An analysis of and conductor's guide to Vincent Persichetti's Masquerade for band, Op. 102

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AN ANALYSIS OF AND CONDUCTOR’S GUIDE TO VINCENT PERSICHERTI’S *MASQUERADE FOR BAND, OP. 102*

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

May 2014

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To Alan, Ron, Arlene, Ryan, Angie, Kaytlin, and Kiley
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to the continued guidance of my advisor and mentor, Dr. Heidel. You have challenged me musically and academically. Your commitment to excellence serves as a daily inspiration for myself. Thank you!

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to study tuba with Professor John Manning. There are numerous performance opportunities I would not have pursued if not for your encouragement and support. I am a more sensitive musician because of you.

Professor Kevin Kastens has been an example of utmost professionalism. I am continually impressed the degree to which you trust and provide your students with leadership opportunities.

Dr. William LaRue Jones’s knowledge of history and repertoire is beyond reproach. The wisdom and insight you shared with me during my time at Iowa I hold in highest esteem.

Encouraging students to view music and analysis from a different perspective is a challenge for any teacher. Dr. Jennifer Iverson challenged me to think more critically and creatively.

I would not have attended The University of Iowa if not for the invitation from Dr. Myron Welch. I treasure your guidance and wisdom.

Above all, I would like to thank my family. To Alan, your love and support has meant so much to me. We have both encouraged each other on our parallel journeys and I look forward to our next adventure. To my parents, Ron and Arlene, I would not be where I am without your encouragement and love. To Ryan, Angie, Kaytlin and Kiley who remind me of how lucky I am to be a member of our family.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide a detailed analysis of Vincent Persichetti’s *Masquerade for Band*, which will include a conductor’s guide focusing upon both technical and interpretive aspects, a brief biography of Vincent Persichetti, and background information pertaining to the creation of the composition. This document will provide the first significant and complete study of the composition since its creation in 1965.

Specifically, the analysis will examine the means by which Persichetti achieves motivic and harmonic unity within the *Masquerade*. The formal structure is considered a theme and variations, however, it is atypical in that each variation incorporates borrowed material from Perischetti’s textbook *Twentieth-Century Harmony*. Although each of the borrowed excerpts seem drastically different from one another on the surface, Persichetti acknowledged that each shared a unifying kernel. In *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, he explains that unifying kernels are short musical fragments of at least two notes that can form the nucleus of a work and from which motivic ideas and harmonic structure is derived. Previously, the kernel in the *Masquerade* had been unidentified. However, significant evidence suggests that the kernel which provides motivic unity among the borrowed material and informs the octatonic harmonies is the intervallic relationship of a minor third first revealed in the theme as pitch-classes E and G.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

With few exceptions, original compositions for wind bands were nearly non-existent until the second half of the twentieth century. Original works that did exist consisted primarily of marches and a handful of compositions by Gustav Holst, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Percy Aldridge Grainger. With a limited body of original works from which to choose, bandleaders who desired to program compositions of high artistic merit were forced to rely largely upon transcriptions of orchestral compositions. The lack of original works stemmed from the stereotype that wind bands were utilitarian musical ensembles unable to match others in both technical and expressive abilities. As such, composers were often reluctant to dedicate time and energy to the creation of works for wind bands. In the program notes to *Lincolnshire Posy*, Percy Grainger remarks,

> With the exception of the military marches almost all the music we hear played on [sic] wind bands (military bands) was originally composed for other mediums (for orchestra, for piano, for chorus, as songs for voice and piano) and afterwards arranged for wind band – and as good as never by the composer…Why this cold-shouldering of the wind band by most composers? Is the wind band…not the equal of any medium ever conceived? As a vehicle of deep emotional expression it seems to me unrivalled.\(^1\)

Grainger was unusual among composers of his time in that he saw the expressive possibilities in the wind band. His observations accurately express the opinions of many composers from his era and, to some extent, of those today.

In an effort to increase the number of original works for wind bands and convince composers that exceptional musical performances were possible, bandleaders began to either commission composers themselves or form organizations with the goal of encouraging new compositions for bands. In 1929, Edwin Franko Goldman, conductor of

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the Goldman Band, arranged a meeting of band conductors to discuss the need for a body of repertoire specifically for wind bands. The meeting eventually led to the formation of the American Bandmasters Association, and beginning in 1956, the organization established the Ostwald Award, given for the best composition for wind band. Soon after, other band organizations, including the National Band Association, College Band Directors National Association, and World Association of School Bands and Ensembles, initiated their own composition contests.

As a result of the efforts put forth by bandleaders, the number of original works for wind band expanded exponentially throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. The years following World War II were “probably the most exciting in the history of the twentieth century for the wind band/ensemble. Composers who had never before written pieces for winds…contributed works introducing new and fresh compositional styles to wind band/ensemble literature.”² Composers who wrote works included Aaron Copland, Morton Gould, Paul Hindemith, Peter Mennin, Walter Piston, H. Owen Reed, Gunther Schuller, and William Schuman. Although the works written by these composers were the result of commissions, many composers were inspired by the rising quality and sophistication of wind bands. “American composers responded to this improved artistic climate for bands. In 1950, Persichetti wrote his first work for band, Divertimento for Band…Clearly Persichetti loved writing for the wind band medium; he wrote three works immediately following the Divertimento.”³ In addition to these three works, Psalm, Pageant, and Symphony No. 6 (Symphony for Band), Persichetti continued to compose for wind bands throughout the remainder of his life.

Vincent Persichetti’s extensive output of high quality works for wind band reflects his belief that such ensembles were capable of expressive artistic performances.

Writing in the *Journal of Band Research* in 1964, Persichetti stated, “Band music is virtually the only kind of music in America today (outside the pop field) which can be introduced, accepted, put to immediate wide use, and become a staple of the literature in a short time.” Many of his compositions quickly became standard repertoire for professional, collegiate, and school bands. His compositions are still performed widely by wind bands at concerts and conventions, appear on many recordings, and are included on nearly every approved list of festival and contest repertoire. In addition to performances, Persichetti’s works have been the subject of numerous dissertations and journal publications. Articles pertaining to his music have appeared in the *Journal of Band Research* 5 6, *The Instrumentalist* 7 8 9 10, *Juilliard Review* 11, *BD Guide* 12 13.

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**Percussionist**, *The Musical Quarterly*, *Perspectives of New Music*, and *The Choral Journal.*

In discussing Persichetti’s music and its importance, Frederick Fennell, founder of the Eastman Wind Ensemble, writes,

More than any other major American composer, Persichetti poured his talents into the literature for wind band. From the *Serenade for Ten Wind Instruments*, Op. 1 to the *Parable for Band*, Op. 121, he provided performers and audiences with a body of music of unparalleled excellence. Of his 14 band works, four are of major proportions, *Masquerade, Parable, A Lincoln Address* and *Symphony for Band*.

Fennell’s statement that four of Persichetti’s works “are of major proportions” is intriguing as he gives no clarification as to what “major proportions” entail or the criteria used to select these four particular compositions. However, if one is to assume that by “major proportions” Fennell implies a work that is of substantial architectural craftsmanship and sophistication, then the works included do indeed have merit. Persichetti’s *Symphony for Band* is almost universally regarded as a highly sophisticated cornerstone work in the wind band repertoire. Edwin Franko Goldman remarked that the *Symphony* “represents a major contribution to the art of writing for band. In its way, it represents how greatly the concept of band sound and texture has changed in recent...

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18 Frederick Fennell, *A Conductor’s Interpretive Analysis of Masterworks for Band* (Galesburg, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2008), 23.
The formidable Lincoln Address, although not as highly regarded as the Symphony for Band, is an arrangement of an orchestral composition whose material was derived from his Symphony No. 7. Parable IX is arguably Persichetti’s most complex work for winds. Donald Morris states in his thesis that “Parable IX is the most complex score of Persichetti’s oeuvre for band,” noting that those who commissioned the work “called for a work of ‘Masquerade dimension.’” If Parable IX is conceivably his most complex composition for winds and was intended to be as sophisticated as the Masquerade, then the Masquerade must be, in the words of Fennell, a work of “major proportions.”

To prove that a composition is complex and difficult to perform does not necessarily qualify it as a composition of high artistic quality and worthy of performance or analysis. A full discussion of the means to fully discern if a composition is of high artistic quality is outside the realm of this research. However, a number important studies have been conducted to establish criteria that can be used to determine whether or not a work is of high artistic merit and what compositions within the band repertoire meet those standards. Acton Ostling completed one of the first evaluative studies and established a listing of ten criteria to determine if a composition is of high artistic merit. The list was developed from theoretical textbooks and from “discussions with several eminent conductors concerning their own criteria for such judgments of value and quality in music.” The criteria Ostling established are:

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19 Edwin Frank Goldman, The Wind Band (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc. 1962), 239.

20 Donald Alan Morris, “The life of Vincent Persichetti, with emphasis on his works for band,” (PhD diss., The Florida State University, 1991), 224.


22 Ibid., 23.
1. The composition has form – not “a form” but form – and reflects a proper balance between repetition and contrast.

2. The composition reflects shape and design and creates the impression of choice and judicious arrangements on the part of the composer.

3. The composition reflects craftsmanship in orchestration, demonstrating a proper balance between transparent and tutti scoring, and between solo and group colors.

4. The composition is sufficiently unpredictable to preclude an immediate grasp of its music meaning.

5. The route through which the composition travels in initiating its musical tendencies and probable musical goals is not completely direct and obvious.

6. The composition is consistent in its quality throughout its length and in its various sections.

7. The composition is consistent in its style, reflecting clearly conceived ideas and a complete grasp of technical details, and avoids lapses into trivial, futile, or unsuitable passages.

8. The composition reflects ingenuity in its development, given the stylistic context in which it exists.

9. The composition is genuine in idiom, and is not pretentious.

10. The composition reflects a musical validity that transcends factors of historical importance, or factors of pedagogical usefulness.²³

From those criteria, twenty university band conductors evaluated 1,481 works and determined that 314 compositions were of high artistic merit. Of the handful that received the highest scores, Persichetti’s Symphony No. 6 was included. Ostling’s study was replicated in 1992 by Jay Gilbert²⁴ to further identify the highest caliber works for wind ensemble. His study, like Ostling’s, asked twenty highly esteemed wind conductors to evaluate 1,261 compositions. Works held in the highest regard were rated “meritorious.” Six composers that appeared with the most frequency included: Warren Benson, Percy

²³ Ibid., 23-30.

Grainger, Igor Stravinsky, Karel Husa, Gunther Schuller, and Vincent Persichetti. Of Vincent Persichetti’s compositions, six were included, with his highest rated work, again, being the Symphony No. 6. His second highest rated work was the Masquerade for Band.

A newly published dissertation (as of 2011) by Clifford Towner sought to update the Ostling and Gilbert studies in 1978 and 1992, respectively. Of the 1,680 compositions that were evaluated by a select panel of wind band conductors, 144 were chosen as meeting the criteria for serious artistic merit. This list of 144 compositions included three by Vincent Persichetti, one of which was the Masquerade. Finally, a recent text by Chad Nicholson sought to create a resource outlining the top 100 works for wind band in grades IV, V, and VI. Fourteen conductors in the wind band profession were asked their opinions on the best compositions for wind band, and the results were compiled into Nicholson’s book. Four of Vincent Persichetti’s works appear, one of which is the Masquerade. Therefore, based upon the opinions of the most respected conductors of wind bands guided by established criteria for artistic quality, Persichetti’s Masquerade For Band can be considered a sophisticated work of high artistic merit.

Need for the Study

Vincent Persichetti’s works for wind band have long been held in high regard and considered staples in the wind band repertoire. Of the studies that have sought to define the core repertoire of wind bands, Persichetti’s compositions appear frequently.


27 Ostling, “An Evaluation of Compositions for Wind Band According to Specific Criteria of Serious Artistic Merit.”

28 Gilbert, “An Evaluation of Compositions for Wind Band According to Specific Criteria of Serious Artistic Merit: A Replication and Update.”
His compositions are performed regularly by public school and collegiate wind bands and appear on numerous recordings. Persichetti has been the subject of over fifteen dissertations, and articles pertaining to his compositions have appeared in many peer-reviewed academic journals. The compositions by Persichetti that are most often performed and the frequent subject of research are Symphony No. 6, Divertimento, and Pageant. Although these works merit repeat performances and detailed analyses, other compositions by Persichetti are equally deserving of such attention. The Masquerade is a high quality sophisticated work that has received performances by many collegiate wind bands in the United States. In the past ten years, the work has been performed by the University of Arkansas Wind Symphony, the University of Georgia Symphony Band, the Indiana University Wind Ensemble, and the University of Miami Wind Ensemble, among many others. The work has also been recorded by the Cincinnati Wind Symphony, the Eastman Wind Ensemble, the North Texas Wind Symphony, the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra, and the Winds of the London Symphony Orchestra.

For conductors wishing to program this complex work, a detailed analysis and conducting guide would be valuable. Currently, only three studies exist (Morris [31], Casey [32], and Stone [33]) that conductors can reference to aid in their score study. Although these studies are helpful in that they provide an initial overview, ultimately, their analyses are cursory or incomplete. All three describe the general form of the work and acknowledge that a unifying element connects the Masquerade’s material. However, the

29 Towner, “An Evaluation of Compositions for Wind Band According to Specific Criteria of Serious Artistic Merit: A Second Update.”

30 Nicholson, Great Music for Wind Band.

31 Morris, “The life of Vincent Persichetti, with emphasis on his works for band.”


mystery remains as to the identity of the unifying element. This study seeks to:
(1) identify the unifying element, (2) provide a detailed analysis of the
interconnectedness among the material, (3) discuss the work’s harmonic language and its
connection to the unifying motivic kernel, and (4) provide a conductor’s guide.

**Purpose and Methodology**

The purpose of this study is to provide the first detailed analysis of Vincent
Persichetti’s *Masquerade for Band* that will assist conductors in the preparation of the
work. The analysis will examine Persichetti’s use of motivic kernels to provide structural
and harmonic unity. Few analyses of the work have been completed, and those that have
been done only provide a cursory acknowledgement that the work incorporates material
from his text, *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, in each variation. In discussing the
*Masquerade*, Persichetti states:

> I realized that certain examples had a thematic kernel in common…these
examples from the harmony book evolved into a set of variations for fifty wind
and percussion instruments. The work is a masquerade of my book: I called it
*Masquerade for Band*.\(^{34}\)

Thus far, analysts have failed to understand fully the nature and ramifications of the
*Masquerade*’s unifying kernel. Using Persichetti’s own texts from journal articles and his
book, *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, a hypothesis will be presented identifying the kernel
and how it unifies the seemingly unrelated material along with the overall harmonic
structure. This process will be guided by the writings of other theorists, including
Heinrich Schenker and, most notably, Arnold Schoenberg. In particular, Schoenberg’s
writings will serve as an analytical guide by which a deconstructive analysis will be
pursued. Although an in-depth analysis of other musical elements (orchestration, texture,

\(^{34}\) Shackelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti,” 128.
etc.) is entirely possible and worthy of further research, such analyses are outside the scope of this study since these other diverse musical elements are not informed and influenced directly by the work’s unifying kernel. The study will conclude with a conductor’s guide that will address both technical and interpretive considerations.

**Organization of the Study**

Chapter One provides background information, describes the need for the study, addresses the purpose and methodology, and guided the overall organization of the study. A review of direct and indirect research materials will be presented in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three, a brief biography of Vincent Persichetti and background information related to the *Masquerade’s* creation will be presented. Chapter Four will identify the unifying motivic kernel and the variety of means by which the main theme, along with the borrowed material, are connected to it. Chapter Five will analyze how the kernel informs the overall octatonic harmonic structure of the work. Chapter Six will include a guide for those wishing to study and conduct the work. Chapter Seven will present a summary of the research presented and conclude with recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the high level of craftsmanship evident in Vincent Persichetti’s compositions, a significant amount of research exists. His works are the subject of at least fifteen dissertations and twenty-five articles in scholarly journals, and have been included in at least seven books. Unfortunately, continued research decreased substantially following his death in 1986. However, since his works continue to receive repeat performances, they remain relevant and merit further research.

Research regarding the *Masquerade* can be categorized into three groups: investigations that analyze his numerous other works and provide pertinent analytical information regarding his compositional process that can be used as guide in analyzing the *Masquerade*; the few that specifically analyze the *Masquerade*; and texts by theorists, most notably Arnold Schoenberg, who sought to uncover holistic and unifying aspects within musical compositions.

**Analyses of the Masquerade for Band**

Only three studies currently exist that explicitly analyze the *Masquerade*; however, they are relatively brief and do not provide a detailed investigation of the work. One occurs as a chapter in a dissertation, another as an article in a now out of print journal, and the latest is a chapter in a popular book series for wind band conductors.

Donald Morris\(^\text{35}\) provided the first substantial analysis of the work in his dissertation, *The Life of Vincent Persichetti, With Emphasis on His Works for Band*. The study begins with one of the most extensive biographies of Vincent Persichetti followed by background information and analyses of each of his compositions for wind band. The

\(^{35}\) Morris, “The Life of Vincent Persichetti, With Emphasis on His Works for Band.”
analyses are extremely brief as a detailed analysis is beyond the scope of Morris’s research: a fact that Morris himself acknowledged. Background information regarding the Masquerade is provided, explaining that the work was the result of a commission from Baldwin-Wallace College Conservatory of Music that premiered in 1965. In the analysis, Morris outlines the overall form of the work as being a theme and variations and briefly explains the work’s connection to Persichetti’s book, Twentieth-Century Harmony. He outlines the examples that were extracted from the book and in what measures they appear. Morris concludes the analysis by describing the difference in the published work as opposed to Persichetti’s sketches and manuscripts of the Masquerade.

Whereas Morris only provided background information and a brief analysis of the work, Patrick Casey’s analysis in the BDGuide offers the most detailed currently available. Like Morris, he provides a brief biography and information pertaining to the commissioning of the Masquerade. However, Casey moves beyond simply stating that excerpts from Twentieth-Century Harmony are used, instead attempting to explain the possible motivic connections between the main theme in the Masquerade and the borrowed excerpts from Persichetti’s book. Specifically, Casey argues that Persichetti’s choice of borrowed material is not accidental. Casey reveals that the contour of the theme is similar to the borrowed material used in Variations I and III. Although this revelation is informative, unfortunately, his analysis only includes the first three variations and does not specifically address the subject of the unifying kernel.

Thomas Stone’s chapter in Teaching Music Through Performance in Band is similar to the contributions by Morris and Casey. In several brief paragraphs, he provides the same biographical information of Persichetti and historical information leading to the Masquerade’s creation. Stone correctly explains that the work is the most complex of

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37 Stone, “Masquerade for Band, Op. 102.”
Persichetti’s compositions for winds due to its sparse instrumentation, unexpected entrances, and advanced harmonic language. However, his analysis of the theme contains several inaccuracies. He states, “Persichetti uses the theme presented by the horn in mm. 7-9 to unify this kaleidoscopic work. The motive follows a universal interval sequence derived from the overtone series. Scale degrees 5-3-6 represent the first three overtones different from the fundamental pitch in the overtone series.”\(^{38}\) Although Stone is correct in arguing that the theme acts as a unifying element, he does not explain how this is achieved. In stating that the first three pitch classes (G, E, and A) occur on scale degrees 5-3-6, he implies that the theme is essentially in C major. Although the work is tonal, its harmonic structure is organized in such a way that traditional functional analysis is not appropriate. Ample evidence suggests that the work is not in C major, but tonicizes on an octatonic scale beginning on pitch class E.

**Analyses of Other Works by Vincent Persichetti**

Although very little extensive research has been written regarding the *Masquerade*, Vincent Persichetti and his compositions have been the subject of numerous articles, books, and dissertations. These investigations provide important insight into Persichetti’s background and compositional process. While not every investigation will be reviewed herein, Rudy Shackelford’s\(^{39}\) interview with Persichetti and the studies by Mark Nelson\(^{40}\) and Barry Rock\(^{41}\) offer the most pertinent information to help guide an analysis of the *Masquerade*.

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\(^{38}\) Stone, “Masquerade for Band, Op. 102.”

\(^{39}\) Shackelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti.”


Rudy Shackelford’s 1981 interview with Persichetti, which has been used in many articles and dissertations, provides an insightful glimpse into his compositional process. The interview covers information pertaining to his education; early compositional influences; religious beliefs; and his insight and opinions into his multitude of works for piano, organ, voices, orchestra, and wind band. The interview reveals that, for Persichetti, thematic ideas are paramount and musical style is always secondary. As a result, he tends to embrace an amalgamation of styles between and within his compositions. He believes that all thematic ideas are a musical “seed, yearning for growth, hoping for blossoms and fruit.” As such, to arbitrarily decide that a work is to be composed in a particular style is antithetical to creative expression. Later in the interview, he explains that he understands his use of thematic ideas as Schenkerian, meaning that he strives to create compositions whose original thematic ideas inform the work’s background, middleground, and foreground structures. Although the interview briefly covers many of his works, it does not discuss any particular one in-depth. However, the explanation of Persichetti’s overarching philosophical approach is beneficial in guiding research into any of his works.

In a period spanning twenty-one years, Persichetti composed a series of parables for solo instruments and chamber ensembles, as well as one for wind band. Mark Nelson’s dissertation examines each of the unaccompanied brass parables with the intention of helping musicians perform a more sensitive realization. The study presents a detailed analysis of each of his parables for brass and follows with potential performance problems. Of the analysis, Nelson examines a variety of musical characteristics, including: symbolism, melody, rhythm, dynamics, timbre, and form. Of the listed characteristics, his examination of Persichetti’s use of melodic material is most pertinent to this analysis of the Masquerade. Specifically, Nelson reveals that motivic cells are one...
of the primary means by which Persichetti organizes his works. Each parable contains small motivic cells that are, in turn, continually transformed. To achieve this, Persichetti uses a variety of traditional techniques including compression, fragmentation, and inversion. Noticeably absent from Nelson’s analysis is an investigation into the means by which Persichetti approaches harmony, how it is derived, and how it used.

Whereas many other analyses of Persichetti’s works discuss a variety of musical elements, Barry Rock’s study focuses upon Persichetti’s use of melodic cells in his sacred works. Persichetti’s catalogue of sacred compositions includes works for choirs, keyboard, organ, and orchestras, and, consequently, his study analyzes a varied collection of literature. Specifically, Rock examines Persichetti’s use of small motives, or cells to create structural unity throughout the entire composition. To aid in an analysis of possible unifying cells, Rock outlines several questions that need to be asked once a cell has been identified. First, how is the cell repeated and transformed as the work progresses? What is the overall contour of the cell? Are there smaller gestures within the cell? Does the cell offer harmonic implications? Finally, are there other significant forces that contribute to the overall cohesion of the work? At the end of his study, Rock outlines several characteristics of these cells that are universal to Persichetti’s sacred works. First, the cells are generally brief, occur at the beginning of a work, and are altered using a variety of techniques. Smaller pitch collections within a cell are often derived and used as unifying agents. The methods Persichetti uses to alters cells is also applied to new material added within a work. Multi-movement works share similar cellular material and single movement works often repeat a cell at the end of the composition in its original form. Finally, although the cells contain a variety of intervals, minor thirds occur most frequently.
Analyses of Other Theoretical Texts

When attempting to develop analyses to uncover unifying elements within compositions, the two most sought after theorists are Heinrich Schenker and Arnold Schoenberg. As will be discussed further in Chapter Five, this study will focus upon the texts by, or based upon, Arnold Schoenberg.

Of the texts by Schoenberg that explain his theoretical views, one of the most widely read is *Style and Idea*.43 The book is a large collection of 102 separate essays written between 1909 and 1949. The majority of the essays are previously published articles written in English. However, the collection also contains transcripts of lectures and unpublished manuscripts in both English and German (translated into English for the collection).44 The editor, Leonard Stein, grouped the essays by subject matter. The topics included are wide ranging and include everything from his personal viewpoints on world events to more technical and analytical texts. For the purposes of this thesis, the two chapters that will be used to guide the analysis are “Composition With Twelve Tones” (214-245) and “Brahms the Progressive” (398-441). Both essays are lengthy and attempt to address numerous different issues. However, both attempt to elucidate Schoenberg’s concept of developing variations and his organistic theoretical beliefs. “Composition with Twelve Tones,” written in twelve sections, begins with the argument that works written according to twelve-tone theory are the natural consequence of larger historical trends. To support this monumental statement, he makes the brief argument (that is explored more intensely in other essays) that great composers develop musical ideas in ways that are both apparent and hidden. He does so by drawing a comparison between Beethoven’s String Quartet, Op. 135 in F major and his own Kammersymphonie, Op. 9. In both, he uses a reductive analysis to show that within each work, seemingly unrelated material is


44 Ibid. 11.
connected and informed by a single musical idea. The remainder of the essay explains the technique of composing with a twelve-tone system. In “Brahms the Progressive,” Schoenberg goes into further detail regarding his theoretical outlook while also arguing that Brahms, whose reputation as a conservative academic composer seems clichéd, was in fact innovative. According to Schoenberg, his innovation stems from his development of material in ways that are not obvious or monotonous. Like in “Composition with Twelve Tones,” Schoenberg uses examples from Brahms to demonstrate the extent to which Brahms’s music exemplifies Schoenberg’s concept of developing variation.

Schoenberg’s analyses are not without their weaknesses, and a number of theorists and musicologists, notably William Ennis Thomson45 and Richard Taruskin46, have written extensive criticisms thereof. Specifically, Schoenberg’s analyses can seem to be arbitrary and lacking a systematic methodology. Further, the lack of methodology indicates that his analyses were not neutral, but rather an attempt to legitimize his twelve-tone technique as a natural progression in music history. Although their arguments assume that Schoenberg’s views were the result of his intentions to draw a historical line, others47 have argued that this view originated in the nineteenth century school of biology and growing belief that works of art should possess internal unity just as living organisms do. This view spawned not only Schoenberg’s understanding, but also Heinrich Schenker’s (although his focus was upon harmony whereas Schoenberg’s was on motives). Finally, if Schoenberg’s writings were theoretically and historically suspect,


those criticisms do not explain the wide number of writers and theorists who have used his method of analysis to address his works and those by others.

Of all the writings regarding Schoenberg, one of the most helpful in understanding his views is a dissertation by Michael Schiano. In it, he begins by acknowledging that Schoenberg did not develop a systematic method of analysis and never clearly identified or explained the concept of Grundgestalt, or ‘musical idea.’ The result can be a superficial analysis that proves whatever the author wants to prove. The paper is an attempt by Schiano to more concretely understand Schoenberg’s terms and develop a model for motivic analysis. He does this by analyzing Schoenberg’s writings and those by students (Erwin Stein, Josef Rufer, and Patricia Carpenter) from three eras in Schoenberg’s life. Although Schoenberg’s illustrations are enlightening, his explanations are short and often lack detail. Schiano ultimately provides a meaningful


55 Rock, “Cellular Construction in Representative Sacred Works of Vincent Persichetti.”

56 Solie, “The Living Work: Organicism and Musical Analysis.”


58 Schiano, “Arnold Schoenberg’s Grundgestalt and its Influence.”
and detailed explanation of Schoenberg’s illustrations that is used to guide the analysis within this paper. Ultimately, Schiano acknowledges that developing a systematic method is impossible and that “the variable form of the Grundgestalt and its dynamic is, in reality, problematic only to those for whom analytical merit is based exclusively on the consistency of detail in the application of an analytical technique.”

Meaning, Schoenberg’s method is flexible and no procedural system can be developed from it. Ultimately, that characteristic is both the method’s strength and weakness. While his method can be applied to vast array of works and illuminate differing characteristics of motivic connections (based upon a compositions style and structure), it will always be rejected by those people who believe that a concrete system must exist for a methodology to be legitimate.

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CHAPTER III

BIOGRAPHY

Born June 6, 1915 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Vincent Ludwig Persichetti was the child of Italian and German immigrants. His father, Vincenzo Ruggero Persichetti, was “born in Torricella Peligna, an Italian village in the Abruzzi where the Bellini family had originated”\(^6\)\(^0\) and his mother, Martha Buch Persichetti, was raised in Bonn, Germany.\(^6\)\(^1\) The Persichetti family lived on South Broad Street, an area that at the time was home to people from a wide swath of ethnic backgrounds. As such, “it should not seem unusual that the future composer, whose works would be described as an amalgamation of styles, was himself an amalgamation of ethnic backgrounds”\(^6\)\(^2\) and a product of a culturally diverse community.

Although his parents were not musicians, they did own a Cunningham player piano on which Persichetti, beginning at the age of two, “played Verdi, Schumann, and Nevin piano rolls.”\(^6\)\(^3\) By the age of five, the Persichetti family discovered that “Gilbert Raynolds Combs, president of Combs Conservatory, lived only six houses away.”\(^6\)\(^4\) The Combs Conservatory was a highly respected and sizeable music institution that boasted “over 100 teachers, two complete orchestras, a military band, dormitories for women, and accommodations for over 3000 pupils.”\(^6\)\(^5\) Beginning in 1921, Persichetti enrolled in piano lessons at the Combs Conservatory. This institution would have a significant impact upon Persichetti as he would continue to study there throughout high school and enroll in their

\(^6\)\(^0\) Shackelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti,” 104.

\(^6\)\(^1\) Ibid.


\(^6\)\(^3\) Shackelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti,” 104.

\(^6\)\(^4\) Ibid, 105.

college program, earning a Bachelor of Music degree in 1936. Initially, Persichetti studied piano with William Stanger before continuing with Gilbert Combs and Alberto Jonas. In addition to piano, Persichetti also studied organ, tuba, and double bass.

Although too young to officially enroll in theory classes, “Vincent was allowed to audit the late afternoon theory classes of Russell King Miller” at the age of nine. This invitation was the result of Persichetti’s relentless questioning.

I believe this invitation [to audit Miller’s class] came as a result of stopping him in the halls with my questions once too often. Why did Schumann begin so many pieces so far from the tonic? Did Beethoven’s title “Sonatas for Piano and Violin” mean that he considered the piano more important than, or as important as, the violin? Why does music have phrases, answers, sections, and development? Can’t it just sit there like a prism and be admired? Can an atonal work be consonant? Why does the bassoon so often sound out-of-tune when it plays the first high G-flat in Beethoven’s Fourth Symphony? Why does the New York critic claim Sibelius as the ‘second Beethoven’?

In addition to this course, Miller also allowed Persichetti to study composition with him privately. Miller would become, as Persichetti stated, “my most important composition teacher.” Persichetti’s early compositions exemplify many of the same characteristics of his later works. His first substantial composition was the Serenade No. 1, Op. 1. The work was written for ten wind instruments and incorporated a previously composed chorale. Throughout his career, Persichetti maintained a fondness for wind instruments (as illustrated by the numerous works he wrote) and many of them incorporated previously composed material. For example, his Symphony for Band (Symphony no. 6) op. 69 incorporated the chorale, “Round Me Falls the Night” from his Hymns and Responses for the Church Year, and the Masquerade incorporates musical excerpts from his textbook, Twentieth-Century Harmony.

68 Ibid., 108.
At the age of seventeen, Persichetti was appointed organist at the Arch Street Presbyterian Church and later assumed the role of choirmaster. Although “the congregation was surprised that a sixteen-year-old had been hired. After the first service, though, there was no doubting the young man’s competence.” As an organist, Persichetti transcribed many orchestral scores and performed them as preludes. He explains, “Many of the orchestral scores I was learning…were performed as organ preludes—excellent score reading practice for me and a good musical indoctrination for the congregation, who enjoyed a regular musical diet ranging from Haydn to Honegger symphonies.”

Persichetti was fortunate to live in Philadelphia, a city he described as “artistically nutritious” with communities that valued music and believed it “was as important as basketball.” He had unlimited access to several libraries in Philadelphia that possessed large collections of music. Persichetti would frequently attend concerts by the Philadelphia Orchestra, bringing with him scores he had borrowed from the library. He explained, “In the then acoustically perfect Academy of Music, Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra offered me the riches of the past, the present, and – I believe – the future.” For those concerts, he continued, “I prepared for almost every concert by memorizing the scores…checking what my inner ear imagined against what I heard with my outer ear at the performance. That’s how I learned to write for orchestra.”

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74 Ibid., 108.
Following his graduation from the Combs Conservatory in 1936, Persichetti enrolled at both the Curtis Institute of Music and the Philadelphia Conservatory (now University of the Arts). At Curtis, he studied conducting under Fritz Reiner, future conductor of the Chicago Symphony. Of Reiner, he stated, “I haven’t been able to shed Reiner’s quick wrist jerk or small beats for loud, precarious entrances. Nor could I forget his kindness and gentleness that permeated the surrounding – until the first mistake was made.”

At the Philadelphia Conservatory he studied piano with Olga Samaroff, former wife of Leopold Stokowski, and composition with Paul Nordoff. He earned a Master of Music degree in 1941 and was immediately “appointed head of the theory and composition departments at the Philadelphia Conservatory,” replacing his former teacher, Paul Nordoff.

Although he completed several works in his early youth and included them in his catalog, beginning in 1929, Persichetti entered a compositional phase he termed the “silent decade.” Like many composers, he entered a period in which he neither completed nor published any works. This is not to imply that he was not actively composing, but that those “years were a fertile period of exploration for the young composer, who sought his own voice while imitating a variety of styles.” Of this decade, Persichetti later reflected, “There was some significant music, but none of it mine.” His Piano Sonata no. 1, Op. 3, written in 1939, broke his compositional silence. The next decade saw a profusion of new works, many of which received honors and accolades. In 1941, he completed his Serenade no. 3, Op. 17, and began work on his

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77 Shakelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti,” 111.
Symphony no. 1, op. 18. The next year, 1942, “His Dance Overture Op. 22, won him his first important prize, the Juilliard Publication Award.” Soon after, his compositions began to be performed by major professional ensembles, the first of which being the Fables for Narrator and Orchestra, Op. 23 in 1945, performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra and conducted by Eugene Ormandy.

In 1947, Persichetti was persuaded by William Schuman, the newly appointed president of the Juilliard School of Music, to accept a teaching position there. Persichetti was William Schuman’s first hire. One of Schuman’s first tasks was to re-organize the theory curriculum and develop “a more integrated approach in which theoretical concepts were arrived at through the study of repertoire.” Persichetti was the first person Schuman tapped to develop the new curriculum that was to be called “Literature and Materials.” Persichetti eventually became Chairman of the Composition Department, and his list of students included: Einojuhani Rautavaara, Peter Schickele, Philip Glass, and Richard Danielpour. He would stay at Juilliard for the remainder of his professional life, retiring in 1987. He was a highly respected teacher and “although Persichetti’s compositions encountered mixed review over the years, his work as a teacher garnered him consistently high praise.” William Schuman always spoke very highly of Persichetti’s teaching, commenting:

Within one period it is not unusual for him to illustrate at the keyboard, in rapid succession and from memory, sizable quotations from a quartet of Bartok, a motet of Lassus, a Beethoven symphony, and a Verdi opera, or various treatments of a

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81 Ibid.
83 Ibid., 75.
84 Ibid., 73
harmonic sequence as handled by a dozen or more of his fellow Americans. The literature of music is in his fingertips on an ever-ready basis.\textsuperscript{85}

In 1950, Persichetti completed his first work for wind band, the \textit{Divertimento for Band}, Op. 42. “The \textit{Divertimento} was very well received following its premier by the Goldman Band in New York, and it provided the composer with his first financial success.”\textsuperscript{86} In addition, it provided Persichetti with a certain amount recognition that hitherto had eluded him. Within six years, the work would be performed in every state.\textsuperscript{87} The work’s appeal lay in the fact that he saw the potential of the wind band and treated it as a legitimate expressive ensemble. In discussing the work, Richard Goldman remarked:

Persichetti’s exploitation of band timbres and sonorities is highly imaginative, and he has not been afraid to score lightly or to call for unusual combinations of instruments. As a consequence, there is more freshness of sound in this score than one has heard in band music since Milhaud’s Suite and Schoeberg’s Variations.\textsuperscript{88}


\textsuperscript{86}Morris, “The Life of Vincent Persichetti, With Emphasis On His Works for Band,” 83.

\textsuperscript{87}Patterson and Patterson, \textit{Vincent Persichetti: a Bio-Bibliography}, 13.


varied and prolific catalogue, his band works are among the most frequently performed."\(^90\)


In 1961, with significant help from his wife Dorothea, Persichetti published his first theoretical textbook, *Twentieth-Century Harmony: Creative Aspects and Practice*. The textbook is an overview of the varying harmonic and compositional practices employed by composers in the twentieth century. Regarding the textbook, Persichetti explained:

> This book did indeed grow out of my years of giving classes on contemporary music, but I had a difficult time projecting these ideas and principles in prose. If it hadn’t been for my musically knowledgeable and verbally talented wife,

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Dorothea, I couldn’t have written such a work. The clarity of thought was defined by her. \( ^{92} \)

Reviews of the textbook ranged from extremely enthusiastic to outright derision. William Schuman’s review of the textbook was laudatory:

The publication of Vincent Persichetti’s *Twentieth-Century Harmony, Creative Aspects and Practice* (W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1961) is an event of historic importance. Surely, this volume will take its place as one of the great books on the art of music. Persichetti’s text could come only from the pen of one with his astonishing qualities and experience. \( ^{93} \)

In J. K. Randall’s scathing review, he wrote, “Vincent Persichetti and the W. W. Norton Company have issued a grab-bag of Mr. Persichetti’s recipes for short-order cookery.” \( ^{94} \) A more balanced review by Halsey Stevens acknowledged that “Persichetti has gone a long way toward defining and codifying 20\(^{th}\)-century harmonic practice. His book is logically organized…The book’s only defect is [all of] the illustrative material was composed by the author. But the supplementary lists Persichetti provides are extensive.” \( ^{95} \) Other reviews also criticized Persichetti for using only excerpts that he composed to illustrate points. Despite the validity of these criticisms, Persichetti used these self-composed excerpts in much the same way as the hymns from *Hymns and Responses for the Church Year*. These excerpts would be incorporated in later works, most notably, the *Masquerade*.

Like many composers, Persichetti’s compositional output evolved continually.

After writing many works for larger ensembles, Persichetti focused upon works for

\( ^{92} \) Shackelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti,” 128.


chamber ensembles and solo instruments. “After 1970, Persichetti still wrote a consistent number of compositions for each, but…he concentrated his efforts on smaller works, mostly for solo instruments.”\(^{96}\) Beginning in 1965 and continuing through the rest of his life, Persichetti wrote a series of 25 works he entitled *Parables*. Of the *Parables*, one is an opera (*The Sibyl*, Op. 135), one is for concert band (*Parable IX*, Op. 121), four are for various chamber instruments, and nineteen are for solo instruments. Of the *Parables* Persichetti explained, “They are always in one movement, almost always about a single germinal idea. Parables convey a meaning indirectly by the use of comparisons or analogies, and they are usually concerned with materials from my other works.”\(^{97}\) The *Parables* are similar to the *Masquerade* in that the use of a single germinal idea (or kernel) unifies the work and that they incorporate outside material. Other later compositions for solo instruments included many for the harpsichord. “A flood of new works continued in the 1980s, especially works for harpsichord. Between 1980 and 1985, eleven major works for harpsichord were premiered.”\(^{98}\) Despite his prolific output of compositions for wind band in the 1950s through the 1970s, he wrote only one work in the 1980s, *Chorale Prelude, O God Unseen*, Op. 160, composed in 1984. Like many other compositions, *O God Unseen* is based upon a hymn of the same title from his *Hymns and Responses for the Church Year*.

Persichetti would continue teaching at the Juilliard School and was an active composer until February of 1987 when he was diagnosed with lung cancer. He passed away at his home outside of Philadelphia on August 14, 1987. His wife, Dorothea, passed away on November 26, 1987 due to complications after a stroke.


CHAPTER IV
MOTIVIC ANALYSIS

Historic Contextualization

The description, theme and variations, implies a musical structure in which a self-contained theme is repeated. With each repetition, certain characteristics of the theme are retained whereas others are manipulated. This particular definition of variation form should not be confused with the many varieties of variation forms (ground bass, passacaglia, chaconne, etc.). In Persichetti’s Masquerade, a theme, preceded by a brief introduction, is followed by a series of ten clearly marked variations. Although three of the variations (Variations II, VIII, and X) function much like a traditional variation with material derived solely from the work’s primary theme, seven variations incorporate borrowed material. The result is a composition with a structure that may seem akin to a series of unrelated motivic ideas that are loosely strung together. This, coupled with Persichetti’s propensity to include diverse stylistic elements within his compositions, produces a highly complex work that eludes easy description and straightforward analysis.

Despite the elusive nature of the work, it is possible to develop a framework in which to analyze it. This framework must go beyond a mere description of the work’s surface elements; it must also analyze the connective tissue that binds the motivic elements. This type of analysis is justified due to written accounts of Persichetti’s own beliefs and due to methodologies developed by theorists and composers before him. In the last chapter of his textbook, Persichetti wrote, “A melodic kernel of two or more tones may form the nucleus from which the subject matter of an entire work is shaped and harmony derived.”99 This view of musical structure implies a belief that a

composition should possess an organic structure. That is, just as the same DNA structure is contained within each cell of a living organism, so too should a musical composition contain connective motivic tissue throughout its entirety. This motivic tissue, or kernel, can be obvious and easily identifiable aurally, or it can be subtle and elusive.

Persichetti’s views are similar to other theorists, most notably, Heinrich Schenker and Arnold Schoenberg. In an interview, Persichetti directly referenced the work of Heinrich Schenker.

From my early teens, I looked at music in a Schenkerian way, without having heard of him. I cannot imagine considering music seriously without the perspective and knowledge gained from a simultaneous grasp of the background, middleground, and foreground. Relationships among hidden motivic materials, the discovery of similarities where differences predominate, the ability to retain specific details without losing the overarching concept – all are of great significance.\(^{100}\)

Although this is the only specific reference to Schenker in Persichetti’s writings or interviews, it is important in that it provides further credence and justification of the importance of conducting an analysis of the connectedness between motives and understanding a composition on various structural levels (background, middleground, and foreground all refer to structural levels in Schenker’s theoretical framework).

Heinrich Schenker was an Austrian theorist, composer, critic, and editor best known for developing a system of musical analysis commonly referred to as Schenkerian analysis. Over a period of 30 years, Schenker sought to create models and procedures for analyzing a work holistically\(^{101}\). These procedures involved a reductive analysis in which a work’s essential elements, the important pitches, are retained, while others are removed. Each step in the process reveals a new hierarchical level that Schenker refers to as

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\(^{100}\) Shackelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti,” 129.

foreground, middleground, and background. The foreground refers to the surface level elements of a composition whereas the background reveals the work’s *Ursatz*, a term used to describe the elaboration of a major triad that occurs throughout the entire length of the composition.\textsuperscript{102} Since the major triad comprises the first four overtones of the overtone series, Schenker believed the major triad (and compositions that fit this schema) was connected to nature. “Schenker’s holistic aesthetic upon traditional concepts of organismism is…clear: the generative force which brings forth the composition is music’s origin in nature, in the major triad or *Naturklang* as found in the overtone series.”\textsuperscript{103}

Despite being revolutionary, Schenker’s method of analysis is limited to those tonal works largely written in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{104} He was actively hostile towards compositions being written at the beginning of the twentieth century, especially those by the Second Viennese School. Although Persichetti acknowledged that he shared Schenker’s holistic conception of music, it is impossible to apply Schenker’s procedures to Persichetti’s compositions. As he drew actively upon the vast compositional possibilities available to him and, as such, his works exhibited an amalgamation of divergent tonal practices from some simple diatonic harmonies to advanced serialism, often within a singular composition.\textsuperscript{105} Therefore, a Schenkerian type analysis would be incapable of describing the harmonic construction of Persichetti’s works adequately. Further, Persichetti clearly indicated the importance of generative motives in the construction of works, a concept not formally addressed in Schenkerian analysis.


\textsuperscript{103} Solie, “The Living Work: Organicism and Musical Analysis,” 151.


\textsuperscript{105} Shackelford, “Conversation with Vincent Persichetti,” 114.
Schenker was not the only theorist to advocate for a holistic approach to musical analysis. Of the others, the most prominent was Arnold Schoenberg. Best known as a composer who abandoned traditional triadic harmony, Schoenberg, like Schenker, attempted to develop methodologies to analyze music from an organic and holistic viewpoint.\(^{106}\) Despite the shared philosophical foundation, Schoenberg’s method of analysis differed significantly from Schenker’s. Schoenberg pursued a holistic analytical approach from the standpoint of motivic connections whereas Schenker operated from a standpoint of harmony and prolongation.\(^{107}\) In his essay, *Linear Counterpoint,* Schoenberg elaborated:

> Whatever happens in a piece of music is nothing but the endless reshaping of a basic shape. Or, in other words, there is nothing in a piece of music but what comes from the theme, springs from it and can be traced back to it; to put it still more severely, nothing but the theme itself. Or, all the shapes appearing in a piece of music are *foreseen* in the theme.\(^{108}\)

Schoenberg used the term *basic shape* to describe a germinating motive and used it interchangeably with its German equivalent, *Grundgestalt.* He believed that all masterworks were built upon germinating motives and those motives provided coherence and comprehensibility within a composition. In Schoenberg’s view, as a work progresses, the original motive is repeated but is also altered and reshaped. Other thematic ideas that may seem unrelated are connected to the basic shape. Thus, “everything within a closed composition can be accounted for as originating, derived, and developed from a basic motive or…*Grundgestalt.*”\(^{109}\) Schoenberg refers to this consistent variation of original

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\(^{109}\) Ibid 135.
material as *developing variation*. In his essay on Johann Sebastian Bach, Schoenberg clarified:

> Music of the homophonic-melodic style of composition, that is, music with a main theme, accompanied by and based on harmony, produces its material by, as I call, *developing variation*. This means that variation of the features of a basic unit produces all the thematic formulations which provide for fluency, contrast, variety, logic and unity, and character, mood, expression, and every needed differentiation, on the other hand – thus elaborating the *idea* of the piece.\(^{110}\)

*Developing variation*, therefore, provides two opposite requirements within a work: unity and contrast. As the *Grundgestalt* unfolds and grows through the process of *developing variation*, it informs the coming variations while varying itself and generating new motives.

Many of the terms used by Schoenberg have been criticized for their ambiguity. He never clearly articulated the definition of each term he used and never used those terms consistently throughout his career.\(^{111}\) From his own students, conflicting understandings of the *Grundgestalt* concept emerged. Erwin Stein understood it to something akin to a pitch-class set, Josef Rufer believed it contained pitches and rhythms, and Patricia Carpenter understood it as something that provided tonal coherence.\(^{112}\)\(^{113}\) Many have postulated that Schoenberg’s reluctance to define these terms concretely was deliberate because he wanted the flexibility to apply his concepts to a wide variety of works.\(^{114}\)\(^{115}\) The promise of such flexibility is that it allows the theorist to apply

\(^{110}\) Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, 397.

\(^{111}\) Clemens, “Combining Ursatz and Grundgestalt,” 3.

\(^{112}\) Schiano, “Arnold Schoenberg’s *Grundgestalt* and its Influence.”


\(^{114}\) Schiano, “Arnold Schoenberg’s *Grundgestalt* and its Influence,” 5.

Schoenberg’s concepts to any style of music, unlike Schenker. However, the peril lies in that motivic analyses can be “dismissed as ad hoc, or highly susceptible to wreck-less [sic] application.”¹¹⁶ Because of this, “Schoenbergian theory is largely distrusted because it lacks a clear methodology.”¹¹⁷

Despite this dilemma, it is possible to develop a better understanding of Schoenberg’s Grundgestalt concept and use it as a guidepost for analyzing other works. The best means to do this is to examine closely how, in Schoenberg’s analyses, he “demonstrates how the constituent elements of a musical composition cohere in order to form a comprehensible music structure, and [how] this comprehensibility is shown to be the result of a basic shape or Grundgestalt.”¹¹⁸ Of the published analyses by Schoenberg, two vastly different texts have been chosen as models. The first is his examination of his own work, Kammersymphonie, Op. 9, found in his essay “Composition With Twelve Tones,”¹¹⁹ and the second being his analysis of Beethoven’s String Quartet, Op. 95 found in his essay “Brahms the Progressive.”¹²⁰ These two diverse examinations have been chosen as models since one is traditionally tonal and the other post-tonal. These two analyses will be helpful in analyzing Persichetti’s Masquerade as it incorporates both traditional and twentieth century compositional techniques.

The purpose of Schoenberg’s analysis of the Kammersymphonie, Op. 9, is to elucidate the interconnectedness of the work’s two primary themes that, on the surface, appear unrelated. Of the work and its two themes, Schoenberg admitted, “After I completed the work I worried very much about the apparent absence of any relationship


¹¹⁹ Schoenberg, Style and Idea, 222-223.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 423-424.
between the two themes... About twenty years later I saw the true relationship.” More than simply insinuating that the two themes were related, Schoenberg attempted to outline the relationship through a series of logical steps. In the excerpt from his analysis (Figure 4.1), the first theme is identified as (a) and the second as (b). In staff (c), Schoenberg outlined the “true principal tones of the theme” with larger note heads and the subordinate pitches with smaller. Staff (d) eliminates the subordinate pitches, revealing an upward movement. Staff (e) inverts (d) and is rhythmicized in staff (f), revealing its connection to the second theme, staff (b).

Figure 4.1 - Schoenberg’s analysis of Kammersymphonie Op. 9, E Major

Ex. 3

\[\text{Kammersymphonie, Op. 9, E major}\]

\[\text{a) } \]

\[\text{b) } \]

\[\text{c) } \]

\[\text{d) } \]

\[\text{e) } \]

\[\text{f) } \]

\[\text{Inversion} \]

121 Schoenberg, Style and Idea, 223.

122 Ibid., 223.
Despite not justifying which pitches to eliminate, Schoenberg’s decisions are logical. Although highly chromatic, the key and the arrival of particular pitches on strong beats indicate that the theme is centered in E major and the reduction in staff (d) outlines an ascending first inversion E major triad with an added F#. These decisions are reinforced rhythmically as the dotted eighth sixteenth figure in measure two is bookended by triplet figures. Schoenberg’s decision to include the B in measure three in staff (c) is questionable since its rhythmic value is so short and does not occur on a strong beat. However, his decision is not completely unwarranted as it fits within the harmonic implications of the first theme.

In Schoenberg’s analysis of Beethoven’s String Quartet, Op. 95, the goal is to not necessarily reveal how two themes are related through a deductive analysis, but discuss how a small motive (Grundgestalt) can be transformed and used in musical moments that do not necessarily constitute a theme (transitional and contrapuntal material for example). In Schoenberg’s essay, he outlines the process of deduction and locates their manifestations in the work (Figure 4.3). In Figure 4.2, the main theme of the String Quartet is shown on line ‘a.’ The motive Schoenberg extracts is identified with an X above each note and consists of pitches D♭ C and D♯. On line ‘b,’ the three-note motive is de-rhythmicized (the choice of quarter notes is arbitrary) and presented in retrograde on ‘c.’ The dotted lines simply indicate the shared pitches. The retrograde form of the motive is then transposed up a minor seventh with the solid lines indicating the transposition of each pitch.

Unfortunately, Schoenberg does not thoroughly explain how staves ‘d,’ ‘e,’ ‘f,’ and ‘g’ are connected to the original motives. An inversion of the original motive produces the pitch-classes C D♯ and D♭. A transposition of those pitches up a tritone produces the pitches in ‘d.’ Therefore, line ‘d’ represents both the retrograde inversion and transposition of the original motive up a tritone. Another transposition of the retrograde inversion is found in ‘e,’ but transposed up a major seventh, and ‘f’ represents
an inversion of the motive and a transposition. Schoenberg disregards exact placement of the final D♭ and lowers it four octaves. Finally, line ‘g’ represents the interaction of two forms of the motive. The first bracket outlining pitches A♮ A♭ B♭ represents a transposition of the original motive, and the second bracket outlining A♭ B♭ A♮ represents a retrograde inversion and transposition.

Figure 4.2 - Schoenberg’s analysis of Beethoven’s *String Quartet*, Op. 95 Part 1

Ex. 36

Figure 4.3 represents musical excerpts that Schoenberg extracts from the *String Quartet*. In each example, Schoenberg connects material directly to his manifestations found in Figure 4.2. In measures 6 through 7 the cello is in the bass clef and the violin I, violin II, and viola parts condensed into the treble clef. Two different appearances of the motive occur simultaneously, with line ‘d’ from Figure 4.2 appearing in whole notes in the cello in measures 7 through 9 and line ‘e’ appearing in violin I in measures 8 and 9. Line ‘b’ is extracted from the violin I part in measure 34 of Figure 4.3. The material is
transitional and although Schoenberg indicates it is based upon ‘d,’ it is actually based upon the retrograde of that line. Violins I and II in measure 40 represent the first pitch classes of ‘f’ with its resolution in the cello in measure 43. Finally, measures 41 and 42 represent the overlapping manifestations discussed in line ‘g.’

**Figure 4.3 - Schoenberg’s analysis of Beethoven’s String Quartet, Op. 95 Part 2**

These two examples, among many, explicate two aspects of Schoenberg’s thinking. First, that two unrelated themes within a self-contained work can be connected in ways that are not apparently obvious. Second, simple motivic material that occurs early within a work can be transformed and developed as a work progresses, producing highly complex relationships. With these motives “it is clear that he views [these] shapes…as some kind of Grundgestalt. The shape becomes the syntactic norm of the piece, and events that are apparently related to this phenomenon contribute to the motivic unity of the piece.”

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Examinations of Schoenberg’s holistic philosophy along with two of his analyses provide foundation and direction for those wishing to pursue an analysis of Persichetti’s works. Persichetti never directly referenced Schoenberg’s theoretical writings, only Schenker’s. In the case of Schenker, the acknowledgement was brief and occurs nowhere in his textbook. Any attempt to explain why Persichetti never acknowledged Schoenberg is speculative. However, it is generally agreed that although Schenker’s theory was firmly established by his students following World War II, Schoenberg’s theory did not achieve the same success.\textsuperscript{124} The reasons for this are varied and extensive and outside the scope of this investigation. It is possible the Persichetti was not familiar with Schoenberg’s writings. A more likely explanation is that Persichetti’s only reference to Schenker was when he was asked specifically about Schenker, and had he been asked about Schoenberg, he would have discussed his writings. Regardless, when the writings of Persichetti and Schoenberg are juxtaposed, it is apparent that a consanguinity exists between them. Schoenberg wrote in his essay \textit{Folklorist Symphonies}:

> A real composer does not compose merely one or more themes, but a whole piece…a real composer’s musical conception is one single act, comprising the totality of the product. From in its outline, characteristics of tempo, dynamics, moods of the main and subordinate ideas, their relation, derivation, their contrasts and deviations – all these are there at once, though in embryonic state.\textsuperscript{125}

Compare this assertion with Persichetti’s quote from the beginning of this chapter, in which he argued that a “melodic kernel of two or more tones may form the nucleus from which the subject matter of an entire work is shaped and harmony derived.”\textsuperscript{126} These two clearly shared the belief that a composition can grow from a central motive/kernel/nucleus/\textit{Grundgestalt}. Therefore, to fully comprehend a complex work like

\textsuperscript{124} Borio, “Schenker vs. Schoenberg vs. Schenker,” 252.

\textsuperscript{125} Schoenberg, \textit{Syle and Idea}, 165.

\textsuperscript{126} Persichetti, \textit{Twentieth-Century Harmony}, 275-276.
the *Masquerade*, it is essential to discover the work’s unifying kernel and the means by which it connects the multitude of borrowed themes and self-contained material.

**Analysis**

In Vincent Persichetti’s *Masquerade*, a single-movement *theme and variations* for wind band with ten variations and coda that incorporates ten examples from his textbook, *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, all pertinent motivic material is either derived from or connected to the work’s theme. Table 1 outlines each variation, its measure numbers, the origin of primary source material (whether it is derived from the theme or from *Twentieth-Century Harmony*), and the tempo indicated. The primary material for three of the variations (Variations II, VIII, and X) is derived directly from the work’s primary theme and varied in an expected traditional manner, whereas Variations I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and IX use examples from *Twentieth-Century Harmony*. All borrowed material shares a connective kernel that is both apparent and obscure and is first revealed in the *Masquerade’s* theme. In the variations with borrowed examples, fragments and variations of the *Masquerade’s* theme appear in a variety of subordinate manifestations.

This analysis will be divided into three segments. The first, titled “Thematic Analysis,” will dissect the *Masquerade’s* theme, identify the unifying kernel in addition to secondary figures that inform the work. The second, “Analysis of Borrowed Material,” will analyze the way the theme acts as the unifying force among each borrowed example. The third, “Analysis of Self-Contained Material,” will analyze the varied manifestations of the theme in their appearances as primary and secondary material.
Table 1 - Structural outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Origin of Primary Material</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>7-24</td>
<td>Allegro – Adagio – Allegro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 168 ( $\dot{\ \ }$ = 60 ( $\dot{\ \ }$ = 168)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation I</td>
<td>Example 2-16</td>
<td>25-49</td>
<td>Andante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation II</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>50-115</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation III</td>
<td>Example 2-17, Example 2-11</td>
<td>116-169</td>
<td>Presto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation IV</td>
<td>Example 2-35</td>
<td>170-201</td>
<td>Andantino – Piu Mosso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 96 ( $\dot{\ \ }$ = 120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation V</td>
<td>Example 9-8, Example 10-1</td>
<td>202-222</td>
<td>Piu Mosso (cont.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation VI</td>
<td>Example 7-20, Example 2-34</td>
<td>223-253</td>
<td>Sostenuto - Andante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 72 ( $\dot{\ \ }$ = 104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation VII</td>
<td>Example 2-49</td>
<td>254-316</td>
<td>Allegro Molto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$\dot{\ \ }$ = 152 ( $\dot{\ \ }$ = 152)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation VIII</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>317-351</td>
<td>Allegro Molto (cont.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation IX</td>
<td>Example 11-33</td>
<td>352-373</td>
<td>Allegro Molto (cont.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation X</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>374-394</td>
<td>Allegro Molto (cont.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>Theme and selected examples</td>
<td>395-434</td>
<td>Allegro Molto (cont.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thematic Analysis

The Masquerade’s theme, in measures 7 through 24, follows a six-measure introduction that culminates in a twelve-tone aggregate chord, a chord containing all twelve chromatic pitches within an octave, in measure 4. The importance of the introduction within the overall structure of the work is negligible as, according to manuscripts, it was one of the last sections Persichetti finished.127

Whereas it is expected that in a theme and variations structure that variations would occur in clearly delineated sections, Persichetti varies the theme twice before Variation I. The work’s primary theme, in which the unifying kernel is revealed, occurs in measures 7-9 (Figure 4.4), with the first variation occurring in measures 10-18 (Figure 4.5) and the second in measures 19-21 (Figure 4.6). The second variation of the theme (Example 4.6) closely resembles the primary theme (Figure 4.4) in length, tempo, and internal structure, whereas the slower first variation (Figure 4.5) is the most dissimilar. The primary theme will be identified as PT, the first variation VT1, and the second as VT2.

In Example 4.4, the PT’s primary motivic components are identified as a, a’, b, c, d, and e. The initial descent of a minor third from G to E, identified as (a), is the unifying kernel of the Masquerade. The retrograde of that figure, (a’), closes the phrase and can be considered another manifestation of the unifying kernel. The minor third interval that begins and ends the theme is also included within the theme’s middle section, (b). This middle section is made up of several overlapping yet distinct components: an ascending minor third (a’), a repeated figure (c), and a descending major second (d). In addition, an ascending and descending major second (e) also exist. Thus, (b) is the result of (a’)/(c) + (d) or (a’) + (e). Transformations of these other components occur throughout the Masquerade, but they are of secondary importance to the initial minor third descent (a).

Any explanation of why Persichetti includes two variations (VT1 and VT2) of the primary theme within the section marked “Theme” is conjectural. However, they most closely resemble the primary theme (Figure 4.4) than any other manifestation, and Persichetti’s variation of material models what occurs later in the composition. The order and similarities of the two variations to the theme resemble the internal structure of the theme. That is, the theme’s structure is ternary in that the minor third leap at the begins (a) and the end (a’) bookends the material (b) in the middle. The second variation of the theme (Example 4.7) closely resembles the theme in structure, character, and tempo, whereas the first variation (Figures 4.5 and 4.6) is the most dissimilar. Therefore, the entire section titled “Theme” is ternary in structure.

VT1 (Example 4.5) is transposed up a major third and re-scored for alto clarinet, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, baritone, and tuba. Unlike the primary theme, which opens and closes with a minor third motive, (a) and (a’), VT1 begins with both the ascending (a’) and descending (a) minor third. A rhythmic variation of (b) follows before ending with an ascending major second (d’). The low brass and low woodwinds become subordinate in measure 13 as the clarinets and saxophone enter (Example 4.6) with the primary melodic line. Despite this, fragments of material still appear as in measure 16.
with (c) and (a) and in measures 17 and 18 with a descending and ascending minor third

\((a)+(a')\) between the A\# (or its enharmonic equivalent Bb) and G.

**Figure 4.5 - mm. 10-18, low woodwinds and low brass**

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The material in Example 4.6 is far more fragmented than the material in Example 4.5, yet
contains all of the components of the theme with the exception of (b). A descending
minor third \((a)\) is again prominent with the descent from G to E, E to C\# and finally D to B.

**Figure 4.6 - mm. 13-18, clarinet I**

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VT1 closes with only a limited collection of fragments (only (a) and (d)) in the horn (Figure 4.7). The descent from the G to the E (held out through the second variation) recalls the initial minor third descent in the primary theme.

![Figure 4.7 - mm. 16-22, horn I](image)

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The Theme ends with VT2 (Example 4.8) whose material closely resembles PT in measures 7 through 9. In VT2, (c) is extended and does not end with an ascending third (a’).

![Figure 4.8 - mm. 19-21, flute I](image)

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**Analysis of Borrowed Material**

Connecting the borrowed examples from *Twentieth-Century Harmony* to the *Masquerade’s* kernel is both straightforward and evasive depending upon the context. As
such, two methods, modeled after Schoenberg’s, will be used to display the connection between the examples to the *Masquerade’s* theme. The first method will deconstruct motives to their essential pitch structure, and, depending upon their tonal center, will be transposed. Doing so will illuminate inherent similarities between the borrowed examples and the *Masquerade’s* primary theme. This method is similar to Schoenberg’s in Figure 4.1. The second will outline where the theme’s primary components (and kernel) appear in the work’s musical material and similar to Figure’s 4.2 and 4.3.

**Variation I**

The first usage of borrowed material occurs in Variation I with the incorporation of Example 2-16. The connection of this example to the theme is arguably the most obvious. Chapter Two of *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, from which the excerpt is extracted, introduces possibilities for scalar construction, specifically modes. Example 2-16 is an illustration of polymodality, that is, two musical ideas based upon unrelated modes that occur simultaneously. Figure 4.9 represents oboe I and clarinet I in measures 25-31. The excerpt is in the E Dorian mode, whereas the accompaniment material, not shown, is in E Phrygian.

![Figure 4.9 - mm. 25-31, oboe I and clarinet I](image)

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Like the theme, the example begins on G, a pitch appearing regularly, and ends with a minor third descent from G to E (or (a) from the theme). Figure 4.10 features a deconstruction of measures 25-28. This type of procedure is similar to Schoenberg’s in his analysis of his *Kammersymphonie*, Op. 9. The top line represents measures 25-28 in the *Masquerade*, the second line eliminates the subordinate pitches so that only the essential remain, and the bottom represents measures 7-9 of the theme. The first pitch, G, is important as it is the beginning of the excerpt. The lower E is significant because it is the lowest note in that measure (and in the excerpt) and the beginning of an upward scale that passes through G before settling on A. The second line reveals that the essential pitches share a similar contour to the theme, and share the same intervallic structure (descending minor third followed by an ascending major second finishing with an ascending minor third).

**Figure 4.10 - mm. 25-28, relationship to the theme**

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In Figure 4.11 (measures 33-40), the top line represents flute I and the bottom oboe I. Initially, the duet between the two parts copies the first four measures of Figure 4.9 (measures 25-28) and ends with an exploration of other motivic possibilities based upon fragments of the theme. As Figure 4.11 shows, the ascending and descending minor
third motive \((a)\) and \((a')\) respectively) features prominently, especially at the end of the fragment, when both parts end with a minor third (F# to D# in the flute and B to G# in the oboe). The repeated motive, \((c)\), appears in both parts this time with three repeated pitches instead of two, and is followed by ascending and descending minor thirds instead.

![Figure 4.11 - mm. 33-40, flute, oboe and clarinet](image)

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**Variation III**

Two examples from *Twentieth-Century Harmony* are used in Variation III, and, like Variation I, both are derived from Chapter Two. The first is Example 2-17 from page 39, and the second is Example 2-11 from page 37.

The variation begins (Figure 4.12) with a series of stacked diminished chords in clarinet I, II, and III. The diminished chords, used at the end of Variation II (Figure 4.48) and the beginning of Variation III (Figure 4.12), anticipate the rhythmic structure of
material in measures 117-118 (Figure 4.13). The amalgamation of pitches in the three chords produces a tone-cluster.

In Example 2-17 from *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, Persichetti attempts to illustrate that when two simultaneously occurring lines are based upon the same mode but have different tonal centers they can be considered polytonal and modal, but are not polymodal. The excerpt is first used in measures 117 and 118 (Figure 4.13) in piccolo I, piccolo II, cornet I, cornet II, cornet III, trumpet I, and trumpet II.

In Figure 4.14, a deconstructive analysis is represented with only the top line from Figure 4.13 (as the bottom consists of only Gs). The minor third interval is structurally
important as the first two pitches (G and Bb) are a minor third apart. As in Figure 4.10, the second line of Figure 4.14 eliminates the non-essential pitches of the excerpt. Both Cs in measure 117 are eliminated since they occur on the weak part of the beat. In the second measure, the C is included as an important structural pitch because of its frequency and because it occurs immediately before the final pitch (Bb). An additional line is added to transpose the deconstructed pitches to the tonal center of the original theme. The order of pitches in the first measure is reversed; however, Persichetti uses the ascending minor third motion frequently throughout the work and closes the original theme with an ascending minor third.

**Figure 4.14 - mm. 117-118, relationship to the theme**

The material from measures 117-118 (Figure 4.14) is repeated and varied three additional times in measures 120-129. In the first repeat, the trombones enter with accompanimental material (Figure 4.15) also derived from Example 2-17 in *Twentieth-Century Harmony*. Like the cornet, this accompanimental material is also connected to the theme. The top line of Figure 4.15 represents trombone I as it appears in *Masquerade*, in the second line
is an inversion of the original that is transposed up a minor third in line three, in the fourth line the non-essential pitches have been eliminated, and the fifth is the *Masquerade’s* theme. The Fs has been eliminated in measure 120 and 121 because they occur on weak beats.

**Figure 4.15 - mm. 120-121, relationship to the theme**

In the second and third repeat of material in measures 124 to 129, Persichetti adds an additional layer of material in the horns. The horn line is audibly distinct in measures 124-127 due to its long held note values juxtaposed against the cornet and trombone eighth-note rhythmic values. The line is not borrowed from the *Twentieth-Century Harmony* but is connected to the borrowed material and to the *Masquerade’s* original theme. The horn line can be split into three sections with the first being in measures 124-125, the second in 126-127, and the third in 128-129. In the first section, the line moves in contrary motion to the cornet I lines with a series of descending major seconds. The
second section is connected to the theme (as shown in Figure 4.16) and third mirrors the trombone line. In the horns second section (measure 126-127), the top line represents the original, in the second the pitches are de-rhythmicized, and in the third, it is transposed up a tritone. Although the *Masquerade*’s theme is made up of the pitches E, G, and A, in this excerpt the A is transformed to Ab (or G#). The interplay between G and G# (or a minor and major third) is a central component of a later timpani line beginning in measures 60-68 (Figure 4.37).

![Figure 4.16 - mm. 126-127, relationship to the theme](image)

Throughout the *Masquerade*, Persichetti is deliberate and consistent with the location of borrowed examples. Specifically, he usually places these examples at the beginning or midway through the variation to emphasize their importance. In Variation III, however, Persichetti places a borrowed excerpt at the end in measures 163-168 (Figure 4.17). The excerpt is Example 2-11 from page 37 in *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, illustrates simply that when a composition is modal, chromatic alterations are acceptable to use. In addition to its unusual placement, the excerpt differs from others chosen in that it is not rich with motivic possibilities and is instead a cadential progression in E
phrygian with several altered pitches. Although the excerpt’s placement may be unusual, being that it is a cadential progression, its placement at the end of the variation fits within the expectation of such a passage. Figure 4.17 is a score reduction with the top line representing trumpet I, line two the alto, tenor and baritone saxophones and bassoons, and the bottom the trombones. A further reduction in Figure 4.18 reveals that each measure’s implied chord or chords are all minor. Since the interval between the root and the third of the chord is a minor third, each chord possesses the kernel since each is minor.

**Figure 4.17 - mm. 163-168, bassoon, saxophones, and trombones**

![Score reduction](image1)

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**Figure 4.18 - mm. 163-167, reduction**

![Reduction](image2)

**Variation IV**

Variation IV begins with the excerpt Example 2-35 from page 54 of *Twentieth-Century Harmony*. Persichetti uses the example to demonstrate that compositions based
upon pentatonic scales can become monotonous; therefore, excerpts must be shorter in length. Extended usage can be achieved when a melody based upon a pentatonic scale is harmonized with chords from distant tonal centers. Figure 4.19 is a reduction of several parts as elements of the excerpt are passed throughout the woodwind section. Like many borrowed excerpts that appear later in the *Masquerade*, the excerpt’s connection to the theme is less obvious; however, it is replete with minor thirds. In measures 194 and 196, minor third leaps occur in at least three of the beats. In measures 195, the first two sixteenth notes in beats one and two, and three and four are in minor thirds. The excerpt ends in measure 196 with an important motivic, a descending minor from C to A.

**Figure 4.19 - mm. 194-196, piccolos, flutes, and oboes**

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**Variation V**

Variation V, the shortest variation, consists of two borrowed examples, the first being Example 9-8 from page 187 (Figure 4.20) and the second Example 10-1 (Figure 4.21) is from page 213. Chapter Nine discusses harmonic progressions by composers in the twentieth century. As such, Example 9-8 demonstrates that perception of harmonic progression can be influenced by factors not related to pitch or harmonic structure. Like Figure 4.19, Figure 4.20 is saturated with minor thirds. Each measure contains at least one descending third interval and, commonly, overlapping minor thirds. For instance, in measure 203, the line leaps from an E on beat one to a G followed by a series of sixteenth notes. The two prominent pitches in the descending sixteenth note figure are the G and E
(minor third) with another minor third leap from D to B on beat three. The (t) in measure 203 refers to the descending the major seventh and represents the timpani motive that will be discussed later in this chapter. Similar to other previous figures that feature a minor third leap at beginning of the excerpt, in Figure 4.20, a minor third leap, occurs at the end (measure 205).

**Figure 4.20 - mm. 202-205, piccolo, flute, oboe, Eb clarinet**

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The second excerpt, Example 10-1 (Figure 4.21), occurs eleven measures into the variation. In *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, the example demonstrates that relatively simple chords can create the impression of complex harmonic movement if the chords are unrelated and occur in quick succession. Unlike previous borrowed examples that occur at the beginning of each variation and consequently signal their importance, Example 10-1’s appearance is brief and couched by repetitions of the theme (4.52) Figure 4.21 is a reduction of flute I and II, oboe I and II, Eb clarinet, clarinet I, alto clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, alto saxophone I and II, and tenor saxophone. In Example 10-1, a quick alteration of unrelated chords occurs between the upper and lower instruments.
Like Example 2-11 (Figure 4.17), Example 10-1 is not a melodic excerpt, but demonstrates possibilities with chord structures. As such, the kernel is not as apparent as in previous examples, but exists within bassoon I and II (Figure 4.22). The excerpt is structured similarly to the work’s primary theme in that a minor third (a) bookends middle material (b). The rhythmic placement of the pitches at the beginning of the excerpt is important being that they occur on downbeats. The first three pitches of the bassoon (G, E, and G) consist of a descending and ascending minor third and thus connect motive to the theme. In measure 213, the excerpt, labeled (b’), is not an exact replication from the theme, but is a re-ordering of material from the theme’s (b) section. Whereas in the original, the (b) section begins with a minor third leap (a’), followed by a repetition of the same pitch (c), and ending with a descent of a major second (d), in measure 213 (b’) begins with a major second descent, followed by a rhythmic variation (dotted eighth sixteenth) of the repeated pitch, ending with a minor third descent.
Variation VI

Like Variations III and V, Variation VI consists of two borrowed examples. However, unlike Variation V, whose borrowed examples are brief and arguably less important than other material, Variation VI’s two examples are the primary motivic material for the entire variation. These two examples are similar in character and share roughly half of the variation (twelve measures for the first variation and nineteen for the second).

The first example is 7-20 from page 145. The entire chapter discusses the means by which to use polychords within a composition. Example 7-20, Figure 4.23, illustrates that in polychordal composition, two-part counterpoint can be achieved between the highest and lowest pitches in the polychord. The Masquerade’s kernel manifests itself in Example 7-20 on both a large and small structural scale.
Figure 4.23 - mm. 223-232, flutes and clarinets

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Figure 4.24 demonstrates the existence of the kernel on a micro level. The figure is a reduction of measure 223 in which the example has been de-rhythmicized and the internal pitches of each polychord have been deleted, leaving only the outer pitches. The two voices begin, enharmonically, on the same pitch and move apart. The interval produced on beat two between the Cb in the bass clef and the D in treble is a minor third. In addition, in both voices, the distance between their first pitch and the third is also a minor third.

Figure 4.24 - m. 223, reduction
A further deconstruction of the borrowed example is presented in Figure 4.25. The top line represents uppermost pitches of the polychords with the second line being a transposition down a minor sixth, and in the third line, non-essential pitches have been eliminated. The justification for which pitches to eliminate is as follows: the first pitch, E, is retained because it is the beginning of the phrase; the G in the fourth measure is included because it ends the first phrase; the A and G in fourth in the sixth and eighth measure because they follow a descending quarter note motive that repeats; and the final E in the ninth measure because it is the end of the second phrase. The deconstruction process reveals a striking resemblance to the (b) section from the *Masquerade*’s primary theme. Again, the minor third interval is prominent especially between the final two pitches (G and E).

The second borrowed material in Variation VI is derived from Example 2-34 on page 52 (Figure 4.26). The example demonstrates ways to establish harmonic variety in melodic lines that are based upon a pentatonic scale because they are harmonically limited.
While not as obvious as in previous examples, the kernel informs the structure of Example 2-34 in several ways. Although the first pitch is E, there is not a minor third leap above or below. However, Figure 4.27 represents a manifestation of the first measure of Example 2-34 that uncovers the kernel. The first line is an exact copy of the first measure from the example. The second line is an inversion of the first, and the third line is a transposition such that the lowest pitch in the inversion, A, is now an E. Line four is a retrograde of line three (and thus a retrograde inversion of line one). When line four is compared to the original theme, the relationship between the two becomes clear.
If we assume that in the original, the kernel manifests itself in the minor third leap from F# to A, then it is possible to compare the first two measures of Example 2-34 to the *Masquerade*’s theme without needing to invert or retrograde the example. In Figure 4.28, the first line represents the first two measures of Example 2-34. The second line eliminates non-essential pitches in light of assumptions used in Figure 4.27 that the kernel appears in the leap from F# to A. When those two pitches are reversed and transposed down a major second in line three, its relationship to the original theme (line four) is apparent.

![Figure 4.28 - mm. 223-224, relationship to the theme](image)

**Variation VII**

Variation VII contains only one borrowed example, Example 2-49 (Figure 4.30) from page 59. Example 2-49 is derived from an extended discussion in Chapter Two of *Twentieth-Century Harmony* of the characteristics and creative consequences of the whole-tone scale. As Persichetti explains, the whole-tone scale “offers limited basis for extended musical expression…A second whole-tone scales lies a half step above a first
but any attempt to produce more will result not only in transposition but in duplication of the notes of the first or second.”

The two possible whole-tone scales are displayed in Figure 4.29. A whole-tone scale is a symmetrical scale built entirely upon whole steps. Therefore, if one were to build a whole-tone scale beginning on C, it would produced the pitch collection listed under WT(0). If that scale were transposed up one half step, it would produce the collection listed under WT(1). However, if it were transposed again, it would repeat the same pitch collection from WT(0).

![Figure 4.29 – Two possible whole-tone scales](image)

Despite being limited harmonically, creative potential is possible if the whole-tone scale is used with other scales or if different modes are used. In Example 2-49 (Figure 4.30), Persichetti employs both possibilities: the upper line uses the two different transpositions of the whole-tone scale and the bottom uses several different diatonic scales.

Example 2-49’s connection to the theme is the most illusive of the borrowed examples. However, a close examination does reveal the relationship. The material in the upper line represents oboe I and clarinet I. Persichetti rapidly shifts between two transpositions of the whole-tone scale beginning with WT(0). Whenever the line shifts from WT(0) to WT(1), it is always done so with an ascending minor third, or (*a‘*) from the theme. The material in the bottom line (representing clarinet II, III, and bassoons) begins in F major (mm. 258-261), moves in E major in mm. 262-263, C# minor in mm.

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264-265 and D minor in mm. 267-269. The distance in tonal centers from F major to D minor is a minor third and E major to C# is also a minor third. Thus, the accompaniment is connected to the work's central kernel through their key relationships being a minor third apart. Example 2-49 contains other excerpts from the theme other than \((a)\) and \((a')\). Specifically, the Example is replete with ascending and descending major seconds, or \((e)\) and its inversion, \((e')\). Finally, the beginning pitch for each phrase between the upper and lower line is a major seventh apart, or \((t)\). That interval, already used extensively in the timpani by this point, is explained further on page 68.

**Figure 4.30 - mm. 257-269, oboe I, clarinet I, II, III, and bassoon**

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Variation IX

The borrowed material in Variation IX is Example 11-33 from page 247 (Figure 4.31). Unlike all other borrowed examples, Example 11-33 does not illustrate a possible compositional practice but instead is part of an assignment that asks students to expand a passage with a double pedal point. Therefore, as the name suggests, the important aspect of the example is not the motivically rich material in the treble, but the double pedal point in the bass. Additionally, although minor third intervals can be found in the treble, their appearance does not tie it to the kernel or theme convincingly. In the bass, the perfect fifth between the Eb and Bb descends a minor third to C and G in measure 352 and the F and C descend to D and A in measure 355 (labeled (a) in both instances). Additionally, the first chord in the bass, the F# and A, which are a minor third apart, are a minor third apart from the first chord in the treble clef (A and C). Again, at the end of the example, the D and A in measure 355 is a minor third below the F and C in the treble clef in measure 356. The treble clef represents the flutes and oboes and the bass represents the horns. The example is only five measures in length and immediately followed by eighteen measures of original material.

Figure 4.31 - mm. 351-356, flute I and II, oboe I, alto saxophone I, horns

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Analysis of Self-Contained Material

Although the *Masquerade* is unusual in its incorporation of borrowed material, variations of the theme occur throughout the work. These variations manifest themselves either as primary motivic material (as in Variations II, VIII, and X) or as secondary material (accompaniment, counterpoint). Persichetti uses the compositional technique referenced earlier in the chapter by Arnold Schoenberg as *developing variation*, or the process by which a composer continually develops material throughout the work. As the *Masquerade* progresses, early variations of motives bear a striking resemblance to the theme, but as those variations are further developed, their relationship to the theme becomes more obscure.

Variation I

In Variation I, the first instance of thematic variation occurs in measures 28-30 in cornet I (Figure 4.32) and tuba (Figure 4.33). In each of these parts, fragments of the theme appear. In Figure 4.32, the fragment begins with a repeated pattern, \((c)\) followed by a ascending and descending minor third \((a')\) and \((a)\) respectively. This same fragment is repeated in the next measure by the tubas, although as an inversion of the cornet fragment. Several measures later, the same motive found in Figure 4.32 is repeated in the timpani (Figure 4.34), although transposed to the pitches of the original theme. The motive in the timpani will reoccur throughout the work and serve as important connective tissue while other borrowed material occurs simultaneously.
The solo in horn I (Figure 4.35) signals the end of Variation I (measures 46 to 49). It is a variation of the theme and is similar to the horn example in Figure 4.7. The line begins with a descent from a G to an E, but unlike the original theme that rises to an A, Figure 4.35 rises only to Ab. This transformation of the pitch down a half step creates a tonally ambiguous ending as the Ab is the enharmonic equivalent of G#, a major third interval. This ambiguity will exploited further in the recurring timpani motive.
Variation II

Variation II typifies a traditional theme and variations structure in that all of its pertinent material is a variation of the *Masquerade’s* theme. The material these variations produce are used by Persichetti in later variations.

The variation opens with a short fanfare (Figure 4.36) in the horns that is derived from the theme. Consisting of only two pitches, the fanfare opens with a descending minor third from E to C# (a minor third below the theme) and ends with the repetition of those two pitches.

Figure 4.36 - mm. 50-53, horn I, II, III, and IV

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Immediately after the horn fanfare, an extended presentation of the theme occurs in the clarinets, alto clarinet, and bass clarinet (Figure 4.37). The first two measures are similar to the horn in Figure 4.36, with the last three reiterating the theme precisely.

Figure 4.37 - mm. 53-60, clarinets

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In measure 60, the timpani begins an exceedingly important motive that Persichetti will use throughout the remainder of the composition. The timpani motive has been mentioned earlier and been identified as (t). It begins with a descending minor third from G3 to E3 followed by an octave descent from G3 to G#2. This G# is the enharmonic transformation of the Ab first heard in the horn in measure 47 (Figure 4.38).

Figure 4.38 - mm. 60-68, timpani

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A woodwind tutti development of the theme follows the timpani in measures 68-75 (Figure 4.39). Measure 68 is identical to measure 19; however, the next measure incorporates the Ab/G# from measures 12 and 15. Measures 69 into 70 incorporate the ascending minor third motive ( pitches B and D). This ascending minor third motive is repeated and extended in the next two measures. Persichetti further develops this motive later in the Masquerade.
In measure 93, the clarinets (top line in Figure 4.40) and bass clarinets (bottom line) further develop material from the theme, specifically the (a) motives. A minor third leap occurs in the top and bottom lines in measures 93-95. The leap from Bb to B in measure 97 is the same leap that will be used extensively by the timpani and first heard in measure 133 (Figure 4.42).

The variation ends with a short development in the clarinets (Figure 4.41) that incorporates the Ab juxtaposed against the E and the oscillating minor third motive. The last chord, an F diminished triad, relates to both the theme in that a diminished chord
consists of minor thirds, but also anticipates Variation III as it begins with a series of eighth note chords (Figure 4.12).

**Figure 4.12 - mm. 109-114, clarinet I, II, and III**

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*Variation III*

Although Variation III begins with Example 2-17 (Figure 4.13), variations of the theme do not occur until measure 133 in the timpani (Figure 4.42). The timpani motive begins with a series of ascending minor thirds. A G# is added to the E and G and serves the same function as the Ab in Figure 34: to create tonal ambiguity.

**Figure 4.42 - mm. 133-134, timpani**

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The second half of Variation III features original material, beginning in measure 146 (Figure 4.43), whose construction can be divided into three sections. The first section is in measures 146 and 147, the second in 148-150, and the third in measure 151. Figure 4.43 ends with the pitches G, E, and A: the original three pitches from the theme in the order they appear. The second section is a continuation of the ascending eighth note pattern from Variation II (Figure 4.39). Figure 4.44 features a deconstruction of the first two measures. Like previous figures, the top line represents the original material, the
second line eliminates non-essential pitches, the third transposes those, and the fourth is the original theme. In line two, the pitches C and A are retained because they are the first two heard and are a minor third apart. Because of the importance of this interval, they are not eliminated throughout the remainder of the two measures despite being on off-beats in measure 147. The D in measure 147 is kept because it is the highest pitch in those two measures and occurs on beat one (a strong beat). Although the B in that measure is eliminated, it is related to the F# in measure 13, or the first variation of the theme (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.43 - mm. 146-151, piccolo I

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Figure 4.44 - mm. 146-147, relationship to the theme
**Variation IV**

The motivic material used within the first 24 measures of Variation IV is based entirely upon variations of the theme. The main melodic line, found within the oboe (Figure 4.45), consists of several overlapping segments derived from the theme. For instance, the first movement consists of an ascending major second and corresponds with $(d)$ from the theme. However the relationship between the first pitch, D, and the third pitch, B, corresponds to $(a)$. The pattern of overlapping segments is again repeated with the descent of pitch E to C# in the second measure $(a)$, is interrupted by an ascent of B to C#, $(d)$. In its entirety, the phrase consists of an extended minor third descent from D to B, labeled $(a)$. When transposed (Figure 4.46), its appearance as a reorganized set of pitches based upon the theme is clearer.

![Figure 4.45 - mm. 170-173, oboe I](image)

![Figure 4.46 - mm. 170-173, transposition down a perfect fifth](image)

Underneath the oboe line, an ascending eighth note figure from Figure 4.39 appears (Figure 4.47). However, unlike the original whose interval was a minor third, it is transformed to an ascending major second. Despite this, the segment does end with an
ascending minor third leap from B to D. This same rising two-note pattern is again developed in measures 198-200 at the end of the Variation (Figure 4.48). The pattern is set through a process of rhythmic diminution where eighth notes are transformed into sixteenth notes.

**Figure 4.47 - mm. 170-175, bass clarinet, bassoon I, alto saxophone I**

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**Figure 4.48 - mm. 198-200, woodwinds**

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**Variation V**

The main motivic material at the beginning of Variation V is Example 9-8 (Figure 4.20). Accompanying Example 9-8 in the *Masquerade* are two different variations of original material. The first is found in the timpani motive that is again varied (Figure 4.49) from its previous iteration. It consists of the same pitch construction as seen earlier in measures 60-68 (Figure 4.38) and measures 133-134 (Figure 4.42), but whose rhythmic construction is simplified.
The rising two-note figure seen in Variation II (Figure 4.39) and developed in Variation IV (Figure 4.47 and Figure 4.48) appears and is varied frequently throughout Variation V. The motive first occurs as an accompaniment with the timpani in measure 202 in the clarinets (Figure 4.50). Its rhythmic construction continues the development begun in measure 199 and extends an additional two measures. Persichetti alters the pitch construction of the motive by returning to the minor third leap with its appearance in the saxophones in measure 205 (Figure 4.51). Three measures later in the cornet, Persichetti inverts the motive (Figure 4.52) so that it consists of a descending minor third. Through the process of successively varying motives, Persichetti alters them in such a way so that while it may appear that their relationship to the theme is, at times, nearly unrecognizable, they are eventually reworked and reconnected to the work’s kernel.

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A near replication of the theme occurs in the trombones and tubas in measures 210-211 (Figure 4.53). However, it varies from the original in that it is transposed down a perfect fifth and contains elements of the timpani motive seen in Figures 4.38, 4.42, and 4.49, with the addition of two pitches a major seventh above A (G#).

Variation V ends with one final repeat of the two-note motive in the piccolo, flute, and oboe in measures 220-221 (Figure 4.54). It, like the cornet in Figure 4.52, consists of descending minor thirds and a return to the original two first pitches of the theme: a G and an E. The movement ends with a one-measure transition in the baritone (Figure 4.55). The transition consists of minor third leaps (a) and a major seventh leap (t) first heard in the timpani in measures 60-68.
Variation VI

The primary material in Variation VI is divided between Example 7-20 and Example 2-34. Additionally, in fitting with the slower lyrical character of the Variation, the texture is sparse. Because of this, the appearance of any accompanimental material is limited. The first appearance occurs as a horn solo that acts as an interlude between the two borrowed examples in measures 231-234 (Figure 4.56). The solo begins with a descending minor third leap \((a)\) that ascends by a minor third \((a')\) and a major second \((d')\). The latter half of the solo is an anticipation of the Example 2-34 in measures 235-242 (Figure 4.26).

Throughout Variation VI, descending eighth-note leaps occur either between beats three and four or six and one. Although they may not have the appearance of a minor third leap, they are often an inversion of one. For instance, Figure 4.57 represents the descending leap of a major sixth in the clarinets in measure 243. An inversion of that figure results in an ascending leap of a minor third.
Variation VII

Variation VII begins with a shortened variation of the previously heard timpani motive (Figure 4.58) in 6/8. When the time signature is changed from 6/8 to 2/4 in measure 299, the timpani motive appears (Figure 4.59). The timpani motive consists of a reiteration of the same development found in the cornet and trumpets in measures 293-294 (Figure 4.60)
In measure 302, two simultaneous variations occur between the upper woodwinds (piccolo, flute, oboe, and clarinets) and the low brass (baritone, trombone, and tuba). The upper woodwind line (Figure 4.61) is the elision of two ideas. In measure 302, the minor third kernel occurs between the E and C#. Measures 303 and 304 are a repeat of measures 146 and 147 from Figure 4.44. Underneath the flurry of sixteenth notes in the woodwinds, a melodic line consisting almost entirely of minor third intervals (Figure 4.62) occurs in measures 302-309.
The variation ends with two important motives. The first occurs in the tuba and baritone parts in measures 312-315 (Figure 4.63), consisting of two overlapping descending thirds, \((a)\), and ending with an ascending minor third, \((a')\). In measures 315 and 316, Persichetti extracts the repeated motive from the theme, \((c)\), and places it within the context of a massive polychord in the piccolos, flute, oboe, clarinets, bass clarinets, bassoons, and alto saxophones (Figure 4.64). This set of repeated notes anticipates the variation of material found at the beginning of Variation VIII.

**Figure 4.63 - mm. 312-315, baritone and tuba**

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**Figure 4.64 - mm. 315-316, woodwinds**

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*Variation VIII*

Like Variation II, Variation VIII does not incorporate any borrowed examples from *Twentieth-Century Harmony*. The primary melodic lines used throughout Variation
VIII incorporate the repeated note motive \((c)\) first heard in the theme and in measures 315 and 316 of the previous variation. In Figure 4.65, the first melodic line of the variation is replete with the repeated note motive, labeled \((c)\), and the minor third leap, labeled \((a)\).

As the material first heard in Figure 4.65, its phrase endings are varied each time. For instance, in Figure 4.66 from measures 328-335, the rhythmic structure is initially the same. However, within measures 334 and 335, a reference is made to the rising two-note motive used extensively in Variation V.

**Figure 4.65 - mm. 318-323, flutes and oboes**

![Figure 4.65 - mm. 318-323, flutes and oboes](image1)

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**Figure 4.66 - mm. 328-335, Eb clarinet and clarinet I**

![Figure 4.66 - mm. 328-335, Eb clarinet and clarinet I](image2)

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At the end of Variation VIII, Persichetti introduces a new variation, but one that is still based primarily upon the same motives, (a) and (c) used earlier. The line begins with a repeated pitch, but the length of the first has been augmented. The descending minor third motive, (a) is used again frequently. The shape of Figure 4.67 is similar 4.66 in that it begins on a higher pitch and descends through the entirety of the phrase. The last two measures of the Variation end similar to Variation V with the reappearance of the two-note motive (Figure 4.68).

**Figure 4.67 - mm. 345-350, flute I**

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**Figure 4.68 - mm. 350-351, clarinet I and II**

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*Variation IX*

The last borrowed example in the *Masquerade*, Example 11-33, is only four measures in length and the remaining eighteen measures are a further development of material from Variation VIII, the first of which begins in measure 357. The material beginning in that measure and continuing to measure 360 (Figure 4.69) begins with an
almost exact replication of the theme but is transposed and its rhythmic values are shorter. The remainder of the line consists of (a) and (c) motives, similar to Figures 4.65 and 4.66. The second set of material (Figure 4.70), occurring in the contrabass clarinets, bassoons, and tubas, consists of several overlapping segments of minor thirds and is similar to Figure 4.54 from Variation V. The movement ends (Figure 4.71) with a simplification of material in the brass from Figure 4.67.

Figure 4.69 - mm. 357-360, clarinets and alto saxophones

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Figure 4.70 - mm. 364-365, contrabass clarinet, bassoon, and tuba

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Figure 4.71 mm. 368-371, brass

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**Variation X**

Variation X is the most aurally complex as it contains six different contrapuntal parts occurring simultaneously. Each part represents fragments of earlier variations and borrowed material that appear throughout the *Masquerade*. Figure 4.72 represents the piccolos and flutes and incorporates material from measures 25-31 (Figure 4.9), 109-114 (Figure 4.41) and 302-304 (Figure 4.61). Figure 4.73 represents the oboe and trumpet and incorporates material from measures 194-196 (Figure 4.19), 202-205 (Figure 4.50), 318-323 (Figure 4.65) and 328-335 (Figure 4.67). Figure 4.77 occurs only in the clarinets. Its material is derived from measures 146-151 (Figure 4.43) and 302-308 (Figure 4.61). The alto saxophones, cornets, and horns are shown in Figure 4.75 and incorporate material from measures 50-53 (Figure 4.36), 210-211 (Figure 4.53) and 345-350 (Figure 4.67). Figure 4.76 represents the alto clarinet, tenor saxophones, and trombones, whose material is derived from measures 46-49 (Figure 4.35). Finally, material closely resembling the theme and Figure 4.75 is represented in the bass clarinets, bassoons, baritone saxophones, euphoniums, trombone III, and tubas in Figure 4.77.
Figure 4.72 - mm. 374-393, piccolos and flutes

Figure 4.73 - mm. 374-393, oboes and trumpets

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Figure 4.74 - mm. 374-393, clarinets

Figure 4.75 - mm. 374-393, alto saxophones, cornets, and horns

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Coda

The Coda begins with a reference to earlier motives. The first, Figure 4.78, is based upon the borrowed example 2-34 from Variation VI (Figure 4.26). The second,
Figure 4.79, is based upon original material in Variation VIII (Figure 4.67) and Variation IX (Figure 4.71). The material in Figure 4.79 is followed immediately by a polychord and two twelve-tone aggregate chords. These twelve-tone aggregate chords close the work, just as a twelve-tone opened the composition in measure 4. The recurring timpani motive (Figure 4.80) intersects the two twelve-tone aggregate chords and, in the second chord, a second iteration of the timpani motive (Figure 4.81) closes the work.

Figure 4.78 - mm. 395-399, oboe I and clarinet I

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Figure 4.79 - mm. 399-406, cornets

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Figure 4.80 - mm. 410-420, timpani

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Conclusion

Because the *Masquerade* incorporates numerous borrowed examples from Vincent Persichetti’s textbook, *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, the work can appear to lack a definitive formal structure and be nothing more than a string of unrelated motives. However, all material in the work is connected via a central kernel that is at times both obvious and elusive. This central kernel is the interval of a minor third first with the pitches G and E. Support for this type of analysis is based upon Persichetti’s own writings and interviews and the process is guided by the theoretical writing of Arnold Schoenberg.
CHAPTER V
HARMONIC ANALYSIS

Persichetti’s works can be described as a potpourri of divergent compositional techniques and styles. He explained, “I’ve never been a part of an avant-garde or any particular camps. What I am, I guess, is an amalgamator – I use everything that’s around me.” Like his textbook, Twentieth-Century Harmony, that, in his own words, “is not a speculative treatise…rather, it’s an account of harmonic materials commonly used by twentieth century composers,” his works are a kaleidoscope of differing harmonic practices. In any of them, one can find simple diatonic materials placed next to advanced harmonic and atonal techniques. Further, within a single work, Persichetti frequently and unexpectedly shifts between divergent compositional practices. This characteristic is pervasive throughout his entire output, as “Persichetti’s shift from simple diatonic tonal materials to more complex and angular elements in no way follows a chronological pattern.”

Specifically, Persichetti’s harmonic writing includes simple diatonic melodies, a variety of scalar materials (major, minor, modal and synthetic), frequent simultaneous use of differing scales, triadic harmonies, polyharmonies, tone clusters, and a variety of post-tonal resources. As Shackelford explains, “Persichetti’s harmonic materials embrace ‘conventional’ major and minor as well as modal scales, and synthetic formations based upon unique distributions of half and whole steps.”


perform the works of Persichetti must be prepared to encounter and identify a variety of harmonic language.

The *Masquerade*, too, incorporates a vast array of the techniques discussed previously. It is, therefore, not unusual that Persichetti carefully chose examples from *Twentieth-Century Harmony* that, as discussed in Chapter Four, share a connective kernel, but also represent a wide variety of harmonic styles. When Persichetti uses borrowed material within the variations, the predominant harmonic structure of that variation copies the harmonic structure of the borrowed example. For instance, in Variation III, the borrowed material, Example 2-17, illustrates that modal works can be polytonal but not polymodal. Therefore, the remainder of non-borrowed material is predominantly polytonal and modal. A unifying harmonic element found throughout the work is the octatonic scale (or, according to Persichetti, the symmetrical scale). The octatonic scale is, at times, the primary harmonic technique used (such as in Variation II), but, more frequently, it is used simultaneously with other harmonic techniques. Much like the unifying motivic kernel discussed in Chapter Four, pitch collections derived from the octatonic scale serve as a unifying element throughout the entirety of the *Masquerade*.

The octatonic scale is a symmetrical eight-note scale consisting of alternating half steps and whole steps. The scale is unique because it can successfully function and masquerade itself in a variety of harmonic contexts. In addition to Persichetti, the scale has been used by a variety of late 19th and 20th century composers, including: Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Scriabin, Stravinsky, Debussy, Ravel, and Bartok. Because of the scale’s systematic alternation of half steps and whole steps, the scale can begin either with a half or a whole step. Figure 5.1 shows two different octatonic scales beginning on

---


C. The scale on the left begins with a half step whereas the scale on the right begins with a whole step.

**Figure 5.1 - Two forms of the octatonic scale beginning on C**

Regardless of which step the scale begins with, both versions of the octatonic scale are symmetrical and evenly divided by the interval of a tritone, with each half of the scale (tetrachord) consisting of two overlapping minor third intervals. Additionally, if one aligns every other pitch in the scale into a chord, the result is a fully diminished seventh chord. As shown in Figure 5.2, when the first, third, fifth, and seventh pitches in the octatonic scale (C, Eb, F#, and A) are combined, they produce a fully diminished seventh chord. Another diminished seventh chord is created with the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth pitches.

**Figure 5.2 - Overlapping fully diminished seventh chords**

Because the scale is symmetrical, Persichetti refers to this scale in Chapter Two of *Twentieth-Century Harmony* as simply the “symmetrical scale.”134 His reason for not referring to it as the octatonic scale, as it is commonly now known, is because the term

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134 Persichetti, *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, 44.
was created in 1963 by composer Arthur Berger\textsuperscript{135} whereas Persichetti’s textbook was published in 1961.

Persichetti and Berger are not the first to explicitly reference the scale as Olivier Messiaen had listed it among his ‘modes of limited transposition’ in \textit{Technique de mon langage musical}, his treatise from 1944.\textsuperscript{136} Messiaen had listed it as a “mode of limited transposition” because “any given octatonic scale produces the same pitch collection as the octatonic scale located a minor third away.”\textsuperscript{137} Therefore, only three collections of the scale are possible. In Figure 5.3, the three possible pitch collections of the octatonic scale are shown on clock-face diagrams and labeled OCT(0,1), OCT(1,2), and OCT(2,3). The clock-face diagram places the twelve chromatic pitch classes possible, along with their corresponding integer, on a circle with C at the top and the ascending order of pitches listed in clockwise order. The pitch classes are also assigned a corresponding integer so that C is 0, C# 1, D 2, D# 3, E 4, F 5, F# 6, G 7, G# 8, A 9, A# 10, and B is 11. Using the clock-face diagrams in Figure 5.3 as a guide, we would label the first octatonic scale from Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 as OCT(0,1). The two overlapping diminished seventh chords are outlined by the two squares found within each circle. The scales is labeled OCT(0,1) because the first two pitches in the scale are C and Db (or integers 0 and 1). The second scale from Figure 5.1 would be labeled OCT(2,3) despite beginning on C because “the highly symmetrical nature of the octatonic scale complicates the issue of pitch centricity in octatonic music.”\textsuperscript{138} As a result, it is the pitch collection that determines the labeling not necessarily any one particular pitch.


\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 172

\textsuperscript{137} Steven Baur, “Ravel’s ‘Russian’ Period: Octatonicism in His Early Works, 1893-1908” \textit{Journal of the American Musicological Society} 52, No. 3 (Autumn, 1999): 532.

\textsuperscript{138} Roig-Francoli, \textit{Understanding Post-Tonal Music}, 54.
Through its pitch construction, transposition and inversion relationships, and implied chords, the octatonic scale features minor third intervals prominently. A calculation of any octatonic scale’s interval class vector, a means by which to calculate the intervallic possibilities among a group of pitch classes (pitch class set), produces <448444>. This means that an octatonic scale contains four minor seconds, four major seconds, eight minor thirds, four major thirds, four perfect fourths, and four tritones. Therefore, the interval-class vector reveals that of all intervals possible in an octatonic scale, the minor third interval occurs most frequently.

The preponderance of minor thirds found within the octatonic scale was not lost on musicologists, as they, specifically Taruskin, “traced the genesis of both the octatonic scale and the whole-tone scale to the prominent mediant relationships common in the music of Schubert and Liszt.”139 Similarly, Persichetti uses the mediant relationship, specifically a minor third, as the kernel to tie together motivic material and construct an overarching harmonic framework. In his view, melodic construction precedes and informs scalar construction. He wrote, “It is advisable that scales be allowed to form as a

139 Baur, “Ravel’s ‘Russian’ Period: Octatonicism in His Early Works, 1893-1908,” 531.
result of the impetus of melodic or harmonic patterns; the material generated by thematic ideas may then be gathered up and placed into scale formations.\textsuperscript{140} As was shown in Chapter Four, Persichetti adeptly used the minor third interval to tie together unrelated motivic material and generate material based upon the theme. So too with harmonic construction, the minor third is particularly flexible in generating a wide collection of scalar possibilities. Further, the transition between these scales is relatively seamless because of the interval’s ubiquity in the western tradition. Bass explains:

\begin{quote}
…the first four notes of a minor scale – \([0,2,3,5]\) – coincide with one of four tetrachordal segments of a scale-ordered octatonic collection. Therefore the transfusion of linear voice-leading progressions and motives from a diatonic to either an octatonic or a whole-tone context permits some degree of continuity even where the underlying harmonies undergo a radical change in character.\textsuperscript{141}
\end{quote}

In Table 2, the kernel within The Masquerade is displayed at the top, immediately followed by the three permutations of the octatonic scale. The octatonic scale that includes both E and F\# in its collection will be labeled OCT(0,1), the scale with E and F OCT(1,2), F and F\# as OCT(2,3). The labeling of these transpositions of the octatonic scale will remain consistent throughout this chapter. The minor third between pitch classes E and G is found within both modes of the octatonic scale. Depending on the type of octatonic scale used, its implementation can easily imply scales initially built on a minor third (all forms of minor, Dorian and Phrygian) or a major third (Lydian, Mixolydian, major, and pentatonic). In the case of the Masquerade, the minor third kernel creates a context of continuity between divergent and dissimilar pitch collections.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{140} Persichetti, \textit{Twentieth-Century Harmony}, 43.
\end{flushright}
Table 2 - Scale formations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kernel</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A#</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>C#</th>
<th>D#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCT(0,1)</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A#</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT(1,2)</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G#</td>
<td>A#</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT(2,3)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G#</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Natural Minor</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Harmonic Minor</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Dorian</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Phrygian</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Lydian</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G#</td>
<td>A#</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>D#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Mixolydian</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G#</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Major</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G#</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>D#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Pentatonic</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>G#</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the octatonic scale, other harmonic techniques found in the *Masquerade* include:

1. Common practice diatonic scales, chords, and chord progressions.
2. Frequent use of modal scales and synthetic scales.
3. Preponderance of third relationships.
4. Rapidly shifting tonal centers.
5. Simultaneous use of multiple tonal centers and scale materials.
6. Recurring use of polytonality and polymodality.
7. Infrequent use of chords incorporating all twelve chromatic pitch classes, but placed in structurally significant locations.

**Introduction and Theme**

Similar to the work’s motivic construction, the Introduction and Theme is a microcosm of the harmonic structure prevalent throughout the *Masquerade*. The Introduction consists of several unrelated scales occurring simultaneously followed by a
twelve-tone aggregate chord, whereas the Theme consists of material based upon the octatonic scale.

The first three bars consist of rapidly ascending sixteenth notes in the upper woodwinds accompanied by eighth-note figures in the brass. Three different keys occur simultaneously in the three measures: the sixteenth notes in the clarinet section are set in C minor (Figure 5.4); an ascending eighth note scale in the brass is based upon OCT(0,1) (Figure 5.5) in measure 2; and in measure 3, sixteenth notes in the piccolos, flutes, and oboes are based upon an F major scale (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.4 - mm. 1-4, clarinet I

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Figure 5.5 - mm. 2-4, cornet I

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Figure 5.6 - mm. 3-4, piccolos

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The polytonal lines culminate in a twelve-tone aggregate chord in measure 4 (Figure 5.7). Persichetti’s use of twelve-tone aggregate chords within an otherwise tonal work is not unusual. For instance, in his Symphony no. 6 (Symphony for Band), the work ends with a chord containing all twelve chromatic pitches within an octave. The Masquerade begins and ends with such a chord. The twenty-one parts are tightly packed in the middle registers with major and minor seconds and thirds. The outer registers consist of perfect fifths and major and minor sixths. The predominant interval of the chord consists of thirds; Persichetti noted in Twentieth-Century Harmony that “mixed thirds may be superimposed until all twelve tones are present”\textsuperscript{142} He explained further, “this is an extremely limited species of harmony, which operates in a confined area; its harmonic functions are few. Twelve-note chords are used for punctuation, for quiet and sustained tension, and for short progressions that answer unison or two-part writing.”\textsuperscript{143} In the case of the Masquerade, the twelve-tone aggregate chords serve as punctuation.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure5.7}
\caption{m. 4, tutti}
\end{figure}

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Following the twelve-tone chord, the clarinets, alto clarinet, bass clarinet, and alto saxophone sustain their pitches while the theme, performed by a muted cornet, is heard

\textsuperscript{142} Persichetti, Twentieth-Century Harmony, 88.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid. 89.
for the first time (Figure 5.8). The aggregate of those pitches produces a tone cluster, but are spaced apart using consonant intervals. As Persichetti stated, “A chromatic cluster can be scored for instruments in such a way that the cluster is broken into chordal units.”

So too in the *Masquerade*, the cluster can be broken into three groups, the lowest two pitches producing a minor third interval (assuming the C and A are inverted), the middle two producing a minor third, and the upper two producing a major third.

![Figure 5.8 - mm. 7-9, clarinets, alto saxophones, cornet I](image)

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The theme is set through two variations, measures 10-18 and measures 19-21, respectively. The material from the first variation, first heard in the low brass and woodwinds (Figure 5.9), is based entirely upon OCT(1,2). The countermelody in clarinet I, II, and III in measures 13-18 (Figure 5.10) and the transitory figure in the horns in measures 16-18 (Figure 5.11) are also based upon OCT(1,2).

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144 Ibid. 128.
A second variation in the upper woodwinds closes the Theme. Harmonically, each chord consists of a series of clusters (Figure 5.12) built upon major and minor seconds. Each chord is also a self-contained collection of pitches found within an octatonic scale.
**Variation I**

In Variation I, Persichetti imitates the polymodal harmonic structure of the borrowed material (Example 2-16) throughout the entire Variation. In addition, frequent shifts in key centers occur between and within phrases. The borrowed material begins initially in measure 25 with continuous eighth notes in oboe I, clarinet I and II anchored in E Aeolian (upper line of Figure 5.13). The accompaniment in clarinet III, alto clarinet, bass clarinet, and contrabass clarinet is in E Phrygian (bottom line of Figure 5.13). A shift in mode following a brief circle of fifths progression occurs in measure 29 with the upper parts in B Aeolian and the lower in F# Aeolian. The shift coincides with the introduction of material in cornet I in measure 28 (upper line of Figure 5.14) and tuba in measures 29 through 31 (lower line of Figure 5.14).

![Figure 5.13 - mm. 25-31, clarinets and bassoons](image1)

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![Figure 5.14. mm. 28-31](image2)

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The material from measure 25 is again repeated in measures 33 through 36, again in E Aeolian, but with an extension in G# Dorian (Figure 5.15). A series of scale passages follows in rapidly changing foreign keys (Eb Aeolian, B Aeolian) before culminating in a dense succession of polychords (Figure 5.16). A comparison of the outer voices reveals that they move in contrary motion, similar to Example 7-20 on page 145 of *Twentieth-Century Harmony* used later in measure 223. In addition, an octatonic scale (OCT(1,2)) is outlined measures 43-44 in the highest voice.

**Figure 5.15 - mm. 37-40, flutes, oboe I, and clarinet I**

![Figure 5.15](image)

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**Figure 5.16 - mm. 43-46, woodwinds**

![Figure 5.16](image)

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**Variation II**

Since the material in Variation II is derived entirely from the theme, the harmonic construction of the Variation is also based almost entirely upon OCT(0,1) and OCT(1,2).
Persichetti freely alternates between the two and frequently transposes the scales. Four pitches within OCT(1,2) collection consist of E, F, G, G#. Persichetti exploits the tonal ambiguity between G and G# as the excerpt is centered on E.

Following a two-note fanfare in the horns, the clarinets (Figure 5.17) perform a variation that begins with material similar to measures 10-18 (Figure 5.9), but ends with an exact repetition of the theme (Figure 5.8). The pitch structure is initially based upon OCT(1,2) before settling back to OCT(0,1).

**Figure 5.17 - mm. 53-60**

![](image)

Underneath the clarinet line in Figure 5.17, the trombones and baritone sustain a G# that ends with a chord based upon OCT(1,2), as it consists of pitches E, G, and G# (top line of Figure 5.18). A timpani motive, first heard in this variation and repeated throughout the entirety of the composition, also used these same three pitches (bottom line of Figure 5.18). The transition culminates a tutti variation in measure 68, first in the upper woodwinds, then in the entire ensemble. A reduction of the woodwind sections is shown in Figure 5.19. The Figure reveals that three distinct parts move in parallel motion and spaced a perfect fifth apart. As a result, each line is built upon a different
transposition of the octatonic scale so that bottom line is based upon OCT(0,1), the second OCT(1,2) and the top OCT(2,3).

Figure 5.18 - mm. 57-68, baritone, trombones, and timpani

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Figure 5.19 - mm. 68-75, woodwinds

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Immediately following the quintal octatonic section, a canon occurs in measure 83 (Figure 5.20), beginning in the low brass and woodwinds. Again, the material is initially based upon OCT(2,3) in measures 83-86 and later moving to OCT(1,2) in measure 87-89.
Like in measures 68-75, Persichetti uses three different transpositions in measures 93-99 (Figure 5.21). In the Figure, the top line in the treble clef represents oboe I, clarinet I, alto clarinet, bassoon I, and alto saxophone I. The second and third lines represent clarinet II and III. Finally, the bass clef represents the bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, baritone saxophone, baritone, and tuba. The material in the treble and bass clef represent two variations of the theme. In the treble clef, a series of first inversion minor chords move in parallel motion. Each line of the of the treble clef and bass is based upon a different transposition of the octatonic scale as shown in Table 3. The material in the bass clef is initially based upon OCT(1,2) but transforms to OCT(0,1) in measure 96. The variation ends one final short manifestation in the clarinets (Figure 5.22) based upon OCT(1,2).
Variation III is characterized by the free mixture of polymodal and octatonic material. The Variation begins with the same series of diminished chords found at the end of Variation II in measure 114. The composite of these three diminished chords produces a dense twelve-tone aggregate chord in measure 114 (Figure 5.23).

Borrowed material (Example 2-17) enters in measure 117. In Twentieth-Century Harmony, the example illustrates that works can be both polytonal and modal without being polymodal; that is, two different modes can occur simultaneously. Persichetti sets the example in Db Lydian and G Lydian. In the Masquerade, Persichetti uses only a fragment of the example initially and sets it in G Locrian (upper line Figure 100), which is scored in the flutes and cornets. A short countermelody, in E Mixolydian, is set in the oboe (bottom line of Figure 5.24).
A closer imitation of Example 2-17 begins in measure 120 with the cornet scored in Gb Lydian (upper line in Figure 5.25) and the trombones scored in C Lydian (lower line in Figure 5.25). In Figure 102, the countermelody in the horns is represented in the middle line with the upper line being cornets and the bottom trombones again.
Throughout the variation, motivic material is interrupted by a series of ascending and descending eighth notes, triplets, or sixteenth notes, all based upon some form of the octatonic scale. For instance, in measure 123, the flutes interrupt a repetition of material with triplets based upon OCT(0,1) (Figure 5.27). Again in measure 134, the flutes and oboes provide transitional material in the form of sixteenth notes with the upper set of pitches based upon OCT(1,2) and the bottom upon OCT(2,3) (Figure 5.28).
Variation III ends with two sections whose use of modal harmonies is different. The first, in Figure 5.29, consists of two differing excerpts, both in the Lydian mode, but with different tonal centers. The upper line, the piccolo, is in F Lydian, whereas the lower line, the xylophone, is in E Lydian. This is similar to Figure 5.25 in which both lines are in the Lydian mode, but again, based in different tonal centers.

The second section consists of borrowed excerpt Example 2-11 and is in E Phrygian. Since the example illustrates that chromatic alterations are possible with modal writing, the excerpt from the *Masquerade* also consists of chromatic alterations. In Figure 5.30, the upper line is a reduction of the saxophone and bassoon lines and the bottom line the trombones.
Variation IV

Variation IV is a shorter variation and the placement of borrowed material is unusual because it is located 24 measures into the variation. In its original form, the borrowed material (Example 2-35) is an illustration that unrelated chords occurring simultaneously with motives based upon the pentatonic scale provide harmonic interest. In Variation IV, the majority of material, whether borrowed or original, is accompanied by unrelated chords, resulting in polytonality. Like other variations, the octatonic scale appears frequently.

The Variation begins in measure 170 with a solo in the oboe (Figure 5.31). That melodic line, built upon OCT(1,2), is a further development of material from measure 117 (bottom line in Figure 5.24). The accompaniment, shown in Figure 5.32, like Example 2-35, consists of chords that are not based upon the octatonic scale. The accompaniment material begins with a series of minor chords (E minor, F# minor, D minor, E minor in measure 170 and 171) that becomes increasingly dissonant so that the final chord, in measure 175, is a tone cluster of pitches that are all a minor second apart (C#, D, D#).

Figure 5.31 - mm. 170-176, oboe I

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Figure 5.32 - mm. 170-175, bass clarinet, bassoon I, alto saxophone I

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The first full exposition of Example 2-35 occurs in measure 194. However, three measures before in measure 191, a shortened fragment of Example 2-35 is found in oboe I. This initial presentation is identical to the first measure of Example 2-35 in *Twentieth-Century Harmony*. The melody in the treble clef is in G pentatonic, whereas the chords accompanying are in F# major, E Major, and C# major respectively. In measure 194 (Figure 5.34), Persichetti alters the excerpt in several ways. First, he transforms measure 194 so that it is octatonic. Second, he changes measure 196 so that three different pentatonic melodies move in parallel motion.

The variation ends with an important rhythmic motive (Figure 5.35), discussed previously in Chapter Four (Figure 4.47) that is built upon a series of polychords. For example, measure 198 consists of an F minor chord sounding against a B minor seventh, followed by a G minor chord against a C# minor seventh. In measure 199, a Gb major
against and F major followed by Fb major against G major and finally in measure 200, the less dissonant Ab major against Eb major.

Variation V

Variation V consists of a rapid kaleidoscope of motivic and harmonic material. The variation includes two borrowed examples, the first being Example 9-8 (Figure 5.36) in the flutes, oboes, and Eb clarinets, accompanied by the horns (Figure 5.37). In the Masquerade, the Example begins in the same key as in the original from Twentieth-Century Harmony. D major. However, two measures later, Persichetti transforms the pitch structure D major to one built upon OCT(1,2). The same applies to the accompaniment, which begins with alternating C and D major chords, but diverges with the incorporation of E minor, C# minor, E Major, and F# major chords. Mixed within these two parts, Persichetti includes the rhythmic fragment from measure 198 (Figure 5.35) in the clarinets in measures 202-204 (not shown) and saxophones in measure 205.
(Figure 5.38). The pitch structure of the rhythmic fragment is varied so that it also based on OCT(1,2).

Figure 5.36 - mm. 202-205, piccolos, flutes, oboes, and Eb clarinet

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Figure 5.37 - mm. 202-205, horns, bass clarinet, bassoons, and baritone

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Figure 5.38 - m. 205, saxophones

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The second excerpt of borrowed material occurs in measures 212-213 in the flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and saxophones. It comes from Example 10-1 where Persichetti illustrates that when simple chords change rapidly, it can produce music that seems harmonically complex. So too in Variation V, in measures 212-215 (Figure 5.39), Persichetti shifts rapidly between chords containing major or minor thirds and sevenths,
creating a whirlwind of harmonic activity and instability. He continues this characteristic using other short motives by shifting their tonal centers rapidly. Relative harmonic stability occurs at the end of the variation with a series of descending eighth notes (Figure 5.40) that are based upon OCT(0,1) and OCT(2,3).

**Figure 5.39 - mm. 212-218, flutes, oboes, clarinet I, bassoons, and saxophones**

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**Figure 5.40 - mm. 218-219, brass**

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**Variation VI**

Variation VI is the only variation that does not include the octatonic scale in its scale formations or vertical harmonies. The two borrowed examples, while different harmonically, are similar stylistically. For example, tempos for both are slower, and music indications direct the player to perform their lines as smooth and connected as possible.
The first borrowed example is Example 7-30 and demonstrates that it is difficult to create melodic direction with music that is primarily chordal (that is lacking an obvious melodic line), especially when the music is polychordal. However, harmonic direction can be achieved through traditional voice leading techniques when the outer voices in each chord move in contrary motion, as demonstrated with Example 7-30 in the *Masquerade* (Figure 5.41). Figure 5.41 is a reduction of flutes I and II and clarinets I, II, and III, along with the alto clarinet and bass clarinet consisting of unrelated polychords (A major/Gb major, Bb major/Fb major, C major/Eb major, etc.). A comparison of the outer lines reveals that they too move in contrary motion.

![Figure 5.41 - mm. 223-226, flutes and clarinets](image)

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The second borrowed excerpt is Example is 2-34, demonstrating that because of the limited number of pitches within a pentatonic scale, music based upon them can quickly become monotonous. To prevent this, if a melody is derived from a pentatonic scale, switching rapidly to different modes of the pentatonic scale can create interest. In the original from *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, the example is in C pentatonic and proceeds through all five modal variations. In the *Masquerade*, Example 2-34 is in A pentatonic (Figure 5.42). Instead of modulating to different modes of A pentatonic, Persichetti moves to E pentatonic (mode 1). The borrowed material begins in the
clarinets, transfers to the cornet I and horn parts in measure 242, where it is also transposed to Cb pentatonic.

**Figure 5.42 - mm. 235-239, clarinet I, II, and III**

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**Variation VII**

Variation VII begins with polytonal material based upon the whole-tone scale accompanied by simple diatonic scales. These scales undergo rapid and sudden shifts in their tonal centers. Although they begin as single lines, these scales become increasingly thick in texture as pitches are added. The variation ends with a descending cascade of material based upon the octatonic scale.

The one borrowed excerpt found in Variation VII, Example 2-49, illustrates that when a whole-tone scale is combined with other scales, it can add musical vitality. The excerpt appears in the beginning after a short introduction in the percussion featuring the timpani motive. Compared to the original in *Twentieth-Century Harmony*, the example in the *Masquerade* is transposed down a minor third. In Figure 5.43, the upper line (oboe I and clarinet I) is based upon a whole-tone scale whereas the lower line (clarinet II, III, and bassoon I) is in F major.
Unlike other variations where Persichetti continues to vary the excerpt, he chooses to end any continual use of the whole-tone scale abruptly beginning in measure 268. However, the lower line in Figure 5.43 continues to be transformed throughout the remainder of the variation. For example, Figure 5.44, representing a conglomeration of several instrumental lines, begins in E major (measures 262-265) and moves to D minor (measures 267-271).

Although the oscillating eighth notes begin as single lines, Persichetti gradually stacks additional pitches resulting in extended tertian chords. For example, Figure 5.45 (representing oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and alto saxophones) is in C major, with the top line moving in contrary motion to the bottom. The movement of each line’s vertical sonorities is determined by the brief tonal center in C major.
Persichetti transforms the ascending and descending motion of the eighth notes into primarily repeated fragments. This transformation occurs first in the cornets and trumpets (Figure 5.46) with the horns, trombones, and baritone joining later (measure 295). The vertical chord structure in Figure 5.46 is similar to Figure 5.45 in that the intervals are based primarily on thirds and major seconds.

![Figure 5.45 - m. 282, woodwinds](image1)

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![Figure 5.46 - mm. 286-287, cornets and trumpets](image2)

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The climax of the variation begins in measure 302 (Figure 5.47) and is tonally ambiguous. A series of sixteenth notes in the upper woodwinds begins in E major (measures 302 and 303), moves to B major (measures 304 and 305), and ends in C minor (measures 306-309). The material in the low brass (bottom line) and cornets/trumpets (middle line) is highly chromatic and lacking a clear tonal center. The last chord in the brass (measure 309) predicts the approaching octatonic material. The chord in the low brass is both a C major and minor chord while the chord in the trumpets is both an E
major and minor. This major/minor duality is possible with harmonies derived from the octatonic scale (specifically OCT(0,1)).

The variation ends with descending eighth notes in the clarinets, bassoons, and saxophones (Figure 5.48). Again, these eighth notes outline an octatonic scale, specifically OCT(1,2). The variation ends with a series of repeated chords in the upper woodwinds in measures 315 and 316 (Figure 5.49). The rhythmic structure of these chords is varied and used in the next variation. Harmonically, the chords recall the twelve-tone aggregate chord from the Introduction, although they lack three pitches (C, F#, and B). The spacing of the pitches is primarily triadic.
Variation VIII

Like Variation II, Variation VIII does not contain any borrowed excerpts and its harmonic structure is based mostly upon different incarnations of the octatonic scale. The relatively short variation (only thirty-four measures in length) begins with a motive that is developed from the repeated sixteenth notes found at the end of Variation VII. This motive is repeated, with slight variation, four times. The harmonic structure of these motives is based upon the three transpositions of the octatonic scale, and the shift between collections occurs rapidly. As shown in Table 4, a different transposition is used nearly every two measures.
The first exposition of material takes place in the flute I, II, and oboe I (top line of Figure 127), and consists of two transpositions of the octatonic scale with shifts occurring between measures 318 and 319. Like material from Variation V, the accompaniment (bottom line of Figure 5.50) is not related harmonically, as the Cb major chord in measures 318 and 319 shares none of the same pitches as that particular version of the octatonic scale.

The second and third iterations (Figures 5.51 and 5.52) are placed in several different instruments: piccolo and Eb clarinet in measures 323-325, flutes in measures 325-328 (Figure 5.51) and Eb and clarinet I in measures 328-331 (Figure 5.52). In both of these repetitions, the octatonic melody is again accompanied by unrelated chords in the

### Table 4 - Different transpositions of the octatonic scale in mm. 317-351

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Transposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>317-319</td>
<td>OCT(2,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320-323</td>
<td>OCT(1,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>323-324</td>
<td>OCT(0,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325-328</td>
<td>OCT(0,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>328-331</td>
<td>OCT(1,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>348-351 (Top)</td>
<td>OCT(0,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>348-351 (Bottom)</td>
<td>OCT(2,3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.50 - mm. 317-323, flutes, oboe I, bassoons, and saxophones

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low woodwinds and saxophones. The fourth recurrence of the motive (Figure 130), unlike the previous three incarnations, is harmonized by the same instruments that were originally used for accompaniment (alto clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, and alto saxophone). The harmonization consists of simultaneous major and minor chords moving in parallel motion.

Figure 5.51 - mm. 323-328, piccolos and Eb clarinet

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Figure 5.52 - mm. 328-331, Eb clarinet and clarinet I

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Figure 5.53 - mm. 332-335, woodwinds

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Variation VIII closes with material based upon earlier rhythmic fragments in measures 348-351. Figure 5.54 represents flutes, oboes, and Eb clarinet in the upper line and contrabass clarinet, bassoon, and baritone saxophone in the lower line. Although both
sections are based upon the octatonic scale, they are based upon two transposed modes of the scale, as shown in Table 4.

**Figure 5.54 - mm. 348-351, woodwinds**

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**Variation IX**

Although Variation IX is not the final variation, it is the last to incorporate borrowed material, Example 11-33. The example, shown in Figure 5.55, features a double pedal-point in the horn section whose pitches are a perfect fifth apart. However, considering the context, it is possible to analyze the pedal in measures 351 and 352 as being in Eb major, C minor in 353, F major in 354 and 355, and D minor in 356. Above the pedal, the material in the flutes and oboes (top line of Figure 5.55) contains all twelve chromatic pitches within an octave. The excerpt ends with dissonant open fifths with F and C in the flutes and oboes (top line) against F# and C# in the horns (bottom line).

**Figure 5.55 - mm. 351-356, flutes, oboe I, alto saxophone I, and horns**

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Persichetti models the remainder of the variation after the highly chromatic harmonic structure of the excerpt. For example, measures 357-364 consist of a series of short, continuously modulating motivic fragments that are passed through numerous members of the ensemble represented in Figure 5.56. That Figure, a composite of the different parts, begins in what appears to be Db major, then immediately shifts to F major, followed by A major, and ending in C minor. Thus, each new key shares a mediant relationship with the preceding key.

Figure 5.56 - mm. 357-364, clarinets, bassoons, and saxophones

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Persichetti interrupts the chromatic passages with a distinctive motive in the contrabass clarinet, bassoon, and tuba (Figure 5.57). Although it is possible to view this small passage as being in C natural minor, considering the extensive use of the octatonic scale throughout the Masquerade, it is more appropriate to label it as OCT(2,3). The variation ends with closing material that is based upon the rhythmic motives heard in Variation VIII (Figure 4.66), as shown in Figure 5.58. The vertical structure of the chords consists of large tertian chords. According to Persichetti, these large “chords are effective in parallel harmony or in harmonic punctuations.”145 So too, the chords in measures 368-371 move in parallel and are effective in punctuating the end of Variation IX.

145 Persichetti, 86.
Variation X/Coda

The beginning of Variation X consists of six different contrapuntal lines whose pitch structure is highly chromatic and polytonal. Not only is each contrapuntal part in a different key, but each also changes tonal centers rapidly. At least in the first two measures the key centers are as follows: piccolo, flute, Eb clarinet in B minor; oboe, clarinet and trumpets in C major; Bb clarinets in G major; alto saxophone, cornet, and horns in E minor; alto clarinet, tenor saxophone, and trombone in A minor; and bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, bassoon, baritone saxophone, baritone, trombone III, and tuba in Bb minor.

The Coda copies the Introduction in that it consists of a series of twelve-tone aggregate chords in measures 410, 412-416, and 424 to the end. The opening of the Coda, a repeat of material from Variation VI, consists of chords made up of two overlapping thirds or fifths (Figure 5.59). For example, the first chord consists of C and E overlapping B and D, producing a tone cluster. In beat two of that same measure, A and E overlap with G and D.
The series of twelve-tone aggregate chords that complete the work exhibit an increase in tension as a result of orchestration. For example, Figure 5.60 exhibits a reduction of all ensemble parts. The distance between the lowest sounding and highest sounding pitch is closer in the first chord as opposed to the last. Like other twelve-tone chords in the work and in other works of his, Persichetti spaces the pitches using diatonic intervals (major and minor thirds and perfect fifths). Along with the final twelve-tone aggregate chord, Persichetti repeats the work’s central theme in the trombones, timpani, and xylophone (Figure 5.61). Unlike in the beginning where the theme is built upon OCT(0,1), it is transformed to OCT(1,2) in the work’s final measures.

Figure 5.59 - mm 395-399, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and alto saxophones

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Figure 5.60 - mm. 424-434, tutti

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Conclusion

Vincent Persichetti’s works are characterized by their amalgamation of numerous different harmonic styles. Similarly, the Masquerade incorporates divergent harmonic structures. Within the work, Persichetti uses simple diatonic scales and chords, modal scales and harmonies, frequent use of synthetic scales, polytonality, polmodality, twelve-tone aggregate chords, and rapidly shifting tonal centers. Since many variations incorporate borrowed examples from his textbook, Twentieth-Century Harmony, Persichetti models the harmonic structure of each variation after the borrowed example. Despite the kaleidoscope of differing harmonic practices, a unifying harmonic element within the Masquerade is the frequent use of the octatonic scale. Because the octatonic scale is built upon two overlapping fully diminished seventh chords, the scale is replete with the minor third interval. Being that the motivic kernel of the work is also a minor third interval (G to E), Persichetti’s predominant use of the octatonic is another means to unify the entire composition.
CHAPTER VI
CONDUCTOR’S GUIDE

Because of its technical demands, complex harmonic structure, elaborate formal construction, and transparent orchestration, the *Masquerade* is a difficult work for even the most advanced groups to perform. For the conductor, these aspects present obstacles in regard to interpretation, conducting, and rehearsal planning. This chapter will begin with a discussion of larger meta-interpretive considerations followed by specific challenges within each variation.

A successful musical realization of the *Masquerade* requires the conductor to showcase the individual characteristics of each variation while maintaining an understanding of the interconnectedness of motivic material and the overall flow of the composition. Persichetti stated, “The only kind of variations I ever like were those in which the stops were made for breathing. A set of variations must have an overall line. There must be a dramatic shape.”\(^{146}\) Therefore, the conductor must be perceptive of the overarching direction of the work and strive to understand the connections between motivic material and the central kernel.

It is recommended that when structuring and planning rehearsals, adequate time be given for the musicians to develop a holistic understanding of the composition. Thus, despite the technical demands, the conductor should allow the musicians to play through the entire work before attempting to tackle its many technical challenges. As rehearsals progress and detailed work is needed, it is natural that each variation will be rehearsed separately. Doing so allows for the conductor to bring out the individual characteristics and style of each variation. However, the conductor also needs to reveal connections and the importance of seemingly inconsequential sections.

\(^{146}\) Morris, 214.
An additional challenge for the conductor is the variety of non-standard terms Persichetti uses. This trait is common within his compositions and must be considered when rehearsing his other works. To aid the conductor, a list of terms, the locations where they occur, and their definitions are listed in Table 5.

A number of other technical issues need to be considered when formulating the rehearsal schedule, the most daunting of which includes transparent scoring and advanced and varied harmonic language. The *Masquerade* demands independence in all players within the ensemble. Like his other works for band, Persichetti frequently avoids scoring for the full ensemble in favor of highlighting unique orchestral timbres. Even in tutti sections, his writing is frequently contrapuntal. An extreme example can be found in the final variation where he combines six different contrapuntal parts simultaneously.

Persichetti demands independence from not only wind players, but also the entire percussion section. His extensive use of percussion in many of his works was advanced for its time. In *Symphony for Band*, the percussion acts as independent musical voice, whereas in many works by others composers during that time period they were merely accompaniment. In the *Masquerade*, the percussion requirements are greater than in the *Symphony*. For instance, the *Symphony* calls for three percussionists (including timpani) whereas the *Masquerade* calls for timpani, xylophone (doubling on glockenspiel), and three additional percussionists. As with the *Symphony*, each percussion part (not including the timpani or xylophone) requires the players to manage a number of separate instruments, as shown in Table 6. Additionally, Persichetti is specific about the means of attack for each instrument. That is, what types of mallets (if appropriate) should be used, if body parts such as fingers or knees are used, and the part of the drum where the strike occurs.

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147 Pare, 1.
Table 5 - Musical terms and definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Measures (Instruments)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amabile</td>
<td>Tender, gentle</td>
<td>223 (flute, clarinet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capriccioso</td>
<td>Lively</td>
<td>117 (piccolo, cornet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con Agilita</td>
<td>Liveliness</td>
<td>199 (flute, clarinets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con Grazia</td>
<td>Gracefully</td>
<td>170 (bass clarinet, bassoon, alto saxophone I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con Spirito</td>
<td>With spirit vigor</td>
<td>257-258 (oboe, clarinets, bassoon), 339 (clarinet),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisivo</td>
<td>Decisive</td>
<td>345 (flute, oboe, alto clarinet, bassoon, alto saxophone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberato</td>
<td>Deliberate</td>
<td>76 (tutti), 209-210 (woodwinds, trombones, tuba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doloroso</td>
<td>Mournful/plaintive</td>
<td>235 (clarinet), 242 (cornet, horn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giocoso</td>
<td>Lively, playful</td>
<td>7 (trumpet), 19 (woodwinds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gioviale</td>
<td>Jovial</td>
<td>202 (piccolo, flute, oboe, Eb clarinet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazioso</td>
<td>Graceful</td>
<td>146 (piccolo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetuoso</td>
<td>Impetuous</td>
<td>68 (woodwinds, xylophone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leggiero</td>
<td>Light, graceful</td>
<td>28-29 (trumpet, tuba),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risoluto</td>
<td>Resolutely and with</td>
<td>216 (brass), 302 (baritone, trombone, tuba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marked accent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robusto</td>
<td>Robust</td>
<td>374 (tutti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruvido</td>
<td>Coarse, rough</td>
<td>352 (flute, oboe, alto saxophone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secco</td>
<td>Dry, staccato</td>
<td>61 (trombones, baritone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semplice</td>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>25 (oboe, clarinet, bassoon), 249 (flute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sereno</td>
<td>Calm, serene</td>
<td>99-100 (flute, alto clarinet, bassoon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serioso</td>
<td>Serious, grave</td>
<td>41-43 (woodwinds, baritone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranquillo</td>
<td>Calm, tranquil</td>
<td>160 (trumpet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velato</td>
<td>Veiled</td>
<td>176-178 (clarinet)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As discussed in Chapter Five, Persichetti’s usage of harmony is both varied and complex. Players need to understand and perform with fluency in different modes of the octatonic scale beginning on any pitch. Other scales they need to be prepared to encounter include: modal (Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian), whole-tone, pentatonic, and chromatic scales. In preparing the ensemble, it would be helpful for the conductor to develop exercises that feature the octatonic scale specifically as well as the others listed.

The remainder of Chapter Six is intended to serve as a guide to aid in both interpretation and rehearsal planning. Like other sections of this analysis, it is organized by variation.
Introduction and Theme

The Introduction and Theme are designed to present motivic material and a stylistic and harmonic microcosm of the remainder of the work. The tempo changes are abrupt, but consistent in their oscillation between 168 and 60 beats per minute. The three measures leading into the twelve-tone aggregate chord in measure 4 need to begin softly, followed by a gradual yet quick crescendo. Three consecutive fermatas occur in measures 4, 5, and 6. The ensemble must sustain the chord while observing the decrescendo. The conductor must be careful that the decrescendo is gradual and that the releases of the brass in measure 5 and woodwinds in measure 6 are not abrupt. A challenge for the clarinet section and the alto saxophone I part is to sustain through measure 9 at a pianissimo dynamic level. It is recommended that each player take a breath secretly before the release of the woodwinds in measure 6.

The balance between the cornet I and the sustained woodwind line in measures 9 and 10 is more problematic since the player is also directed to use a cup mute. Therefore, the woodwinds need to stay underneath the theme. The cornet player must closely observe the stylistic and articulation indications closely. The solo must be light and each eighth note needs length, but with separation. Underneath the woodwinds and cornet, the percussion parts require delicacy and precision.

In measure 10, the low brass and low woodwinds may tend to articulate their entrance pitch too aggressively. Their first pitch must, again, be subtle, soft, and precise. Since the parts are in unison, intonation will be a challenge, and they must listen closely and adjust. Despite the slower tempo, the line must be sustained and not be broken by obvious breaths until the rest in measure 15. These musical directions should also be applied to the clarinets and alto saxophone I. The challenge for the horn I solo beginning in measure 16 is to sustain the concert E through measure 22. The horn player should not breathe while sustaining the concert E because it functions as a pedal tone underneath the woodwinds in measure 19 through 21. The horn soloist can break the phrase and take a
large breath before the anacrusis into measure 18 or two players to perform the solo with both performing in unison and stagger their breathing through the pedal tone. Alternatively, they can split the solo, with one playing the first half of the line and the second only the pedal with the anacrusis. Unlike the cornet solo in measure 7, the woodwinds’ articulation of the theme in measures 19-21 should be dry and very detached.

**Variation I**

Unless otherwise indicated, all players should strive to perform Variation I in a legato style. The exceptions are cornet I and tuba in measures 28-31, as they are marked *staccato*. Persichetti indicates that both parts should be performed lightly. Another exception is with oboe I, clarinet I, and flutes in measures 37-40. All parts should be performed marcato. An additional challenge with these parts is to align rhythmically, as the oboe and clarinet are in unison and the flute is in canon.

Like other sections within the work, the solo horn line at the end of Variation I (measures 46-49) is transitional and ties the rhythmic and pitch structure of Variation I and Variation II. The horn soloist must delineate clearly between triplet and duplet rhythms.

**Variation II**

Variation II represents Persichetti’s predilection for free alternation between sections of “grazioso and grit.” The variation contains sections that are legato (measures 93-107) and those that require dry and accented staccatos (measures 68-80). Additionally, players need to be prepared to shift articulation styles rapidly.

The opening horn material, although marked *mezzo piano*, should be thought of as a fanfare with significant weight given to the accents. The crescendo into measure 53
needs to be sudden and dramatic. The supporting drone in the flutes, oboes, and bassoons also needs to begin softly and end with a sudden crescendo.

The clarinet line in measures 53-60 presents several issues related to tempo, dynamics, articulation, and intonation. The clarinets should strive to perform the line in as legato and connected a manner as possible, at a pianissimo dynamic level, and without letting the tempo decrease. The eighth notes in measures 58-60 must be given length despite the tempo and earlier incarnations that contained staccatos.

In the score published by Elkan Vogel, an important entrance occurs in the first measure of page 12 (measure 57) in the trombones and baritone. The conductor must not miss this cue, as it is the first time the trombones have played since the Introduction. Their eighth notes in measure 60 need to be accented and crisp. Despite the dissonance between the baritone’s G# and the trombone I’s G, both need to perform their notes with conviction.

The climax of the variation begins in measure 68 and continues through measure 89. The section is marked “impetuoso” and should be performed forcefully and intensely. The climax begins with only woodwinds and percussion and is joined by the brass section eight measures later. The conductor must ensure proper balance with the brass entrance in measure 76, as they could easily overpower the entire ensemble. The quarter notes in measure 79 need to be given length without separation. The canon between the low woodwinds/brass and clarinets and alto saxophones must not be performed short, but heavy with separation.

The variation ends like it begins, with Persichetti indicating that all parts are to be performed in legato style. The two exceptions are with alto saxophone I in measures 102, 103, and 104, and the clarinets, trumpets, and trombones in measures 107-108. Along with its lyricism, the ending’s other defining characteristic is its contrapuntal activity, the first of which (consisting of two variations of the theme) occurs in measures 93-98 and the second in measures 99-106. The variation ends with a chord by the clarinets,
consisting of three different diminished chords a half step apart (Eb, E, and F diminished). As discussed in Chapter 5, these three chords also serve as the first chords in Variation III.

**Variation III**

Variation III is the fastest of all the variations and should be approached in the same manner as a scherzo movement in a multi-movement composition. Stylistically, it needs to be performed lightly and gracefully. The main exception, however, is in an eight-measure passage beginning in measure 138. The orchestration of the variation is sparse, with careful consideration given to timbre. Thus, individual colors of each performing instrument must be exploited. Close attention needs to be given to the variety of percussion instruments required and the independence of each part. For example, in the beginning Persichetti calls for tom-toms to be played with brushes, muffled snare drum, and gong played by a triangle beater.

The movement begins as Variation II ended, with the three polychords in the clarinets. The main motivic material is doubled in piccolos, cornets, and trumpets, with the countermelody in the flutes. In the cornet and trumpets, two different mutes are used (cup in the cornet and straight in the trumpet). The trombones, joining the texture three measures later, are also muted (straight mutes from the previous variation). Again, the staccatos in this variations should not be overly dry or aggressive, but light. In contrast to the staccatos in the main material, the countermelody (first in the flutes and later in the horns) must be smooth and legato. This contrast must be emphasized again in measure 124 between the horns and brass. Although the horns initially must strive for lyricism, they are required, in measure 128, to instantaneously stop their instruments and adjust their articulations so that they are light and crisp.

The contrasts in style become more dramatic as the movement progresses. For instance, in measure 135, the upper woodwinds must be aggressive and forceful with
their sixteenth notes, be instantly soft in measures 136 and 137, and aggressive again in measures 138-146. Underneath the aggressive sixteenth notes, the cornets and tubas play a figure in unison. They too need to be forceful, as their parts are marked marcato. Additionally, the cornets need to bring out the color of their muted parts.

The need for light articulation returns with the exposed piccolo and flute line in measure 146 accompanied by the percussion. In the percussion, Persichetti requires xylophone, wood block, and the snare and bass drum (played on the rim). Each percussion part is completely independent and the parts do not align until the downbeat of measure 158. Similar to other parts within Variation III, the percussion instruments must change their dynamic levels from pianissimo to forte in measure 156.

The close of the variation begins in measure 160 with an exposed and muted solo in trumpet I that is copied by oboe I in measure 167. Both parts are marked espressivo and should be approached as such. The trombones (muted), saxophones, and bassoons accompanying the trumpet solo must be careful to be softer than the muted solo. Persichetti indicates that the entrance of the trombones in measure 163 should be conducted in two as opposed to a fast four. Conducting in two is advised as it the fits the chorale-like character of the ending. The variation ends with a miniature cadenza in the oboe, and as such, should not be conducted.

Variation IV

Variation IV can be interpreted as an extended transition between Variation III and Variation V. That is, the beginning of Variation IV mirrors the softer legato sections of Variation III that is followed by an increase in tempo, dynamic range, and rhythmic complexity that mirrors what occurs in Variation V.

In the beginning of Variation IV, a legato melody in the oboe is accompanied by light and rhythmic material in the bass clarinet, bassoon, and alto saxophone I. The same melody is reworked later in measure 181 as a unison passage shared by piccolo I and a
muted cornet I and accompanied by the clarinets, bassoons, and alto saxophone I. For those voices with the main melody, the challenge is to shape the line so that the part does not remain static since its rhythmic structure is comprised primarily of whole notes and half notes. The unison between the piccolo and muted cornet I is highly susceptible to intonation issues and thus both parts must listen closely and adjust accordingly.

The accelerando in measure 186 corresponds with an increase in dynamic level and rhythmic complexity. Also, a canon begins in the percussion, starting with percussion III (tenor drum), followed by percussion II (sandpaper blocks) and percussion I (woodblock). Although the full exposition of borrowed material does not occur until measure 194, a brief fragment appears in the oboe I and xylophone. The part must cut through the texture as Persichetti indicates that it should be performed marcato and at a forte dynamic level. The variation ends with an exceedingly important rhythmic fragment in measure 198. This fragment, used frequently throughout the rest of the Masquerade, is set in unison between the flutes and clarinets and, therefore, players must be careful that their parts align. Additionally, since the fragment is rhythmically complex, it is important that enough separation is heard in the rests.

**Variation V**

The primary challenge in Variation V is the execution of complex and layered rhythmic patterns. At the beginning of Variation V, measure 202, four distinct parts occur simultaneously. First, the primary melody (Example 9-8) occurs in the piccolos, flutes, oboes, and Eb clarinet. While the part may not be complex rhythmically, its pitch structure is complicated. Second, supporting this part is a bass line in the low woodwinds and baritone, along with off beat rhythms in the horns. Third, included in this texture is the rhythmic figure from the previous variation in the clarinets. Fourth, each part in the percussion consists of an independent rhythmic figure. All accompaniment parts need to
be performed softly (as all are marked *piano*), and the articulation needs to be crisp and with separation.

The climax of the variation occurs in measure 209 with a crescendo beginning in measure 207. All parts in measure 209 are marked as fortissimo and need to be performed deliberately. However, attention needs to be given to articulation as the parts are either slurred or given a tenuto. Therefore, no separation should exist between the parts. Finally, Persichetti includes an anvil in the percussion on the off beat of measure 209. This anvil is important color that needs to be heard, as it is the first time it appears in the score.

With exception of the last measure, articulations throughout the rest of Variation V need to be aggressive, accented, and dry. The repetition of the *Masquerade*’s theme occurs in the trombones and tuba in measure 210 and needs to be highlighted. The second borrowed example, 10-1, is placed in the woodwinds in measure 212. Although featuring this borrowed example is important, the conductor cannot ignore the difficult xylophone line whose part does not align with any other.

A fair amount of rehearsal time must be given to measures 215-219 as the parts are in extreme registers, are again rhythmically complex, and musical fragments are placed in canon between the low brass, high brass, and upper woodwinds. The last measure contains a short cadenza-like passage in the baritone that are similar to the oboe at the end of Variation IV. Like before, that measure should not be conducted and the player should be given artistic liberties in performance.

*Variation VI*

Variation VI, the halfway point within the work, serves as a interlude between the rhythmically charged variations before and after. While not difficult technically, the challenge lies in shaping long phrases successfully and matching intonation between doubled lines.
The primary motive (borrowed Example 7-20) at the beginning of Variation VI (measures 223-232) is voiced by the flutes and clarinets. Besides intonation, it is important to sustain the entire line without breaking the phrase between measures 226 and 227 and later between measures 228 and 229. Players should be encouraged to stagger breathe. Persichetti is explicit that the opening line should be performed mezzo piano in measure 223, piano in 227, and pianissimo in 229. Players will be tempted to crescendo into 229 because it lies higher in their range and the conductor will need to work to counteract that tendency. A solo interlude line, similar to those heard at ends of Variation III and V, is placed halfway through the variation. Following the cutoff of the clarinets and flutes in measure 233, the conductor should not conduct the horn solo.

The second half of the variation, again, features the clarinets and flutes with the inclusion of Example 2-34. Persichetti indicates that the eighth note should be performed at 104 beats per minute. Because of such a slow tempo, the section should be conducted in six. The opening line calls for solo clarinets with the rest of the section joining in measure 237. For players joining two measures later, they must be careful to enter as softly and unexpectedly as possible. The entrance of the cornet and horn in measure 242 requires a soft articulation. The release of the woodwinds in that same measure should not be abrupt. Despite the overall character of the movement, the clarinets in the next measure must not give length to their second eighth note. Additionally, the two thirty-second notes by clarinet III in measure 243-247 must not be rushed, but each note must be distinctive. The variation closes with a final repeat of material by the flutes. In the last measure (253), the staccatos must be wet; that is, slight length must be given to each one.

**Variation VII**

Beginning with Variation VII until the end of the *Masquerade*, there is not a break between any variations. As such, the audience will most likely perceive Variation
VII until the end as one larger variation. Therefore, it is imperative for the conductor to identify and emphasize the unique characteristics of Variations VII, IX, and X.

Variation VII opens with the percussion (alto, tenor and bass drum, snare drum with snare turned off and performed with timpani stick) and timpani. Because the variation begins with an instantaneous tempo change, the percussion must outline both the rhythms native to 6/8 and the new tempo clearly.

A repeated fragment that is used extensively throughout Variation VII is the ascending and descending eighth-note figure first heard in measures 258 and 259. Although these fragments are critical (especially for accentuating the whole-tone melody above it), it is easy for these to overpower other more important lines, especially when they are doubled in multiple instruments. For example, in measure 262, the whole-tone melody is performed by only the first clarinets, whereas the eighth note accompaniment is placed in clarinets II and III, alto clarinet, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, and bassoon I and II. Again, this problem presents itself in measures 281-285 with the eighth note being placed in the flutes, clarinets, bassoons, and saxophones, while the main music material is in the horns (which are muted). Therefore, the accompaniment, despite their indicated dynamic, must still stay below the horns and the horns must be confident and possibly perform at a fortissimo.

The ascending and descending eighth note pattern is transformed to repeated eighth notes in 286 in the cornets and trumpets and later in measures 293-299 in the horns and low brass. The staccatos should be crisp and not heavy, especially with the crescendo in measure 295. The accent in measure 287 and 295 should not be overly aggressive. Instead, players should approach it as if they are leaning into the first note.

The finale of the variation begins in measure 302. The canon between the low brass and cornet/trumpets must be full without being brash or articulated too harshly. The quarter note crescendo in measure 306 must be quick and noticeable, but not overly powerful. Beginning in measure 309, a descending cascade of eighth notes occurs in the
woodwinds (except for the flutes and piccolos). Persichetti carefully orchestrates the section so that each pitch within the descending cascade is sustained. All pitches that are sustained need to be at the dynamic level and must think of their sustained sound as a block of sound that neither crescendos nor decrescendos.

Variation VIII

With the exception of the end, Variation VIII needs to be performed as lightly as possible. Persichetti indicates this with the term “giocoso” or lively and playful. In addition, the texture is quite sparse and, with the exception of the initial horn trill in measure 318, the movement is completely absent of brass instruments. With articulation, Persichetti is very specific about the placement of staccatos, tenutos, and accents, and, as such, players need to be precise when performing. Staccatos, again, should be approached lightly and accents should not be performed too aggressively. The exception to this includes the clarinets and bassoons beginning in measure 335, as this section is marked marcato for all parts. The relatively short variation closes with a rhythmic figure in measure 345. Because the flutes, oboes, Eb clarinet, alto clarinet, bassoons, and alto saxophones have unison rhythms, the conductor must point out to whom they should listen so that their rhythms are performed together and so that they are in tune with each other. Finally, length must be given to each quarter note but there must be slight space between each.

Variation IX

Like Variation VIII, Variation IX is a relatively short variation (only 21 measures). It contains the last borrowed material (Example 11-33) in measures 352-356. Persichetti indicates that the section should be performed “ruvido,” or rough. As such, it would be appropriate to perform this variation vigorously. Persichetti, most likely predicting that players would not give note values their full length when attempting to match this style, places tenutos over the eighth notes throughout the section. As such, the
section must be performed in a smooth and connected fashion and the articulations must not be overly aggressive. However, just four measures later, players must perform much more aggressively. In measure 364, Persichetti indicates that the material in the contrabass clarinet, bassoon, and tuba should be performed at forte fortissimo dynamic and molto marcato.

**Variation X**

The primary challenge in Variation X is that six different contrapuntal parts of earlier material occur at the same time for all the parts. Because of the large number of parts, it is nearly impossible for listeners to distinguish individual lines. The result can be chaotic, although that is not Persichetti’s ultimate intention. To help develop a sense of cohesion, the variation needs to be centered upon the cornet and horn line for several reasons. First, the material in the cornet and horns is an augmentation of the work’s theme. Although the material in the bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, bassoon, baritone saxophone, baritone, and tuba most closely resemble the original theme, their part is not as easily discernable as the cornet and horn. Secondly, whereas the rhythmic structure of the other parts consists of eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and syncopated rhythms, quarter notes makeup the primary rhythm in the cornets and horns. Finally, Persichetti emphasizes the importance of this line by assigning the cornets and horns a higher dynamic level (fortissimo) than the rest of the ensemble (forte).

**Coda**

The Coda begins with the material from Variation VI (measure 235 specifically) in measures 395-399. However, to keep it within in character of the preceding Variation and twelve-tone chords to come, Persichetti marks it with a fortissimo dynamic and indicates it should be performed “pesante” or heavy. Therefore, the player needs to perform so that their lines are smooth and connected, but also powerful.
Following, the Coda begins a series of chords that become louder, more intense, and more dissonant. The first, in measure 404, is placed in the flutes, oboes, clarinets, and brass. Within four beats, the players must perform a dramatic crescendo from a piano to a fortissimo that is interrupted by the recurring timpani motive. The second chord (measures 411-416) follows a repetition of the work’s opening four bars. The second chord, a twelve-tone aggregate chord, requires all players—except bass and contrabass clarinets, trombones, and tubas—to trill. Since the parts are marked forte-fortissimo, the trill must be exceptionally violent. Yet, through this texture, the timpanist must be heard, since the timpani motive is the primary motivic material. Following a decrescendo in measures 420-423, the players must again manage two dramatic crescendos in mere measures: the first in measures 424-429 and the second in measures 429 to the end. The beginning of the second, on the off beat in measure 429, requires a subito piano with a very delicate articulation. In the last six measures, the trombones and xylophone join the timpani for a final recurrence of the theme. Like before, this line must be heard despite the thick-textured chord in the rest of the ensemble. The final chord (in a parts except flute and piccolo) is assigned both an accent and staccato. As such, its execution must be dry and percussive.
CHAPTER VII
CONCLUSION

Vincent Persichetti’s compositions are considered to be some of the most respected and important in the wind band repertoire. Because of their high artistic quality, they are performed frequently by bands at all levels, are recorded often, and are the subject of many research papers. Although many of his works, notably Symphony No. 6, the Divertimento, and Pageant, have had extensive analyses written of them, one in particular, the Masquerade, has received little attention.

The work is structured formally as a theme and variations. With that structure, a theme is presented and repeated subsequently in any number of separate variations. In each repetition (or variation), one or several aspects the melody’s musical structure are altered while others are not. The Masquerade, while using this form as its basis, deviates from it in several significant ways. Although the work presents a theme at the beginning, it is not repeated and varied in the expected manner. In Variations I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and IX, the primary material is not a modified version of the theme but borrowed examples from Persichetti’s textbook, Twentieth-Century Harmony. Since the themes come from his textbook, the work is a masquerade of his book, thus the title of the work.

Because Persichetti uses an array of seemingly unrelated borrowed examples, superficially, the work can appear to consist of a loose assemblage of material lacking any apparent connection. However, in an interview, Persichetti acknowledged that the borrowed examples share a unifying kernel. In his textbook, he explains that a kernel is a musical idea consisting of two or more pitches from which an entire work’s motivic structure and harmonic construction is derived. In the Masquerade, the kernel is a minor third interval that appears initially as a descending leap from a G to an E.

The appearance of the unifying kernel in the borrowed examples is sometimes obvious and at other times obscure. To guide the analysis in uncovering the means by
which the kernel connects the borrowed material to the theme, several previous theorists advocated for a holistic analytical understanding; their research will be used as a guide herein. Of these, the one whose work is most suitable for this type of analysis is Arnold Schoenberg. Like Persichetti, Schoenberg believed that masterwork compositions were built upon germinating musical ideas. The term he used to describe this concept was Grundgestalt, or ‘basic shape.’ Although he never defined this concept concretely or built systematic methodologies like Heinrich Schenker, his Grundgestalt is similar to Persichetti’s concept of the kernel. Using Schoenberg’s analysis as a guide, it is possible to understand the connection between the borrowed examples and the theme. Finally, Persichetti also uses Schoenberg’s concept of developing variation to transform the theme continually and use it as secondary or contrapuntal material in conjunction with borrowed examples.

In addition to using the minor third kernel to inform and unify motivic material, Persichetti also uses it to inform the harmonic construction of the work. Specifically, the Masquerade is replete with pitch collections and harmonies that are based upon the octatonic scale. The octatonic scale, a collection of alternating half steps and whole steps, consists of two overlapping fully diminished seventh chords, or four-note chords built entirely upon minor thirds. Further, a calculation of the octatonic scale’s interval class vector, a means of calculating the intervallic possibilities in a pitch collection, produces <448444>. In that series of numbers, each number represents an interval. Therefore, in an octatonic scale, a minor second can occur between four pitches (along with the major second, major third, perfect fourth, and tritone). Further, it is apparent that the most common interval in the scale is the minor third: the same interval as the work’s kernel. Because the octatonic scale is a mode of limited transposition, meaning it can only be transposed three times before it repeats the original pitch collection, it is a harmonically flexible scale. This is useful for Persichetti since in each variation that incorporates borrowed material, he also mirrors that example’s harmonic structure. In those instances,
the octatonic scale is used in conjunction with other harmonic structures and can coexist with them comfortably.

For conductors intending to program this work, it is vitally important for them to understand the role of the minor third kernel in unifying the *Masquerade*. They will need to understand the means by which the central kernel connects the theme to the variety of borrowed examples and other secondary material. Further, they must also understand the role the kernel plays in constructing the work’s harmonic framework: specifically, the frequent use of the octatonic scale.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

Thankfully, the vast majority of Persichetti’s compositions for wind band have been analyzed extensively. In addition to this study, analyses of other works include: *Divertimento for Band, Psalm for Band, Pageant, Symphony no. 6*, and the chorale preludes. One noticeable exception is his *Parable IX*. Although an analysis of his parables for brass exists, no significant study exists of the *Parable IX*. This is surprising since it is considered “the most complex score of Persichetti’s oeuvre for band”¹⁴⁸ and was the result of commission that “called for a work of ‘Masquerade dimensions.’”¹⁴⁹

While the other analyses of Persichetti’s band works have all focused on those aspects most pertinent to them, only a few have briefly acknowledged Persichetti’s propensity in employing germinating kernels in constructing his works. Of those that have, none have done so to the extent that has been achieved in this study. It would be fruitful and enlightening to apply Schoenberg’s *Grundgestalt* concept to Persichetti’s other compositions as well.


¹⁴⁹ Ibid.
APPENDIX A
EXAMPLES FROM TWENTIETH-CENTURY HARMONY

Variation I
Example 2-16 (page 39)

Variation III
Example 2-17 (page 39)
Example 2-11 (page 37)

Andante (phrygian)

Variation IV

Example 2-35 (page 52)

Variation V

Example 9-8 (page 187)

Example 10-1 (page 213)
Variation VI

Example 7-20 (page 145)

Variation VII

Example 2-49 (page 59)
Variation IX

Example 11-33 (page 246)
APPENDIX B.  
PERMISSION LETTER

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