.” And so they tried

¹²² David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

again and it was *mezzo forte*. And I said, “No. Try it again.” And it took four times to actually bring it down to a *pianissimo* level, and then they did it. And we placed it there, and they heard it there, and they understood the enormous increase of power because of it. Alright. And there was this, “Oh!” kind of moment. “Oh! That’s what that really sounds like!” And, “Oh! How cool is that when it’s related to this other thing!”

So, that’s my job, is to actually ask people to do what is there....And it’s my job to go in there and throw a monkey wrench in that whole works and to say, “No. Stop. Stop and listen. And listen deeply....”

What that does is to give ownership to the players, because they’ve heard the real sound happen. And that ownership is the transition point. We have done this sound. We are owners of this sound, as opposed to sort of being present as the sound floated past. There’s the whole deal of music making right there. It’s the foundation for interpretation. It is the foundation for the spiritual energy that flows through.¹²³

Some conductors and performers may not choose to pursue connections on an inwardly personal level. They may find satisfaction in the composition strictly as music-for-music’s-sake. When asked by the author how knowledge of Maslanka’s spiritually focused compositional process affects his approach to the music, Steele quite simply replied, “It doesn’t.” This does not mean that Steele finds no emotional impact, however. He believes that Maslanka writes music that is powerful enough for an audience to be “completely grabbed and overwhelmed” regardless of their knowledge of the composer.¹²⁴ He goes so far to say that Maslanka’s music even has the ability to overcome poor performance.

One of our colleagues, I think it was Symphony No. 5, was in the consortium for Symphony No. 5 and gave it five rehearsals and a performance. And the performance was awful, but the music still spoke. And I told David, “The notes don’t have to be played in your music.” I mean it’s nice if they are, but the music has that much power that it

¹²³ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹²⁴ Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

comes through in an inadequate playing. And I don't know very many people's music that can overcome that.¹²⁵

Not surprisingly, Maslanka sees the spiritual connection with a greater passion.

Knowing that the music is conceived with subconscious and spiritual connections does matter. A conductor or performer may not (most likely cannot) apply this knowledge directly, but knowing that these connections exist leads individuals to begin their own search for their own connections...Music would not exist without such connections! Music is a manifestation of spirit. If no spirit, then no music, or anything else.¹²⁶

Connecting to Maslanka's approach is also important to Timothy Mahr. He believes "an exposure and possible understanding of these influences on the part of the conductor and performers can be very beneficial in solidifying a grounded interpretation."¹²⁷

Maslanka's personal and spiritual journey is often expressed in his compositions. Just as Maslanka draws from all of his musical history when composing the music, he believes that performers can and should let every available influence shape the energy they put into the music.

The primary thing you have as analyst or conductor is the score – the "big four:" notes, rhythms, tempo, dynamics. You have other sources as well: conversations with the composer and other conductors who have done a piece, recordings, anything written about the piece or performance practice that has grown around the piece, your own background of musical experience and knowledge which informs your intuition, and then that seemingly rare thing, the *direct experience* of the music. Whatever your background, or level of knowledge, you can simply be blindsided by a musical experience.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

¹²⁶ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 26, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹²⁷ Timothy Mahr, interview by author, May 27, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹²⁸ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 26, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS. (emphasis original)

It is at this point that the door to the spiritual and emotional side of a “Maslankian” approach begins to open wider. As the music becomes familiar in “black and white” form, it is likely to trigger certain memories, feelings, or images for members of the ensemble. All of these are colored by each individual’s personal experience, and, when such connections occur, they can become powerful means of interpretation. In Chapter Two the author related that Maslanka sees his role in composing as being a conduit as much as a creator.¹²⁹ The author believes that the key for performers and audiences to creating important internal connections comes in each person allowing themselves to similarly become a channel of personal expression. Mahr speaks of the experience in the like terms.

More than anything, I feel the conductor needs to submit to the role of being the conduit through which the interpretive issues of the work must flow, leading through gestures buoyed by inspiration that allow the musicians in turn to submit to the music....Don’t fight it – just let it in.¹³⁰

Maslanka believes that everyone has “some direct spiritual sense,” and, therefore, has the ability to both actively seek spiritual connections and allow connections to come to them unaided.¹³¹ Maslanka illustrated this concept during the author’s visit to his home in June 2011. The composer took the author on a hike into the foothills around Blue Mountain southwest of Missoula, an area Maslanka frequents during his meditative walks. After gaining a modest amount of altitude, a clearing emerged along the downhill side of the tree-lined trail revealing a strikingly beautiful mountain meadow of flowing grasses speckled with wildflowers. The author grew up just hours away from Missoula in southeastern Idaho and feels a strong connection to the intermountain west region of the United States. Upon seeing the meadow, the depth of the author’s feelings and yearning for the west was revealed in a surprising rush of emotions. The sensation was such that the author’s eyes welled and he felt a lump emerge in his throat. Later that day Maslanka explained that he believed this was an instance of direct spiritual connection, a response

¹²⁹ See Chapter Two, page 22.

¹³⁰ Timothy Mahr, interview by author, May 27, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹³¹ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 26, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

that was not taught nor prodded by any doctrine, principle, or intellectual study. It is this kind of intuitive, subconscious association that Maslanka believes is key to both his composing and a meaningfulness experienced by performers or listeners.

Because of the diversity of humanity and human experience, there are countless ways of finding or assigning meaning to any given musical moment. When asked by the author if any and every spiritual connection was valid, Maslanka replied:

My exploration of the unconscious, and my composing have been a grand experiment. I have been very wary of claiming “truth” for them, relying instead on the resulting actual experiences. The music has shown itself to be powerful; people are moved, opened, changed. I am not preaching a “way” but simply following as best I can where the spirit and the music lead. There is no person or thing or system that is perfect. I am shown things in my meditations that I might try to claim as a revelation from God. I don’t. I let them sit in my mind and let them push the formation of a piece of music. If the music “works” then I see that the “revelations” have some force, and that is quite enough for me. The perceived validity of personal experience, or of a piece of music, is a thing that is worked out over a very long time.¹³²

The conductor plays a critical role in a “Maslankian” approach. He or she must balance becoming a catalyst for creating personal connection with the temptation to artificially impose personal meaning on the music. Gregg Hanson described this balance as follows:

I think that the conductor’s job is to unlock the essence of the music. The music itself is the vehicle, and there are certain things in the preparation of his music that have to happen in order for that to be unlocked. But, I think it’s a misunderstanding for any conductor to think that they are, you know, they themselves are making this incredible experience. I think the music itself makes the experience.¹³³

¹³² David Maslanka, interview by author, May 26, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹³³ Gregg Hanson, telephone interview by author, May 31, 2011, Hays, KS.

Though Maslanka typically hesitates to assign specific meaning to specific moments in his music, there are a handful of particular images associated with moments of Symphony No. 7. These are shared in the remaining chapters. It is worth stating clearly that emotional and spiritual connection cannot be forced upon anyone. However, peeking into Maslanka's meditation associations may be a good place to start building personal connections for those who wish to do so. In the chapters that follow the author also relates stories of powerful moments from performances of this symphony and other Maslanka music as shared by the panel of conductors interviewed for this project. The author further encourages conductors to allow current events and stories meaningful to the time and place of performance to become catalysts for connection. Some may find all the background needed for a deeply personal experience within these stories. Others may choose to use them as a starting point for allowing their own inner connections to emerge.

In addition to providing basic background on the composer, his compositional approach, and stories associated with the composition, the author suggests several practical measures conductors might use to help themselves and their players better relate to Maslanka's music. The first is to become a consumer of Maslanka's music through score study, recordings, and email or telephone contact with the composer himself. With time one can become intuitively familiar with his voice and notions of what his music is and how it should sound. Recommended recordings related to Symphony No. 7 include all of Maslanka's band symphonies – Symphony No. 2, Symphony No. 3, Symphony No. 4, Symphony No. 5, Symphony No. 7, and Symphony No. 8.¹³⁴ The author feels it best to listen to these in chronological order as a means of experiencing Maslanka's spiritual journey through the evolution of his symphonic voice. Non-symphonic pieces recommended include those Maslanka identified in Chapter Two as belonging to his "mature" period along with Symphony No. 7. These are *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble*, and *Song Book* for flute and wind ensemble. Maslanka also recommended *Desert Roads* for clarinet and wind ensemble and *A Carl Sandberg Reader* to the author.

Another valuable resource recommended in the strongest terms is a twelve-point list created by Gregg Hanson for his use during an interview with the author. It may be

¹³⁴ At the time of this writing *Symphony No. 9* is scheduled to premier in November 2011.

found in Appendix F with discussion of these points included in a transcript of the author's interview with Hanson in Appendix G.¹³⁵

Other thoughts to consider include accuracy with all metronome markings from the first moment of preparation. Steele's approach to Maslanka and any piece of music is for the first reading to be as uninterrupted as possible and at performance tempo.¹³⁶ This gives the ensemble an immediate understanding of what technical facility is required. To help focus balance efforts, the author encourages early identification of important thematic and motivic material. Formal identification, especially identification of returning material, can help an ensemble plan dynamic and emotional pace. In the case of Symphony No. 7 the formal outline in Appendix A and thematic catalog in Appendix B may be distributed to the ensemble. The author also suggests making the score available for perusal by the ensemble. Because Maslanka's scores are in manuscript, seeing Maslanka's writing and tangibly holding the entire score in one's hand may help some connect to the composer. Exposure to the score may also allow one to see the inner workings and constructs of the piece and how different moments and musical gestures relate across the ensemble, especially if one is familiar with the thematic, motivic, and formal structures of the piece. Chapter Two mentioned Maslanka's long walks and how that discipline helps creative focus emerge. The author offers that walking can be a useful mechanism for performers to find their creative voice as well, whether it is walking while listening to a recording or while reflecting on the piece internally.

Whatever connections it produces in the end, the author believes a "Maslankian" approach to Symphony No. 7 is worth considering. It begins with a true and accurate interpretation of the printed music which can lead to deeply meaningful emotional and spiritual connections.

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¹³⁵ See pages 219 through 225 for discussion.

¹³⁶ Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

CHAPTER FOUR: Movement I - Moderate

Sunday night church services from my youth. Mrs. Smith played the piano. The opening piano solo is marked “enthusiastically” in the score. A dream travels to a far place.

~ Program Note for Movement I¹³⁷

Introduction

Symphony No. 7 begins with a memory. As noted in the biography in Chapter Two, as a teenager Maslanka was involved in a youth group at a small evangelical church in Westport, Massachusetts. Although the confidence in the faith he was exploring at that time began to break down as he grew older, he still recalls his time in the youth group as “very powerful.”¹³⁸ Since then, Maslanka’s spiritual journey has taken him away from those experiences and through several permutations of spiritual understanding, and this pathway has been at times extremely challenging and personally difficult. It was, therefore, very significant and “fabulous” for the composer that these memories and energies reemerged in the opening measures of Symphony No. 7 manifested in the form of Mrs. Smith’s piano hymn tune improvisations.¹³⁹ Maslanka sees it as evidence that these foundational experiences never truly left.

The earlier fact of having been associated with an evangelical church when I was a teenager was a very powerful thing at that time. It was a thing that lasted for, I want to say, about four years at which point I’d become a young adult and began to think about these things and all the imagery of that began to fall apart, and I began to lose that as a primary focus. So, all of my religious imagery disappeared. I felt a large black hole, if you want to think of it that way. Really quite a depressed place when that early religious experience broke apart. And so I didn’t

¹³⁷ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹³⁸ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹³⁹ David Maslanka, interview by author, February 2, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

have anything to replace it with at that time. But, that was the beginning of my own internal work to reconstitute an understanding of what that energy was and to rebuild it a bit at a time so that I did arrive finally at where I've come to. But, I want to say that the initial energy that came through that first religious experience there was a powerful thing. And clearly it was a powerful thing because it came back in memory all these years later.

So, it's really kind of a very interesting gift to receive back again, when you think that something is dead and gone and no longer part of your being and to realize, well, no! [laughter] It is a living gem, if you want to think of it that way, in your mind and has been there all that time.¹⁴⁰

Analysis

Like the other three movements in Symphony No. 7, the first movement can formally be understood as an ABA structure plus a Coda. The first A section encompasses measures 1-98, the B section measures 99-204, the second A section measures 205-291, and the Coda measures 292-318.¹⁴¹

It is the author's opinion that two distinct "hymn tunes" can be found in the A sections, each with four phrases, and for purposes of this study they have been labeled "Mrs. Smith's Hymn" (Figure 4.1) and "Trombone Hymn" (Figure 4.2) respectively. Maslanka claims that the material is "no way a direct quote of [Mrs. Smith's] playing, but something newly composed out of the memory of what she did."¹⁴² However, recently Maslanka acknowledged that the second and fourth phrases of "Mrs. Smith's Hymn" are

¹⁴⁰ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹⁴¹ The author has produced formal outlines and thematic and motivic catalogs of each movement. The formal outlines may be found in Appendix A. Thematic and motivic examples are included in the body of Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven; however, the entire thematic and motivic catalogs may be found in Appendix B. The labels assigned to the formal elements, themes, and motives are entirely of the author's creation for purposes of discussion and are not in any way associated with Maslanka's thoughts or impressions of the music. The author also acknowledges that alternate interpretations of formal structures or harmonic centers may be equally valid.

¹⁴² David Maslanka, interview by author, February 2, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

taken from the Bach chorale “*Das walt’ mein Gott.*” (Figure 4.3)¹⁴³ Although he has utilized his own harmonizations, both phrases are set in a chorale style in the clarinets, bass clarinets, and saxophones. The second phrase of “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” (Figure 4.4) closely follows the melodic contour of the first two phrases of “*Das walt’ mein Gott*” with the fourth phrase of “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” (Figure 4.5) resembling the final three phrases of the Bach, although less exactly. Harmonically, both “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” and “*Das walt mein Gott*” begin in F Major and modulate to a key center of D in the last phrase. “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” moves to D Major, while “*Das walt mein Gott*” shifts to D Minor with a Picardy Third on the last chord.

Figure 4.1: Movement I, “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” melody, measures 1-37.

Interestingly, in his program notes Maslanka states that only one melody of Symphony No. 7 is borrowed, the Bach Chorale “*Du Friedensfurst Herr Jesu Christ*”

¹⁴³ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

used in the third movement. When the author asked about the appearance of “*Das walt’ mein Gott*” as another borrowed melody, Maslanka said he simply “overlooked” it when writing the program notes.¹⁴⁴

(Trombones 8vb)
phrase 1

phrase 2

(Clarinets & Saxes)
phrase 3

(Trombones 8vb, Clarinets, & Saxes)
phrase 4

(phrase extension - clarinets, saxes & piano)

(unresolved)

Figure 4.2: Movement I, “Trombone Hymn” melody, measures 37-71.

There is no mistaking the heavy gospel influence on the piano solos throughout the first movement, a sound largely manifested with stacked triadic chords in various inversions in the right hand and an octave bass line in the left hand. The first phrase (m.1-7) and third phrase (m.17-23) of Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” employ this style alternating with the clarinet/saxophone chorale settings. The piano joins the texture and supports the chorale setting at the end of the second and fourth phrases.

At measure thirty-seven the first and second trombones enter in unison with the “Trombone Hymn” melody in D Major. For the first two phrases (m.37-45 and m.46-53) the trombones play the melody. Bass support is provided in the first phrase by the bassoons, mostly in a pedal fifth of D and A with the double bass inserting a *pizzicato* D on the fourth and eighth bars. The piano plays rapid ascending arpeggiated triads that

¹⁴⁴ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

begin to hint at the flavor of Mrs. Smith’s piano improvisations, although at this point they simply outline the chord progression of the hymn tune. At measure 53, just before the third phrase of the “Trombone Hymn,” the piano arpeggios change contour to ascending and descending structures that slightly expand the improvisatory feel of the piano. This activity intensifies through the rest of the “Trombone Hymn” and the first A section.



Figure 4.3: “Das walt’ mein Gott,” J.S. Bach.

The third phrase of the “Trombone Hymn” is set in the clarinets, alto saxophones, and tenor saxophones, while the piano returns to block chords in measure fifty-eight. The piano outlines the melody but also adds forward motion at the phrase’s cadence point with various inversions of primarily tonic chords over a rising bass line on each quarter note pulse. Maslanka thickens the texture slightly for the last “Trombone Hymn” phrase (m.62-71) as the first and second trombone return with the melody. A three-measure phrase extension is inserted between the antecedent and consequent portions of the phrase starting in measure sixty-six. In measure sixty-nine the piano returns to rapid arpeggios that ascend through measure seventy then work back down. This last phrase is left unresolved, cadencing on the dominant.



Figure 4.4: Movement I, Chorale setting of “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” phrase 2, measures 8-16.



Figure 4.5: Movement I, Chorale setting of “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” phrase 4, measures 25-36.

Maslanka repeats the first phrase of the “Trombone Hymn” in measures seventy-four through eighty-two. Here the clarinets and saxophones are in a full chorale setting with the first trumpet reinforcing the melody, and the piano continues its intensification

with the addition of rapidly repeated chords outlining the melody and octave flourishes. Perhaps it is at this point that one can fully appreciate the memory of Mrs. Smith's improvisations. Rapidly ascending and descending *fortissimo* arpeggios in the Bb clarinets, bass clarinets, bassoons, saxophones, and marimba add murmuring color. This setting continues into last phrase of the first A section which is a repeat of the second phrase of the "Trombone Hymn" in measures eighty-four through ninety-one.

Interestingly, Maslanka changes one note of the "Trombone Hymn" melody on its repeat. On the third beat of measure eighty-seven, the melody plays an A; however, the corresponding note in the first appearance of the phrase – beat three of measure fifty – is a G. The author questioned Maslanka about this variation. His reply further reveals the character of his thinking that perhaps explains why certain elements of his music are difficult to classify.

The only thing I can say is that the tune was in my head, and it came out this way on this occasion. The work process on tunes (and everything else!) is akin to a metal worker hammering a piece of metal. There are any number of approximations until the thing feels right. The long evolution of folk tunes and the chorales is like this. These melodies have take generations to reach some kind of final form, and I think they would keep on evolving, like language, if they weren't written down. Writing slows the evolution process, but doesn't stop it. Compare English from the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries....The English three hundred years from now will be something that we wouldn't understand easily. I would love to hear what the music will be in 300 years...how about 3,000 years??¹⁴⁵

The first A section concludes with transition measures (m.92-98) marked by a five-note descending figure passed down through the first flute and first clarinet to the first alto saxophone and marimba. During this falling line the piano pounds out *fortississimo* second inversion G Major chords that accelerate for three measures then decelerate before shifting to a first inversion C Major (add #11) chord in sixteenth notes on beat three of measure ninety-seven. This chord is held by the clarinets and alto

¹⁴⁵ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

saxophones with the added tritone (#11) appearing in the first clarinet.¹⁴⁶ In his program notes Maslanka says that each tune in Symphony No. 7 “has a bright side and a dark side, a surface and the dream underneath.”¹⁴⁷ Although the effect of these two chords is a dominant to tonic motion with the expectation of the next section to be in some incarnation of C, the tritone and pounding piano brings a tangible sense of instability as Maslanka prepares to move to the B section which may be seen as an exploration of the movement’s “dark side.” The transition plunges into the B section with a massively crescendoing fermata on beat three of measure ninety-eight propelled by a rumbling bass drum roll.

The B section begins in measure ninety-nine transitioning metrically through 6/8 to 9/8 with a torrent of woodwind sixteenth notes in ascending and descending scalar patterns in an obscured A Minor/A Phrygian tonality.¹⁴⁸ Fragments of the upcoming “Challenge!” theme appear in the low brass.¹⁴⁹ Loud duple groupings in the horns and oboes in measures 102 and 103 obscure the triple meter pulse. The “Challenge!” theme appears in full in measures 107-112 in the horns and low brass (Figure 4.6). Though the theme appears solidly in A Minor, high woodwinds and keyboard percussion confuse the tonal center with eighth note triple and duple groupings and sixteenth note runs using several B-flats and D-flats. It is the author’s opinion that the tonal center of the woodwinds and keyboards may be seen as A Phrygian with the added coloring of the tritone. As will be seen in the subsequent sections, Maslanka seems to be fond of using Phrygian and minor modes simultaneously.

¹⁴⁶ As will be seen in the following chapters analyzing the subsequent movements, Maslanka shows a proclivity for adding color notes to chords, particularly ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths.

¹⁴⁷ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹⁴⁸ The obfuscation is accomplished by the inclusion of several accidentals, most notably E-flats, B-flats, and G-flats, that are followed quickly by E-naturals, and G-naturals. A commonality of B-flats that are never “cancelled” may suggest A Phrygian. The melodic fragment in the trombones uses none of these accidentals suggesting a firm A Minor.

¹⁴⁹ The “Challenge!” theme has been so labeled by the author because of its bold voicing, its forward impulsion, its shift to minor mode, and the character of its intrusion into the texture of the movement challenging the material of the A section.



Figure 4.6: Movement I, “Challenge!” theme, measures 107-112.

Another fragment of the “Challenge!” theme, this time in full brass plus tenor saxophone and baritone saxophone and again under eighth note groupings in the upper woodwinds and keyboard percussion, occupies the next five bars. This is followed by an longer statement starting in measure 118 (Figure 4.7). This version of the theme is set in saxophones and brass with similar woodwind and keyboard percussion figures accompanying. The theme is possibly set in A Dorian and is extended in measures 123 to 130 and progresses through a series of chords that lead to an episode arrival in B Minor/B Phrygian at measure 131.¹⁵⁰ Here flurries of sixteenth notes in the clarinets, bassoons, saxophones, and piano hint at B Phrygian with an added tritone over pyramid chords from the trumpets, horns, and euphonium that help establish B Minor. Each of these chords is marked with a crescendo that Maslanka marks in his compositional sketches as “nasty.”¹⁵¹ Rising bass line interjections in the trombones and tuba supported by timpani add rhythmic stability to a pulse otherwise obscured by the abundance of activity.

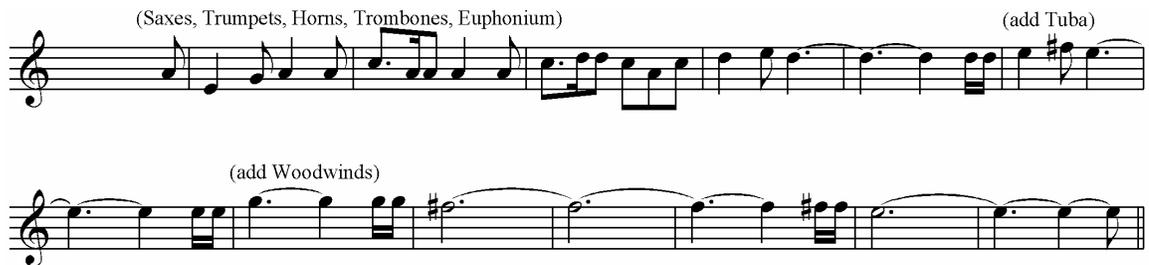


Figure 4.7: Movement I, “Challenge!” theme extended, measures 118-130.

Another episode begins in measure 139. This section is characterized by repeated three-note figures arguing between upper and lower alto saxophone, horn, trumpet and trombone parts. The section also seems to shift from B Phrygian to B Minor as C-naturals are replaced by C-sharps. All of this activity occurs over a B pedal in low

¹⁵⁰ Here and through much of the movement, Maslanka seems to be drawn to using both the minor and Phrygian modes simultaneously.

¹⁵¹ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7 sketches* (unpublished).

woodwinds and double bass. At this point the entire percussion family is momentarily dropped, but returns as the episode is extended in measures 146-154 and is set primarily in B Minor with hints of B Phrygian in measure 151. An interlude-like melody appears in the upper woodwinds and euphonium mostly in a duple meter setting (Figure 4.8). Duple groupings of F-sharp to B-natural or F-sharp to E-natural in keyboard percussion help center the ear in B. The 6/8 pulse is reinforced by tonic-dominant motion from low woodwinds and double bass using eighth notes on every strong beat.

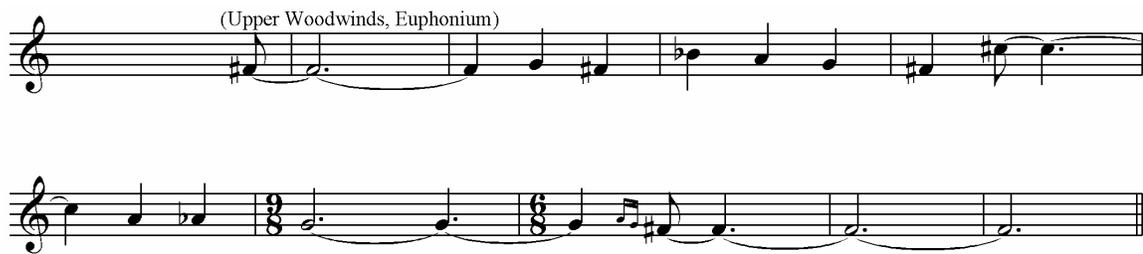


Figure 4.8: Movement I, “Interlude Melody,” measures 146-154.

The interlude melody extends through measure 154 overlapping the next “Challenge!” theme incarnations in measures 152 to 162. This appearance, voiced first in the brass (without horns), saxophones, and timpani and then adding most woodwinds, seems to settle in B Phrygian as indicated by the presence of a handful of C-naturals. An interesting clash of F-sharp and F-natural occurs in measure 160. Maslanka explains the reason for this particular dissonance:

In a 6-8 meter divided quarter-eighth, quarter-eighth the eighths are always rhythmically weaker than the quarters. I wanted to give that particular eighth a boost in power with the sharp dissonance. It is certainly always a matter of “ear.” Something in me said this was right. In context it passes by pretty much without notice because the basic rhythmic surge is so strong. I could have made a point of it by coming back to it a number of times in different rhythmic ways, but it is only what it is. Dissonance can be overridden entirely by orchestration, dynamics, and other factors such as the powerful rhythmic current of this passage.¹⁵²

¹⁵² David Maslanka, interview by author, May 18, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

The author sees measures 163 to 204 as development of fragmented elements of the “Challenge!” theme that can be broken down into three sections. The first centers around dotted figures traded back and forth each half-measure between saxophone and brass voices. This is supported by falling chords in the woodwinds and falling back and forth eighth note figures in the keyboard percussion. Tonally, this section seems to pivot around and return to F# or the dominant of B. The next section is a quickly passing four-measure bridge set in similar texture but with the back and forth motion accomplished with straight eighth note figures. The key centers around F Minor with the third spelled as both A-flat and G-sharp in various instances. The last part of this developmental section is from measure 180 to measure 204. The back and forth motion in straight eighth notes continues, this time outlining B Minor triads with C-sharps clashing with the downbeat B-naturals. Most woodwinds provide long-note chordal support with some use of 7-6-5 motion in B Minor. The pulse is very strong, but begins to obscure somewhat in measure 189 through tenor drum and bass drum interjections. Upper woodwind and percussion duples appear in measure 196 as the harmonic motion grows static and a sense of broadening is accomplished through syncopations in measure 202 and measure 203.

The A section returns in measure 205 as Mrs. Smith’s piano returns in F Major with full voice. Remnants of the B section in the vibraphone and tam tam fade away. The first phrase of “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” is played in full through measure 212, and the second phrase begins in measure 213, but is interrupted near the end of the phrase stalling out on a dominant C Major chord in measure 218. A solitary C to B-flat minor 7th in the piano in measure 221 questions the tonality of F Major, and all motion is left suspended momentarily with a fermata.

A transition section appears in measure 222 through measure 231. Based on the first A section, one might expect a return to the key of D Major. Fifths in the piano and marimba establish D as a tonal center, but no third appears to confirm major or minor. The solo piccolo twice plays a simple descending major second from B to A in half note values in measures 225 and 226 and measures 228 to 230. This 6-5 movement helps confirm D as a tonal center as does the fifth in the clarinets in measure 231. An ethereal, unmetered, angular, and often tonally distant xylophone solo begins in measure 227 and carries through to the end of the movement.

The first half of the first phase of the “Trombone Hymn” returns in measures 232 to 240 in solo flute and piano, but this time its primary pulse is the dotted quarter note instead of the quarter note creating a prolonged hemiola effect. The appearance of F-sharps in the melody confirms the anticipated return to D Major. Fifths from clarinets then muted trumpets continue the tonal center of D, however D Mixolydian is hinted at by the bass and contrabass clarinets in measure 238 as they play C (flat 7) to D. The unmetered xylophone solo continues.

An episode occurs in measures 240 to 252 with no appearance of any established or new melody. The primary voice is rapid descending sextuplets in the vibraphone shifting between various inversions of D Major and G Major triads. Fifths continue in the trumpets then horns, clarinets and flutes with color insertions from bowed crotales, sandpaper blocks, and a large Buddhist meditation bell. The unmetered xylophone solo continues.

The second phrase of “Mrs. Smith’s Hymn,” based on the first two phrases of *Das walt’ mein Gott*, returns in measure 252 in a gentle clarinet chorale setting. The scoring is more simply stated than the original appearance in measures eight through sixteen. The fifths drop out and the marimba rolls softly on an A with intermittent brushes from the sandpaper blocks. The unmetered xylophone solo continues.

The first phrase of the “Trombone Hymn” reappears in measure 263 once more set in solo flute and piano with the addition of crotales. The primary pulse is again set with dotted quarter notes, but this time the full phrase is used. Fifths in the alto saxophones then muted trumpets provide harmonic framework and light *staccato* eighth notes in the bass and contrabass clarinet add solid rhythmic pulse and interest. Clarinet whispers are played *ad. lib* and temple blocks infuse color. The unmetered xylophone solo continues.

Measures 278 to 291 complete the second A section with the second phrase of the “Trombone Hymn.” This is set similarly to measures 263 to 277 with additional harmonic support from clarinets, first horn, muted first trombone, and double bass. The piano adds chordal harmonization of the second half of the phrase beginning in measure 286 while the other winds drop out. The *pizzicato* double bass reinforces the bass harmonization at this point. The unmetered xylophone solo continues.

The final section of the first movement, measures 292 through 318, can be heard as a coda. No strong thematic material appears, and Maslanka uses this time to carefully bring the movement to a close. The coda remains in D Major and is generally thinly scored. Fragments of previous *staccato* figures by the bass and contrabass clarinet in measures 265 and 266 return then slowly fade away over several measures. A fifth in the clarinets provides a harmonic ground as other gentle colors are softly inserted by the double bass, meditation bell, bowed crotales and sandpaper blocks. The vibraphone returns in measure 298 with rapid descending sextuplets shifting between various inversions of D Major and G Major triads, similar to measures 240 to 252. Everything dissolves away slowly until the only voices remaining are the unmetered xylophone solo and a very soft marimba holding a rolled A in measure 318. Over the course of about thirty seconds the solo xylophone completes its last statements and the marimba fades away to nothing.

Connections for Preparation and Performance

The beginning of the first movement should immediately take on the feeling of a gifted and enthusiastic gospel pianist improvising around hymn tunes. Timothy Mahr feels that “the door for listeners to this symphony is opened by the gentle hands of Mrs. Smith at the piano and the ensuing hymn statement.”¹⁵³ To capture this aura the author suggests researching the stylings of Eva Mae LeFevre. LeFevre (1917-2009) was a prominent gospel pianist and vocalist with a performing career that spanned nearly eighty years. She was the first living woman elected to the Gospel Music Hall of Fame (1978) and in 1988 became the first gospel musician elected to the Georgia Music Hall of Fame.¹⁵⁴ LeFevre employed what has become known as the “windshield wiper” style of piano playing, a sort of mirrored version of stride piano. In this style the left hand plays in traditional stride fashion with bass notes in a lower octave alternating with accompaniment chords in the middle of the keyboard. Meanwhile the right hand plays the melody with fills and flourishes either above or below the melody. The visual effect

¹⁵³ Timothy Mahr, interview by author, May 27, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹⁵⁴ “About Eva Mae LeFevre.” <http://www.evamae.com/evamae.htm> (accessed May 17, 2011).

is similar to the rhythmic back and forth action of windshield wipers. This style lends itself well to embellishment and improvisations around melodies and chord structures.¹⁵⁵ Although Maslanka's piano writing in the first movement of *Symphony No. 7* does not utilize this exact style, referencing it may be useful in gaining a feel for gospel piano playing and hymn tune improvisation. At the time of this writing many video and audio examples of the "windshield wiper" style are easily accessed through a basic internet search.

Maslanka's personal and spiritual journey has often been marked by periods of inner exploration, and he has frequently used desert imagery to describe these times of seeking. When discussing the use of "*Das walt' mein Gott*" in the first movement, the desert metaphor emerges.

The connections between titles [of the Bach chorales] and musical expression in my pieces are not always direct, but they do exist. In the case of "Das walt..." (The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Rule) there is no direct connection that I know of, although it is certainly possible to speculate. The melody shows up in the "desert" section of the first movement, which to my mind is clearly about an image of Christ in the desert, and by extension the internal "desert" experience that seekers go through. "Das walt..." (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) can be seen as the triple gateway to spiritual connection through the desert experience.¹⁵⁶

At the beginning of his compositional sketches for *Symphony No. 7*, Maslanka wrote the words, "Desert Roads," the title given to his clarinet concerto and also the title of the work's first movement.¹⁵⁷ Performers of *Symphony No. 7* are encouraged to listen to the entire piece, but the first movement in particular. The following excerpts from the concerto's program notes further describe the desert experience:

The concerto has become a particularly intimate vehicle of expression for me. The title "Desert Roads" suggests an

¹⁵⁵ A living performer who studied and worked with LeFevre is Mark Fuller. At the time of this writing his web site may be accessed at <http://www.markfullermusic.com/index.htm>.

¹⁵⁶ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹⁵⁷ For the rest of the chapter, unless otherwise indicated by footnote, all sketch quotes are from: David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* sketches (unpublished).

interior journey, a time of searching, of not knowing, of creative incubation.

I. Desert Roads: Christ's 40 days in the desert – Moses and Israel: 40 years in the desert – a time of inner searching¹⁵⁸

In Chapter Three the author presented meditation imagery dealing with health issues of Stephen Steele that came to Maslanka during Symphony No. 7's composition process. Should one wish to reconcile the multiple images of an inner desert and concern for a friend's physical health, the author suggests focusing on the searching or questioning aspect of each – seeking personal transformation and seeking help for physical need. The fact that the hymn tunes and chorale used in the beginning desert section are set in a major mode challenge the mood one might expect for a desert impression. However, desert imagery might be more easily perceived in the return of the A section with its interruption of "Mrs. Smith's Hymn," less stable hemolic treatment of the "Trombone Hymn," and especially the unmeasured and tonally distant xylophone solo that carries through the coda.

Despite the radical difference in mode and style between the A sections and the B section, the movement seems to flow together with coherence. To aid in understanding and connecting to the movement, the author presents the following exchange:

LW: Well, I think there are just some powerful things. You know, if you take the first movement, you set up the church music and then the second section is completely...

DM: Another world.

LW: ...another world. Yeah, exactly. And when the piano returns, it returns in a strong way, but then it becomes unsure of itself. It almost seems like, "Do I really belong here again?" It's in that dream space that you talk about, and it returns – obviously, it's not different, but it's been affected by the departure.

¹⁵⁸ "Desert Roads: Four Songs for Clarinet and Wind Ensemble | David Maslanka." <http://69.16.233.70/wind-ensemble/desert-roads-four-songs-for-clarinet-and-wind-ensemble/> (accessed May 17, 2011).

DM: Yeah. That is so interesting because you start with the piano dream, and then it opens another door which seems to be to some place radically different, but which is not, because it's in the same place. It's just that it sounds different. And that energy becomes fierce and overbearing and powerful and thunderous. And all of the sudden it goes, "BOOM!" and all of the sudden the other dream shows up again. And it's like, "What! Oh, I know that dream." But then, that same dream opens another door to a space which is radically different than what the piano dream was. And so an understanding of it, if you want an intellectual understanding of it, has to be that the piano music opens these other dream spaces, and that the quiet dream at the end has to be seen as parallel to the huge dynamic second section of the movement. They have to be understood as being the same space, just in different terms. And the movement is coherent. That is, you follow it from start to finish even though the difference is so radically present.¹⁵⁹

Maslanka's compositional sketches also provide other hints that may help performers connect with the music on an interpretive level. In measures seventy-seven and seventy-eight the clarinets, bass clarinet, bassoon, and saxophones play rapidly ascending and descending sixteenth-note sextuplets. Maslanka refers to these figures as "swirling fireworks" in his sketches. When the "Challenge!" theme is given its extended presentation in measures 118-130 its extension begins in measure 123. In measure 125 *tutti* winds harmonize the extension, and here Maslanka indicates "add weight" in the sketches. This encouragement would lend an appropriate sense of tension.

Maslanka indicates that the piccolo solos in measures 225 to 230 and measures 311 through 316 are to be played with no vibrato. Even so, some may be tempted to "sweeten" the piccolo tone with vibrato. However, Maslanka believes that "tones which are played either loudly or softly with an absolutely straight sound and with firm attacks and firm releases," strike him as "having an emotional edge of great consequence."¹⁶⁰

Another sketch notation appears shortly after the unmetered solo xylophone enters at measure 227. Here Maslanka writes "wind in the trees, flowing waters." These words

¹⁵⁹ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹⁶⁰ J. Patrick Brooks, "An Analysis of David Maslanka's Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion" (DMA dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1994), 15.

help foster the ethereal, “desert searching” atmosphere especially prevalent throughout the last A section and coda.

CHAPTER FIVE: Movement II - Slow

In the manner of an American folk song, with a setting that might have come out of the 19th or 20th centuries.

~ Program Note for Movement II¹⁶¹

Introduction

Maslanka is not shy about embracing all the musical influences that have entered his life as an American composer. Because of this, he is just as open to creating music that recalls the vernacular as he is to that which reflects art music. Maslanka feels all experiences are related and whatever shows up when he meditatively asks for direction is important. One should be reminded that his program note for Symphony No. 7 reveals the significant effect that American folk songs and hymn tunes have had on him. Among the movements in this piece, perhaps Maslanka's affinity for the colloquial is revealed more in the second movement than anywhere else.

Analysis

Utilizing an ABA form in which the B section occupies over two-thirds the length of the movement, Maslanka begins in 4/4 meter with a "newly composed melody" that he also feels is "very much...like a Stephen Foster song."¹⁶² Indeed, like a folk song, the melody employs regular phrasing, is quite singable, and seems to be based on a pentatonic scale similar to Foster's "Oh! Susanna." In this study the author has labeled this opening gesture as the "Folk Song Theme" (Figure 5.1). Interestingly, the "Folk Song Theme" begins with the same four-note melodic motive as "Mrs. Smith's Theme." This begs the intriguing question of which theme emerged first in the composition process. Unfortunately, Maslanka is unable to remember.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹⁶² David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹⁶³ Ibid.



Figure 5.1: Movement II, “Folk Song Theme,” measures 1-8.

Two statements of the “Folk Song Theme” form the entire first A section. The first statement occurs in measure one through measure eight. The D Minor solo melody is set in the harmon muted first trumpet and is accompanied by the piano playing *pianissimo* arpeggios alternating between D Minor with an added second and various inversions of E half-diminished seventh chords. The solo role shifts from the trumpet to a flute for the second statement of the “Folk Song Theme” in measures nine through eighteen. Here the piano becomes much more active and almost rhapsodic or concerto-like in character. It is worth noting that that Maslanka, a clarinetist by training, is able to write quite adeptly for the piano. Gregg Hanson describes this moment in the music and Maslanka’s abilities as a pianist.

[The piano writing in the second movement] is just so exquisite, such beautiful music. And, pianistically it just blew me away. I’ve seen David play piano. He’s a self-taught pianist. Early on, he’s just like the rest of us, just kind of poke it out, and he’s become pretty accomplished. The amazing thing is that it’s so pianistic. I mean, it sounds like Schuman. It’s amazing to me that he understands the instrument that well. He can actually sit down and play it, I mean, not on the level that a great player would play it, but he can play it. That’s really cool.¹⁶⁴

The piano becomes more impassioned as it approaches the end of the “Folk Song Theme’s” penultimate phrase. A short but effective *fermata* at the end of measure fourteen allows the performers and audience to catch their breath before the setting lightens and the section is completed with the flute presenting the final portion of the

¹⁶⁴ Gregg Hanson, telephone interview by author, May 31, 2011, Hays, KS.

theme in 3/2 meter. The piano completes the accompaniment with simple, ascending quintuplet arpeggios. In this second statement of the theme, Maslanka plays with the relative F Major tonality as seen in F Major arpeggios in measure nine and measure eleven, but functionally the passage remains in D Minor.

The B section makes use of three distinct themes, the first of which has been labeled the “Rising Walking Bass Theme.” The main element of the theme is two measures long and first appears in measure nineteen in the bassoon, contrabassoon, and *pizzicato* double bass. It begins in D Minor and is treated in development-like fashion in a series of like statements each with a higher tonal center (Figure 5.2). As the theme works through E Minor, F# Minor and Ab Minor, Maslanka builds intensity by adding voices and increasing dynamics.¹⁶⁵ Quarter note pulses beginning in the first and second clarinet then passed on to other voices add an initially subtle sense of implacable forward impulsion. As the intensity and dynamics increase, so does the sense of irresistible progression. Meanwhile, a simple half note and quarter note counter line appears in the first alto saxophone then the oboes and first trumpet before being swallowed up by the quarter note pulses in measure twenty-six.

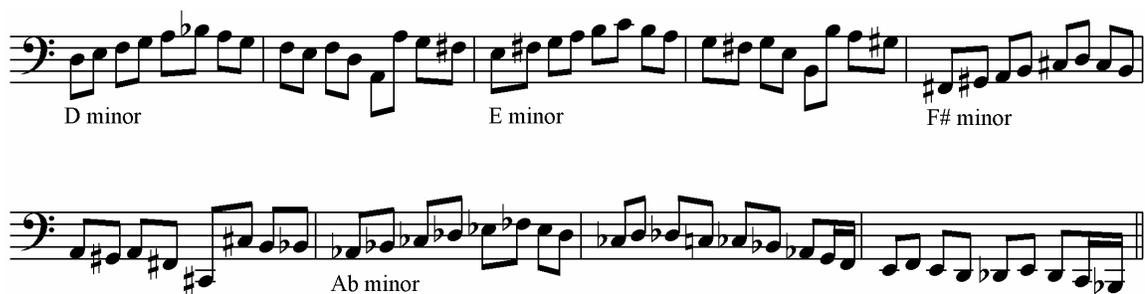


Figure 5.2: Movement II, “Rising Walking Bass Theme,” measures 19-27.

The extended build-up of energy spills over into a powerful arrival in F Major at measure twenty-eight and the presentation of what the author has quite simply called the “Quarter Note Theme” (Figure 5.3). This bold theme pounds away in most of the upper woodwinds, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon, horns, euphonium,

¹⁶⁵ Maslanka will often sequentially work thematic or motivic elements up through similar progressions with key notes of the themes or motives progressing up scale degrees sometimes skipping a note or two. A like treatment can be found in measures eighty to eighty-six of movement III.

tuba, and timpani. It is set over repeated sixteenth-note figures in the third clarinet, saxophones, and piano that use triad members to reinforce the shift in tonal center. The theme is stated again in measure thirty-two with a slight extension in measure thirty-four. This time more weight is given to the sixteenth notes as the bass clarinets and bassoons join the figures and the tessitura shifts lower. Also in measure thirty-two, eighth notes outlining the bass line progression appear in the trombones and double bass. Because the quarter note pulse has been firmly established by this point, the eighth notes on the beats are absorbed into the texture and the upbeats are heard more prominently. Suspended cymbal, tam tam, and bass drum add crescendoing rolls to set up each theme statement.



Figure 5.3: Movement II, “Quarter note Theme,” measures 28-31.

The texture thins out considerably and provides a brief respite in measures thirty-six through thirty-nine as the “Quarter Note Theme” is stated again with melody only in the piccolo, flutes, oboes, Eb clarinet, and muted first and second trombone. Sweeping ascending and descending twelve-tuplets outlining an F⁷ chord in third inversion flutter underneath. Crescendoing quarter note pulses return in the horns in measure thirty-nine and thrust energy back into the movement with support from rolled and crescendoing suspended cymbal, tam tam, and bass drum beginning half a measure earlier.

The “Quarter Note Theme” then returns for one final *fortissimo* statement at measure forty led by the piccolo trumpet, first alto saxophone, Bb trumpets, horns, and timpani that touches on F Major. Sixteenth notes outlining thirds in the clarinet family, bassoons, the rest of the saxophones, and piano, bring rhythmic intensity. Eighth note pulses on C in the trombones and double bass place the F Major tonality in second inversion. This less stable voicing prevents the ear from completely settling into F Major as a permanent tonal center. A small amount of harmonic shifting occurs before more sweeping twelve-tuplets at the end of the phrase lead to a cadential extension and descending scalar line in the upper woodwinds, piccolo trumpet, and first horn arrive back in D Minor in measure forty-five. Another small extension in measures forty-six

and forty-seven delays the arrival of a four-measure transitional episode in measure forty-eight.

During the episode, a quiet fragment of a theme appears as a solo line in the first alto saxophone. Repeated eighth notes followed by quarter notes in the horns provide accompaniment as clarinets add color. The double bass, piano, and timpani provide the foundation of a pedal A. The melody does not seem to have enough musical weight to it to justify it as an independent theme or motive, and it does not reappear in similar form elsewhere in the movement. The author sees this incompletely stated idea akin to a partially recalled memory that is interrupted by one more established.

The final theme of the B Section, the “Interlude Theme,” is the basis of the next eleven measures starting in measure fifty-two (Figure 5.4). The theme remains in D Minor and appears in the Eb clarinet with motivic echoes from the flutes and muted first trumpet. A euphonium counter melody begins in measure fifty-five and extends beyond the primary melody. Intermittent fifths in the first and second trombone set against pedal B-flats from the bass trombone, *pizzicato* double bass, piano, and timpani along with soft tam tam add color and darkness.



Figure 5.4: Movement II, “Interlude Theme,” measures 52-60.

The author has assigned the label “Dream Transition” to measures sixty-three through sixty-six. Here the solo piccolo recalls the plaintive half notes of measures 225-230 in the first movement, this time at the interval of a minor third (A to F-sharp). Whispered arpeggio fluttering in the flutes outline a D Major arpeggio with an added B-flat (flat sixth) over a *pianississimo* triad held by the clarinets. This tonality could also be heard as Bbaug^{maj7}. The author chooses to label it D Major because Maslanka often shifts tonality by altering one or two notes of an established tonality, and shifting from D minor

to D major is in line with this practice. Color effects are added by the piano and percussion in measures sixty-four and sixty-six (Figure 5.5).

The image shows a handwritten musical score for measures 64-66 of Movement II. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes staves for Tuba (Tbn), Double Bass (DB), Piano (Pnu.), and Timpani (Timp). The second system includes staves for Percussion (P.) and four other percussion parts (3 and 4). The score is annotated with various performance instructions and dynamics.

Measure 64:

- Tbn:** T.b. depress keys silently - T.b. gently and slowly strum strings several times up and down with back of fingernail.
- DB:** T.b. gently and slowly strum strings several times up and down with back of fingernail.
- Pnu.:** PP. Catch t.v. resonance with Ped.
- Timp.:** Vibe - mtrion full. Final. tempo ad lib.
- P.:** PP. multi orch bells brs. slow overlapping glissandi.
- 3:** Small non-pitched metal ball shake rapidly but gently for two beats.
- 4:** RainTree slow, gentle spill (finish, after Pro. Vibe. a.g.).

Measure 65:

- Pnu.:** sim.
- Timp.:** sim.
- P.:** sim.
- 3:** sim.
- 4:** sim.

Measure 66:

- Pnu.:** sim.
- Timp.:** sim.
- P.:** sim.
- 3:** sim.
- 4:** sim.

Figure 5.5: Movement II, piano and percussion color effects during “Dream Transition,” measures 64-66.

The B section concludes with the return of a full statement of the “Rising Walking Bass Theme” with slight alterations beginning in measure sixty-seven. As before the tonality begins in D Minor and rises through E Minor, F# Minor, and Ab Minor. Here the texture is quite thin with the first bassoon carrying the theme alone at *pianissimo* and working into the upper parts of the register. A soft counter melody that overlaps the ending of the “Dream Transition” sounds in the first oboe. A separate counter line is provided by the first flute and first and second clarinets. Light staccato eighth note pulses on each beat from the second oboe and muted first trumpet support the primary theme and its harmonic ascension. The “Rising Walking Bass Theme” runs its course then slows significantly and fades away bringing the section to a close in measure seventy-five.

The final A section (measures seventy-seven to eighty-five) is composed of a single D Minor statement of the “Folk Song Theme” returning in the solo flute and

accompanied by rising arpeggios from a hammered dulcimer.¹⁶⁶ Accompaniment extends through measure eighty-four ending on the dominant. The movement closes with the solo flute holding a long tonic D and fading away into silence.

Connections for Preparation and Performance

Dream imagery, whether accomplished by means of a meditative dream or a sleeping dream, is an important source of creative energy for Maslanka.¹⁶⁷ It is significant, therefore, that the program notes for *Symphony No. 7* refer to each movement as having “a surface and the dream underneath.”¹⁶⁸ The author feels that the second movement especially provides an important opportunity for performers to connect to the dream space that music can create. Before offering performance ideas tied to Maslanka’s imagery and sketch notations, the author wishes to briefly explore the dream concept.

Maslanka states in his program note that the setting of the second movement “might have come out of the 19th or early 20th centuries.”¹⁶⁹ In an interview with the author he expanded this idea that, though it is an original melody, it is “almost like a Stephen Foster song. That kind of character.”¹⁷⁰ The author finds it meaningful that the composer connects this movement to Foster and the nineteenth-century. Views of life and society of time at that time were marked by a romanticized tenor of separation and yearning, and these feelings naturally pervaded contemporary popular music. Escape from the pains of yearning was often found in the idyllic images portrayed in the parlor songs of Foster and others.¹⁷¹ Musicologist Richard Crawford expands on this thought:

To judge by their songs, Americans of the 1800s were keenly aware of being removed from things they wanted. The song of yearning that flourished then was largely a creation of the Irish poet Thomas Moore, who...was one of

¹⁶⁶ Maslanka indicates that piano may be used as an alternative, though the author strongly recommends that a dulcimer be used if possible.

¹⁶⁷ See Chapter Two, pages 20, 21.

¹⁶⁸ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹⁷¹ To confirm the importance of dreams and idyllic images in nineteenth-century music, the author suggests examining the lyrics to popular Foster songs such as “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair,” “Beautiful Dreamer,” “My Old Kentucky Home,” “Hard Times Come Again No More,” and others.

Foster's chief models. Moore once laid out his favorite subject in a four-stanza lyric. The first stanza is especially worth quoting because it crystallizes an attitude that many Americans took to be artistic, and its spirit lies behind any number of beloved nineteenth-century songs:

My harp has one unchanging theme,
On strain that still comes o'er
Its languid chord, as 'twere a dream
Of joy that's now no more.

The idea of "joy that's now no more" proved to be hugely popular: here was a myth into which anyone could step, for all had experienced disappointment and unrealized hopes. Moore's example helped songwriters to become connoisseurs of regret.¹⁷²

Dreams of the ideal helped nineteenth-century society deal with the harsh realities of life. A significant percentage of Foster's lyrics and song titles draw on the dream ideal – "I Dream of Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair," "Beautiful Dreamer," "Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming," "Hard Times Come Again No More," for example. Although Maslanka's perspective on the value of dream space does not mirror Crawford's description exactly, Maslanka also believes dreams are critical sources of energy that allow people to function on a daily basis.

It has been my long experience with old songs, chorales included, that they hold the collected energy of a people. This energy amounts to a very deep and powerful dream space. Looking deeply into old songs, especially as I have done with the chorales, has allowed me to touch and enter elements of my own larger dream space. The dreams that are touched may on the surface seem to have little or nothing to do with the original, but that is the nature of symbols: they are rich touch points that open into unbounded areas. Our human minds need and want boundaries. We can't live our daily lives without them. A life of no boundaries would mean a continuous disorientation. We tried to do that with drugs in the 60's – remember Timothy Leary "tune in, turn on, drop out." The emerging lesson from that time is that daily functional

¹⁷² Richard Crawford, *America's Musical Life, A History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001), 248-249.

reality is a good thing, and yet opening to larger dreams is powerfully important. Lives go dead without the dream connection. Drugs aren't necessary to do this.¹⁷³

In preparation and performance of this symphony of “old songs remembered,” and the second movement in particular, the author encourages performers to bear in mind the weight that dreams carry with Maslanka. Performers are also encouraged to consider being open to their own potential dream space connections that may emerge through the music.

Due to the intimate nature of the outer A sections and Maslanka's score notations of “freely and expressively” at the beginning and “freely” upon the return of the A section, there must be absolute cooperation and coordination between the trumpet and flute soloists and the piano and dulcimer accompaniment. It is the author's opinion that the treatment of the accompaniment in these sections can be tied to the improvisatory character of the solo piano in the first movement. Maslanka spreads the responsibility of pulse manipulation among the soloists and accompanists. Care should be taken that soloists and accompanists are comfortable enough performing with each other to anticipate these manipulations and yield responsibility for the same when indicated or appropriate.

Timothy Mahr feels an especially strong connection to the flute and piano duet.

Our pianist and flutist memorized the material in the second movement. To stand quietly on the podium next to them when the flutist, eyes closed, fit her line into the flourishes from the piano remains one of the very special moments in my musical life.¹⁷⁴

Maslanka generally hesitates to assign specific images to specific moments of his music. However, in the case of the second movement, performers may choose to draw from a rare instance in which he does so. The reader will recall that a great deal of Maslanka's mental pictures focused on health issues of Stephen Steele. Part of those images dealt with Christ emerging from his tomb carrying Steele and handing him back

¹⁷³ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 18, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

¹⁷⁴ Timothy Mahr, interview by author, May 27, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

to Maslanka.¹⁷⁵ In an interview with the author, the composer revealed that this image is tied to the climactic arrival in measure twenty-eight.

One of the things that comes immediately to mind is in the second movement when the middle section of it begins to happen with the steady pulse and the rise a bit at a time with the addition of the horns. And then when it finally rises over that really powerful, central climactic moment in the piece – just in thinking about it now, and this is the first time I’ve had this thought – that reminds me powerfully of the image of Steve being given back to me, if you want to think of it that way. And there’s a strong heart connection to that moment.¹⁷⁶

Fewer interpretation clues are found in the composition sketches of the second movement, however, a few do exist. In measure thirty-two of his sketches Maslanka writes, “fat low rhythm,” next to the lower voice sixteenth notes.¹⁷⁷ The two-note piccolo solos in measures sixty-three through sixty-five are described as “distant,” and the quarter note pulses starting in measure seventy are to be “full value.”

Finally, when the “Rising Walking Bass Theme” returns in measures sixty-seven through seventy-five, the author suggests allowing the natural intensification of the rising line to freely emerge. Though no dynamic increase is indicated, this effect is likely to surface naturally because of the rise in tessitura and the tension created by the harmonic progression. This rise should increase the effectiveness of the decrescendo, relaxation of tempo, and lack of harmonic resolution that closes the section.

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¹⁷⁵ See Chapter Three, pages 50, 51.

¹⁷⁶ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹⁷⁷ Throughout this paragraph all sketch quotes are from: David Maslanka, Symphony No. 7 sketches (unpublished).

CHAPTER SIX: Movement III – Very Fast

A ferocious fast music, unrelenting, determined to get a grip on chaos. Toward the end a fractious quote of the Bach Chorale melody “Du Friedensfurst Herr Jesu Christ (Prince of Peace Lord Jesus Christ).”

~ Program Note for Movement III¹⁷⁸

Introduction

Even without hearing the music, one can begin to get a sense of the challenge and impact of Symphony No.7’s third movement by simply reading the first sentence of the movement’s program note. It is technically grueling. It is harmonically demanding. It is rhythmically arduous. It is mentally taxing. It is powerful. And, above all, it is fast.

Upon finishing the editing process of the University of North Texas Wind Symphony’s 2007 recording of the symphony, director Eugene Corporon commented, “I think that’s as fast as we’ve ever played on anything with clarity.”¹⁷⁹ He classifies the movement as “monstrously challenging.”¹⁸⁰ However, Corporon also has an interesting perspective on why Maslanka is able to be successful with this kind of writing.

It’s never difficult to sell to anybody. And, I don’t mean “sell,” but convince a group that we should keep working on this....But, with David no matter how hard it is, people buy it pretty quickly. It’s not a lot of drill. There’s a lot of technical challenge in it, but people take it on. It seems to lay well most of the time. It’s not awkward. There’s a difference between difficult and awkward, and his music isn’t awkward.¹⁸¹

Gregg Hanson concurs:

Obviously, the big stuff takes really, really good players to do it. But, the amazing thing always to me is without me

¹⁷⁸ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹⁷⁹ Eugene Corporon, telephone interview by author, May 17, 2011, Hays, KS.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

hyping it at all, without me saying, “Ok, you guys are going to love this!” when you get into it, they get so drawn into the moment and into the power of it, that they just start to devour it. My kids do. I don’t have to say anything. It just happens. And, that’s not true of everything. Some really good music, they have to be beaten into submission to want to really do it, and at the end they go, “Oh, ok. I really liked it.” But, with his stuff it just grabs them instantly, and consequently the technical part of it is sort of a nonissue really for my kids.¹⁸²

Analysis

Maslanka again sets the third movement in an ABA formal structure, however, in this instance he applies principles of sonata form – statement, departure, and restatement. Despite this tendency, it must be clear that the movement is not cast in a traditional sonata form. Rather, Maslanka applies the overall concept of the sonata form to the movement. For example, while the author does see the material of the B section – the development section of sonata form – treated with developmental concepts, the material could validly be seen as newly introduced. At best, it may be seen as loosely tied to exposition themes. Such incorporation of new music in the middle section is not a problem for the composer. In a discussion with Robert Ambrose about the development section of the first movement of Symphony No. 2, Maslanka indicated that he didn’t feel obligated to “trace every single thing back to a generating root,” and further offered that his music “is not ‘intellectually rigorous’ in that regard.”¹⁸³

Although he does employ what is essentially a direct recapitulation, Maslanka also adds a sizable section at the end of the movement, perhaps justifiable as a coda, in which he introduces the Bach chorale *Du Friedensfürst Herr Jesu Christ*.

The traditional strong harmonic relationships vitally important to classical sonata form are also absent in the third movement and are replaced by Maslanka’s intuitive

¹⁸² Gregg Hanson, telephone interview by author, May 31, 2011, Hays, KS.

¹⁸³ Robert Joseph Ambrose, “An Analytical Study of David Maslanka’s Symphony No. 2” (DMA dissertation, Northwestern University, 2001), 158.

harmonic motion. A brief summary of the large formal elements and prominent key centers of the third movement’s hybrid sonata setting can be seen in Table 6.1.¹⁸⁴

Table 6.1: Movement III, hybrid sonata form showing large formal elements.

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Sonata Form Structure</u>	<u>Prominent Key Centers</u>
1-5	Introduction	C Minor, B Octatonic
6-98	Exposition	B Octatonic, C Octatonic, A Octatonic, Eb Octatonic, Gb Minor, Ab Major, Eb Major, C Minor, C Major
99-151	Development	Gb Major, B Major, B Minor, also some key centers with split third ¹⁸⁵
152-244	Recapitulation	Same as Exposition
245-307	Chorale Section/Coda	A Major, Polytonal, A Octatonic, D Octatonic

The loud, brash five-measure introduction is a shocking contrast to the delicate flute and dulcimer conclusion of the second movement. This is especially so if the symphony is played “without significant pause or relaxation of musical tension between movements,” as Maslanka instructs on the score’s instrumentation page.¹⁸⁶ The interactive low voice eighth note punches that occupy the first three measures center around C and E-flat, indicate a C Minor tonal center. This is followed by a furiously ascending arpeggiated line of sixteenth notes that is passed through the woodwinds and provides the framework for a B Octatonic (hs/ws) scale arriving along with brass and saxophone cluster figures and cymbal and anvil hits on the downbeat of measure five.¹⁸⁷

Another cluster hits in the low voices and a flurry of sixteenth notes in B Octatonic (hs/ws) kicks off the first subsection of the exposition. The flurry is passed from the clarinets and marimba starting on B below middle-C and ascending two and a

¹⁸⁴ The author reminds the reader that more detailed formal outlines of all Symphony No. 7 movements can be found in Appendix A.

¹⁸⁵ Split third tonality indicates the presence of both the major third and the minor third within the same chord structure. This will be illustrated below.

¹⁸⁶ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

¹⁸⁷ Throughout this chapter octatonic scales will be labeled with either “(ws/hs)” indicating a whole-step/half-step pattern, or what is sometimes referred to as Mode 1. A “(hs/ws)” label indicates a half-step/whole-step pattern or Mode 2. Because there are only two modes of octatonic scales, for purposes of discussion and clarity, tonic in octatonic passages has been determined by the relative importance of starting or ending notes and the strength of pulse given to these pitches.

half octaves before descending again. In higher registers the clarinets are joined by the upper woodwinds and xylophone. Color is added on occasion by the alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, and muted first and second trumpet. A variety of slur groupings obscure any sense of strong pulse.

The first theme of the movement, the “Mixed Meter Theme,” enters at measure nineteen in low woodwinds, trombones, piano, and timpani. Though a great deal of mixed meter is used, this punchy and accented theme is surprisingly rhythmically stable (Figure 6.1). Perhaps this stability is due to Corporon’s opinion that Maslanka “fits the meter to the quality of line. So, therefore, it’s not so hard to teach or remember. It’s not awkward.”¹⁸⁸ The theme begins in C Octatonic (wh/hs), which is constructed from the same notes as B Octatonic (hs/ws), but instead tonicizes C. Upper voices harmonize the last measure of the theme, but the overall tonal effect of the passage is C Minor.



Figure 6.1: Movement III, “Mixed Meter Theme,” measures 19-31.

Two short fragments of the “Mixed Meter Theme” follow the initial statement. The first is found in measures thirty-two through thirty-five. Here the theme fragment is varied slightly and stated in A Octatonic (ws/hs), utilizing the same pitches and the previous two octatonic manifestations. Parallel fourth harmony appears in the second alto sax and euphonium, and upper voice punches fill in the theme’s rhythmic holes. Interestingly, the harmony is built on pitches from the opposite octatonic mode. The second theme fragment occupies measures thirty-six through thirty-nine where Maslanka thickens the texture slightly with the addition of horns. The parallel fourth harmony expands to the second and fourth horns along with the second trombone.

¹⁸⁸ Eugene Corporon, telephone interview by author, May 17, 2011, Hays, KS.

A longer fragment of the “Mixed Meter Theme,” the first eight measures, begins softly in the low woodwinds and double bass in measure forty. Trombones join in measure forty-five where a dramatic crescendo begins. One is likely to hear this as a return of C Octatonic (ws/hs), though not enough of the theme is present to completely define it as octatonic. This fact, plus a very strongly held G in the horns may shift the ear more toward C Minor.

A new musical idea arrives in measure forty-eight, the “Pounding Eighth Note Motive.”¹⁸⁹ Tonally, the motive settles in Gb Minor, though, for ease of recognition by the players, the minor third is spelled enharmonically as A-natural instead of B-double flat (Figure 6.2). The motive appears in the clarinets, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, third trumpet, euphonium, and tuba and is answered by two-note *marcato* interjections from the upper woodwinds, first trumpet, and xylophone. A rising long note counter line in the oboes, alto saxophones, and horns adds tension and helps solidify the key center by completing the Gb Minor triad with the addition of a Db in measure fifty-one. The motive is passed back and forth among several voices beginning in measure fifty-four while percussive depth and accent is added by the timpani, bass drums, bongos, and tam tam. Measures fifty-nine to sixty-two provide a transition with a rising motivic fragment that simultaneously recalls the current motive, the next motive, cluster punches, and more rapidly ascending arpeggios.



Figure 6.2: Movement III, “Pounding Eighth Note Motive,” measures 48, 49 and following.

A second motivic area, which the author has labeled the “Four-Note Motive,” emerges in measure sixty-three (Figure 6.3). This short idea is passed back and forth among upper woodwind, brass, and keyboard percussion voices in a call-and-answer fashion. The upper note of the motive moves up part of the C Harmonic Minor scale

¹⁸⁹ This idea is designated as a motive rather than a theme because it is quite short, employs only three pitches, is repeated in rapid succession, and is otherwise treated in such a way that is reminiscent of motivic development.

before stalling out on B in measure sixty-nine. C half-diminished seventh chords on the third beat of measures sixty-three through sixty-eight in the low woodwinds and horns along with piano clusters, both constructed from notes from the main octatonic mode used thus far, add dissonance. This intensity is increased by D fully-diminished seventh chords from the horns and trumpets along with piano clusters on the third beat of every measure in measures sixty-nine through seventy-two.



Figure 6.3: Movement III, “Four-Note Motive,” measures 63-72.

The two sections described above – measures forty-eight through sixty-two marked by the “Pounding Eighth Note Motive” and measures sixty-three through seventy-two featuring the “Four-Note Motive” – are excellent examples of Maslanka’s use of repetition. Moments like these are seen by some as minimalistic. The composer does not think in such terms but rather writes like this simply “because it feels good.”¹⁹⁰ Such moments of repetition may open the door for performers and listeners to focus their conscious and unconscious minds and to find powerful connections to the music.¹⁹¹

Measures seventy-three through seventy-nine begin to set the stage for the largest arrival point of the exposition. The upcoming “Triumph Theme” is previewed in diminutive form in the flutes, Eb clarinet, and first trumpet. Quarter note chords in the clarinets support a harmonic shift to Ab Major, the first appearance of a major tonality in the movement. Slightly varied versions of the “Four-Note Motive” appearing in the alto saxophones and euphonium tie this section to the previous and demonstrate Maslanka’s ability to provide strong connections within a piece, while also economizing his material.

¹⁹⁰ David Maslanka, live interview by author, June 20, 2011, Missoula, MT.

¹⁹¹ See Chapter Two, page 36.

Measures seventy-seven through seventy-nine feature a masterful transition and, in the author's opinion, a prime example of how the idea of transformation may be applied to Maslanka's writing. The composer uses these three measures to set up a shift of tonality from Ab Major to the closely related key of C Minor. His primary musical material is a fragment of the upcoming "Triumph Theme" previewed in flutes, Eb clarinet, and xylophone along with a slightly modified version of the "Four-Note Motive" in the tenor saxophone and euphonium. Instead of working around a more traditional circle-of-fifths progression, Maslanka simply allows the anchor notes of these elements, along with the bass line, to sideslip down from A-flat to G to F to E-flat and to D on their way to a C Minor arrival in measure eighty. That motion in and of itself might not seem all that significant until one notices that Ab, F, Eb, and D are all members of the octatonic scale that has permeated much of the movement thus far. At the same time G, F, Eb, and D are simultaneously the fifth, fourth, third, and second degrees of a C Minor scale. Over the course of three quick measures Maslanka has used modified or transformed existing motivic material as a vehicle for modifying or transforming the octatonic scale into a C Minor scale. Meanwhile, the key center modulates or transforms the key center from Ab Major to C Minor. It is, indeed, an intellectually engaging examination, yet it is the author's opinion that it is also very effective musically.

A very compelling sense of arrival occurs at measure eighty with the reason for a strong harmonic arrival described immediately above. Texturally, nearly every instrument is playing and lands with conviction on the downbeat. Metrically, the basic pulse broadens from quarter note to half note values as Maslanka shifts from 4/4 to 5/2, all of which is maintained through measure eighty-five. The "Four-Note" motive can be found in high woodwinds and xylophone, but the primary foci of the passage are the strong downbeats and the powerful long chords in the horns and trumpets. The author sees the rest of the layered activity as subordinate. Additionally, Maslanka treats the material in this section in a transitory fashion, here working anchor notes up a portion of the C Natural Minor scale rising from E-flat through F, G, A-flat, B-flat and C. This rising motion creates instability and tension that is expected to be released by a tonic arrival. The fast, cascading arpeggios in clarinets and lower woodwinds along with the

jaggedly contoured arpeggios in the low voices propel musical impulsion forward instead of letting it come to a powerful resolution.

Measures eighty-seven to ninety-five finally surrender the climax of the exposition. Here the “Triumph Theme” rings out gloriously in the horns and trumpets (Figure 6.4). “Four-Note Motive” figures continue centering mostly around C but also shifting tonality in measures eighty-eight, eighty-nine, and ninety-four. Furious ascending and descending sixteenth-note arpeggios are traded between piccolos and first flute and xylophones. Because he feels C Major has a “rooted vibrational energy that is universal,” it is also significant that Maslanka chooses this tonality for the climax.¹⁹²



Figure 6.4: Movement III, “Triumph Theme,” measures 88-95.

Despite a sense of a strong arrival, some harmonic instability does exist in measures eighty-seven through eighty-nine. In the sixteenth-note arpeggios both E-naturals and E-flats along with A-naturals and A-flats appear creating split-member tonalities with major and minor thirds and the sixths. The E-flat and A-flat may be seen as hinting back toward C Minor. Following these measures, only C Major is present until measure ninety-four.

The “Triumph Theme” ends in measure ninety-five but here an elision of phrases also takes place as another flurry of ascending and descending sixteenth notes, reminiscent of measures six through eighteen, transitions out of the exposition. This short outburst returns to C Octatonic (wh/hs) and is again harmonized at the parallel fourth. A pedal C in the trombones, double bass, and timpani maintains tonal foundation.

¹⁹² Roy Breiling, “David Maslanka’s Use of a Chorale Tune in *In Memoriam*.” (DMA dissertation, University of Arizona, 2000), 16.

Measure ninety-nine marks the point where one would expect the development of a typical sonata form to occur. Maslanka does apply developmental principles, particularly harmonic transformation, in this part of the form. However, in general this B section, which covers measures ninety-nine to 151, seems to utilize newly composed material, though it may be possible to hear relationships to exposition themes and motives. The section leans more toward major tonalities, which also sets it apart from the exposition and recapitulation, but these key centers may not always be perceived with clarity. Regardless, the author will refer to this portion of the movement as the development for purposes of discussion.

The first subsection of the development lasts from measure ninety-nine through measure 108. It sees the return of a driving 4/4 meter and is set in Gb Major which is harmonically as far removed as possible from the previous tonal center of C. In the author's opinion the reason this unexpected modulation is effective is another example of Maslanka's penchant for harmonically transformative writing. The reader will recall that measures ninety-five through ninety-eight provided a transition moment using a flurry of woodwind sixteenth notes that mostly returned to C Octatonic (ws/hs). Because G-flat is a member of that scale, Maslanka shifts the tonal center to G-flat simply by ending the flurry on that pitch. The sense of arrival is aided by the fact that the flurry concludes with an accent on the downbeat of the development section where the tonality is picked up by repeated fifths and octaves in the piano and keyboard percussion. These repeated figures hold on to the G-flat tonal center through measure 119. Even though G-flat becomes an obvious tonal center, Maslanka is not yet ready to give up on C. He holds a very soft pedal C in several low voices until measure 112. Though it is not prominently heard in the texture, if properly balanced, it does cause a feeling of instability, perhaps if only subconsciously.

A new melodic line begins in the oboes, alto saxophones, and muted trumpets in measure 101. The author labels it the "Rising Melody". Though not directly related, it possibly recalls the rising counter line in the oboes, alto saxophones, and horns found in measures forty-eight to fifty-three (Figure 6.5). G-flat as a tonal center is confirmed by the B-flat found in the "Rising Melody" in measure 103. A brassy color is added in measures 105 and 106 with the horns playing a Gb⁷ chord (no third) in second inversion

and crescendoing to a *fortissimo cuivré* effect. A slightly mysterious touch of minor flavor is added in measures 107 and 108 with repeated, fading sixteenth-note figures in the piccolo, flutes, and Eb clarinet.

The “Rising Melody” is extended and embellished with sixteenth notes in measures 109 to 119. The embellishments could possibly be seen as being built on a Gb Mixolydian Flat-6 scale, although there is no flat-seventh for confirmation. In all likelihood Maslanka’s gestures are based on intuition rather than theory. Horn *cuivré* color is added again with the crescendo starting in measure 112. Fifths that are held over from the previous section become half note pulses on beats two and four with an addition of bass clarinets, bassoons, muted trombones, and muted euphonium. These pulses should feel like upbeats, however the syncopated nature of the “Rising Melody” and the sixteenth-note groupings obscure pulse to the point that the half note pulses might be heard as sounding on beats one and three. A tonal shift in the pulses occurs in measure 118 with the tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, and horns playing a split-third E-flat chord over *pizzicato* A half notes in the double bass.

“Rising Long Note Counter Line” (measures 48-53)



“Rising Melody” (measures 101-106)



Figure 6.5: Movement III, comparison of “Rising Long Note Counter Line” and “Rising Melody.”

In the opinion of the author, the next two sections, measures 120 to 130 and measures 131 to 141, are areas of development involving several previously sounding elements. The primary developmental treatments are fragmentation and tonal lift. Measures 120 to 130 have been labeled as the “Split-Third” development since several chordal structures include both major and minor thirds (Figure 6.6). A melodic line in the oboes, clarinets, and alto saxophones could be seen as a slightly diminished and fragmented development of the “Rising Melody” set in B Phrygian. A long, rising

counter line in the piccolo, flute, and Eb clarinet recalls the octatonic scales. Pulses at quarter note values appear in the bass clarinets and horns with half note pulses sounding on the opposite beats in the euphonium and double bass. Syncopated eighth note figures in the trumpets infuse rhythmic interest in measure 127. Meanwhile, the fifth and octave eighth note figures that began in measure ninety-nine in the piano and keyboard percussion persist but begin to shift tonality in measure 120. Underneath the entire texture, the bass line, possibly derived from the sixteenth notes found in the “Triumph Theme,” appears in the bass clarinets and bassoons, supported by the second marimba. (Figure 6.7)

Figure 6.6 is a musical score snippet showing three measures of split-third chords. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The time signature is 4/4. Measure 120 (m.120) features a B split-third chord in the treble and a minor 3rd in the bass. Measure 124 (m.124) features an E split-third chord in the treble and a minor 3rd in the bass. Measure 129 (m.129) features a G maj7 split-third chord in the treble and a minor 3rd in the bass. Labels for the treble staff include 'B split-third', 'E split-third', and 'G maj7 split-third'. Labels for the bass staff include 'minor 3rds'. Additional labels include 'major 3rds' and '(major 3rd B)' for the treble staff, and '(minor 3rd Bb)' for the bass staff.

Figure 6.6: Movement III, split third chord members.

Figure 6.7 is a musical score snippet showing a bass line with sixteenth notes. The staff is in bass clef and the time signature is 4/4. The notes are: m.127 (C2, D2, E2, F2), m.128 (G2, A2, B2, C3), m.129 (D3, E3, F3, G3), and m.130 (A3, B3, C4, D4).

Figure 6.7: Movement III, bass line possibly recalling “Triumph Theme” sixteenth notes, measures 127-130.

Activity intensifies in measures 131 through 141. A *fortissimo* B Major arrival is declared by the horns and trumpets, setting the primary tonality for the section and is held into measure 134. The bass line figures in the low woodwinds and piano carry over in similar fashion from measures 120 to 130, but here join in on the split-third trend. A melodic line in the first flute, Eb clarinet and first and second clarinets is reminiscent of the “Rising Melody” embellishment in measures 109-119. This line is joined by the piccolo, first flute, Eb clarinet, and trumpet in measure 137. Sixteenth-note arpeggios

return in the piccolos and xylophones primarily in B Major with an added flat sixth. The bass line shifts up (tonal lift) periodically and adds a perfect/diminished split 5th in measures 134-138. Measure 141 sees the return of B Octatonic (hs/ws) in falling woodwind and keyboard percussion sixteenth notes over another strong B Major chord from the horns and trumpets and a metric modulation to 3/2.

Maslanka allows the performers and listeners a moment of repose during a transition period that occupies measures 142 to 151. The theme in the first and second clarinet, muted first horn, euphonium, tuba, and second marimba establishes B Minor and is possibly derived from the “Rising Melody,” and a long note counter line appears in the first oboe. While the timpani hold a long roll on B, the fifth is added in the second alto saxophone, muted first trombone, third trombone, and first marimba. This brief respite and modulation to B Minor sets up the recapitulation.

Much of the recapitulation is an exact repeat of what existed in the exposition. Of the ninety-two measures in the exposition, seven are re-scored versions of the original, five are re-scored with multiple pitch alterations but essentially occupy the same function in the recapitulation. One measure is an extended and re-scored version of the original, seventy-one are repeated exactly, and nine do not appear in the recapitulation. Only one measure of the recapitulation does not have a corresponding measure in the exposition. All of the non-identical measures occur either at the beginning or the end of the exposition and recapitulation (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: Movement III, comparison of exposition and recapitulation.

Exposition Measures	Corresponding Recap Measures	Changes
6-10	152-156	Original material rescored
11	157	Nearly identical scoring with several altered pitches
12, 13	158, 159	Original material rescored
14	160, 161	Original material rescored and extended
15-85	162-232	Exact repeat
86, 87	-----	Exposition material does not appear in recapitulation
-----	233	Material new to the recapitulation
88-91	234-237	Original material rescored with several altered pitches
92-98	-----	Exposition material does not appear in recapitulation

The recapitulation begins with the same sixteenth-note flurry that started the exposition with a few alterations. The main difference between the recapitulation version and the exposition version is in the scoring. At measure 152 Maslanka holds over an open fifth in the alto saxophones, muted first horn, muted first and third trombones, euphonium and tuba. The sixteenth notes appear initially only in the first clarinet instead of all three. Marimba joins the texture in measure 153 and other upper woodwinds starting in measure 155. Maslanka alters several pitches in measure 157, but the function of the measure is unchanged. The next two measures are again rescored versions of the original. Measures 160 and 161 are an extended and rescored version of measure fourteen in the exposition, the final change before Maslanka slips into a seventy-one measure section where the recapitulation is an exact repeat of the exposition. So exact is the repetition that a close examination of the score reveals that pages 103 through 114, which encompass measures 172 through 232 of the recapitulation, are photocopies of pages seventy-two through eighty-three, or measures twenty-five to eighty-five of the exposition.

It may seem to somewhat odd that in an otherwise exact recapitulation, Maslanka alters a handful of measures, seemingly at random. In true “Maslankian” fashion, the composer offers the following rationale for changes in three of these measures:

At m.157 and 160-61 the small changes occurred for no other reason than that’s what happened! Each spot in the piece has its own needs, although I’m not able to verbalize what that is...a momentary different emphasis.¹⁹³

Measures 233 to 244 are an extended and transitory version of the “Triumph Theme” from measures eighty-seven to ninety-five in the exposition. Measure 233 functions as a transition measure in G Major that is a dominant set up for the full return of the theme in the next measure. Similar loud, half note block chords appear in the oboes, clarinets, alto saxophones, third and fourth horn, first and second trombone, and euphonium. A notable change from the exposition are the quintuplet figures in the upper woodwinds, bass line, and keyboard percussion that appeared as quadruplet groupings in

¹⁹³ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 23, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

the exposition. Similarly, the running sixteenth notes in the piccolos and xylophones are grouped in fives here instead of fours as in the original. In this instance the sixteenth-note runs add flat sixth and sharp eleventh degrees to otherwise C Major figures. From that C Major starting point, the melody begins in measure 234 in the first flute, Eb clarinet, first clarinet, first and second horn, and second and third trumpet. It takes two measures to state the motive of the “Triumph Theme,” and each group of two measures is played five times between measure 234 and 243. As the figures repeat, the anchor notes of the theme move down a portion of the C Major scale from E to D, C, B, and A before landing on G in measure 244. The tonality of the theme chords touches on G Major, B Diminished, A Minor, and D Minor before settling on A Minor upon arrival in measure 244. The sixteenth-note runs stay in C Major with added flat sixth and sharp eleventh degrees through measure 236, brush G Major with an added flat sixth in measure 237, then settle in C Major from measure 238 through measure 243. The bass figures remain centered around C throughout.

With the major structures of sonata form complete, in measure 245 Maslanka moves on to a coda-like section that features the Bach chorale “*Du Friedensfürst Herr Jesu Christ.*” The section begins in A Major with a floating melody the author has labeled the “Chorale Interlude.” It is played by the piccolo, flutes, oboes, Eb clarinet, and first clarinet and is syncopated throughout, although it stretches into longer note values after the first two measures (Figure 6.8). The piano and keyboard percussion play repeated ascending triplet triad arpeggios that create a lighter textured, bright moment. Harmonic support is provided by sustained fifths in the first and third horn with bass support in the third trombone and *pizzicato* double bass then bass clarinet and tenor sax. Eighth note pulses in the trombones starting in measure 251 set up duple subdivision versus triple subdivision. These pulses also help outline a very non-traditional chord progression over the next ten measures – Fm, A⁴₂, F# (no 3rd), Caug, Dmaj⁷(add9), Dmaj⁷(add4). Second and third clarinet and the bass clarinet join these pulses in measure 257. Despite this curious progression, the melody allows the overall tonality of the section to be perceived in A Major.



Figure 6.8: Movement III, “Chorale Interlude,” measures 246-261.

At measure 262 Maslanka sets the first phrase of “*Du Friedensfürst Herr Jesu Christ.*” The chorale is rhythmically altered and infused with the composer’s own polytonal harmonization. The original chorale is written in A Major (Figure 6.9), however, the primary voices heard in Maslanka’s version, the trumpets, piano, vibraphones, and chimes are set in A Lydian and harmonized in parallel motion at the major third or minor sixth. At the same time Maslanka layers four other tonalities into the chorale texture. The *divisi* first clarinet is in G Minor with harmonization at a minor third below the melody, the second and third clarinets are set in F Minor with harmonization at a minor third below the melody, the alto saxophones are set in Gb Minor with harmonization mostly at a minor third below the melody, and the horns and two sets of orchestra bells are set in E Lydian and harmonized at a perfect fifth below the melody (Figure 6.10). A pedal B in the low woodwinds and double bass underscore the clashing harmonies and shifts to A just before the arrival of an episode in the next section.



Figure 6.9: *Du Friedensfürst Herr Jesu Christ*, J.S. Bach’s harmonization, first phrase.

"Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ" Phrase 1 (piano in A Lydian harmonized in major triads)

"Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ" Phrase 1 (clarinet 1 in G minor harmonized in minor thirds)

"Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ" Phrase 1 (clarinet 2 & 3 in F minor harmonized in minor thirds)

"Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ" Phrase 1 (alto saxes in Gb minor harmonized mostly in minor thirds)

"Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ" Phrase 1 (horns in E Lydian harmonized in perfect fifths)

"Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ" Phrase 1 (trumpets in A Lydian harmonized in minor sixths)

(piccolo trumpet 1 octave above upper line)

Figure 6.10: Movement III, Maslanka's harmonization of the first phrase of *Du Friedensfürst, Herr Jesu Christ*, measures 262-265.

The overall effect of this unusual harmonic setting, the *fortissimo* dynamic, and the bright edge from the trumpets and keyboard percussion might stretch the ears, but it is surprisingly powerful and aurally accessible. Though it can be analyzed in a logical way, the theory behind the passage is far less concerning to Maslanka than the character of its sound.

Yes, the harmonization of *Du Friedenfurst* is polytonal, whatever you figure it out to be. I don't have a systematic approach here, just ear. I do passages like this very occasionally. For the most part I much prefer the clarity of simple chords, often strictly tonal in the old sense. This one seemed to demand a certain crunchiness.¹⁹⁴

The first of three coda episodes appears in measure 266 through measure 271. There is no prominent melody, but a short syncopated figure in the piccolo, flutes, oboes, Eb clarinet, and marimba grabs attention in measures 268 and 269. The eighth note triplet triad arpeggios in A Major return in the clarinets, piano and vibraphones with upper notes rising to F-sharp and G-sharp in measures 269 and 270. The horns and alto saxophones interject a ripping figure that emerges as an A Major triad in second inversion, while a pedal A in the low woodwinds, double bass, and timpani anchor the episode.

As does Bach in his original, Maslanka repeats the first phrase of the chorale in measures 272 through 276. The setting is very similar to the first appearance.

Another episode fills measure 277 to measure 282, again in A Major. The syncopated figures in the upper woodwinds are expanded and slightly developed. Intermittent tonic and fifth eighth note punches are added by the alto saxophones and low brass. The upper note in the eighth note triplets rises from E to F-sharp to G-sharp to A in measures 280 through 282.

The final phrase of *Du Friedenfurst Herr Jesu Christ* is presented in measures 283 through the downbeat of measure 287. Again, the setting is very similar to the first phrase and its repeat.

The final episode of the coda is in measures 287 to 294. Maslanka takes the material from the previous two episodes and intensifies it in preparation for the movement's final outburst. The major change in this episode is the inclusion of a constant eighth note pulse from the alto saxophones, horns, piano, and vibraphones. These and the eighth note triplet triad arpeggios, which are isolated to the upper woodwinds this time, provide a strong pulse that can be easily manipulated as a

¹⁹⁴ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 23, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

significant *rallentando* is applied at the end of the passage. Though the episode is again in A Major the simultaneously sounding F-sharp, G-sharp and A in the upper woodwinds, horns, trumpets, and piano add harmonic tension. The competing duple and triple subdivisions also add natural tension as does the slowing of tempo and slow but wide ranging crescendo. Throughout the episode, crescendoed rolls from the bass drum, timpani, and tam tam propel motion forward and emphasize strong downbeats.

The last gesture of the movement is a final return to sixteenth-note flurries that begins in measure 295. The tempo marking given is quarter note equals 184 with the additional encouragement of “or faster...as fast as possible.” The first six measures, though scored differently, recall the opening measures of the exposition and recapitulation in A Octatonic (ws/hs). Added descending cascade bursts in the trumpets, horns, and vibraphone ending in minor seconds add tension.

In measure 303 Maslanka flips the layers around either in terms of rhythmic pulse, intervals, or direction of motion. The rising clusters move to the tenor saxophone and trumpets and are moved to offbeats that bleed over to the next measure. The half-step, whole-step, and half-step interval pattern is sent to descending lines in the bassoon, alto saxophones, baritone saxophone, and horns. The upper woodwind and xylophone sixteenths add vibraphone and are flipped from descending to ascending and with the exception of the first beat again apply the half-step, whole-step, and half-step interval pattern.

Measure 304 approaches controlled chaos. Maslanka shifts most pitches to D octatonic (ws/hs), which is the other octatonic scale. The upper woodwinds, first and second horn, trumpets, xylophone, and vibraphone fly up and down groups of four sixteenth notes ending on B. Descending lines permeate third and fourth horns and lower voices. Harmonizations can be found in parallel minor thirds in the horns and parallel perfect fourths in the trumpets. The chimes, anvil, and choked crash cymbals add weight, color, and impact to the arrival of all the lines on beat four. Two measures of silence allow the chaos to ring and undoubtedly cause many a first listener to wonder if the movement is over. The answer to any confusion comes through a thunderous *sforzato* wallop from the bass drum and double forearm piano clusters in the low bass register.

Connections for Preparation and Performance

The third movement of Symphony No. 7 stands apart from the other three in many ways. Most obvious are tempo and technical challenge. With prominent octatonic and polytonal moments the movement is a tonal departure from key centers that are generally focused around major or minor. In the author's opinion, it has far fewer singable passages, and is the least like what most would imagine when pondering "old songs remembered." It is also the only movement with a sonically big ending.

As before, one can look to the colorful and informative notations that decorate Maslanka's sketches to provide insight for preparation and performance. The first of these is found at the introduction's arrival on downbeat of measure five. Here Maslanka writes the word, "whack."¹⁹⁵ This simple, but effective, indication tells the ensemble not to be shy about playing the note with a vigorous accent. Though *sforzato* markings are provided for those who do not play the fast 16th note figures that lead to the downbeat, the sixteenth note players are given only *staccato*. It would seem that a "whack" would require a certain degree of accent in addition to short articulation. Maslanka again writes "whack" in his sketches at the downbeat of measure six, though the low range and thinness of the scoring is likely to temper the impact here, especially when compared with the intensity of the first "whack."

The odd slur grouping applied to the fast sixteenth notes at the beginning of the exposition and recapitulation will initially be a challenge for any ensemble to coordinate. Fortunately, the first note of most groupings is accented, and as groupings are repeated, albeit with variation, a sense of syncopation emerges. These syncopations can help players find rhythmic anchor notes around which the rest of the passage can be built. The accents in the first and second trumpet in measures fifteen and sixteen fulfill Maslanka's sketch indication of "odd accents with brass = color one or two notes."

The "Mixed Meter Theme" has its own groove with the 3/4 bars providing stability in the first half and the repeated 5/8 rhythm lending security to the second half. Though accents are applied to every note in the theme, Maslanka's careful addition of *staccato* and *tenuto* markings to the accents allow the players to shape the phrase through

¹⁹⁵ For the rest of the chapter, unless otherwise indicated by footnote, all sketch quotes are from: David Maslanka, Symphony No. 7 sketches (unpublished).

changes in weight. The sudden dynamic drop in most voices in measure forty allows players a few seconds of reprieve before intensity builds again.

Following the shifting rhythmic ground to this point in the movement, from measure forty-eight through seventy-nine Maslanka lays out a straight forward section in 4/4. Here the composer uses the contour of the “Pounding Eighth Note Motive” and the “Four-Note Motive” and well-defined articulations to leave no doubt regarding the location of the strong pulses. In fact, strong pulse is a characteristic that permeates the majority of the remainder of the exposition. Perhaps some may consider this area a place where the movement is “determined to get a grip on chaos,” as the program note suggests.

To accompany the broadening of the pulse to half notes and the meter change to 5/2 in measure eighty, Maslanka gives exceptional weight to the downbeats with what his sketches call a “ringing [*sic*] perc. whack.” Especially important to this texture are the chimes, vibraphone, orchestra bells, and the anvil. Maslanka instructs the vibraphone and orchestra bells to choose any four pitches in the top part of the instrument’s range and “whack” them with four hard plastic mallets. To facilitate the ringing all of these instruments are marked with either *l.v. (laissez vibrer)*, given an indication to keep the pedal down (vibraphone and chimes), or both. The accompanying bright, metallic shimmer should solidly anchor the transition to the “Triumph Theme.”

Though the “Triumph Theme” section almost overflows with layer upon layer of musical motion, Maslanka sorts through it all and sees it as something far less complex. His big picture vision can make this and other areas seem less overwhelming.

The layering...in m.88-89 and other spots gives the impression of intense activity and energy, but the textures are not all that complicated. The primary idea at m.88 is in horns and trumpets. This gives a central, easily-followed stability. The swirling figures in [*sic*] Fl/Picc and percussion are purely decorative. The bass line figures are simply, repetitive, and functioning completely in the key area of C-something. Horns and trumpets are in C-major; the bass parts are some variety of C-minor. The total effect

is one a simple melody in the brass against a rising line in the bass, and the whole thing has a flying energy.¹⁹⁶

Following the powerful “Triumph Theme,” which the author sees as a moment in which chaos has been trumped, another flurry of sixteenth notes sends the movement into the development section. Maslanka labels this section “rhythmic coloring” in his sketches. Several other sketch notations appear between measures ninety-nine and 119, or the “Rising Melody” portion of the movement. The Gb Major tonality, which is initially hinted at by the repeated eighth notes in the piano, vibraphone, and orchestra bells, is a rather *dolce* contrast to the furious sixteenths immediately preceding. Players might feel a tendency to pull back and “sweeten” the tone somewhat. However, the given dynamic is *fortissimo*, and Maslanka indicates “no let up” in his sketches. Once the melody enters at measure 101, this texture should draw back for balance, but the author would also encourage players to keep the word, “unrelenting” from the program note in mind. On the downbeat of measure 101, Maslanka colors the first note of the melody with a *sforzato* eighth note chord in the horns. In the sketches the composer instructs the chord to be “[sic] ‘Pizz’ a hard pop.” The crescendoing *cuivré* chords in the horns in measures 105, 106, 112, 113, and 114 are labeled “brassy” and are to be played with a “snap release.” The sixteenth note figures in measures 107 and 108 are described as “evaporating echoes.” Maslanka’s sketches provide no other direct interpretation indications for the rest of the development.

Other than comments to show where Maslanka rescues portions of the music, the only sketch notation that appears in the recapitulation is “color accents” in measure 152. In this instance the color is accomplished with the second marimba. The author additionally suggests attention to the evenness of the five-tuplet eighth note and sixteenth note groupings in the “Triumph Theme” portion of the recapitulation starting at measure 234.

Despite large section of exact repetition, the author does not believe it is possible to play similar exposition and recapitulation sections the same way. In a conversation

¹⁹⁶ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 23, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

with the author, Maslanka explains how the formal structure and transformation within that structure can affect the music.

LW: ...that takes me to another area, how form is related to emotional expression. Do you see elements of that in *Symphony No. 7*, where the form specifically projects this emotion.

DM: Yes, I do. And I have a tendency in this piece toward ABA structures.

LW: You're right. Like I need to tell you! [laughter]

DM: [laughter] And they're very simple. The second movement is a simple song form – ABA. And in the third movement, it is strongly related to traditional sonata form. And the last movement, there you go. That quality of very basic shapes has arisen in the music and repeats itself again and again and again and again. I keep coming back to those shapes. So the character of expression is definitely embodied by those shapes. As to why that's the case? I'm not going to answer that question.

LW: Why is ABA as powerful as it is in any setting?

DM: Can you answer any of that?

LW: I don't know. I think maybe just the fact that once you've established an idea and you either challenge it or contradict it or frustrate it somehow...

DM: Or continue it in another vein.

LW: ...sure, and then return to the familiar – seems like everyone wants to go home again.

DM: Yeah. And there's a reinforcement that happens. Steve Steele has an interesting thought about that in recording pieces. If there's an exact recapitulation, he was tempted initially to say, "Well, I've already done a recording. I'll just use it there."

LW: Yeah. That happens in the third movement.

DM: And he discovered, well, that's not the same as that. And it just isn't, even though the notes are the same.

LW: Exactly.

DM: The energy has been transformed into something else by the time he reached it at that particular point. So, ok, we're sort of speculating together here as to what this might be. An initial statement of something that's movement is through an area which evolves or is different than, and then the restatement has a different energy. So, something of the word, "transforming," comes into play again. These are subtle things....¹⁹⁷

Though extra interpretation clues are again rather spartan in the sketches for the chorale/coda section, Maslanka does include several indications in the score that help maintain balance and energy. Because Bach's chorales are vitally important to Maslanka's work, the author recommends familiarity with Bach's original version of *Du Friedensfürst Herr Jesu Christ*." As with the appearance of *Das walt' mein Gott* in the first movement, Maslanka has offered perspective behind possible reasons this particular chorale emerged.

"Du Friedensfürst" on the other hand erupted as an ironic commentary on our time. Since the earthly presence of the "Prince of Peace" the world has seen nothing but an increase, and in our time an exponential increase, in wars. My personal take on this (certainly subject to debate and revision!) is that the seed planted by the life of Christ has taken 20 centuries to reach and open the deepest conflicted and troubles elements of the human psyche. What looks like suicidal murderousness is reaching the surface on a world scale. This is a necessary stage in the transformation of the human race.¹⁹⁸

After the last statement of the chorale, Maslanka inserts a dramatic buildup in measures 281 through 294. As the pulse slows and dynamic increases dramatically toward the end of the passage, the author envisions an increasing feeling of tension as if a

¹⁹⁷ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

¹⁹⁸ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

gigantic slingshot was being slowly stretched to the limit. The sketches indicate a “massive build” starting at measure 291. All of the built-up potential energy is then hurled forward in a final flurry of sixteenth notes that ends with what the sketches call a “percussive bomb” in the bass drum and piano. Here the conductor and performers must find a balance between Maslanka’s tempo indication in the score to play at quarter note equals 184 “or faster...as fast as possible” and the ability to be accurate in pitch and timing across the ensemble.¹⁹⁹ To be slightly on edge regarding tempo will most likely yield a performance pleasing to the composer. The author reminds performers of Maslanka’s principle that “pitch is certainly important, but wrong notes are less critical in performance than wrong or loose tempo conception.”²⁰⁰

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¹⁹⁹ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

²⁰⁰ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Movement IV – Moderately Slow

A simple song of peace and healing.

~ Program Note for Movement IV²⁰¹

Introduction

Following the thunderous ending of the third movement, the fourth movement begins with what might be perceived as the most contrasting moment of the entire symphony. Three well-spaced and lingering strikes of a small Buddhist meditation bell are likely not what the average listener plans to hear at the beginning of a symphony's final movement. In the author's opinion the sound is simultaneously bright and hopeful, yet haunting and unsettling – perhaps a concurrent realization of the bright and dark sides of which Maslanka speaks in his program note. It is certainly not an overpowering or massive sound, yet in a certain sense it is the most grabbing moment of Symphony No. 7. Stephen Steele explains:

You know the most stunning moment of the symphony....the beginning of the movement, because the bass drum and the piano's sound at the end of the third movement is so fierce, and everything was so fierce going into that, and then silence before that. And then, whack! I don't care if you hate David Maslanka's music; you are gripped at that moment. I mean, you have to be just by the power of what just happened. And then, for that Buddhist meditation bell to speak – and I think on the recording that's almost a minute of time. And, it's stunning.²⁰²

For Eugene Corporon, Maslanka's shift of energy between the third and fourth movements affects how he perceives the structure of the symphony as a whole:

But, what's interesting to me about that is that movement is three, not four. You know what I mean? Most people would save something like that for the end. It would be a wowie-zowie ending. To do that and step totally back, the

²⁰¹ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

²⁰² Stephen Steele, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2011, Hays, KS.

impact that gives to the fourth movement is so Maslanka-like, “Maslankian,” because you feel like there’s an epilogue. There’s the rest of the story.²⁰³

Analysis

Despite the fact that it is only struck three times, the Buddhist meditation bell becomes a focal point for the fourth movement. Maslanka is rather specific in how he wishes the bell presented. Instructions written into the score are as follows:

Small Buddhist meditation bell with appropriate striker:
The bell can be any pitch. It can sit on a cushion, or be held in the hand. The bell and bell ringer should be plainly visible to the audience. Strike firmly, and allow sound to die away significantly (but not to silence) before striking again.²⁰⁴

After the third strike of the bell fades, a ten-measure introduction begins. The movement’s first thematic material, the “Opening Dream Theme,” appears in the vibraphone (Figure 7.1). The theme is stated twice and built around a Bb Major triad with an added sixth. Fifths in the first and second clarinet and hand chimes, along with tonic in the orchestra bells provide openly spaced harmonic support. A small shaker colors the end of each statement.



Figure 7.1: Movement IV, “Opening Dream Theme,” measures 1-6.

A two-note *glissando* motive rising from F to G serves as transition material in measures seven through ten. This figure is primarily heard in the solo first flute playing only the head joint. Pitch changes are accomplished by inserting a finger into the end of the head joint to play F and withdrawing it to slide up to G. The motive is stated three times with support from the harmon-muted first trumpet on the first and third statement, and the harmon-muted first trombone on the second. Additional color is added on each F

²⁰³ Eugene Corporon, telephone interview by author, May 17, 2011, Hays, KS.

²⁰⁴ David Maslanka, *Symphony No. 7* (United States: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2004).

by a plucked piano string and on each G by the orchestra bells. The motive is reminiscent of the piccolo solos in measures 225 to 230 of the first movement and sixty-three to sixty-six of the second movement.

Maslanka also uses this transition to subtly and cleverly modulate from Bb Major to C Major. Because it figured prominently in the sonority of the “Opening Dream Theme,” Maslanka is able to pivot the tonal center around G – changing it from a sixth in Bb Major to the dominant of C Major – and gently sideslip into the new key area.

Following the introduction the movement presents the first A section of the movement, which, like the others, is cast in ABA form. The A section is built around a song-like theme, which the author has labeled the “Healing Theme” (Figure 7.2). The two-phrase structure begins in measure eleven with the melody in the solo euphonium and right hand piano in the same range. The only accompaniment is long note bass support in the left hand piano and double bass articulated at the beginning of every measure.

phrase 1

phrase 2

Figure 7.2: Movement IV, “Healing Theme,” measures 11-25.

The first phrase often reminds performers and listeners of the popular song, “Up Where We Belong,” made famous by Joe Cocker and Jennifer Warnes in the 1982 movie *An Officer and a Gentleman*. The song hit number one on the Billboard Hot 100 Chart

on November 6, 1982, and remained there for three weeks.²⁰⁵ Despite the song's popularity and Maslanka's openness to being shaped by popular culture, the composer does not claim any direct knowledge of the song.

...people have told me this sounds a heck of a lot like some show tune or pop tune that they have heard. And I don't even remember what it was.... And that reference has been made a number of times, and I don't actively know what that is. I may have well heard it, but I can't imagine that there aren't more than a few tunes that start the way this one does. It's simple triadic material, and yet the nature of the movement always just touches me deeply.²⁰⁶

The second phrase of the theme floats on a more relaxed rhythmic structure using longer note values. It is also not as strongly tied to triadic intervals. Quarter note pulses are added in the clarinets in measure sixteen with the oboe joining the melodic texture in measures fourteen to nineteen, twenty-two, and twenty-three. The character of the bass support remains the same with the brief addition of the bass clarinet and contrabass clarinet in measures eighteen to twenty-one.

A slightly altered version of the first phrase of the "Healing Theme" returns in measure twenty-six (Figure 7.3). The solo euphonium and right hand piano are joined by the solo first clarinet and an echo-like countermelody in the first and second horn. Quarter note pulses shift to harmon-muted trumpets, and the bass line continues as before. Like the first version of the theme, this variation begins on E. However, in this instance Maslanka modulates to A Major making E the fifth of the tonic triad instead of the third as it was in C Major. The C Major version outlines a tonic triad in first inversion and the A Major version outlines a tonic triad in second inversion, but the transformation occurs so subtly that most listeners will hear the second as a direct transposition of the first. In the author's opinion this is another fine example of Maslanka's transformation philosophy applied musically.

²⁰⁵ "Billboard Hot 100 Chart 50th Anniversary."

<http://www.billboard.com/specials/hot100/charts/weekly-no1s-80s.shtml> (accessed May 24, 2011).

²⁰⁶ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.



Figure 7.3: Movement IV, “Healing Theme Variation,” measures 26-31.

Measures thirty-two through thirty-six are marked by a dramatic harmonic lift and increase of musical tension. In the score the euphonium is still designated as the “lead solo,” but its sonority is supported and colored by oboes, alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, and piano. Quarter note pulses continue in the trombones and piano with the bass clarinet and contrabass clarinet rejoining the double bass and piano on the bottom of the texture. Maslanka works this material sequentially up through the following tonal areas: C#m/D#, C half-diminished⁷, Fm/G, E half-diminished⁷, and F# half-diminished⁷. A gradual crescendo across these measures builds to a *fortissimo* on the downbeat of measure thirty-six. With a bold ascending line in measure thirty-six from the clarinets, horns, and piano based largely around the F# half-diminished⁷ sonority, Maslanka pushes the building energy into a climactic arrival in G Major on the downbeat of measure thirty-seven.

The high point of the first A section in measure thirty-seven lasts just a moment before the composer allows the energy to subside. The oboes, alto saxophones, and horns play a brief resolution melody that quickly subsides in measure thirty-nine and forty. Here the resolution is passed to the first trumpet and euphonium which carry it to the end of the section. Quarter note pulses, which are played strongly by the clarinets, tenor saxophone, trombones, and piano also subside so that only the clarinet and piano remain in bar forty-one. The bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, tuba, and double bass fade away, leaving only the left hand piano as bass line support in measure forty-one. A *fermata* in measure forty-two closes the A section with a held fifth from the first horn, second trumpet, and euphonium.

The B section of the fourth movement bursts forth in measure forty-three with a strong B-flat to F fifth from the piano, vibraphone, xylophone, and orchestra bells on the downbeat. Bold swirls of repeated sixteenth note triplets in the clarinets, bassoons, alto saxophones and piano employing the root, fifth, and sixth propel motion forward. This swirling is echoed in the next measure by repeated sixteenths in the upper woodwinds

and xylophone playing the root, second, third, and fifth. A syncopated brassy melody, which the author has simply labeled “Victory!,” occupies measures forty-three to fifty-four. It is played primarily by the trumpets and horns with support from the clarinets, saxophones, and piano in measures forty-seven, forty-eight, fifty, and fifty-one, while a driving eighth note bass line in the trombones, double bass, piano, and timpani underscores the section. Across this passage Maslanka infuses color and shimmer into the harmony through heavy use of the added second and sixth scale degrees (Figure 7.4).

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The top system, measures 43-46, shows a treble staff with dense, chromatic chords and a bass staff with a driving eighth-note line. The bottom system, measures 47-54, continues this texture with similar harmonic complexity and rhythmic drive. The notation includes numerous accidentals and chromatic intervals, reflecting the 'added second and sixth scale degrees' mentioned in the text.

Figure 7.4: Movement IV, “Victory!” harmonization of theme and accompanying bass line, measures 43-54.

Measures fifty-five through sixty-six present one last series of harmonic shifts that move from Bb Major to G⁷(add 2, add 6) and calm the bright energy of the B section. This “Descending Resolution Melody” is a simple motivic line that starts in the high woodwinds, horns, and piccolo trumpet in measure fifty-five. Its upper notes are anchored on B-flat through measure fifty-nine with the first note of the motive descending down the B-flat major scale on each repeat. In measure sixty the upper anchor note becomes F. Meanwhile, the descending bass line falls nearly an octave and a half down a Bb Major scale ending on a D in measure sixty-four (Figure 7.5). The rapid sixteenth note triplet colorations continue in the clarinets, saxophones, vibraphone, and

xylophone. Overall the texture thins slightly at measure fifty-five then more at measure sixty accompanied by a long *diminuendo*. All comes to a rest on the G⁷(add 2, add 6) sonority in the first flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, horns, and orchestra bells in measure sixty-six. This chord serves as a dominant for the return of C Major in the second A section.



Figure 7.5: Movement IV, “Descending Resolution” with descending bass line, measures 55-64.

One simple statement of the “Healing Theme” in measures sixty-seven to eighty-four comprises the last section of the ABA form. It is presented simply and peacefully by the solo euphonium and right hand piano with a slight variation in the second phrase. Bass accompaniment is provided by the double bass and left hand piano.

As the solo euphonium comes to its final tonic in measure eighty-three, which is held for two measures, the right hand piano plays a gentle step-wise eighth note coda-like melody harmonized mostly in sixths. A pedal C is held underneath by the double bass and left hand piano. It is repeated, augmented, and extended slightly before bringing the entire symphony to rest.

Connections for Preparation and Performance

While Maslanka's program note refers to the fourth movement as a "simple song of healing," his picture of what is being healed is far from simple. He explains:

Okay, this is a HUGE generalization, and possibly a huge piece of wishful thinking, but it is something that has evolved in my mind over many years. The last movement of the Symphony seems to be a statement of the reconciliation of the warring elements in the human psyche, looking toward a true world peace, and a partnership of humans with the whole natural earth system. Many thinkers (Jung among them) have dismissed this "Millennial" vision (everybody happy and content, the lions lying down with the lambs) as without base, that the nature of human existence is struggle, and always will be struggle. My intuition is that we are in a very long evolution process, and that now is a major turning point. We'll see what happens...²⁰⁷

The entire atmosphere for the fourth movement is set by the Buddhist meditation bell. In a performance of Symphony No. 7 with the University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble on April 22, 2007, the author recalls Maslanka instructing the percussionist who played the bell to pause before the first strike and focus on the upcoming sound. After the bell was struck, the player was to let the sound itself determine how long the decay should be before the next strike. This extra moment of thought gave the sound meaning for the performer and helped the audience focus on the stark contrast between the end of the third movement and beginning of the fourth. For those who wish to do so, seeking meaning from the sound can make the performance more intimate for all performers and listeners. As an example, Corporon related the following story in a telephone conversation with the author:

I'm remembering one of my players – you're always wondering if you're getting across to your players what the piece is about. And, I remember that at the time we played this there was a man who was killed in an automobile accident in my neighborhood. A very important past government official, he had been in the Reagan White House, he had served the country, he had been a marine.

²⁰⁷ David Maslanka, interview by author, May 16, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

And, he just pulled out on the road and somebody just wiped him out. He was eighty-four or something. So, we dedicated the performance of this symphony to his memory, and his family came to the concert.

So, the fourth movement, the epilogue, starts with those three Buddhist bells. And, we did the performance, and the player who played that came up to me after the performance, and he said, “I want you to know that the first bell was for [the gentleman who had died], the second bell was for us, and the third sound I made was for everybody in the room.” I said, “You got it. David would love that answer to why you played those three sounds the way you did tonight.” So, that’s exactly what David would want a player to bring to this. You know, bring something of yourself, why are you making these sounds?²⁰⁸

The author examined four recordings of Symphony No. 7 and found eighty-two seconds to be the average length of time between the first bell strike and the beginning of “Opening Dream Theme” in measure one.²⁰⁹ The shortest span of time was sixty-five seconds and the longest was 100 seconds. This information is given to demonstrate that with whatever motivation they are played, the Buddhist meditation bell player should be patient.

Maslanka’s compositional sketches reveal just a few insights into the composer’s thoughts on the fourth movement. A notation of “pattering” is written next to the soft shaker appearances in measure three and measure six.²¹⁰ The words, “swept aside; swept away...memory” are written underneath the transition in measures seven through ten between the “Opening Dream Theme” and the “Healing Theme.” The author again acknowledges that the thematic labels assigned in this study are of his own creation and are not intended to speak with Maslanka’s voice or intention. However, considering the

²⁰⁸ Eugene Corporon, telephone interview by author, May 17, 2011, Hays, KS.

²⁰⁹ These recordings are: Cody Birdwell and the University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble. Live Recording of April 22, 2007 concert (unpublished) Compact Disc; Eugene Corporon and the North Texas Wind Symphony. *Transformations* (GIA Wind Works, CD-686, 2007) Compact Disc.; Timothy Mahr and the St. Olaf Band. *Inner Visions* (Westmark, WCD 30197, 2010) Compact Disc.; and Stephen K. Steele and the Illinois State University Wind Symphony. *World Premiers of Commissioned Works* (Albany Records, Troy 821, 2006) Compact Disc.

²¹⁰ For the rest of the chapter, unless otherwise indicated by footnote, all sketch and score quotes are from: David Maslanka, Symphony No. 7 sketches (unpublished).

composer's perspectives on the importance of dreams, transformative motivations, and hope of "lions lying down with the lambs," the author suggests that this point of the music marks the metaphorical transition in which the intangible dream ideal acquiesces to active healing.

As expected, Maslanka's dynamic, articulation, and tempo wishes for the movement are spelled out clearly. In doing so, Maslanka assigns the label, "fiercely," to what might be considered the biggest moment of the fourth movement – the large climactic push in measure thirty-six arriving in measure thirty-seven. Although the author initially found the use of this term somewhat ironic considering the movement's healing nature, Maslanka recently reminded him that healing processes are often wrought with struggle, frustration, and pain. Indeed they can be fierce experiences.²¹¹ A final notable score indication is the word, "dreamy," which is applied to the coda at measure eighty-three. It is an appropriate reminder as the final heartfelt gesture brings the symphony to completion.

Because the euphonium figures very prominently in the outer sections of the fourth movement, it is helpful to understand the significance of that sonority and personal connection it has with Maslanka. The following conversation between the composer and the author offers elucidation:

LW: Is there a reason – and I'm going back again to that fourth movement – that the euphonium speaks so powerfully?

DM: You know it's such an interesting thing. When I first wrote my first wind ensemble piece, I didn't even know euphonium existed! And so [laughter], the piano concerto had no euphonium part in it. If I'd been told there was a euphonium in the wind band, I probably would have said, "Ok, I'll put one in there." But, then it turned out that I did know about it for my next piece – it's not in *A Child's Garden* – the first euphonium solo is in the second symphony. And then, when my son Matthew came along, the very first instrument he chose when it became time to choose an instrument in school music, was cello. He brought a cello home, and my dear wife could not bear listening to the sound of a cello being practiced in the

²¹¹ David Maslanka, live interview by author, June 20, 2011, Missoula, MT.

house and actually encouraged him to choose something else. [laughter]

LW: [laughter] That's a great story.

DM: And so his second choice was euphonium, and he began to learn it. He became a brilliant player. And so I had that sound in the house, you know; this voice and this sound. So, I think that one of Matthew's gifts to me and one of the gifts I've gotten through my son, was that the voice of the euphonium came into the house. And I understood its power through his ability to play. And so that's how it entered into pieces of music, and then it became this very special point. So, that's why that's there.

LW: It's perfect; it's just what needs to be at that moment.

DM: And so, when gifts are given like that, it seems, well, it's mere coincidence, but I don't think of life in coincidental terms anymore. The thing happens at the junction where it needs to happen, and you become associated with it. If you have any humbleness at all, you say, "Thank you."

Above all, the author encourages performers to remember the composer's thought that the piece maintains an "earnestness" and "songful" quality.²¹² Whatever personal connections the performers and listeners find within the music, it is the author's opinion that Maslanka's Symphony No. 7 is an important example of the transformative and meaningful writing that characterizes the work of this noteworthy American composer.

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²¹² David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study

Conclusions

David Maslanka's Symphony No. 7 is a significant and important contribution to the wind band repertoire from one of the world's foremost band composers and musical artists. It is a poignant and touching composition that is a prime example of Maslanka's unique voice and compositional approach.

Through his many important contributions to the repertoires of the wind band and other genres, Maslanka has earned an excellent reputation among performers, listeners, and his peers. His music stands out as unique both in terms of how it is conceived and the sound with which it is realized. Established Maslanka characteristics found within Symphony No. 7 include vernacular influence, relatively simple melodic material, intuitive harmonic progressions, a wide variety of textures including fiercely difficult technical passages and extremely exposed writing, strong rhythmic constructions, unique tone colors enhanced particularly by traditional and non-traditional percussion instruments, formal structures influenced by but not tied to traditional forms, and the potential to create deeply personal emotional and spiritual connections.

The symphony also demonstrates a portion of the wide-ranging musical and philosophical influences that Maslanka embraces. American cultural influence may be seen in the recollection of Mrs. Smith's piano in the first movement and the nineteenth-century folk music flavor of the second movement, and Bach chorales make notable appearances in the first and third movements. This research has also explored musical examples in which it is the author's opinion that connections to the composer's philosophical focus on the principle of transformation is manifested theoretically and developmentally.

The author has attempted to provide insight into the conscious and subconscious landscapes important to Maslanka's work through examination of the composer's biography, his compositional approach, the history of the commissioning of Symphony No. 7, the composer's meditation images, notations found in his compositional sketches, and conversations with Maslanka himself. These elements in addition to stories, insights,

and opinions provided by a panel of prominent band conductors may be useful to performers or listeners as a catalyst for discovering deep emotional and spiritual connections. Although they cannot be forced on any person, personal connections as discovered by individual performers and listeners can unlock more effective and meaningful performances.

An important aspect of this document is its effort to define a “Maslankian” approach to music. This has been done largely through input from the composer and a panel and the panel of conductors. The conclusion presented is that a “Maslankian” approach begins with a true and accurate interpretation of the printed music as Maslanka intends it. When properly addressed, this attention to detail unlocks the ability of the music to create personally meaningful individual and corporate connections leading to powerful performances.

Furthermore, because of its “songful” character, its vernacular influence, its variety of material, and overall approachability, the author believes that *Symphony No. 7* is an excellent way to introduce Maslanka’s music to someone unfamiliar with his work.²¹³ Gregg Hanson believes that *Symphony No. 7* might be Maslanka’s strongest composition.²¹⁴ He believes it to have “the most interest, the most variety,” and that “the really glorious moments of it are...more glorious.”²¹⁵

Suggestions For Further Study

Though Maslanka may be one of the most prolific and well known composers using a meditative approach to composition, a fascinating subject might be determining if other composers past or present have used a similar approach. This could potentially function as a cross-discipline study combining musical research with areas such as metaphysics, philosophy, or psychology. One might also consider further research into the philosophical concept of transformation and how it appears in Maslanka’s music through formal structures, developmental practices, and theoretical applications. Maslanka agrees that a “thorough job of tracing how the transformation of motives,

²¹³ David Maslanka, live interview by author, February 24, 2011, Wichita, KS.

²¹⁴ Gregg Hanson, telephone interview by author, May 31, 2011, Hays, KS.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

themes, significant rhythms, qualities of orchestration, etc., underlie a sense of coherence in the piece,” and would be an important “next step in determining a more completely realized theoretical understanding of my composition process.”²¹⁶ Studies in Maslanka’s use of harmonic rhythm could also reveal important connections about the formal construction of his music.

The author sees potential for further study in several areas. Because it has never been performed, very little is known about Maslanka’s first symphony. No scholarly research dealing with this work or his other orchestral symphony, Symphony No. 6, exists. An examination of these pieces or an analysis comparing and contrasting his band symphonies with his orchestral symphonies would be interesting and worthwhile.

Research potential also lies in the exploration of Maslanka’s use and reuse of thematic material. The composer acknowledges that a significant portion of material from his first symphony appears in subsequent compositions. This is also true of the Mass. Research tracing Maslanka’s use of previously composed material and the motivations behind the practice of borrowing his own material could shed more light on his approach to writing. It would be a monumental task, but a study of all the appearances of Bach chorales in Maslanka’s music might serve the same purpose. An examination of direct and indirect vernacular influences and quotes could be the source of further study along similar lines.

A final area of interest proposed by the author is an examination of Maslanka’s musical voice as it has changed over the years. In reading descriptions of his music in numerous doctoral documents and listening to many pieces, the author believes the composer’s band writing has evolved over a period of approximately thirty-five years. The existence of this transformation has been confirmed through accounts provided by the composer as well as prominent conductors, some of which appear in this document. A deeper study would prove valuable to the understanding of the composer’s history.

This document is the first scholarly consideration of Maslanka’s Symphony No. 7 and provides information and insight that can lead to more effective performances and a better understanding of the composer and his creative process. It is the opinion of the author that David Maslanka is a true artist, a fascinating study, and an invaluable

²¹⁶ David Maslanka, interview by author, June 9, 2011, email correspondence, Hays, KS.

contributor to the world of music through the wind band medium. Symphony No. 7 takes its place as a pillar of his offerings which enhance the world's greater musical experience.

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APPENDIX A: Formal Outline of David Maslanka's Symphony No. 7

Movement I – Moderate

FORM: A B A Coda

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
SECTION A			
1-37	“Mrs. Smith’s Hymn”		
1-7	Phrase 1	F Major	Piano unaccompanied
8-16	Phrase 2	F Major	Clarinet and saxophone melody; double bass support; first two phrases of “ <i>Das walt’ mein Gott</i> ”
17-23	Phrase 3	F Major	Piano unaccompanied
24-37	Phrase 4	F Major → D Major	Clarinet, saxes, & vibes with melody; contrabass clarinet, double bass, & marimba support; piano joins melody on phrase extension (m.34-37); last three phrases of “ <i>Das walt’ mein Gott</i> ”
<i>e</i> 37-98	“Trombone Hymn”		
<i>e</i> 37-45	Phrase 1	D Major	Trombone melody; piano flourishes; low reed & double bass support
46-53	Phrase 2	D Major	Trombone melody; piano flourishes; low reed & double bass support
54-61	Phrase 3	D Major	Clarinet, alto sax, & tenor sax with melody; bari sax; trombone & double bass support; piano with melodic block chords in m.58-61
62-71	Phrase 4	D Major	Clarinet, alto sax, tenor sax, & trombone melody; contrabass clarinet, bari sax, double bass support; harmonically unresolved
72, 73	Extension	D Major	Dominant 7 th chord in clarinets, alto sax, & tenor sax; bass line movement in bassoon 2, bari sax, & double bass
74-82	Phrase 1	D Major	Clarinet, saxophone & trumpet melody; pounding piano chordal embellishment; woodwind & marimba 16 th note flourishes (sketches: “swirling fireworks”) at cadence points
83-91	Phrase 2	D Major	Similar to m.74-82; one melodic note changed (m.87, beat 3) from previous appearance (m.50, beat 3)

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
92-98	Transition	G ⁶ ₄ → C ⁶ (add #11)	Descending clarinet, flute, alto sax, & marimba lines; pounding piano transition chords freely accelerating and slowing

SECTION B			
99-106	Transition	A Phrygian/ A Minor (obscured)	Shift to triple meter; fury of woodwind 16 th notes against low brass motive fragments from upcoming “Challenge!” theme and hemiolic 8 th note groupings in oboes, horns, & trumpets; other interjections by clarinets, saxes, & keyboard percussion; tonal center is obscured by appearing and disappearing accidentals
107-112	“Challenge!” Theme	A Minor/A Phrygian	Horn & trombone melody with joining trumpet at m. 109; high woodwind & keyboard percussion 8 th note and 16 th note runs; pounding timpani & piano duple feel at m.110
113-117	“Challenge!” Theme Fragment	A Minor	Woodwinds & keyboard percussion continue; alto saxes & piano add duple feel 8 th notes; motivic fragment restated by brass and low saxes
118-130	“Challenge!” Theme” Extended	Modulating	Begins similar to m.107-112; extension at m.123-130 works through series of chords heading toward B Phrygian
131-138	Episode	Modulating → B Minor/ B Phrygian	Clarinet, lower woodwind, & piano flurries of 16 th notes; series of pyramid chords in brass and upper woodwinds over B pedal; rhythmic pulse obscured by activity
139-145	Repetition Episode	B Phrygian → B Minor	8 th note triples argue between upper and lower alto saxes, horns, & trombones then alto saxes and trumpets over a B pedal in low woodwinds and double bass; shifting articulations; upper woodwind counter figures
146-154	Episode extension	B Minor→ B Phrygian	Upper woodwind & euphonium interlude melody mainly in duple meter; key center of B reinforced by bass instruments, piano, & keyboard percussion B to F# or B to E repetition; pulse supported by anvil

Measures	Event	Key Center	Description
e152-162	“Challenge! Theme”	B Phrygian	Theme interrupts interlude melody returning in saxes, brass, & timpani with slight variations followed by tutti except for percussion; piano & double bass
163-204	“Challenge! Theme” developed		
163-175		Shifting around F# (dominant of B)	Back and forth dotted 8 th figures in saxes & brass; falling chordal support in woodwind and falling back and forth 8 th note figures in keyboard percussion
176-179		F Minor	Similar texture as m.163-175; straight 8 th note figures back and forth; F Minor chord with enharmonically spelled (G#) in woodwinds but not keyboard percussion
180-204		B Minor	Back and forth triple figures in saxes and brass supported by keyboard percussion; primarily B Minor chords with 6-5 suspensions at times; woodwinds provide chordal support; pulse very strong but obscures somewhat starting at m.189 by tenor drum & bass drum punches then duples in upper woodwinds, timpani, & keyboard percussion

SECTION A’			
205-292	“Mrs. Smith’s Hymn”		
205-212	Phrase 1	F Major	Piano melody; vibes and tam tam fade
213-221	Phrase 2 interrupted	F Major	Piano unaccompanied; melody interrupted near end of phrase on dominant chord; tonality questioned by C to Bb minor 7 th interval in m.221
222-231	Transition	D (Major)	Piano & marimba fifth establishes key center of D (no third to confirm D Major) which is reinforced by B to A solo piccolo half notes then clarinet fifth, unmetered xylophone solo begins

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
232-240	“Trombone Hymn” Phrase 1	D Major	First half of phrase set in dotted quarter note values with flute and piano creating hemiola effect; F# in melody confirms D Major; open fifth support in clarinets & muted trumpets; bass clarinets hint at D Mixolydian D with b7-8 motion; unmetered xylophone continues
e240-252	Episode	D Major	Gentle D Major to G Major chords (plagal motion) in vibes with fifths in trumpets then horn, clarinet and flute; percussion color from crotales, sandpaper blocks, and Buddhist meditation bell; unmetered xylophone continues
253-262	“Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” Phrase 2	D Major	Chorale setting of phrase (first two phrases of “ <i>Das walt’ mein Gott</i> ”) in clarinets scored more simply than original appearance in m.8-16; marimba rolls on A, sandpaper blocks and unmetered xylophone continue
263-277	“Trombone Hymn” Phrase 1	D Major	Set again in dotted quarter note values in flute, piano, and crotales; bass and contrabass clarinets add intermittent light, staccato 8 th note bass support; alto saxes then muted trumpets hold open fifth; ad. lib. clarinet whispers and temple blocks add color; unmetered xylophone continues
278-291	“Trombone Hymn” Phrase 2	D Major	Similar setting to m.263-277 but adding harmonic support in clarinets, horn, muted trombone, and double bass; piano adds chordal harmonization of melody in 2 nd half of phrase while other winds drop out and double bass reinforces bass harmonization using pizzicato; unmetered xylophone continues

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
CODA			
292-318	Coda “Floating on a dream”	D Major	Thinly scored; open fifth in clarinets; fragments of bass and contrabass clarinet; flute reinforces tonic initially; other gentle colors inserted by double bass, meditation bell; vibes (similar to m.240-252), crotales, & sandpaper blocks; piccolo B to A solo returns softly and deliberately; all dissolves to unmetered xylophone figures & marimba roll on A; xylophone finishes & marimba fades away

e = elision

Movement II – Slow

FORM: A B A

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
SECTION A			
1-8	“Folk Song Theme”	D Minor	Solo trumpet with harmon mute supported by arpeggiated piano chords
9-18	“Folk Song Theme” restated	D Minor	Flute melody slightly more embellished; much more active; rhapsodic piano arpeggiations simplifying slightly near the end of the phrase

SECTION B			
19-27	“Rising Walking Bass Theme”	Shifting (D Minor→ E Minor→ F# Minor→ Ab Minor)	Walking bass in bassoon, contrabassoon, & double bass adding 3 rd clarinet, bass clarinets, tenor sax, bari sax, euphonium, & marimba; quarter note pulses in clarinets then horns and alto sax 2 support harmony; countermelody in alto sax 1 then oboe and trumpet; intensity builds
28-35	“Quarter Note Theme”	F Major	Fortissimo, accented, tenuto theme using F and A only in most upper woodwinds, bass clarinets bassoons, horns, euphonium, tuba, & timpani; repeated 16 th note patterns reinforce tonality; harmonization of theme based around first inversion F Major adding a bit of instability
36-39	“Quarter Note Theme” restated	F Major	Theme chords based around 2 nd inversion F Major creates more instability; texture thins out to piccolo, flutes, oboe, Eb clarinet and muted trombone on melody & fast, sweeping clarinet and alto sax arpeggios outlining F ⁴ ₂ chord creating even more instability
40-47	“Quarter Note Theme” extended	F Major→ Shifting	Thicker texture returns with second inversion-based theme chords in alto sax 1, trumpets, and horns; pulsing 8th notes and 16th notes in clarinets and lower voices then sweeping arpeggiations in upper woodwinds & saxes leading to extension with descending scalar line that resolves section; repeated 16th note figures in saxes provide forward motion in m.45, 46

Measures	Event	Key Center	Description
48-51	Transition episode	D Minor	Alto sax melody; D minor confirmed with D^6_4 chords in horns and pedal A in double bass, piano, & timpani; clarinets add color as harmony shifts to F^6 (III) and Bb^4_2 (VI ⁷)
52-62	“Interlude Theme”	D Minor	Eb clarinet solo with motivic echoes from flute and muted trumpet; intermittent soft Bb (the minor 6 th) whole notes in bass trombone, pizzicato double bass, piano, & timpani add darkness; trombones 1 & 2 provide intermittent open fifths; euphonium countermelody begins in m.55 & extends beyond primary melody
63-66	“Dream” transition	D Major (add flat 6) or $Bbaug^{maj7}$	Solo piccolo plays A to F# in half notes values reminiscent of similar solos in m.225-230 of Movement I; clarinets with D Major triad; whispered arpeggios in flutes & vibes outline D Major plus Bb (flat 6); this may also be seen as $Bbaug^{maj7}$ in first inversion; color effects from piano & percussion
67-76	“Rising Walking Bass Theme” recalled	Shifting (D Minor→ E Minor→ F# Minor→ Ab Minor)	Solo bassoon with theme; thinly scored; flute, oboe, & solo clarinet countermelodies; oboe 2 & muted solo trumpet with staccato 8 th note pulses then adding clarinet & flute quarter note pulses supporting harmony; phrase fades away without resolution

SECTION A’			
77-85	“Folk Song Theme”	D Minor	Solo flute with harmon mute supported by arpeggiated hammered dulcimer chords; movement ends with solo flute tonic fermata fading away

Movement III – Very Fast

FORM: Modified Sonata (A B A) + Chorale Section/Coda

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
INTRODUCTION			
1-5	Introduction	C Minor→ B Octatonic (hs/ws)	Fast, loud low register 8 th note punches centered on C to Eb minor third with dissonance from added Bs; rising arpeggios on B Octatonic (hs/ws) over Bbaug ⁷ (no 3 rd) in horns and piano clusters in m.4; snare and log drums add accents; motion ends on B downbeat of m.5 though colored with dissonance
SECTION A (“Exposition”)			
6-18	16 th note flurry	B Octatonic (hs/ws)	Rapid 16 th notes runs with varied slur groupings based around B Octatonic (hs/ws) with occasional altered pitches; motion moves through clarinets & marimbas with color from alto sax & muted trumpets up through two octaves to oboes, flutes, piccolo, & xylophone then back down adding tenor sax
19-31	“Mixed Meter Theme”	C Octatonic (ws/hs) (→ C Minor)	Punchy mixed meter theme from low voices in C Octatonic (same scales as B Octatonic, but with C “tonicized”); overall effect of C Minor; Bb added in m.27-31 effectively moving tonality to C Minor; upper voices harmonize in m.31
32-35	“Mixed Meter Theme” Fragment	A Octatonic (ws/hs)	A “tonicized;” theme rhythmically varied & harmonized with parallel 4ths (harmony in other octatonic mode) in alto sax 2 & euphonium; punches in upper voices fill in theme’s rhythmic “holes”
36-39	“Mixed Meter Theme” Fragment	Eb Octatonic (ws/hs)	Eb “tonicized;” texture thickens slightly with addition of horns; parallel 4 th harmony continues and expands to horn 2 & 4 along with trombone 2

Measures	Event	Key Center	Description
40-47	“Mixed Meter Theme” Longer Fragment	C Octatonic (ws/hs) or C minor	C “tonicized;” portion of original theme scored low in woodwinds & double bass then adding trombones; strongly held G (5 th of C) from horns & alto saxes shift ear more toward C minor
48-62	“Pounding 8 th Note Motive”	Gb minor	Motive in clarinets, tenor sax, bari sax, trumpet 3, euphonium, & tuba; 2-note interjectory answers from upper woodwinds, trumpet 1, & xylophone; motive passed back and forth among several voices in m.54-58; rising long note counter line in oboe, alto saxes, & horns adds tension and confirms key center in m.51 with Db; bass drum, bongos, & tam tam add depth; transition in m.59-62 with rising of motivic fragments and preview of motive from next section
63-72	“4-Note Motive”	Shifting	Back and forth “call and answer” feel with motive in upper woodwinds & keyboard percussion; upper note of motive moves up portion of C Harmonic Minor stalling on B in m.69-72; C half-diminished 7 in low woodwinds & horns with piano clusters (all notes from octatonic scale) add dissonance in m.63-68; horns & trumpets play D fully-diminished 7 chord with piano clusters in m.69-72; very dissonant & tense
73-79	“Triumph Theme” Preview	Ab Major→ Shifting	Theme previewed in diminution in flute, Eb clarinet, & trumpet; quarter note chords in clarinets support harmony; versions of “4-Note Motive” in euphonium; transition in m.77-79 as theme fragments in upper woodwinds & xylophone along with bass line work down recalling member pitches of the previous octatonic scale that are also part of the C Minor scale setting up a strong arrival in C Minor; falling arpeggio in low voices in m.79 also recall octatonic scale; pulse begins to shift to half notes setting up coming 5/2 meter

Measures	Event	Key Center	Description
80-86	Transition	C Minor	No prominent theme though “4-Note Motive” persists in piccolo, flute, Eb clarinet, & xylophone; jagged arpeggios in low voices; fast, cascading arpeggios in clarinets, alto saxes, & lower woodwinds; powerful block chords in trumpets & horns; “anchor” notes of motives work up Eb, F, G, Ab, Bb, & C leading to arrival & climax of next section & also outlining portion of C Natural Minor
87-95	“Triumph Theme”	C Major (with hints of C Minor)	Bold theme blocked out in trumpets and horns; “4-Note Motive” figures in low voices center mostly around C but also shift in m.88, 89, & 94; rapid arpeggios in piccolos, flute 1, and xylophones employ E-natural & Eb as well as A-natural & Ab creating a split-member tonality with elements of both major and minor present in m.87-89 with C Major only after that
e95-98	16 th Note Flurry Transition	C Octatonic (ws/hs)	Return to flurry of rising woodwind 16 th notes (recalling m.6-18) ending on Gb; tonality returns to octatonic scale with C “tonicized;” harmonization with parallel 4ths in m.98; pedal C in trombones, double bass, & timpani

SECTION B (“Development”)			
99-108	“Rising Melody”	Gb Major	Melody in oboes, alto saxes, & muted trumpets possibly derived from rising long note counter line from oboe, alto saxes, & horns in m.48-53; fifths & tonic 8 th notes in piano & keyboard percussion; horns add seventh in punch at m.101 and chord with <i>cuivré</i> crescendo at m.105, 106; repeated 16 th note figures in piccolo, flutes, & Eb clarinet; held fifth in clarinet 1 & 2 help confirm tonality, but pedal C (tritone) in bass clarinets, trombones, double bass, & timpani tie section to previous & add instability

e = elision

Measures	Event	Key Center	Description
109-119	“Rising Melody”	Gb Major (possibly Gb Mixolydian Flat 6)	Melody extended and embellished with 16 th s possibly built on Gb Mixolydian Flat 6 scale (no flat 7 th to confirm); fifths become weak beat pulses adding bass clarinets, bassoons, muted trombones, & muted euphonium; shift to Eb with split-third in tenor sax & horns over A in bari sax and double bass; piano and keyboard percussion continue with fifths & tonic 8 th notes
120-130	“Split-Third” Development	B→E→B→E→G maj7 (all with split-thirds)	Melody in oboe, clarinets, & alto saxes possibly a diminution development of “Rising Melody” in B Phrygian; rising long note counter line in piccolo, flute, & Eb clarinet recalls octatonic scale; quarter note-valued pulses in bass clarinets & horns through m.126; half note pulses on opposite beats by euphonium & double bass; syncopated 8 th note pulses take over in trumpets in m.127; bass line in m.127-130 recalls 16 th notes from “Triumph Theme” in m.127-130
131-141	Development	B Major (with elements of split-third & split-fifth)	Loud B Major arrival chord in trumpets & horns; bass line in low woodwinds and piano with similar contour to m.120-130 & employs both D and D# to create split-third; melodic line in flute 1, Eb clarinet, & clarinet 1 reminiscent of “Rising Melody” embellishment in m.109-119 joined by piccolo, flute 1, Eb clarinet & trumpet 1 in m.137; 16 th note arpeggios in piccolos & xylophones primarily in B major with added flat 6; bass line shifts up adding split 5 th in m.134-138; B octatonic (hs/ws) returns in m.141 in falling 16 th notes over B Major chord in trumpets & horns
142-151	Transition	B Minor	Calm “catch your breath moment;” melody in clarinet 1 & 2, muted horn 1, euphonium, tuba, & marimba 2 possibly derived from “Rising Melody;” long note counterline in oboe; pedal F# in alto sax 2, muted trombone 1 & 3, & marimba 1; timpani rolls on B throughout

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
SECTION A' ("Recapitulation")			
152-165	16 th note flurry	B Octatonic (hs/ws)	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 6-18</i> B & F# fifths in alto saxes, muted horn 1, muted trombone 1 & 3, euphonium & tuba carry over from previous section; fifths passed to clarinet 3 & bass clarinets in m.155-158; scoring is initially thinner than original appearance with no oboe, alto sax and muted trumpet initially; m.157 alters pitches from corresponding original (m.11); m. 160, 161 are original m.14 extended to two measures; m.162-165 are exact repeats of m.15-18 and begin large portion of exact recapitulation
166-178	"Mixed Meter Theme"	C Octatonic (ws/hs) (→ C Minor)	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 19-31</i> Exact repeat of Exposition
179-182	"Mixed Meter Theme"	A Octatonic (ws/hs)	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 32-35</i> Exact repeat of Exposition
183-186	"Mixed Meter Theme"	Eb Octatonic (ws/hs)	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 36-39</i> Exact repeat of Exposition
187-194	"Mixed Meter Theme"	C Octatonic (ws/hs) or C minor	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 40-47</i> Exact repeat of Exposition
195-209	"Pounding 8 th Note Motive"	Gb minor	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 48-62</i> Exact repeat of Exposition
210-219	"4-Note Motive"	Shifting	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 63-72</i> Exact repeat of Exposition
220-226	"Triumph Theme" Preview	Ab Major→ Eb Major→ Shifting	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 73-79</i> Exact repeat of Exposition
227-233	Transition	C Minor	<i>Corresponding Exposition measures: 80-85</i> Exact repeat of Exposition

Measures	Event	Key Center	Description
234-244	“Triumph Theme”	C Major→ Shifting	Transition in m.233 set in G Major (dominant of C) with block chords in oboes, clarinets, alto saxes, horn 3 & 4, trombone 1 & 2, & euphonium; 5-tuplet figures in bass line and 16 th note runs instead of 4-tuplet figures as in Exposition; 16 th runs add flat 6 and sharp 11 to otherwise C Major figures; melody repeats with “anchor” notes working down C Major scale (E, D, C, B, A, G); tonality in theme chords touches on G Major, B Diminished, A Minor & D Minor before settling on A Minor in m.244; 16 th runs stay in C Major with added flat 6 and sharp 11 through m.236, touch G Major with added flat 6 in m.237, then settle in C Major at m.238 through m.243; bass figures remain centered around C throughout

CHORALE SECTION/CODA			
245-261	Chorale Interlude	A Major	Melody in piccolo, flutes, oboes, Eb clarinet, & clarinet 1; fifth support in horn 1 & 3; bass support in trombone 3 & pizzicato double bass then bass clarinet & tenor sax; piano and keyboard percussion with 8 th note triplet triad arpeggios; 8 th note pulses in trombones set up duple vs. triple subdivisions and help outline chord progression of F#m, A ⁴ ₂ , F# (no 3 rd), Caug, Dmaj ⁷ (+4); clarinet 2 & 3 & bass clarinet join 8 th note pulses in m.257; melody allows overall tonality to remain centered on A

Measures	Event	Key Center	Description
262-265	<i>Du Friedensfurst</i> Phrase 1	Polytonal	Melody rhythmically altered from original; Maslanka's own harmonization in parallel motion – clarinet 1 in G Minor harmonized at minor third below, clarinet 2 & 3 in F Minor harmonized at minor third below, alto saxes in Gb minor harmonized mostly at minor third below, horns in E Lydian harmonized at perfect 5 th below; trumpets in A Lydian harmonized at minor 6 th below; piano in A Lydian harmonized in major triads below; vibes & one set of orchestra bells in A Lydian in octaves; second set of orchestra bells in E Lydian in octaves; pedal B in low woodwinds & double bass moving to A in last half of m.265
266-271	Episode	A Major	No prominent melody; fifth support in horn 1 & 3; clarinets, piano and vibes with 8 th note triplet triad arpeggios with upper notes rising to F# and G# in m.269 & 270 (rise supported by alto saxes); syncopated 16 th figures in piccolo, flutes, oboes, Eb clarinet & marimba; A major triad in horns; pedal A in bass clarinets, bassoons, tenor sax, bari sax, double bass, & timpani
272-276	<i>Du Friedensfurst</i> Phrase 2	Polytonal	Similar setting to m.262-265
277-282	Episode	A Major	Similar setting to m.266-271; syncopated figures in upper woodwinds expanded and slightly developed; added intermittent 8 th note punches from alto saxes & low brass; upper note in 8 th note triplets rises to F#, G#, & A in m.280-282
283-287	<i>Du Friedensfurst</i> Phrase 3	Polytonal	Similar setting to m.262-265 & m.272-276

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
e287-294	Episode	A Major	8 th note triplet triad arpeggios in piccolo, flutes, oboes, Eb clarinet & clarinets with upper notes rising to F# & G#; duple 8 th note setting first in fifths with similar rise in alto saxes, tenor sax, horns, & vibes; duple triads in piano; pedal A in low woodwinds, low brass, timpani, & marimba; bass drum and crescendos in timpani & tam tam emphasize downbeats; simultaneously sounding F#, G#, & A in upper woodwind triplets & horns, trumpets, & piano duples in m.291-294 add tension as does rallentando in m.292-294
295-307	16 th note flurry	A Octatonic (ws/hs)	m.295-300: similar to first section of Exposition and Recapitulation; added descending cascade burst in trumpets, horns, & vibes ending in minor 2nds increase tension in m.298-300
			m.301 & 302: groups of four 16 th note figures based on descending half-step/whole-step/half-step intervals with first notes rising through G, Ab, A-natural, B, C, D, Eb, & F in upper woodwinds, alto saxes & xylophone; short rising tenor sax, bari sax, and trombone clusters of 3 notes in minor 2 nd on strong beats; descending cascades in alto sax, trumpets, horns, & vibes add color and harmonic anchor
			m.303: upper woodwind 16 th groups shift to ascending half-step/whole-step/half-step figures rising through D, F, G & A and adding xylophone and vibes; descending 16 th note groups using half-step/whole-step/half-step intervals in alto saxes, then bassoons, bari sax, & horns; cluster bursts shift to trumpets on 8 th note offbeats
		D octatonic (ws/hs)	m.304: sheer fury; shift to other octatonic mode; piccolo, flute, oboe, Eb clarinet, clarinets, xylophone & vibes with 16 th notes moving up & down ending on B; descending figures in lower voices; harmonization in parallel minor 3rds in horns & parallel perfect 4ths in trumpets; chimes, anvil & choked crash cymbals emphasize last note;
			m.305 & 306: silence
			m.307: <i>sffz</i> bass drum & piano cluster hit

Movement IV – Moderately Slow

FORM: Intro A B A Coda

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
Un-numbered	Meditation Bell	None	Buddhist meditation bell struck three times with instructions to “allow the sound to die away significantly (but not to silence)”

INTRODUCTION			
1-6	“Opening Dream Theme”	Bb Major	Vibes with melody; clarinets, hand chimes, & orchestra bells provide support with open fifth; shaker adds texture
7-10	Transition	Bb Major	Glissandi F to G by flute, muted trumpet, & trombone; supported by plucked piano string & orchestra bells; G functions as a dominant to the upcoming key center of C Major; oboe G will become part of countermelody in next section

SECTION A			
11-42	“Healing Theme”		
11-15	Phrase 1	C Major	Euphonium & piano solo; oboe countermelody; double bass & left hand piano supporting bass
16-25	Phrase 2	C Major	Euphonium & piano continue with melody joined by oboe in m.22; clarinet quarter notes & bass line in bass clarinets add texture, harmonic support and pulse
26-31	Phrase 1	A Major	Euphonium & piano joined by clarinet with slightly varied melody starting on fifth of chord instead of third as before; horn countermelody; trombone quarter notes support harmony & pulse; hand chimes add color

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Key Center</u>	<u>Description</u>
32-36	Lift	Modulating	Sense of harmonic lift created through sequence with melody in oboe, alto sax, tenor sax, euphonium & piano; quarter note pulses in trombone & piano; bass progression in bass clarinets, double bass, & piano; clarinets & horns with ascending line leading to arrival in m.37; chord progression: C#m/D#→C half-diminished 7→Fm/G→E half-diminished 7→F# half-diminished 7
37-42	Climax & resolution	G Major	Big arrival at m.37 on G triad; melody in oboe, alto sax, horns, trumpet 1 through m.40; quarter note pulses continue in clarinets, tenor sax, trombones, & piano with simple triad voicings over pedal G; trumpet & euphonium take melody at m.41; dynamics soften & texture thins to open fifth in m.42

SECTION B

43-54	“Victory!”	Bb Major	Brassy melody with several weak beat accents primarily in trumpets & horns with support from clarinets, saxes & piano in m.47, 48 & m.50, 51; heavy use of added 2 nd and 6 th scale degree for color & shimmer; fast, repeated figures reinforce tonality & reinforce underlying pulse
55-66	“Descending Resolution”	Bb Major→G ⁷ (+9, +13) (Dominant of C)	Homophonic, simple motivic melody maintains similar contour as chord progression winds down with roots outlining a Bb Major scale; texture thins slightly then thins more at m.60; rapid figures continue through m. 59; section ends with G ⁷ with added 2 nd & 6 th scale degrees functioning as a dominant for return to C Major in A’ Section

SECTION A’

67-84	“Healing Theme”		
67-71	Phrase 1	C Major	Euphonium & piano solo; double bass & left hand piano supporting bass
72-84	Phrase 2	C Major	Same texture continues

CODA			
<i>e</i> 83-92	Coda	C Major	Euphonium resolves to tonic; double bass holds pedal C; piano with gentle step-wise based melody mostly in sixths; augmenting employed in 2 nd half of phrase; final resolution with C to A major 6 th interval

e = elision

**APPENDIX B: Select Thematic and Motivic Catalog of
David Maslanka's Symphony No. 7**

Movement I – Moderate

“Mrs. Smith’s Hymn” (measures 1-37)

The musical score consists of five staves of music in 3/4 time, all in treble clef. The first staff is marked "(Piano)" and "(Clarinets & Saxes)" and is labeled "phrase 1". The second staff is labeled "phrase 2". The third staff is marked "(Clarinets, Saxes, Vibes)" and is labeled "phrase 3". The fourth staff is marked "(Piano)" and is labeled "phrase 4". The fifth staff is labeled "(phrase extension)".

“Trombone Hymn” (measures 37-71)

(Trombones 8vb)
phrase 1

phrase 2

(Clarinets & Saxes)
phrase 3

(Trombones 8vb, Clarinets, & Saxes)
phrase 4

(phrase extension - clarinets, saxes & piano) (unresolved)

“Challenge!” theme (measures 101-112)

(Horns, Trombones, Euphonium) (add Trumpets)

“Challenge!” theme extended (measures 118-130)

(Saxes, Trumpets, Horns, Trombones, Euphonium) (add Tuba)

(add Woodwinds)

“Interlude Melody” (146-154)

(Upper Woodwinds, Euphonium)

The musical score is written on two staves. The first staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The second staff is in treble clef and contains a bass line with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some notes beamed together and others held as half notes.

Movement II – Slow

“Folk Song Theme” (measures 1-8)

Two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff contains measures 1-4, and the second staff contains measures 5-8. The melody is written in treble clef and features a mix of eighth and quarter notes with some rests.

“Rising Walking Bass Theme” (measures 19-27)

Two staves of music in bass clef. The first staff contains measures 19-23, and the second staff contains measures 24-27. The music is a walking bass line with a rising contour. Chord labels are placed below the notes: D minor, E minor, F# minor, and Ab minor.

“Quarter note Theme” (measures 28-31)

A single staff of music in treble clef containing measures 28-31. The melody consists of quarter notes and a half note, ending with a double bar line.

“Interlude Theme” (measures 52-60)

Two staves of music in treble clef. The first staff contains measures 52-56, and the second staff contains measures 57-60. The melody is written in treble clef and features a mix of quarter and eighth notes.

Movement III – Very Fast

“Mixed Meter Theme” (measures 19-31)

Two staves of musical notation in bass clef. The first staff contains measures 19-27, and the second staff contains measures 28-31. The piece features a complex, changing meter: 5/8, 3/4, 5/8, 3/4, 3/8, 3/4, and 3/8. The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, with some rests.

“Pounding Eighth Note Motive” (measures 48, 49 and following)

A single staff of musical notation in treble clef, 4/4 time. It shows a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a variety of accidentals (flats, naturals, sharps) and rests, creating a driving, repetitive effect.

“Four-Note Motive” (measures 63-72)

Two staves of musical notation in treble clef, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with various accidentals. The second staff continues this motif, showing how it is repeated and varied across measures.

“Triumph Theme” (measures 88-95)

Two staves of musical notation in treble clef, 4/4 time. The first staff features a melody with quarter notes and eighth-note runs. The second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with longer note values and rests.

“Rising Long Note Counter Line” and “Rising Melody”

“Rising Long Note Counter Line” (measures 48-53)



“Rising Melody” (measures 101-106)



“Chorale Interlude” (measures 246-261)



Maslanka's harmonization of the first phrase of
Du Friedensfurst, Herr Jesu Christ (measures 262-265)

"*Du Friedensfurst, Herr Jesu Christ*" Phrase 1 (piano in A Lydian harmonized in major triads)

The piano score consists of two staves. The right hand (treble clef) begins with a melodic line in A Lydian mode, marked *8va* above the staff. The left hand (bass clef) provides harmonic support using major triads. The piece is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#).

"*Du Friedensfurst, Herr Jesu Christ*" Phrase 1 (clarinet 1 in G minor harmonized in minor thirds)

The clarinet 1 part is written on a single staff in treble clef. It features a melodic line in G minor, characterized by the use of minor thirds for harmonic intervals. The piece is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of one flat (Bb).

"*Du Friedensfurst, Herr Jesu Christ*" Phrase 1 (clarinet 2 & 3 in F minor harmonized in minor thirds)

The clarinet 2 & 3 part is written on a single staff in treble clef. It features a melodic line in F minor, characterized by the use of minor thirds for harmonic intervals. The piece is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb).

"*Du Friedensfurst, Herr Jesu Christ*" Phrase 1 (alto saxes in Gb minor harmonized mostly in minor thirds)

The alto saxophone part is written on a single staff in treble clef. It features a melodic line in Gb minor, characterized by the use of minor thirds for harmonic intervals. The piece is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of three flats (Bb, Eb, and Ab).

"*Du Friedensfurst, Herr Jesu Christ*" Phrase 1 (horns in E Lydian harmonized in perfect fifths)

The horns part is written on a single staff in treble clef. It features a melodic line in E Lydian mode, characterized by the use of perfect fifths for harmonic intervals. The piece is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#).

"*Du Friedensfurst, Herr Jesu Christ*" Phrase 1 (trumpets in A Lydian harmonized in minor sixths)

The trumpets part is written on a single staff in treble clef. It features a melodic line in A Lydian mode, characterized by the use of minor sixths for harmonic intervals. The piece is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). A note in the final measure is marked with an 'x' and the instruction "(piccolo trumpet 1 octave above upper line)".

Movement IV – Moderately Slow

“Opening Dream Theme” (measures 1-6)

Musical notation for the "Opening Dream Theme" (measures 1-6) in treble clef. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and features a complex, multi-measure rest structure. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a series of multi-measure rests in 4/4, 2/4, 4/4, 2/4, 4/4, and 4/4 time signatures.

“Healing Theme” (measures 11-25)

Musical notation for the "Healing Theme" (measures 11-25), phrase 1, in bass clef. The notation includes a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a series of multi-measure rests in 4/4, 2/4, 4/4, 2/4, 4/4, and 4/4 time signatures.

phrase 1

Musical notation for the "Healing Theme" (measures 11-25), phrase 2, in bass clef. The notation includes a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a series of multi-measure rests in 2/4, 4/4, 2/4, 4/4, 2/4, and 4/4 time signatures.

phrase 2

Musical notation for the "Healing Theme" (measures 11-25), phrase 3, in bass clef. The notation includes a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a series of multi-measure rests in 4/4 time signature.

“Victory!” harmonization of theme and accompanying bass line (measures 43-54)

The musical score for measures 43-54 is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 43-46) features a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of a half note G4, followed by a quarter note F#4, and then a series of chords: G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, and G4-B4-D5. The bass line starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G3, and then a series of chords: G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, and G3-B3-D4. The second system (measures 47-54) features a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note F#4, and then a series of chords: G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, and G4-B4-D5. The bass line starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G3, and then a series of chords: G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, and G3-B3-D4.

“Descending Resolution” with descending bass line (measures 55-64)

The musical score for measures 55-64 is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 55-60) features a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody consists of a half note G4, followed by a quarter note F#4, and then a series of chords: G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, and G4-B4-D5. The bass line starts with a whole note G3, followed by a quarter note F#3, and then a series of chords: G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, and G3-B3-D4. The second system (measures 61-64) features a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody consists of a half note G4, followed by a quarter note F#4, and then a series of chords: G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, G4-B4-D5, and G4-B4-D5. The bass line starts with a whole note G3, followed by a quarter note F#3, and then a series of chords: G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, G3-B3-D4, and G3-B3-D4.

APPENDIX C: Interview with David Maslanka

At the time of this interview David Maslanka was in attendance at the 2011 Kansas Music Educators Association In-Service Convention in Wichita. He was the guest of two ensembles, each performing a movement of one of his symphonies. The Pittsburg State University Wind Ensemble under the direction of Craig Fuchs presented the first movement of Symphony No. 7 on February 24. Mark Norman and the Washburn University Wind Ensemble presented the third movement of Symphony No. 2 the following day. The transcript of this interview, which took place on February 24, 2011, has been approved by Maslanka.

Abbreviations: DM = David Maslanka; LW = Lane Weaver

LW: Well, with your permission to record...

DM: Sure.

LW: ...we might start with something I didn't even send you earlier in that email. Do you have any just general, when you think of Symphony No. 7 – what visions, what ideas, what comes to your mind or your thoughts?

DM: Well, that's a broad, general question. And the thing that comes to mind most forcefully for No. 7 – things, I would say – are the song qualities. It is definitely a songful piece and particularly an old song kind of piece. The second movement is a newly composed melody, and yet it is very much, almost like a Stephen Foster song. That kind of character.

LW: Is that what you mean when in your program notes you say a setting that...I can't remember the exact words...

DM: That could well have come from a nineteenth or twentieth century kind of American folk song. The last movement is song-like, too, and people have told me this sounds a heck of a lot like some show tune or pop tune that they have heard. And I don't even remember what it was.

LW: "Love Lift Us Up Where We Belong."

DM: Something, yeah. And that reference has been made a number of times, and I don't actively know what that is. I may have well heard it, but I can't imagine that there aren't more than a few tunes that start the way this one does. It's simple triadic material, and yet the nature of the movement always just touches me deeply. So, I think that there is an earnestness about the expressive qualities of the piece, and by "earnestness" I mean a kind of open, heartfelt quality that is unembarrassed about being that. There are

certainly intellectual parameters to the music, but I think its primary way of being is an open heart. And that's what it feels like.

One of my best moments with this music was during the premier tour, which was now six years ago that we did this. We had a performance in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. My brother and his wife came down from Boston – my older brother – to see the performance, and I was sitting next to them. Neither one is a musician, and my sister-in-law particularly not so, but we got to the climax of that movement, the last movement, and the thing just swept up the way it does and over the top. And she just kind of leaped out at me and she said, “Oh my God!” And so that capacity for the music to touch that way is what it's real power is.

LW: Yeah, I would agree. This afternoon's performance for me, felt so...nice performance, but I needed the rest of it. I needed the rest of it! [laughter]

DM: Well, yeah. These situations – the Kansas Music Educators offer you thirty-five minutes of performance time [laughter]. Craig Fuchs put together a pretty darn good show for thirty-five minutes, so there's that.

LW: He did. He did.

DM: So, I've encourage him, and he's also encouraged to take up the whole piece later.

LW: I hope so.

DM: Same with Mark Norman to do the whole Symphony 2 later. And Mark wants to do Symphony No. 4 next year. So, I think that's on his radar to do that.

LW: Oh, great! I'll have to keep my ears open for that performance. Well, maybe stepping back again to the generalness and hitting on some of the things that I'd sent you earlier. I sent you some questions about...well, one starts with a quote when Michael Varner did your marimba piece where this is what you had said, “What is unique in my music? It certainly isn't the musical materials because my music is largely tonal, uses traditional instruments and often uses traditional forms. I haven't invented new language elements, but my voice is uniquely my own.”

DM: Right.

LW: So, understanding that, my question then becomes is there really any way to answer the question, “What is Maslanka music?”

DM: Well, yeah, I suppose. But that is going to be...you in your paper will be doing that without actually necessarily addressing that question head on. Because what you'll be doing is collecting a lot of information and you'll begin to make your assessments about what you think is important about the work. And I think as you do

that you begin to be able to say these are the things which are uniquely important to this work and all the parameters that you will have defined for that analysis.

That question of voice is a really important one. And I think the best that can be said for voice is that it is related to the word, “style,” and that style and voice are both the result of consistent kinds of choices made over a long period of time. So, when you have composers whose music you can readily identify, such as Aaron Copland’s music or Beethoven’s music, it doesn’t take long to hear into that and say that this is that composer. And this becomes defined – not defined, but certain choices keep coming back as primary ones. And I think that things that are primary about my choices are often a very solid, substantial rhythmic pulse and one item, a foundational item, certain kinds of rhythmic patterns that appear again and again. Other things that I want to say about that, that when simple choices are made – and when I made that quote to Michael Varner – seemingly non-original, that is because they have been done before, all the tonal elements have been done before, all the rhythmic elements have been done before; but the difference is the individual composer’s choice at this instant because of the need of the music. And that is a hard thing to get at, but it’s I think the core of the issue.

Why does music, why does a language work? [laughter] Let’s take it into English. We both speak English. We both have been trained from birth to speak that language. So the words that we are using and the cadences of those words, sentence structures, are not unique to us. They are the given, and they are sublimated to such an extent that we no longer think about them as we speak. We both share all the base material which allows us to have a level of communication which we understand. Musical language is precisely the same way.

I want to go back for the language motive just a second. If you take a Shakespeare sonnet, it is a specific kind of language from that era, and a sonnet is a very specific kind of structure with a certain number of lines and a certain rhythm and a certain number of syllables per line. And so with that kind of a relatively fixed structure, how does a poet infuse personal meaning through that? Well, these are the choices of that voice, of that individual voice.

I’m not getting at it quite the way I want to get at it. But I’m trying to poke at this a little bit and see if I can figure this out.

LW: Uh-huh.

DM: [pauses and thinks] Here’s a thought that I’ve just come across recently. I’ve found and got very interested in the poetry of a man named W. S. Merwin. He is now in his eighties. He is by interesting coincidence the current poet laureate of the United States. Didn’t know we had one did you? [laughter]

LW: I didn’t know certainly that it would have been him! [laughter]

DM: But I had just only these past few months discovered his poetry. I kind of nose around in poetry books to try to see what I can find because I’m always interested to see what that voice is. His poetry spoke very deeply to me. It’s a kind of work which I find myself coming back to again and again and again, re-reading, re-reading. It’s already inspired some music. In one of his poems he talks about being really interested

in the words of older people, older poets particularly. He says because these simple words that they have chosen have been around for these poets for years and years and years. And so they have taken on a weight, a meaning. And so I want to say that the simple, quote-unquote “choices” that I make in my music have the weight of my own soul in them. If you can think of it that way.

LW: Yeah, I can. It makes a lot of sense. It really makes a lot of sense.

DM: So, the same rhythms, the same melodic item, the same whole note that would appear in any number of other pieces is mine because I’ve spoken it. [laughter] And that’s not an ego statement. It is a statement of the fact that something powerful has moved through my system and through the language that I have absorbed. And so that leads to the idea that I’ve spent a long time absorbing the roots of tonal musical language.

I’ve been through the middle of the twentieth century as a composer at a time when language was being literally thrown out so that the old language of tonality and the old rhythms and the old forms and the old media were challenged. Assertive statements made that the old is no longer of importance or consequence, let it go because we’re now doing the new. And I never moved in that direction, even when melody was in [indicating quotes with fingers] “respectable” circles, melody was out... [laughter]

LW: “Respectable.” Yeah, exactly.

DM: ...I never left off. So there were choices to be made. Many people who went ahead and worked purposefully in non-tonal materials arrived at their own musical language through those means, through electronic means, through computer means and all that. The jury is still out on a lot of stuff. And I’m not making statements here that say, “My music is better than...” and my way of going about it is *the* way to about it. I can only speak for what I do.

LW: Sure.

DM: The age has complex enough that you have to simply understand that there are many ways of going about. The thing that I needed to do was to find a music which would first off satisfy me deeply then would communicate something powerful to other people as well. So, my mind was drawn to old music, and I got into singing the Bach chorales, and then I got into writing chorales in the old style, and that turned into twenty years of self-training which still goes on. I hadn’t intended it to be a deep study but it certainly turned into that.

LW: Such a major part of what you do.

DM: Yeah. But when I got into that I just thought, well, I’m doing something to help myself feel better in order to able to write music. And I started singing these chorales, and then just out of simple curiosity – like people do Sudoku or crossword puzzles – I said, well, let me write chorales. [laughter]

LW: [laughter] I like that. I like that a lot.

DM: And I started to do that. And what that did over a long period of time was to deeply root me in the fundamentals of tonal music. I've been through all that theory stuff. I have a doctorate in theory, but this is what really grounded me in the study – the repetition, going back again and again and again and again and again to the same old language. I've been through the Bach chorale book seventeen times, and every time I finish I start again. I've written over two hundred chorales in the old style. So, what it has done to my music is to produce a clear relationship to melody, to clear melody, to clear phrases. When enough is enough, it's enough. And clear, clear, clear expression has been the whole idea. So, it's a long answer to your question, but I think it touches on a lot of issues. That the musical language is founded on very simple traditional principles – well, as simple as they are, they're not simple – but, the continued deep meditation on the same point. I think that's probably a foundational thought here. The deep, continual meditation on the same spot.

So, like any kind of ritual practice, if you have a religious practice at all – and we'll just take for instance Catholic religious practice, and I'm not a practicing Catholic, but that's by way of example. If you go through the mass as a religious practitioner again and again and again and again, or if you say the Hail Mary that is sheer, no intellect repetition of a particular thing. “Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus...” and so on. Why say that? But, if you say it literally thousands of times, it opens a pathway in your soul, and it brings forward an energy which you can't bring forward in any other way. And so, contemplating the old language of the Bach chorales is exactly parallel to that.

LW: Along those lines, do you feel that's why – well, why is a very specific question – but, did that influence specifically Symphony No. 7 with some of the repeated statements that you have, where you'll have a certain amount of time and the same gestures happen before you move on.

DM: Ok. Well, I don't know. Everything is related, but I'm not sure if it's exactly related to that issue. But, let's consider it in that light. So, qualities of repetition that happen – I've found that it has come to me to work in broader strokes so that the gestures are perceivable. There are all kinds of subtleties in the music, and yet the thing that I think touches is that there is a broad, immediate gesture or line that people can stay with and that often involves repetition of one sort or another.

I remember way back in graduate school we had a guest composer come in that H. Owen Reed brought in. The man had been a New York City song writer. He wasn't anything else but that. He was talking to us about songs and how you make songs. He was talking to these sophisticated graduate composers [laughter], and he said, “If you get a good idea, repeat it!” [laughter] “Repeat it!” And were going, “Who is this guy?”

LW: AABA right? [laughter]

DM: We know better than this person. [laughter] Repeat it, repeat it, repeat it. And there is that!

LW: Yeah. Well, I like that explanation better than one I've heard – you know, the label “minimalism” put on some of your gestures. As I've tried to get to know you through some of the writing and through this process even, that makes a lot of sense to me how you've explained that. And I think that's a good perspective that I appreciate having now.

DM: The word “minimalism” is a difficult word because as soon that is said and people agree that that's a meaningful term, they have lost the pursuit of what is actually happening in the music. There is a handy label that allows you to say, “I understand what is going on here. I don't have to think about it anymore.” [laughter] So, I like really to back away from labels of all sorts and simply go and begin describing what actually is happening in the given piece of music, as opposed to the attempt to leap to a generalization as a first step.

LW: Right.

DM: So finally the word “minimalism” may have some bearing because it does. But, you'd have to know what is meant by that, and then you start trying to define it, and it's a little bit slippery.

LW: Yeah. It's true. I would completely agree with that. Again, maybe with some general thoughts and ideas here. When you're – well, this afternoon even in the first movement of Symphony No. 7, if you think in such ways, as you're sitting in the audience or working with the directors or performers what is it that you want them to understand, to get out of your music. Why should they perform your music?

DM: Ok. You might be better at answering that than I am. [laughter]

LW: [laughter] That's a fair point.

DM: I won't put you on the spot right now to say that. But, you might just imitate that question back to and think to yourself. The fact is that people find something of value in the music. They can begin to try to piece out what that might be, but they do. And that has been the case, that there is an energy, there is an opening which takes place. For whatever reason the music begins to compel fairly rapidly a deep attention to it. The thing that I can say about that is that it seems to have the capacity – for the most part we're talking about the things that do that, as opposed to the stuff that doesn't play too good – to direct a person deeply into themselves. It's almost as if there's a piercing of light which goes from consciousness into the depth. And I don't mean this in any arrogant or egotistical way. It appears to be what happens.

And it does that because, again, for whatever reason, that kind of musical impulse of energy before it becomes music, the impulse comes to me, comes through me. I have done a lot of work to go toward it, so that I can start from conscious mind and move toward exploring what I call dream space, exploring the unconsciousness in order to make contact with that kind of energy. That in itself is a deep kind of prayer directly

related to saying the Hail Mary. Because when you ask deeply that something happen, then something begins to happen.

It's the same way when you practice an instrument, or if you take any discipline with great intensity. When you practice an instrument, you are doing the same kind of ritualistic prayer. And it's repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition of the same things with the same limitations. We talked about limitations and staring at the same spot. Each instrument is its own set of absolute limitations. But, people go back again and again and again and again and again for thousands of hours until they are truly capable players. That is deep prayer. It says I demand that God give me this. [laughter] And I'm not going away until I get it. [laughter] Really, this is what everyone is doing who is a good player. They may not put it in those terms, but that's what you do. You're making the inner demand that your intellectual end make deep contact with your spiritual end and your spiritual side. And this is what I do when composing. And because of that, that energy does come forward. It comes up in a powerful way, and people connect to that.

I think of our culture now. It is deeply thirsty for meaningful experience of all kinds. Meaningful, as opposed to the glib surface of our entertainment. And our entertainment now is pervasive.

LW: Right.

DM: And not a lot of it – some of it does, some of it offers terrific returns. For instance, I just saw the movie *The King's Speech*. Have you seen that movie?

LW: I've not.

DM: Well, go take a look. Terrific movie. And it's a riveting movie. My wife and I saw it together. And we came out of it saying this is one of those we put on our perfect movie list, because it took you powerfully to important places. So, we need this. And this is what seems to happen through the music.

LW: With thoughts toward perhaps touching on that spiritual side, that meaningful side, in an ideal world toward that end how would you guide conductors, performers, an audience member in the preparation of this piece or any other piece, even to the point...are there...I know with your meditative approach to composition, some of the walks you take and some of the disciplines that you have, would any of those come into play?

DM: Potentially, yes. But initially a number of thoughts surround this issue. One is that every time people select to play any music of mine, it's a big adventure. It's a first step into things they haven't necessarily done before. Certain people have done a lot of it over many years. Most people have not. And so I'm working with two groups now, with Craig Fuchs from Pittsburg State here, who has for the first time approached a bit piece of mine. And Mark Norman did the second symphony when he was in North Carolina and now for the first time engages me in doing that music here. So, the beginnings of things which haven't happened before. So, the answer is first off not in

philosophy, not in lots of talk about this, but in doing what's on the page. That seems kind of a simplistic answer, but it's fundamental.

I had an email from a person who is about to conduct my *Symphony No. 4* wanting to engage in kind of a philosophical discussion about the meanings of aspects of the symphony. And I'm ok, fine. And I can respond in that way, but I said the fundamental is notes, rhythms, and tempo.

LW: Right.

DM: And not being in any way facetious. That's it! It's notes, rhythms, tempo, and dynamics. The big four here. And so to go deeply into those with your objective intent to find the full value of those things. Ok, now some illustrations.

I'm working with Mark Norman's group. They're doing the finale from the second symphony, and he's done a wonderful preparation of this. They can lay out the piece, but they haven't quite found themselves in it yet. They don't quite know how to go about this. My job is to go, and – this is what I do – to simply listen to what they're doing and to say how to go further with things like dynamics. So, there's one particular spot in the movement where it comes out to a few wind instruments and the wood block and the piano and it's marked *pianissimo*. Well, they banged into it at *mezzo forte/forte*. Well, I stopped them right there and said, "No. It's marked *pianissimo* for this group, see? So let's do it *pianissimo*." And so they tried again and it was *mezzo forte*. And I said, "No. Try it again." And it took four times to actually bring it down to a *pianissimo* level, and then they did it. And we placed it there, and they heard it there, and they understood the enormous increase of power because of it. Alright. And there was this, "Oh!" kind of moment. "Oh! That's what that really sounds like!" And, "Oh! How cool is that when it's related to this other thing!"

So, that's my job, is to actually ask people to do what is there. Because you know as a conductor that there is always limited time and there's always the looking ahead to, "How do I get through this rehearsal? How do I get through this piece? How do I get it set up? How do I get the concert on its feet so that the whole thing can go? I have limited time. I have other duties and obligations." You know the whole routine. And it's my job to go in there and throw a monkey wrench in that whole works and to say, "No. Stop. Stop and listen. And listen deeply." And the beautiful thing working with Craig on the Symphony No. 7 movement is asking for qualities of sound. And we would get to a particular chord sound, and again stop and ask, say it's in the brass, "Let's go for balance here. Ok. This is marked at a certain dynamic. It's marked for the brass ensemble, and here are the pitches and so on and so on. And, alright, it's out of balance." And we simply bring it into balance. "You play less. You play more." Alright, hear that. "No, you play even less. You play...and so on and so on. Now, softer if it's going to be *pianissimo*. Alright, hear that." And then they hear it and the thing comes to life because it is what it's supposed to be, as opposed to something that they were doing which the conductor accepted because he was too busy in his own mind to think any deeper into it.

So, with all these words that I'm saying now the task is to bring people who are performing to the real quality of every specific instant. You can't do that, because there are too many instances, but you can start there. You start there. This is what you do.

You start there and you spend the time that you have doing that. Yes, there's reason to do whole gestures and whole movements and all that, too, but considerable amount of time spent in that specific "right here, right now" task. What that does is to give ownership to the players, because they've heard the real sound happen. And that ownership is the transition point. We have done this sound. We are owners of this sound, as opposed to sort of being present as the sound floated past. There's the whole deal of music making right there. It's the foundation for interpretation. It is the foundation for the spiritual energy that flows through.

LW: Yeah. Ownership. It's a great word. That's a great word. I really like that. You've talked before about, well, maybe a struggle to release ego. I think that I've read that in a couple of different instances. With ownership and releasing ego how do you encourage – maybe that's a weird way of saying it – how do you encourage the release of ego.

DM: The release of preoccupation with one's own stuff and the release of nervousness, because that's primarily what goes on with folks; the release of nervousness is accomplished precisely in this way: You begin to look deeply and to experiment deeply with the qualities of the music. So, if you're prepared as a conductor to experiment with the full range of dynamic markings and to experiment with colors, with actual sounds and balances, to experiment with sound related silence; then you become an observing consciousness as the full power of the music appears, and you are not attempting to direct it or tell it what to do. You are bringing your conscious mind, your ego part into partnership with the music making. How to achieve that balance is a long practice like any other practice. But, it is in the same category as learning to play an instrument. You do it by practice.

Now, when I first started working with people, I had music which was powerfully coming through me, but I also had my own nervous personality which took a lot of years to sort out. And I'm still, after all this time, sorting it out. So, additionally, I was simply scared working with people. And the music might happen, but you know. I remember the first time working with John Paynter. It was one of the very first times that I'd been invited out to work with anybody, and he was doing my first piano concerto, the very first piece I'd written for winds. I remember standing outside the rehearsal hall at Northwestern, as the rehearsal had already started and people were in there playing, and thinking, "Geez! What am I doing here?" [laughter] "What have I got to say to anybody?" So that was my starting point. It's been a long learning process that it isn't about my nervousness, it isn't about anything in me except that I can be a transmission element to help people find what they have to do. And so, the think that I have learned is that all of these ego issues come down to being able to pay full attention to the thing that you're looking at. It sounds like a simple statement.

LW: Notes, rhythms, tempo...

DM: Yeah, pitch... [laughter]

LW: ...dynamic. [laughter] All that stuff.

DM: Yeah. You know we can say it in that summary form, but that's it! Being able to pay full attention to each of these elements of music. You find your mind achieving a clarity of focus, and that all of the other issues that might be your personality and all your other stuff simply float off into another space. You've been in that space and understand what it is.

LW: Yeah. I understand. Do you ever – well, maybe you've worked past this – do you ever struggle to feel like you've given up control of your music to an ensemble that might approach it in a different way than you would specifically prefer?

DM: Well, there are two issues. I would say at this point there's enough performance of my pieces that most people performing my music don't ever get in touch with me. So, a relatively small percentage, I would say maybe as few as ten percent of people performing my music actually make contact with me and actually want to have some kind of interaction, and an even smaller percentage that actually invite me out to work with them. So, I have no control of what's going on except that over time, because of the performance work that has been done, people have some idea about what they're approaching when they pick up a piece of mine. The only thing that I can do directly is if people ask me to come and work with them, and we enter into that kind of partnership arrangement. So, no, I've given up worrying about that because there's nothing to do.

LW: Well, maybe if we have a little bit of time, we can talk about the Symphony No. 7 itself.

DM: Ok.

LW: What's the story of its commission and its background? How did it come to be?

DM: Ok. Well, Steve Steele at Illinois State is the only person on this planet who has actually commissioned me to write a symphony. Symphonies that occurred before – No. 1 was a doctoral graduate student piece. No. 2 was commissioned simply as a concert piece with no stipulation. It came out to be a symphony. I made a piece, it looked symphonic, and so I called it that. No. 3, Gary Green asked me to write a concert piece. He was hoping for a substantial concert piece in the 20-minute range. It became a huge symphony. And No. 4 – I was commissioned by Jerry Junkin to write a 10-minute concert piece, and it became that. No. 5 was the first time that Steve asked me to write a piece and he specifically asked me to write a symphony. So, at that point – this is in the year 2000 that happened, I believe it was – and that was the beginning point of our regular commissioning projects that he sponsored and became the head for the consortiums. And he has regularly commissioned me for new works until the current date. Our most recent work together was a double concert for flute and cello and small wind ensemble entitled, *O Earth, O Stars*. It's a six-movement concerto, and in my estimation a beautiful and very successful piece. So, the next commission after No. 5, No. 6 was orchestral. Steve asked for another symphony, and so that was our starting point, him asking me for a symphony.

And my process of work as always is to focus on the person who has asked me to write in a meditative way and then to find the energy – this is not an intellectual process at all, it's hard to talk about. Finding energy, what does that mean? Opening to the images that came to me and realizing their particular power and having that as a foundation for – a filter if you want to think of it that way, through which the energy comes to become the piece of music. There are a lot of mysteries in here, and I don't know if I can be objective enough to help you out with what wants to happen.

I don't think Steve would mind for me to tell you this end of the meditation process. In my meditation on him at that time I saw him as approaching the end of his life. This is a difficult thing. Steve has had some medical issues and things which were potentially life threatening, but I could see it as the end of his life. Literally I saw the tomb with his name and the dates of birth and death, and I couldn't shake it, and I couldn't make it do any differently than that. I saw numbers.

And then in another meditation, again focused on him – there are several here that are very important – I saw in my meditation image a farmhouse. It looked like mid-America prairie area farmhouse. And entering the farmhouse I see him – now you have to understand that this is something of a dream image, but it's in conscious mind, and, when I have images like this, they are images of the condition of the person in a deep way. There is a direct contact from my mind to that person's energy, and the image comes forward as a way of expressing the nature of the energy. The image was of a person extremely ill but in this farmhouse and essentially shackled, wrists and ankles, to a wall. My movement in this dream – dream, well, meditation – was to release him at which point there was the presence of a bear. A bear is a protective spirit. A bear is one of the images of the divine. A bear moves toward the divine. I assist in placing Steve on the back of the bear, and off they go to places that I don't know anything about.

The very next image in this meditation is of the tomb of Christ, and it is opened and the figure of Christ emerges carrying Steve, literally tosses him in my direction and says, "Here, you have him back. Do some work." And, ok. So, over the course of time he's still alive, and he's now healthy as far as I know and past the date that was on my little.... So things changed for him. He moved toward his own health, did specific things to help himself out and is working powerfully in music making.

Now I share these images, and they are personal and they have kind of a private quality to them, but I wanted you to understand the nature of going to seek that energy and what happened in this particular case when I did.

So, in the deeper unconscious are all the helpful powers, and they are personified in various ways. In this case the image of the bear which has been an image in my deeper meditation life for a long time. It hasn't occurred recently, but over the years the bear has been a significant guide for me. There are also images that are of human figures. For instance we have the figure of Christ. Is this a literal figure of Christ? I don't know. It is the energy of universal healing which prompts that image in my mind. So this is what comes on through.

Another dream which is associated with this area, not specifically with this symphony, although it is implied by the dream, this is a sleep dream that I had some years ago related to Steve. In the dream I am in his "office" with quote marks around it. And it is a very primitive place with a very flimsy wooden door leading immediately to the outside. And the outside is a river bottom. It's a flat plain leading toward a river, and

as you get closer to the river you see mud, and then the river is flowing by in the distance. In this dream out of the mud flat there there sprang and entire family of elephants. [laughter] And I began meditating on this dream and I began to realize the elephants were the projects we were doing together. With this large line, and there's a whole series of them. There is a whole family of elephants.

So those kinds of images are part of the background for No. 7.

LW: I've read about some of these other images that have come up. I think I might know the answer to this, but let me ask it anyway, not presuming to understand your mind or put things in your mind. A lot of the time when you go back to things like *Child's Garden* where you have very specific images based on the poetry there. Or, I've read in Symphony No. 3 the "Golden Light Song" and the "Bear song" in those, where it seems like – not to try to tie things down too much – but it seems like there are moments where those things are depicted in a specific way.

DM: I understand. That is correct, yes. Well, the energy has motivated that music.

LW: Correct, not a literal picture.

DM: Not trying to make a picture of that.

LW: Right. Are there moments in Symphony No. 7 tied to the images you have?

DM: Well, I think I can say yes to that. It might be interesting now for you also to go look and see if they make any sense to you. One of the things that comes immediately to mind is in the second movement when the middle section of it begins to happen with the steady pulse and the rise a bit at a time with the addition of the horns. And then when it finally rises over that really powerful, central climactic moment in the piece – just in thinking about it now, and this is the first time I've had this thought – that reminds me powerfully of the image of Steve being given back to me, if you want to think of it that way. And there's a strong heart connection to that moment.

Steve has some of his own imagery, but he doesn't as a general rule go there. He's a very down-to-earth kind of guy. He simply does his job. So, it's not a thing which immediately concerns him, although he's aware of what I do, and he's aware of the power of the connection. And he's also aware that when we work together it's very powerful.

So, that's just one image that comes to mind. I would be kind of hesitant to try to say this is that other places.

LW: Sure, sure. Well, that's great. I might bounce around a couple of different spots here.

DM: Sure.

LW: Well, let me ask this thought before I forget about it. In Brenton Alston's work on Symphony No. 3 you shared some meditation notes with him. Do those exist for this piece?

DM: Well, to the degree that I've just spoken them out I would say, yeah. They exist.

LW: Ok. Well, let me ask you about this. You've expressed such an important connection in this idea of transformation and the Catholic Mass being a powerful manifestation of the transformation process. And, again from my understanding, your Mass becomes a central point in your compositional history, for lack of a better way of saying it. Do you see any similar connections with the church music from the beginning of the symphony?

DM: Well, let's think of it this way. All things that are of spiritual importance to a person are the same thing. They have very different expressions at times. So, if I gravitated toward the Catholic Mass as a graduate student and began to think about it as a thing which was attracting me and I should do something with it, and then the length of time it took to develop my understanding of it and to approach the actual composition of the mass, and the fact that it continues as a powerful influence, that is a primary spiritual energy focus which has moved my life. The earlier fact of having been associated with an evangelical church when I was a teenager was a very powerful thing at that time. It was a thing that lasted for, I want to say, about four years at which point I'd become a young adult and began to think about these things and all the imagery of that began to fall apart, and I began to lose that as a primary focus. So, all of my religious imagery disappeared. I felt a large black hole, if you want to think of it that way. Really quite a depressed place when that early religious experience broke apart. And so I didn't have anything to replace it with at that time. But, that was the beginning of my own internal work to reconstitute an understanding of what that energy was and to rebuild it a bit at a time so that I did arrive finally at where I've come to. But, I want to say that the initial energy that came through that first religious experience there was a powerful thing. And clearly it was a powerful thing because it came back in memory all these years later.

So, it's really kind of a very interesting give to receive back again, when you think that something is dead and gone and no longer part of your being and to realize, well, no! [laughter] It is a living gem, if you want to think of it that way, in your mind and has been there all that time. So this leads to just very interesting ideas about how we're sustained in life. And if you have any understanding let's say of a divine energy, a divine movement in life, that sense of the divine in life is often challenged by very difficult times. So if you have yourself or someone that you love that goes a dangerous illness or has trouble with drugs or has mental problems, so on and so on; dangerous stuff that happens to people, and you begin to question, well, what does that have to do with God's will and things of that sort. And you don't know. And those things can help break apart a sense of faith. And yet, underlying everything is an energy of being, and it is our work as conscious minds to a bit at a time begin to understand that. And when it does happen, you begin to get bits and pieces of understanding and grasping of the fact that you are connected, that you are this energy, and that becomes clearer and clearer and

clearer in your mind and the realization that this energy moves through you. And that's your purpose.

So, that old image of the Christian faith was a starting point even though I couldn't sustain it because of my own personal difficulties. I was not able to sustain that, and it broke apart, and I let it go. That didn't mean that it went anywhere. It meant that I simply had to find it again in different terms. So that was the evangelical Christian set of terms, but it's the same energy which supports the Catholic set of terms or a Buddhist set of terms, or any set of terms – a different expression of the same thing. That's a lot of words to try to...[laughter]

LW: [laughter] It's a big question! Sometimes it takes a lot of words. Again, in my reading trying to get to know you through what others have done – which is a dangerous task at times – transformation is something I've come back to several times. In *Symphony No. 7* you've mentioned in the second movement perhaps the moment of transformation when you felt Steve Steele was given back to you. Do you find – well, let me not define it with my terms – where do you see the ideas of transformation and the energies behind that manifested?

DM: You mean in the symphony?

LW: In *Symphony No. 7*.

DM: Well, the symphony is, as any piece of music is, an expression of that process. And I guess I'm deliberately being general here. You know, I do need to go back to that specific point that we discussed earlier that all of music making comes down to the basic points of rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo, and paying attention. And the minute, the instant you begin paying that kind of attention, you enter the path of transformation. And we'll take it back to our original illustration of a person learning to play an instrument. The learning to play an instrument is a terrific transformative experience. You start as a person who cannot play an instrument, and you come out as a person who can play an instrument. You've asked for the transformation, and by diligent effort, you've achieved the transformation. And so music allows that possibility. If you pay that kind of attention to it, your person becomes transformed.

What happens is that you have an influx of energy into your system, and what it does is to touch and to begin to break apart your conscious sense of yourself. And it touches all the issues which are troubled. And it does. And over time, with your conscious work, it begins to transform your mind. So, I can say that music has had that grand effect on me over all these years. That doesn't happen instantaneously, and at this age I still perceive issues. Well, ok. That's just how that is. But, a huge amount has been transformed through this process of looking deeply at music.

So, you want to say, well, where are the transformative elements of *Symphony No. 7*? Every single note. [laughter]

LW: [laughter] Sure, sure. Well, I know when I listen to it, again, going back to when we heard it today, I wanted the rest of it.

DM: That's right.

LW: I wanted all of it. And, I have a hard time, whether it's listening to it in the car – or I had the chance to share it with my family around Christmas time – and, again, they have musical background, but are not musicians professionally – and, there was the sense, especially through the end; we've come through all the journey, all the moments of struggle and pain and resolution, and then, for whatever reason, as you termed that simple song of healing in that fourth movement...

DM: That's right.

LW: ...and how the euphonium becomes such a powerful expression of that. And you get to the end with the euphonium and the piano and finally settling back into that last C Major moment – there's something that happens along the way! I don't even know what I'm getting at at the moment.

DM: Well, let me jump in because I think I feel what you're trying to say that, yes, you are identifying that a transformation quality has taken place through that whole journey. And instead of pointing out, well, this is where it happened and so on, I think the position of the euphonium voice at that particular spot says that a thing has changed. And then in following that journey through, you experience that quality. Now, it's something you can't speak about very well. But, you feel the satisfaction, if you want to put it that way, of having been through a large process.

Now, that experience of itself is a starting point for people. If the piece is powerfully played and powerfully attended to, that's one of those memorable moments that you take with you, and it doesn't go away. And, I'm thinking that we're sitting here talking about this because that happened to you with this piece of music. And so, you have a thing in you which is, I would think of it simply as a single point of universal energy, which is the cumulative effect of that symphony. I've thought of it this way, that that's what the true effect of a powerful musical experience is. You don't go away, although you might be able to remember quantities of the symphony, twenty years from now, if you hadn't listened to the symphony again, it would be vague in your mind at best. And, this is what happens to most people who've had the experience, but the actual experience itself in real time fades. It leaves just that point of powerful energy in the system, which, the way I could speak about it, becomes a conduit for creative force which wants to move through a person. That point is one element of a transformative energy.

When people accumulate these through powerful musical experiences, then that is the engine, if you want to put it that way, the engine of transformation begins to be at work in that person. It doesn't mean that suddenly everything is fine. It means that this has started, and it is a grand spiritual journey which may take a lifetime.

LW: Is there a reason – and I'm going back again to that fourth movement – that the euphonium speaks so powerfully?

DM: You know it's such an interesting thing. When I first wrote my first wind ensemble piece, I didn't even know euphonium existed! And so [laughter], the piano

concerto had no euphonium part in it. If I'd been told there was a euphonium in the wind band, I probably would have said, "Ok, I'll put one in there." But, then it turned out that I did know about it for my next piece – it's not in *A Child's Garden* – the first euphonium solo is in the second symphony. And then, when my son Matthew came along, the very first instrument he chose when it became time to choose an instrument in school music, was cello. He brought a cello home, and my dear wife could not bear listening to the sound of a cello being practiced in the house and actually encouraged him to choose something else. [laughter]

LW: [laughter] That's a great story.

DM: And so his second choice was euphonium, and he began to learn it. He became a brilliant player. And so I had that sound in the house, you know; this voice and this sound. So, I think that one of Matthew's gifts to me and one of the gifts I've gotten through my son, was that the voice of the euphonium came into the house. And I understood its power through his ability to play. And so that's how it entered into pieces of music, and then it became this very special point. So, that's why that's there.

LW: It's perfect; it's just what needs to be at that moment.

DM: And so, when gifts are given like that, it seems, well, it's mere coincidence, but I don't think of life in coincidental terms anymore. The thing happens at the junction where it needs to happen, and you become associated with it. If you have any humbleness at all, you say, "Thank you."

Composing is exactly like that. You know, we always think of composing in terms of the composer having a mental plan and he knows exactly and so on and so on. The process (inaudible due to the noise of an airplane flying over the building) and my job is, you know we talked about the relationship of ego to the other side, my job is to allow my ego to receive the gifts that are given and to accept them without question. That's the only thing that I know how to do, simply to accept without question that this has happened.

LW: Well, that actually leads to another question that I was going to bring up at some point. When David Booth wrote his piece on *Child's Garden*, you had made a statement that the "Here I Am" motive was something that was made intentionally. So, I guess the question becomes how are your intentional decisions balanced with the meditative reception of...

DM: I'm not sure of any kind of exact quotation that I gave to David Booth, unless you have one handy that you could repeat back to me. It's been a very long time since we did that.

Now intentionality there – I'm going to put this now in terms that the presence of that motive and the identification of it with the words, "Here I am," were a thing which happened together. I didn't intentionally say I want to make a motive that says, "Here I am." And, so, oh! Ta da! The thing happened musically, and then my awareness of

being able to speak of it in those terms I think was a second factor. So, I want to withdraw that idea of intentionality with that particular thing.

Intentionality is a very difficult thing to talk about, but let's talk about it in terms of musical forms. I've talked about a musical flow or energy flow which I experience, which then becomes translated through my brain into music and of being able to go along with it and allowing it to flow. And at the same time, I have a lot of training in traditional musical forms, and I know what they are, and my brain is activated in those forms.

We can go in another direction with this with older composers who persistently used standard forms. Take Scarlatti sonatas, for instance, and the nature of those pieces. They are two pages of music. The first half starts in the key, moves either to the relative major or the dominant. The second half starts in the dominant and moves back to the tonic. He wrote five-hundred and something of these things. [laughter] That was the form! And through that very fixed form, he began to discover a terrific power. And you can point to any number of other composers who dealt with specific forms, like Bach who'd write a passacaglia, or a chaconne, or a fugue, or canons. These are very demanding intellectual structures that he had control of. And then, having sublimated them enough, allowed a musical flow to come through.

So, we're talking about the relationship of an established language as we do with English speech and how a creative flow comes through say a sonnet, or any other kind of limited poetic structure. So, it is possible to start with the idea of a formal element and then to produce a profound, moving piece of music. My way has always been to allow the music to tell me what it wants to be, and then, if it begins moving in the direction of such a form, I have the equipment to allow it to do that.

LW: Yeah. And, again, that takes me to another area, how form is related to emotional expression. Do you see elements of that in Symphony No. 7, where the form specifically projects this emotion.

DM: Yes, I do. And I have a tendency in this piece toward ABA structures.

LW: You're right. Like I need to tell you! [laughter]

DM: [laughter] And they're very simple. The second movement is a simple song form – ABA. And in the third movement, it is strongly related to traditional sonata form. And the last movement, there you go. That quality of very basic shapes has arisen in the music and repeats itself again and again and again and again and again. I keep coming back to those shapes. So the character of expression is definitely embodied by those shapes. As to why that's the case? I'm not going to answer that question.

LW: Why is ABA as powerful as it is in any setting?

DM: Can you answer any of that?

LW: I don't know. I think maybe just the fact that once you've established an idea and you either challenge it or contradict it or frustrate it somehow...

DM: Or continue it in another vein.

LW: ...sure, and then return to the familiar – seems like everyone wants to go home again.

DM: Yeah. And there's a reinforcement that happens. Steve Steele has an interesting thought about that in recording pieces. If there's an exact recapitulation, he was tempted initially to say, "Well, I've already done a recording. I'll just use it there."

LW: Yeah. That happens in the third movement.

DM: And he discovered, well, that's not the same as that. And it just isn't, even though the notes are the same.

LW: Exactly.

DM: The energy has been transformed into something else by the time he reached it at that particular point. So, ok, we're sort of speculating together here as to what this might be. An initial statement of something that's movement is through an area which evolves or is different than, and then the restatement has a different energy. So, something of the word, "transforming," comes into play again. These are subtle things, and I'm having difficulty teasing them out and making sense of them.

LW: Well, I think there are just some powerful things. You know, if you take the first movement, you set up the church music and then the second section is completely...

DM: Another world.

LW: ...another world. Yeah, exactly. And when the piano returns, it returns in a strong way, but then it becomes unsure of itself. It almost seems like, "Do I really belong here again?" It's in that dream space that you talk about, and it returns – obviously, it's not different, but it's been affected by the departure.

DM: Yeah. That is so interesting because you start with the piano dream, and then it opens another door which seems to be to some place radically different, but which is not, because it's in the same place. It's just that it sounds different. And that energy becomes fierce and overbearing and powerful and thunderous. And all of the sudden it goes, "BOOM!" and all of the sudden the other dream shows up again. And it's like, "What! Oh, I know that dream." But then, that same dream opens another door to a space which is radically different than what the piano dream was. And so an understanding of it, if you want an intellectual understanding of it, has to be that the piano music opens these other dream spaces, and that the quiet dream at the end has to be seen as parallel to the huge dynamic second section of the movement. They have to be understood as being the same space, just in different terms. And the movement is coherent. That is, you follow it from start to finish even though the difference is so radically present.

LW: It goes together.

DM: Yeah, it does.

LW: On the surface looking at the score, it doesn't seem like it should because it is so radically different.

DM: So radically different. Yes. That just makes me smile because that's the way it works. So, I want to relate that to meditation imagery. That when I go to meditate on a given subject, say if I go and ask the question – which I often do when starting a piece of music – “Show me something I need to know about the music that I am involved in writing.” And I never ask to hear the music right then. I say, “Show me something about this piece of music. Something, not everything. Show me something.” That's a prayer addressed to my deeper helper sources asking them to bring forth from my unconscious things that will illuminate for me the territory that I'm in. And they will often be radically different pictures that will show up side by side in the same meditation session. And my system will meld them and go, “Oh! There is a central power here which is represented by all these images.” But if you look at one, then that, then that, they don't seem to be related to one another. And that is the key issue to the formal structures in my music.

LW: There you go. Yeah, I like that.

DM: That means you, as a person analyzing it, are going to have to in your own terms contemplate those dream spaces and see what you come up with. And it leads to a very difficult time making definitive statements and objective, closed – this is what this is, that is what that is.

LW: I agree wholeheartedly with that! [laughter] I'm working through it, and we'll see where the journey takes us. It may not be – it certainly won't be textbook. And I may come back and read something I wrote five years later and say, “I don't see that now.”

DM: Well, I'm going to offer a thought that what you write down you'll come back to five years later and say, “Oh, yeah. I understand.” Because you may write out of a place which you don't understand. You may write out of a space which is comparable to the musical space, and it will give you something which you don't immediately grasp from the intellectual end of it. But it will be a start to your own journey and your attention to this music, and your internal journey. What will happen is that you will, finally, make a defined paper – you'll probably do it fairly quickly – and that will be that. That's it. But it's a first step, as opposed to the end of the story.

LW: It's not the end of my association with the music.

DM: This opens the journey.

LW: I think that got us through some good moments there. It's fun. It's fun to talk about. I might again bounce around, and I'll keep an eye on the time.

DM: We have twenty minutes.

LW: I sure appreciate every moment. Do you remember anything about the sketching out process of No. 7 – what emerged when?

DM: Not directly. I never start from the beginning. But, what I did do is bring a copy of those sketches for you.

LW: Oh, great! Wonderful!

DM: Now, they are not first sketches, so I don't know what value they are to you. [Looking over sketches of Symphony No. 7.] This is the first sketch of the piece in its entirety, so it's already well developed, but you can at least see what the process looks like.

[The next few minutes are spent glancing through sketches together.]

LW: As far as which movements or ideas emerged first, do you have any recollection of that at this point?

DM: Frankly, no.

LW: Do you feel in your compositional process, is this – I've read before, and obviously I haven't heard the first symphony, but sometimes you go back and pull things from your first symphony. Are there things related to any of your other pieces that you find in No. 7?

DM: I don't think that's the case here. No, to my knowledge I haven't quoted anything else from an earlier piece.

LW: Ok. I was interested to hear about your pastel drawings. Do you find correlations between pastel drawings that emerge at a particular time and what you are working on musically?

DM: Well, I suppose that the answer would be yes to that, but I couldn't tell you exactly what those relationships are. Because you do have a visual image of something, whatever that might be, and there's a musical thing which is going on, so the brain is obviously working at two expressions of a similar energy. I guess the correlation could be made, but I haven't always dated my drawings, and it might be very difficult to go back and actually say this is what was happening. But, I can say in general that the process of drawing has been one of those things which has revealed another character, another quality which I might not necessarily have been aware of. And, I don't

necessarily have words to describe what those things are. So, not to shut that off as an avenue of approach, it's just that it would be very difficult to deal with.

LW: Sure. Well, maybe just a couple of more things that I'm thinking. I'm sure I'll be contacting you again. This was 2004, I believe either when it was completed. Does anything stand out to you in your personal biography of what might have been going on for you that would have influenced the piece? And the reason I'm asking is that you've talked about the transition from New York to Montana and how that had a big impact on what you've done. So, I'm just curious if there's anything in your personal story, that you feel comfortable sharing, that might have been part of this.

DM: Well, life has been a fast-forward blur [laughter], and the years are floating by like one every two or three weeks [laughter], and I have to think back to what was happening in 2004. And it would be kind of difficult to pin that down to specifics. But, there was no monumental change happening like the move from New York. There were no deaths in the family that I can refer to or radical changes in the family structure or my personal life.

I think I would like to say about No. 7, is that it seemed in its own way to represent a significant change of attitude, and that No. 8 is also a marking point. There seems to be a large stepping process happening over a length of time.

So, Symphony No. 5 is a very hard-edged piece and full of a kind of rough energy, which was very hard to contain in my system, and felt like I was being banged around by that symphony. And when I finished it, finally, I had the sensation that I had been used by something and not very nicely. But, it represented, I think, an internal attempt to come to terms with a transformation that was trying to take place. The end of No. 5 is – what's the hymn now? – *Christ lag in Todesbanden...*

LW: Yeah. "Christ lay in the bonds of death."

DM: ...right. And it's a very stark and dire kind of finish to that symphony. It leaves you in darkness, after all that's gone on previously in the symphony which has about it some terrific aspects of heart and of light. But, the first movement is just fierce and doesn't ever let go and doesn't stop. The second movement has just a beautiful euphonium solo and so on. But, then you come down to that last movement, and it's just finally a kick in the head when you get down to the end of it.

So, decent into the grave, and the grave as imagery is always about transformation and is never about some kind of finality. When you look at it that way – a life is over and the person is in the grave, that's the end of it – no. That is a point of transformation. So, interestingly in the next piece that happened, in the very next piece that happened, the *Song Book* for flute which begins with the hymn melody "Christ is Risen," which is a piece filled with a gentle light and a gentle kind of transformed energy. And so, that quality of smile, if you want to put it that way, begins to open up in the seventh symphony even though it has its own large, and sometimes very aggressive, energetic kinds of qualities to it. It is something which is filled with a sense of, "Yeah!" [laughter]

LW: Yeah. I can understand, “Yeah!” It’s a very uplifting piece, despite what it goes through.

DM: Yeah. And you can say it has its references to what its gone through, and we have a quality of the huge, settled smile that things are ok. The eighth symphony goes through another level of thought.

There’s a big movement here which has to do with being settled, and in the process of all this between five, six, seven, and eight, that I am becoming settled. I’m beginning to see life from a clear and objective standpoint. I have my passions and my stuff still, and yet there are considerable times when I’m simply present, and I’m not being pushed around by my mental stuff. So, that character of being present, and simply being present as an open center through which things can move, is the thing which seems to be coming into play. And what that implies for another symphony and other music, we’re going to see.

LW: Well, it is interesting to see – people talk about composers and their periods – it is interesting to see, and not being as familiar with five or eight obviously as I am with seven, but to see how those might be tied together. I think that’s important and significant with even presenting seven.

The third movement; the Bach chorale comes into play. And, I might actually explore that with you at another time. Obviously, Bach is a huge influence. You’ve talked about Stravinsky and some others in there in your history. Actually lots of influences. Do you see anybody else emerging through this, or is this – it’s hard to say, it can’t be just David Maslanka.

DM: Yeah. Well, everything connected and all of the influences rise through the music again. So, I would think that on the bigger symphonic pieces that the primary influence that I can point to is probably Shostakovich as a symphony writer. The guy is amazing! [laughter]

LW: I think of him, I look at him and think he was writing angry happy music – what he was forced to do in his history and biography. Maybe that’s too simply stated, but there’s a certain power in there that’s uniquely him.

DM: So a movement like the third movement which is just like this big energy thing which happens, I refer it in my own mind to that quality of energy which Shostakovich was able to generate. And when he gets stuff cranked, it is just cranked. He just does it to its full value. Something that I admire about him so much is that there is no half measure in his music, no half gesture. It goes the full value that it has to go with the situation that he’s in. And that’s something that I have always aspired to, and I think things have succeeded. So a movement like the third just has a large, satisfying character to it to me. It just makes me smile. I love that energy.

LW: I was just thinking of that huge bass drum at the end. What a satisfying moment!

DM: I conducted the piece once. Gregg Hanson had prepared it, but he was about to have shoulder surgery and was not able to do the performance and asked if I would come in and conduct the performance. So he had it prepared, and I think we did three rehearsals with the ensemble with his guidance on elements of conducting – mainly, back off and not try to make the thing happen, especially in that third movement. I was able, essentially, to ride the horse in a light way, and it just made me smile. These people are playing like crazy. There's nothing that I'm going to do to terribly influence what they're doing [laughter], and so I'm, in a very gentle way in that movement, keeping time. While this thing is happening, I'm standing here like this with the small gestures, and these are the entrances and so on and so on and so on. It was just fun!

LW: At Kentucky I had the chance to rehearse that movement a few times, and it is fun! One last question, and time is really short. The layering that you have in your music, and I'm thinking of moments where you have, like in 4/2 [sings half-note melody from measures 88 & 89 of third movement] and the piccolos and keyboards are going nuts! They're going absolutely nuts around that. There's just multiple layers of activity going on that all come together and work. And, again, I'm not even sure what question I want to ask with that. This layering of different layers of activity. I don't know if there's anything coming to your head that you can speak to that at all.

DM: Well, I don't know. Maybe that's something we can explore further another time. It seems like it would be getting into a whole other level of thought.

LW: Well, let's do it another time then. We've spent a lot of time here, and I just can't say how much I appreciate it. I really, really do.

DM: I appreciate your interest. It's been a nice thing for me to see the character of your questions and the character of your own intelligence.

APPENDIX D: Interview with Stephen Steele

Steele is the Director of Bands at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois. He is a close friend of David Maslanka's and a leading advocate for his music. He has recorded extensively releasing many recordings of Maslanka's music and others. The following interview took place via telephone on March 26, 2011. Steele was in his office at Illinois State University. The author was in his office at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. The transcript of this interview has been approved by Steele.

Abbreviations: SS = Stephen Steele; LW = Lane Weaver

LW: With your permission can I record this?

SS: Sure.

LW: Ok, good. Well, I'd like to start with some general questions on you as a conductor and some ideas and philosophies there, maybe move into Dr. Maslanka himself and your relationship with him, the commissioning process and what brought about Symphony No. 7, and then maybe a little bit on the piece itself, some specifics there.

SS: Ok.

LW: Well, just starting off, this is kind of like one of those questions when you're doing an interview, "What's your philosophy of education?" – and I hate those questions – but maybe give me just some perspective on where you come from as a conductor, what you believe the role of a conductor is, how you go about in general preparing and rehearsing any piece.

SS: Wow. Well, do you have an hour and a half or two? [laughter]

LW: [laughter] How about that, huh?

SS: Let's see. Where shall we start?

LW: Well, I'm not looking for a whole dissertation on that. I'd just kind of want to get your - if you can highlight it, I know that's a hard thing to do – some of the things you feel are very important as a conductor, the role a conductor takes, and how you go about some things that you like to do to prepare to conduct any piece.

SS: There's the notion that one of our primary responsibilities is to select repertoire, and that's a process, trying to maintain contact with our history, playing selections or compositions that are maybe not quite – haven't stood the test of time yet, and playing new music. So, it's a difficult mix to find, and yet we have to continue selecting and playing repertoire that we believe to be significant, and if we continue to

select repertoire that isn't significant it creates momentum for non-significant music to be written, which seems to be a lot. Does that make any sense at all?

LW: Sure, yeah. Absolutely it does.

SS: I think that's one of the primary responsibilities of the conductor is the notion of building ensemble through good selection of repertoire. "Band music," quote-unquote, seems to be – a lot of our colleagues don't like anything if it's a little over ten minutes long. It's too long. So, building a program of five, six, or seven five to ten minute pieces is an interesting task. [laughter]

LW: Right.

SS: Especially when we consider the notion that of those five to ten minute pieces, probably three-quarters of them or more won't ever be heard again, or fifty years from now no one will even know them. So, that's a very difficult part of what we do, I think. I don't know about your experiences on the podium, but I have found that ensembles respond to quality repertoire in a natural way. And pieces of music that do not necessarily have any significance or depth to them, they find it difficult to deal with. I don't know if I'm making any sense or not. It's kind of a touchy area because different people like different things for different reasons, if you know what I mean.

LW: Sure.

SS: I've found it doesn't matter how difficult a piece is, if the ensemble is attracted to it and committed to it, they'll do whatever they have to to commit to the piece. On the other hand, pieces that – well, we're playing something, I won't tell you what we're playing, we're playing something with a soloist, and the soloist and I yesterday finally made some progress in really kind of a nasty little section. It's only about thirty bars long. The piece is about twenty-six minutes, and there's this thirty measures that's just nasty. We finally made some progress with it, and we were happy about it. But, then I mentioned to him, I said, "I guess we'll have to wait to find out if we'll get rewards." [laughter] You know, the rewards that come from really stellar music and the effort that goes into it make it worthwhile, but I don't know if we're going to reap the rewards other than the satisfaction of conquering the little bastard. You know what I mean?

LW: Sure, yeah.

SS: Did that help at all? Is that the direction you were looking for?

LW: Yeah. I don't know if I was looking for any specific direction. I just kind of wanted to see what your thoughts are.

SS: Ok. And philosophically in preparing a score, especially a new score – there's a really good quote in one of the conducting books, and I can't remember which

one it is right now off the top of my head, but essentially it says reading a score is like taking a walk through the woods, and every time you walk through the woods you see something new and something different. And that's absolutely true. It's just constant walking through the woods.

I prepare for rehearsal differently than that. The macro preparation is reading, and I typically read with the metronome turned on really low just clicking, and I try not to stop my eye and thought process, which in an active office is kind of a challenge.

LW: [laughter] Understood.

SS: [laughter] Then our rehearsal preparation for any piece, whether it's a new piece or not, is the same, and that is the period of time that we have to devote to it, the number of rehearsals we have to devote to it – the beginning and end of that process for us is complete big picture. I won't stop unless there is something I just have to stop for. I let the errors fall and let them go, and we just read. And then the end of the rehearsal cycle and the week of the concert, we go back to full reads again. And that comes from frustration as an ensemble player myself being in ensembles that never played the whole.

LW: Right.

SS: And you know, I just don't think the music speaks if we're constantly picking at it. So, we get to a point in time – and it is a point in time, it's like that last two or three rehearsals depending on the total number of rehearsals – and we just read. And, I like to try to do it in concert order, so that everybody, especially the brass, has a notion of, "Geez. What kind of pacing do I need to make it to the end of this program?" And especially on Maslanka. You just have to have a notion of how much work it's going to be to finish the piece.

And then the individual rehearsals, I tend to – it's a written out script, it's a lesson plan. I don't use names, I use instrument names and not ensemble member names, and we identify similar lines. It's exposing the score aurally is the best way I can describe it. An obvious thing might be the motor, the harmonic language over the motor, and the melodic line. There's a very simple thought process. A lot of music isn't that simple to find in the score, but that's our process. And, the students know exactly to the measure what I'm going to quote-unquote "decompose" at this next rehearsal, because it's a published rehearsal plan. It might be letter C to letter E, and the notion there is that, by golly, you'd better have all the technique and issues on the page finished so that we can make some music and explore what's on the page with each other and share for the rest of the ensemble what everybody's playing, so there a notion of how everything fits together.

It's an amazing process, because the first time we read in that rehearsal, the first time we read that C to E section, there is a sound of whatever, and then I tear it down and put it back together and it's completely different sound. And there is actually very little discussion. It's just tear it down and put it back together. And I know it's just the fact that awareness of the score and awareness of who you're playing with, even if it's subliminal, cleans almost everything up by itself. So, that's the process that we go through.

LW: Ok, alright. I like that. One more general question before we get into Dr. Maslanka. That goes again to any piece that you're preparing, how much do you like to get into the philosophy, for lack of a better word, or even the biography of the composer. How much does that influence your preparation.

SS: You mean with the ensemble or myself?

LW: Either, or.

SS: Ok. With myself I tend to like to know a little bit about who's music we're playing, and, if it's new music, I like to have conversations with that person either via email or personally. The current crop of composers are very, very aggressively marketing their own music, so they're very anxious to talk and very anxious to share email and notions. And you kind of learn something about if there's depth before you even get into the piece.

I don't think looking at a score, I can't look at a score and determine depth. I can't do that. I don't have that capacity. I get a sense of whether there might be [depth], or more likely I might get a sense whether there might not be. But there are always surprises.

Certainly with the ensemble I don't spend time lecturing. We have an hour and fifty minute rehearsal, and probably a total of seven or eight minutes of that hour and fifty minutes is not on task. I don't do any talking at all, and if I do it's very sporadic and not complete sentences just to get things going. But, I will give a little bit of history occasionally, a little touch here and a little touch there, or a little bio information here and there, and then encourage students to do more on their own. Frequently they do anyway, especially if they're drawn to a composer or a piece. It's so fast now. They find more information in ten minutes than we used to be able to find in a week.

LW: Right. Uh-huh.

SS: Does that help?

LW: Yeah, I really like that. Ok, well, maybe if we could get into Dr. Maslanka himself, maybe if you could just start by telling me about your relationship with him, how it began.

SS: Sure. Yeah, it's a really fun and interesting story. And, I have a strong hunch that the opportunities that I've found have been there for many, many people, but for whatever reason they didn't follow through. When I was at the University of Arizona doing what you're doing – finishing a degree, and I was running the athletic bands, and the second band, and teaching conducting and stuff – my boss left and went to another institution. He went to the University of Illinois. And, that left me as the acting director of bands for a year. My previous life had been fifteen years in the public schools. Well, that repertoire doesn't necessarily fit, although I was doing some good repertoire. But, I started exploring – this was in 1985, '84-85 or '85-86, one of those academic years – I

was left with the top band; plus marching band, thank you; plus the pep bands, thank you; you know, plus, plus, plus. I almost died that year. You can relate.

LW: [laughter] I understand. I do.

SS: A colleague of mine at the University of Arizona – well, you might actually know the name, Gary Cook, he’s got the percussion method book for university percussion studios in the percussion class; about seventeen thousand pounds of stuff – but, anyway, he had two recordings. And, he had just met Michael Colgrass and had a recording of *Winds of Nagual*, and he had a recording of New England Conservatory playing that and a recording of [Maslanka’s] *A Child’s Garden of Dreams* that John Paynter had done.

LW: Yeah.

SS: Just two cassettes, and he said, “These are pretty cool. You might listen to them.” We were friends and we talked a lot. We talked about repertoire and what not, and here were two pieces that didn’t fit in the quote-unquote “mainstream” of what band music is all about. In that period of time we were still struggling to get away from nothing but transcriptions and Alfred Reed. I mean, you know, that was it with the exception of the Hindemith symphony, the Persichetti symphony. A few other things were there, but, you know, just kind of shallow water that we were walking, and, these two pieces were very deep for me. I programmed them both that year, and the students hated them both. But, I didn’t.

In the process of working *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*, I called Dr. Maslanka in New York in his Manhattan apartment, and we talked about some things and looked at the score and stuff. And then a year passed and I finished my degree, and I had a new boss, so I didn’t have to do the top band anymore, and then I got the job here in the fall of ’87.

Well, this place was a complete disaster. There were thirty-five wind majors in the School of Music, and the band was awful. I think either in the fall of ’88 or spring of ’89 I programmed *A Child’s Garden of Dreams*. First of all, looking back now twenty-five years later, I think that was a complete idiot [thing to do]. We didn’t have – Lane, I was teaching notes and rhythms and fingerings...

LW: Oh, wow.

SS: ...in the top band of a university. And, you know, sometimes I forget [laughter] that that’s where we’ve been. Because, you know, I get ticked off in first rehearsals when nuances are missed, and I was teaching...“No, that’s middle finger, guy.” [laughter]

LW: Yeah, yeah. [laughter]

SS: Try this alternate fingering. You know, it was just like being in the public schools, quite frankly, and my last high school band was far better than what I found here. But, anyway, in the course of preparing *A Child’s Garden of Dreams* one of our

clarinet players...approached me, like two weeks before the concert and said, "I can't play this." I said, "Well, we'll just practice a little bit!" "No, no, no. You don't understand. I cannot play this piece." "Well, why?" "Because it's about the devil." I said, "Excuse me?" [laughter] "No, it's about the devil."

So, I'm sitting in the same office where we sat down and called David, and David talked to her for an hour about the piece. She did some crying and some other things, and I thanked David, and he hung up. But, she didn't play the piece, I mean ended up not playing. That was our next contact – that experience. And then – oh, I take that back. I have to back up one year. This would be the spring; this would be February of 1987, my last year at Arizona just before I came to Illinois State. [College Band Directors National Association] was at Northwestern, and John Paynter premiered *Symphony No. 3*. I'm sorry, *Symphony No. 2*.

LW: [Symphony] 2. Yeah, that's right.

SS: *Symphony No. 2* combining his symphonic band and his wind ensemble in a marathon four-hour concert. [laughter] And, I was sitting in the balcony of Pick-Staiger [Concert Hall] with Gary Green, who had been a friend for – I had taught in the northwest in Oregon in the '70s and he was teaching in Spokane, Washington, at the time. We had rival high school bands; we bumped into each other, especially with the jazz bands occasionally. So, we knew each other, and we got to know each other better when I was teaching high school in Arizona and he was still teaching high school in Washington. Long story short, now we're sitting together at CBDNA and *Symphony No. 2* just blew us right out of our chairs. And John used an ensemble of about ninety or one hundred for that piece.

LW: Wow!

SS: He was making a statement about wind ensemble versus symphonic band, and of course he did both wind ensemble and symphonic band. It was a bunch of whoop-de-do from the late '60s through maybe even still existing today, that, "Bands should be big," and other guys, "Bands should be small." And wind ensemble – yada, yada, yada. Frederick Fennell – yada, yada, yada. And, so you know, he was making some sort of personal statement, because on that program the Wind Ensemble played something one on a part by Messiaen. He did a Persichetti thing with choir, one on a part. There was literally, I think there was a full three hours of concertizing. And he was just making a statement to CBDNA right there. And, it was very cool. Other guys were pissed, but I thought it was very cool! [laughter] "Yes sir, Mr. Paynter. I get it."

But, anyway, obviously Gary Green was hammered by that. Within that year, or maybe he was already there – he may have already been at the University of Connecticut by that time - but, almost immediately he asked David for a piece commissioned by the University of Connecticut. And that turned out to be *Symphony No. 3*.

LW: Right.

SS: And, that was a straight wind ensemble piece, which Symphony No. 2 wasn't. But, that was because – my opinion only – the Big Ten band directors commissioned it. So, the Big Ten bands at that time, and still even somewhat today, are pretty good sized ensembles. I think that probably drove Maslanka's thinking on the instrumentation and size and scope. But, [Symphony] 3 went small.

So, Gary was really excited about it, and he had the score in the summer. Must be '90, maybe? No, '89. I'm not sure of the timing right now. [He was] copying the parts because David wasn't going to copy the parts. Green copied all the parts, and that's a disaster because his hand is just awful. That's how the parts existed for a long time. They are good parts now, but they weren't then. So, Gary and I were hanging a little bit in the summer, and he was whining about stuff and the parts, and I committed to going to the premier, which I did. I went to Stoors. I think I made two rehearsals and the concert. At that time he said, "Why don't you take Dr. Maslanka to dinner." I think it was just because he wanted to get rid of him. [laughter]

So, David and I went to dinner, and we talked for a long time, and I started to understand a little bit more about what was going on. That spring of that year we played Symphony No. 3, and he came to the campus for the first time when we did that. Green actually came to the campus for that as well. And, then, let's see, from about that point forward our relationship started getting more and more committed to his music and to building an understanding. The Mass we performed was probably late 90s. I don't remember. Symphony No. 4, I went to the premier there. [Jerry] Junkin commissioned a ten-minute work and out came Symphony No. 4. And after that I asked him to write a symphony, and that was Symphony No. 5. And I built a consortium for that and Symphony No. 7. We built a consortium for the percussion concerto, a consortium for – I was in the consortium for the flute concerto and the trombone concerto and the clarinet concerto, in the consortium for the double horn concerto, *Sea Dreams*. But, anyway, he was here every year after that. Then we started – with Symphony No. 5, we performed that at CBDNA in Denton and made our first CD off that program. And then we began doing basically a CD project a year. It's not always David's music, but usually his music is on the CD, and I think we have thirteen CDs. So, that started around 2000, I guess, with Symphony No. 5. And then [Symphony No.] 7 you asked about was the second – in fact, he told me once that I was the only person to ever actually commission a symphony.

LW: Yeah, he's told me the same thing.

SS: Ok. People commissioned things that turned out to be symphonies.

LW: Correct. Yeah.

SS: You know, we're in the process of building a consortium right now for No. 9, and everybody's laughing. Nobody does – nine is not a good number. But the short symphony [*Give Us This Day*] doesn't have a number, so there's a symphony. And, he has two *Child's Garden of Dreams*, and those are really symphonies.

LW: There you go. Ok.

SS: So, I figure this is about twelve.

LW: There you go.

SS: [laughter] Does that give you enough on our relationship?

LW: Yeah! And to be honest, knowing it's twelve makes me feel a little better.

SS: [laughter] Well, I don't know. It's just guessing, if you start adding it up, it's eleven or twelve. But, we communicate freely and ultimately on a regular basis through email. We used to talk on the phone. And, I kept all my handwritten communication and all the mail communication, so someday someone can just go through and build – because the conversations aren't necessarily always about what I'm doing or what he's writing, but more general, where he's travelling and who he's talking to. So, there's a wealth of information. I think there are over four thousand emails right now and a file of handwritten communication that will eventually be available to somebody to use for research. It's not going to be me. I'm too tired to do that. But, it will be available to them. But, anyway, so I don't remember what my point was. [laughter]

LW: No, we were just talking about your relationship.

SS: Yeah. One other thing that's very cool, he stays at the house now, he has for about ten, maybe twelve years. And, he'll stay sometimes for a week or ten days, depending on what we're working on as a project. And, we've literally – I'm a very hard person to get along with. You could ask my ex-wife and any number of ex-friends, but he and I literally have never had a cross word. Ever. We are diametrically the opposite politically and in many other ways, and we've never really had a cross word. We've had disagreements, but not anger. The Persichetti CD that just came out, the John Barnes Chance CD, the Karel Husa CD, he produced all of those for me.

LW: Oh, wow.

SS: He's been involved in pretty much everything we've done that's been produced for CD.

LW: Wow. That's such a close relationship. That's kind of neat to see.

SS: You know, and that was my point when we started. I'm sure many, many, many, many colleagues have had the opportunity, but not followed through. And we've talked about this. Many times he gets very frustrated. "So-and-so's playing something, and I haven't heard a word from them."

Well, there are two things. One, people don't think he has the time or inclination, and he does! It's his music! He wants to be involved in it! And the other thing is a lot of pieces like *Symphony No. 2, A Child's Garden of Dreams*, *Symphony No. 3*, now the short symphony *Give Us This Day*, are being played so much by so many people that

people are getting to a point where they feel like they don't need communication anymore, maybe.

He made a comment, Gary Green did Symphony No. 4 with the Texas All-State Band this last winter with one hundred and sixty kids. And it worked. [laughter]

LW: Wow!

SS: I didn't hear it, but Gary said it worked, so it did. Eastman is playing his music. Eastman is involved in the consortium now. Although, interesting piece, and you'll have to get the details from David, but Fennell was one of the early people who encouraged him as a composer in New York.

LW: Right. I remember reading that with the piano concerto.

SS: The piano concerto! That's a correct statement. Alright, so you already have all that.

LW: Yeah, yeah. Good connection. Well, let me go with another kind of broad, general statement and just whatever terms come to your mind – and I think I might have hinted at this in an email that I'd sent. But, if you can categorize, and put this in quotes, "Maslanka" music, what is "Maslanka" music?

SS: I don't know. That's a straight answer. I don't know. I know that – let me give you an example, and we're talking about depth and breadth of not surface music, not jingles, but actual art. When we started our process on the trombone concerto, we read it with the soloist there. We read it down, and I had to stop because half the ensemble was crying.

LW: Hmm. Wow.

SS: That's in a first read. [laughter]

LW: That's a powerful moment, I'm sure.

SS: It is, and those moments come extremely frequently in David's music and very seldom in anybody else's music. And I'm not talking about the aesthetic response to perfect pitch, or a ringing chord, or a balanced sound that do come. They do. But the music itself – in fact, I made a comment to David one time. One of our colleagues, I think it was Symphony No. 5, was in the consortium for Symphony No. 5 and gave it five rehearsals and a performance. And the performance was awful, but the music still spoke. And I told David, "The notes don't have to be played in your music." I mean it's nice if they are, but the music has that much power that it comes through in an inadequate playing. And I don't know very many people's music that can overcome that.

LW: Yeah. Well, you know what, I like that. And, I haven't asked many people that question, but I think what you just said really speaks volumes to what makes it effective. So, I thank you for sharing that. I appreciate that.

SS: I just don't know. I just don't know what it is. I don't. There's a moment, my second band's playing in Symphony No. 8 right now, and there's a moment in the first movement that just raises my hair and always has and does every time we get to it. Every time! It doesn't matter if it's being played amazingly well. That moment is a stunning moment, and what it is I don't know. I suppose I could sit down and analyze it and come up with an intelligent academic reason, but I'm not into that. I'm into – this music feels good. I like stuff that feels good, you know, [laughter] or presents some kind of power to me musically or rewards musically, and his music is rewarding to me musically. It's not rewarding musically to everybody, and I feel sorry for those people, and I don't know why that is. They're just different I guess.

LW: Right. I can appreciate that. Well, you've kind of touched on the next direction that I was going which is why Maslanka is worth performing. Why is it worth performing for the conductor, for the players, for the audience? You kind of touched on that. I don't know if you want to expand on that any more. Or, do you see any negatives to performing Maslanka?

SS: Here's some thoughts that I have on it, and they're just kind of going to be random.

LW: Sure.

SS: A lot of my friends resist playing David's music because of the difficulty level. But, they've played difficult music. You know what I mean?

LW: I think so.

SS: They've played difficult music, but then they resist David's and maybe because David's difficult music also has a length to the landscape as well. If you've talked to him about extracting movements, then you know how he feels about extracting movements.

LW: [laughter] Yeah!

SS: I have no confirmation of this and just a notion that that's why Symphony No. 4 has no break in the movements, but it's clearly movements.

LW: You know what, I've read – and I can't tell you exactly where, maybe in the dissertation that was written on either [Symphony] No. 3 or No. 4 - whoever did that. There was a moment in an interview with Dr. Maslanka – and you can't tell what the tone is, but it might be tongue-in-cheek – where he said that that was the reason he didn't put in any breaks.

SS: He's never said that to me, and I've never asked, but I've always suspected because the finale of No. 2 is extracted so much, and yet the rest of No. 2 is stunning music.

LW: Yeah it is.

SS: But, just the finale and the speed of the movement and the guttural response. A large band can do it. Doesn't have to be a small group to do it. So, I've always had the notion that he just didn't put breaks in there, because there are clearly movements. I mean it's very clear that there are separate movements throughout.

LW: Right, we...

SS: We started down a track and I got lost. And what was the track? Why do people – what are the rewards or disadvantages, why do people not play his music? I think some people, boy, how do you say this? I think some people are afraid of where his music kind of takes you. I think they're not exactly sure how to deal with the emotional power that comes from his music. And, I think that scares the hell out of them. The friends that I have that are playing his music a lot, when they take a year off of his music, every one of them to a person says, "I can't do this. I have to go back and play something of his. And, anywhere in the country anyone that knows what we're doing thinks that's all we do. Playing Maslanka's music. So, because of that we started posting our rep online. We're playing a hell of a lot of rep! We do play David's music, yes, but that's not all we play. And I don't say that in a defensive manner.

It's interesting what people's notion becomes. Some people like nothing but Mozart. Ok, fine. I have no problem with that. We're doing the *Gran Partita* right now. That's cool. I like it, too. But, the same kids that are playing the *Gran Partita* right now are dying to play No. 9 in November. They're already talking about it. And, there's a power built in there that's, I mean that's beyond the music. You see what I mean? They're already excited about something that's not going to happen for six months. And in university life, kids don't get excited about very much. [laughter]

LW: [laughter] Yeah, I think that's a fair statement, too. Well, what about an audience? What do you want an audience, and maybe I should extend this to players, what do you want as a conductor, as an advocate for Maslanka, what do you want them to get out of his music?

SS: Whatever it brings to them. Period. This is a very interesting cycle. The top band is playing *Give Us This Day*, which the second band recorded three years ago for Albany. And, the second band is playing *No. 8*, which the top band recorded two years ago for Albany. So, it's flipped right now. The first band is playing a piece that they read down without issue, and yet they're finding the power in the piece. And, the second band is struggling...to play *No. 8*. For the first time in my life, the first rehearsal for *No. 8* was three weeks ago on a Monday. And, that band rehearses at four o'clock. We rehearse in the concert hall, unless somebody needs that hall, but our normal rehearsal

space is in the concert hall. I walked into the concert hall at a quarter to four and could have started rehearsal. Everybody was in their chair ready to play.

LW: Wow.

SS: [laughter] How many times to you stand on the podium ready to start and have one straggler? I mean, the stragglers happen. There was no straggler. I mean, everybody was there. Everybody was in their chair. Everybody was ready to play, and they're chomping at the bit. So, there's a power there that. It's just indescribable.

I have family of our students who are non-musicians that have bawled through a concert.

LW: Yeah, I can relate to that. I've shared with my family, at least No. 7 with my family, too. And, there's something powerful there. I don't know how to say it.

SS: I don't know what it is. I have no idea what it is. And maybe there's and academician who can say this is what he's doing. I don't think David thinks that way. I think David – actually, he says he's a conduit, I think he believes he's a conduit...I think he actually feels that he's a conduit and that he has to intellectualize the scoring and intellectualize the note-making, but the power is via conduit.

And, I'm sorry, Lane, most of our colleagues can't accept that. Because it's beyond the scope of anything – it's another dimension that we don't think in. And so we can't accept it. It's completely unknown to us. I accept it for its face value. And in private conversations once, maybe twice, he's taken me some places I've never been. Ever. Or since. Before, or since. It's not frightening, it was exciting, and I think he showed me how I can do that on my own, but I don't. That's just not who I am. So, I just don't do that. [laughter]

LW: Right. Yeah, I understand. Well, even that idea of being a conduit sort of dovetails into my next space that I want to explore. Obviously, he has a very unique compositional process and way he goes about bringing the music to be. How does that affect how you approach his music?

SS: It doesn't.

LW: It doesn't.

SS: No. It doesn't. You know he's goes through the Bach chorale things as warm up every day. And, he's been doing that for like thirty years. He can tell you much more about it than I can. He decided to start making wind arrangements of them, and, as he worked his way through as his warm up, he just started making arrangements. And he started collecting them, and now they're in a book. That's how we start every rehearsal.

Well, the students find those chorales in his music. "This is Chorale #66. This is Chorale #67." I don't even pay attention to that. I just don't. I'm worried about making music. They connect way faster than I do, way more quickly. Is everything chorale based? No, I don't think so, but I think a lot of people think everything is chorale based.

Have you heard No. 8?

LW: Yeah. Uh huh.

SS: The opening them in the soprano sax, and then it's stated in the timpani.
[sings theme]

LW: Right.

SS: That is literally there for forty minutes. Always there. I mean, amazing compositional power and technique. It's always there, and the students find it as fast as I do. They hear it and they connect to it. I've conducted most of his wind music, certainly not all of it. And I can tell you – I'll give you a great example – we did the *Mass* three times, three performances in one week. It's two hours long, and every time I turned the page to the last page I went, "No way!" And that's happened on every big piece. "No way! We can't possibly be done!" I get that into the moment of the music, that deep into the music that it's never the racehorse getting to the barn. I'm turning the page and I'm shocked. "No way! We can't be done!"

The power – No. 8 between movements there wasn't a sound, and we probably had three or four hundred people in the hall. There wasn't a sound. Nothing. Not a cough. Nothing. Dead silence. So, I mean, there's something there that – and I love the Hindemith symphony, but between the movements there's noise. [laughter] There's shuffling. There's paper shuffling. There's people getting cough drops out. You hear it all. In his music between the movements, there's nothing! What makes that happen? I don't know. I don't know.

LW: Yeah. Too big for words, I think.

SS: Yeah! He grabs – right away No. 8 starts so simply, and a minute in you are grabbed by the throat. You're not moving.

LW: Yeah, and that's exactly how I felt about No. 7 when I heard it for the first time. In a rehearsal of all things.

SS: At Kentucky.

LW: At Kentucky.

SS: Actually, I think I was there. I was there for the performance. I've been at Cody's for that, something else, *and No. 8*.

LW: Yeah, well, I think you came for Colgrass didn't you?

SS: Yes, I came for Colgrass as well.

LW: I did have the chance to actually meet you and shake your hand at that point.

SS: Well, yay, we shook hands. [laughter]

LW: Yeah, for whatever that means. [laughter]

SS: Exactly.

LW: Well, maybe one last question then I'd like to get into the commissioning process. Is there a way you would encourage somebody to prepare to hear Maslanka's music who has never heard it before? Or, is there even a way to do that?

SS: No, I don't think there is. I really don't think there is. I will tell you we're going to play the short symphony for our high school concert band festival, and I won't say anything about it, and it will have completely grabbed – there will be six, seven, eight hundred high school kids and they'll be completely grabbed and overwhelmed by the power of the piece. I already know that. That's why we're programming it. [laughter]

LW: There you go!

SS: I don't know. And, you know, it's interesting because not everybody on the faculty are supportive of David's music. You know, they're just not. They don't get it. Well, and they don't get why the kids are so excited. So, it's just different for different people.

LW: Yeah, it is. Even in our state convention, our KMEA convention that was about a month ago. And, again, some groups did just single movements, the first movement of No. 7 and the last movement of No. 2. I saw one of my colleagues, one of my friends that I had met, and he was there for the first movement of No. 7. I said, "Hey, what did you think of that?" And, he said, "I don't get it. I don't understand it, and I don't like it." I have a hard time relating to that.

SS: [laughter] Well, I think if you sit and – I don't know, I'm thinking out loud – maybe if you sit and try to analyze or try to intellectualize while the music is going, you're not on the trip. You're not consumed by the music. You're not into the music. You're trying to figure out what the hell is going on. And, I think your friend's reaction is fairly common with our colleagues. But, by the same token there are a lot of people that are completely taken with his music. The interesting thing is, and David and I have talked about it, you're what thirty-three? Thirty-four?

LW: Thirty-five.

SS: It's your generation that is more excited, because there are more of you that have experienced it and have the excitement, and it's just a groundswell that will continue. Now your students will go out. And, so, we call it ripple effect, but it's happening. Predominantly the younger people are doing more Maslanka than the older conductors are. And, interestingly enough, Japan, Argentina, Slovenia, upper east

European countries. Have you seen the YouTube of No. 5 with the, like, one hundred-piece community band?

LW: No, I haven't.

SS: It's stunning! [laughter] A one hundred-piece community band. There's a gigantic community band on YouTube doing No. 8!

LW: Where are they from?

SS: Europe some place.

LW: Some area in Europe. I'll be darned.

SS: Portugal, maybe. I don't know. But, we're too snobbish here. And, you know, it's interesting, the U.K., nobody in the U.K. has heard of his music. But, it's working its way around the world in its own way.

I was in Slovenia last May, and I'm walking into the concert hall, and I see a guy with our clarinet concert CD in his hand. It's random. In Slovenia!

LW: Wow.

SS: That's how, you know, when music touches people it touches people, and, if you're a snob, and you're trying to intellectualize, and you're whatever you are, and you say, "No. David's music doesn't get to me," it doesn't. But then you look around, and it's getting to other people, take a clue from that, don't you think? [laughter]

LW: Yeah, maybe so. Maybe so. Well, if you're still good with time?

SS: I'm fine. I'm going to go home and watch the golf tournament.

LW: There you go. [laughter] Let me get into the symphony itself, and maybe if you have some background on how that commission came about – whether you wanted another symphony from him, and what sort of emotional and spiritual connections that came through in the process of the piece being written.

SS: Let's see, we did – we must have premiered that in '05. Yeah?

LW: Yeah, the date on it is '04. On the score.

SS: Right. So, and No. 4 was premiered when, '01? But, anyway, no wait, No. 5 we did in Denton in '01. So, when we're doing No. 5, and David actually travelled with us in the bus and everything on No. 5. It was a lot of fun. So, he was with us the whole like two weeks. But, we already started talking about No. 5 then. I said, "I want No. 5." I mean, No. 7.

LW: No. 7. Ok.

SS: When we were in the process of performing and recording No. 5, we started talking about No. 7. And, at that time we also tried to build what we thought would be an exciting package of new music. Matt Halper and Sam Zyman were two other composers that we were familiar with, and we commissioned them all three at the same time. No. 7, a flute concerto from Halper and a piece by Sam Zyman to open the concert. And, we did that with the notion of just doing a tour across I-80 to New York, playing in Lincoln Center, and then coming home and, I think, producing a CD. That all came about during No. 5. And, I think there were probably two or three years before No. 7 actually happened. Yeah, probably, because No. 6 is in there, the orchestra piece, and I don't know. I know the clarinet concerto is not in there.

LW: Well, the flute *Song Book* came after No. 5, I know.

SS: So, yes. Gary Green commissioned the flute concerto, if I'm not mistaken, and we were part of that. And, we recorded it the next year, and that would be the year before – in fact, during the flute concerto is when we decided Halper would write a flute concerto for Kim [Risinger], our flute teacher. In that same period of time is when David met Sam Zyman, who teaches in New York, a composition teacher at Lincoln Center. And, so, that's how we got connected with Sam, and all of that came about. The consortium was actually a gigantic consortium because all three pieces were part of the consortium. Which I get serious hesitation from guys now when I try to combine things. They're not interested in combinations. And what happens is they're interested in maybe one of the guys or two of the guys, but not all three. So, you blow their membership. You know what I mean?

LW: Yeah.

SS: I don't do that anymore. And, there are other reasons I don't do that anymore, but we'll get to that probably. So, that's the genesis of No. 7, and it was specifically requesting a symphony knowing that we were going to go to New York, knowing that we were going to do a CD, and all of that stuff.

LW: Ok.

SS: No. 8 and No. 9 are, "Let's just keep going!" [laughter] That's what those are.

LW: Sure. Yeah. I would want to keep going, too. Why not?

SS: You know, one of my friends said one time – and he's a serious friend, he's a seriously talented, he's retired now, he's a seriously talented musician and conductor, and the only two pieces of David's he's done is *A Child's Garden of Dreams* and the finale to Symphony No. 2. He did the finale to Symphony No. 2 at a national convention, at an MENC convention. That's the only pieces of David's he's done. And, he said, "You are

doing him a great disservice by commissioning him, continuing to commission band works. He needs to do other works, as well.” Well, he does! You know, he’s doing chamber music. He’s doing piano music. He’s doing all kinds of commissions, but the band world is only aware of his wind band commissions.

LW: Yeah. His catalog is amazing.

SS: Oh, it’s stunning! Yeah, it’s a stunning catalog. That means to me that my friend has never looked on his web site.

LW: Yeah, it’s all right there! No questions about it. Well, was there anything in the commissioning process that came about – and I don’t know from your side, I’ve heard a little bit from his side – that has any special...

SS: I know where you’re going, and the answer is no. But, that’s not to say it wasn’t there, and I wasn’t aware of it.

LW: Ok. That’s fair enough.

SS: And, I say that because I know for a fact that when somebody commissions and says, “I want you to write a piece for me,” and David says, “Well, send me something of yours,” or, “Let’s talk,” or something...

LW: Right.

SS: ...so, it becomes more personal. And, I’m not exactly sure how all that works for David, that may be part of his meditation and all that. That’s his business, and I’m not into his business. But, we’ve had a relationship for twenty years now, so I don’t know how much he draws on that relationship when he composes. I have no idea. Or, if he even does.

LW: Yeah. Well, I do know, and I’m sure that he’s shared it with you – and part of the reason I wanted to talk to you as well – during his meditations for No. 7, he had some very specific images that came to his mind that dealt with you and your health and some of the struggles that I understand might have happened along those lines.

SS: He’s shared that with me, and he predicted some health problems and they came true, but he also predicted some serious health problems that haven’t come about yet. And, I’m knocking on my desk, which is solid oak! [laughter] But, I made some drastic changes, personal changes in my life, and one of them is a marriage to a woman who’s an amazing musician and a complete supporter of what I do and [is] part of what I do. And, I think that in his estimation has cleaned up my health. That’s his impression of where I am. My doctor says I’m fine. [laughter]

LW: I’m glad to hear that!

SS: And I go to the doctor, you know? I don't just listen to David Maslanka.
[laughter]

LW: [laughter] Another fair point.

SS: I do. I have complete trust in David, but I still go to the doctor.

LW: There you go. Trust and verify. Right?

SS: That's right.

LW: Well, with those images, and they are personal images that he shared with me, are you comfortable with me including those in my paper?

SS: Heavens, yes! I have no issues. Your paper will be read by a lot of people who are either exploring David, some of them with jaundiced eye, and so they're not going to get it anyway. So, what difference does it make?

LW: Well, that's true, too. I understand that, too. Ok. Let's maybe get into the piece specifically itself. When you think about No. 7, what stand out about it to you? How do you describe it?

SS: Do you mind if I grab my score?

LW: No, not at all! I'll grab mine as well.

SS: Hang on. Ok. Well, the first thing – and a friend of mine heard a rehearsal of *No. 7* and said, "I wish he would have waited for the piano." And, to me the piano is it.

LW: You said he wish he would have waited for the piano?

SS: Yeah, waited for the piano to make its statement.

LW: Oh, ok.

SS: And, the piano to me is it. And, the first wind statement after the piano statement is one of those power moments in my estimation. I need to go back and do this again, now that I'm looking at the score. I haven't looked at it for a long time.

The first thing that jumps out at me when I look at the score is the technique, because it's so black. [laughter] The other thing that jumps out at me when I look at his scores are the white pages, I mean, there's just tons of white pages. And, I've come to know, and believe, and trust the fact that the white pages are where the difficulty lies. Being a band director, I used to only look at the technique and go, "How are we going to make that happen?" And, now I understand that's easy. I mean, in our recording session the technique usually isn't even edited, and that's probably why you hear

technical errors in it. [laughter] But, the hard part is all the white pages. That's where the difficulty has come.

The power of that gigantic flute solo with no notes. I mean, flute players get paid by the note, and she's looking at nothing. And, I love her to death. She's in the Navy Band now. But, anyway, the flute comes to mind immediately. The big piano thing.

LW: You're talking in the second movement, right?

SS: No, I was looking at page forty-three. Forty-two.

LW: Oh, ok. Sure. Oh, yeah, where everything is displaced by half a beat.

SS: Yeah. [laughter] I look at the beginning of the second movement and immediately a face comes to mind, the kid playing the harmon mute thing. I mean, that thing just looks like nothing, you know? Page fifty and fifty-one look like nothing.

LW: Right.

SS: And yet, it's so hard! Yeah. What do I think? I don't know what I think.

LW: I have that same thought, I tell you.

SS: No, I really don't know that I think. Like for example, I'm looking at fifty-seven. I've played so much of David's music that I look at page fifty-seven and measure forty, and I know what I have to do to make that work. I mean, I know immediately what I have to do to make that work. And, yet, it's more intuitive than being able to articulate, but I hear my colleagues do that and not understand what it is. You know what I mean? They haven't done it – oh, here's an interesting thought. You may have to ask [Jerry] Junkin, and he might not answer in a direct way, but I don't think you could play David's music unless you give it a lot of cooking time. And, I'm not talking about learning the notes and rhythms; I'm talking about letting the music cook and be in the air and powerful.

It was actually reinforced in a gigantic way between Wednesday and Friday. We rehearse Monday, Wednesday, and Friday with the second band, and the difference between Wednesday and Friday was stunning on No. 8 simply because it cooked for a couple days without being played. And that's all that psycho-babble crap that people can't deal with, you know? [laughter] But, I've heard the Dallas Wind Symphony play David's music horribly because they had three rehearsals and a concert. Well, dammit, every note was played. But, the music wasn't. And, if you notice, Jerry is onto a pattern where they play something of David's like one season, and then a season or two later they bring it back and extend it and then do a recording. I think he thinks the same way. I don't know.

But, they're playing No. 8 in April, and I'm going to go to the concert, because I want to hear the piece and I want to hear what they do with the piece. I know that cooking time is required. I believe in that cooking time. And, it starts to settle and becomes a different level of music making when it sits and cooks. No. 8 has this

transition, this metric modulation using five-tuplets to fours, back to fives to fours to threes and the speed of the note never changes. The pulse changes. And, it drives the ensemble crazy until it doesn't. And then, it doesn't anymore and it just is what it is. And then, the movement in No. 8 that is a gradual *accelerando* and ends up at one hundred and eighty-four beats per minute. Well, that takes cooking time. Anybody can accelerate, but to make music move through that passage requires a lot of "cook." A lot of cooking time.

LW: Yeah, I can agree with that. Well, how do you know? You have to get your mind wrapped around it, and sometimes it's just too big to do in three rehearsals.

SS: You've hit it right on the head. Yeah, you're a musician, you're a professional musician, you can see what's on the page. What's the big deal? Just play it. Well, there is another level of big deal. That's the point exactly. There's another level of big deal.

The beginning of the third movement is just stunning, isn't it? Is that the movement that got played at KMEA, and the guy didn't get it?

LW: No, that was the first movement.

SS: Oh. He didn't get the first movement!

LW: Exactly. I don't understand...

SS: Come on, man! You can't hear a church piano and know what's going on? Was it played aggressively just like a Baptist church pianist would play it?

LW: Well, part of the problem there is that it's not a very good hall.

SS: Ok.

LW: And so, it really depends on where you sit. The more I go there the more I find the sweet spots to sit.

SS: Did you hear Eastman play No. 4 at Midwest?

LW: No.

SS: Ok.

LW: But, in any case it was [movement] number one. But, number three – everything about number three, or the third movement, is striking.

SS: It is. And yet, it looks scary as hell on the page, doesn't it? [laughter]

LW: Oh. Unbelievably. [laughter] Unbelievably scary.

SS: And yet, that opening statement and the recapitulation on our recording is unedited. I mean, there's not a note changed. Because the power of the technique – I mean, if you finger match and play what's on the page, that just rips! Just rips!

LW: Yeah.

SS: And the next page, actually, I think on the podium, extremely hard. And that's the note groupings on page sixty-eight in the clarinets. I mean, to hear that on the podium is extremely hard, because it tears you away from the pulse. The note grouping is so strong, fives, fives, fives. Cool! You're getting me excited about doing this piece again.

LW: [laughter] Well, I'm glad! You talked about some of the things that come intuitively in how you approach Maslanka. Is there anything – I mean, it's hard to talk about what comes by intuition – but, what are some of the successful techniques perhaps that you've applied to his music, that you've learned to apply to his music over the years, that you would encourage somebody wanting to play or conduct it [to incorporate]...

SS: You know what I think it is? I think it is the systematic approach that I learned a long time ago to decompose the piece and recompose it aurally, that that's where it came from. I don't think it was vice versa. I think my awareness and understanding of David's music came from that process. The process didn't come from David's music. I didn't do something different with his music, it just exposed his music in a different way. Does that make any sense at all?

LW: Sure, yeah.

SS: Alright. Ok.

LW: So what you were talking about when we first started speaking, the approach that you take there...

SS: Right.

LW: ...big picture. When you first do a movement or read a piece, do you just try to go as far as you can? Do you try to go through the whole movement?

SS: No, we do the whole. We'll do the whole symphony. The way the rehearsal plan is built – like I said, I'd like it to be in concert order, but it's not always in concert order – but, the time allotted to each piece is that piece plus twenty percent time-wise. So, there's plenty of time in that block of time to do the read. It's ok to stumble, I mean, its fine. Yeah, like the juxtaposition of rhythms we were just looking at a little bit ago in the clarinets and in the 5/8, 3/4, 5/8, 3/4, 3/8 stuff [in the third movement] may be a little bit edgy the first time, but as long as you on the podium are clear, it works. And the other thing I've noticed over a long period of time is not to read under the tempo unless it's just ridiculous. We try to be at tempo or very close to it, so they have a notion of

what they're challenge is going to be. He's good about – the tempi are always marked and all of your expressive things that are on the score are on the parts, so they see what you're seeing, and that helps.

LW: Yeah. His stuff is edited very, very well.

SS: Yeah. His son does a great job.

LW: It might take some flipping through or whatever, but what stands out emotionally? I mean, you talk about some of the white pages and things like that, but are there some “ah-ha” moments for you that you think need some special attention?

SS: Hmm. No. [laughter] That's kind of disappointing isn't it?

LW: Well, I might strike that from my paper! [laughter]

SS: I don't think that way, you know? And, maybe that's not good. I don't know. There are definitely places that require you to intellectualize, “What the hell does this mean?” just from a notational point of view. An example of that is page 115, the metric modulation that he has there. And, if you nail the metric modulation then it's really cool. It's a really cool metric modulation where the fives [five-tuplets] come out of the fours [sixteenth notes].

LW: Uh huh. Right. Well, I'm thinking possibly page 127, this is measure 282 with the 3/4.

SS: Right, right. That's a pretty straight ahead modulation, but he's full of stuff like that. But, look at page 129. This turns a lot of our colleagues off. Measure 295, [quoting tempo instructions printed in the score to play at quarter note equals 184] “or faster, as fast as possible.” And the fact is, we like to hear [sings 16th line in a slow tempo]. We like to hear that, but wait a minute. It becomes something else when it's flying. And if the fingers are matched up, it becomes something completely different, and there's a macro pulse that starts to come.

You know the most stunning moment of the symphony? Ok, are you ready?

LW: Yeah.

SS: The Chinese gongs at four, on the fourth movement.

LW: At the beginning.

SS: The beginning of the movement, because the bass drum and the piano's sound at the end of the third movement is so fierce, and everything was so fierce going into that, and then silence before that. And then, whack! I don't care if you hate David Maslanka's music; you are gripped at that moment. I mean, you have to be just by the power of what just happened. And then, for that Buddhist meditation bell to speak – and

I think on the recording that's almost a minute of time. And, it's stunning. And, it's an uncondacted moment. And, the next sound to come out of there with the hand chimes – and I hate when he writes that crap. And you have to go find it, you know? You have to go do something. [laughter]

LW: [laughter] Or the dulcimer.

SS: Yeah. Well, the dulcimer – and I have a little difficulty listening to our recording, because the dulcimer didn't get tuned before the recording session – but, that's the sound he wanted, so, ok, whatever.

I think the end of the movement is extremely difficult. I'm looking at the last two pages, and there's nothing there. But, it's extremely difficult for the euphonium player, not so much for the piano player. I was very fortunate with the piano player. She's a doctoral student at Cincinnati now. Her hand spread was less than an octave, and she played this.

LW: Wow! That's hard to imagine, isn't it?

SS: Yeah. She's four feet tall! [laughter] Mina. Mina Son. Yeah. Sweetheart.

LW: Well, the end of the symphony, if there's one moment for me – and there are multiple – but, the one I always have to point to for whatever reason, when the euphonium hits that last C, and it's really probably from about measure eighty-three to the end with the piano finally settling back down, and then we have that final C Major tonality, you talk about a moment that I want to cry? I mean, that's it.

SS: Right, right. Well, C Major is a pretty attractive place for him. Although, is it No. 8? I think No. 8 has some B Major stuff which I find appealing as well.

I'll tell you what makes David's music hard and why people don't like to play his music, because they can't play perfect fifths in tune. There are perfect fifths everywhere in David's music. Everywhere! Perfect fourths and perfect fifths everywhere, and then a major third occasionally. But, the perfect fifths, especially with the wind instruments, when they succeed, it is a stunning sound. It is the most amazing sound. And, the other thing which is very, very difficult about David's music is the mallet/piano unisons with winds. That exposes all of our pitch issues. And, the two different kinds of tuning are exposed, so the wind player is forced in a lot of different directions. We don't even discuss it. We just don't discuss it, but it's hard. It's hard. When you're an oboe player and there's a bowed crotale...

LW: How are you supposed to match that?

SS: ...and you're on a high A, and you're supposed to match that at *pianissimo*. [laughter] And, nobody else is playing. So, people don't like that, you know? Well, that's hard, but when you're successful, it's incredibly powerful.

LW: Yeah, it is. Well, the way he does – and I guess we've touched on it before – the simple moments that he has, they are so powerful. And obviously he has some

moments – it happens in the third movement of this – where there is some repetition, moments where you have four bars of the same thing as that idea gets settled. Do you approach those moments – and I’m not going to call it minimalist, because I don’t believe that’s what it is – but, those repetition moments. Is there anything that stands out to you in those ideas?

SS: [laughter] Let me give you something on that. First, a comment about those quiet moments or slow moments. Frequently now, or more frequently now, you see in the scores, “Be patient here. Take your time here,” because he’s trying to encourage us not to just pound through it seventy-two beats per minute, but allow the time to pass and to be patient with it. That’s hard for us, you know?

LW: Yeah, it is.

SS: Unless you get emotionally connected to what’s going on, you’re doing it mechanically, and it doesn’t work.

Alright. So, one of the movements in the flute concerto is an exact repeat of itself. I mean, an exact repeat of itself. It’s like half the piece, and then it repeats itself. So, we did the recording session, and I’m in editing at the recording engineer’s place in Massachusetts working on the editing, and I have a take of the first half that is spectacular! And I said, “Oh my God. This is amazing! We’ll just use it twice.” And, as I continued to listen, the second half – even though it’s exactly the same – is completely different. Now go figure that out.

Now listen to the quote-unquote “minimalistic” four measures, how it changes without changing, and how it’s different. Look at the third movement. [It] has a direct recapitulation other than a note. What is that?

LW: Well, it comes back, and then he goes off into what he calls the fractured statements of the Bach chorale. Where is that?

SS: I found it. Page 149 is a recapitulation of sorts, but it’s completely different. But, it’s the same notes. But, there is a note, and I’m trying to remember what it is.

LW: I’m sorry, say that number again.

SS: Page 99.

LW: Right, yeah.

SS: But, where is it? Ok, here we go. Let’s see. I can’t find it right now. The descending line around [measure] 158, 159, 160, 161 has one note that’s different than the beginning.

LW: Huh. You know, I’ve never noticed that.

SS: I don’t remember what it is, but there’s one note that’s different.

The other thing that we as wind players like to do, is decay a long note. A long note starts and has a good front, and then as we hold it the energy starts to go out of it. It doesn't necessarily get softer, it just loses its energy. David won't let you do that. His music will not allow that. It must continue to maintain the energy of the whole.

LW: Well, he's talked about some moments where even just straight-toned, simple straight-toned – and I'm thinking maybe sometimes where the piccolo has half note solos and things like that – where without any vibrato, just straight held tones is emotionally a more powerful way of presenting that.

SS: Well, he's talking now about his compositional technique, and he and I have never talked about it. We've never discussed it. We don't discuss the pieces unless I have a question, ok. Let's say on this piece, if I find something in rehearsal that I don't understand or I think is an error, I contact him. We talk about that. Specifically, that note. When he comes, we talk about the process, how's it going, yada, yada, yada. We don't talk about the music. The music starts and then we go to work. And we've never talked, ever about this depth, or that depth, or the power of this sound, or the power of that sound. We've always worked directly with the act of making music. Does that make sense?

LW: Yeah.

SS: We've never talked about it. I'm not sure I can talk about it. Well, I can, because I have said to David, "This measure is really powerful for me." I remember one. *No. 5* has two chords, half note chords that just made no sense to me. My ear just – this doesn't work. And so, I said, "What is this?" And, he looked and said, "It's just a convoluted modulation. Just go ahead and put some accents on them." So, we did, and it worked! [laughter] I chuckle every time. My wife and I travel by car a lot. We like to be in the car, and we take all of the Maslanka CDs. And, it's pretty close to twenty-four hours, because one trip we make on a regular basis is a twenty-four hour drive. We don't do it at one time, but it's a course of twenty-four hours, and we usually get pretty close to all the way through our CDs. But, *No. 5*, almost every time that comes, I laugh, because I remember that's the only way that worked for me was to put accents on it. Those two half notes. So, who knows?

He's far more metaphysical and spiritual, but we're not. We may be connected in a way I don't understand, but we don't discuss it, and we don't discuss that in relation to his music, which may be disappointing to you.

LW: Well, I'm not sure quite how I feel about that. That's interesting. I guess because he's so spiritual and so much on the metaphysical plane and things like that, how much does someone really need to get into that to do his music well and successfully and to get something out of it? That's an interesting question.

SS: From my perspective, you don't. All you have to do is allow the music to speak. And, it will speak through – I believe the music speaks through me. I don't make it speak. I don't make it happen. Yes, I am methodical in rehearsal. Yes, I have a plan.

Yes, we attack the plan. We attack the score in a methodical way. But, when we go back to macro, to the big picture, I step back and away from the whole and just experience the whole with the students. I don't experience detail. So, I don't think of it being metaphysical, but it very well could be.

But, you know. Come on. Even athletes have being in the moment, being in a space of time where they're doing things that would seem to be difficult or "in a zone" quote-unquote I think is a term that they use. If you don't get in a zone when you're doing David's music, it isn't going to happen. If you're forcing it to happen, you know what I mean? It just sort of – you just allow it to go. Yeah, you're directing traffic, and you're conducting the music, but you're not making it happen. Encouraging? Ok, but that's part of being in that space of power as well.

I heard a comment by, I think it was Bernstein who said, "if during the course of the performance I didn't feel like I wrote the piece, then I didn't connect to it." I think that's a good analogy. And, I'm certainly not a composer, so I can't go there like he would, or another composer conducting. No, they can go some place I can't go. I mean, I've never tried my hand at it other than arranging stuff. You know what I mean? It's another level of thinking that I can't do. [laughter] As they say, I'm a simple man. I like to keep it that way.

LW: [laughter] Yeah. Well, you've certainly provided more than just simple thoughts on this. I do appreciate it. Is there anything – just looking at time here, and I need to process some of the things that you've said – is there anything else either on Maslanka or Symphony No. 7 that you feel needs to be said?

SS: I am sorely disappointed that No. 7 doesn't get a lot of play. No. 5 get's more play than No. 7 does. I think they're both terrific pieces of music. They're just great pieces of art. No. 8 seems to be going like gangbusters. But, see, that's got to be the guttural response that we were talking about before. Why would one piece take off and another piece not? And, how do we project twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years from now?

I will project that fifty years from now Maslanka's music will be being played. I can't say that to be true of a lot of our composers, because that just doesn't happen. Maybe one percent of our music will stand the test of time. We're so early in our actual life as a movement that it's exciting to be involved in this period. And, you should be very excited. I'm mean, you should see the next thirty years of evolution. Where is the next Maslanka? Where is the next really significant composer of art music, music that is significantly artful? Anybody can throw a bunch of notes on a computer screen and publish it.

LW: Right.

SS: [laughter] I'm sorry. That's happening a lot. And, David's music is way beyond that. That's why it's powerful. It is heartfelt. One thing I tell my students when we start a Maslanka is that there's not one mark on that paper that doesn't have a purpose. It's your job to find out what that mark means. Don't blow off any mark of any kind. And, look closely around the noteheads, because they're not always the same.

They're not always a *tenuto* marking. They're not always a *staccato* marking. Look and see what it says. Then they start to hear it in a different way.

We're so mentally note and rhythm conscious that we stop looking at the other hints that are there and that most composers give. But, David's music, not only does he give it, but when you execute it's stunning.

And, it's very interesting – I was starting to tell you a little while ago the difference between Wednesday and Friday was stunning, and I have a couple of conducting students who go to all the rehearsals with scores and stuff. And, after Friday's rehearsal of No. 8, they walked up basically to put chairs and stands away, and they were dragging their butts. And I said, "What's the matter?" And they said, "Wow. That was so incredibly powerful." And Wednesday wasn't. So the energy is starting develop in the piece, and it's becoming its own entity. And that scares people. [laughter] And, I just accept it for what it is and look for it to happen.

LW: Yeah. I don't know what I can say. I can appreciate that.

SS: Here is an interesting thing. It pisses me off. It's a personal thing. We have a lot of people who are writing music right now making a lot of money who have full time jobs who aren't really good artists. David is a really good artist, and his full time job is writing music for us. You know? We need to support him, man. What we pay him is what he gets paid.

LW: Yeah. I understand that.

SS: Alright, Lane, if you have anything else, don't hesitate to call, any other questions and we'll set up another time.

LW: I sure appreciate it. Can't tell you how much.

SS: No, I enjoyed it a lot. Obviously, it's a passion of mine.

LW: Yeah. Well, thank you very much. Have a great weekend, and we'll be in touch.

SS: Thanks, man.

LW: Thank you.

APPENDIX E: Interview with Eugene Corporon

Corporon is the conductor of the Wind Symphony and the Regents Professor of Music at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas. He is one of the leading wind conductors in the world. He is active and widely-respected nationally and internationally and has recorded over 600 works. The following interview took place on May 17, 2011, via telephone. Corporon was in his office at the University of North Texas. The author was in his office at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas.

Abbreviations: EC = Eugene Corporon; LW = Lane Weaver

LW: What I would like to do is get some general impressions. One of the perspectives that I'm getting from you and from Steve Steele and from Tim Mahr, who have all made many recordings of Maslanka's music, is background in approach to music in general, but also Maslanka and his music – knowing him, working with him, knowing about his methods and approaches.

EC: Ok.

LW: And then getting into the piece just a little bit as well.

EC: Sure. Well, you know there are a lot of people who have done a lot more of his music than I have, but the pieces I do I am an avid supporter of. And Symphony No. 7 is the only one of his symphonies that I have ever done. I think the other pieces that for me are really important and are personal are *A Child's Garden of Dreams*; *Tears*; this latest piece that I just did, *Traveler*. There are a number of really good pieces, and I find that when I relate best to his music is when the overall scope of the music seems to fit the amount of material that's in the music.

I think there's a hugely heartfelt message in his music. He's a very spiritual composer. I guess you could say that all composers are spiritual, but I think that David connects with something before he begins to write. And it seems to me that one of the problems with – not a problem, but one of the challenges of doing his music is to understand the connection he has to whatever the topic is and then trying to come at it from that vantage point.

It's been said that he uses a lot of vernacular kind of sounds in his music, or he's influenced by a lot of his own culture. I think that's really true. I don't know what composer isn't, but I think for him it especially kind of peeks out. There are people always trying to say, "Oh, that's a Bob Dillon tune," or "Oh, that's a Joni Mitchell tune," or, "that's something" in his music. But, that is especially true of *A Child's Garden of Dreams*. People spend a lot of time trying to match things up, I think, in that piece with what may have impacted him in his culture. There are vernacular kinds of influences, much like there were for Ives, you know, hymnody, popular song, I mean that same kind of thing. I think there's a lot of that connection in his music – a lot of tonality, which makes it more approachable for a lot of people, there's always good melodies, there's

always a sense of arrival, a sense of completion, and he also takes chances. He'll end a big piece soft instead of loud, which is not typical of wind music. He'll take a chance to leave a listener in a very thoughtful place versus zapping them. And, he can do both very well.

It would be interesting – I've never asked him why he does his scores in C, but I think that's always interesting that most of the time you are looking at the sounding pitch. Also, the fact that most of his work is manuscript, at least most of the things I've worked with is in his own hand, and that's always interesting for me as long as it's readable. But he is. He's readable. His music is very clear on the page, so that's also kind of fun to work with his notation rather than the computer's.

I also think he does a great job of using free music, in writing box notation and things that are not really improvisatorial, but are free and structured but allow the players some interaction with the sounds that come out different every time. I think that's always pretty interesting, too.

LW: Yeah, I agree.

EC: You know, we had him here once, and he was so powerful. He was here visiting the area, and I had him lecture my wind lit class, and he was just terrific in his presentation of his thoughts and the way he does things. But he has a double style. There's a cultural style, an aesthetic artistic style, and then a vernacular style where you feel like he's using possibly folk tunes or popular tunes. And, they sound like folk tunes, even though they may have been made up by him. He can write sometimes, especially in the seventh symphony, he can write things that sound almost Appalachian, but then he's not quoting anything in particular.

LW: Yeah. Well, in my conversations with him and things that I've read on him, his connection to culture, like you say, and what's influenced him, and the fact that he – he doesn't shy away from the fact that all these influences, whether it's jazz or pop music, or western classical music, those are all in him and part of what he draws from.

EC: Right. And also the eastern perspective, you know. He does have an eastern, occasionally a meditative quality to his music, which is part of his life. I know he does a lot of meditation. And, I think where he lives – he moved where he lives in order to meditate, I think, at some point and drop out of the hectic scene. And so, he lives in a very Grainger-oriented place where there's room for that kind of personal meditation, and I think that comes out in his music.

LW: That connection to place, you're right, is absolutely important to him. It's definitely important to him. So, you had mentioned trying to understand maybe some of his spiritual connections or where some of this music comes from. How much time do you spend exploring that with Maslanka, or maybe with any composer?

EC: Well, I'm always one who believes you should hear the piece before you start reading about the piece. What you need to know is in the score and in the silence. Part of that comes with studying a little bit with Ted Johnson. It's nice to have a

backstory, but sometimes there's no backstory at all in his music. It's just there, and you have a sense of it. He lets the music speak for itself. Other times – like this piece I just finished recording, *Traveler* – it was written very specifically for Ray Lichtenwalter upon his retirement. So, he was reflecting on someone's life and retirement and someone's coming to the end of one phase of their career. So, that had a certain sense of reflection in it, and there's more of a backstory.

But, my basic thought is that composers put a message into their sounds. There's some message there from every composer. I think Maslanka is no different in that regard. A composer represents their time and place and environment and all those things. They can't escape that. I was talking about American music in Europe once, and there was a question in the audience about, "Don't the Americans understand or listen to Beethoven and Mahler and blah, blah, blah, and don't they know these?" And, I said, "Of course, they know those composers, and, of course, they listen to them. And, they are bound and determined not to sound like them." And that took them by total surprise that that would be a goal.

I think to find the goal of being unique to one's time, I know a lot of composers who feel that way. The thing is about David is that he's willing to take on the whole idea of a symphony. Most composers are not these days. Most composers feel, "Well, what do I have to say that Mahler didn't already say, or that Beethoven didn't already say, or Brahms?" But, David has, gosh, he's working on number nine now.

LW: Right.

EC: So, I mean, it's pretty amazing. I think there's no other wind composer that has worked in large forms as much as he has.

LW: Yeah. His catalog is definitely impressive, that's for sure.

EC: And I'm not a fan of all his symphonies. I'm actually – I'm a fan of David Maslanka. I'm a fan of his work and his ability, but I sometimes feel that one piece has three pieces hidden in it. For me, his ability to link things together – he's got that ability and that happens in a lot of his music, but other times for me it feels like he sometimes will get an idea and then go to another idea and then go to another idea, and all of the sudden you are realizing, "Gee, there are just too many ideas here." All of them are great, but I don't know. So that's where the conductor has to say to himself, "You know, I have to study this piece more to connect with it." I don't connect with everything Frank Ticheli does. I don't connect with everything Don Grantham does. That's why there needs to be more than one conductor. That doesn't mean that I don't connect with David or with his music, because I just think it's superb.

The thing about David's music is that you can tell it's him. And, I think that's the mark of a great composer. He has a language. He has a way of putting sounds together that identifies a style, and it's a very heartfelt, authentic style, much like Copland does or Haydn did or Mozart did. You understand. You can hear seven classical pieces and pick out which one is Mozart even though they might all come from the same year and the same city. So, there's a certain signature in his music that I think needs to be there in

order for someone to really think a composer is a valued contributor. I think he's got that. He's got a lot of diversity in what he does.

I also think one of the things that makes him sound so great is that he's embraced the whole idea of the "fourth element," I call it, in wind music that the late twentieth century identified. You know, we have woodwinds, brass, percussion, but he's identified woodwinds, brass, percussion, keyboards. And that addition of celeste, piano, harp, vibraphone, crotales, marimbas, xylophones, things that are pitched that kind of create a new resonance and offer optional resonance.

LW: Right.

EC: I just think he's one of the important people. It's a unique voice. I was just looking – one of my students wrote a paper. Angela Schroeder wrote a paper for us on an analysis and discussion of the vernacular in the seventh symphony. And, she was saying how in this piece [Maslanka] describes the seventh symphony as "old songs remembered."

LW: Right.

EC: Her sentence is, "Maslanka describes the work as 'old songs remembered' indicating his awareness of the significance that vernacular melodies have had on his music." So, I think that's true. I don't think he'd say, "No, I'm trying to steal that melody. This is an arrangement of Beatles tunes." But, he's synthesized that sense of ballad. And, I mean it with respect, sometimes in his pieces I'll say, "This is the Billy Joel moment." And I really love Billy Joel. You'll have that sense of the repeated chord, you know, that could be in any of Billy Joel's ballads in the left hand of the piano. But then, he turns that into music of artistic significance within his symphony. So, the listener goes, "Man, I can identify with that. That's about my life." Or, "That's about the music I'm experiencing right now." I think that's a real gift.

LW: And I would think that, again from my perspective for what it's worth, that Maslanka would definitely agree that those influences are there and that's just part of who he is. I don't think he shies away from that.

EC: Yeah. You know, the old question comes up. How could they not, in a way? People who are running away from those influences have more trouble than the people who embrace them and say, "Yeah. It's part of what's inside of me, and it may come out somehow in the way that I write."

Richard Danielpour is terrific. He gave a lecture once in New York about his music, and he said, "I've been influenced by the three Bs. And, it's not the three you think. Bach, Beethoven, and the Beatles."

LW: Yeah, there you go.

EC: He was serious. He said, "I was taken by that music." So, there are more and more people willing to admit that.

On the same set of recordings we just wrapped up we had a piece by Cindy McTee, and she is also influenced by a little bit of jazz, and mystical, and Ives. So, that comes out in what she writes. In a different way she has her own language that speaks of her time and her experiences.

I think we're lucky to have David writing for us and devoting the kind of time he does to wind music. We need this niche filled, and he's put a lot out there for all of us to think about and work on. You know, it's hard to keep up with the guy. He's always writing some great piece. And, that's great. That's good news for us.

LW: Definitely. You've bounced around and hit a lot of things very succinctly that I was going to ask you about, so I appreciate that.

EC: Sure.

LW: One of the things that I wanted to get your perspective on, and this is a little slippery to define, but I wanted to get a few different ideas on it. If you could say, and I know you've worked with him to a certain extent, if you could say there's a "Maslankian" approach to music, whether that's writing, rehearsing, performing, whatever, can you quantify that at all?

EC: Yeah, there are a couple of things I could say about it. I haven't worked as closely with him as Steve [Steele] has. Ray Lichtenwalter, too. I don't know if you're talking to Ray Lichtenwalter, but it might be another really good person to talk to. He wrote a piece for Ray when Ray's wife passed away.

LW: Right.

EC: And from that point on, he and Ray were very close friends. I wish I'd had, and maybe I will, but so far I haven't had as many opportunities to be around him. But, when I have been – there's one story that captures it for me completely, his approach, which is this: He was talking to my wind lit class. He had been out to a junior high band in Texas who was working on, shoot, I think it was the memorial piece that he had written for Ray's wife.

LW: *In Memoriam*

EC: Yes, *In Memoriam*, thank you. He had been there just before he came to the class, and so he mentioned this. He said, "Well, I was there. I heard these youngsters play this piece." And he stopped for a minute, and he said, "You know, the feeling I had was, have you ever seen a four-year-old dressed up for a beauty pageant?" He said, "That's kind of how I felt about hearing them play my piece." And that has stuck with me forever, because I went, "Exactly." Yeah, you're all dressed up like an adult, and your nails are painted, and your hair is real pretty, but there's something wrong with that. There's just something basically wrong with that. They are too young to be experiencing that. And, I think that was his way of telling these future music educators – he told them so much in one little story. He was saying be sure the music you pick is something they

can grasp, something they're ready to grasp. Just because you can play it doesn't mean they can understand it. That was his message. But, the way he chose to deliver that message is what I would say encapsulates David in a nutshell. He's like the wise guru off the mountain. Not in a way that's fake.

LW: Right, sure.

EC: It's just who he is. He's calmly thinking all the time about the meaning of things and about the appropriateness of things. And, that comes out in his music so well. I mean, he can bring so much stillness to an audience through the way he ends *Traveler* or the slow movements in the symphony. He can just freeze people in their place. People become afraid to move or almost afraid to breathe, because of the way the music is impacting them.

So, I think it really does transfer to what he writes. He's genuine. I really feel he's genuine, and it's hard to say that about someone who says, "Well, you know, I live in Montana because I can really meditate there. I can really find my inner self." That can be very cliché, but it isn't with him.

LW: Right.

EC: So, I think that's a big part of it. What comes of is that he's genuinely spiritual, and he's a deep thinker, and he feels very deeply. He doesn't wear it as a red badge of courage. He doesn't brag about it. He doesn't use it. He just is that way. In that regard he's very original, I think, and very real about it. And, that's kind of my reaction to him. I just can't wait for the next piece I take on

You know, the way it goes I do a big piece of his – well, all of his pieces are big! That's the problem. So, you do one every other year. I'm looking here – the symphony, our recording of it was over thirty-four minutes. Well, that's half a disc. So, in trying to be sure you broaden the students' education and play enough music over a four year period, or with my group a two year period before it rolls over, it's hard to do a Maslanka piece any more than every other year. Or a Colgrass piece, or any other. When you get into these longer pieces you have to spread it out.

LW: Well, with that perspective that you just shared on Maslanka and his approach, are there practical ways that you see that applied to preparing a Maslanka piece?

EC: Hmm. Yeah, that's interesting. I'll tell you, the thing about his music is I don't have to...it's very interesting. I did that piece of his most recently along with *Apotheosis* and *Arctic Dreams*. So, of the three you've got Husa's *Apotheosis*, which by far is the hardest piece to have to sell to anybody. You know, you've got players sitting there holding a note for thirty-five seconds and then bending it a quarter tone and bending it back and coming in between the vibraphone and clarinet at a quarter tone. It grates on the nerves. David is the exact opposite. It's never difficult to sell to anybody. And, I don't mean "sell," but convince a group that we should keep working on this. I know you may not be fine that this is a great piece. But, with David no matter how hard it is,

people buy it pretty quickly. It's not a lot of drill. There's a lot of technical challenge in it, but people take it on. It seems to lay well most of the time. It's not awkward. There's a difference between difficult and awkward, and his music isn't awkward. So, I don't spend a lot of time digging into things with my players, but I do spend time saying, "Ok, there's a lot going on here, let's see if we can figure out what we think is the most important thing." Because very often in his music, of course, all the noodling is really not important. Once you get it going you've got to kind of take the edge off it because more important is maybe a big whole note underneath that changes every six bars, and that is really where the tune is hidden.

The metering in his music, too – sometimes people change meter just to change meter. He fits the meter to the quality of the line. So, therefore, it's not so hard to teach or remember. It's not awkward. That's another thing about his music. It can be difficult, but not awkward.

And then the bigger thing is maintaining the long line, the old Nadia Boulanger thing of the long line. David is not afraid to take time to have something unfold. And that takes maturity, to not give too much too soon, and plan it and let things unfold at the rate of speed he wants to control. So, timing is another big issue for me, and the long line, and trying to decide where you're going, are you trying to keep from getting there, have you gotten there. He's obvious about where those places are, but still, sometimes you run out of gas if you give too much too soon.

You know it was interesting. I remember working on the seventh symphony and sending him rehearsal tapes, and he kept pushing me. "It's got to go faster. Can you go faster there?" And I'm going, "Ok. Yeah, we'll do what we can." And, we really worked hard to get up to the top speed – I'm looking at my tempo marking for the coda. I've got a quarter equals 178, and I mean, that's fast with sixteenth notes. That's a lot of fingers moving.

LW: Is that in the third movement?

EC: Yeah. He was really pushing us to go quicker. And I actually I'm looking. Most of our tempos, most of the fast tempos are marked faster than he marked them. So, I think after he heard it, he wanted it even faster. That kind of stuff where he was pushing it.

The other thing I was just going to mention are his – sometimes this idea where he'll lay fives in against fours against threes.

LW: Right.

EC: His layering, metrical layering, can be tough, because everyone's got to hold their ground for that to work. And the temptation is sometimes to go with – you know, the fives to go (sings uneven groups of five notes with the first three notes grouped as sixteenth note triplets followed by two sixteenth notes). One-two-three-one two. One-two-three-one-two instead of one-two-three-four-five, one-two-three-four-five. You know what I mean?

LW: Yeah, yeah.

EC: Not really get the fives, but they are really important to him. I have marked in my score in one place, too, and this is back to this music – that’s the other word I was looking for, music cultures outside of the western culture. Because I swear there’s places in the seventh symphony that sound like a gamelon.

LW: Oh, yeah.

EC: You know, that he really is imitating the sound of a Javanese gamelon and other sounds like that – prayer bells. There’s another story about that, too. This is the one isn’t it that has three prayer bells in it, three hits?

LW: Yeah. That’s at the beginning of the fourth movement.

EC: Yeah. I’m remembering one of my players – you’re always wondering if you’re getting across to your players what the piece is about. And, I remember that at the time we played this there was a man who was killed in an automobile accident in my neighborhood. A very important past government official, he had been in the Reagan White House, he had served the country, he had been a marine. And, he just pulled out on the road and somebody just wiped him out. He was eighty-four or something. So, we dedicated the performance of this symphony to his memory, and his family came to the concert.

So, the fourth movement, the epilogue, starts with those three Buddhist bells. And, we did the performance, and the player who played that came up to me after the performance, and he said, “I want you to know that the first bell was for Mr. Snoyer, the second bell was for us, and the third sound I made was for everybody in the room.” I said, “You got it. David would love that answer to why you played those three sounds the way you did tonight.” So, that’s exactly what David would want a player to bring to this. You know, bring something of yourself, why are you making these sounds? Just kind of hit it and hit the next one before the sound goes away – but he leaves it to the player to have it be expressive of something. And, that would be the kind of interaction that his music would draw out of somebody, I think.

LW: That’s a great story.

EC: Yeah. And, I had never suggested that to the player, but that’s where he identified with it.

LW: That’s wonderful. Well, as you are kind of looking and reviewing and remembering, are there any moments that you feel required extra, you mentioned technically you didn’t spend a whole lot of time on this other than...

EC: Well, what is the movement that’s just wildly fast?

LW: Three

EC: Yeah, three. After we got done editing [the recording], I said, “I think that’s as fast as we’ve ever played on anything with clarity.” It’s monstrously challenging. But, what’s interesting to me about that is that movement is three, not four. You know what I mean? Most people would save something like that for the end. It would be a wowie-zowie ending. To do that and step totally back, the impact that gives to the fourth movement is so Maslanka-like, “Maslankian,” because you feel like there’s an epilogue. There’s the rest of the story. There’s the review of the real meanings, and that’s something that he’s very good at doing. He just really takes on those moments and is willing to look at them and not go for the obvious, which I think is really cool.

LW: Well, let me share with you something he shared with me yesterday by email about – you’re talking about tempo and how fast and pushing and everything. One of the things he said – I have some sketches that he’d done for Symphony No. 7 that he shared with me, and every once in a while he has these little mathematical ratio figures that he works. And, I asked him about them. He said, “The mathematical ratio problems are tempo relationships.” He said, “Rhythmic flow is probably the strongest factor of coherence for me in a piece of music. Tempo, tempo relationships among sections, and rhythms large and small are the most important things in composing and in performance.” He said, “Pitch is certainly important, but wrong notes are less critical in performance than wrong or loose tempo conception.”

EC: I agree with him on that. That’s very interesting, yeah. That’s true in not just his music, but most music, I think. Yeah, that’s a good point. That’s a really good point.

LW: Do you do anything to prepare your ensemble for Maslanka?

EC: No, I don’t. I don’t try to control their reaction. Sure, I would make sure I approached the piece in a way that would help represent who he is, if he isn’t there or can’t come to visit, that they get a sense of who he is as a person from me. That’s part of my job as a conductor. But, I do that with everybody. And, in the course of rehearsing a piece, I’ll try to point out the personality of the person as I understand it. That’s even true of Grainger, of people I’ve never met. I still try to have a sense of their persona and have them interact.

I also almost always now, when I’m doing something where the composer is alive, they’re getting rehearsal tapes from me a couple times a week. I don’t usually send them the first couple of weeks. It’s just disgraceful. But, after we get to a point where we can represent the piece with some accuracy and feeling, I’ll involve them. In the old days you had to send a cassette, you waited a week, you got a cassette back. It was just a mess. Now, we can finish a rehearsal at 4:00 and have it in their hand by 4:15, because of the computer. We’ll just upload it as an mp3, and they can access it have it back that night. I can study it the next day and get it back to the students the next day. It’s like daily rushes are to a film. It’s really pretty amazing, and I know David helped us with that. The minute you’re doing that, people start to get a sense of the reaction, because they’re reading the words directly from the composer. When they write something back, we hand that out.

But, I let them decide. I don't want to prime them and say, "Oh, you need to be really emotional here." They'll figure that out, especially with David. I might say something like, "Can you see how heartfelt this is? Can you get a sense of where he might have been at to write something with this much power?" I'll pose a question to them and let them think about it.

And not every piece – it's interesting, some pieces are just lighthearted. They're good pieces, and they're lighthearted. *Festive Overture*. Shostakovich. You don't have to have – although, you could think about old Russia, and you could get yourself in a bad mood before you played that piece. But, Maslanka, pretty much once you're into it you go, "Something was going on here." You know what I mean? There's pretty clear access to the emotion that he's working to portray. And, he doesn't write lighthearted, I don't think. He writes joyous music, but he doesn't write anything that's, I'm looking for a word, that's flamboyant or just fast to be fast or just cheesy. He doesn't go there.

LW: Do you share anything about his meditative approaches with your ensemble?

EC: Yeah. Oh, yeah. They would know that he comes at music from a spiritual standpoint and spends time meditating about what he does and thinks about what he does. But, I guess you could call almost anything a really good composer does meditation in a way. When I talk to other people who write, there's a lot of thought that goes into it.

It was funny. I spent a lot of time with Persichetti many, many years ago, and he just writes. He just sits down and writes. He just says, "I got to go to work. Everyday I've got to sit at my desk, and I've got to write or nothing happens." He was pretty matter of fact about it.

But, I think there's always an idea that sparks a piece for a composer, and for Maslanka that idea is really important, and I think it comes back through him again and again. Just my thought about it. And, he'll reference that, and he'll spend time with it and let it influence what he's going to do.

LW: Well, I don't know if there's anything else that you feel is important to share about Maslanka or the piece.

EC: No, I think that's pretty much it. I look forward to the next piece, whatever it's going to be and to doing more of his music. I think he's just a really unique voice and somebody we're all lucky to have writing for us. I'm anxious to see what he does with the ninth. I've got to learn another one of his symphonies, and I'm hoping it's going to be the ninth. I'd love to spend some time with it. We'll see how it all comes out.

LW: Yeah, I think we're all waiting for that one anxiously.

APPENDIX F: Gregg Hanson's Discussion Points on Approaching David Maslanka's Music

Hanson is director of wind bands and professor of music at the University of Arizona in Tucson. He has conducted all seven Maslanka band symphonies. He also premiered and co-lead the commissioning consortium for Maslanka's Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble and premiered and led the commissioning consortium for Maslanka's Mass. Under his direction the University of Arizona Wind Ensemble has recorded three albums of Maslanka's music. The following discussion points are rooted in the idea of a "Maslankian" approach and were created by Hanson for an interview with the author that took place on May 31, 2011. A transcript of the entire interview may be found in Appendix G.

- David Maslanka has very specific perceptions of his music unlike some composers.
- Be exacting about all tempi, dynamic, stylistic markings--take it all literally.
- Develop sense of texture through specific dynamics, instrument pairings, and extremes of tessitura.
- Be willing to go to all dynamic levels from *pp-fff*. Extremes.
- Terminology--take literally. Do not impose overly sentimental nor romantic [*sic*] *expressivo* on the music.
- Be patient with slow music, especially moments of silence. Allow energy to dissipate.
- Keep dynamic/energy levels up over long melodic/harmonic sections of the music. Forward direction.
- Conductor must demonstrate focus and centered energy. Don't confuse "excitement," "hype," and "passion" with focused energy.
- Curb your "creative license" in deference to realizing the intent of the music.
- The "soul connection" is within the music itself. It cannot be imposed upon it. It must be allowed to emerge.
- Be intensely aware of levels of energy at all times. It travels between lowest and highest points.
- Know when to get out of the way!

APPENDIX G: Interview with Gregg Hanson

The following interview took place via telephone on May 31, 2011. Hanson was in his office at the University of Arizona in Tucson. The author was in his office at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. The transcript of this interview has been approved by Hanson.

Abbreviations: GH = Gregg Hanson; LW = Lane Weaver

GH: Well how do you want to proceed? I wrote down, I jotted down about twelve different points that I can talk about, and I don't know if you want to ask questions, or if you want me to go through these and elaborate. I would like for you to enter into it if you'd like, and, hopefully, I'm entertaining the right ideas here, you know?

LW: Yeah. Well, let me give you an idea of some of the spots I'd like to be able to hit on, and then as your points fit into that we can go with that, and you can expand on whatever you feel is important.

GH: Ok.

LW: A couple of things – I'd like to get a little bit of background, maybe a few thoughts on your approach as a conductor, how you approach a piece of music, not only the music itself, but knowing the composer's background – things like that. Whatever thoughts you'd like to put together on that. I'd like to understand a little bit more about your relationship with Dr. Maslanka, a little backstory on how that started, when that started, and how that's developed over the years.

GH: Ok.

LW: Then maybe some ideas on this thought of what is a "Maslankian" approach to music as you might interpret that in whatever terms come to your mind.

GH: Ok, sure.

LW: And then perhaps maybe a little bit on Symphony No. 7 itself and things that stand out as salient points of that piece.

GH: Ok. Alright, well, that sounds great. My general approach to things, and of course, David has been a huge influence on me since I met him and we started working together, and that was in 1993 – actually spring of '93. He's kind of changed the approach, the way I think about the approach that I take to things and actually has made me very much more conscious of how I do what I do. You know, thinking about what it is that I do, especially in terms of communication of the intuitive aspects of music, of communicating with the musicians, of learning how to approach them in a slightly

different way. It really has had nothing – I can say this freely, I think – nothing to do with the actual conducting, the physical aspect of it.

What happened to me was that – let me jump ahead a little bit and that will help to explain that last statement. The year we did the seventh symphony, it was, what year was it, 2006? Was that the year it came out?

LW: The score is dated 2004.

GH: 2004, ok. Well, it was 2005, I guess, the spring of 2005 was when I did it. Anyway, long story short – you know I’m recovering from my left shoulder surgery, I had my right shoulder done that spring, the year we did the seventh symphony. And, it was much worse than my left one has currently been. My right one, my arm was almost completely frozen so I could not move it hardly at all.

LW: Wow.

GH: And I had to do all the preparation for it with my left arm, which was working at the time. Of course, when David came, I called him way in advance and said, “You know, I can’t conduct this piece. It’s too demanding. I’m in too much pain. I’ll prepare it. Are you willing to conduct it?” He said, “For you, yes, I’ll do that.” And, that was the first time, I think I told you in an email, that was the first time in twenty-five years he had conducted anything. So, I did all the preparation for it. He came and conducted the performance.

The reason I am telling you all this – I learned a huge lesson from that experience, and that was the less I was able to do physically, the more the players stepped up.

LW: Uh-huh.

GH: And, we had a really, really strong performance of it. His comment to me during the rehearsals and stuff, he said, “These kids can play this piece with or without me!” I mean, they were so into it that they were so strongly communicating with each other, and they were so much more aware of each other and the music and the core of it without the normal amount of input from me, that it really enhanced it. So, what I learned from that whole experience was that less is more. You know, the more you can get them to own it, the more you can get them involved, and this is what happens on a professional level to all great musicians in a large ensemble, you watch any recordings or tapes of any of the great orchestras, and the conductor is doing creative shaping things in enhancing the emotional moment, communicating on a very high level with the musicians. The musicians are playing with each other. They don’t need the conductor, in any kind of ensemble, for anything. That’s all done internally. And so, I learned that lesson from him from that experience, particularly with that piece. That was a huge thing for me.

So, I kind of rethought and realigned the way that I do things in that way. In other words, my conducting gestures have become smaller, I think more minimalist. I am much more inclined to get students to own their responsibility and open their ears as much as possible. I didn’t realize how much they could do until that experience.

LW: Yeah.

GH: I mean, it went over the top of what I thought they were capable. It's that whole, "They need me. Watch me, watch me," thing, and I learned that is simply not true. So, that was huge.

So, my relationship with David began in that I met him in Reno at a CBDNA [College Band Director's National Association] conference in '93. I had conducted the last movement of the second symphony, and I was completely mesmerized by his music. I didn't know him at all. He was standing in the lobby of the conference, and I was with Pat Hoy. I don't know if you know Pat, she was the director of bands at NAU, Northern Arizona at the time, and she said, "Oh, there's David Maslanka. Would you like to meet him?" And I said, "Man, I sure would!"

So, she introduced me to him. We went to breakfast, and you know how insightful he is. I mean, he can read everybody. He reads through the obvious and into the depth of your psyche. You know, he has that ability. Some people call it psychic. I don't know what I call it, I don't really have a name for it. He's extraordinarily perceptive that way. And, he knew instantly – it was like I'd known him forever. And, he knew that I knew that he knew that it was really a strong connection.

So, I came home pretty blown away from that experience. I was going through some personal difficulties in my life at that time. Very difficult stuff. So, I was able to share that part of my life with him, and he shared on a personal level his own difficulties, and we'd been through a lot of the same kinds of things. This is a very long story, but we became very good friends in addition to musical colleagues. And, that was a hugely important thing for me. I had such tremendous respect for him. I was so enamored with his music. It was so powerful to me and really helped me in a lot of ways to overcome the personal issues that I was having. I really kind of used his music as a tonic, you know, emotional, spiritual to help me through the difficult times I was having. And, it was just gigantic. So, I feel like my relationship with him is pretty deep. I know other conductors are close to him, but I think – I'm not saying I'm the only one, certainly – but I think that he and I have a very special connection that is unusual.

I've had him here, I've probably had him here ten or twelve times on campus. And, he asked me to do the premier of the Mass. I don't know if you're...

LW: Right. Uh-huh.

GH: Ok, well that was a huge, huge, huge thing for me and a turning point for my career, for his composition, and it was probably the pinnacle of my musical growth was that experience. You know it's an hour and fifty minutes. It's fourteen pieces by David Maslanka, and if you start to think about it you can easily lose your mind. So, you just kind of have to focus on, ok, we'll do this one and now we're going to do this one and now we're going to do that one. The preparation took an entire semester, and the premier was amazing and it was incredible.

For him an enormous amount of the material in that work has resurfaced in everything. In the seventh symphony it's prevalent. It's prevalent in everything. He's taken movements of it, like in the saxophone concerto there are movements of it that are lifted directly from the Mass and played on alto saxophone instead of the soprano voice.

So, that material was huge and he just sort of poured it all out in that one piece. Not that he hasn't had a lot of original ideas since, but I think it's been a huge catalyst for his composition ever since. That was enormous, and then from then on out I've done all the symphonies with him here. I haven't done any of them without him here. I've done a bunch of his music. We've recorded some of it. Steve [Steele] of course, has the handle on all of that now, which is wonderful. I mean, I think it's terrific that he's got the wherewithal to make that happen

But, I feel like I have a really close relationship with David that is pretty unusual.

LW: Yeah, that's great.

GH: So, in reference to how I deal with his music – you just interrupt me if I'm on the wrong track here.

LW: Ok, sure.

GH: I don't feel, Lane, that a conductor can make anything be spiritual. I think that the conductor's job is to unlock the essence of the music. The music itself is the vehicle, and there are certain things in the preparation of his music that have to happen in order for that to be unlocked. But, I think it's a misunderstanding for any conductor to think that they are, you know, they themselves are making this incredible experience. I think the music itself makes the experience. The conductor is the one that allows it to happen, that trains it, that focuses it, that teaches it in order for it to happen. So, that's probably the crux of it.

(Hanson's review of his discussion points begins here.)

David is very, as you well know, specific about what he wants and what he thinks his music is. Some composers are more free about interpretation of their music. Some of them are, "Oh, go ahead. You can take this liberty – a little faster, a little slower. You can do whatever you feel here. Blah, blah, blah." You know, I contrast him with my own students to [Alfred] Reed, who was also a good friend. And Al used to say, "The interpretation of music depends on the ability level of the group, it depends on the acoustic of the hall, depends on the mood you're in. You know, those markings are just indications. Feel free to do your thing."

LW: Right, yeah.

GH: That's not true with David. You should not feel free to do your thing [laughter], because he has a very specific idea about what the music is. So, what you want to do, I mean what all conductors want to do, is try to get as close to that intent as you possibly can. Does that diminish your creative input? In my opinion, in no way does it, because what you're doing is initiating and awakening the creative process. The notes are just dots on the page, and the creative process has to do with bringing it all to life. But, you want to do it in a way that is very specific to his wishes.

And, the reason he feels so strongly about it – it took me some time to figure this out – is because what he says about it and what he's written about it is exactly what it is.

It makes it exactly right. And, if you mess with it, you start to lose the center of it. You lose the focus of it. By messing with it I mean anything to do with a tempo change. I mean, there are tiny variations within it – maybe a little tiny bit faster, maybe a little tiny bit slower. But, essentially, the tempos that are marked, I’ve discovered, are absolutely right. The music works at that tempo, and the tempos are all related to the whole of the music in a very large way, so that if you follow the tempo markings exactly, and you make the tempo changes exactly as they are indicated, you discover that the large architecture of the music works perfectly. And, if you mess with it – too slow, too fast – it upsets the balance of the whole, and that’s usually important. So, I think you have to be very careful. I think tempo is a really, really giant, probably the most important aspect of it.

LW: Right.

GH: Pardon?

LW: I’m just agreeing with you. You are not the first person I’ve heard that from. It is a foundational element of what he’s about.

GH: Right. The other thing is the dynamics and the stylistic markings that he writes need to all be taken literally. The dynamic markings are especially interesting. He’s created his own voice – nothing is a surprise, what I’m saying to you, I’m sure – but, just so I can reiterate my statements about it.

He has his own sound. The mark of a great composer, one of the marks of a great composer, is that when you hear it you know immediately who it is. If you hear Brahms, you know it’s Brahms – Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Beethoven, right down the line. All the great composers, the reason they’re still around and still performed and still played and still loved and are so powerful is because they are speaking with their own voice. And, it doesn’t sound like anything else or anyone else. It’s not a ripoff of anything. So, I think David is one of the few – and I will really say this freely – one of the very few wind composers that has accomplished that. I think a lot of them sound like everybody else. There are lots of clichés in the band repertoire, and they get recycled over and over and over again, but not true with him. He has created his own voice.

Well, one of the ways he does that is by textures and by dynamics. When you are first starting to deal with his music you start to look at it and you think, “How can that particular voice be marked at *fortissimo* and the bass line be marked at *piano*? What does that sound like? What is that?” And, I remember really struggling with it. The first piece I did with him – before he came, the first preparation I did was the third symphony. And it had all those crazy dynamic levels within the framework of the texture. And what you have to do is you have to adhere to the dynamics that are written and then develop your own sensibilities about what the sounds that are created are, rather than trying to, as we’ve been trained to do, make it that homogeneous sound that everything is equal in proportion. All the sounds are equally blended, and we make that nice [Francis] McBeth pyramid, and that’s what everything sounds like. Not so. Not true.

So, sometimes, particularly the upper voices, you know those extreme piccolo, flute in the upper octaves, Eb clarinet, first clarinets in the extreme upper registers, and

then underneath that will be the low reeds or the low brass that will be written at half the dynamic or less than half. So, you have to adjust your hearing and your ears to what those sounds are and not try to homogenize them. That's really super important.

The stylistic markings are really literal as well. This is something that is certainly not unique to him. Everything is marked really clearly. I mean, almost every single note has either a stylistic marking on it – a dot, a dash, a *sforzando* – or something in the nomenclature that says longer, shorter, there's some indication as to how long the notes should be, or how much weight they should get in terms of *sforzando* or agogic accent, or *marcato* accent. All those things are very clearly labeled. You know, one of his favorite things to do for example is that repeated eighth note accompaniment figure [sings example eighth note pattern]. Knowing exactly how long those notes should be and how articulate they are, how *legato* how *staccato*. It's something you really have to develop a sense of. I think it becomes really obvious after you spend some time with it, but he will say, "clearly articulated."

LW: Right.

GH: Yeah. In other words, not too *legato*, not too short and pecky. Make the notes sound without overarticulating, but make them clear enough so there's space between and each note is clearly heard. Same thing with those repeated quarter notes [sings example quarter notes], making them the right length. That kind of stuff. That requires developing a sense of the music and a sense of his style, and I think that comes over time. It isn't something that you just immediately know. You have to spend time with it to develop a sense of what that's about.

The next think I wrote here is, "Be willing to go to the extremes with dynamics." He knows what the capabilities of each of the instruments are. He knows what the capabilities of the entire ensemble, what the capabilities are in terms of extremes. And, his music gets really, really loud. Really, really soft. And, you have to be willing to go there. I think a lot of people in our business are of the contest mentality. "Oh, it's too loud! We'll distort it. Oh, it's too soft. We'll lose control." Tough beans. In order to make his music work you have to go there, and the musicians have to learn how to control it. If you strip the music of those extremes, you've stripped it of its heart and soul. You can't do it. He understands what the power of those extremes is. It can go from the most sublime, most ethereal nothingness to taking the back wall of the hall right out. That's the intent, and you have to go there. You can't modify that.

Let's see here. In terms of interpretation, I wrote, "Do not impose overly sentimental nor romantic expressivo on the music." I think a lot of people misunderstand that, too. In order to make it expressive – the music is extraordinarily expressive, but it's rarely *rubato*. It's rarely sentimental. It's more sort of – there's a sense of truth about it that is not meant to tug at your heart strings in a sentimental way. I think that that's really, really important. In other words, you can't – the tempos, a lot of people try to make things expressive by using a lot of *rubato*. That kind of thing. And you really can't do that. The *rubato* is built into the terminology, and he uses the word, "hesitate" or "hes." many times over and over and over. Those are moments when there is a little *rubato*. You get to a certain point, you hesitate, you move on. And, that's an intuitive thing that I think most people feel in a pretty similar basis actually. I don't think those

things are up for grabs that much. I think they're pretty similar. But, don't overly try to romanticize it, because that's not what it is, and that tends to make it something that it is not.

Be patient with the slow music. And, patience is the key. Sometimes there is very little movement, and something will go over a very large span of time with very little happening. Sometimes the tendency is to want to hurry up and get through it, and you have to do just the opposite. You have to settle into it and just sort of be with it. Not sort of be with it, for sure be with it. Just become one with it. The whole idea of it is to relax the energy, to dissipate the energy, to suck the energy out and let just the sound sort of be there. Those moments are absolutely exquisite, and they can be breathtaking, if you are patient enough to let it be. In conjunction with that you have to allow the silence to take the proper amount of time.

This is a really interesting subject, and I've talked with him about it over and over again. He explained to me one time, which I've never forgotten, and I've used ever since, that *fermata* and the silence that follows it sometimes are means of letting the energy dissipate. And, you think of the sound energy, which is the vibrational energy, everything is set in motion and sometimes you've got an extreme amount of it, you've got an extreme amount of rhythmic energy in which things are very fast or something and it comes to a screeching halt, and then there's silence. In order for the silence to be effective, you have to give all that built up energy time to dissipate in the silence. That's huge. And, in the score very often it will say, "Take your time," "Be patient," "Don't hurry." Those silences sometimes feel like they're forever unless, as I said before, you are in the moment. You can allow that to dissipate, and it's almost in your head. As the conductor you wait for it to completely go away. You're hearing it, and it's crashing around in your head, and then you just kind of wait for it to be gone, so that it's no longer in your head before you go on, rather than trying to time it out or say it's this many seconds, or it's this long. Let that energy dissipate and give it the time to do that, and that's a wonderful, wonderful thing to be able to do.

Keep the dynamic levels up over long melodic or harmonic sections of music. Sometimes, like at the end of the eighth symphony, it goes on forever and ever and ever. And, you think it's going to end, and it doesn't end, and it goes on. And, if you let up, if the forward direction of it starts to backslide a half an inch, it falls flat. You have to get the players involved. You have to keep that energy level up and keep feeding it and keep pouring it on and not let it backtrack.

This may be helpful to some people, if you decide to use it. I developed an analogy that I think is pretty effective. I know it is with my students. It's like a wire that you have attached to one wall of the rehearsal room, and the wire is also attached to the back of the room, and then there is an electrical impulse. The wire is pulled really tight. The electrical impulse is the sound, and you start that electrical impulse, and you send that shock across the wire. And, that's the forward direction, that's the energy of the music. Well, if the line slacks, if there's a place where that tautness doesn't remain, a slack in the line, it drops the energy. So, you have to keep that tautness, keep that tightness of the energy all the time and keep that energy moving across the line and not let it slack and not let it fall backwards. Those big, long sections are tremendously powerful. They build up so much energy and so much anticipation that they magnify the huge moments. But, you kill them if you allow them to backslide.

Ok, this is really, really important. Conductors must demonstrate focus and centered energy. Don't confuse "excitement," "hype," or the word "passion," which I've learned to dislike in some ways; don't confuse those words with energy. Some people turn red in the face and they get all excited. And you know, they're being passionate, and they're being excited. That's not what David's music is. It's not what it does, and it's not what feeds it. It creates sort of a nervous tension in it. That is not good for it. It's not good for any music. But, I think a lot of people who are looking – as your subject has evolved in your thinking and stuff, and particularly the subject you're dealing with, they're looking for that connection, that soul connection, that thing. And, they feel that the more hyped up they are, and the more passionate they feel, the more that's going to feed it, and I don't think that's true. I don't know if that's controversial to you, or if that makes sense.

LW: It does make sense. I liken it to artificially inserting something that's not there...

GH: Yeah.

LW: ...just for the sake of somebody saying, "Well, music should be passionate." Ok. Well, then this is what outside influences say passion should look like or should be, rather than drawing it from within the context of the music and allowing it to emerge as what it was intended to be and what it is from the music.

GH: Right. Exactly. It's the music itself that's passionate. I tell my grad students I'll never forget I was judging a contest years ago, and it was one of those travelling things where you do the critique and are in the warm up room, that kind of stuff. I was in the room and the band director was warming up the ensemble, and the kids were ready to go on stage, and he said, "Now, don't forget. Be emotional!" I have since come to realize that you can't do that. You can't be emotional. Something has to trigger an emotion. Something has to be the impetus for it, and then that displays itself as emotion. So, you can't be emotional. You have to have a catalyst for it. And, I think that that's an immature and misguided notion that the conductor can be emotional, and you can sweat and pull crazy faces. And, there's even a school of conducting that has you draw the faces and all that kind of nonsense. I think those are all external kind of fake misconceptions about what really goes on. So, I think it's important to be really highly energized, but really focused so that your energy comes through your core, comes through the vibes you send out. I don't know how all that works. Those things are a mystery to me still. It's interesting to me, Lane, because I've sort of come to the place that I don't care how it works.

LW: Yeah.

GH: I don't care what it is. I got really tired of trying to define it, because I'm not sure you can.

Anyway, then I said, "Curb your creative license in deference to realizing the intent of the music," which we've already sort of talked about. Then the "soul

connection,” in quotes, “is within the music itself. It cannot be imposed upon it. It must be allowed to emerge.” We talked about that. “Be intensely aware of levels of energy at all times. It travels between the highest and lowest points.” I think this is an important thing.

In David’s music there is always one moment, there is in everything, actually, it’s pretty clearly defined in his music, there’s one moment that is *the* moment. And, I think there’s no question about it, at least in my experience with it. You just know what that is. And, there is always also a moment of repose, the lowest ebb, and the whole music is really constructed between those two points. It’s really a kind of cool way to think about it. You take the lowest point, the highest point, and then you’re just putting those two places in a time continuum, and you’re building everything around them so that the highest energy is carefully constructed. So, when you get there, everything is in place for it to happen and have the most meaning. And, I think that requires that the conductor have a very real and broad perspective of the whole of the music, and you have to know where you’re going, you have to keep everything in perspective and in proportion as you go. So, when that really sublime moment comes, you’ve prepared it properly so that it is as sublime and as touching and all those things as it can be. When the big moment comes, you’ve prepared it in such a way that it is as big and strong and powerful as it can be, as it actually is. I think that’s kind of an interesting way to think about it.

And the last thing I wrote is, “Know when to get out of the way.”

LW: [laughter] Yeah.

GH: [laughter] I had a conductor say to me fairly recently, who was sort of a novice to David’s music, he conducted the eighth symphony, and he said, “That was the most terrifying forty-five minutes of my life.” And I thought, I understand, first of all. I understand that because I’ve certainly felt that way myself, but that is in a way unfortunate, because it shouldn’t be terrifying. It should be enormously uplifting.

His music is so specific and so particular that you really have to develop and own a sense of what it is before you can relax into it. Then, after you’ve done – this is true of everybody – but, after you’ve done a bunch of it, you start to get a sense of it. You start to see the recurring ideas, not just thematic and compositional ideas, but the recurring style of him. What he has to say. Then you start to get comfortable with it and say, “Oh, ok. I get it.” Then, in the places that are monstrously, technically difficult, it’s like, so what?

I don’t know how much of it you’ve experienced yourself in terms of doing it on what level. Obviously, the big stuff takes really, really good players to do it. But, the amazing thing always to me is without me hyping it at all, without me saying, “Ok, you guys are going to love this!” when you get into it, they get so drawn into the moment and into the power of it, that they just start to devour it. My kids do. I don’t have to say anything. It just happens. And, that’s not true of everything. Some really good music, they have to be beaten into submission to want to really do it, and at the end they go, “Oh, ok. I really liked it.” But, with his stuff it just grabs them instantly, and consequently the technical part of it is sort of a nonissue really for my kids.

LW: Yeah.

GH: They just sort of go, “Ok. Here it is.” You know, if you’re a keyboard player in the percussion section, you’re going, “Bring that stuff on!” They take such pride in just nailing that stuff, and it’s arpeggios! Scales and arpeggios. And, I just say to the kids, “If you know your scales and arpeggios, you’re good to go. Go figure out what these are and dig it out.”

LW: Yeah. It’s interesting that you say that. Steve Steele had talked about, at least in talking with me, talked about his students finding those similar connections as far as being that into the music and that excited just to pull it off.

GH: Yeah! There’s something about it that just draws them in. It’s not, you know, Motivation 101. You don’t have to say hardly anything. They just need to experience it. You read it – I remember the last time this happened. I had him here last November the year before we did the eighth symphony. And I remember reading the first movement of it. We were just sightreading. You know, it’s not that hard, the first movement of that symphony. They could pretty well play it, but it was not polished by any stretch. But, at the end of it, it was just magic. There was deathly silence in the room. Everybody went, “Oh my! Oh, wow, that is so cool!” Well, that’s all they need. Any of the technical aspects of it, they are just going, “Ok, give me that! Let’s go.” Really cool.

(Hanson’s review of his discussion points ends here.)

So, that’s what I had on my list. In terms of the seventh symphony I think, and I hate to be quoted about this, but I think it’s his strongest piece. I do. I wouldn’t call it my favorite, because I don’t feel that way about his stuff. I don’t have a favorite. But, I think it’s got the most interest, the most variety. I think the really glorious moments of it are kind of more glorious. The first movement of it is like a Tchaikovsky symphony to me once it gets past the piano introduction stuff. All of the sudden it gets into sort of the developmental aspect of it, and it’s just this huge symphonic thing. The second movement of course is just drop dead beautiful. It’s like a piano concerto with the flute.

LW: Right. Exactly.

GH: That stuff is just so exquisite, such beautiful music. And, pianistically it just blew me away. I’ve seen David play piano. He’s a self-taught pianist. Early on, he’s just like the rest of us, just kind of poke it out, and he’s become pretty accomplished. The amazing thing is that it’s so pianistic. I mean, it sounds like Schuman. It’s amazing to me that he understands the instrument that well. He can actually sit down and play it, I mean, not on the level that a great player would play it, but he can play it. That’s really cool.

And then the third movement, the *scherzo* is just mind boggling. I’ll never forget, my first clarinetist, she went to Indiana, she did really well there, and she’s an amazing kid and a great player. And that’s marked, what is it? 184?

LW: Yeah.

GH: Yeah, with ten million notes in it. I called her in and I said, “Take a look at this and tell me if you think it’s possible.” And she said, “Oh, sure.” [laughter] I mean, seriously. It was just so cool! It’s dazzling. Then the fourth movement of it has complete contrast. I think the fourth movement of it has the most depth of meaning. I think it all really comes together in that movement. The climax in the movement I think is just amazingly gorgeous. And of course the movement sends the piece off into the place where it settles and it should be. So, I think it’s a terrific piece, and I really have a hard time describing it much more clearly than just using adjectives and stuff.

I remember when I did the third symphony, David describe it as a mountain range with different – how many movements are in that third symphony? Five, I think?

LW: Third symphony, yeah, five.

GH: Yeah, five. He described it as five mountain peaks with higher peaks and lower peaks, but it was like a mountain range. That really helped me to understand. I can impose that on other things he’s written, especially the seventh symphony where you have those gigantic – like my previous comment that the extremes of it are so incredible. It has really some jagged edges and rolling gorgeous hills, and it just sort of encompasses a vast array of sensibilities and feelings. It’s just amazing to me.

And, you know, when you start off with the piano, that whole piano thing where he sees that woman in church when he was a kid sitting there [sings the opening gesture of the first movement] banging away on the piano. For that to be the impetus for it is just mind-blowing. And, as it progresses it develops and turns into this incredibly potent thing. I think he was in a particular state of mind when he wrote it, and I don’t know where it came from, but it’s really amazing.

LW: Yeah. I got some feedback from Tim Mahr at St. Olaf. He said the remarkable thing to him about that moment in particular is that for a quote-unquote “modern” piece, it eases anybody’s ear into the music. The connections that are made are immediate. Anybody can relate to that type of sound. And he draws you in with it and takes off and goes...

GH: Yeah. That’s a very good point. I think that’s true of all his music. You know, he does not use complicated harmonic sequences. I mean, the harmonic sequences are all functional harmony, basically Romantic harmony.

Well, this is interesting, too, Lane. You may be very interested in this. I don’t know if this has come up in your discussion with him or anybody else, but melodically, he struggled a long time with himself. He really thought for a long time he couldn’t write a really great melody. And, I remember when – I did the premier of the saxophone concerto here also. And, this is pretty potent information, I do believe. Up until that point he would say in our discussions with students and with me that the material he used in his music is what he calls stupid stuff. Little bits and pieces of fragments, melodic fragments and stuff. And come to find out that he felt he wasn’t a very good melodist. He didn’t feel like he could write a great melody. He was so thrilled with himself when he wrote the first movement of the saxophone concerto. [Sings melody] That gorgeous

tune. And, he said to me when – it’s a long story, but we did the premier and Joe Lulloff learned it in two weeks. Do you know this story?

LW: No, I don’t.

GH: Well, it was written for Kelland Thomas on our faculty here, and Kelland is an incredible player. He was twenty-four years old, twenty-five when we hired him here. David wrote that piece for him. He developed a really weird neurological thing with his jaw and his mouth, and he lost control of his playing almost completely.

LW: Wow.

GH: And we came in for our first rehearsal together and he couldn’t get through the first three minutes of the piece. When it was over, I called David and said, “We are in big trouble here.” We’d been in preparation of it with the wind ensemble for weeks. So, I said, “What should we do? What should we do?” Well, Kelland wanted to do it. “No, I can do it. I can do it.” It put me in a hard place because Kelland really wanted to do it. It was his concerto. And he couldn’t do it.

He had organized – the International Saxophone Alliance was here on our campus, and the premier of it was scheduled in two weeks, and it was going to be the big whoop-doo of the whole conference. There were people here from all over the world. So, I said to Kelland, “I’m really sorry. David is on one end of this. You’re on the other. I’m going to go ahead. We’ve got to do this premier.” So, he suggested to call Joe Lulloff at [Michigan State University], and Joe learned it in two weeks. Came out, and in about two rehearsals we did it.

LW: Wow.

GH: Consequently, we took it on tour with Joe. We went to WASBE [World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles] in 2001 and did it in Lucerne at the WASBE conference, which was really a kick. There’s a really, really good recording of it that we did at the conference there. It was quite the trip.

But, I digress. The melodic content of that first movement, he said, “Just wait until you hear this melody.” He said, “I can write a melody after all.” And, that was cool, because that opened up a whole new thing. Now, a lot of his music has these incredibly lush – like I’m thinking of the second movement of the eighth symphony with the saxophone quartet and the little vignettes, the little variations on that theme are so cool. That’s something he wouldn’t have incorporated in anything prior to the saxophone concerto, because he just didn’t feel like he had the melodic ideas that worked.

His music has also gotten a lot less conflicting. It’s much more consonant. There are many more moments of really thin – you know, he loves to open the score and say, “Look! There’s nothing here.” And, there will be one little line in oboe or flute or something in a vibraphone or marimba, and it will be this beautiful sound that will be so sonorous and rich, and there’s really no one playing essentially. So, you know this to be true from his second symphony, which is sort of the leaping off point for us wind band types for his stuff, all that conflict – the second movement of it with just turmoil and

tension and harmonic tension and polytonality and no tonality and just craziness. And, all that emotional conflict, just rip your guts out kind of thing. The more self-aware he has become, the more the music has become free, not simplistic, but free of conflict. It's interesting because you go from the second symphony to the third, and there are those moments in the third symphony which are wrenching and wrenching, gut wrenching in that way. And, then you go to the fifth symphony, and there's turmoil and conflict in there, but not so much. You go to the seventh symphony, and it starts to kind of disappear. It turns into a different kind of energy. Eighth symphony, different yet again. So, I think he's gradually kind of removing that extraordinary conflict. How do I say this? It's kind of less of a personal turmoil and more of a pure musical element. I don't know if that makes sense.

LW: Hmm. Yeah.

GH: You know, in the eighth symphony there's not one moment in that piece where there's any polytonality or what he calls crunch chords. You just double up your fists and hit the piano. There's none of that. That just extraordinary amount of tension. That's kind of gone.

LW: Well, he recently redid his perspective on what his compositional periods are for me. And, it's something I'm going to include in my paper.

GH: Fantastic.

LW: And, it makes a lot of sense what you're saying. He talked through how some of these symphonies and other pieces are grouped together. If I'm remembering, and I don't have it right in front of me, if I'm remembering right, from the fifth symphony – of course, the sixth was orchestral – from the fifth to the seventh and eighth, he says he's finding himself in a place where he's satisfied. He's come to a point of rest, maybe. I wish I had it right in front of me. Just a point of being where he's comfortable to where he's come.

GH: Yeah, exactly. And, that's such a cool way to think about it. You feel that in the music. To me that's very, very evident. And, what's interesting for me in my personal experience is that we're sort of on a parallel path that way in terms of our self-awareness – not that I'm comparing ourselves in any way. But, just with our friendship and the personal turmoil, like I said I was in really in sort of the depths of despair, in emotional turmoil, and now I feel like I've really got a – I'm really free, I guess is the right word in so many ways.

So, when I do his music, to me this is such a cool place to be. I can take the piece and pick it up and look at it and go, "Yep," and just go to work, instead of "Oh my! What is this? What is that? What do I do here?" This is not an ego thing I'm saying at all, it's just true. I just get it. It doesn't matter. He can throw anything he wants, and I can go, "Ok. I get it. I see what that is." That makes it such a joy, because when I'm working I can completely give of myself to the kids and to the music itself and not have to worry about anything on a personal level about what is that, or how am I going to do

that. Or, I'm concerned or I'm afraid or any of that. That's completely gone. He personally and his music have had an enormous impact on me being able to say that.

LW: Yeah. That's good.

GH: Yeah. A really cool place to be. I'm looking forward to the ninth symphony. I got a message – he wrote me a long – you know, I just got back to the office last week for the first time, and he said he's really, it's really rough going. It always is for him. He really has a hard time getting started always. He goes into such depth and such dark places to get where he needs to be, but he said he feels something really powerful rumbling around. I'm sure it will be a killer.

LW: Yeah. I'm hoping to get a little bit of a taste of it. In a couple of weeks I'm going to go see him in Missoula.

GH: That's so great. I'm so glad you get that chance. I've been to his home, too, and it's just wonderful to see him there, see him in his atmosphere. He's a very granola kind of guy. He lives a very simple life, and it's all about the purity and truthfulness of the music. That's him. That's how he lives and that's who he is. Very cool.

LW: That will be fun. I'm looking forward to it.

GH: Well, I really admire what you're doing. What format are you going to use this in? Is this a dissertation?

LW: Yeah, it's my doctoral document.

GH: Oh, wow. So what kind of other research have you been able to use?

LW: Well, I've read pretty much every doctoral paper that's been written on his band music, which is ten or twelve of them. That kind of gives you the background, and it's been interesting to see how the writing on him has evolved. The first doctoral paper was written on him back in 1995ish or mid-90s. Something like that. I read those in chronological order just to see how he emerged as a subject of doctoral study...

GH: Right.

LW: ...and to see how his biography has developed over the years. That was kind of the basis of it. A lot of input from him. I can't tell you how many emails he and I have sent back and forth, and he's always so good about putting a lot of thought and time into answering questions.

GH: Right.

LW: I think I mentioned I've talked with several other conductors from Steve Steele to Tim Mahr, who both recorded seven, to Eugene Corporon.

GH: Have you talked to Gary Green?

LW: I have an email into him. Waiting to hear back from him, so we'll see how that plays out. So, a lot of input from people who know him well and have done a lot of his music. And then just diving in and doing some analysis. You know the blow-by-blow thing, he's told me he's not necessarily into the blow-by-blow, note-by-note descriptions of it.

GH: Right.

LW: But, I've used that hopefully as a framework for understanding some of the formal structures...

GH: You know, that's an interesting subject, too, and something I've talked with him about. Because, in teaching conducting – we offer a DMA in conducting here, one of a handful of places – it's been an interesting trip to develop a course of study in approaching advanced conducting students and stuff. And, I've come to the conclusion for myself, and he reinforced this for me, that the whole note-by-note harmonic analysis of the music is, in terms of its realization to musicians, to the people in front of you, is an exercise in futility.

LW: Uh-huh. Yeah.

GH: I mean, you understand it for yourself. Obviously, you can look at it and see what's there, but forcing conducting students to do that, to try to make the connection between that exercise and doing it like you did in theory class or like you have to do in theory class, and doing it as a conductor and making the connections between the actuality of knowing it and connecting it with the relevance of knowing it – I don't think there is a connection between those two things.

LW: Well, you know, there's a lot of that that's definitely true. It is interesting knowing a little bit about the focus he places on the idea of transformation...

GH: Yeah.

LW: ...and going from one place to another that – and this is what I've tried to do in my analytical part of things, is to infuse some of these ideas and some thoughts so that it's a little bit more interesting and not just a textual rehashing of what the piece is on paper. If you look at the way he plays with harmonic structures, the way he manipulates motivic material, things like that, there's this underlying idea of transformation that can be seen in what he's physically doing, so to speak, with the music. For me, whatever, there are some interesting connections between the theoretical and philosophical...

GH: Yes, I understand what you're saying.

LW: ...that I've been able to pull out. And, you know, it's interesting. I don't think it's necessarily the most engaging part of the study, but on the other hand, for those that might get into that type of stuff and get excited by it, it's there.

GH: Yeah, exactly. Like we were saying, it's really, really hard to write about the essence of it.

LW: Yeah.

GH: That's what music is. It's its own language, and the written word is not able to communicate what it does, otherwise they wouldn't exist separately.

LW: True story.

GH: I've heard people try to – the caution I give conductors and stuff to not overly emotionalize it – certainly when you're working with an ensemble, and any great conductor does this from a professional level through us educator types, you draw analogies, you draw visual images for kids to help them create, to guide their own thought process and stuff, but it's just so important to finally realize that you can't infuse any of that.

LW: Yeah.

GH: It has to come from each individual person there, and it has to come from the collective, a collective of all of their energy and yours. And, it's a two way street. They give to you, you give to them, and you enter into that whole energy exchange back and forth between the whole of it with you as sort of the manipulator of the energy, and them being engaged and focusing all of that and drawing it to a point where you get this really refined performance. Then, let the music do its thing, and it will do it.

LW: Yeah. That's a good way to put it.

GH: It's pretty huge. Trying to write about it – there are people who try to write about the emotional aspects of it, blah, blah, blah. Well, I went through therapy for two and a half years twenty years ago, big time. And my shrink said to me something I'll never forget that is really important for conductors to know. You can't make anybody feel anything. Right?

LW: It's true.

GH: It was huge. I thought, "I can't?" After all these years I've been thinking that was doing all this. No. You can be a catalyst for releasing feelings and thoughts and sensibilities, but you can't make any of it happen. And, the word David uses exclusively is, "allow." You have to allow this to work, allow this to be. Allow, allow, allow. It's huge.

LW: Well, that really gets to – as I’m trying to draw this project to a close – it comes down to my thoughts of what a “Maslankian” interpretation is. First of all, it starts with, like you said in detail, doing the black and the white to its fullest extent as he intends it to be. You know, all the marks on the paper, making them mean something. But, then creating an environment in which individuals are able to find those connections, find those spiritual and emotional connections, allow those to emerge like you say using his terminology. Not forcing it – one of the things I’ve been trying to do as I hear stories from you and from other people and conductors, some of the meditation images that Dr. Maslanka has shared with me, putting those out as springboards or catalysts, to use a good word, for people to find their own spiritual and emotional connections.

GH: Exactly right.

LW: However it emerges is valid to the performer, it’s valid to Dr. Maslanka, and it’s not intended to be this one idea, this one thing that happens at this one moment in time.

GH: That is so huge and so important. He stopped – I’ve always had him talk to the audience before a concert and the last couple of times he was here, he said, “I don’t want to do that anymore.” He said, “Just play the music.” Which I think is really cool. As a young musician, we all went through this, you read the program notes. I’ll never forget studying the Strauss tone poems, *Don Quixote* and all that stuff. Oh, you can see the windmill and you can feel the wind and all this stuff, and a Mahler symphony, all those things were catalysts for the composer. The beauty of all art is that it releases individualism. Right?

LW: Yeah, there you go. That’s a good way to say it. I like that.

GH: It’s exactly as you said. There’s no specific intent, there’s no specific story or line of thought that should be realized from any of it. That’s not the point. The point is to reach the individual, and then let that individual make his or her own interpretation of what it feels like or what it means. I was going to ask you, too, is there any attempt in your document to define the meaning of when you say the spiritual nature? What does that mean exactly?

LW: You know, that’s a good question. I’ve not really tried to define that. Many dissertations have been written on that that would fill volumes and rooms.

GH: Yeah. I’m just wondering if there’s a succinct way – it’s such a kind of catchall term, especially in our society in this sort of “new agey” kind of thought, where everything is spiritual. Everything happens for a reason. I get so tired of hearing that statement, I could scream. But, it’s a very prevalent kind of thought, where everybody has this – you know, they talk about connection, they talk about spiritual this. I think it’s sort of a way of defining the difference between having unconscious thought as opposed to religion, having a defined set of beliefs. It kind of frees people from having a defined

set of beliefs and allows their unconscious mind to evolve without being sort of hampered or defined by religion. I don't know. That's my own kind of feeling about it.

It's just a thought, because when you start reading about it you can look at it in print and think, well, "Discuss the spiritual nature of blah, blah, blah." Well, that means a whole lot of different things to a whole lot of different people. I'm just wondering if there's a way to kind of nail it down that would draw people more into the essence of what you're trying to say.

LW: Well, that's an interesting question. My personal thought on it is that I'm not sure I really want to nail it down too much, because it does mean so many different things to so many different people.

GH: Right. Or maybe just acknowledge that.

LW: Yeah, exactly. You know, I certainly come at life and come at music from my own spiritual framework, and it's quite different than Dr. Maslanka's. And, I could spend a lot of time discussing what my spiritual framework is. I'm not sure that's really the purpose of the paper.

GH: No. I understand exactly. You know another interesting story about him, if you've got time.

LW: Sure.

GH: It was right before the mass. You know, I had to raise \$52,000 to do that piece.

LW: Wow.

GH: And, I had to raise the commissioning fee for him, and I had to raise the fee of having the thing copied. An hour and fifty minutes, you can imagine, SATB chorus, boys chorus, soloists, piano, organ, wind ensemble, I mean it's huge.

LW: Right.

GH: So, just having it copied cost \$20,000. It was just like this gigantic thing. So, I kind of went on the road with David, and we went to several different CBDNA regional conferences, and I spoke at a few of them. I was saying we're doing this, please jump on the bandwagon. It is true, there are people who are actually afraid to do his music it's really powerful and they don't know what – you know all of this already.

LW: Sure.

GH: Anyway, this is hilarious. He was on a composer's panel. The text of the Mass, I'm sure you're familiar with it, it has to do with the Latin liturgy. And, he sort of used the Latin liturgy part of it as the male god energy and it is counterbalanced by

mother earth, which is the Richard Beale poetry, so there is the male and female side of all of it. But, there's so much Christianity involved in it that people got really confused. And, somebody raised their hand in the middle of this discussion and said, "Mr. Maslanka, are you a Christian?" And, he said, "No, I'm not." It was really interesting, because he had used – and I'm not speaking for him at all in this way, because I don't know, I think he's sort of in the same places he was then – he uses the power of the image of Jesus and the liturgy, you know, those kinds of things, the power of it as the catalyst for the music, not in a literal way.

LW: Right.

GH: The Bach chorales that are so prevalent for a long time, since the mid-2000s or whatever, he started to incorporate those hymns in practically everything. So, people make that connection, they assume he's writing something that has to do with Christianity, and that's not true. Like the *Give Us This Day*. He makes a delineation in the program notes saying "Give us this day" is from the Lord's Prayer and then talks about his readings of Buddhism, which opens up to the listener and to the interpreter and the thinker this vast world of spiritualness that is not specific. If that makes sense.

LW: Yeah. It does. I think that's where he comes from. He's mentioned in different program notes that his use of Christian symbols is because that's his heritage, that's what he grew up with. That's what their intended to be, a frame of reference and symbolic, and, like you say, not a literal interpretation as a believer would interpret them.

GH: Right, exactly. So, interesting. Well, listen, I really admire what you're doing. I can't wait to see the finished product, because I think it's really, really important. And, it sounds to me like you're on such a good track with it.

LW: Well, I hope so. It's turned into a lot longer project than I anticipated, but it's been good. It's been a nice investment of time. I hope it's valuable. I hope people find it useful.

GH: Oh, I'm sure it will be, and it's such a difficult thing to write about. I fully appreciate that, and I will be very interested to see how it all turns out. You know, I've thought myself of doing the same thing, trying to write down my thoughts. Maybe you're doing it for me.

LW: Well, I just really appreciate the time and the effort.

GH: Well, I'm very happy to do it. He's been such a gigantic and powerful influence in my life that anything I can do to further the cause, I'm happy to do.

LW: That's great. I appreciate it. Thank you so much.

GH: Thank you.

APPENDIX H: Transcription of YouTube Video

The following is a transcription of an online video posted on YouTube.com at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPTfcnato4o>. It is also linked to the home page of DavidMaslanka.com. In the video Maslanka speaks about a few aspects of his compositional process.

(0:00-0:33)

“(inaudible) everything. All the things that I have been and known about and do. I read a tremendous amount and things that are not about music. I read a lot in history, in philosophy, in religion; so, these are things which contribute to my understanding of the world and through that understanding comes a broader sense of (inaudible) music.”

(0:34-1:46)

“The musical spark, it’s hard to define what that is. I will for no good reason have something (inaudible) in my head – some musical push, some tune. It often happens when I’m in a relaxed place like the shower, that a melody will come into my mind, a little bit of a tune, some rhythms, and I’ll start to see them and to play around. So, other times musical ideas come while sitting at the keyboard. They also come while walking, and it depends on where the composition is in the process. If I am far enough along in it, I will in my walking most usually have the musical things connect up, that is large ideas connect with other large ideas or the whole reason for being for a piece of music shows up suddenly. Why that should happen I have no idea. It’s just part of the thinking process that I was born with and that I have trained over a very long time.”

(1:47-3:09)

“Well my understanding of being stuck...those...in a number of directions. Stuck often means that the ideas are there but they’re not ready to be fully brought forward yet. And it’s really surprising how much time it takes for an idea to mature before it’s ready to speak itself. I can have a good idea and have no idea how to use it, I can have no idea how to extend it or what it’s position is in a piece of music. And at a certain point for no good reason just like a phone number might show up in your head after thinking about it for a day or two days – or the name of a friend you had in high school that shows up. And...so there’s a deep working that’s going on, out of sight in the unconscious mind which is putting things together, and when that’s ready to show itself then that will rise to the surface. So things that I’ve been staring at for days and days and days may on the next look suddenly fall into place.”

(3:10-6:19)

“The things that I do to encourage it to come along are largely walking. There’s a very long and old tradition about walking and creativity, that walking helps you solve problems. And any number of people who have written books or done any other kind of artwork have done this – long walks. And in those long walks I will simply go into my meditative mode and ask for internal help. I will ask the forces that be, that manifest themselves in my mind, and say, ‘Let me know something here, show me what I need to

know in order to let this music go forward.’ So there is patience in the process, and there is a little mantra that I’ve developed over many years time which is, “Just show up.” Just be here and give it a chance to work. If you’re not here giving it a chance to work, you can’t work. And creative work doesn’t matter how you feel – doesn’t matter if you feel good, bad, or indifferent. The music itself is not about self-expression. You think of self expression as what – as the expression of your personality, how you feel about things, that music has feelings and all that. This is what the artist is doing. No, it’s not what the artist is doing. It can be on a superficial level, yes. But what is happening through a person who does artwork is that a channel with a deeper force is being established. And that channel really does bypass all your feelings. I can come in here feeling terrible, like I don’t want to be here. I’ll be tired. I’ll be crabby. I could be annoyed. And then I could sit down and something is happening which is none of that but which is its own thing. You just consider how long it takes to write a piece of music. If I’m writing a symphony it’s going to take three or four months. And you can think of the number of moods you can have in three or four months. But the piece itself isn’t any of that at all. It is its own shape, its own way. And so, when I’m composing, I’m constantly coming back to what the theme itself wants to be rather than what I think it should be. So the thinking process, conscious thinking process that we normally say it is how we make things, is a process which works in parallel with the force that wants to come through, the force that doesn’t have any names and which is not formed. So the function of the conscious mind is to assist in the formation of that, rather than to dictate what it’s supposed to be.”

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PART TWO

CHAPTER NINE: Program Notes

Doctoral candidates beginning a degree in performance with a focus in Wind Conducting in 2006 were required to complete three recitals: two conducting recitals that would equate to two full concert programs, and a lecture recital. Following are programs and notes from a comprehensive recital that involved excerpts from the University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble, Symphony Band, Concert Band, and Chamber Winds during the fall 2006, spring 2007, fall 2008, and spring 2008 semesters; a special chamber recital given on April 3, 2008; and a lecture recital given on May 28, 2008.

Comprehensive Conducting Recital #1

University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble, Symphony Band, and Concert Band

Singletary Center for the Arts
Concert Hall

Program:

Molly on the Shore Percy Aldridge Grainger (1882-1961)
ed. Mark Rogers

UK Symphony Band, Wednesday October 11, 2006

The Gallant Seventh John Philip Sousa (1854-1932)
arr. Frederick Fennell

Second Suite in F for Military Band Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
arr. Colin Matthews

- I. March: Morris Dance, Swansea Town, Claudy Banks
- II. Song Without Words, "I Love My Love"
- III. Song of the Blacksmith
- IV. Fantasia on the Dargason

UK Concert Band, November 7, 2006

Aspen Jubilee Ron Nelson (b.1929)

UK Wind Ensemble, February 16, 2007

Cajun Folk Songs Frank Ticheli (b.1958)
II. Belle

UK Concert Band, April 4, 2007

Monologues Joseph Turrin (b.1947)

Jason Ham, euphonium

- I. Chaconne
- II. Arioso
- III. Intermezzo
- IV. Capriccio

UK Wind Ensemble, April 22, 2007

Program Notes:

Percy Aldridge Grainger, perhaps one of the most beloved and original wind composers of the 20th century, was born in Melbourne, Australia in 1882. With three months of formal education to his name Grainger's formative years were spent mostly with his mother Rose who instructed him academically and musically. At the behest of his mother Grainger's father left home in 1891 leaving mother and son to face the world together. The bond between the two was extremely strong and she remained constantly at his side. They left Australia in 1895 for Frankfurt where Grainger studied until 1901. After this, though he despised playing the piano, Grainger embarked on a career as a concert pianist touring England and the British Empire.

It was during this time that Grainger began to compose and collect folk songs. He traveled through countless villages and countrysides with an Edison wax cylinder recorder on his back, coaxing anyone he could into recording whatever folk songs they knew. It was this wealth of musical material that became the basis for much of his compositional efforts. At the outbreak of World War I, Grainger and his mother immigrated to the United States where he became an overnight success.

Grainger enlisted in the U.S. Army Band at Fort Hamilton and began his long association with the wind band for which he is perhaps most well known today. During the years prior to and following World War II, Grainger became interested in the public school and university band movement, promoted jazz as the finest of all popular music, played hundreds of benefit concerts for the military, and continued contributing to his oeuvre of more than 400 compositions and arrangements. The final years saw a decline in health and popularity. He died on February 20, 1961 in White Plains, New York.

It is speculated that *Molly on the Shore* was originally set for string quartet and written as a birthday gift to Grainger's mother in 1907. The wind band version was completed in 1920. It is a setting of two reel tunes, "Temple Hill" and "Molly on the Shore." Marked by rhythmic intensity, a good deal of chromaticism, and formidable technical demand, this piece has remained popular in the Grainger repertoire.

Written for the Seventh Regiment, 107th Infantry, of the New York National Guard, *The Gallant Seventh* might be considered one of the best from the pen of the march king, **John Philip Sousa**. Composed during the last decade of his career, it honors the 7th Regiment, 107th Infantry, of the New York National Guard and their conductor, Major Francis Sutherland who was a cornetist in Sousa's Band. Sutherland left to enlist in the army after the United States entered World War I.

Gustav Holst composed the *Second Suite in F for Military Band* in 1911 using English folk songs and folk dance tunes. Each of the four movements has its own distinct character. The opening march employs three tunes, "Morris Dance," "Swansea Town," and "Claudy Banks." The second movement is a slow, tender setting of an English love song, "I'll Love My Love," that tells of two young lovers separated by their parents. "The Song of the Blacksmith" is a rhythmically complex movement, much of it set imaginatively in septuple meter. The final movement begins with "The Dargason," an English country dance and folk song dating at least from the 16th century. Its peculiar property is that it does not really have an end but keeps repeating endlessly like a circle. After "The Dargason" is played seven times it is juxtaposed with the well-known folk

tune “Greensleeves.” This combination of tunes produces simultaneously sounding 6/8 and 3/4 meters. Richard Franko Goldman said of the suite that no more delightful contribution has ever been made by a prominent composer to the band repertory.

Ron Nelson has long been considered one of America’s foremost band composers. He wrote his first composition at age six and later played in the Joliet (Illinois) Township High School band. At seventeen he wrote a twenty-two minute concerto for piano and symphonic band. Nelson went on to study composition at the Eastman School of Music where he earned his bachelor, master and doctoral degrees. Having fulfilled many commissions from leading professional and collegiate ensembles, Nelson’s contributions to band music include *Rocky Point Holiday* (1969), his *Medieval Suite* (1982), and *Morning Alleluias* (1989). Nelson is the distinguished winner of the 1993 ABA/Ostwald, the NBA Composition Contest, and Sudler International Wind Band Composition Competition (The John Philip Sousa Foundation), for his work *Passacaglia (Homage on B-A-C-H)* (1992).

Aspen Jubilee was commissioned in by the Manatee High School Band in Bradenton, Florida. Nelson writes:

I was thinking of the stupendous beauty of the Rockies in general, of blinding sunlight of snow-covered peaks; of the frontier spirit of old Aspen with its brash, funny dynamism, its corny ragtag Fourth of July parades and fireworks displays. I was also thinking about indescribably beautiful nights under star filled skies (the middle section is titled ‘Nightsong’). There is only a passing nod to the Aspen which has now become a playground for the rich and famous.

Without question **Frank Ticheli** is one of the biggest wind band names to emerge in the last fifteen years. His music runs the gamut of emotion from delicate and sensitive to dramatic and passionate to energetic and muscular. Many of his works such as *Postcard*, *Amazing Grace*, *Blue Shades*, and *Symphony No. 2*, and have become modern concert band standards and been programmed hundreds of times. Ticheli has been on the faculty of the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music since 1991, and makes many appearances around the world as a guest composer and conductor.

Cajun Folk Songs II is inspired by folk melodies of unknown origins. The ballad opens with an original brass chorale written as an elegy to the composer’s father. The rest of the movement is built on two different settings of the folk song, “*Aux Natchitoches*.” An 18th century version first appears in the English Horn and is answered by a 19th century version played by the brasses. The former version returns to complete the movement. The outer sections of “Country Dance” are based on original music that envisions the dance halls of southern Louisiana. Two pentatonic Cajun folk songs, “*Et ou c’est que tu es parti*,” and “*Joe Ferail est un petit nègre*” form the middle of the movement. Ticheli deftly sets these two tunes in canonic imitation providing an effective contrast to the dance sections.

Joseph Turrin studied composition at the Eastman School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music, and has pursued a career that has always been multifaceted.

As a composer, he has produced works in many genres. He has received numerous commissions from major orchestras and musicians worldwide, and has a longstanding relationship composing for the New York Philharmonic and its members. He is active as a composer, and conductor for film and theatre, and lists among his many credits several scores for classic silent films. He also did the orchestrations for the 1992 Olympic Fanfare for the summer Olympic ceremonies in Barcelona, Spain. Several of his films and recording projects have been nominated for Emmy and Grammy Awards.

Monologues was written in the summer of 2006 for Jason Ham, Principal Euphonium with the US Military Academy Band at West Point. The work is in four contrasting movements. Of the piece Turrin writes the following:

The *Chaconne* is based on a two-chord progression that is stated at the very beginning of the piece. The soloist embellishes on this with long melodic phrases that weave in and out of the texture. *Arioso* is based on a series of triplets and clusters that form a background over which the solo euphonium displays its beautiful melodic characteristics. There is a middle section that breaks into a small chamber group. New material is introduced in the form of a bass ostinato over which material from the opening euphonium lines are used and expanded. *Intermezzo* is a short movement based on small motifs and patterns that interact and evolve. The feel in this movement is light and airy with bursts of melodic activity throughout. The last movement *Capriccio* is a galloping romp that has all the implications of a classical rondo. Themes and sections reoccur and build as the movement progresses. Throughout the solo euphonium technical artistry comes into demand with florid displays of virtuosity.

Comprehensive Conducting Recital #2

University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble, Symphony Band, and Concert Band

Singletary Center for the Arts
Concert Hall

Program:

- Zion* Dan Welcher (b. 1948)
UK Wind Ensemble, October 18, 2007
- Old Churches* Michael Colgrass (b. 1932)
- The Vanished Army* Kenneth Alford (1881-1945)
arr. Frederick Fennell
- Italian Polka* Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
arr. Erik Leidzen
UK Concert Band, October 29, 2007
- Dance of the New World* Dana Wilson (b.1946)
UK Wind Ensemble, November 19, 2007
- October* Eric Whitacre (b.1970)
- Pas Redoublé* Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)
arr. Arthur Frackenpohl
UK Concert Band, April 2, 2008
- Selections from *Southern Harmony* Donald Grantham (b.1947)
III. Exhilaration
II. Wondrous Love
I. Midnight Cry
UK Symphony Band, April 13, 2008

Program Notes:

Dan Welcher began his musical training on piano and bassoon with degrees earned from the Eastman School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music. He was the principal bassoonist of the Louisville Orchestra from 1972 to 1978 during which time he also taught composition and theory at the University of Louisville. Welcher has been at the University of Texas since 1978 where he created the New Music Ensemble, served as the Assistant Conductor of the Austin Symphony Orchestra and has premiered over 120 new compositions. Having written over 100 pieces for a wide range of musical genres including opera, symphony, concerto, piano, vocal literature and various chamber settings, Welcher is considered to be one of America's most-played contemporary composers. His work for band has earned him many accolades and commissions.

Welcher writes:

Zion is the third and final installment of a series of works for Wind Ensemble inspired by national parks in the western United States.... As in the other two works (*The Yellowstone Fires* and *Arches*), it is my intention to convey more an impression of the feelings I've had in Zion National Park in Utah than an attempt at pictorial description.

Zion is a place with unrivalled natural grandeur...in which the traveler is constantly overwhelmed by towering rock walls on every side – but it is also a place with a human history, having been inhabited by several tribes of native Americans before the arrival of the Mormon settlers in the mid-nineteenth century. By the time the Mormons reached Utah, they had been driven all the way from New York State through Ohio and through their tragic losses in Missouri. They saw Utah in general as 'a place nobody wanted' but were nonetheless determined to keep it to themselves. Although Zion Canyon was never a 'Mormon Stronghold,' the people who reached it and claimed it (and gave it its present name) had been through extreme trials.

It is the religious fervor of these persecuted people that I was able to draw on in creating *Zion* as a piece of music. There are two quoted hymns in the work: "Zion's Walls" (which Aaron Copland adapted to his own purposes in both *Old American Songs* and *The Tender Land*) and "Zion's Security," which I found in the same volume where Copland found "Zion's Walls" – that inexhaustible storehouse of nineteenth-century hymnody called *The Sacred Harp*.

Zion is the winner of the 1996 American Bandmasters Association Ostwald Prize and is dedicated to the memory of Aaron Copland.

Born in Chicago in 1932, **Michael Colgrass** grew up in Brookfield, Illinois. He was first drawn to music when he saw drummer Ray Bauduc in a movie playing *Big Noise from Winnetka* with the Bob Crosby band. Colgrass knew that he wanted to be a drummer, just like Bauduc. He formed his first pop/jazz band, The Three Jacks and a Jill, at the age of twelve. He listened to all the big bands both recorded and live, and imitated every drummer he heard. Colgrass went on to study classical music at the University of Illinois.

In an effort to get Colgrass involved in other kinds of music, his percussion teacher took him to a percussion ensemble concert. After the concert he asked Colgrass what he thought, and Colgrass boldly told his teacher that he liked the playing, but that the music was “terrible!” His teacher challenged him to write something better. The idea struck him like a thunderbolt and launched his composing career. He won the 1978 Pulitzer Prize for Music for *Déjà vu*, which was commissioned and premiered by the New York Philharmonic. In addition, he received an Emmy Award in 1982 for a PBS documentary “Soundings: The Music of Michael Colgrass.” He has been awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships, A Rockefeller Grant, First Prize in the Barlow and Sudler International Wind Ensemble Competitions, and the 1988 Jules Leger Prize for Chamber Music. Today he lives in Toronto.

A study in basic aleatoric or chance music, *Old Churches* uses the premise of Gregorian chant to create a monastery scene filled with the prayers and chantings of monks. Graphic notation provides the musicians with the opportunity to play random and specific pitches without rhythm to create mysterious murmuring effects that simulate the idea of voices echoing in monastic churches. The chant unfolds through call and response patterns. One monk intones a musical idea, and the rest respond by singing back. This musical conversation continues throughout the piece, with the exception of a few brief interruptions. Colgrass suggest that perhaps they are the quiet comments church visitors make to one another.

Kenneth J. Alford was a pseudonym for Frederick Joseph Ricketts. Born the son of a coal merchant in London in 1881, he studied both piano and organ as a child. At fourteen he enlisted in the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment as a band boy, playing cornet as well as violin and euphonium. Alford entered the Royal School of Music in 1904, serving as organist and Assistant Director of music from 1906 to 1908. Known as the “British March King,” Alford composed most of his marches during the next two decades. In 1927 Alford was granted a commission as Lieutenant and Director of Music for the Royal Marines at Deal, near the English Channel, and in 1930 he was transferred to Plymouth where he remained until his retirement as a major in 1944.

The Vanished Army, written in 1918, was appropriately called a “poetic march” by the composer. It is considered by many conductors to be one of the more expressive marches in the concert band literature. Parenthetically titled “They Never Die,” the march was dedicated to the 100,000 men who were killed during the first forays of World War I. A somber and stirring work, it serves as a reminder of the price of war.

Sergi Rachmaninoff, distinguished composer, pianist, and conductor, was educated at the Moscow Conservatory. He disliked the drudgery of prolonged study, but with his natural gift for composition, did manage to win a gold medal for his opera *Aleko*

while he was at the conservatory. In 1917 he escaped from the anarchistic revolution in Russia and a year later reached America where he resided until his death. He was a maligned yet widely-imitated composer. Critics found it difficult to forgive him for writing music in the twentieth century which they felt should have been written by Tchaikovsky during the nineteenth century.

Italian Polka is an engaging little work originally written for two pianos. While traveling in Italy, Rachmanioff heard the tune played on an old-fashioned street organ that was drawn through the streets by a donkey. Liking the tune, he immediately wrote it down. Later in Russia, it was arranged for the Imperial Marine Guard Band, and was performed with great success. The present arrangement was made for the Goldman Band by Erik Leidzen under the supervision of Rachmaninoff himself.

Dana Wilson holds a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music, and is currently the Charles A. Dana Professor of Music at Ithaca College. He is active as a composer, jazz pianist, clinician, and conductor. He has received numerous grants, and his work has received several awards, including the International Trumpet Guild First Prize, the Sudler International Composition Prize, and the Ostwald Composition Prize. Wilson's music has been commissioned and performed by such diverse ensembles as the Chicago Chamber Musicians, Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings, Buffalo Philharmonic, Memphis Symphony, Washington military bands, Netherlands Wind Ensemble, Syracuse Symphony, and Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra. Solo works have been written for such renowned artists as hornist Gail Williams, clarinetist Larry Combs, trumpeters James Thompson and Rex Richardson, and oboist David Weiss.

Wilson writes:

Dance of the New World was composed during the months that, exactly 500 years earlier, Columbus was on his historic voyage, and I wanted to capture in the piece the spirit of awakening and burgeoning that resulted from his journey. The piece begins almost imperceptibly and gradually evolves (though, as in American history, not without difficulty and need for reflection) to an exuberant climax. Because of where in the western hemisphere he landed, I decided to employ aspects of Latin American music to represent the many cultural syntheses that have since evolved.

Eric Whitacre burst onto the band scene in 1994 with *Ghost Train*, a piece written during the previous Christmas Break while he was an undergraduate at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Equally at home in the choral and vocal worlds, several of his works have entered the standard choral and instrumental repertoire. Whitacre is in demand worldwide as a composer, conductor, and clinician.

He shares the following about *October*:

October is my favorite month. Something about the crisp autumn air and the subtle change in light always makes me a little sentimental, and as I started to sketch I felt that same quiet beauty in the writing. The simple,

pastoral melodies and subsequent harmonies are inspired by the great English Romantics (Vaughan Williams, Elgar) as I felt that this style was also perfectly suited to capture the natural and pastoral soul of the season. I'm quite happy with the end result, especially because I feel there just isn't enough lush, beautiful music written for winds.

Paris-born **Charles Camille Saint-Saëns** was a child prodigy, composing his first piece for piano at the age of three. He entered the Paris Conservatory in 1848 at age 13. He was also a private student of Charles Gounod. Saint-Saëns had total recall; any book he read or tune he heard was forever committed to his memory. He held the coveted post of organist at the Madeleine from 1857 to 1875. He was also an accomplished pianist, conductor, score reader, and astronomer. As a composer, he wrote in many genres, including opera, symphonies, concertos, sacred and secular choral music, concertos, and chamber music.

Pas Redoublé is a lighthearted concert march (double-quick step) reminiscent of Offenbach. Originally composed for four-hand piano, the piece was skillfully transcribed for band by Arthur Frackenpohl.

In 1835, William "Singin' Billy" Walker's songbook *Southern Harmony* was first published. This remarkable collection contains, according to its title page, "a choice collection of tunes, hymns, psalms, odes, and anthems; selected from the most eminent authors in the United States." In fact, few of the numbers in the book are identified as the work of a particular composer. Many are folksongs (provided with religious texts), others are traditional sacred tunes, while some are revival songs that were widely known and sung throughout the south. The book was immensely popular, selling an amazing 600,000 copies before the Civil War, and was commonly stocked alongside groceries and tobacco in general stores across the American frontier. From 1884 until World War II, an annual all-day mass performance of selections from *Southern Harmony*, called the "Benton Big Singing," was held on the Benton, Kentucky, courthouse lawn.

The music of *Southern Harmony* has a somewhat exotic sound to modern audiences. The tunes often use modal or pentatonic rather than major or minor scales. The harmony is even more out of the ordinary, employing chord positions, voice leading and progressions that are far removed from the European music that dominated the concert halls at that time. These harmonizations were dismissed as crude and primitive when they first appeared. Now they are regarded as inventive, unique, and powerfully representative of the American character.

In his use of several tunes from *Southern Harmony* **Donald Grantham**, the Frank C. Erwin, Jr. Centennial Professor of Composition at the University of Texas at Austin, has attempted to preserve the flavor of the original vocal works in a setting that fully realizes the potential of the wind ensemble and the individual characteristics of each song.

Chamber Conducting Recital

University of Kentucky Chamber Winds

John Jacob Niles Gallery

Thursday, April 3, 2008

Program:

Selections from *Soldier's Tale Suite*

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

- I. The Soldier's March
- II. Music to Scene I – "Airs by a Stream"
- III. Music to Scene II – "Pastorale"
- IV. The Royal March
- V. The Little Concert
- VII. The Devil's Dance
- VIII. Great Chorale
- IX. Triumphal March of the Devil

Program Notes:

Cut off from his native Russia due to the ravages of the Great War, **Igor Stravinsky** found himself in Morges, Switzerland in 1917. Switzerland had become a *de facto* gathering place for many artists and musicians displaced by tyranny and war. Wartime conditions also limited the number of available musicians and venues for any type of large scale production. Fortunately, *Histoire du Soldat*, or *The Soldier's Tale*, came during a period in which Stravinsky was withdrawing from the indulgent and lavish productions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In the liner notes of a 1968 Columbia Records release entitled "Stravinsky Conducts Stravinsky," the composer is quoted as follows:

The shoestring economics of the original *Histoire* production kept me to a handful in instruments, but this confinement did not act as a limitation, as my musical ideas were already directed toward a solo-instrumental style. My choice of instruments was influenced by a very important event in my life at that time, the discovery of American jazz.... The "Histoire" ensemble resembles the jazz band in that each instrumental category – strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion – is represented by both treble and bass components. The instruments themselves are jazz legitimates, too, except the bassoon, which is my substitute for saxophone.... My knowledge of jazz was derived exclusively from copies of sheet music, and as I had never actually heard any of the music performed, I borrowed its rhythmic style not as played, but as written.

The story of the piece involves a soldier who is traveling home on a short leave ("The Soldier's March"). While stopping to rest by a brook, he takes out his violin and begins playing idly ("Airs by a Stream"). The Devil appears and tricks the soldier into trading his violin for a magic book which tells about the future and can be used to gain unending wealth. They spend three days together – the soldier learning about the book and the Devil learning the violin. When he gets home, the soldier realizes that the three days were actually three years. He discovers that his fiancée is married and has gone on with her life ("Pastorale"). The Devil comforts the soldier and reminds him of the power of the book which the soldier used to quickly amass great riches. Soon realizing that his wealth brings no meaning to life and seeking something more, he buys an old violin from a peddler (the Devil in disguise). However, he discovers that he can no longer make any sound when he plays. In despair, the soldier casts away his violin, tears up the magic book, and is left to aimless wandering.

His travels eventually lead him to a kingdom with a sick princess. The king offers her hand and a large dowry to anyone who can restore her health. Convinced by an old friend to give it a shot, the soldier confidently heads to the palace ("The Royal March"). When he arrives he finds the Devil disguised as a violin virtuoso also attempting to cure the princess. Discovering that freedom from curses will come if he rids himself of the Devil's money, the soldier intentionally throws a card game with the Devil while getting

him drunk. With the Devil slumped over at the table, the soldier takes the violin and plays ("The Little Concert"). He then plays for the princess. His music cures her and she begins to dance ("Three Dances" – omitted in this performance). Enraged from being duped by the soldier, the Devil confronts the soldier again. However, the soldier plays such entrancing music on the violin, that the Devil dances uncontrollably until he drops to the ground in exhaustion ("The Devil's Dance").

The princess and soldier fall in love and marry, however the soldier is warned that he must learn contentment and never return to his past or he will fall victim to the Devil ("Great Chorale"). Eventually, the princess, curious about her husband's former life, convinces him to return to his childhood village. As they near the village, the Devil appears playing a violin. Mesmerized, the soldier forsakes all else and follows the Devil down the road ("Triumphal March of the Devil").

The suite was arranged by Stravinsky for a July 20, 1920 performance at Wigmore Hall in London.

Lecture Recital

“Donald Grantham’s *Southern Harmony*”

May 28, 2008
University of Kentucky

- I. Introduction
- II. History
 - a. Colonial Music
 - b. Singing Schools
 - c. Shape Note Hymnody
- III. The Piece
 - a. Donald Grantham
 - b. Southern Harmony Overview
 - c. Note on the Music
 - d. Note on the Vocal Recordings
 - e. Movement I – “Midnight Cry”
 - f. Movement II – “Wondrous Love”
 - g. Movement III – “Exhilaration”
 - h. Movement IV – “The Soldier’s Return”
- IV. Conclusion

Vita for Lane Weaver

Born: May 28, 1975, in Logan, Utah

Education

1998-2000 Master of Music (summa cum laude) in Trombone Performance and Literature, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana

1993-1998 Bachelor of Music (magna cum laude), Utah State University, Logan, Utah

Positions and Appointments

2008-present Fort Hays State University (Hays, KS); Director of Athletic Bands, Symphonic Winds, and Brass Choir; Instructor of Low Brass

2006-2008 University of Kentucky, Graduate Teaching Assistant

2005-2006 Grace Church (Grainger, IN), Music Pastor

2000-2005 University of Notre Dame, Assistant Band Director

2001-2002 Grainger Christian School (Grainger, IN), Orchestra Director

1998-2000 University of Notre Dame, Graduate Teaching Assistant

Publications and Presentations

Weaver, Lane. "A New World Adventure." In *Teaching Music Through Performance in Beginning Band*, vol. 2, ed. Richard Miles and Marguerite Wilder, Chicago: GIA Publications, 2008.

_____. "Leave Me Alone! - How Natural Vocalization Reveals Hidden Expression In Instrumental Music or How Yelling At Your Mom Can Make You A Better Musician." Kansas Music Educators Association In-Service Conference, Wichita, KS: February 26, 2011.