Aaron Perrine’s It has to be beautiful: concerto for alto saxophone and wind ensemble – an analysis, conductor’s guide, and soloist’s guide

Nolan Andrew Hauta

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AARON PERRINE’S IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL: 
CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND WIND ENSEMBLE – 
AN ANALYSIS, CONDUCTOR’S GUIDE, AND SOLOIST’S GUIDE

by

Nolan Andrew Hauta

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, 2019

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Richard Mark Heidel
To my family with love
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PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Aaron Perrine’s music has grown in popularity and critical acclaim since his 2005 composition *April* became a finalist in the first Frank Ticheli Composition Contest. Perrine is only the ninth composer to earn two Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Awards since the creation of that honor in 1956. However, there is a lack of published scholarly material on Perrine and his music. The subsequent void between his impact on the repertoire of the wind band and the lack of available resources precipitates the need for this document.

The goal of this study is to examine Perrine and his 2018 composition, *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble*. The resultant document includes a biography of Perrine; an analysis; a conductor’s guide to addressing technical issues, interpretation, and gestures; and a soloist’s guide to address the technical and interpretive challenges within *It Has to Be Beautiful*.

This study was prepared with the help of multiple interview subjects: Dr. Kenneth Tse, for whom the concerto was written; Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, who conducted the North American premiere; Dr. Timothy Diem, whose personal story is intertwined in the programmatic nature of the concerto; and the composer of the concerto, Dr. Aaron Perrine, who was interviewed multiple times.

Lastly, this study presents information on Perrine’s compositional style and aesthetic, which may also be germane to other compositions in his catalogue, for wind band or otherwise. The many interviews undertaken for this study resulted in the sharing of previously unpublished information which will prove useful to composers, conductors, and others interested in Perrine, as well as those composers who identify with his compositional processes or product, regardless of genre or the ensembles with which they work.
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CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE, NEED FOR THE STUDY, RELATED LITERATURE, METHODOLOGY, AND LIMITATIONS

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. It is a seeking that he who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein.¹
– Zora Neale Hurston

Introduction

Aaron Perrine (b.1979) is a promising composer whose music for wind band has been receiving increased attention. His works are often of a lyrical nature and emphasize the many varied colors available from the wind band while also challenging ensembles with complex harmonies; sometimes inspired by jazz. His slow, broad, expansive music calls for maturity and focus from the musicians, regardless of difficulty level. Often quiet or introspective, areas of thin scoring give way to passionate moments of tutti ensemble. Perrine’s music captures the imagination due to its variety and often serene and gentle nature.

Several of Perrine’s works have been routinely performed by district bands, festival bands, honor bands², All-State Bands³, at conferences⁴, and have increasingly appeared on high

³ 2015 California All-State High School Wind Symphony, 2017 Massachusetts All-State Concert Band, 2017 Pennsylvania All-State Concert Band, 2018 Association of Texas Small School Bands All-State Symphonic Band, 2018 Utah Music Educators Association All-State Junior High Band, 2018 North Dakota All-State Band
⁴ 2014 Midwest Clinic, 2014 College Band Directors National Association North Central Division Conference, 2014 Western International Band Clinic, 2016 Midwest Clinic, 2017 Midwest Clinic, 2018 Georgia Music Educators Association District 9 Clinic Band
school and college concert programs throughout the United States. In addition to domestic and international performances by some of the foremost ensembles and soloists, Perrine’s compositions have also been recorded by a number of well-respected ensembles. Not only do his works appeal to practitioners in the musical profession, they have also garnered numerous juried awards. Perrine’s 2005 composition *April* was a finalist in the first Frank Ticheli Composition Contest, and his 2016 composition *Temperance* won the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) Young Band Composition Contest in 2017.

Perhaps most notably, though, Perrine has received two Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Awards. He earned the first of these prestigious awards in 2013 for his 2011 composition *Pale Blue on Deep*, which was then performed at the eightieth annual American Bandmasters Association (ABA) Convention by the South Carolina Wind Ensemble. Perrine won his second Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award in 2015 for his 2014 composition *Only Light*, which was then performed at the eighty-second annual ABA Convention by the California State University, Long Beach Wind Symphony.

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5 Baylor University, Cornell College, Indiana University, Louisiana State University, Mercer Island High School, Sam Houston State University, St. Olaf College, Troy University, University of Alabama, University of Iowa, University of Minnesota, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
8 Due to discrepancies that exist regarding the name of this award, the author sought clarification. Kerry Taylor, who “serves on the Board of Directors of the American Bandmasters Association” told the author, “The official name of the award at this time is the Sousa/ABA/Ostwald Award or Sousa-ABA-Ostwald Award. I don't anticipate any changes to the name in our near future.” The first award to include the Sousa name was awarded in 2011.
10 Kerry Taylor, e-mail message to author, March 22, 2018.
12 Ibid.
As a youth, Perrine participated in all the available school bands in his hometown of McGregor, Minnesota. He then attended the University of Minnesota, Morris. It was there that he began to compose. Perrine completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in trombone performance with a certification in music education in 2002. While an undergraduate, he received recognition for his compositional prowess via two Minnesota Music Educators Association Collegiate Composition Awards. Upon graduation, he moved to Minneapolis and, in a few years, completed a Master of Arts degree in music education at the University of Minnesota. In addition to his coursework in music education, Perrine also took courses in composition with Judith Lang Zaimont and courses in jazz arranging with Dean Sorenson.13

After earning his Master of Arts degree in music education, Perrine taught at Humboldt High School in St. Paul, Minnesota, and then at Brooklyn Center High School in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. As a band director, Perrine was still afforded the opportunity to create new works for band: he wrote commissions for Central High School (St. Paul, Minnesota), Farmington Middle School (Farmington, Minnesota), Oakton Community College (Des Plaines, Illinois), and Richfield Middle School (Richfield, Minnesota).14

Perrine then sought to further satiate his interest in composing and pursued a PhD in Composition. Despite his past success as a composer, this was his first college degree in composition. He chose to attend the University of Iowa, where he studied with Dr. David Gompper and Dr. Lawrence Fritts. As he had done at the University of Minnesota, Perrine continued to write for wind band throughout his time at the University of Iowa and completed his PhD in 2014. His PhD dissertation, a composition for wind band, was titled Beneath a Canvas of

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14 Ibid.
Green. Perrine then joined the music faculty of Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, where he currently teaches. At Cornell College, Perrine has taught a variety of theory, composition, and music education courses. Since 2016, a new, more flexible schedule has allowed him to devote more time to composing.\(^{15}\)

Over the past eighteen years, Perrine has not only received numerous accolades, but he has also seen a growing number of performances of his compositions. He effortlessly incorporates moments of tranquil and sublime simplicity and can quickly juxtapose that against intricate rhythmic groupings and complicated dissonances. His increasing influence as a composer and his rising prominence in the wind band community has inspired the author to craft a scholarly document dedicated to Perrine’s biography, compositional process, and inspirations. Included in this study is the author’s analysis of one of Perrine’s compositions: *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble.*

**Purpose of Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to examine Aaron Perrine’s *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble*. By conducting a thorough examination of *It Has to Be Beautiful*, the author was able to create three important resources for the composition: an analysis of the work, a conductor’s guide, and a soloist’s guide.

This study’s secondary purpose is to augment existing analyses and conductor’s guides of Perrine’s work via information gleaned through interviews with prominent persons involved in the composition’s creation. The list of interviewees includes Dr. Perrine; Dr. Kenneth Tse, the

saxophonist to whom the work is dedicated and who performed the world premiere and North American premiere; Dr. Tim and Toni Diem, who are the inspiration for the concerto; and Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, the conductor of the North American premiere. The information from the interviews provides essential context for the composition, context which has previously not been available; having this information strengthens the analysis, conductor’s guide, and soloist’s guide for *It Has to Be Beautiful*. Full transcripts of the interviews are provided in the appendices.

**Need for Study**

There are published resources dedicated to many prominent twenty-first century composers and their works. However, at this time, there is little extant scholarly research dedicated to Perrine and his music. Therefore, the author hopes to contribute to a greater understanding of this composer and his works. There are multiple measures which one can use to determine what music is deserving of study and performance.

First, Perrine is a talented composer. His works are imaginative in their use of color and texture, avoid predictable conventions in their formal structures, utilize thinner textures in addition to full scoring, and often incorporate atmospheres which are “dreamlike”\(^\text{16}\) and “evocative.”\(^\text{17}\) Often loosely based on a program, a visual, or a text, Perrine’s works create “musical imagery.”\(^\text{18}\) He has crafted compositions of numerous difficulty levels which provide a careful blend of consistency and variety which keep the listener engaged and interested. Another aspect of Perrine’s writing that makes him worthy of study is that his compositional voice is


\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) Ibid.
different than that of the earlier generations of great band composers. He focuses significantly more on timbre and texture and less so on the development of melodic material. He has stated, “For me, melody comes from texture. I find the melody from the texture. I pull the melody out of the texture.”

His music, therefore, evokes moods and imagery in a loosely programmatic way while taking time to subtly unfold. He often avoids preexisting formal structures, and it is this unpredictability which helps maintain the listener’s interest via variety. His music is in no way cliché or routine: he wants musicians of all ability levels to have more musical and harmonic challenges in their music and to experience things not present in other literature.

Second, Perrine’s music is performed with regularity. Lists of the frequency with which works have been performed have been used for many years as a means of identifying the core repertoire of wind bands. This includes the research of Holvik, Fiese, and Kish. Some frequency lists have also served as tools for observing trends in regions or divisions such as those created by Powell, Paul, Paul, and Wacker & Silvey. Research into trends regarding frequency of performance at conventions has been completed by Hopwood and Martin. The

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philosophy behind the many different types of frequency lists can be best summarized by one of the first to undertake such a project: Harold K. Peercy. In 1958, Peercy wrote:

Extensive lists of band compositions have long been available thru [sic] various music dealers and publishers, but band directors and students have had difficulty in knowing the musical value of the various selections in these lists. Since it was felt that the performance of selections by trained personnel would indicate a higher standard of composition and that a greater number of performances would indicate a higher value, a survey was made of the programmed repertoire of college and university bands over a period of years.\footnote{Peercy, Harold K. 75 Favorite College Band Compositions: The Most Frequently Programmed Numbers by Over 100 College Bands. The Instrumentalist, 12:10 (June 1958), 72.}

Between 1950 and 1957, Peercy collected programs from over 100 colleges and universities in 36 states and reported the findings in his June 1958 article in The Instrumentalist.\footnote{Ibid.} While Perrine’s works have seen significant numbers of performances, there is no arbitrary threshold upon which a work’s performance frequency suddenly enters it into the upper echelons of remarkable compositions. Therefore, with Perrine’s works, the pedigree of the performing ensembles also becomes an indication of respect, in addition to the quantity of performances.

Third, ensembles with established reputations of excellence, such as the United States Air Force Band, the University of Iowa Symphony Band, and the University of Kansas Wind Ensemble have performed and recorded Perrine’s music, thereby hitting that particular mark of repute. A related validation of Perrine’s status and that of It Has to Be Beautiful also comes from the ringing endorsement of Dr. Kenneth Tse, who asked Perrine to write this saxophone concerto. Professor of Saxophone at the University of Iowa, Tse is a preeminent performer who has recorded numerous CDs on four different labels. Tse has soloed on five continents and has had over thirty new compositions written specifically for him. Because of Tse’s reputation and abilities, his acknowledgement of and interest in Perrine’s capabilities is a significant factor.
when considering whether or not Perrine’s music is worthy of study. The continued performance of Perrine’s music by numerous college ensembles, high school ensembles, honor bands, district bands, All-State Bands, and at state, regional, national, and international conferences between 2001 and the present is a clear sign of the respect and popular appeal his works have earned. Furthermore, in addition to frequency and credibility of performances, another measure of the merit of a composition for wind band is its degree of success in juried competitions. As stated in the introduction to Chapter 1, Perrine has been winning juried composition competitions since he was an undergraduate.

Fourth, Perrine’s works *Pale Blue on Deep* and *Only Light* both carry the distinction of having received the meritorious Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award. Numerous prominent wind band composers (e.g., Clifton Williams, Robert Jager, John Barnes Chance, James Barnes, James Curnow) have been among the recipients (See Appendix A). In the more than six decades since the first Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald was presented in 1956, Perrine is one of only nine composers to receive the award multiple times\(^{31}\) (See Appendix B). Only Robert Jager has received more Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Awards than Perrine; and after Jager’s third win, in 1972, the 1973-1974 contest rules for the Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award were changed to limit recipients to a maximum of two awards in their lifetime.\(^ {32}\) Clifton Williams won the first two contests (1956 for *Fanfare and Allegro* and 1957 for *Symphonic Suite*), which resulted in the award committee amending the rules to limit a composer to only two consecutive awards, but they did not place an overall limit on the total number of awards at that time.\(^ {33}\)

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\(^{32}\) Vondran, Shawn D. “The Development of the Ostwald Award.” DMA essay, University of Miami, 2009.

\(^{33}\) Ibid.
Perrine has other award-winning pieces as well. His composition *Temperance* was the recipient of the 2017 CBDNA Young Band Award. Additionally, one of Perrine’s early works, *April*, was a finalist in the first Frank Ticheli Composition Contest. Furthermore, as an undergraduate, Perrine received two awards for compositions by college students from the Minnesota Music Educators Association. Therefore, within a span of approximately ten years, Perrine has received awards consistently. This demonstrates remarkable reliability and speaks to his ability to not just compose but to receive praise and acknowledgement for those compositions by expert panels of adjudicators.

This brings us to the fifth measure of the merit of a piece: the name recognition and reputation of the composer. Once established as a credible composer of excellent music, a composer’s name and reputation are important when commissioning and programming new works as well as when choosing works that are extant but unknown to a conductor. While it is true that a composer’s reputation could be greater than is merited by their work, that their success could be predicated on merely being part of a passing trend, and that talented composers are overlooked for a variety of reasons, Perrine has an established reputation for compositional success among the conducting community as well as in juried competitions, and his status as an in-demand professional is unquestionable. He maintains an active compositional schedule and already has numerous commissions contracted for the next few years. Additionally, a sample of his professional engagements in the spring of 2018 included a premiere and residency with the North Dakota All-State Band in March, a residency and world premiere at the University of Kansas, a world premiere at the University of Dayton, and a performance by the United States Air Force Band at the Eastman School of Music. Furthermore, he held Skype clinic sessions with the University of Colorado and Florida Atlantic University in April. He also served the Iowa
Bandmasters Association Conference in several capacities in May: he was the guest conductor for the All-Iowa 8th Grade Honor Band, composed *Traces of Amber Sky* for that same ensemble, and also presented a clinic session on the use of texture and timbre in mid-level music. Two more of his works were also performed at that same conference.\(^{34}\) Upcoming engagements have been scheduled as distant as 2021 when Perrine is scheduled to guest-conduct the South Dakota All-State Band and compose a commission for the occasion.\(^{35}\)

The combination of all these measures (Perrine’s distinct compositional voice and well-crafted music, frequency of performance, performances by well-respected ensembles, achievement in juried competitions, and reputation) all indicate that Perrine is a composer worthy of study. Each of these measures on their own does not necessarily make a case for a composer or for their works, but the support from each of these diverse measures indicates a growing interest and respect for Perrine and his music. Not only are he and his work worthy of study, due to the lack of scholarly sources currently available regarding Perrine and his music, the profession would benefit from this study.

This document is important because it adds to the growing body of literature on twenty-first century composers and their compositions. Furthermore, this study aids in the understanding of repertoire specifically for the wind band, most notably through the understanding of compositions by Perrine. This study also contributes to the music profession by adding to the resources available regarding concerti with wind accompaniment and, in particular, concerti for alto saxophone and wind accompaniment.

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\(^{34}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.

Related Literature

Conducting-related resources and materials for specific pieces and/or specific composers are frequently produced in academic settings. These documents are created in order to assist conductors with the daunting task of preparing for pieces in an ever-expanding repertoire. This is especially true of the rapidly growing number of works for wind band. The resources and materials that informed this particular study can be placed in one of the following four categories: primary sources regarding Perrine and his music, secondary sources of a scholarly nature regarding Perrine and his music, secondary sources of a less-than-scholarly nature regarding Perrine and his music, and associated materials which do not specifically focus on Perrine or his music.

The category of primary sources includes multiple in-person interviews with Perrine. Additional communication with Perrine included telephone calls and e-mails. Interviews were also conducted with Diem, Tse, and Heidel. Verbal exchanges between Perrine, Tse, Heidel, and the University of Iowa Symphony Band occurred during rehearsals and a recording session. These exchanges have been referenced as well. Primary sources written by Perrine himself include his website (Aaron Perrine, https://aaronperrine.com/music/), the scores to his compositions, and the program notes located therein. Similarly, the CaringBridge website of Tim and Toni Diem (Journal, https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/tonidiem/journal) was managed directly by both Tim and Toni Diem and therefore served as a primary source of information. Direct communication with so many important contributors to the history of It Has to Be Beautiful provided valuable information which heled when documenting the compositional history and creating the analysis, conductor’s guide, and soloist’s guide.
The next category of sources for this study includes sources of a scholarly nature regarding Perrine and his music. An entry in Volume 7 of the *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* book series was the first scholarly source written about Perrine and his music. This entry, published in 2009, focused primarily on his composition *April*. The entries in this acclaimed series are not intended to be exhaustive studies of a composer or of a work but the eight-page inclusion about Perrine and *April* in the series has served as many conductors’ initial introduction to his work, including Heidel’s.\(^\text{36}\) In 2018, Connor Tipping of the University of Central Missouri wrote a Master of Arts supporting document which examined Perrine’s work *Only Light*.\(^\text{37}\) Another scholarly source which focused on Perrine is a PhD dissertation by Tonya Mitchell from the University of Kansas. In this document, she explored Perrine’s dissertation: *Beneath a Canvas of Green*.\(^\text{38}\) This composition was written in 2014 for wind band and was reworked for percussion quartet with wind band by Perrine in 2018. Mitchell’s research was undertaken through the lens of the percussion ensemble and its repertoire. The final academic writing in existence about Perrine can be found within Justin Zanchuk’s *The Influence of Minimalist Compositional Techniques on Literature for Wind Ensemble*.\(^\text{39}\) This Doctor of Arts dissertation from the University of Northern Colorado was completed in 2018. A portion of one of Zanchuk’s chapters demonstrated the minimalist techniques present in Perrine’s wind band composition *In the Open Air, In the Silent Lines*. These sources served to supplement Perrine’s biographical material, provide insight into his compositional process, and added information about several of Perrine’s compositions.


Another category of sources regarding Perrine and his music includes secondary writings of a less-than-scholarly nature. This includes the C. Alan Publications web page on Perrine (Perrine, Aaron b.1979, [http://c-alanpublications.com/brands/Perrine%2C-Aaron-%28b.-1979%29.html](http://c-alanpublications.com/brands/Perrine%2C-Aaron-%28b.-1979%29.html)), the Cornell College web page on Perrine (Aaron Perrine, [http://c-alanpublications.com/brands/Perrine%2C-Aaron-%28b.-1979%29.html](http://c-alanpublications.com/brands/Perrine%2C-Aaron-%28b.-1979%29.html)), various articles located on newspaper websites (Aitkin Independent Age, [https://www.messagemedia.co/aitkin/](https://www.messagemedia.co/aitkin/) and Mille Lacs Messenger, [https://www.messagemedia.co/millelacs/](https://www.messagemedia.co/millelacs/)), and the University of Maryland’s web page dedicated to Perrine’s place in the overall history of the Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award (Aaron Perrine, [https://www.lib.umd.edu/ostwald/winners/2001-present/aaron-perrine](https://www.lib.umd.edu/ostwald/winners/2001-present/aaron-perrine)). While not as detailed or lengthy as some of the other sources on Perrine, these sources did help provide biographical information and information about several of his compositions.

The fourth and final category of associated materials examined in this study consists of conductor’s guides and analyses of works. While not directly involving Perrine, these documents still helped guide the format of this document and have served as models for the analytical tools chosen for this study. These associated materials presented numerous lines of intersection within the primary focus of study for this document.

For example, Cross and Holliday included histories of the concerto in their dissertations. In doing so, they successfully established a historical context against which they compared twentieth and twenty-first century concerti. This was useful because Perrine also

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41 Holliday, Guy M. “Steven Bryant’s *Concerto for Wind Ensemble*: Musical Analysis and Considerations for Conductors.” DMA project paper, Claremont Graduate University, 2013.
composed a concerto that does not fit many of the norms which have been established in that
genre over the centuries.

The conducting considerations in this document are modeled in part on the writings of
researchers such as Cernuto,42 Cox,43 Hart,44 and Jennings.45 These authors drew attention to
various challenges in gesture and interpretation while also presenting possible solutions. In this
current document, global considerations, or “meta-interpretative considerations”46 are provided
by the author as well as those recommendations which may only apply to one specific measure
within the concerto. These studies helped the author develop a framework in which to write
about *It Has to Be Beautiful*.

Researchers who have prepared in-depth analyses of music have also often listed a
complete catalogue of the composer. This has been demonstrated in the research of Decker,47
Norman,48 Rettie,49 and Tower.50 Recounting biographical information leads to a more complete
understanding of a composer, their compositions, and their overall place in music and culture.

42 Cernuto, Joseph R. “Analytical, Interpretative, and Performance Guides for Conductors and Soloists to John
Mackey’s *Harvest: Concerto for Trombone, Drum Music: Concerto for Percussion*, and *Antique Violences: Concerto
43 Cox, Ishbah. “An Analysis of Johan de Meij’s *UFO Concerto: for Euphonium and Wind Orchestra* Through the
Lens of Conductor and Soloist, With a List of Original Euphonium Solos Accompanied by Wind Band
DMA diss., University of Iowa, 2014.
45 Jennings, Ernest A. “A Study of American Composers Carolyn Bremer and Nancy Galbraith: An Overview of
Their Background, Compositional Style for Wind Band, and Analysis of *Early Light and Febris Ver.*”
48 Norman, Mark A. “*La Gai Paris*” and “*Concerto Pour Trombone*” by Jean Francaix; An Analysis and Discussion
of Two Works for Solo Instrument with Wind Ensemble Accompaniment. DMA diss., University of
49 Rettie, Christopher S. “A Performer’s and Conductor’s Analysis of Ingolf Dahl’s *Concerto for
Alto Saxophone and Wind Orchestra.*” DMA monograph, Louisiana State University, 2006.
The inclusion of a complete catalogue in this document is in part due to their research. This may help place *It Has to Be Beautiful* within the context of Perrine’s total output as a composer. Bristow and Ramirez extensively focused their studies on the biographies of their research subjects: saxophonist Donald Sinta and composer Igor Stravinsky, respectively. Bristow and Ramirez organized their studies to clearly delineate the early years, years of study, and professional career of their research subjects. Bristow’s biographical chapters are largely based on locale: each change of employment for Donald Sinta corresponds to a new chapter heading in the document. The structure as well as biographical information included in these studies helped guide the creation of this document.

Portions of the dissertations of Cernuto, Cross, Holliday, Jennings, and Nix are dedicated to describing the compositional processes of a composer or multiple composers. Not only is an understanding of a composition valuable, conductors and performers also benefit when they learn about the process of how composers generate, refine, and complete their compositions. Additionally, the interview transcripts contained within these documents served as templates for the transcripts which have been included in this document.

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55 Holliday, Guy M. “Steven Bryant’s *Concerto for Wind Ensemble*: Musical Analysis and Considerations for Conductors.” DMA project paper, Claremont Graduate University, 2013.


57 Nix, Jamie L. “Steven Bryant’s *Ecstatic Waters* for Wind Ensemble and Electronics: Compositional and Performance Perspectives for Conductors.” DMA essay, University of Miami, 2010.
Analyses of concerti with wind accompaniment such as those by Cernuto,\(^58\) Cox,\(^59\) Cross,\(^60\) Hsieh,\(^61\) Norman,\(^62\) Ramirez,\(^63\) Tower,\(^64\) and Treybig,\(^65\) provided valuable examples for this study. Their overall structure, depth, and scope helped define the goals of this author’s research and served as guides. In particular, analyses of saxophone concerti by Foster\(^66\) and McElhaney\(^67\) and, more specifically, analyses of various saxophone concerti with wind band accompaniment by Burns,\(^68\) Jenkins,\(^69\) Rettie,\(^70\) Wallace,\(^71\) and Waters\(^72\) also served as valuable models for the layout and goals of this particular study. Through their overall construction and inclusion of performance-related information for soloists, they served as models for the construction of this document’s soloist’s guide.


\(^{60}\) Cross, Travis J. “A Conductor’s Examination of Three Concertos with Wind Ensemble.” DM document, Northwestern University, 2012.


\(^{62}\) Norman, Mark A. “La Gai Paris” and “Concerto Pour Trombone” by Jean Francaix; An Analysis and Discussion of Two Works for Solo Instrument with Wind Ensemble Accompaniment. DMA diss., University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2012.


\(^{65}\) Treybig, Joel A. “An Investigation and Analysis of Karel Husa’s Concerto for Trumpet and Wind Orchestra.” DMA treatise, University of Texas at Austin, 1999.


\(^{68}\) Burns, Kevin R. “Karel Husa’s Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Concert Band: A Performer’s Analysis.” DMA document, Louisiana State University, 2000.


\(^{70}\) Rettie, Christopher S. “A Performer’s and Conductor’s Analysis of Ingolf Dahl’s Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Orchestra.” DMA monograph, Louisiana State University, 2006.


Studies of concerti may also provide a focus on the role and responsibility of the conductor in addition to that of the soloist. Therefore, there are numerous research documents which consist of an analysis, a conductor’s guide, and a soloist’s guide such as those by Burns\textsuperscript{73}, Cernuto\textsuperscript{74}, Cox\textsuperscript{75} and Rettie\textsuperscript{76}. Such studies served the current study by demonstrating various ways to discuss gesture and movement in the context of conducting winds.

In addition to the existing research with an analytical or a gestural focus, there are also those documents which emphasize non-musical elements. Documents by Corley\textsuperscript{77}, Mahr\textsuperscript{78}, Riley\textsuperscript{79} and Wanken\textsuperscript{80} examine the contributions to the profession made by composers, conductors, and pedagogues. Vondran\textsuperscript{81} studied the history and impact of the Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award. Bristow’s aforementioned study of Donald Sinta was also valuable due to its emphasis on the impact of a specific saxophonist throughout their career via numerous commissions, recordings, and landmark performances. The treatment of biographical and historical information in these documents proved useful. The Vondran study also provided historical information about the Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award which was applicable to this study.

\textsuperscript{73} Burns, Kevin R. “Karel Husa’s concerto for Alto Saxophone and Concert Band: A Performer’s Analysis.” DMA document, Louisiana State University, 2000.
\textsuperscript{76} Rettie, Christopher S. “A Performer’s and Conductor’s Analysis of Ingolf Dahl’s Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Orchestra.” DMA monograph, Louisiana State University, 2006.
\textsuperscript{78} Mahr, Timothy J. “An Annotated Bibliography and Performance Commentary of the Works for Concert Band and Wind Orchestra by Composers Awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music 1943-1992, and a list of their works for Chamber Wind Ensemble.” DMA essay, University of Iowa, 1995.
\textsuperscript{81} Vondran, Shawn D. “The Development of the Ostwald Award.” DMA essay, University of Miami, 2009.
Research documents were consulted which were written regarding specific compositional devices which have influenced Perrine’s writing. Waters\textsuperscript{82} examined the use of serial techniques within a saxophone concerto. Perrine looks upon portions of the concerto through the lens of set theory. The use of set theory as an analytical tool has appeared in numerous documents since Allen Forte included it in The Structure of Atonal Music in 1973. Water’s research proved relevant because Perrine used non-tonal collections of pitches in \textit{It Has to Be Beautiful}. Another exploration of twentieth century compositional techniques is present in Marra’s\textsuperscript{83} article about pitch and rhythm as means of organization and structure in Husa’s \textit{Concerto for Alto Saxophone}. Zanchuk\textsuperscript{84} explored the use of minimalism in works for wind band; including a work by Perrine – \textit{In the Open Air, In the Silent Lines}. Minimalist techniques were also employed by Perrine within \textit{It Has to Be Beautiful}. These documents helped the author describe the tools at the composer’s disposal and provided means of describing these compositional elements within the music.

Each of these approaches and categories of research contributed to a more complete understanding of \textit{It Has to Be Beautiful}. A wealth of analyses, conductor’s guides, and soloist’s guides have been created which can serve as model approaches for research methods. No longer is it the case that “the available literature on conducting does not present an approach to score preparation of sufficient breadth and detail to allow for thorough comprehension.”\textsuperscript{85}

A survey of the relevant literature, a study of Perrine’s other music, and interviews with Perrine and others integrally involved in the creation of *It Has to Be Beautiful* all coalesced to form this current understanding of Perrine and his music. Perrine’s scores and program notes further assisted in the author’s interpretation of the conductor’s goals for *It Has to Be Beautiful*, in addition to contributing to its analysis. Furthermore, *It Has to Be Beautiful* is the first piece composed by Perrine for which he saved sketches from the composition process; and he has graciously shared these sketches with the author, along with detailed explanations (See Appendix C).

**Methodology**

The preliminary stage of research was the author’s initial communication with the composer, Aaron Perrine, in January 2018. At that time, the author obtained Perrine’s consent to be the focus of this document. The next step consisted of locating related literature, including analyses of concerti with wind band accompaniment, analyses of concerti for saxophone, and biographical sources for Perrine. The Institutional Review Board was consulted in March and the determination of not human subject research was made.\(^{86}\) The researcher then continued to prepare the literature review as well as refine interview questions. The author spoke with Perrine in April 2018, in order to learn more about *It Has to Be Beautiful*, the composition of which was still ongoing. In April 2018, the researcher shared the proposal for intended research with the proposal committee. In May 2018, the researcher defended the proposal and was approved by the proposal committee to study Perrine and *It Has to Be Beautiful*.

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\(^{86}\) John Wadsworth, PhD, University of Iowa Institutional Review Board Chair, e-mail message to author, March 23, 2018.
Next, the researcher conducted an interview with Perrine in May 2018, two months prior to the premiere of *It Has to Be Beautiful*. The premiere occurred on July 11, 2018 at the XVIII World Saxophone Congress in Zagreb, Croatia. At that initial interview in May, the orchestration process was not yet completed. The second interview was conducted at Perrine’s place of employment, Cornell College, and occurred in October 2018, in the time between the world premiere and the North American premiere. Perrine and the author had scores to *It Has to Be Beautiful* available at that interview and referenced them as they went page by page through the concerto. The third interview took place in Iowa City in November 2018 while Perrine was visiting the University of Iowa and assisting with preparations for the North American premiere and the recording project which would occur the day after the premiere. The fourth and final interview of Perrine occurred in January 2019. This interview was used to determine Perrine’s reactions to the North American premiere and the recording project as well as to collect additional information for the study.

All interview subjects were invited to participate, and each graciously volunteered their time and insight. They were invited to interview because of their involvement with Perrine and this new concerto. All of the interview subjects were provided with questions in advance of their interviews. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed. Steinar Kvale’s *Doing Interviews* was used as a guide for transcription. The transcripts appear in Appendix S through Appendix W. Interviews with Perrine and others were conducted in person whenever possible and via telephone only when absolutely necessary, such as when Diem was in Syracuse, New York and when Perrine was in Aitkin, Minnesota. The lines of questioning followed a semi-structured

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approach. Although various tangential topics were explored, the primary focus was on Perrine and the concerto.

Analysis of the score to *It Has to Be Beautiful* occurred concurrently with the interviews and transcription. The author’s analysis of the concerto was partially corroborated during the second interview with Perrine. During this interview, Perrine shared some of his own perspectives on aspects such as the formal structure, harmonic language, and use of motives within *It Has to Be Beautiful*. *Understanding Post-Tonal Music* by Miguel Roig-Francolí was referenced for proper use of terminology related to serialism, set theory, and minimalism.

This thesis is organized into seven chapters: Chapter 1 is the introduction, Chapter 2 is a biographical study of Perrine, Chapter 3 details the history of the concerto and the interconnected nature of many of the key figures in its origin, Chapter 4 is the analysis of *It Has to Be Beautiful*, Chapter 5 is the conductor’s guide to *It Has to Be Beautiful*, Chapter 6 is the soloist’s guide to the concerto, and Chapter 7 includes the author’s findings and a list of suggestions for future research. Appendices and the bibliography follow Chapter 7 and complete the document.

**Limitations**

Additional works by Perrine have been included when relevant to the goals stated earlier, but these pieces did not receive a similar depth or breadth of analysis as the primary piece undergoing examination. This study does not aim to serve as an analysis of Perrine’s complete catalogue.

The inclusion of the interviews was specifically to further the analysis of *It Has to Be Beautiful*. Therefore, the lines of questioning focus on Perrine and this composition. Limited
biographical information has been included and asked for when applicable to the goals of this study, as well as to provide additional context, but is not a significant focus of this thesis.

During the initial interview with Perrine in May 2018, he indicated that he had not yet finished the final process of orchestrating *It Has to Be Beautiful*. This means that non-analytical aspects of the current study, such as the interviews, began prior to the completion of the composition. Completion of the researcher’s analysis of the concerto followed the completion of other research aspects, such as the interviews. For this reason, it is possible that information learned via the interviews guided and influenced the researcher’s understanding of the piece as opposed to a strictly self-directed analysis in which the music is explored independently by a researcher, devoid of outside influences.

While Perrine had saved some sketches and all the interview subjects had saved certain correspondences or other items related to *It Has to Be Beautiful*, the passage of time on one’s ability to recollect specific information is powerful. Therefore, minor inconsistencies during interviews are not uncommon. However, it should be stated that the interview subjects provided their best effort to share accurate information and experiences. Therefore, any errors on the part of the interview subjects should be seen as purely accidental and never deliberate.

Multiple attempts have been made to reduce errors and proofread each of the interview transcripts. Several of the transcription challenges included discerning the spoken word when there was significant background noise, when both the interviewer and the interview subjects spoke at the same time, and when portions of conversations were quiet and, thus, barely audible on the recording devices. Therefore, any errors on the part of the author should be seen as unintentional and never malicious. The interview subjects have read the transcripts to assist in verifying, or correcting, the contents therein. Each of the interview subjects has acknowledged
accuracy of the transcript of their own particular interview(s). Each has granted their consent for their interview(s) to be included in this document. (See Appendix D.)
CHAPTER 2: BIOGRAPHY OF AARON PERRINE

For him, music is not history but the future, always waiting to meet him.
– Kevin Haworth

Early Years

Aaron Aldon Perrine was born in St. Cloud, Minnesota, on January 6, 1979, to Pat and Judy Perrine. He was raised in the small rural town of McGregor, Minnesota, and much of his youth was spent in the natural beauty of the great outdoors. In addition to this time spent outdoors, Perrine was also raised with significant musical influences within his family, namely his father and his grandfather.

His grandfather, Don Perrine, was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1931. He was an All-State Band trumpet player who graduated from high school in Blue Earth, Minnesota, in 1949. Don went on to attend the University of Minnesota, from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music in 1953. Don became a high school band director and taught in Iowa Falls, Iowa. He completed a Master of Music degree in 1961. In 1972, Don completed an administration degree and moved his family to McGregor, Minnesota, where he began working.

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as a high school principal. He would serve as the principal for the town’s only high school for twenty years. Don retired in 1992 and passed away in 2014.  

Perrine’s father, Pat, also had a career in music. He followed in his own father’s footsteps when he also became a band director. Like his father, Pat’s primary instrument was a brass instrument: the trombone. Pat was the band director in McGregor, Minnesota, for twenty years and then taught elementary music for four more years in nearby Aitkin, Minnesota before retiring in 2013.  

Aaron Perrine recalls starting piano lessons in third grade. His piano primers, like many primers, had writing assignments and exercises which included some standard elements of music theory, such as chord construction. Therefore, by the time Perrine reached college, he felt quite comfortable with the basics of music theory. He stopped taking formal piano lessons in eighth grade. At that point, trumpet and drum set had eclipsed his interest in the piano.

Having a parent who was a band director resulted in opportunities for Perrine that many other youths did not have. Perrine stated:

My dad was a band director, so I was hanging out in the band room, trying new instruments and learning about all sorts of things like that. I started playing trumpet in fourth grade. . . . before we [officially] started. . . . I can remember as a fifth grader going along and trying to play some of the pep band songs with the high schoolers. . . . It was just always what I did. I was never thinking that was going to be my career.  

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100 Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s Only Light.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.
Outside of school, Perrine was involved in a number of other musical endeavors as a youth, too. Regarding his son, Pat has stated, “Aaron played trumpet, piano and drums in high school and his [piano] teacher was Jo Schneider from Tamarack. He [Perrine] played trombone in college and began composing at that time.”¹⁰¹ In high school he also played in rock bands with his friends and wrote “pop stuff at that point. I had garage bands and just kind of dabbled.”¹⁰² He also played the piano at the Methodist church.¹⁰³ Perrine graduated from McGregor High School in 1997.¹⁰⁴

**Undergraduate Years: The University of Minnesota, Morris**

In the fall of 1997, Perrine began college at the University of Minnesota, Morris. It was as a high school student that he had become enthralled with that institution’s top jazz ensemble when they had made a stop at his school as part of a regional tour. As it turned out, the jazz ensemble had an open day in their schedule and was able to find one more school to visit in the area: McGregor High School.¹⁰⁵ Perrine recalls being invited by the jazz ensemble’s director, Dr. James “Doc” Carlson, to sit next to the drummer and observe as the band played Pat Metheny and Lyle May’s composition *The First Circle*. The constantly oscillating meter, which alternates between 12/8 and 10/8, fascinated Perrine.¹⁰⁶ This unexpected event was a contributing factor to

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¹⁰² Ibid.
¹⁰³ Ibid.
¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
Perrine’s decision to attend the University of Minnesota, Morris. It was at the University of Minnesota, Morris that Perrine began to compose.

His mentor was Dr. Clyde E. Johnson. Perrine was among Johnson’s last official university composition students. Johnson (1930-2009) had earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in instrumental music, a Master of Arts degree in music education, and a PhD in composition, all from the University of Iowa. Further composition studies occurred at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik, Frankfurt/Main and at the Music Executive Institute held at the Eastman School of Music. He began teaching at the University of Minnesota, Morris in 1961 and retired in 1999. He taught a variety of courses over the years, including theory, composition, stage band, concert band, and applied woodwinds (Johnson primarily played clarinet but also played saxophone in jazz ensembles). A memorial scholarship now exists in honor of Professor Emeritus Johnson.

Despite Perrine’s passion and aptitude for music, he did not initially declare music as his major, stating:

I was thinking I was going to be a lawyer at that point. I was leaning toward business or law school. So, that's what I assumed I would do. My dad was a band director, so I thought, “I don't know if I want to do that.”

Therefore, Perrine began his undergraduate years by splitting his time between economic courses and music courses. He even assisted with economics courses as a teaching assistant (TA):

The economics people said, “Why are you TA-ing for us when you're so into music?” I was thinking both options at that point. I always liked music, so I just

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kept taking music courses. . . . I was a performance major for a while because I just didn't know if I wanted to teach. I'm glad I picked up the teaching license. In the end I thought, “I should probably get this while I'm here. I might need it.”\textsuperscript{112}

In the end, it was the music faculty, the music courses he was taking, and the ensembles in which he played that further inspired him to pursue his true passion: music. In addition to changing majors, Perrine made the change from trumpet to trombone after his freshman year due to an embouchure change. At the most frustrating points of this transition, it was his trumpet teacher and jazz ensemble director, Dr. James “Doc” Carlson, who kept him going. Perrine recalled, “He asked me to write a piece for jazz ensemble – I think he knew I needed something else to do at the time.”\textsuperscript{113} Perrine went on to play trombone, drums, and piano in the same jazz ensemble that had originally inspired him to attend the University of Minnesota, Morris.\textsuperscript{114} Perrine graduated with high distinction in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music (trombone performance).\textsuperscript{115} He also earned an instrumental music teaching certification for grades K-12.

As an undergraduate, Perrine received several different awards. He was the recipient of two first place awards in the Minnesota Music Educators Association (MMEA) Collegiate Composition Contest.\textsuperscript{116} These awards were presented to Perrine at the annual Midwinter Clinic in Minneapolis, Minnesota, held in February by the MMEA.\textsuperscript{117} In addition to being acknowledged for his compositional aptitude, Perrine also received awards for academic

\textsuperscript{112} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
\textsuperscript{113} Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s Only Light.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.
\textsuperscript{114} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
excellence in music and for high scholastic achievement in general. He was the recipient of the Edna Murphy Morrison Award (music), the Daisy Hansen Award (music), and the Chancellor’s Award (academics).\textsuperscript{118}

Perrine’s composition experiences as an undergraduate had been positive. He had the opportunity to hear several of his compositions performed live, including his first piece for wind band, \textit{In This Moment}. The premiere of \textit{In This Moment} occurred on September 30, 2001, when Perrine was a senior.\textsuperscript{119} It was premiered by the University of Minnesota, Morris Concert Band under the direction of Dr. Pamela Bustos.\textsuperscript{120} Perrine also heard several of his original compositions for jazz ensemble performed. His works were not only played by the top jazz ensemble at the University of Minnesota, Morris, but they were also performed at some high-profile events, including the Minnesota Music Education Association Midwinter Clinic and the Montreux Jazz Festival.\textsuperscript{121}

**Master’s Degree Years: The University of Minnesota**

Being able to compose, take risks, and have his music performed in such a nurturing and positive environment helped Perrine foster an interest in studying composition at the graduate level.\textsuperscript{122} Even as a senior in college, he could envision his future unfolding. He wrote that “his

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\item \textsuperscript{119} “University Band.” University of Minnesota, College of Liberal Arts – School of Music. University Band, Timothy Diem, conductor. Concert Program. Minneapolis, Minnesota. Ted Mann Concert Hall. April 23, 2002.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{122} Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s \textit{Only Light}.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.
\end{itemize}
future plans consist of teaching and attending graduate school in the area of music composition.” According, he did just that. After completing his Bachelor of Arts degree, Perrine and his wife, Stephanie, moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Stephanie enrolled in pharmacy school at the University of Minnesota, and a semester later Perrine enrolled in the composition program at the University of Minnesota. At the University of Minnesota, Perrine studied composition with Judith Lang Zaimont, Doug Geers, and Dean Sorenson.

The approaches of the composition teachers at the University of Minnesota helped push Perrine in new directions, forcing him to refine his skills. He found “it was a great progression: to go from no limits and everything is possible, to refining the craft later.” Perrine shared that his studies with Zaimont focused on different things than his earlier studies with Johnson had, as Zaimont was more particular when it came to looking at the “nuts and bolts.” She also helped him to better understand phrases and the potential that lies within overlapping phrases to make his music sound more “organic.”

Geers, who currently resides in New York City, is a composer whose specialty is electro-acoustic and multimedia music. Perrine studied electronic music in courses taught by Geers for one full year. This was Perrine’s first exposure to composing for that medium. These experiences made him consider transferring the techniques used in electronic music to acoustic instruments: namely, shifting colors and textures.

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126 Ibid.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid.
Dean Sorenson also played a valuable role in Perrine’s continued growth. Sorenson taught a jazz arranging course which Perrine took. Sorenson also programmed some of Perrine’s jazz ensemble compositions at the University of Minnesota. Additionally, Sorenson would regularly invite Perrine to spend time with special guest artists who were performing with the university’s jazz ensembles. These conversations with jazz musicians included a useful lesson from Fred Sturm in which Perrine learned that the third of a chord, depending on the voicing of the chord, can feel like an extension of the harmony. The importance of voicings to Perrine will be discussed in Chapter 4, the analysis portion of this document.130

While a master’s student, Perrine concurrently studied jazz piano with Laura Caviani, a jazz pianist and composer who has been performing and recording in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area for over fifteen years. One ensemble of which Caviani is a member, the Pete Whitman X-tet, performed some of Perrine’s compositions.131 Caviani also teaches at Carleton College and St. Olaf College, both of which are located in Northfield, Minnesota.132

High School Teaching Years: Humboldt High School and Brooklyn Center High School

Perrine’s trajectory shifted when he was recommended for a high school band director position at Humboldt High School in St. Paul, Minnesota. He stated:

I got a teaching job offer. I didn’t even apply for the job – someone recommended me for the job in St. Paul [Humboldt High School]. I ended up taking that job and that’s how I started teaching high school band. Then, I ended up transferring my credits into a music education degree so I could finish my master’s.133

131 Ibid.
133 Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s Only Light.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.
Perrine taught at Humboldt High School for four years and then taught at Brooklyn Center High School in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota for one year. Even though Perrine had completed a Master of Music degree in music education in 2006 and not a Master of Arts degree in composition as he had originally intended, he nonetheless remained interested in composing and continued to compose while he was a high school band director.134

While teaching full-time, Perrine received multiple commissions from friends and colleagues in the area. His composition April was a finalist in the first Frank Ticheli Composition Contest, which was held in 2005. April was commissioned by the Farmington Middle School East 2005-2006 7th Grade Concert Band in Farmington, Minnesota, Joshua Pauly, director.135 Some of Perrine’s other compositions for wind band from this period include Fever Flash and Shimmer. Both were composed in 2008. Fever Flash was commissioned by the Richfield Middle School Concert Band in Richfield, Minnesota, Ben Hoehn, director.136 In 2010, Perrine published Inner Sanctum, his fourth and final piece with C. Alan Publications. Inner Sanctum was commissioned by the Brooklyn Center High School Concert Band in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, Christine Porter, director.137 Following the publication of Inner Sanctum, Perrine’s compositions have all been self-published via his own publishing company, Longitude 91 Publications.138 Perrine composed other works for wind band during this time, but not all are available publicly. One such piece is Move, which was also commissioned by Joshua Pauly of Farmington Middle School in Farmington, Minnesota. Move was the first piece Perrine was ever

commissioned to write. The experience was a positive one and resulted in a second commission, which was April.

These initial commission experiences, as well as the encouraging feedback Perrine received along the way, helped move him toward the realization that he could have a successful career as a composer. His studies with Geers in electronic music also helped him to feel more confident about exploring composition further. Therefore, to pursue that dream, Perrine quit his teaching job at Brooklyn Center High School in 2009 and enrolled in the PhD program in composition at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa.

**Doctoral Degree Years: The University of Iowa**

Perrine primarily studied with two composition faculty members during his time at the University of Iowa: Dr. Lawrence Fritts and Dr. David Gompper. Perrine has observed that, of his various mentors over the years, Fritts “was the one who was throwing the most curveballs at me.” It was Fritts that helped Perrine expand his tonal palate and push him beyond strictly tonal music into atonal and serial music. Perrine learned that he could still write music with emotional impact while also incorporating atonal or serial elements. Perrine’s preference is to avoid an overly strict adherence to pitch class set or other parameters that could limit the aesthetic landscape he wants to achieve. Perrine stated that Fritts “opened my mind to these types

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142 Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s *Only Light*.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.
143 Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
of possibilities”144 and asked questions like “well, why can’t music feel like that?”145 Perrine stated that he is reminded to explore these options when he is composing, and his goal is to target certain emotions through his music.146 According to Perrine, Fritts “would present the most wacky, crazy ideas and got me to think. . . maybe I can do that.”147 Perrine further added about Fritts’s influence: “All that stuff we talked about, the lessons that sunk in and that resonated with me, that’s still a huge, huge influence on what I do now. I spoke with him this week. I think he was pleased to hear that.”148 Fritts, like Geers at the University of Minnesota, led Perrine through a year-long study of electronic music. One result of Perrine’s exposure to electronic music is the piece *Five Turn*. This work for fixed electronics was premiered at the Exchange of Midwest Collegiate Composers.149 Currently, Perrine is looking forward to further immersion in electronic music when he will compose a large-scale commission for winds, electronics, and soprano.150 The manipulation of color in his electronic music gave him ideas of how to approach acoustic instruments in similar ways. As a result of Fritts’s influence, Perrine’s music began to become more challenging. This is most noticeable in regard to rhythmic complexity. Fritts encouraged Perrine to write what he wanted to hear and to not be afraid of creating challenging parts for the musicians.151 It may have been Perrine’s experience as a band director that caused him to occasionally simplify his music for pedagogical purposes rather than taking new and exciting risks with rhythmically interesting and otherwise challenging music.

144 Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
145 Ibid.
146 Ibid.
147 Ibid.
148 Ibid.
Dr. David Gompper was another composition mentor for Perrine at the University of Iowa. Gompper helped Perrine better understand pacing.\textsuperscript{152} At composition recitals, Gompper would watch the audience and try to find at what point, if any, they lost interest in the music and began to appear listless.\textsuperscript{153} With this in mind, he helped Perrine find ways to maintain energy and create variety in his music. Perrine stated:

Larry [Fritts] and I talked about this [pacing, energy] too. It’s something I talk about when I’m teaching composition. Energy is important: “Maybe it's the way you scored it.”; “Maybe we need to express that to the ensemble like this.”; “This is the energy behind this part here.” It's such a balancing act and in the end it comes down to trusting yourself. I think if this is your piece, you have to own it either way.\textsuperscript{154}

Perrine also said, “I think about pacing. How long can I use an idea until I get bored? I examine other composers and their works. What do they do and for how long?”\textsuperscript{155} Gompper also helped Perrine think more about the big picture and large-scale forms. Perrine recalled that Gompper emphasized a strict adherence to deadlines and completion of pieces and moving on to the next project.\textsuperscript{156} The varying approaches of these two mentors further prepared Perrine for life as a composer because having both Fritts’s and Gompper’s perspectives helped Perrine to become more malleable as a composer. In large part, Perrine believes that

All composers are mostly self-taught. It is interesting to have lessons to teach composing. Composition lessons: it is mostly just another perspective. . . . There is orchestration of things and certain things will more or less probably work better here or there, but some of the other things are tough to pinpoint.\textsuperscript{157}

\textsuperscript{152} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
\textsuperscript{153} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{156} Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s Only Light.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.
\textsuperscript{157} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
Being able to see the value in the feedback from others has allowed Perrine to become more open-minded. This was only one of the many valuable lessons that Perrine learned at the University of Iowa.

Composition faculty members at the University of Iowa were not the only ones who believed Perrine would become a successful composer. Perrine’s work also came to the attention of Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, Director of Bands at the University of Iowa. When Heidel applied for the Symphony Band to perform at the CBDNA North Central Division’s 2014 Conference, he asked Perrine if he would write a piece for the occasion. The result was Only Light, which won a Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award. In fact, both of Perrine’s Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award winning works were composed while he was a student; he was a student, the first award came in 2013 when for Pale Blue on Deep.

Perrine is one of many talented composers who has contributed valuable works to the wind band repertoire. The guiding philosophy of the Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award, “to stimulate the composition of original works for concert band,” can be traced back to the founding of the American Bandmasters Association (ABA):

Capt. William Stannard [of the United States Army Band] in August, 1928, recorded the original and lasting intent of the ABA in a letter to Albert Austin Harding, Director of Bands at the University of Illinois: "We conceived the idea of creating an ABA for the purpose of furthering the interests of outstanding American Band Masters, and of interesting composers, arrangers, and music publishers in Wind Band music. . . . It would be the aim of the ABA to unite in a concerted effort to influence the best composers to write for the Wind Band."

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Regarding the commissioning process, Perrine notes that Heidel continues to be a strong proponent of his music.\(^{162}\) Two years after commissioning *Only Light*, Heidel commissioned Perrine to compose another work for the Symphony Band: a concert opener. Perrine responded with *A Glimpse of the Eternal*. On October 13, 2016, the University of Iowa Concert Band and Symphony Band performed their first concert in the Concert Hall of the new Voxman Music Building. A flood in 2008 had rendered the previous Voxman Music Building unusable, resulting in eight years of temporary facilities for the School of Music. This concert would be the first concert Heidel would conduct in a concert hall on the University of Iowa campus, because he had been hired immediately prior to the devastating flood and had moved to Iowa City during its immediate aftermath.

Perrine was a doctoral student during this time of temporary facilities for the School of Music. He would sometimes even have his composition lessons at Dr. Larry Fritts’s home.\(^{163}\) Perrine knew how much the new facilities would mean to the students, faculty, and community. Regarding *A Glimpse of the Eternal*, he wrote:

> The title relates to this specific concert in that for many, it was their first visit to the new Voxman Music Building: an amazing structure that will serve as the home for the University of Iowa School of Music for years to come.\(^{164}\)

Prior to the October 2016 band concert, their first in the new 700-seat Concert Hall, Heidel said, “The theme of this year is ‘coming home.’ The first selection, *A Glimpse of the Eternal*, was commissioned specifically for our first concert in the new concert hall.”\(^{165}\) *A Glimpse of the Eternal* is a fanfare, three minutes in length, which is based on the Iowa-born poet

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\(^{163}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.


Ted Kooser’s poem of the same name. Once the date of the concert was set, Heidel contacted Perrine to secure the commission.

*A Glimpse of the Eternal* is not a line-by-line musical depiction of the poem but rather is inspired by the feelings and emotions brought about through the poetry. Perrine said:

While the poem is not directly related to the music, I like the abstract connection between the theme of ‘coming home’ and using one of Kooser’s poems. I also think the title is somewhat related to this specific concert, as it will be the first glimpse of the new concert hall in Voxman.

Heidel’s own comments regarding this commission further exemplify the mutual respect and admiration shared between himself and Perrine:

I’m especially excited about bringing a new work to life with the premiere of *A Glimpse of the Eternal*. I’m a big supporter of Aaron Perrine, and I could not be more proud of the musical relationship we’ve developed over the past several years.

Heidel also shared that “somewhere in that 2010-2011 period was when I first identified him as someone who had a real ability and interest in writing for the medium. . . . that is one of the larger reasons for trying to commission several works from him.” Additionally, Heidel thought “This is a person that has a real future as a composer for wind band.” He accurately predicted that Perrine would have success, but could anyone have guessed the amount of success he would achieve so quickly? Perrine’s earning of two Ostwald awards and the CBDNA Young Band Composition Contest, within a five-year span is unprecedented (John Mackey accomplished this feat within six years). Naturally, Heidel is proud of Perrine and enjoys the relationship they have.

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169 Ibid.
170 Ibid.
He is encouraged by Perrine’s various successes and glad that the University of Iowa was a part of the early portion of Perrine’s career.\footnote{Heidel, Richard Mark. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. January 24, 2019. Iowa City, IA.}

There will likely be future collaborations between Heidel and Perrine, too. The collaborations have proven mutually beneficial: Perrine has gained significant exposure with well-respected performances of his works, and the University of Iowa has been provided world premiere opportunities and educational exchanges with a composer. Heidel noted that “this relationship goes both ways. If there's some way that we can help I've extended that open invitation to him.”\footnote{Ibid.}

**The Present: Cornell College**

Perrine concluded his coursework at the University of Iowa in 2012 and moved back to Minnesota to write his dissertation. Then he became “busy writing, teaching, and having kids . . . but [the dissertation] was basically done.”\footnote{Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.} Perrine was able to finish his dissertation and officially complete his PhD in 2014. It was at this time that he accepted a position at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, not far from Iowa City and the University of Iowa.\footnote{Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s *Only Light.*” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.} Perrine has taught a variety of courses at Cornell College, including Aural Skills/Sight Singing, Composition Lessons, Music Education Seminar, Methods of Music Education, and portions of the Music Theory I-IV sequence.\footnote{“Aaron Perrine.” Cornell College. https://www.cornellcollege.edu/academics/our-faculty/faculty-profile/index.php/show/aperrine. Accessed March 24, 2018.}
In 2016, Perrine’s schedule at Cornell was adjusted so that he could spend more time composing and less time on campus. Therefore, he is now able to spend much of the year at his permanent residence in Aitkin, Minnesota, with his wife and children. Each year, he is present on campus at Cornell College for a shorter, more intense duration each year – approximately seven weeks. He is also able to handle some of his advising duties, composition lessons, and day-to-day duties via Skype.  

**Compositional Influences**

Perrine’s choice to relocate to Aitkin, Minnesota, was not pure happenstance. Aitkin is near his hometown of McGregor, and Perrine and his wife still have a lot of family nearby. Perrine also lives close to rustic surroundings and natural influences. Like many composers past and present, he draws inspiration from nature. His muse for *Pale Blue on Deep* was Lake Superior. About that piece, Perrine wrote:

> I arrived at the title, *Pale Blue on Deep*, while sitting on the shore of Lake Superior. Though I’ve visited this lake countless times, I’m always mesmerized by its power and serene beauty. You don’t just see this Great Lake; it’s a feeling you experience with all of your senses.

Similarly, Perrine’s personal experiences with the Temperance River in Northern Minnesota guided the composition of his 2016 work *Temperance*. This work is his “response to the beauty, serenity, and solitude found along Minnesota’s North Shore.” The title of another of his pieces, *Beneath a Canvas of Green*, refers to

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176 Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s *Only Light.*” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.


the many walks I used to take during the summers while growing up in northern
Minnesota. I love the way the sunlight shines through the leaves – especially when
there is a bit of wind to make the light dance and flicker. I am also fascinated by
the way in which the many things I pass by on a regular basis can appear so
differently, depending on the time of day, season of the year, or mood I am in at the
time.\textsuperscript{179}

Additional works by Perrine were also inspired by natural phenomenon: \textit{I Was Just
Looking at the World} and \textit{Tears of St. Lawrence} were influenced by fog over Lake Superior\textsuperscript{180}
and the Perseids meteor shower,\textsuperscript{181} respectively. Perrine describes his works as “. . . vividly
colorful and rhythmically infused layers of music, inspired by the soundscapes and unparalleled
allure of the natural world.”\textsuperscript{182} Therefore, it is important to consider the natural world as one of
Perrine’s many compositional influences and inspirations, including in an examination of \textit{It Has
to Be Beautiful}.

The natural world also influences the work of two of Perrine’s favorite poets: Ted Kooser
(b. 1939) and Mary Oliver (1935-2019). The simple and straightforward writing style of these
poets, coupled with their interest in nature as subject matter, has caused Perrine to be heavily
influenced by their words. In an interview, it was shared that “Perrine has been a longtime fan of
Kooser, and says he believes Kooser captures the essence of the Midwest like no other.”\textsuperscript{183}
Kooser was born in Iowa and spent his adulthood in Nebraska. His unassuming style helped him
win a Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 2004 and become the United States poet laureate in the same
year. It has been written that

Kooser is popular . . . he writes naturally for a nonliterary public. His style is
accomplished but extremely simple – his diction drawn from common speech, his
syntax conversational. His subjects are chosen from the everyday world of the Great

\textsuperscript{179} Perrine, Aaron. \textit{Beneath a Canvas of Green}. Longitude 91 Publications, 2018.
\textsuperscript{180} Perrine, Aaron. \textit{I Was Just Looking at the World}. Unpublished, 2011.
\textsuperscript{181} Perrine, Aaron. \textit{Tears of St. Lawrence}. Longitude 91 Publications, 2014.
\textsuperscript{183} “Perrine Writes Opening Number for Upcoming Concert.” \textit{Cornell College}.
Plains, and his sensibility, though more subtle and articulate, is that of the average Midwesterner. . . . There is to my knowledge no poet of equal stature who writes so convincingly in a manner the average American can understand and appreciate.\textsuperscript{184}

Kooser himself said of his poetry:

I write for other people with the hope that I can help them to see the wonderful things within everyday experiences. In short, I want to show people how interesting the ordinary world can be if you pay attention.\textsuperscript{185}

Another of Perrine's literary influences is Mary Oliver. Oliver was the recipient of the 1984 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry. She also received a National Book Award in 1992. Her poetry was often inspired by her over forty years of observing the wildlife in the marshes, woods, and tide pools near her home in Provincetown, Massachusetts. When she died in 2019, Margalit Fox of The New York Times wrote, “Throughout her work, Oliver was occupied with intimate observations of flora and fauna. . . .” and her poems “offer impeccable descriptions of the land and its nonhuman tenants in a spare, formally conservative, conversational style.”\textsuperscript{186} Perrine has greatly admired her work and observed: “She wrote a lot about the natural world. I am considering using one of her titles. One that stuck with me.”\textsuperscript{187} Oliver’s poems, like Kooser’s, appeal to everyone and not just the erudite. Her poems

are built of unadorned language and accessible imagery, have a pedagogical, almost homiletic quality. It was this, combined with their relative brevity, that seemed to endear her work to a broad public, including. . . composers, like Ronald Perera and Augusta Read Thomas, who set it to music. . . .\textsuperscript{188}

In addition to being inspired by nature, poets, and nature-based poetry, Perrine has also cited the influence of a variety of classical composers. Some of the composers who most influenced Perrine “that come to mind (in no particular order) are Michael Colgrass, John Luther Adams, David Maslanka, Maria Schneider, György Ligeti, Igor Stravinsky, and Johannes Brahms.”

Perrine had the opportunity to meet and have dinner with one of these influences, David Maslanka, in December of 2016 – less than eight months before Maslanka passed away. Perrine was sitting in on a rehearsal of one of his pieces at the Midwest Clinic. Gary Green (retired Director of Bands from the University of Miami) was conducting when David Maslanka, a close friend of Green’s, arrived and also sat in on the rehearsal. Green and Maslanka were going out for dinner after the rehearsal and invited Perrine to join them. This was an important moment for Perrine. He had been considering refocusing his efforts away from teaching and more towards composition. Maslanka had embarked on his own similar journey years earlier when he moved from New York to Montana and abandoned academia to become a freelance composer. In fact, Maslanka maintained that it was not until he was forty years old that he began to compose successfully. This was encouraging news to Perrine who was contemplating this major life decision. Discussing his dilemma with Maslanka that evening helped Perrine develop additional confidence as a composer about to forge ahead into composition as the primary focus of his career.

In addition to influences from classical and wind band composers, Perrine is influenced by jazz. This is in part due to works by fellow Minnesota-born composer Maria

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190 Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s Only Light.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018.
Schneider and from Perrine’s time playing in jazz ensembles, which likely nurtured Perrine’s affinity for extended harmonies and his experimentation with voicings. Perrine shared that in his first piece for wind band, *In This Moment*, “the melody and basic chord structure. . . are jazz influenced.”\(^{191}\) Of course, his studies with Laura Caviani and Dean Sorenson played a role as well.

Perrine also absorbs some facets of popular music which subtly shape his compositions. Perrine shared that one movement of *It Has to Be Beautiful*, III. “Illumine,” bears some small resemblance to Indie pop music in the style of Bon Iver and Sean Carey.\(^{192}\) Perrine began writing the third movement right after listening to Bon Iver and Sean Carey. Perrine said, “They're huge: they've won Grammys, they’re doing amazing stuff. They use electronics. They’re great.”\(^{193}\)

When Perrine is immersed in the compositional process, he deliberately limits his intake of classical music so that he can remain true to himself and not subconsciously emulate other composers and allow their voices to “seep in.”\(^{194}\) At these times, popular music becomes a larger portion of the music he consumes. This is because popular music colors his own compositional process less than classical music might.

Elements of Perrine’s biography, such as the natural beauty surrounding his hometown and surrounding his current residence, impact his choices as a composer. His diverse educational and teaching experiences provided him with skills and knowledge to embark upon a career of composition. Chapter 3 will further demonstrate the importance of his network of music


\(^{192}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. May 11, 2018. Des Moines, IA.

\(^{193}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.

\(^{194}\) Ibid.
colleagues regarding career and regarding the creation of the focus of this study: *It Has to Be Beautiful.*
CHAPTER 3: IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL: CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND WIND ENSEMBLE – COMPOSITIONAL HISTORY

Of course the gift to be cherished most of all is that of life itself.
One’s work should be a salute to life.
– Pablo Casals

Compositional History

The origins of *It Has to Be Beautiful* date back to 2014 when Perrine was in attendance at the CBDNA North Central Division Conference, held at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. His wind band composition *Only Light* was performed there on February 28, 2014, by the University of Iowa Symphony Band, Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, conductor. The world premiere of *Only Light* had occurred less than two weeks earlier, on February 15, 2014, during the annual Honor Band Festival held at the University of Iowa. (See Appendix E.) It was premiered in the Iowa Memorial Union Main Lounge by the Symphony Band, Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, conductor. After the CBDNA North Central Division Conference performance, Perrine rode home with Dr. Kenneth Tse, Professor of Saxophone at the University of Iowa, and Dr. David Gier, who was the head of the University of Iowa’s School of Music. Tse had performed Frank Ticheli’s *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* with the Symphony Band on the same concert as *Only Light*.

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Tse already knew Perrine to some extent because Perrine’s good friend Joel Vanderheyden had been in Tse’s studio. Vanderheyden’s presence at, and endorsement of, the University of Iowa was a major reason Perrine was drawn to that school in the first place. Tse also knew of Perrine because of the Perrine family’s appearance on the television program America’s Funniest Videos. The family’s entry aired during the October 28, 2012, episode. After moving on to the next level of competition, their video was included on the November 18, 2012, episode, where it won. This made Perrine a bit of a local celebrity at the University of Iowa.

Perrine had attended various performances by Tse, as well as performances by the students in Tse’s saxophone studio. However, it was the events surrounding the CBDNA North Central Division Conference which enabled Perrine and Tse to become better acquainted. On the ride back to Iowa City from Muncie, Indiana, Gier, Perrine, and Tse stopped for dinner. It was then that Perrine and Tse first discussed the possibility of an alto saxophone concerto. They did not develop a formal agreement, but both were interested in the project’s potential. Perrine recalled that Tse contacted him intermittently to see if the project was moving forward.

Tse also remembered Perrine’s initial excitement for the project and that Perrine had some commissions he needed to finish before he could begin work on the concerto. Tse

201 Tse, Kenneth. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. December 11, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
understood completely that their loose agreement did not constitute a binding contract and that there was not even a specific deadline for Perrine. Was it truly a commission? Yes and no. Tse asked and Perrine delivered. But they never discussed money, and neither one has any regrets or misgivings about that. Perrine stated:

Sometimes you need to write music because you want to write the music. To me, this piece had to be written and I wanted him [Tse] to do it. It just made a lot of sense. It's fitting that Iowa is doing it and Mark [Heidel] has been so supportive. So, it worked out well.205

Circumstances have changed considerably for Perrine since that time. As a student, he assumed that teaching would be his primary vocation and that composing would fit into his schedule around his teaching duties. Little did he know that in a few years he would continue to have pieces commissioned and performed across the United States, and that soon he would be able to more fully dedicate his life to composition.

The concerto would be added to the list of Perrine’s commissions that were already in progress. Tse knew quite well that “[Perrine] relies on those commissions to feed his family,”206 and so he was thankful Perrine was interested in collaborating with him. Tse shared that “[Perrine] was very kind to write a piece for me. A gift in a way.”207 Perrine was certainly interested in taking on the project “pro bono.”208 particularly because, no stranger to writing for saxophone, Perrine had long “wanted to write a saxophone concerto.”209 Although Perrine could not begin writing for Tse immediately, he added Tse’s request to his queue.

Part of Perrine’s interest in this endeavor was the chance to compose his first ever concerto. He was aware that the traditional definition of concerto was being challenged in some
ways by contemporary composers and that the genre was evolving. He even asked himself, “What is a concerto, anyway?” He had interest in the way genres change and adapt.

Additionally, his own desire was to be forward-thinking rather than conservative in his approach to composing. Perrine stated that recent compositions by Joel Puckett, Jonathan Leshnoff, and Joel Love influenced him in one way or another. Perhaps most of that influence was in the form of encouragement, giving him the freedom to simply compose the way he wanted to and not feel restrained by tradition and convention. Perrine spoke about the *attacca* nature of the Puckett concerto *The Shadow of Sirius: Concerto for Flute with Winds and Percussion* and Puckett himself shared some of the inspiration for the work on his website:

> A friend once said to me, “many concerti explore a virtuosity of technique but not many explore a virtuosity of expression.” It was with that thought in mind that I began work on *The Shadow of Sirius*. . . . Each movement offers my reflection on a single [W.S] Merwin poem from the collection *The Shadow of Sirius*. Although the work is played without pause, the soloist plays unaccompanied solos to separates [sic] the individual movements.

Perrine then discussed his knowledge of the slow-fast-slow configuration of Leshnoff’s *Clarinet Concerto: Nekudim*. This work was written originally for orchestra in 2015 but transcribed for band in 2016 by Leshnoff himself. Leshnoff explained why the concerto is bookended by slow and lyric movements:

> A string instrument or piano resides outside of the player’s physical body; the musician uses his/her exterior limbs (hands) to make the instrument sound. But the clarinet is attached to the player’s mouth - the clarinetist literally breathes life into the notes on the page. So much nuance and tenacity of line in the first and last movements of my concerto is dependent upon the clarinetist's interpretation, their own inner essence, that the player must delve deep to unearth the inner meaning of the lines in his or her own way. This is the meaning of [the Hebrew word] “Nekudim.”

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Lastly, Perrine stated that Joel Love decided to include an important subtitle when he named his concerto for alto saxophone — *Solace: A Lyric Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble.* Love noted “how well the saxophone can imitate vocal music” and “expressed interest in a new concerto with a lyrical element.” Love also circumvented convention by writing a concerto with five movements. To Perrine, these were some of the composers who were changing the way people view concerti. The concerto as Vivaldi, Mozart, and Beethoven knew it had evolved.

Perrine deliberately sought to avoid the interplay between the soloist and the *ripieno*, an interaction common in concerti from other centuries. Few and far between are the opportunities for wind players to interact with the soloist in *It Has to Be Beautiful*. Instances of such interaction do exist in a few locations within this concerto, such as movement two, m. 28. Here the first alto saxophone, assisted by the first flute, should project sufficiently to resemble the soloist. Another opportunity for the wind ensemble to be at the forefront occurs at movement two, mm. 80-81. This gorgeous oboe reprise of the soloist’s material from mm. 72-73 is a brilliant way to alter timbre and energy. By assigning the melody to the oboe, Perrine allows the audience to experience a change (orchestration) while still experiencing something familiar (melodic material) prior to the alto saxophone soloist again taking the central role in the unfolding drama. Another poignant interaction between soloist and ensemble unfolds in movement two, this time in mm. 58-60. The clarinets take turns echoing the soloist and outline a
descending minor third, a motivic interval which appears frequently in *It Has to Be Beautiful*. Perrine summed up the soloist and ensemble roles with this conceptual quote about their interactions:

> I envisioned the piece almost like there's a spotlight on him [Tse]. . . . Everyone else is in the shadows. So, he is at the forefront nearly all the time and he . . . interacts with them at times. But their job is actually super hard and super important because they keep helping him shift the mood.\(^{216}\)

Yet another reason Perrine wanted to compose a concerto was to “feature Tse and demonstrate his particular skill set.”\(^{217}\) For Perrine, that meant showcasing Tse’s ability to play lyrically rather than a stereotypical concerto which highlights the technical prowess of the soloist. After much deliberation, Perrine ultimately decided that the concerto would comprise three slow, lyrical movements. This will be explained in more detail in Chapter 4.

For many reasons, the concerto project would be a unique one for Perrine. At this point in his career, he was composing almost exclusively for commissions. However, his collaboration with Tse did not have a deadline, so Perrine was free to sketch and revise over a longer period of time than is typical. This allowed him to truly become immersed in the piece and make it “Aaron Perrine, but up a level”\(^{218}\) as well as longer than most of his works. He also did not have a specific wind ensemble for the accompaniment. For this reason, he decided to keep the wind ensemble parts “thinly scored”\(^{219}\) so that Tse “would be the star of the show”\(^{220}\) and so that a variety of ensembles could play the work while featuring Tse. This is evident in the numerous unaccompanied cadenzas or recitative-like moments in the concerto. Another distinctive aspect

\(^{216}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
\(^{217}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.
\(^{218}\) Ibid.
\(^{219}\) Ibid.
\(^{220}\) Ibid.
of this project was that it was the first time that Perrine saved sketches from during his
compositional process (See Appendix C).\textsuperscript{221}

\textbf{Tim and Toni Diem}

The initial concept for this alto saxophone concerto developed from the aforementioned
conversation between Perrine and Tse in 2014. However, significant portions of the musical
inspiration and artistic direction would come from other sources, namely Tim and Toni Diem.
Perrine’s friend, Tim Diem, and his wife Toni (Antoinette) were going through the unimaginable
– Toni had been battling metastatic breast cancer on and off since 2007.\textsuperscript{222} Perrine and Tim Diem
become friends in the spring of 2002 and immediately began a relationship of collaboration.

Perrine and Diem both completed their undergraduate degrees at the University of
Minnesota, Morris though their times there did not overlap. Several years after Diem had
graduated, while in attendance at the 2002 Minnesota Music Educators Association Midwinter
Clinic, he read in the conference booklet that a student at the University of Minnesota, Morris
had won a young composer contest. Diem, feeling a sense of pride in the achievements of this
student who shared his alma mater, decided to

\begin{quote}
stop by and check it out. . . . It was Aaron’s first work for band which was called 
\textit{In This Moment}. Even with a MIDI performance I thought, “Wow, these are sounds
I haven’t heard much in the band world. This is interesting, this is different. Here
we have a young guy making different sounds - that’s great.”\textsuperscript{223}
\end{quote}

Diem met Perrine after the award presentation and spoke with him about \textit{In This Moment}.

Diem received permission from Perrine to program it that same semester with “the third band at

\textsuperscript{221} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.
\textsuperscript{222} Diem, Timothy. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. August 9, 2018. Syracuse, NY.
\textsuperscript{223} Ibid.
[the University of] Minnesota, the University Band.” Diem told Perrine “That’s a perfect piece for that group.” Diem provided further opportunities for Perrine by inviting him to work with the University Band in rehearsal and to conduct *In This Moment* at the performance on April 23, 2002. This was Perrine’s first chance to conduct one of his own works. Diem recalled:

Our connection started with that piece [*In This Moment*] and him coming in to work with the band and have him conduct on the concert. It started there and ever since then he and I have remained connected and talk a lot. He sends me his pieces and I get to try them with the students I am working with at the time and it’s great. We immediately hit it off . . . . I knew right away this is a guy I want to make music with. It’s been a great relationship ever since.

Perrine and Diem kept in touch and, therefore, Perrine was able to witness Toni’s struggle with cancer which began in 2007. In response to Tim and Toni’s continued fight against cancer, *Only Light*, was composed as a celebration of Tim and Toni’s strength and “is meant to convey a sense of hope and healing.” It was Perrine’s first piece honoring Tim and Toni; *It Has to Be Beautiful* was the second. In the program notes from the initial edition of *Only Light*, Perrine shared:

I was moved by two friends’ display of strength and courage through adversity . . . . I was reminded how delicate life is, and how things can change at a moment’s notice. Reflecting upon these events inspired me to expand and ultimately finish this previously composed music [initially *Only Light* was a smaller portion of Perrine’s dissertation *Beneath a Canvas of Green*]. *Only Light* is meant to convey a sense of hope and healing.

It was at a particularly difficult time for the Diems in August of 2013 when Perrine read something that caught his attention. It was a post on Toni’s CaringBridge website, a site which

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225 Ibid.
226 Ibid.
228 Ibid.
the Diems had begun posting on in November, 2007. Perrine wrote that he discovered a post, written by Tim, which included the following excerpt:

A timeline. Oh, the dark places I’ve dwelt this morning. The “hows,” “what ifs,” and “Whys” pouring over me. But, I digress. There is no timeline at this time. There is only, “we aren’t done with you yet.” There is, “we’ve got more things to try.” There is, in a word, hope.

I need me some of that. Toni has pointed out that there are times that I can find the dark cloud behind any silver lining. (Had you only known me before I met you, young lady. Now that Tim could really find darkness where there was only light.) [Emphasis added.] The medical team is set to battle on.

Toni experienced several health victories which would last months and sometimes even years at a time. Her limitless optimism and courage buoyed the spirits of Tim and others around her. A common theme in their conversations was “light”. Toni insisted that her husband “stay in the light,” “go to the light,” “stay with the positive,” “hold on to the goodness,” and not let himself “slip into the darkness.” Toni would “frequently use the phrase fiat lux, meaning ‘let there be light.’” This would become the “rallying cry” for the Diem family and it was this mentality that helped the family experience some sense of normalcy during their hardship.

It was the recurring theme of light in the midst of the Diems’ struggles which gave Perrine “fresh inspiration. In this moment of darkness, the play of light became a symbol of how delicate life is and how things can change at a moment’s notice.”

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229 CaringBridge is described as a health journal and was created to communicate emotionally taxing information to many people quickly. CaringBridge also serves as a way to “rally support” for those on a health journey.
232 Ibid.
233 Ibid.
triumph.” For Tim, “Only Light is Toni’s sound.” Sadly, the cancer kept returning time and time again. A major setback occurred in 2013 when the cancer metastasized to Toni’s lungs.

It would be over a year after the premiere of Only Light before Perrine would truly set to work on It Has to Be Beautiful in the fall of 2015. Some of Perrine’s inspiration came from reading Tim and Toni’s posts on Toni’s CaringBridge web page. These posts helped him decide which direction his concerto should go. Perrine said:

From pretty early on I found the title It Has to Be Beautiful and it came from that piece of paper there [printed copy of a CaringBridge post from August 10, 2015]. So that was definitely the starting point. I put it in the back of my brain that I wanted to write this piece someday.

The specific portion of Toni’s post which so inspired Perrine reads:

I’m thankful for my special team of spiritual friends and guides who help me prepare for the Glory that awaits me. The balance there is difficult – wanting so much to be with Jesus but digging in my heels and wanting to stay here with my boys like I had planned all those years. But the word to notice here is I, not He. It is God’s Will, not mine, that is the best ending to this and all stories. I will ask for your prayers to help me remember to continually ask for and accept His Will for me. It cannot be a bad ending if He is in charge. It has to be beautiful.

Perrine printed some of Tim’s and Toni’s writings from the CaringBridge website and put them on the bulletin board above his desk. Every day, when he wrote, he would read them and draw inspiration from Toni’s courageous battle. Excerpts from these posts can be found in the program notes to It Has to Be Beautiful located at the end of this chapter. On October 14, 2015, two months after Perrine had decided on the title of It Has to Be Beautiful, Toni passed away. When

she was given her initial diagnosis on October 15, 2007, she was told she would have “two to
two-and-a-half years,” yet Toni bravely battled cancer for eight years, almost to the day. She passed away in Delano, Minnesota, with her family by her side. She is survived by her husband Tim and three sons: William, Paul, and John. Toni was only forty-two years old.

Although she provided much inspiration for Perrine, he never had the opportunity to meet her. Later, Perrine found out that the concerto also held special significance for Toni’s brother who is a saxophone player.

Kenneth Tse

*It Has to Be Beautiful* bears the dedication, “for Kenneth Tse.” As it turns out, Tse’s mother also lost her own battle with cancer in 1999, adding another layer of significance to the piece. When possible, Tse prefers to work directly with composers rather than as part of a consortium. With a commission, he feels that the finished product more closely resonates with him, as opposed to a more general work that does not have the same personal touch. Perrine feels similarly. He said, “I want to know who I’m writing for.” Perrine, like Tse, also believes that with a consortium, a composer may make compromises because they do not know all of the ensembles, all of the soloists, and everyone’s capabilities. In effect, they may water down their

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244 Ibid.
music or pull some punches in order for the composition to be more commercially successful overall but less specifically tailored to meet the abilities of a certain ensemble or performer.

Perrine asked some of Tse’s students what most stands out about his saxophone playing. Their response: his tone. Tse shared that “sound is very important to me.” Of course, Tse can play extremely challenging and technical music. However, he is able to do so with a remarkably clean and clear tone, regardless of the difficulty level. This impressed his students and impressed Perrine, who not only studied Tse’s recordings but also heard him perform live several times. Therefore, in It Has to Be Beautiful, Perrine focused his efforts on the lyrical challenges rather than on those of a technical nature. He noted that

I wanted to do something that pushed [Tse] lyrically. . . . There are quite a few notes, but there are not “runs of sixteenth notes all day”. . . . I wanted to push him with this idea of lyricism.

Tse also noted that the challenges inherent to the concerto can be underestimated. At a glance, it may appear easier than it truly is. One must take care to focus on each individual note. Tse stated:

It’s all about sound and tone. I think it's important to focus on resonance and the colors of each note. The sound itself communicates to the audience. . . . a lot of players . . . just play through the notes. You need to take your time. . . . especially with this piece, to enjoy the intensity of the emotions and colors. There's a lot you can do with long tones. In some ways it is a lot harder to connect with the audience. You need to know where you are going.

Initially, Tse was a bit skeptical about one important aspect of the concerto. Early on, he asked Perrine, with some surprise, “There are three movements? And they are all slow?” Tse, however, maintained his typical hands-off approach when asking composers for new works. His

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modus operandi is to not interfere or overly influence the composition process. Perrine, a composer well-versed in writing for saxophone, felt comfortable sending various drafts to Tse for feedback. Tse’s suggestions were helpful but also quite minimal. This approach was likely due to three main factors: 1) Tse was well aware that Perrine had prior experience writing for saxophone and had sought assistance from authorities in the past (including Joel Vanderheyden), 2) Tse generally tries to let the composer write how they see fit, preferring to not get too involved, and 3) Tse is highly respected as a performer, and there are few challenges that Perrine could write that Tse would be unable to play.

Perrine explained that Tse was “involved the whole time.” He added that “[Tse] had a few [suggestions] when I sent him the original draft. He suggested two or three spots right in the beginning. There were a couple passages where he said, ‘Let's take this up the octave,’” but Tse did not desire to micromanage Perrine. The two of them met and they tried those multiphonics. The end [of movement three] at m. 82, m. 84, and m. 85, that was pretty challenging. That was something that [Tse] wasn't totally 100% sure he liked. . . . In a couple of weeks, he said, “. . . I can handle it no problem.” Otherwise . . . for the most part he didn't have many suggestions. He tries to avoid leading the composer in any one direction. Throughout the whole process he was hands-off as far as trying to push me in any particular direction.

In addition to showing the solo part to Tse, Perrine sought feedback from other sources regarding other aspects of the concerto. As a rule, Perrine seeks collaboration and enjoys hearing the ideas of others. He stated:

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252 Campbell, Murray. “Multiphonics.” Oxford Music Online: Grove Music Online. https://doi-org.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630/article.43536. January 20, 2001. Accessed February 3, 2019. defines multiphonics as “sounds generated by a normally monophonic instrument in which two or more pitches can be heard simultaneously. The term is customarily used to describe chordal sounds played on a woodwind or brass instrument. . . . A multiphonic sound can be achieved on a woodwind instrument by choosing an unconventional fingering pattern . . . giving additional sum and difference tones. The result is a rich complex of generally inharmonic partials. Such a sound may be perceived as a stable chord with several pitches, or as a tone cluster with periodically fluctuating loudness and timbre.”
I have showed [It Has to Be Beautiful] to a few people that know my music well. They think it’s the best thing I have written so far. Hopefully. Up to this point definitely one of my better pieces. So, we will see. There are some people I have showed it to that know pretty much my entire catalog. They like it.\footnote{Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. October 2, 2018. Mount Vernon, IA.}

The number of people who learned about the work-in-progress concerto slowly increased. The largest and most public announcement about the upcoming piece for Tse took place in December of 2016. Perrine and Longitude 91 Publishing took out a full-page advertisement in the conference program for The 70\textsuperscript{th} Annual Midwest Clinic: International Band and Orchestra Conference. The conference was attended by approximately 17,000 musicians, educators, and members of the music industry.\footnote{“Our History – An International Band, Orchestra, and Music Conference.”
https://www.midwestclinic.org/about_midwest.html. Accessed January 31, 2019.} The advertisement included a notice that Perrine’s “upcoming projects include: a concerto for alto saxophone and wind ensemble (Kenneth Tse, soloist)” as well as “a percussion duo plus wind ensemble. . . .”\footnote{“From the Beginning, Into the Future: The 70\textsuperscript{th} Annual Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference 2016.” Conference Program, 204.} These “upcoming projects” became It Has to Be Beautiful and Beneath a Canvas of Green. Both would be completed and premiered in 2018. The full-page advertisement also included a brief biography, listed six of his pieces, promoted a performance of one of his works which would occur at the conference, and encouraged attendees to visit his booth in the exhibit hall.

A solo part was provided to Tse prior to the completion of the full score and all the parts. This solo part, which would be amended by June, was shared with the author in April 2018.\footnote{Aaron Perrine, e-mail message to author, April 12, 2018.} By the time It Has to Be Beautiful was mostly completed, Perrine already received word that Tse would premiere the concerto at the XVIII World Saxophone Congress on July 11, 2018, in Zagreb, Croatia.\footnote{Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. May 11, 2018. Des Moines, IA.} The orchestration process took Perrine roughly the entirety of May 2018 to
complete. With his teaching duties at Cornell College behind him for the academic year, Perrine was largely free to dedicate the month of May to orchestrating the concerto except for some guest conducting and other duties.\textsuperscript{259} He achieved his goal of completing the orchestration on time.\textsuperscript{260} By June, he was able to supply parts and a full score to Tse who, in turn, passed along the score and parts to the Symphonic Wind Orchestra of Croatian Armed Forces.

**Compositional Process**

Perrine primarily composes at his piano or, when necessary, at a keyboard. He has shared that his approach is similar to that of composer Steven Bryant in that he plays in an intuitive manner and audio records what he plays. Then Perrine goes back, adds to it, and revises it. Bryant described his own compositional process by saying that “I’m not thinking about how that’s going to look notationally” and that in his drafts “there are no time signatures. It’s just the *music* [Bryant’s emphasis], without barlines.”\textsuperscript{261} Bryant elaborated further on the intuitive nature of his compositional process:

\textquote{...I’ll just start recording and just play. ... Then I’ll go back and play them in time and I’ll listen and say “No, I need an extra beat there ... that should last longer here ... I need a new color there.” So, ... then I go elongate it, decorate it, stretch it out, re-orchestrate it, and grow it into the piece from that core idea. ... I’ll improvise the melodic line, or some element of it ... but I don’t pay attention to any of the bar lines, or meters. ... So, I’m not calculating it out. I’m just intuitively following where I think I want it to go.}\textsuperscript{262}

Later, Bryant transcribes his improvisations with the assistance of his wife, the Austrian-born conductor Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant. Her skill as a conductor and her intuition help define

\textsuperscript{259} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. October 2, 2018. Mount Vernon, IA.
\textsuperscript{260} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{261} Nix, Jamie L. “Steven Bryant’s *Ecstatic Waters* for Wind Ensemble and Electronics: Compositional and Performance Perspectives for Conductors.” DMA essay, University of Miami, 2010.
\textsuperscript{262} Ibid.
where emphases occur and where the meter changes would feel natural in Bryant’s work. During
the transcribing process they try to

figure out what I did and try to find the closest notation to get to what I did. The
very last thing I do is put in the time signatures. And they’re just matters of
convenience. That’s why it changes . . . all over the place.263

Perrine’s intuitive approach, much like Bryant’s, and the ability to quickly revisit his
improvisations also help Perrine to further develop the sound he is seeking. This is opposed to
being constrained by meter, key, or even notation at the onset of the compositional process.
Perrine conceded that his recording technology is not as advanced as Bryant’s, stating, “I should
get more adaptive with some of the electronic programs that Bryant uses”264 but the overall
concept is analogous. Regarding Bryant’s approach, Perrine said:

That is similar to what I did with my friend, Justin Zanchuk with this particular
piece because he knows my music well. Every week I would ask, “What do you
think?” We went back and forth on the pros and cons of the metering. I do the same
thing. I took out my phone quickly to record . . . I did that for this piece, because
this all came together from a lot of me playing at the piano. . .265

Perrine’s approach is also somewhat comparable to that of composer John Mackey.

Mackey had this to say about his instrument of choice:

The Yamaha Disklavier is, first and foremost, a traditional piano, with strings,
hammers, and pedals. But hidden inside and underneath the instrument is some
amazing Linux-based technology that allows the piano to record what you play and
send it as MIDI data to your computer.266

Perrine’s equipment is not as elaborate as Mackey’s. Perrine said:

I simply took out my cell phone and set it on the music stand and recorded for two
minutes. I would just do a take and another take and then use things from the

263 Nix, Jamie L. “Steven Bryant’s Ecstatic Waters for Wind Ensemble and Electronics: Compositional and
Performance Perspectives for Conductors.” DMA essay, University of Miami, 2010.
265 Ibid.
improvisations that I liked: “I like this little lick here.” “No, I didn’t like that.” Then I just let my fingers find the notes, so I wasn’t worried about meter or tempo. I didn’t care. 267

Mackey, who composes while using intuitive and improvisational elements, has also refined the means by which he adds more interest to his harmonies. He “writes pieces that are essentially tonal and ‘dirties’ up the harmony” 268 by adding notes outside the typical tertian chords he uses. While this process is not formulaic, Mackey does note that “the same sorts of notes get changed or added . . . like 2nds, 9ths, a sharp 4, or a flat 9, notes that always want to go to a resolution.” 269 Mackey described in detail the origins of his “dirtying” techniques and the musical purpose behind his method:

I will end up with a chord that is not very interesting, and I have consistent ways – without being aware of it – to “dirty up” a chord. A ‘V’ chord really isn’t a ‘V’ chord because I will add in a sharp 4, sharp 7, flat 9. I do that all the time. It is still a dominant chord and still rooted in tonality . . . but “dirty.” 270

This “dirtying” of the harmony is akin to the process often followed by Perrine. There are areas within It Has to Be Beautiful which appear to be instances of bitonality. In actuality, these areas should be defined as chords with extra color added. Perrine, influenced greatly by jazz, is fond of using extended chords and finding alternative voicings for chords. These complicated collections do not necessarily mean polytonality is being used: often a sound that appeals to a composer is related to tertian harmony but is altered in some way. Perrine further explained some of his intuitive rationale when he said the following about his piece Tears of St. Lawrence:

It has interesting chords, but they are easy to play: it is all about finding and fitting into the sweet spots. I prefer to change things up because I get bored with triads. I

269 Ibid.
think we should be getting students to think differently about music too. I can do this by composing things they don’t experience in other literature.  

After working extensively at the piano, Perrine begins notating the worthwhile salient musical elements via Dorico notation software. He often transcribes or notates the music; first as a piano score with some supplemental parts – in the case of this concerto, the solo alto saxophone. Finally, he orchestrates his piano score into a full band score. At times, he will “write at the piano, then immediately go to full score starting with one instrument, find some pairings, and get to full ensemble.”

While the written words of Tim and Toni Diem served as Perrine’s muse for the first and second movements of his concerto, the inspiration for “III. Illumine,” came from a different source. One month after Toni’s passing, Tim included the homily given at Toni’s funeral in a post on the CaringBridge website. As Tim explained to the author, “Toni was a woman of great faith” and even though she was “humbled” by her ordeals, she never gave up hope. When Perrine read the words within the priest’s homily, a portion truly stood out to him:

When I finally was able to meet Toni, she was already nearing the end of her 8-year battle with breast cancer. She was frail and connected to an oxygen pump as she spent the majority of her day in her bedroom because any physical activity would literally take her breath away. Even though I met Toni towards the end of her bodies’ [sic] journey, her soul was far from dimming. Maybe it was the fact that her body was dying before my eyes that was what made her soul so illumined. It made no sense to see the outside wither while the soul grew and glowed . . . only God could work such a marvel. Toni was vibrant with joy and hope even though her body was wasting away.

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275 Ibid.
“Illumine” is defined in two different ways: 1) “to supply with light” and 2) “to provide (someone) with moral or spiritual understanding.”\(^{277}\) Perrine himself supplied some additional definitions: “to enlighten spiritually or to light up.”\(^{278}\) Both sets of definitions aptly describe Toni’s role in the life of Tim, their three boys, and anyone who interacted with her. Armed with the concept of illumine, Perrine knew how to compose the final movement of his concerto.\(^{279}\)

As Perrine approached the end of composing *It Has to Be Beautiful*, he shared a draft of the solo part with Tse prior to the completion of the full score and all the parts. This solo part, which would be amended by June, was shared with the author in April 2018.\(^{280}\) Once the composing was completed, the process of orchestration took Perrine roughly the entirety of May 2018 to complete. With his teaching duties at Cornell College behind him for the academic year, Perrine was largely free to orchestrate the concerto, save for some guest conducting and other professional duties.\(^{281}\) He achieved his goal of completing the orchestration on time.\(^{282}\) By June, he was able to supply parts and a full score to Tse who, in turn, passed along the score and parts to the Symphonic Wind Orchestra of Croatian Armed Forces. The concerto was now complete.

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\(^{278}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.

\(^{279}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. May 11, 2018. Des Moines, IA.

\(^{280}\) Aaron Perrine, e-mail message to author, April 12, 2018.

\(^{281}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. October 2, 2018. Mount Vernon, IA.

\(^{282}\) Ibid.
The world premiere of *It Has to Be Beautiful* was held on July 11, 2018, in the Croatian National Theatre at the XVIII World Saxophone Congress in Zagreb, Croatia. Dr. Kenneth Tse was the featured soloist, and the ensemble was the Symphonic Wind Orchestra of Croatian Armed Forces, Alain Crepin, conductor. (See Appendix J.)

Perrine was in Croatia for the premiere and the rehearsal prior. According to Perrine, the most significant challenge during the rehearsal was the limited amount of time available. Due to time constraints, he was not able to provide much feedback or have much of an opportunity to work with the ensemble, which Perrine noted was no one’s fault. In addition to being pressed for time, Perrine said the staging and acoustics in the rehearsal and performance spaces lead to some balance issues. Still, Perrine learned from the experience and had a better sense of how to make the next performance a success:

The middle movement went together fairly quickly. It's primarily in 4/4 time, and it's scored the easiest in the winds and percussion. It's a very challenging work and that's all there is to it. There is a lot of rhythmic precision that needs to happen.

Interestingly, the Croatian football (soccer) team was to play England in the World Cup semifinals on the day of the world premiere of *It Has to Be Beautiful*. Perrine recalled that the schedule of the XVIII World Saxophone Congress had to be changed to accommodate the World

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288 Ibid.
Cup match that evening.²⁸⁹ Again, Perrine understood there were peculiarities about the premiere and in no way faulted any individual or organization. He remained positive about the experience but also knew there was a chance that future performances could better represent his intent with the piece. Perrine knew that Tse performed well and that another performance was on the horizon.

During April 2018, Perrine thought the world premiere may serve as a trial run or a “soft premiere.”²⁹⁰ It is not uncommon for composers to describe a premiere with this term: for example, if a large-scale work is not yet complete and only select movements will be performed at a concert. Perrine knew that rehearsal time between Tse and the ensemble at the XVIII World Saxophone Congress would be limited. Additionally, Perrine was unfamiliar with the Symphonic Wind Orchestra of Croatian Armed Forces and their capabilities, as was Tse.

In May 2018, Perrine did not know with certainty who would be conducting the premiere in July, but he thought Dragan Sremec had been chosen to conduct.²⁹¹ Sremec, Professor of Saxophone and the Vice-Dean at the Zagreb Music Academy²⁹², was host and organizer of the 18th World Saxophone Congress in 2018.²⁹³ Therefore, it was plausible that Sremec would conduct the world premiere because he had experience conducting the Zagreb Philharmonic, Croatian Radio Television Symphony Orchestra and Choir, Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra, and the Croatian Army Symphonic Wind Orchestra.²⁹⁴ It turned out, however, that Sremec did not conduct the premiere. Instead, another saxophonist and conductor would have the opportunity:

Alain Crepin. Crepin is Professor of Saxophone at the Conservatoire Royal de Musique in Brussels and Professor of Orchestration and Conducting at the Conservatory of Music of Esch-sur-Alzette in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. Crepin has been a military musician for decades and was promoted to his current rank of major in 2004. From 2004 until 2008, he served as artistic director of all bands in the Belgian Army. Both Sremec and Crepin have quite impressive credentials and therefore either was a fine choice to conduct the premiere.

Even though “Kenneth [Tse] sounded amazing” and the debut occurred in front of a highly discerning audience at a prestigious convention, Perrine was looking forward to the North American premiere on November 15, 2018. In the spring of 2018, several months prior to the world premiere, Perrine and Dr. Richard Mark Heidel had agreed that the University of Iowa’s Symphony Band would be the second ensemble to accompany Tse in a performance of It Has to Be Beautiful. Heidel, Director of Bands at the University of Iowa, would conduct this performance. Perrine had not yet finished writing and had not begun orchestrating the concerto at the time this agreement was reached. Perrine and Heidel felt comfortable planning this endeavor.

Perrine said:

I think for the most part [Heidel] knows me and knows my music. That’s the great thing about working with someone that you’ve worked with in the past. That trust is there. He programmed it and said, “Let’s do it.”

For the North American premiere, Perrine would have more factors under his control, which made him feel more at ease. Perrine’s dissertation, Beneath a Canvas of Green, and two commissions: Only Light and A Glimpse of the Eternal were performed by Heidel and the Symphony Band within recent years. Therefore, Heidel was quite familiar with Perrine’s music.

296 Ibid.
298 Ibid.
Compared to the rehearsal time available to him in Croatia, Perrine would have much more time to interact with the University of Iowa Symphony Band and refine the North American premiere. Perrine fully understood that Tse would also be more comfortable preparing the North American premiere since Tse had previously collaborated with the University of Iowa Symphony Band and their conductor, Dr. Richard Mark Heidel. These partnerships included performances of Frank Ticheli’s *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* and the recording of a CD of American saxophone concerti with wind ensemble accompaniment. That CD, titled *Kenneth Tse: Martyrs for the Faith – American Saxophone Concertos*, included two world premiere recordings.

**Revisions and the North American Premiere**

After the world premiere in July, Perrine would have to wait four months until the second performance of *It Has to Be Beautiful*. The University of Iowa Symphony Band began rehearsing the concerto after the completion of their first concert of the fall semester, held on October 4, 2018. In the score, Perrine indicated that there should be one player per part “except for the clarinets, which are doubled.” Therefore, the full forces of the Symphony Band were not used. Instead, the concerto was prepared and performed by the instrumentation which Perrine called for: an ensemble whose instrumentation more closely resembled that of a purist interpretation of a wind ensemble.

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During the period between the world premiere and the North American premiere, Perrine had this to say about potential revisions to the concerto:

Looking at mm. 95-99 [in movement three] after where Kenneth [Tse] hits his very high note. . . . That was one spot that [Tse] asked, “Do I need to go full out here?” . . . He can control that note at any dynamic level. So that's one spot. If I tweak anything it might be just an orchestrational thing right at the end there. That's one spot even in one of the early rehearsals I'm hoping to get a chance to have a sense of what to do.302

When discussing other possible changes to his composition, Perrine said, “That's one spot I’m kind of considering [mm. 95-99 in movement three], but on the whole, no, there's not a lot I want to change at this point.”303 Regarding the vibraphone pitch bending which begins in m. 32 of the second movement, Perrine was unsure how this extended technique would come across in a live performance. He said:

. . . that dynamic, for example, I don't know if they actually need to be forte. We’ll just see. A few of those types of things like dynamics I might want to tweak. That's always hard to tell too because people interpret dynamics differently. Is that supposed to be a true forte or is it within the context of the piece? I hate marking dynamics personally. A lot of that is reliant upon the performers and the director.304

When asked how rapidly or to what extent the pitch should be bent, Perrine wanted to hear this effect prior to making any decisions. He said:

I need to hear it in person to truly be able to answer that. With the whole note rather than the quarter note, I was thinking, don’t dampen the sound. I guess that’s what I was getting at. I don’t know how much they can bend the sound. It’s going to be up to the players and how well they can execute that if they can. Again, I was just trying to do things. . . . If it’s not working, just cross it out and it won't be happening any further. I feel like this performance will be a better litmus test of where I want the piece to sit as far as some of those types of things.305

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303 Ibid.
304 Ibid.
305 Ibid.
Perrine was excited for the opportunity to be more involved in the preparations for this performance than he was able to be for the world premiere. After the world premiere, Perrine stated that he wanted to “reserve judgement” on certain aspects of the concerto: his use of orchestration, for example. He would wait until after the North American premiere to judge the overall effectiveness of his concerto, as he believed that performance would be a better measure of the concerto’s success.

Not only was Perrine more comfortable, Heidel was also in a good position to put forth an excellent North American premiere: in addition to more rehearsal time, he had access to Tse who could attend multiple rehearsals, and he was also in contact with Perrine. Heidel shared that this direct line of communication with Perrine proved helpful in achieving an accurate interpretation:

I sent rehearsal recordings to [Perrine] and got feedback, and I asked him questions about the score. . . . Of course, he was here on campus which is always a delight. We had a full rehearsal with Aaron and Dr. Tse, so that interaction was important and special. . . . We were fortunate in that there was a partnership in the North American premiere. When you're on your own, you're on your own. A premiere is like a performance of most other works except there are no recordings available to use as a resource.307

For the North American premiere, Heidel shared that his preparations and that of the Symphony Band weren’t any different for any other work except that we had the benefit of having access to Aaron. I remember I sent him at least one rehearsal recording without Dr. Tse, so he could hear the band and make some comments without the solo. Being able to do that was important, and that was certainly an advantage. My goal was to present a performance that he would be pleased with and to know that the interpretation matched his vision. That was my primary goal.308

308 Ibid.
Perrine was a guest composer-in-residence on the campus of the University of Iowa for the week of the North American premiere: November 12-16, 2018. He was present at rehearsals of the Symphony Band on November 12th and 14th, the concert on November 15th, and assisted with the recording project on November 16th. For the concert program from the North American premiere, see Appendix F. During the week of his residency, Perrine made a few small adjustments to the concerto, which are described below.

In an interview more than a month prior to the performance in Iowa, Perrine predicted that the ensemble’s support of Tse in mm. 95-99 of movement three may prove insufficient to provide the emotional intensity necessary to tell the story. This suspicion was confirmed in rehearsals during the week of the concert. Therefore, Perrine asked one of the percussionists to add a suspended cymbal roll. Then, he added another roll shortly thereafter. Carriage bolt chimes\textsuperscript{309} and key chimes\textsuperscript{310} were also added by Perrine in m. 98 to supplement the soloist’s energy at this dramatic moment in the concerto. At both the North American premiere and the subsequent recording session the next day, the carriage bolt chimes were added to the vibraphone one part and played on stage right. The key chimes were added to the vibraphone two part and played on stage left. These musicians then still had several measures remaining in which to prepare for their final few bowed vibraphone notes.

Lastly, Perrine altered some dynamic indications. This change applied to the woodwinds and also occurred in mm. 95-99. Here, he asked the woodwinds to increase each of their dynamic levels by one level. As mentioned previously, Perrine acknowledged that dynamic levels are quite subjective and that this change to his music was the least substantive. He saw the addition of suspended cymbal rolls, key chimes, and carriage bolt chimes as a larger editorial change.

\textsuperscript{309} For a photograph of carriage bolt chimes, see Appendix G.
\textsuperscript{310} For a photograph of key chimes, see Appendix H.
The harpist and pianist were also asked to play their final chord at a *forte* dynamic rather than the *mezzo-piano* dynamic indicated. Again, Perrine viewed this change as less permanent than the addition of instruments. Perrine noted that dynamics can be subjective and should be adjustable as needed due to the acoustics of the hall and other factors. For him, the change of the chordal dynamic in the final measure was more about “confidence and getting all the notes to sound”311 than about a powerful conclusion to the concerto. The closing should still be contemplative and serene. Overall, these were all fairly minor changes, thereby confirming Perrine’s earlier prediction that only a few slight modifications would have to be made to the concerto.

**The Future**

After the North American premiere, Perrine offered his thoughts on the performance and the recording project. Overall, he was “quite pleased”312 with the result. He felt that his intentions were better reflected through this performance than at the world premiere. He was also satisfied with the small alterations he had made in the week leading up to the performance in Iowa and which were also present in the recording project which took place the day after the North American premiere. For a photograph chronicling the congratulations which occurred immediately following that performance, see Appendix I.

Tse has already performed *It Has to Be Beautiful* for a third time and has expressed interest in performing the concerto again in the future. The third performance occurred at the

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North American Saxophone Alliance (NASA) Region 9 Conference, hosted by the University of Lethbridge in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, from February 15 to 17, 2019. Tse indicated that he does not have any exclusive rights for performance of the concerto and hopes it will continue to grow in popularity and frequency of performance. Tse actually views the work as more of a rhapsody or a tone poem than a concerto. This is, in part, due to the interconnectedness of the three movements, both in terms of musical content and the *attacca* transition from movement two to movement three. To this end, Perrine prefers that the work be played in its entirety and single movements not be excerpted from the larger work. He has described the concerto as a “three-in-one” work and strongly feels that the first movement is an introduction to the other two. According to Perrine, as the first movement comes to a close, the energy level dissipates, the texture thins, and

the first movement slowly . . . dissolves. This pulsating percussion and piano material slowly works its way down. So, the first movement is, in effect, just setting the stage for the second movement. In my mind, the second movement was always the core of the piece. To me, this *was* the piece. This *was* the music I was getting to. Hence the title of the concerto. It’s the title track. So, this may not be typical of a concerto. [The first movement] is almost one six-minute-long introduction setting the stage for the second movement.

Tse has stated that he hopes Perrine will continue to write for the saxophone and he has expressed interest in collaborating with Perrine again; perhaps as part of a consortium. Tse shared that he is happy that Perrine has been finding success as a composer, and he is happy that others are noticing that success. It helps fuel interest in the creation of new music, which is a

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passion of Tse’s. He also believes it is important to encourage younger or lesser-known composers.317

Perrine enjoys writing for the intimacy of a soloist and for chamber groups.318 Even before he set about orchestrating the work, Perrine imagined that the second movement of It Has to Be Beautiful would contain significant amounts of chamber music scoring primarily involving the soloist, piano, and harp.319 He finds it rewarding but understands funding opportunities via commissions and consortia are often more limited in those genres than in works for wind band. Still, he does plan to write more works for smaller, more chamber-like instrumentation in the future. In fact, Perrine’s experience with his reworked dissertation, Beneath a Canvas of Green, allowed him to get to know Michael Compitello, Assistant Professor of Percussion at the University of Kansas. This association has piqued Perrine’s interest in a “chamber music collaboration with Compitello”320 and cellist Hannah Collins, the duo known as New Morse Code.

Perrine is also considering how to reduce It Has to Be Beautiful to significantly smaller instrumentation. He posted this intention online by stating, “Kenneth [Tse] sounds absolutely amazing on it. I might do a reduction as well.”321 In fact, Perrine has had requests for a reduction. However, due to the prominence of the piano part and Perrine’s extensive use of harp and percussion, a reduction may not be possible for only one piano. He stated, though, that possibilities might include some combination of piano or pianos, harp, and/or percussion.322

One such person interested in a chamber reduction is Dr. Christopher Anderson at Richland Community College in Decatur, Illinois. While it was not printed in the program notes in the score, Perrine shared that the world premiere performance “was dedicated to Chris Anderson” by Tse. Tse knew that just three months before the world premiere of *It Has to Be Beautiful*, in April 2018, Anderson lost his wife, Jennifer Klauda Anderson, to pancreatic cancer. The conference booklet of the XVIII World Saxophone Congress contains a program from the world premiere and bears this memorial: “The performance of *It Has to Be Beautiful* is dedicated to the memory of Jennifer Klauda Anderson.” (See Appendix J.) Understandably, Anderson would have a particular interest in performing Perrine’s alto saxophone concerto, as it touches on themes of grieving and acceptance. Anderson is embarking on his first solo album, which will be dedicated to his late wife and “will tell our story of our cancer journey over the past few years through music. The centerpiece of the album will be a new concerto for saxophone and wind ensemble by Stephen Andrew Taylor.” Anderson expects to release this CD in 2020. Therefore, it is possible he will include a reduction of *It Has to Be Beautiful* on his inaugural CD.

**Program Note**

*It Has to Be Beautiful* is a loosely programmatic work. While Perrine did not choose to depict specific events or moments, he did create a sound world that evokes the many emotions,
nuanced and overt, that one experiences in the face of adversity. The program note below elaborates on these challenges:

The deep sorrow of the grieving process is universal to the human experience. For all who have fought or watched a loved one fight a terminal illness, the choice of treatment for the emotional and spiritual needs can be just as critical as the choice of treatment for the physical. From the moment of diagnosis, we all struggle with our role as patient, spouse, child, parent, sibling, friend. Even as we grieve in a deeply personal way, we are grieving together. Finding ways to share in our grief makes it possible to work through the physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges of these experiences. To share in anger. To share in hope. To share in faith. To share in love.

One such journey has served as the inspiration behind Aaron Perrine’s concerto for alto saxophone and wind ensemble, *It Has to Be Beautiful*. In the fall of 2013, Perrine discovered a CaringBridge post online. The post, written by his friend Tim, referenced Tim’s wife Toni and her ongoing struggle with breast cancer. This initial post provided inspiration for Perrine’s earlier work, *Only Light*. He continued to follow their story as they both regularly posted entries online until and after Toni’s death in October 2015. Discussing the concerto, Perrine states:

Sometimes you simply need to write a piece of music. From the moment I read Toni’s post, *It Has to Be Beautiful*, I knew. Kenneth [Tse] and I first discussed the idea of a concerto about four years ago, and I felt he would be the perfect person to further express the message so deeply embedded in her words. I reread those amazingly enlightened words every morning before I composed. The duality of my feelings was apparent; my heart constantly ached for things to somehow be different, yet I was comforted in knowing she was at peace and headed to a place more beautiful than any of us could ever imagine.

The first movement, “Screaming at the Sky,” is inspired by an entry written by Tim reflecting on his anger and frustration at their current situation. The second movement, “It Has to Be Beautiful,” is inspired by an entry written by Toni who, in the face of death, found hope in transitioning from this world to the next. The third movement, “Illumine,” is inspired by an entry that shares words from the homily given by the priest at her funeral.

I. “Screaming at the Sky”

*She can’t be sick, can she? She’s 41. We have plans. She has said from early on that she can’t wait until we retire so we can spend every minute together. When do we get to do that? She is 41, for crying out loud. . . . If you need me, I’ll be outside, screaming at the sky.*
II. “It Has to Be Beautiful”

I’m thankful for my special team of spiritual friends and guides who help me prepare for the Glory that awaits me. The balance there is difficult – wanting so much to be with Jesus but digging in my heels and wanting to stay here with my boys like I had planned all those years. But the word to notice here is I, not He. It is God’s Will, not mine, that is the best ending to this and all stories. I will ask for your prayers to help me remember to continually ask for and accept His Will for me. It cannot be a bad ending if He is in charge. It has to be beautiful.

III. “Illumine”

Even though I met Toni towards the end of her bodies’ [sic] journey, her soul was far from dimming. Maybe it was the fact that her body was dying before my eyes that was what made her soul so illumined. It made no sense to see the outside of her wither while the soul grew and glowed . . . only God would work such a marvel.

It Has to Be Beautiful was written for Kenneth Tse, Professor of Saxophone at the University of Iowa and premiered at the World Saxophone Congress in Zagreb, Croatia, on July 11, 2018.

–Justin T. Zanchuk326
CHAPTER 4: IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL: CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND WIND ENSEMBLE - ANALYSIS

What, exactly, is polarity? It is something much more than simple duality or opposition. For to say that opposites are polar is to say much more than that they are far apart: it is to say that they are related and joined – that they are the terms, ends, or extremities of a single whole.

– Alan W. Watts\(^{327}\)

Compositional History

Perrine’s concerto presents several extremes of human emotion, most notably the polar opposites of “rage and anger” and “acceptance and yearning.”\(^{328}\) Between those extremes is a wide chasm bridged by more nuanced and conflicted emotions. In the sixteen years between composing his first piece for band, In This Moment, and composing It Has to Be Beautiful, Perrine has refined his techniques and skills and has become more adept at expressing himself through music. An example of his growth as a composer is evidenced by his choice to redact two of his earliest works: Move and Snap. While “they served their purpose at the time,”\(^{329}\) Perrine does not see them as having as much value now. He has revisited and revised pieces before: In This Moment, for example, as well as his dissertation, which became Only Light and Beneath a Canvas of Green. Those two early works that he chose to redact would have required so many alterations that he preferred to simply start afresh. He is not the same composer he was in the early 2000s. Heidel said, “He's reading, he's listening, he's researching, and he’s still learning. . . . He is inventive. . . .”\(^{330}\) Indeed, Perrine continues to re-define himself.

\(^{328}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.
Through Perrine’s many changing roles (e.g., husband, father, professor, composer) and corresponding life experiences, there is no doubt that he has changed as a person. Even though his music has become more complex over the years, Perrine has retained his affinity for composing for winds and maintained an interest in music for saxophone. Therefore, while *It Has to Be Beautiful* is Perrine’s first concerto, it is not his first work for saxophone.

Perrine has composed multiple solo and ensemble works for saxophone and has returned to the genre multiple times. However, *It Has to Be Beautiful* is his most extensive solo feature to date and, thus far, his only solo concerto and only solo work accompanied by wind ensemble. At the time of this research, Perrine’s website lists five works for solo instrument, solo with accompaniment, or chamber ensemble. Of those pieces listed, three are for saxophone or saxophone ensemble. These saxophone pieces are *Flow* for alto saxophone and piano, *Bridge Suite* for alto saxophone and cello, and *Primal* for saxophone quartet.331 There is some indication that “a sonata for alto saxophone and piano”332 was also written by Perrine, but it is not listed among the works on his website.

*Bridge Suite* was premiered at the 2012 North American Saxophone Alliance Biennial Conference held in Tempe, Arizona. It is a ten-minute work encompassing classical, jazz, and rock elements. It includes the use of extended techniques such as multiphonics for the saxophonist and slapping the fingerboard for the cellist. Atypical notation within *Bridge Suite* is also used to indicate quarter tone tuning.333 Quarter tone tuning is also used and described in more detail in Perrine’s work for unaccompanied flute: *...of the Saints*.334

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Perrine’s saxophone quartet, *Primal*, was commissioned by the Missouri Saxophone Quartet and premiered at the 2012 World Saxophone Congress XVI held in St. Andrews, in Fife, Scotland.\(^{335}\) It was later performed by this same ensemble at the 2014 North American Saxophone Alliance Biennial Conference held in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois.\(^{336}\) *Primal* includes even more extensive use of extended techniques. These include multiphonics, glissandi, key clicks, quarter-tone tuning, flutter-tonguing, timbral trills, hisses/airnotes, aleatory, and slap tongue.\(^{337}\) Slap tongue is an “abrasive articulation that produces both the tone of the note fingered and an audible popping noise at the initiation of the tone. This popping noise is created by the release of suction placed on the reed by the tongue.”\(^{338}\) For many years, Perrine has sought out ways to showcase unconventional sounds via such extended techniques.

In addition to using extended techniques, Perrine has demonstrated past success blending multiple genres into a cohesive composition. In fact, his *Bridge Suite* was the result of his desire to craft “a composition influenced not only by the classical world, but also the world of jazz and rock.”\(^{339}\) *Bridge Suite* is just one example of Perrine’s ability to adapt to many musical environments. In *It Has to Be Beautiful*, Perrine proves further elasticity as a composer by delving into the worlds of minimalism and set theory.

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\(^{339}\) Perrine, Aaron. *Bridge Suite (for alto saxophone and cello)*. Longitude 91 Publications, 2011.
Compositional Style

Perrine is one of several composers born within a ten-year span who share some similar compositional qualities. Heidel has observed that some of the characteristics found in Perrine’s music have reminded him of some of Mackey’s slower pieces and maybe Steven Bryant. . . . Jonathan Newman has a number of works in that slow, lyrical, coloristic, style reminiscent of Aaron’s music. . . . I would also say Andrew Boss reminds me of Aaron. He’s another contemporary of Aaron’s.\textsuperscript{340}

Perrine’s works also share similarities with some established and venerable composers from an earlier generation. Heidel noted:

There are some glimpses of Ticheli in his writing. Especially where [Perrine] is writing rhythmic patterns of fives over four beats or fours over three beats in that kind of treatment of rhythm which is quickly evolving in his vocabulary . . . there are some shared characteristics.\textsuperscript{341}

Heidel’s comparison between Perrine and Ticheli goes even deeper than Perrine’s treatment of rhythm:

Aaron gravitates toward thinner, more economical textures generally and the importance of thinly scored individual colors is quite important . . . Aaron enjoys and excels at the more transparent, thinner scoring. I think of that like Ticheli. He is an economical writer.\textsuperscript{342}

Ticheli listens for four main criteria when he evaluates a composition. He

listens and looks for in any piece of music, to include his own compositions, these four elements: 1) aspects of singing and dancing. . . ., 2) authenticity with consistency in approach and application, 3) textures that sparkle and that are transparent, and 4) good counterpoint.\textsuperscript{343}

\textsuperscript{340} Heidel, Richard Mark. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. January 24, 2019. Iowa City, IA.
\textsuperscript{341} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{342} Ibid.
When Ticheli’s music was examined by John A. Darling, it was observed “that these ‘subjective’ elements do exist [sic] in Ticheli’s compositional approach and language.”344 Regrettably, though, not all music is as well-crafted and innovative. Darling warns against predictability and formulaic compositions:

Too often, new compositions of leading wind composers resemble their previous works. The forms and structures are designed to be learned quickly and to make the ensemble sound good with a minimum of effort, which normally means . . . lacking meaningful content. The textures are predictably full of block scoring and simplistic, repetitive rhythms. The counterpoint is uninspired and superficial.345

In addition to bearing some resemblance to Ticheli’s music, Perrine’s music has some shared characteristics with one of his inspirations: David Maslanka. Heidel observed

some similarities between Perrine and Maslanka. Both of their writing styles are broad and expansive. Slow. Slow-moving, slow-developing, and large-scale. I do see some similarities in that respect.346

Heidel also observed that Perrine’s concerto contains elements which are reminiscent of other concerti, “especially the Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Orchestra by Ingolf Dahl. There were sections that were slow and dramatic. . . .”347

While the music of Perrine and Maslanka share similarities in the way they pace their works, there certainly are differences in style. Heidel stated that when comparing Perrine to Maslanka,

Aaron gravitates toward thinner, more economical textures generally and he emphasizes individual colors in thinly scored sections. In Maslanka’s writing, the orchestrations tend to be more dense. Color is still obviously a prevalent feature in his writing, but Aaron enjoys and excels at transparent, thinner scoring.348

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345 Ibid.
347 Ibid.
348 Ibid.
Heidel has observed another key difference between the Maslanka and Perrine: how they employ intensity in their compositions differently and they also differ in how they build up to the more intense moments in their pieces. He noted:

There is little of Aaron’s music that I find to be “in your face.” He's pretty reserved about jumping out and hitting you with big impacts. He's careful and thoughtful to pace his music to whatever few climaxes exist. I think of Maslanka’s music as often being quite hard-hitting and aggressive, and quite effective. I think Aaron tempers that aspect quite a bit.349

This statement is indeed accurate; dramatic and sudden impacts or hits are rarely seen in Perrine’s oeuvre. Perrine currently has twenty completed wind band compositions in his catalogue. (See Appendix L.) Of those twenty existing pieces, few are “hard-hitting”350 or “in your face”351 or have moments with that type of character.

Perrine makes a concerted effort to continue to develop himself as a composer. For example, he does not use predictable formal structures, he eschews block scoring in favor of more interesting sonic mixtures, his music is seldom replete with repetitive rhythmic cells, and his counterpoint is never dull. Composers of Perrine’s generation were fortunate to play in bands which had access to inventive music written by such composers as Maslanka and Ticheli. Each generation of composers stands on the shoulders of the giants who have come before, enabling them to see further than previously possible, and Perrine is certainly representative of this notion.

Of these composers which have been compared to Perrine (Boss, Bryant, Mackey, Maslanka, Newman, and Ticheli), Perrine has only singled out Maslanka as a conscious influence.352 As noted earlier, it would be difficult to be a composer in the world of wind band music without experiencing some influence from these composers.

350 Ibid.
351 Ibid.
352 “Composer Aaron Perrine.” Northshore Concert Band.
The author agrees with Heidel’s comparison to the aforementioned composers. In particular, the music of Steven Bryant seems quite similar in ways to Perrine’s: their use of time, suspended animation, sustaining pitches. They are both, at times, intensely patient as their music slowly develops. The author also contends that Perrine also shares similarities with John Mackey. While Perrine’s chromaticism can often be found in slower-paced music and Mackey’s in more fast-paced music, the extra notes enhance the tertian harmonies. Also, Mackey’s affinity for percussion instruments (e.g., quantity of instruments called for as well as the quantity of time playing) is similar to Perrine. Both composers feature percussion instruments in prominent roles in their works and both have even called for the use of homemade percussion instruments. While Mackey’s catalogue initially included primarily forceful and fast music, his slower, lyric music contains some similarities to Perrine: metric variety and intense chromaticism.

Yet another composer to whom Perrine bears some resemblance is Eric Whitacre. They both use tight harmonies (and at time extended harmonies) and embrace dissonances for extended periods. Whitacre’s *October* is a commonly-performed work which includes many colorful textures and has moments of stasis similar to those found in Perrine’s writing. Whitacre’s *Equus* is much more frenetic and more closely resembles some of the layering, minimalist elements, and motor-like sections of *It Has to Be Beautiful*.

Perrine is currently contracted for another nine works to be completed in upcoming years. There are also two pieces redacted from his catalogue in which he has no interest in reviving or revising. Those pieces will not be included in any calculations in this document but are listed in Appendix L. Therefore, Perrine has twenty-nine current and future works for wind band in his catalogue. Perrine’s catalogue thus far includes more pieces for an “intermediate” difficulty than

any other difficulty level. Forty-one percent of his current and future works are of a difficulty level of “intermediate,” twenty-four percent are at the “advanced” difficulty level, seventeen percent are at the “beginner” difficulty level, and seventeen percent are at the “professional” difficulty level. (See Table 1.)

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<th>Difficulty Level</th>
<th>Number of Compositions</th>
<th>Percentage of 29 Works*</th>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 – Comparison of Difficulty Levels Present in Perrine’s Compositions for Wind Band

The instrumentation used in Perrine’s works is quite routine. However, *It Has to Be Beautiful* calls for two homemade percussion instruments; carriage bolt chimes and key chimes which will in most cases need to be constructed. If one is interested in performing additional compositions by Perrine, it may be advisable to keep the carriage bolt chimes and key chimes intact after the performance because Perrine’s catalogue includes a number of works which call for one or the other or both of these instruments. Perrine’s percussion writing is integral to the overall effect of the work, and the mallet percussion parts are significant melodic contributors. In *It Has to Be Beautiful* there are no parts for snare drum or bass drum.

* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
There are numerous instances where Perrine’s use of thinly-scored textures creates intimate settings. The tutti passages in this work are mainly for added emphasis and energy. The existence of a predominantly lighter texture also helps the soloist to be prominently displayed amidst so many other wind instruments, including four other saxophones. The sense of space, of openness, that exists in Perrine’s music is often vertical in nature due to wide spacing between a small number of instruments. When the sense of suspended animation is horizontal in nature, as is common in the slowly unfolding motion of many of his works, it is important to take one’s time: “not just blowing through some of those moments is important.” According to Perrine, in It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone,

There are a lot of fermatas, there are a lot of notes that sit and they sometimes remain dissonant for uncomfortably long periods of time. And I love that. I simply love that. To me that's interesting. That might not be for everybody, but I love that.\footnote{Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. October 2, 2018. Mount Vernon, IA.}

It is Perrine’s pacing that creates a sense of anticipation and interest in his music.

Perrine enjoys finding alternative voicings for chords so that he can use dissonant pitches but, when spaced far enough apart, the dissonance is less grating. He also enjoys treating conventional chord tones as extended harmonies. To this end, Perrine reflected on his time as a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. His private study with Dean Sorenson, and Sorenson’s jazz arranging course were influential. Perrine recalled, “[Sorenson] programmed a lot of my jazz charts at the University of Minnesota as well.”\footnote{Ibid.} Other opportunities also came about that influenced Perrine’s understanding of conventional chord tones serving as extended harmonies: when Sorenson would connect Perrine with any visiting guest artists for lessons.

Perrine specifically remembers

\footnote{Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. November 14, 2018. Iowa City, IA.}
some of the things I learned in lessons with Fred Sturm. . . . Especially . . . voicings and how if you actually take a chord and voice it in a certain way . . . all of a sudden, “Oh, the third can actually feel like an extended harmony . . . it's not the 11th, it's not the sharp whatever, it's the third of the chord.” So . . . the voicings are super important. For me, that comes from studying jazz, it comes from jazz piano. . . .

Perrine was able to apply creative voicings to sections of the concerto, especially those which more prominently feature the piano, harp, and mallet percussion.

Instrumentation and Score Notes

The instruments called for in It Has to Be Beautiful are conventional with the exception of the percussion instruments needed and the prominence of the harp (See Appendix M: It Has to Be Beautiful – Instrumentation). Of note is Perrine’s instruction that “this is an exact instrumentation except for the clarinets, which are doubled.” As mentioned previously, rhythmic precision is a major obstacle to a pristine performance of this work. The inclusion of too many additional players would obfuscate Perrine’s intricate rhythmic layers. Furthermore, increasing the number of performers in the ensemble beyond the composer’s recommendations would result in issues of balance with the soloist.

The piano and the harp contribute significantly to the overall texture at many points in the concerto. Each has its own featured moments unaccompanied as well as prominent melodic material with wind accompaniment. The piano and harp parts, while challenging, are not virtuosic. Perrine’s skill as a pianist helped him to create idiomatic writing for the piano and he consulted a reliable source to proof read his harp parts; that will be described in more detail in

Chapter 5. The pianist and harpist each have a responsibility to develop a cohesive interpretation with one another and also with the soloist. These musicians lead several sections of chamber music in the concerto.

The required percussion instruments could prove problematic. The score calls for the following percussion instruments: two marimbas, two vibraphones (played with bows as well as with mallets), tam-tam, medium suspended cymbal, large suspended cymbal, two sets of pitched gongs, and two homemade instruments which Perrine has included in several of his compositions: carriage bolt chimes and key chimes.

Two sets of four pitched gongs are needed to perform this piece. The first set of pitched gongs calls for gongs tuned to B-flat3, C-sharp4, C5, and D5. The second set of pitched gongs calls for gongs tuned to C-sharp4, A4, E-flat5, and F5. It is important to note that the two sets of pitched gongs are played by the marimba players who are located on opposite sides of the stage. Therefore, due to the staging, it would not be advisable for two musicians to share a single C-sharp4 gong. Ideally, there should be a C-sharp4 gong located on each side of the stage. (For a photograph of the second set of pitched gongs, located at stage left, see Appendix N.)

It should be noted that it is necessary to stage one marimba and one vibraphone on each side of the ensemble in order to achieve a stereophonic or antiphonal effect. Perrine would prefer “to put the vibraphones at the front of the stage to help support the sound. So [the soloist] is playing in this music box of sound.”358 The author suggested amending the “stage right” or “stage left” percussion staging instructions to read “up stage right” or “up stage left.” This idea was met with approval from Perrine, who said that he “could add some performance notes . . . to clarify that . . . .”359 He elaborated further on this point:

359 Ibid.
I want the vibraphones out front, so they can play that, there's all that canonic material happening in the beginning of the third movement that I couldn't hear [at the world premiere]. I don't know if they were playing it or not just based on the sheer set up of the ensemble or maybe the space itself.  

Providing a seating chart is seldom necessary in wind band compositions, but in this case, it would help ensembles maximize the impact of the spatial effects in the percussion writing.

Seating charts have appeared in various scores in the repertoire. For example, in Karel Husa’s 1982 composition *Concerto for Wind Ensemble*, “... a unique aspect of the piece is the seating arrangement which is specified in the preface of the score.” Far from being arbitrary, Husa deliberately designated his seating arrangement in order to help listeners more readily observe his compositional goals. Similar to the stereophonic effects produced in *It Has to be Beautiful*, a particularly striking “feature of [Husa’s] seating plan is the location of the percussion instruments. The five timpani are located on the conductor’s left... with the other percussion instruments on the opposite side of the ensemble.”

The score for *It Has to Be Beautiful* does not include diagrams or seating charts and therefore does not draw much attention to the need for a mirrored, or antiphonal, mallet percussion setup. Marimba one and vibraphone one are both to be located on stage right, and marimba two and vibraphone two are both to be located on stage left. The mallet setup is only parenthetically mentioned on page five of the score within the staff for the percussion instruments. More attention could be drawn to this important detail. In addition to the spatial requirements of the mallet percussion setup, Perrine discussed that the piano and the harp should be located close together because there are a lot of times when they are playing unison, or the harp will come in halfway through the piano’s line and then

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add to it. The harpist should basically be right next to the pianist, so they can make eye contact, so they can actually physically see each other, and then play off each other. I envision them both together stage left.  

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of preparing the percussion setup will be the time spent making the carriage bolt chimes and key chimes. Perrine’s use of these unique instruments dates back to earlier pieces such as *Beneath a Canvas of Green, Pale Blue on Deep, Only Light,* and *...to the Wind.* In the scores to these works, Perrine has noted that “carriage bolt chimes and key chimes are homemade instruments, similar in effect to wind chimes.” Perrine has commented that, to his ears, the sound created by typical wind chimes sounds “too perfect, too Disney.” Thus, he instead prefers the variety and imperfection found in the sounds of these homemade instruments.

Besides calling for homemade percussion instruments, Perrine also experimented with the percussion technique of bending pitches on the vibraphone, which he has included in the second movement. This was discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3. Another of his experimentations occurs in mm. 46-47 of movement two: the use of soft cluster bars. These percussion-striking implements are used to play several notes at once, akin to the tone clusters which appear in the piano music of Henry Cowell (1897-1965). (See Appendix O.) In Cowell’s music, tone clusters were

a chord made up of adjacent notes played simultaneously. A simple example may be played on the piano by pressing down on the keys with a flat palm. Tone clusters may also be played with the fists or forearms. . . . While Cowell did not claim to have invented the technique, he systematically incorporated it into numerous works, along with other innovative approaches to sound production on the piano.

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368 Perrine, Aaron. Rehearsal with the University of Iowa, Symphony Band. November 12, 2018.
Cowell also contributed to the repertory of extended techniques for piano via “a variety of other groundbreaking techniques for stroking, strumming and plucking inside the piano, directly on the strings, which he dubbed the string piano.”\textsuperscript{370} Perrine’s use of soft cluster bars (which are also known as cluster mallets) is similar to the forearm technique of Cowell used to create “a wash of sound.”\textsuperscript{371} Perrine stated that the use of the soft cluster bars is

\begin{quote}
one thing I tried because honestly, I read it about them in a percussion book. \ldots they are each roughly the size of a fifth. You can take one and play a fifth, all the white notes or at least three black notes, together and get those clusters. \ldots I don’t know how common they are. So, I thought, well, we’ll just find out. I wrote the carriage bolt chimes that one time and all of a sudden that became a thing.\textsuperscript{372}
\end{quote}

The absence of soft cluster bars in one’s percussion inventory should not prevent this piece from being performed. Approximating the intent with four-mallet technique would suffice if an alternative mallet is not available; using disc-shaped tam-tam/gong mallets may also produce the desired effect. For a photograph of soft cluster bars/mallets, see Appendix P.

Heidel has singled out Perrine’s treatment of the percussion section as particularly noteworthy. That’s because Perrine composes in such a way that percussion is important to the overall aesthetic of his pieces. His novel use of the instruments and his inclusion of atypical instruments is also significant. Heidel stated:

\begin{quote}
I give considerable focus to the percussion writing. I'm careful. He is inventive in his writing for percussion and so I try to be especially attentive to what he is asking for in terms of the instruments and effects. I find his percussion writing to be quite interesting.\textsuperscript{373}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{371} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.

\textsuperscript{372} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. October 2, 2018. Mount Vernon, IA.

\textsuperscript{373} Heidel, Richard Mark. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. January 24, 2019. Iowa City, IA.
I. “Screaming at the Sky” – Form and Structure

A concerto is defined as “an instrumental work that maintains contrast between an orchestral ensemble and a smaller group or a solo instrument, or among various groups of an undivided orchestra.” This aptly describes Aaron Perrine’s first concerto, *It Has to Be Beautiful*, and his intent to prominently display Tse as the focal point of the work.

Three movements comprise *It Has to Be Beautiful*. As noted in *Grove Music Online*, a structure of three movements has been used in concerti for centuries:

Before 1700, the term [concerto] was applied to pieces in a variety of forms for an even greater variety of performing media, voices as well as instruments; it was also used in the sense of ‘ensemble’ or ‘orchestra’. Not until the beginning of the 18th century was the term applied consistently (though not exclusively) to works in three movements (fast–slow–fast) for soloist and orchestra, two or more soloists and orchestra (concerto grosso) or undivided orchestra. . . . In the late 18th century and during most of the 19th the solo concerto was a prominent form of virtuoso display.

Perrine’s concerto does not adhere to the common fast-slow-fast configuration of the three movements which is so prevalent among concerti. The fast-slow-fast model allows for numerous opportunities for soloists to demonstrate their superior technical capabilities. Concerti with a fast-slow-fast layout often include a cadenza serving as an exciting introduction to the third movement and/or an extended unaccompanied cadenza towards the conclusion of the third movement. These conventions have evolved over time, but one person left indelible marks on the development of the concerto: the Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741). Vivaldi wrote over five hundred concerti and therefore “laid the foundations for the mature Baroque concerto. His contributions to musical style, violin technique, and the practice of orchestration were


375 Ibid.
substantial, and he was a pioneer of orchestral program music.” He was idolized by many of his contemporaries, and his methods have been copied by innumerable composers ever since. Vivaldi helped standardize the alternation between soloist and the accompanying ensemble. It is said that

If he did not invent ritornello form . . . he was at least the first composer to use it regularly in the fast movements of concertos, so providing his contemporaries with the models they were seeking. The same is true of the standard three-movement plan.

Perrine’s three-movement plan for his inaugural concerto is slow-slow-slow, a vast departure from Vivaldi’s fast-slow-fast blueprints. Much of Perrine’s catalogue is known for being contemplative, introspective, and lyric. While he has composed fast-paced works, it is his slower, more reflective works that have garnered him the most critical and popular acclaim. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Perrine was encouraged that other composers (e.g., Leshnoff, Love, Puckett) were making the concerto fit their own compositional voice. Perrine felt free to create a concerto to his own liking without being beholden to tradition. The overall architecture of Perrine’s entire concerto is shown below in Table 2. While key areas are listed, it should be stated once again that Perrine seldom writes in terms of diatonic and functional harmony: his use of chromaticism pervades all of his writing and the many nuances colors he seeks are not as simple as tertian harmony.

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377 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Key Areas</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Screaming at the Sky</td>
<td>1-48</td>
<td>c.5:30</td>
<td>Gb Lydian, C7, d, B7, A Lydian</td>
<td>A-B-A’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>It Has to Be Beautiful</td>
<td>1-92</td>
<td>c.6:00</td>
<td>Db, Gb, D, F#, E, Gb</td>
<td>A-A’-B-Trans-Recit-Recit-C-A’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Illumine</td>
<td>1-121</td>
<td>c.6:15</td>
<td>Ab, Bb, F, d half-dim, Eb/f</td>
<td>Intro-A-Recit-B-Coda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 – *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* – Overall Architecture

The general formal structure of the first movement is similar to that of a ternary ABA’ form. For an arch map of the form of I. “Screaming at the Sky,” see Figure 1. The soloist does not enter until m. 17 so the initial presentation of the A material in effect serves as an introduction. Furthermore, since Perrine described the first movement as an introduction to the rest of the concerto, the preliminary A material effectively functions as an introduction to the introduction. The A material is presented in G-flat Lydian with significant usage of chromaticism. Several sustained minor seconds present themselves almost immediately; in m. 2, the texture and harmonies become much denser and richer. The staggered clarinet entrances function as outbursts of Diem’s “anger” and “rage.” The rolling piano figure continues unabated as the glue that holds the A material together.

![Figure 1 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” Arch Map](image-url)
The B section begins at m. 17. Here, a chord is presented a la opera recitative. As it begins to fade, the soloist begins a soliloquy. Meter is cast aside, and the soloist is left to interpret the cadenza to their own personal taste. They have significant opportunities for personal expression via the aleatoric nature of Perrine’s feathered beaming notation\textsuperscript{378} and the unaccompanied nature of this extended feature section. For an example of feathered beaming notation, see Figure 2. Several more accompanimental chords are used, and after approximately one minute of cadenza, the recitation concludes.

![Figure 2 – Example of Feathered Beaming Notation\textsuperscript{379}](image)

A strict sense of time returns at m. 23. Here, the bubbling and rippling effects of the clarinets are bolstered by the flutes, bassoons, and mallet percussion, each with their own rhythm of cascading notes. The A’ section, which begins at m. 23, is based on A Lydian, the ensemble having been introduced to that key center by the soloist in the recitative. The tonality remains related to A Lydian until the end of the first movement. At m. 23, the scoring for the A’ section also includes the soloist. The music intensifies as louder dynamic ranges are explored and thicker textures are employed. The trumpets and oboe present a sextuplet motive in m. 24 that will be taken up by the soloist. This motive will reappear, albeit rhythmically modified, several times in

\textsuperscript{378} Feathered beaming notation graphically represents a gradual change in the speed of notes. An indeterminate number of notes is typically performed, and the number of notes is not as important as the effect of acceleration or deceleration. The location of stem placement reflects the rate of tempo change; condensing of stems represents acceleration whereas expansion of stems represents deceleration.

the second movement. By m. 33, the ensemble and the soloist have reached a fever pitch. Accented fortissimo entrances occur on main beats and also appear on eighth note and sixteenth note subdivisions of the beat. These bombastic chords combine with the tremolo in both flute parts, the incessant rippling of the piano, and four rhythmically active mallet percussion parts to create a substantial masking of the beat and meter. Over the top of this instability, the soloist then “screams” in the altissimo range. In m. 37, the frustration and anger begin to subside. Slowly, the orchestration begins to thin, the soloist descends from the altissimo register, the dynamic levels decrease, and the rhythmic cacophony gives way to simpler rhythms with fewer layers. After the soloist crescendos into a multiphonic accompanied by two pitched gongs, the music fades to niente. The screaming has ended.

I. “Screaming at the Sky” – Musical Elements

Even though the first movement begins at a slow tempo, the opening measures are anything but tranquil. Perrine wrote an exciting and interesting opening to his inaugural concerto, immediately inundating the listener with a powerful chord from the ensemble and rapid passages in the percussion and clarinets. This initial “wash of sound”\(^{380}\) is created by a florid mix of scales and arpeggios played by the clarinets, harp, and piano. Later, at A’, beginning at m. 23, additional instruments are added to create even more chaos via layering of various rhythmic units: flute, bassoon, and mallet percussion.

In addition to obfuscating the metric pulse of the opening of the concerto, the techniques that Perrine has employed (e.g., varying rhythms, staggered entrances) also work to mask the

\(^{380}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.
tonality. The use of G-flat Lydian with its characteristic raised fourth scale degree also disorients the listener and lends itself to a feeling of tonal ambiguity. (See Figure 3.)

![Figure 3 – G-flat Lydian Scale](image)

In addition to the rapidly occurring notes, Perrine further contributed to the undulating effect by simultaneously utilizing multiple divisions of the beat: twelve notes per beat in the harp and eight notes per beat (thirty-second notes) in the piano. (See Figure 4.)

![Figure 4 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” m. 1, Thirty-Second Notes (Piano) vs. Dodecuplet (Harp)](image)

This attention-grabbing rippling effect is also highlighted by the staggered entrances in the clarinets, the feathered beaming pseudo-aleatoric notation for the timpani, and the tremolos in

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381 Excerpts from *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* are included in this document with the permission of Dr. Aaron Perrine (See Appendix Q).
both marimba parts. (See Figure 5, Figure 6 and Figure 7.) Such tonal and metric ambiguity was a calling card for Impressionist composers such as Claude Debussy (1862-1918). Among wind band literature, examples of metric ambiguity appear in *Toccata Marziale* by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958). At times, the meter in *Toccata Marziale* seems unsteady and changing. Such metric masking also appears in the music of a later generation of composers such as Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996) and Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962). Similar to the opening measures for the harp’s in *It Has to Be Beautiful*, Takemitsu also called for similar figuration in his compositions. He labeled such harp playing “Aeolian rustling.”

Holliday used the term “rhythmic deception” to label instances of obscured meter when analyzing the music of Steven Bryant, and this description could also be used to label some of the effects in Perrine’s music.

![Figure 5 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” mm. 1-2, Clarinets, Staggered Entrances](image)

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383 Holliday, Guy M. “Steven Bryant’s *Concerto for Wind Ensemble*: Musical Analysis and Considerations for Conductors.” DMA project paper, Claremont Graduate University, 2013.
Clearly, Perrine’s innovations and experimentations extend beyond the use of homemade percussion instruments. He is always open to new ideas. Heidel shared that during the rehearsal process, the Symphony Band had to work through some of the effects like the glissandi, which were a little bit awkward. I think he’s still experimenting but it’s clear that he knows what he’s hearing. When he was here, he actually heard the slow flute four-beat glissando and how difficult it is to perform. He's reading, he's listening, he's researching, and he’s still learning.  

An example of a four-beat glissando in the first flute part is shown below in Figure 8.

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Another development in Perrine’s writing for wind band is the increased rhythmic complexity. According to Heidel, Perrine is becoming more rhythmically daring. The author has also observed this progression. A comparison of Perrine’s earlier works (e.g., *In This Moment, April*) to his more recent works (e.g., *Beneath a Canvas of Green, It Has to Be Beautiful*) reveals an increasing emphasis on the layering of various rhythmic figures and how these layers interact with one another.

In Perrine’s works, color is a vital component. In m. 1, Perrine immediately evades the expectations of what a band will sound like: he calls for the trombones to use Harmon mutes with the stem out until m. 23. Similarly, the euphonium and tuba play muted at points to provide a gentler tone. In mm. 6-10 the trumpets are instructed to play using Harmon mutes with the stem out. From the start, Perrine uses atypical colors in this composition. Those familiar with Perrine’s catalogue will know that timbre is immensely important to him. Effects like tremolo, flutter tonguing, and glissandi create interest.

At m. 9, the first tutti arrival at a forte dynamic occurs. Here, the clarinets and piano again perform the florid figuration which occurred in m. 1. At this point however, the harp and marimba 1 deviate from the scales and arpeggios to provide their own rhythmically oriented

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material. The masking of the meter continues throughout mm. 13-15 due to Perrine’s simultaneous use of duple and triple meter and the insertion of rests. At m. 17, the first recitative section begins.

The harp, piano, marimbas, and vibraphones present a collection of pitches: A, B-flat, C, D, E, F, and G. This resembles a chord strummed on guitar or harpsichord and then left to decay: as often appears in opera recitatives of previous centuries. The soloist then presents a monologue. In this particular recitative, there are multiple instances of rapid tonguing on a single pitch. Here, feathered beaming notation is employed in the soloist’s part and, therefore, the number of notes to be played is approximate. (See Figure 9.)

![Figure 9 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” m. 17, Solo Alto Saxophone, Feathered Beaming Notation](image)

While only six measures long, the recitative will take approximately one minute to perform. Four more accompanimental chords are provided during the recitative: three chords are played by percussion, harp, and piano and only one chord is played by the winds: flutes, clarinets, and trombones. The pitch centers around G at the beginning of the recitative and shifts to A by its end. The recitative is marked “Very Free (\( \dot{=} \) c.35)” and there is no meter, indicated by the “X” in the time signature.\footnote{386 Perrine encountered challenges with the score layout. This prompted him to begin using the Dorico notation software. Perrine shared that the extended cadenzas then became much easier to notate. \textit{It Has to Be Beautiful} is the first piece he engraved with Dorico. He plans to use Dorico exclusively going forward.}
From m. 33 to m. 48, the dynamic level gradually softens, and the rhythmic vitality slowly dissipates. These measures are a steady transition and easing of tension from the powerful climactic section until the end of the movement. The effect is that one feels as though they have been screaming at the sky until they have reached the point of sheer exhaustion. The final sounds of the movement are a multiphonic played by the solo alto saxophone and two gongs pitched a major seventh apart. The fluttering effect achieved by that particular multiphonic is reminiscent of a guttural growl. The saxophone blends with the metallic sounds of the pitched gongs, and all sound fades to oblivion.

Perrine used multiphonics in *It Has to Be Beautiful* quite sparingly. The two multiphonics were deliberately chosen to match the other pitches and timbres occurring simultaneously. While Perrine used multiphonics in earlier compositions, this concerto may be the first instance of him using multiphonics to fit the accompaniment or other parts rather than as a special effect or for novelty. This parallels the observations of Marcus Weiss and Giorgio Netti who contend that the use of multiphonics in compositions has changed over time:

What began as the use of opaque blocks of sound functioning as contrast or even interference within the flow of monodic music has developed, in certain cases, into a material that has become fully integrated within the musical discourse. The multiphonic has grown from an isolated sound effect into a complex element in close relationship with its context. . . . The initial opaqueness of these sounds opened up to more transparency and a more differentiated approach.

More details about the two multiphonics will be presented in Chapter 6.

Creating interesting timbres is one of Perrine’s primary goals. He said that color is a compositional element which “I think about all the time in my music.” Along with a strong

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390 Zanchuk, Justin T. “The Influence of Minimalist Compositional Techniques on Literature for Wind Ensemble.”
emphasis on timbre, his treatment of harmonic material and his slowly unfolding formal
structures have helped him attain success and popularity. While these characteristics are not
unique among composers, these traits have helped Perrine achieve success while staying true to
his own compositional voice. The author described the pacing and the motion of *It Has to Be
Beautiful* as glacial, and Perrine agreed. It is this slow unfolding of the music that is interesting
to Perrine. He shared the following thoughts regarding pacing and slow tempi:

> How can we make this an effective piece? But it's not all this fast stuff all the time. It is in fact very slow, most of it. So how can this be an effective 20-minute piece? So, the way it moves through time is going to be extremely challenging I think... So not just blowing through some of those moments is important. Looking for all those unique little timbral things, all those colors, and just that sound between the notes. For me that's endlessly fascinating.  

The need for the conductor and ensemble members to maintain reliable tempi at such slow speeds is paramount to a successful experience. Metronome work with the ensemble and with individual conducting preparations may exceed what is typical for a conductor, soloist, or ensemble preparing a piece. As Perrine learned from Gompper, pacing is important, and it would be easy to dynamically peak too soon in this concerto. The same could be said of the *rubato* sections – something Perrine warned against when he said to avoid “blowing through some of those moments.”

Perrine’s use of slow tempi is incredibly consistent. The use of various tempi within I. “Screaming at the Sky,” is shown below in Table 3. The total percentages of the first movement which each tempo constitutes is outlined in Table 4.

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392 Ibid.
Table 3 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” Use of Tempo

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<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
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Table 4 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” Percentage Each Tempo is Used

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<th>Tempo</th>
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<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\mathcal{Q} = 48$</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Meter</td>
<td>$\mathcal{Q} = \text{c. 35}$</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In I. “Screaming at the Sky,” each change of meter also exactly corresponds to each change in tempo. Every 4/4 measure is to be performed at $\mathcal{Q} = 48$. Each non-metered measure is to be played at $\mathcal{Q} = \text{c. 35}$. Such a distinct relationship between tempo and meter is not prevalent in movements two and three.
I. “Screaming at the Sky” – Atonal Elements

Perrine’s process for generating much of the pitch material in movement one was based on the atonal analytical technique known as set theory. For example, in the measure prior to the soloist’s recitative, a collection of pitches is used which is not necessarily a chord. Perrine found inspiration in the works of the Italian composer Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-1975). Dallapiccola composed atonal music in such a style that it was often melodically and harmonically pleasing to the ear. Perrine especially enjoyed one particular collection of pitches from Dallapiccola’s catalogue (see Figure 10) and therefore Perrine scored an almost identical collection of pitches (see Figure 11).

Figure 10 – Luigi Dallapiccola’s "Quartina,” no. 11 from *Quaderno musicale di Annalibera per pianoforte (1952-1953)*, mm. 1-2

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At this point, defining some elements of atonal analysis may assist the reader. It is the author’s view that many terms and labels are used incorrectly when discussing atonal music.
“Atonal” refers to music which “normally does not feature any kind of tonal center or pitch centricity.”  

Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951), one of the foremost figures in composition during the twentieth century, as well as the originator of the twelve-tone method and the *paterfamilias* of the Second Viennese School, preferred the term “pantonal” because every note/tone is equal; there is not a lack of tonality – there is an parity of tonality. Unfortunately, the terms “serialism,” “twelve-tone method,” and “atonal” are often used interchangeably and incorrectly. There are actually numerous methods by which to create or analyze atonal music. Serialism and the twelve-tone method are both approaches but not the only means by which one can create or examine atonal music. To further clarify:

The twelve-tone method is also often called serialism. Serialism, however, refers to the compositional technique in which a row or series is used, no matter what the size of the row might be. Thus, serialism is not necessarily ‘twelve-tone serialism.’ . . . If we want to make it clear that we are referring to the twelve-tone method, and not just to any serialism, we should use the term ‘twelve-tone serialism.’

The above clarifications are necessary because Perrine did, in fact, use some atonal methods of composition; however, those means at his disposal were not serialism (of pitch, rhythm, dynamic, timbre, etc.) nor were they the twelve-tone method. Perrine instead composed while thinking in terms of pitch-class set theory, commonly referred to as set theory. This means that he did not use full rows of twelve tones, but he still avoided preferential treatment of pitches and clear tonal centers. It has been stated that “Music in which pitch centricity is normally avoided . . . is often based on collections of pitch classes, used both motivically or as harmonic building blocks.” By moving away from pitch centricity, or tonality, helped Perrine explore a new dimension of composing.

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Pitch-class set theory, as used by Perrine,

is particularly useful to label small pitch-class collections and to compare and relate such collections among themselves . . . the system can be used analytically to uncover relationships that have immediate musical interest, but also that it would be much more difficult to discover some of those relationships without recourse to pitch-class set theory.\textsuperscript{396}

The use of small groupings of pitches, whether melodically or harmonically, was appealing to Perrine for multiple reasons, which he shared in no particular order. First, this piece would be “the second piece I have ever written using set theory.”\textsuperscript{397} Perrine, therefore, saw this concerto as an opportunity to continue to learn as a composer and further hone his craft.

Secondly, Perrine had long enjoyed the sonorities found in the piano music by Dallapiccola. In particular, Perrine found “Quartina,” no. 11 from \textit{Quaderno musicale di Annalibera} especially striking. Dallapiccola was a composer who used the twelve-tone method ingeniously throughout his career to craft compositions which were economical and quite palatable to the listener. His “most universally accepted later pieces have on the whole been short and lyrical” and other works from his earlier years demonstrated “calmer, more lyrical textures.”\textsuperscript{398} Dallapiccola was “interested in discovering possible melodic applications of the twelve-tone system.”\textsuperscript{399} It is accurate to say that “the music, not the method, was Dallapiccola’s priority.”\textsuperscript{400} Perrine chose to use some of Dallapiccola’s musical material as a starting point for composing \textit{It Has to Be Beautiful}. Two sonorities, pitch collections rather than chords, were especially captivating for Perrine:

\textsuperscript{397} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.
\textsuperscript{399} Stoldt, F. Chlod. “Luigi Dallapiccola’s \textit{Quaderno Musicale Di Annalibera}: Interpretive Implications for Piano Performance Derived from Organ Registration/Technique, Orchestration, Text, and Film.” DMA essay, the University of Iowa, 2003.
\textsuperscript{400} Ibid.
I just love the voicings. The first day I taught that particular piece... I played it at the piano and asked, “What do you think of that?” Their ears kind of perked up... it sounds almost like jazz. Like a jazz pianist playing. It has all these melodies and yet it’s twelve tone.401

Perrine also shared that he

was using these two [Dallapiccola] sonorities. I was playing around with them in this first movement. And it's pretty much just like [plays sonority] right? I believe it’s that voicing right there. Yes, that’s the opening sonority, right? So, the first movement uses these sonorities that came from Dallapiccola. I used those two for the opening movement.402

Perrine’s favorite of these sonorities, referenced in the quotation above, is shown in Figure 12.

This excerpt from Appendix C is in Perrine’s own hand.

![Musical notation]

Figure 12 – Dallapiccola Sonority #1

The second sonority used by Dallapiccola which Perrine was drawn to is shown below in Figure 13. This excerpt from Appendix C is also written in Perrine’s own hand.

402 Ibid.
Perrine’s third reason for including set theory in his concerto was the fact that he was teaching set theory to his students at Cornell College at the time. In effect, he wanted to demonstrate to himself that not only could he teach about the analysis and methods of atonal composition, but he could also compose using those methods. He said:

I was teaching theory at the time. That's when I conceived the idea of writing it in this fashion. This came from an example that I use, one of my favorite examples, to introduce the students to twelve-tone music that doesn’t sound like twelve-tone music.⁴⁰³

Here, Perrine is again referring to the Dallapiccola sonorities found in “Quartina,” no. 11 from Quaderno musicale di Annalibera. Perrine’s fascination with jazz voicings helped him appreciate Dallapiccola’s work. Perrine said:

I love this chord. I've loved it for years. . . . “That's going to be in the concerto somewhere. I'm going to sneak that in somewhere.” It’s a great chord. It’s a great voicing. I love that 7th below. It’s simple but it is brilliant. And that's what I want to resonate: the mallets, the harp, and the piano and then all of a sudden [Tse] just sneaks in there.⁴⁰⁴

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⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.
The chord which Perrine is referring to is the collection of pitches displayed previously in Figure 12.

The final reason for wanting to compose while using set theory was Perrine’s desire to take some chances with the composition. To avoid becoming predictable, he wanted to try using a method which would take some of the creative choices out of his hands. His rationale was that he needed to force himself to make music and choose notes that he wouldn’t otherwise choose.

Perrine was poised and ready to use small collections of pitches, but he now needed to establish how these sets would progress into meaningful music. Therefore, he chose to use abstract complements to force his hand and break free of habits or tendencies typical in his writing. Abstract complements of a set are the literal complement (pitches not included in the set) reordered into prime form (ascending by interval, beginning with the smallest interval). By setting certain parameters, Perrine took a significant amount of agency out of his own hands. He stated:

I like some of the processes that I have learned through studying atonal music. I like taking those and putting my own spin on them. Finding tonality within that by meetings of common tones, by means of voice leading, by means of the spacing, the chord construction, and all of that. For me there's also this element of texture and timbre that are so vital to the way I think about music.⁴⁰⁵

Rather than let the process and the parameters dictate all of his pitch material, Perrine reserved the right to alter pitches if he did not like the results. Again, Perrine’s goal of using set theory and abstract complements was that he wanted to avoid being identified as a composer whose music all sounds the same. He said that he doesn’t “want to be pigeonholed into any one type of genre.”⁴⁰⁶ He wants to push against any possible typecasting of him and his music. In an interview, Perrine shared a bit more about his use of abstract complements:

What this did for me, it allowed me to introduce pitches in a way I wouldn’t have normally chosen by free will. I chose the game because I set up the parameters so it’s my will at the beginning. . . . But still there was some element of “according to this road map I have to do ‘blank’ next. . . .” That's where some of these pitch choices came from as far as how this chord is slowly changing . . . using some common tones and then slowly introducing new pitches.407

A diagram of Perrine’s abstract complements can be found in Appendix C, on page 1 of 3.

I. “Screaming at the Sky” – Motivic Elements

The first movement of It Has to Be Beautiful has several distinct motives. The steadily undulating material in the pianist’s left hand is the most common: it appears in a total of thirty-five of the movement’s forty-eight measures. Glissandi from the harp also appear quite frequently. The staggered clarinet entrances appear multiple times and, as a gestural effect, reinforce the piano and harp.

The soloist’s opening cadenza provides two motives of a more melodic nature. The first such motive is simply a descending minor third. This interval concludes the first instance of feathered beaming in the soloist’s part. (See Figure 14.)

Figure 14 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” m. 17, Solo Alto Saxophone, Descending Minor Third Motive

By using a descending minor third as the initial interval by the unaccompanied soloist, Perrine draws a significant amount of attention to its existence. As will be discussed throughout this chapter, this “sighing” or “sobbing” motive appears numerous times in *It Has to Be Beautiful*. The solo line prominently displays the descending minor third two more times before the monologue is completed.

The descending minor third motive is a frequently recurring motive in the soloist’s part and in the wind accompaniment. At times, its usage is subtle, and at other times, it is displayed quite overtly. The descending minor third initially appears in m. 17, reappears in m. 19, and surfaces again almost verbatim in m. 21. Perrine uses it again in m. 26, m. 29, m. 30, m. 33, m. 34, m. 35, and m. 36. While the rhythm rarely stays similar, the “sighing” or “sobbing” motive is persistent. The descending minor third also appears in the soloist’s part in mm. 43-44. This time it is used as part of a rhythmically-augmented line. The first movement is not the only usage of the descending minor third melodic motive. This will be discussed in more detail in the analyses of the other two movements.

Harmonically, the interval of a minor third also appears in “I. Screaming at the Sky.” One instance is the tremolo in both flute parts at m. 33. (See Figure 15.) Another harmonic use of the minor third, and a subtler usage, occurs at m. 23. At this point, the soloist’s introductory cadenza has concluded and the *tutti* ensemble enters. The tonal center has just shifted from G-flat Lydian in the A section to A Lydian in the A’ section. Perrine pointed out, “We went up a minor third. Do you remember the original motive? A minor third. There are a lot of minor thirds in this piece.”

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In addition to the descending minor third motive already discussed, there is a second melodic motive which Perrine uses multiple times in the first movement. This has been labeled by the author as the sextuplet motive and it is the second motive introduced by the soloist. It first appears in m. 18 as part of the soloist’s introductory cadenza. (See Figure 16.) Its initial appearance includes octave displacement and an ever-increasing wedge contour, but subsequent uses more closely resemble scalar passages. (See Figure 17.) This motive is not exclusive to the first movement, as will be discussed soon.

Figure 15 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” m. 33, Flute, Minor Third Tremolo

Figure 16 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” m. 18, Solo Alto Saxophone, Sextuplet Motive
II. “It Has to Be Beautiful” – Form and Structure

Movement two of *It Has to Be Beautiful*, which Perrine has described as the heart and soul of the concerto, has a formal structure of A-A’-B-Development-C(with fragments of A)-Coda(A’). An arch map of the form of this movement, II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” is shown in Figure 18. As with movement one, the labels of tonal centers are a guide towards some of the more prominent pitches and harmonies and should not be misconstrued to be functional harmony and triadic chord structures. Perrine’s extensive use of color notes makes labeling of chords a subjective matter at times.
After the turbulence of the first movement, II. “It Has to Be Beautiful” begins with a gentle piano solo centered around D-flat. This is another instance where Perrine utilized feathered beaming notation. (See Figure 19.)

The harp is added, and the first ten measures employ only those two musicians until the completion of the A statement. The alto saxophone soloist then joins the existing piano and harp texture until m. 19. This concludes the A’ statement. The thematic material for the B section, which begins at m. 20, is tonally centered around G-flat. This is introduced by the piano. (See Figure 20.)
As in the initial A section of movement one, a significant amount of emphasis in the harp part is placed on the modality of G-flat Lydian. This time, however, the harp glissandi appear more frequently. The glissandi in movement two also encompass a broader range of pitches than those in movement one. (See Figure 21.)

Between m. 20 and m. 30, the solo alto saxophone plays higher and higher and the notes become more and more rapid. The ensemble builds in intensity via increases in dynamic level and thicker scoring. The instrumentation also gradually becomes *tutti* scoring. At m. 32, the Development section begins. The tonality at this juncture shifts to a bichord of b minor and C major. The texture is significantly thinner. The use of vibraphone pitch bends is a novel effect. Perrine’s usage of the pitch bends and the soft cluster bars was detailed earlier in this chapter.
Between m. 52 and m. 63, a significant increase in dynamic, orchestration, rhythmic complexity, and tempo work together to create a dramatic intensification. Next, the energy dissipates as Perrine thins the texture, decreases the dynamic level, slows the harmonic rhythm, and slows the melodic uses of rhythm.

At m. 64, the C area begins with a relaxing of tempo. This section includes fragments from the A section presented in the piano part. Here the tonality is centered around G-flat. This holds true until the conclusion of the movement. A new soaring, lyric melody is introduced by the soloist in m. 71. This is accompanied by powerful sostenuto sounds in the ensemble. The piano and percussion are included in the tutti harmonic rhythm; it is rare in this concerto that they play and sustain long durations when playing along with the rest of the ensemble – their parts are typically much “busier” in other locations in It Has to Be Beautiful. For much of the concerto, the percussion, piano, and harp have more active roles and the winds have sustaining roles. The solo C theme is followed by a reprise of that same material played by the oboe in m. 80. The final four measures of C material, mm. 82-85, is a new bubbling or rustling effect. This time the rippling is passed between many instruments in a hocket-like fashion. Previously in It Has to Be Beautiful, this type of effect remained within specific instruments and did not move from section to section. Here, though, the alto saxophone soloist is included in this exchange of color. After a few gentle closing remarks from the soloist in mm. 86-88, a four measure-long Coda occurs. These final four measures are the same as the first four measures of the movement but now have been transposed up a perfect fourth to G-flat.
II. “It Has to Be Beautiful” – Musical Elements

The second movement uses significantly more tempi and includes more tempo changes than can be found in movement one. Table 5 shows the various tempi used in “II. It Has to Be Beautiful.” Unlike I. “Screaming at the Sky,” the meter throughout the entire second movement remains unchanged. Table 6 shows the percentage with which each tempo is used in “II. It Has to Be Beautiful.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 44</td>
<td>1-19</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 72-80</td>
<td>20-31</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 72</td>
<td>32-44</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 76</td>
<td>45-60</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 40</td>
<td>61-63</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 44</td>
<td>64-67</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 58-66</td>
<td>68-88</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>♩ = c. 44</td>
<td>89-92</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 – II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” Use of Tempo

* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
Table 6 – II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” Percentage Each Tempo is Used

As in the first movement, the emphasis on color in the second movement is important to Perrine. In movement two, Perrine once again employs the use of Harmon mutes with stem out. This allows the trumpets and trombones in mm. 54-60 to contribute an interesting color to the overall texture. Additionally, the euphonium is to use a straight mute during mm. 54-60. The tuba, which is to play from m. 56 to m. 58, is also instructed to use a straight mute.

II. “It Has to Be Beautiful” – Motivic Elements

The piano introduces the first motivic statement in the second movement. (See Figure 22.) In mm. 5-8, the piano presents an altered iteration of the initial motive. (See Figure 23.) An incomplete statement of the piano’s initial motive appears in mm. 13-14. This figure closes with a cadential statement of a minor third; this time that interval ascends rather than descends. (See Figure 24.) A final use of movement two’s initial motive, in its entirety and transposed up a
perfect fourth, serves as the Coda and appears from mm. 89-92. An excerpt from the Coda appears in Figure 25.

Figure 22 – II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” mm. 1-2, Piano

Figure 23 – II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” mm. 5-6, Piano

Figure 24 – II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” mm. 13-14, Piano
Another recurring motive in movement two appears solely in the piano part. (See Figure 26.) It is easily noticeable due to its distinctive quintuplet. This quintuplet motive is in mm. 15-16, mm. 65-66, and appears as a fragment in m. 67.

The final motive which appears numerous times in the second movement was originally introduced in the first movement. The sextuplet motive from m. 18 of the first movement, now
rhythmically altered, appears in the unaccompanied alto saxophone solo in mm. 44-45 and mm. 47-48 of the second movement. (See Figure 27.)

![Figure 27 – II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” m. 44-45, Solo Alto Saxophone](image)

The soloist’s recitation of this varied sextuplet motive builds in intensity, accompanied by block chords and both accompanimental alto saxophones playing the motive as well. The soloist ends the soliloquy and is echoed by each of the three clarinet parts who play the varied sextuplet motive followed by the telltale descending minor third motive in rapid succession. (See Figure 28.) As mentioned earlier, the first movement is not the only time Perrine used a descending minor third motive.

![Figure 28 – II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” mm. 59-60, Clarinets](image)
The descending minor third motive is played by the soloist in movement two as they move from m. 58 to m. 59. The clarinets respond in a canon with the same pitches and interval as the soloist. A descending minor third is played by clarinet 3, then clarinet 2, and then by clarinet 1. This is a rare instance of the accompaniment performing material from the solo part. In m. 62 of the second movement, the soloist again plays a plaintive descending minor third.

III. “Illumine” – Form and Structure

The formal structure of the third and final movement of *It Has to Be Beautiful* is roughly Introduction-A-Recitative-B-Coda. An arch map of the formal structure of III. “Illumine” can be seen in Figure 29.

![Figure 29 – “III. Illumine,” Arch Map](image)

The initial tonality of III “Illumine” is predominantly A-flat major pentatonic but also includes many colorful pedal points, including that of the second oboe which sustains a B-flat. The introductory material is provided primarily by the piano. A new melodic line is played by the harp beginning at m. 9. The winds provide a canvas upon which the piano and harp paint. The soloist does not play in the introduction.

Canonic entrances of the vibraphones and canonic treatment of the marimbas at m. 17 announce the arrival of the A section. The A section emphasizes B-flat. It, however, is
significantly influenced by other pitch centers, namely C minor. After the percussion establish a
definite use of compound meter, the soloist resumes a role of prominence. The winds provide
long, sustained sounds behind the soloist. The A section is one of the larger areas in the entire
concerto. It lasts from m. 17 to m. 61. At m. 38, the tonal center shifts toward A-flat. Gradually,
though, the texture thins, and the dynamic level relaxes. At m. 62, the soloist again performs a
recitative over a sparse chordal accompaniment. Then, at m. 69, the B section begins. The soloist
floats on a concert D6 surrounded by silence for two measures before winds and vibraphones
resume their accompanimental role. The power and passion in the B section eventually fade and
give way at m. 107 to a calm and serene Coda which lasts from m. 107 to m. 121. The Coda
concludes with one last, brief recitative from the soloist and a gentle chord from the harp and
piano, which supports the solo’s ascent to the final note.

“III. Illumine” – Musical Elements

In “III. Illumine,” Perrine also devised overlapping phrases in the piano, harp, and
marimba parts so that they have a peculiar interplay. The harp and the marimbas begin at m. 9.
They are essentially in 4/4 time while the piano is in 3/4 time. The rest of the ensemble, in 3/4
time, does not outline any particular meter as much as the piano, harp, and marimbas do. When
the harp and marimba melody appears again and again in succession, the start of the phrase
changes location with each reiteration. The phrase begins on beat one for the first usage, beat two
for the second, beat three for the third, beat one for the fourth, etc. (See Figure 30.) Such a
technique is commonplace in, but not unique to, minimalist compositions.
At m. 17, the marimbas embark on their own independent lines and leave the harp to continue the same melodic figure alone for three more iterations. Since the meter changes to 6/8 at m. 17, the harp once again plays phrases that do not consistently align with the start of measures. The melody begins on beat one in m. 17, beat three in m. 18, and beat five in m. 19. The melody then concludes with a final instance of the starting pitch of the phrase placed on beat one of m. 21. (See Figure 31.)

Like the transition from m. 16 to m. 17, the transition into m. 71 in the B section could prove challenging because there are musicians playing in compound time and musicians playing in simple time simultaneously. At this slow tempo, \( \frac{1}{4} = 44 \), accurate subdivision is challenging. Additional instances of compound time vs. simple time in the brass occur in m. 38, m. 40, and
mm. 42-44. Many of the woodwinds join the brass for a duple vs. triple statement in m. 41. The percussion have momentary instances of duple time in several measures of this section due to their canonic parts: mm. 38-40 and mm. 42-44. At the anacrusis to m. 46, the soloist is instructed to circular breathe, a point that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. The perpetual motion of the soloist’s circular breathing ends with a tremolo in the solo alto saxophone and the two accompanimental alto saxophones. The harp again plays its eight-note-long melody in mm. 54-61. This time, however, the harpist plays harmonics. Perrine’s use of harmonics at this point is quite clever

because [harmonics] have little volume, there is no point in using them except in passages where the background is extremely light. They are useful for single notes or, rarely, for short melodic lines that move slowly enough to allow for the special technique involved in playing harmonics.409

This harp melody is underscored by pizzicato string bass and arpeggios by the piano. The soloist then plays one long note which crescendos into a multiphonic,

Following the multiphonic, the soloist plays another recitative. This cadenza concludes with five rapid flourishes in the altissimo register followed by several seconds of a concert D6 floating unaccompanied. After a moment, the vibraphones and woodwinds enter. They in turn are followed by the brass, harp, and piano. The marimbas join shortly and the gradual layering of various rhythms becomes quite complex. The saxophone section introduces another rhythmic layer at m. 75. The rhythmic layers which exist at m. 75 are as follows: two notes per measure (and a subdivision into twelve notes per measure), three notes per measure, four notes per measure (and a subdivision into sixteen notes per measure), six notes per measure, and a pedal point. The end of this many-layered hemiola, in mm. 87-89, is made all the more tense by the

crescendo and the reverse “pyramid effect” descending through the brass. This provides an effect of contrary motion against the soloist’s ever climbing exploration of the altissimo range.

The saxophone section gets to assist the soloist at m. 84, m. 90, and m. 91. Naturally, their timbre is most like the soloist, so their playing of grace notes sets up the soloist for powerful altissimo playing. At m. 76, “screaming” elements similar to those used in the first movement are introduced, namely the use of the altissimo range and rapid repetition of pitches. The inclusion of grace notes and tremolos to this line add energy to an already emotional moment.

Rapid crescendos and diminuendos in the woodwinds provide support for the soloist’s highest note in the concerto: a concert A₆ that begins in m. 98. Suspended cymbals, carriage bolt chimes, and key chimes also help support the soloist in this climactic moment. The energy dissipates as the Coda, m. 107, approaches. Here, the soloist’s part descends from the altissimo range and becomes less rhythmically active. The brass provide a stable pedal point above which the soloist sings. At m. 111, the percussion also accompany the soloist with pitched gongs, bowed vibraphones, and a steadily resonating tam-tam. The soloist adorns the melody a bit before offering one final, unaccompanied recitative. Then the soloist ascends into the altissimo register as a thickly-scored final sonority is played by the harp and piano.

In movement three, Perrine once again calls for the brass to use mutes. The tuba and euphonium are to use straight mutes. For the tuba, this begins in m. 5 and ends in m. 13. The euphonium is to be muted from m. 7 until m. 29. The trumpets are to use Harmon mutes with stem out from their first entrance in m. 13 until m. 39. The trombones also are instructed to play while using Harmon mutes with the stem out. This occurs from m. 11 to m. 30. The final use of
Harmon mutes with stem out occurs in the trumpet parts in their final contribution to the concerto: mm. 108-113.

Perrine said of the section between m. 73 and m. 94, “it's called ‘Illumine.’ This should glow.” To that end, he felt the world premiere did not demonstrate sufficient sparkle. It is essential that this section between m. 73 and m. 94 be brilliant in order to exude the optimum amount of sparkle and illumination – to live up to the movement’s name. Percussion mallet choice will be quite important here to create a celestial atmosphere. A successfully established hierarchy involving the harp, piano, and ensemble is required for the necessary bright sound.

At m. 74, a canonic figure appears in the oboe parts. If one disregards the F in the first oboe part, it can be observed that the first oboe provides a rhythmic echo of the second oboe after one measure. The echo is not the same pitch however, and the result is a minor second for three measures in addition to the disjointed rhythm. (See Figure 32.) Not only can this figure be seen as an echo, but the second oboe part is also a near rhythmic retrograde of the first oboe part.

![Figure 32 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 74-78, Oboes, Canon and Rhythmic Retrograde](image)

At the Coda, m. 107, an uncommon indication is provided for the double bass and timpani: *non crescendo*. While the meaning of this term is not a mystery, it is worth pointing out that Perrine is exceptionally specific in his instructions to the musicians. As Heidel noted in an interview, Perrine wants many

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subtleties that he brings to bear in his writing. I find with his scores that what you see is exactly what he wants. If you realize what he composed, then you will be in good shape. . . . When I approach his music, I trust that what he has written is exactly what he wants and my responsibility is to honor that with the performance. . . . 411

From m. 111 to m. 118, the vibraphones are to be played with bows. The musicians playing the pitched gongs are also provided with a special instruction in m. 111: “approximate rhythm: slowly falling out of time.” 412 This is similar to an effect Perrine used in his saxophone ensemble piece Primal. In that piece, he provided the instruction: “don’t attempt to syncronize [sic].” 413

The third movement, like the first, goes through several meter changes, including sections which are non-metered. The third movement also uses several tempi, as does the second movement. Table 7 shows the use of various tempi in “III. Illumine.” The final movement changes more often, and uses more meters, than the first movement. Table 8 shows the percentage that each tempo is used in “III. Illumine.”

Table 7 – III. “Illumine,” Use of Tempo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Percentage*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>↓ = 66</td>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>↓ = 44</td>
<td>17-61</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Meter, 4/4</td>
<td>↓ = c. 54</td>
<td>62-68</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>↓ = 44</td>
<td>69-106</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/8, No Meter, 4/4</td>
<td>↓ / ↓ = c. 36</td>
<td>107-121</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 – III. “Illumine,” Percentage Each Tempo is Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Total Measures</th>
<th>Percentage*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>↓ = 44</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>↓ = 66</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/8, No Meter, 4/4</td>
<td>↓ / ↓ = c. 36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Meter, 4/4</td>
<td>↓ = c. 54</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 displays the percentages with which each tempo is used in *It Has to Be Beautiful*.

The vast majority of the entire composition, 67.3%, is to occur at ↓ / ↓ = 48 or less. The tempo

* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
for 16.8% of the concerto falls between $\frac{4}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4} = 72$. Lastly, a mere 15.3% of this concerto is at a tempo of $\frac{3}{4} = c. 72$ or faster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Total Measures</th>
<th>Percentage*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>$\frac{6}{8} = 44$</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = 48$</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 44$</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 58-66$</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>$\frac{3}{4} = 66$</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 76$</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/8, No Meter, 4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{6/8}{4/4} = c. 36$</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 72$</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 72-80$</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Meter, 4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 54$</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Meter</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 35$</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>$\frac{4}{4} = c. 40$</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 – *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble*, Percentage Each Tempo is Used

* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
Tempo is one of the most important factors for a successful performance of *It Has to Be Beautiful*. When Perrine was asked if he had any advice to give Heidel, who was preparing to conduct the second performance of the work, Perrine’s reply was to

> know your tempos. And I know he yelled at me already for making the tempos so slow. [Laughs] He and I have done enough together that he knows the shapes . . . the colors I tend to be looking for. And I feel like this is representative of my music; it just might be a little bit more complex . . . more dissonant. So, even more attention to intonation and balance is going to be required. But that's not just for him, that’s for any ensemble. . . .

As the concerto approaches its conclusion, the listener begins to arrive at a point of peace. According to Perrine, “The end of the concerto is about acceptance. Acceptance and yearning.”

Toni Diem arrived at a point of acceptance toward the end of her struggle with cancer. Her CaringBridge post from her twenty-sixth day of in-home hospice care will give the reader a glimpse of the struggle Toni contended with in regard to staying in this life and going on to what is next:

> [Choosing hospice care] was not an easy decision to make, but I know in my heart that it was the right one for me. I'm focused on quality of life now [Toni’s emphasis]. And I can't tell you the difference it feels not to be running to so many appointments but to be spending time with my boys, my hubby, and so many of you who have come to offer a hand with the housework, hugs, prayers, or songs!

Later in the same CaringBridge post, Toni continued describing her precarious position of feeling stuck in limbo:

> I’m thankful for my special team of spiritual friends and guides who help me prepare for the Glory that awaits me. The balance there is difficult – wanting so much to be with Jesus but digging in my heels and wanting to stay here with my boys like I had planned all those years. But the word to notice here is I, not He. It is God’s Will, not mine, that is the best ending to this and all stories. I will ask for your prayers to help me remember to continually ask for and accept His Will for me. It cannot be a bad ending if He is in charge. It has to be beautiful.

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The ascending solo alto saxophone in the final measures of the concerto is a representation of Toni moving from the limits of her Earthly life to something beyond.\footnote{Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.} Musical depictions have often been used to conjure imagery for transitioning from struggle to peace – and sometimes vice versa. This concerto gradually transitions from the screams of the first movement to reflection and contemplation in the third. This use of opposites appears in the title of the University of Kansas Wind Ensemble’s 2017 CD release, \textit{Of Shadow and Light}, which included Perrine’s \textit{Only Light}. This theme of extremes, similar to Perrine’s inspiration for composing \textit{Only Light} and \textit{It Has to Be Beautiful}, is an encapsulation of the vast range of emotions which people feel throughout their lifetimes. In the CD liner notes for \textit{Of Shadow and Light}, it is written:

> Ideas about lightness and shadow have inspired countless artists throughout the years as expressions of beauty and mystery, sources of comfort and harbingers of doom, and representations of divinity and chaos. Each . . . reflecting the breadth of emotions wrapped up in this basic dichotomy that shapes all of our experiences.\footnote{Roust, Colin. Liner notes to \textit{Of Shadow and Light}. The University of Kansas Wind Ensemble, Paul Popiel, conductor. Klavier KCD-11216. CD. 2017.}

\textit{It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble} runs the gamut of human emotion. This polarity bookends the piece: anger, frustration, and rage in the first movement gradually giving way to acceptance by the conclusion of the third movement. Acceptance and yearning are portrayed by the gentle harp. An association between harp and peaceful or heavenly scenes has long existed.

The final movement is where Perrine is the most daring through his use of interplay of various metric groupings, the near retrograde in the oboes, the high degree of independence
among the various parts, and the challenges to the solo part. Perrine used a significant number of compositional tools when crafting this movement; including the use of minimalist techniques.

III. “Illumine” – Minimalist Elements

Perrine shared that he created the third movement in such a way that it had “minimalist” elements to it. While this was another way to employ certain compositional tools, the third movement is not as minimalist as are many works by the founders of the minimalist movement, such as La Monte Young (b.1935), Terry Riley (b.1935), Steve Reich (b. 1936), John Cage (1912-1992), Philip Glass (b. 1937), and John Adams (b.1947). At this point, some clarification of the term “minimalism” could prove useful; according to Miguel A. Roig-Francoli,

> The term ‘minimalism’ . . . can be misleading. Simplicity and economy of means do not necessarily mean use of minimal materials. Even when some of the musical parameters are greatly reduced . . . other parameters may be organized according to complex processes . . . the term minimalism has become widely accepted in the musical community . . . as a general label to be broadly applied to musical styles based on the reduction of compositional means.⁴²⁰

Timothy A. Johnson wrote about minimalism’s changing identity over time and how it was originally an aesthetic, eventually evolved into a style, and is now considered by many to be a technique:

> Considering minimalism as an aesthetic or style may be useful and appropriate for historical references to the development of minimalism. . . . But defining minimalism primarily as a technique clarifies the term and more accurately reflects the continuing influence of minimalism on recent composers and their works.⁴²¹

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According to Johnson, there are many traits commonly associated with minimalism. A select few may be used at once but most can be used simultaneously. Their applications can vary widely but “pieces with two or more minimalist features . . . may be identified as minimalist in terms of technique.”\footnote{Johnson, Timothy A. “Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style, or Technique?” \textit{The Musical Quarterly}. Volume 78, No. 4. Winter, 1994. pp742-773} These minimalist features include “continuous form, texture consisting of interlocking rhythmic patterns and pulses, simple (often diatonic) harmonic materials, slow harmonic rhythm, a lack of extended melody, and repetitive rhythmic patterns.”\footnote{Ibid.}

Therefore, the author maintains that the third movement of \textit{It Has to Be Beautiful} demonstrates some minimalist techniques but is not rigidly minimalist. Perrine did in fact use “the minimalist techniques of repetitive rhythmic and melodic patterns”\footnote{Johnson, Timothy A. “Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style, or Technique?” \textit{The Musical Quarterly}. Volume 78, No. 4. Winter, 1994. pp742-773} but he also allowed himself to deviate from repetition. Some examples of the repetitive rhythmic and melodic patterns appear in the piano (mm. 1-16), the harp and marimbas (mm. 9-20), and both marimba and vibraphone parts (mm. 17-44). Between m. 17 and m. 44, the marimbas and the vibraphones also exhibit common minimalist tools: layering, canon, and interlocking rhythmic patterns. These mallet percussion parts were composed as cyclical patterns in 4/4 time that do not correspond to the time signature of 6/8. Therefore, the beat where each successive repetition begins will fluctuate, creating a rhythmically disorienting effect for the listener. An additional example of interlocking rhythmic patterns takes place at m. 75 in the two marimba parts. An example of pitch being used as “a parameter . . . greatly reduced”\footnote{Roig-Francoli, Miguel A. “Understanding Post-Tonal Music.” New York: McGraw Hill, 2008. 321.} and the rhythm being “organized according to complex processes”\footnote{Ibid.} occurs in the flute and oboe parts in mm. 1-4. (See Figure 33.)

\footnote{Ibid.}
\footnote{Ibid.}
This concerto is not the only piece in Perrine’s catalogue to include minimalist elements. He begins *In the Open Air, In the Silent Lines* with a section that includes eight minimalist melodic patterns. While the rhythm of these patterns does not change, Perrine gradually changes pitch content. Then, after a brief development, the minimalist patterns return again.

### III. “Illumine” – Motivic Elements

As in the previous movements, III. “Illumine” includes a substantial role for the pianist and, to a lesser extent, the harpist. The opening motivic material, a two-measure phrase in the piano, appears identically eight times. (See Figure 34.)

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428 Ibid.
The consecutive use of these two measures is among the evidence to suggest Perrine had goals of using minimalist techniques while composing this movement. Additional repetitive figures exist in the percussion parts beginning at m. 17. (See Figure 35 and Figure 36.)
At m. 46, the melody played by the vibraphones beginning in m. 17 now appears in the flute parts. (See Figure 37.) As before, the material is presented canonically in both parts. Regarding these intricate canons, Perrine said, “I was trying to obscure the meter.”⁴²⁹ This type of effect has also been noted in various other locations within *It Has to Be Beautiful*.

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Another of the soloist’s descending minor thirds in this concerto appears in m. 43 of the third movement. (See Figure 38.) The soloist is echoed in the same measure by all three of the trumpet parts. The first and third trumpets play the same pitches as the soloist while the second trumpet plays a harmony part. The use of the descending minor third motive in m. 43 is rhythmically reminiscent of the motive’s appearance in the first movement in mm. 33-37. It is worth noting that this melodic use of the descending minor third is transposed down a minor third from its use in the first movement in mm. 33-37 to which it bears a rhythmic resemblance.

The final statements of the descending minor third motive appear in m. 65 of the sparsely accompanied cadenza. Here, the motive is played twice by the solo alto saxophone. The appearance of minor thirds melodically as well as harmonically in this concerto is frequent. It is important to note that the usage of minor thirds is not limited to the solo alto saxophone but appears in the accompaniment as well.
Another motive present in the third movement is based on the sextuplet theme which appeared in movements one and two. This motive appears in the solo alto saxophone part in m. 62 (see Figure 39) and m. 65. Perrine’s use of the descending minor third motive and derivatives of the sextuplet motive in all three movements is far from coincidental. The recurring nature of these motives further supports Perrine’s statement that “there are these connections. . . throughout the piece. To me, it truly is one big piece.”\footnote{Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. October 2, 2018. Mount Vernon, IA.} For Perrine, a single movement does not stand on its own.
The final motive is introduced at m. 82. This is a rapidly tongued figure made distinct by the use of several repeated pitches. (See Figures 40-46.) This motive undergoes some rhythmic variation in its subsequent appearances in m. 84, m. 85, m. 90, m. 91, and m. 93. The start of the motive also varies. In a two pattern for conducting 6/8 without subdivisions, m. 82 begins on beat one, m. 84 begins on beat two, m. 85 begins on beat one, m. 90 begins on beat one, the second instance of the motive in m. 90 begins on beat two, m. 91 begins on beat two, and m. 93 begins on beat one. The motive remains recognizable because the rhythm of the first ten pitches in each statement of the motive stay consistent; it is only the final note which becomes elongated in several of the variations. Despite the small alterations to the rhythm in each of the seven statements of this motive, the pitches remain the same, and in the same order, each time they appears. This is the final distinct and recurring melodic motive present in *It Has to Be Beautiful.*
Figure 41 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 84, Solo Alto Saxophone

Figure 42 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 85, Solo Alto Saxophone

Figure 43 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 90, Solo Alto Saxophone
III. “Illumine” – Evolution of the Solo Part

A solo alto saxophone part was shared with the author on April 12, 2018, and another, now found in the full score, was shared with the author on June 9, 2018. A comparison of these two versions of the solo alto saxophone part reveals only a few alterations, most of which

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431 Aaron Perrine, e-mail message to author, April 12, 2018.
432 Aaron Perrine, e-mail message to author, June 9, 2018.
occurred in the third movement. One amendment in movement three was between mm. 54-59. The June version replaced a multi-measure rest found in the April version with an additional five measures of music. Two multiphonics are used in this concerto, but the April version only had one multiphonic. The second multiphonic replaced the multi-measure rests in mm. 54-59 of the April version. An excerpt from the April version of the solo part can be seen in Figure 47. An excerpt from the June version of the solo part can be seen in Figure 48.

Figure 47 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 54-62, Alto Saxophone Solo, April Version

Figure 48 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 52-61, Alto Saxophone Solo, June Version

A comparison of Figure 47 and Figure 48 also demonstrates that Perrine created additional timbral interest by changing a trill to a tremolo and by adding a multiphonic. The smaller changes to the April version of the solo part include Perrine’s removal of a measure of rest at m. 17 and the reduction of the concert D6 at m. 69 from five to four measures. Due to these edits, the measure numbers from the April and June versions do not correspond. Therefore,
measure numbers from both versions will be listed in the following description to add increased clarification for the reader.

Revisions also occurred where portions of the April version of the solo part were embellished. This appears in m. 77 in the April version, which became m. 75 in the June version. (See Figure 49 and Figure 50.) A comparison of Figure 51 and Figure 52 will show significantly more florid writing in the June version. Embellishment was also added to mm. 104-108 in the April version, which became mm. 114-118 in the June version. A final cadenza was added, as was the final ascent to a concert C6. A fermata on the final measure was also added. A comparison of Figure 53 and Figure 54 will reveal these final embellishments and the addition of the cadenza and fermata.

Figure 49 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 74-76, Alto Saxophone Solo, April Version

Figure 50 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 76-79, Alto Saxophone Solo, June Version
Figure 51 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 79-82, Alto Saxophone Solo, April Version

Figure 52 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 77-80, Alto Saxophone Solo, June Version

Figure 53 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 102-116, Alto Saxophone Solo, April Version

Figure 54 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 113-121, Alto Saxophone Solo, June Version
One of the most striking differences between the two versions of the solo part is the addition of twelve measures of music after m. 82 in movement three of the April version. The added portion, mm. 81-92 in the June version, is an incredibly dramatic and intense section. It would be difficult to imagine the concerto without the *altissimo*\(^{433}\) material in the solo and without the *forte* and *fortissimo* chordal accompaniment. The two versions then begin to correspond again melodically (at m. 83 in the April version and m. 93 in the June version). Figure 55 displays the twelve additional measures in the June version with the additional context of the material preceding it.

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\(^{433}\) The Oxford Dictionary of English, 3rd Edition, defines *altissimo* as “very high in pitch.”
Another especially striking feature absent from the April version of the solo part is the extension of the soloist’s upper register. While the soloist does soar over the ensemble in the twelve measures which Perrine had inserted, the true coup de grâce did not appear in the April version: mm. 98-100 in the June version. Here, the soloist crescendos to a fortissimo concert A6 and holds it at that level of intensity for several seconds. In many ways, this is the emotional climax of the entire concerto. The April version reaches a concert A6 at the climax and repeats that note several times over the course of eight measures. However, it lacks the intensity of the octave leap into the upper register which is present in the June version. Once one has experienced this concerto, it would be difficult to imagine it without that prominent and intense
extension of the upper register. This octave leap to the highest note of the piece, which is also one of the longest and loudest, may well have been one example of where Perrine provided the music to Tse for feedback and Tse said, “Hey, let's just take this up the octave.”434 The April version is shown in Figure 56. The June version, which was performed at the world premiere, can be seen in Figure 57.

![Figure 56 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 84-90, Alto Saxophone Solo, April Version](image)

![Figure 57 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 94-100, Alto Saxophone Solo, June Version](image)

The evolution of the solo alto saxophone part into a more elaborate and challenging part seems to fit a natural progression. A composer may begin with generalities in mind and then gradually refine and build upon the loose framework of earlier drafts. They may then cultivate a piece with more nuance and detail than existed in the preliminary stages of composing a work.

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Conductors, regardless of the study procedure used, all have the same objective: acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the score’s content and a clear expressive conception of the work’s meaning and character.

— Frank Battisti

Technical Considerations

*It Has to Be Beautiful* includes a variety of challenges for musicians. Below, global observations will be listed first and then will progress to more specific details.

Throughout all three movements, a general objective is to play with a lyric and sostenuto style underneath the soloist. For most of the ensemble, the musical and interpretive difficulties will far outweigh the technical challenges they face. A mature, nuanced, and sensitive approach is needed.

The piece contains frequent use of close harmonies, such as minor seconds and extended harmonies. Intonation may prove challenging during the initial rehearsal stages as players become accustomed to Perrine’s compositional vocabulary. Players should be encouraged to embrace and lean into the dissonances rather than shy away from them. Many dissonances exist for significant amounts of time, including the eight measures of minor seconds in movement two, mm. 51-59. At a tempo of \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{c}} \) = c. 76 in 4/4 time, this example of dissonance lasts approximately twenty-eight seconds. Therefore, the ensemble must be comfortable with sustaining dissonant intervals like minor seconds while being true to their own personal intonation and not compromising their pitch in order to adjust to the pitches of others.

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In the accompaniment, the use of extreme ranges and extreme dynamic levels is uncommon. The solo part, however, frequently explores the upper register and performs at higher dynamic levels. Blend among the ensemble members and maintaining a balance under the soloist is essential. Therefore, having additional rehearsal assistants out in the hall will help in determining proper balance. Dynamic indications are somewhat subjective and can also vary from piece to piece or from composer to composer. Perrine is aware of this and has said that he prefers that the hierarchy be established between the soloist and the ensemble rather than ensemble members playing each dynamic indication literally. To that end, conductors should feel comfortable making adjustments to dynamics as they deem necessary.

Perrine composed this concerto with knowledge of Tse’s talents and said that “with Tse, the sky is the limit.” The ensemble parts, however, were written without knowing the capabilities of the musicians which would perform the work. Therefore, the emphasis even from the initial stages of the composition process has always been on the soloist.

Rhythmic cohesion will prove to be one of the most consistent challenges in this piece. Heidel noted that Perrine is becoming more rhythmically daring. Among the encouragement provided by one of Perrine’s mentors, Dr. Lawrence Fritts, while Perrine was a student at the University of Iowa was this: take risks, be bold, and do not be afraid to write challenging parts for the players. This desire to compose without worrying if the music will push the players out of their comfort zones may also stem from Perrine’s interactions with Maslanka. When sharing his own personal philosophy on repertoire selection, Maslanka pointed

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438 Tipping, Connor J. “Aaron Perrine’s Only Light.” Master of Arts Supporting Document, University of Central Missouri, August 2018. 5.
out that conductors will often only view the limitations inherent in a piece of music and not explore the potential which lies within the music. Maslanka wrote:

The biggest inhibiting factor in the selection of music is fear: my band can’t. I have seen it time and time again: the biggest inhibitor of the ability of a band to play is the conductor’s fear of failure – my band can’t... There is no perfect! I can’t play (name the piece) because I don’t have (bassoon, oboe, contrabass clarinet, euphonium, baritone sax, whatever).439

In *It Has to Be Beautiful*, achieving rhythmic precision between the harp, piano, and percussion will account for a significant amount of rehearsal time. It may prove beneficial to isolate these instruments with a sectional rehearsal early in the rehearsal cycle and again closer to the performance(s) in order to further refine the progress they have made earlier in the rehearsal cycle. Indeed, the harp, piano, and percussion carry much of this piece. In this concerto, the slow tempos will likely create a proneness to rushing. The complex rhythmic layering (e.g., I. “Screaming at the Sky,” m. 23) will also take some time for the ensemble members to become familiar with, as far as what to listen to and how their subdivision fits into the greater whole of the meter. However, much of this filigree is gestural, and therefore, it is not absolutely essential for it to be perfectly aligned. Heidel explained that

there are many instances where precise alignment is essential. But the more intimidating sections that you see contain thirty-second notes or six-lets and quintuplets. You may think “I need to work hard to get all of that to line up” but that’s the least important part. It's simply an effect... that was liberating in a sense. Obviously, we worked with subdivision with the metronome like I mentioned to establish an accurate sense of time, but I didn't lose much sleep in trying to line up most of that. 440

Conductors familiar with Perrine’s catalogue should also expect an emphasis on the importance of color in this concerto. There is gradual adding and subtracting of voices, which

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changes the sonic palette. The use of Harmon and straight mutes in the brass and the use of bowed vibraphones contribute to a wider timbral palette. In the second movement, the flutes are asked to play a harmonic in mm. 32-36. The second flute is asked to flutter-tongue in mm. 4-7 of the third movement. Tremolos appear in the flute parts in movement one in mm. 33-36. This adds a new texture and helps increase the energy level at this intense portion of the movement. Both of the accompanimental alto saxophone parts join the soloist in a tremolo at m. 54 in movement three. At m. 87, more tremolos begin to appear for oboe, clarinets 1-3, and the first alto saxophone. The following measure adds even more voices in tremolo: an additional oboe and an additional alto saxophone. All four of the accompanimental saxophone parts (first alto, second alto, tenor, and baritone) have four grace notes leading into m. 84, m. 90, and m. 91. It is important to note Perrine’s stipulation that these “grace notes should be played before the beat.”

The winds are not the only musicians who contribute to the overall effect of the concerto via varied colors and techniques. The double bass plays several glissandi; these occur when other musicians in the ensemble also play glissandi. In movement three, in mm. 54-56, the double bass is instructed to play pizzicato. The remainder of the concerto is to be played arco.

The harp is instructed to play harmonics in mm. 54-61 of the third movement. That passage is a sparsely accompanied solo and is the most extensive use of harmonics in the concerto. In fact, only two other harmonics exist for the harp: m. 4 in the first movement and m. 62 in the third movement. The harp is also asked to play bisbigliando in m. 5 of the first movement and in mm. 35-37 in the second movement. This ethereal fluttering effect, whose name is Italian for “whispering,” is achieved in the following way:

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A *bisbigliando* is played with both hands by plucking the interval or chord, one note after the other, rapidly, lightly and continuously. . . . When playing a *bisbigliando*, the harpist hardly places the fingers on the strings before playing. He/She plucks the strings very fast and lightly to minimize buzzing and to create a continuous sound. *Bisbigliando* is a quiet effect, since its production does not allow enough muscle strength for a full sound.442

Perrine adroitly utilized this technique to add to the mystery and drama of his work. Its inclusion contributes a texture not feasible by wind instruments. Regarding his use of this technique, Perrine consulted harpist Pam Weest-Carrasco. Weest-Carrasco plays second harp for Orchestra Iowa and the Quad Cities Symphony443 and frequently performs with several University of Iowa ensembles, including the Center for New Music, Concert Band, Symphony Band, and Symphony Orchestra.444 Perrine knew that it is a pretty significant harp part. [Pam] has already seen it actually. I showed it to her right away this summer to make sure it was good before I sent it off [to Croatia]. I asked her, “Can you double-check this to make sure it's all playable?” I send all of my harp parts to her. She knows what is possible. . . . She's my harp proofreader to make sure everything works.445

The percussion also produce some special effects. In addition to playing feathered beaming pseudo-aleatory material, the timpanist is called upon to play glissandi. As with the double bass part, these glissandi occur when wind musicians are also performing glissandi. Both of the vibraphone parts bend pitches in the second movement between m. 32 and m. 42. Shortly thereafter, in m. 46, they are called upon to use soft cluster bars to play pseudo-aleatory collections of pitches. Both vibraphones will also be played with a bow in the third movement. This occurs between m. 111 and m. 118. The inclusion of carriage bolt chimes and key chimes

adds a special timbral element. Since these homemade instruments will vary from venue to venue, each performance of this work will be truly unique. The carriage bolt chimes and key chimes appear at the apex of the concerto: m. 98 in the final movement.

In mm. 111-118 of the third movement, Perrine indicated that the pitched gongs should be “slowly falling out of time.” This produces a pseudo-aleatory effect. For optimum performance, the two percussionists may choose to meet outside of regularly scheduled rehearsals in order to plan out how they would like to perform these measures.

Two instances of multiphonics occur in the solo alto saxophone part. These contribute timbral elements that are not commonly found in wind band literature or in the solo saxophone canon. The use of these multiphonics was described in greater detail earlier in this chapter.

To Perrine, color is not just a vague mixture of different timbres. Therefore, anyone conducting this concerto should strive—at all times, ideally—to have a timbral image of which instruments are of primary importance. This is especially true when the alto saxophone soloist is not playing and is not the primary timbre. Perrine once noted that in his music, “rarely are two instruments split evenly 50-50. Usually, one instrument or section is of primary importance.”

It is possible that this attention to color could be overshadowed by a focus on rhythm, intonation, style, dynamic, etc. However, conductors “need to have an opinion” and be prepared to show their goals to the ensemble via gesture and through the rehearsal process. To this end, it cannot be overstated how important color is to Perrine, as “texture and timbre [inform] virtually every compositional choice” he makes.

448 Ibid.
449 Ibid.
Now that general trends and difficulties have been presented in a broad overview, the challenges found in the concerto which are of a more specific nature will be listed next, starting with changes in density. Changes in density add variety and interest within Perrine’s concerto. Seldom does the full ensemble play all at once, but when this does happen, Perrine avoids unimaginative block scoring and includes various rhythmic layers instead. Perrine has also masterfully included some “chamber-like sections”\textsuperscript{450} such as the introduction to the second movement, where “it is thinly scored”\textsuperscript{451} so that Tse “would be the star of the show.”\textsuperscript{452}

Throughout the concerto, Perrine wanted to provide leeway for the vibraphonists to make their own artistic choices. He even intentionally omitted pedaling instructions for the vibraphone, stating “I'm not going to try to micromanage that. They know better than I do. I’ll let them go.”\textsuperscript{453} There are other factors at play as well, including the acoustics of the performance venue, so Perrine saw no need to be “specific, hyper specific.”\textsuperscript{454} He added “but I can envision [the vibraphone parts] being a lot of little pedals to clear the sound - like a half-clear kind of pedaling.”\textsuperscript{455}

In movement one, m. 1, it is advisable that the pianist gently accent the primary beats which begin each slurred note grouping. This recommendation is based on observations of rehearsals, performance, and the recording session. In m. 3, the glissando to the articulated downbeat is an unusual technique not common to wind band compositions. Perrine’s instructions are to ensure “a more accurate downbeat, a more secure arrival”\textsuperscript{456} and not necessarily for any emphatic or dynamic purpose. The other glissandi, which are notated similarly, should be

\textsuperscript{450} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.
\textsuperscript{451} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{452} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{453} Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. October 2, 2018. Mount Vernon, IA.
\textsuperscript{454} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{455} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{456} Ibid.
performed in a consistent manner. At m. 9, marimba 1 (which is located at stage right) and the harp (which is located at stage left) may present difficulties due to the precise nature of the rhythms expected in mm. 9-10. Accurate alignment of these two instruments may prove challenging, especially at the slow tempo indicated.

In movement two, the introduction (the first sixteen measures) may prove challenging to align: the soloistic and rubato nature of this material lends itself well to a solo performer but can be difficult to vertically align with multiple musicians. Agreement of interpretation must be achieved. In m. 30, the pianist establishes the rubato feel and creates, as Perrine has said, “give and take within the bar” because “there has to be a lot of push and pull, a lot of elasticity.” However, this cannot be too overly Romantic as to interfere with the rest of the ensemble or with the soloist. The augmentation of rhythms at m. 32 may cause some performers to rush. At m. 32, the flutes are to play harmonics. This is notated in the score and in the parts. The purpose is to achieve a cold, non-vibrato sound. The pitch-bending technique used by the vibraphone 2 in this section (mm. 32-41) should be copied as closely as possible by vibraphone 1, as the intent is to resemble an echo. Spending some isolated practice as a duo will help the vibraphonists achieve this goal. Next, the half note triplet in m. 48 can create alignment issues due in part to the slow tempo. Between m. 55 and m. 60, the contributions of the reeds must be heard but should not overshadow the soloist. The descending minor thirds in mm. 59-60, which conclude each clarinet statement, should also be heard as three distinct motives (or one motive followed by two echoes). In m. 74, one flute and one oboe must be heard even with all the brass already playing. The triplet figures in m. 82 must be delicate and should bubble like the clarinet material at the

opening of the concerto. The triplet figures should be approached with “less articulation” and be played “less mechanically” and with “less front, more legato.” The final four measures of this movement, mm. 89-92, are a reprise of the introductory material. The harp and piano interactions here should also be expected to have total agreement on interpretation so that they may align vertically. Time rehearsing this portion without the winds would be an investment in the final product.

Movement three, like the others before it, has a focus on the piano. The introductory material, mm. 1-16, may include a gently accented left hand to help anchor the rest of the ensemble in tempo. Additionally, it is important to note the single usage of flutter-tonguing in mm. 4-7 of the third movement, which occurs in the second flute part and should stick out from the texture surrounding it.

One of the larger challenges of this movement occurs at the transition from m. 16 to m. 17. While the meter changes at m. 17, the eighth note should remain constant. This could confound some of the performers, partly because the melody played by the harp and marimbas is in 4/4 time (despite the meter being 3/4 in mm. 1-16 and 6/8 beginning in mm. 17) and does not align with the meter. A steadier pulse will begin to be felt in rehearsals once the ensemble becomes comfortable with the harp melody continuing through this meter change unabated. At m. 17, the vibraphone one part also performs a repetitive pattern in 4/4 time which is at odds with the time signature of 6/8. Its timing corresponds to that of the harp part. However, due to the much more intricate nature of the vibraphone parts compared to the harp part, and the

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460 Ibid.
canonic response from the vibraphone two part, this cyclical milepost would be less perceptible to members of the ensemble.

**Interpretative Considerations**

Pacing is one of the foremost interpretive considerations for both the conductor and the soloist. Perrine, Tse, and Heidel all discussed pacing in their respective interviews. The entire concerto builds to the intense *altissimo* passage in m. 98 in the third movement. Heidel shared his thoughts on the challenges of pacing, as opposed to those of a technical nature, inherent in this work:

> It is such a *tour de force* for the soloist. They are always at the forefront on this piece which is something to consider. Three movements, 20 minutes in length, and all three movements are slow. That is something else that has to be considered. Just the high level of concentration that is required is a concern. Trying to manage pacing in terms of tempo but also pacing in terms of the arch of the piece requires discipline and understanding.  

The recitative accompaniment in m. 17, m. 18, m. 19, and m. 22 of the first movement is open to a certain degree of interpretation. The lengths of the whole notes in the harp, piano, and percussion should not be strictly metered but should still be in agreement across the ensemble. There is no indication for any of the percussion instruments to roll. The lower pitches will likely sound longer than the higher pitches, and any pedaling instrument could feasibly sustain for an extended period of time. Therefore, an understanding should be made with the soloist prior to their attending rehearsal(s) regarding how long they will allow that sonority to ring prior to beginning their introductory cadenza. This information can then be explained to the ensemble and a consistent interpretation can be applied throughout.

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The *rubato* in movement two must also be carefully considered. At m. 20, slowing too much on each rapidly occurring diminuendo may disrupt the greater continuity of the whole. While each measure can function as a small phrase, it is important to note that there are four measures prior to the piano part repeating m. 20 again. Therefore, a macro-level view of four-measure phrases is important to keep in mind. Again, too much ebb and flow in each individual measure may disrupt the large-scale nature of Perrine’s writing. The conductor may choose to meet with the pianist prior to rehearsing this movement in order to agree upon a sufficient amount of *rubato*. With the ensemble, *rubato* can have a tendency to gradually lose energy and lose time. This kind of loss should be avoided. Perrine also spoke about pushing forward too excessively in some of the more intense *rubato* sections or, in his words, “blowing through some of those moments.”

Therefore, one should savor the tension and drama inherent in this piece which includes so much rhythmic and harmonic complexity. Regarding mm. 82-85, Perrine shared that the rhythms are not approximate. The sextuplets are to be performed as strict rhythms rather than a gestural effect.

The interpretation of the Coda, mm. 89-92, will resemble that of the opening of movement two. Again, the conductor has the option of not conducting these measures if the musicians have a sufficiently coordinated interpretation on their own.

The third movement does not have as much *rubato* as the second movement. In that respect, it more closely resembles the first movement: sections with a steady tempo with a cadenza within. One of the few gradual changes of tempo in the third movement is the *ritardando* in m. 61. It is advisable to subdivide this measure and conduct it in six. The only moving line in this measure is played by the harpist. Clearly communicating and showing all six

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463 Ibid.
beats will ensure optimal agreement on an organic *ritardando* which, in turn, will help prepare the change of character and scoring which occur at the soloist’s next cadenza. This cadenza is accompanied in a different manner than the opening cadenza in movement one is. Here, winds sustain and there is a need for them to fill each measure in its entirety. Perrine indicated his intent with the chords which sustain one eighth note into the next measure:

> They're just . . . going to touch the next sound. That's a Kirchhoff thing [Craig Kirchhoff is Professor Emeritus of conducting at the University of Minnesota.464] That’s a nice way to say it so you don't hear gaps. “Trombones, touch the sound of the trumpets.” That type of thing. That’s what I'm thinking.465

A significant amount of the third movement emphasizes the interplay of rhythms and Perrine’s use of timbre. Due to more straightforward tempi, the third movement offers fewer interpretive obstacles than are present in movement two. As mentioned previously, pacing is important throughout this concerto. To that end, the conductor must lead the ensemble through the increased dynamics in mm. 38-45 without that becoming the pinnacle of the concerto. At the B section, which begins at m. 69, Perrine described the texture with words like “glow” and “sparkle”. This is where the music should characterize the word “illumine.” The conductor should explore various options of mallets for the percussion instruments for balance and color. One should also expect more presence from the upper woodwinds to achieve the desired result.

Tim Diem shared some powerful, overarching thoughts with the author regarding music and its importance to not only the musicians but also the listeners. In the midst of all their preparations, it is easy for musicians to become consumed with technique and allow the smaller details to overshadow the bigger picture. Diem noted that a musician will be a success “so long

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464 “Craig J. Kirchhoff” *University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts.*

as you share your soul – not just notes and rhythms.”

According to Diem, the ultimate goal of musicians is to “capture life in sound” and “evoke feelings and memories – we are playing feelings and memories.”

Perrine also shared a similar attitude when he said, “I compose in adjectives. I want the music to feel like this.”

**Gestural Considerations**

The first movement, “Screaming at the Sky,” “begins with the piano creating a wash of sound.” What Perrine describes as “clusters” embody “the rage and anger” felt by Tim Diem when he wrote the following post on his wife Toni’s CaringBridge website:

She can’t be sick, can she? She’s 41. We have plans. She has said from early on that she can’t wait until we retire so we can spend every minute together. When do we get to do that? She is 41, for crying out loud. I told her that when I get to the pearly gates I’m going to have my snow shovel with and if someone doesn’t have a good reason for why this has happened to her I’m going to start introducing Peter and the others to the business end of my shovel. She advises me to not do that. . . . If you need me, I’ll be outside, swinging a snow shovel at the sky.

Perrine’s version of that last sentence, “If you need me, I’ll be outside, screaming at the sky,” differs slightly from the original. It may be the result of a slight inconsistency in his memory or he may have taken a certain degree of poetic license. Regardless, the overall emotional impact of

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467 Ibid.
468 Ibid.
470 Ibid.
471 Ibid.
472 Ibid.
Perrine’s program note remains consistent with the urtext: frustration, anger, and the need to push against the constraints of reality, no matter how futile.

Accordingly, one’s conducting gesture at the start of the first movement should be large and powerful, yet not accented. The continuous bubbling figure in the clarinet parts is slurred and the other instruments do not play highly articulate notes, so a legato style from the conductor would be appropriate. A significant amount of weight and resistance would fit the style appropriately. Cuing the harp and percussion at certain moments (e.g., m. 4 and m. 7) may assist the performers with confident entrances as well as agreement in how forcefully to begin each entrance. Additionally, in mm. 9-12, using a gesture of syncopation may help to clarify entrances off the beat.

The sonorities based on Dallapiccola’s writings (m. 17, m. 18, m. 19, and m. 22) should be started with a confident preparatory beat. Once the interpretation is chosen, the conductor may choose to show the ensemble via a gently receding left hand, a small push off the beat plane mirrored in both hands, or a circular release also mirrored in both hands. The author believes the first option would be the most discreet as well as musically authentic. However, a case could be made that the conductor, once satisfied with the note lengths in rehearsal, need not show the releases but may allow the musicians to attend to that detail themselves. There are extended moments where the ensemble waits during the cadenza, but there are no measures without ensemble interaction. Therefore, there is no benefit to trying to conduct or even mark each measure. The ensemble can be verbally instructed in rehearsal that each downbeat is a new measure and no other beats will be given. The exceptions are m. 20 and m. 21, which are metered. The resumption of tutti playing at m. 23 is, like the opening, strong yet without accents.
A legato style would be effective here. The use of gestures of syncopation may assist the double reeds in placement of their rhythms in mm. 31-32.

At m. 33, the style of the music changes considerably and the ensemble is now expected to play in a heavily accented *fortissimo* style. The conductor should now conduct more forceful beats in a drier style with little to no rebound. Much of the accented material occurs in lower reeds and all the brass. Therefore, lower gestures that carry significant amounts of weight and power from the conductor’s core will help to inspire dark, heavy playing from the ensemble. Resistance will help demonstrate the density of the music and the thick textures created by the many layers in Perrine’s writing.

This section may accelerate unintentionally due to the powerful dynamic level. The use of a metronome in rehearsals while singing or bopping\(^{474}\) may prove effective. In rehearsals, tempering the dynamics or tone of the ensemble may be necessary at points in order to prevent the musicians from becoming overly dramatic – especially if their tone begins to suffer from overblowing. Compromised tone could possibly occur in mm. 33-37.

At m. 37, the heavy articulations have passed, and the conductor should again use a legato style. From this point until the end of the first movement, the texture gradually thins, and the dynamic level gradually decreases. Much of the sound is still in lower voices; especially the piano left hand. The use of a lowered beat plane would be effective. The final three measures require some coordination between the soloist, conductor, and percussionists playing the pitched gongs. Minimal conducting is required for the three whole notes in mm. 46-48. However, a clear preparation for the pitched gongs is needed. The conductor must understand the soloist’s

\(^{474}\) Bopping is one name for a rehearsal technique in which musicians articulate but do not sustain pitches. Its use is often for improving vertical alignment, rhythmic precision, or rapid entrances being masked by improper balance.
intentions during the crescendo into the multiphonic in order to give the percussionists an accurate downbeat for the pitched gongs. Once the gongs are struck, they may need to gently begin the dampening process. The last sound should be that of the soloist. Once the gongs are struck, the conductor may choose to slowly bring both hands inward horizontally as well as sagittal. The conductor need not conduct any further beats, give any more gestures, or show a release for the soloist.

Another rehearsal consideration would be to isolate the clarinets in m. 1, m. 9, m. 23, m. 27, etc. These canonic figures may be successfully rehearsed as a unison passage first and then separated into the stretto entrances which Perrine composed. Adding a snare drum as a metronome or asking the percussionist playing snare drum to play the same rhythm as the clarinets may further help increase precision and clarity. Similarly, in m. 33, the subito fortissimo entrances appear on sixteenth note subdivisions, eighth note subdivisions, and on primary beats (quarter note subdivisions of the measure). As was suggested for the clarinets, metronomic support from a snare drum or from an amplified metronome will help the ensemble properly align these entrances. This alignment is important, as the strong dynamic indication and the accented articulations could cause the musicians to incorrectly alter their tempo.

The opening sixteen measures of movement two, “It Has to Be Beautiful,” could be quasi-conducted primarily to assist with rhythmic clarity. Consistency will be developed through the rehearsal process and will ensure more accuracy at the performance, at which time smaller gestures would more accurately reflect the gentle, and intimate, nature of the introduction to this movement. Perrine also shared that this brief section with its sparse instrumentation could change to chamber style. That's exactly what we did in the second movement of my percussion quartet piece [Beneath a Canvas of Green]. Same thing. She [Tonya Mitchell] purposely didn't conduct and that was kind of the intent. She said
“That could be amazing if I didn't conduct these five minutes. Let's just let them play.” So, that's kind of what I envision.⁴⁷⁵ Therefore, the conductor has the option to allow the musicians more freedom should the opportunity present itself.

At m. 20, the ensemble adds a significant number of whole notes to the texture so the conducting style should remain legato. This is an example of a slowly unfolding moment from Perrine. The pulse is still in the piano. The author recommends that each four-measure grouping in the piano be considered one phrase and that each individual measure as a smaller unit. While rubato is called for at m. 20, the conductor needs to be sure the ensemble, especially the pianist, is not dragging. As higher voices begin to enter, the texture becomes brighter and the beat plane may be elevated accordingly. At m. 32, the conductor should conduct the pianist’s rhythm with small beats in between. At m. 43, the conductor may choose to show the pianist a release or simply allow them to release of their own volition; the latter option is the author’s recommendation since only one musician is playing and some time may be permitted to exist between the pianist’s release and the entrance of the soloist in the next measure. The unaccompanied solo in mm. 44-45 could be conducted throughout or simply be marked by one beat per measure by the conductor.

Having a steady and established pulse in m. 45 that is easy to see could assist with the rhythmic challenge present in m. 46. Ensembles often perform the three notes of quarter note and half note triplets with inconsistent note lengths. As such, the half note triplets in m. 46 may result in inaccurate rhythms, especially when performed at the indicated slow tempo of ∆ = 76. If a subdivided pulse throughout this measure is not achieving the proper results, the conductor may

choose to dictate the triplet themselves, and the outcome should be greater uniformity among the musicians. This approach may prove to be the least time-intensive method of addressing this particular challenge. This method could be implemented in the initial stages of rehearsal and then ceased once the ensemble is comfortable playing these triplets without as much direction from the conductor. Then, if necessary, the conducting of these three notes could be added back in. Regarding m. 46, Perrine himself said “It can be conducted if that helps.”476 For the same reason one may choose to conduct m. 45, one will likely conduct through mm. 47-48 also, even though marking may prove to be an acceptable alternative.

Between m. 49 and m. 60, there are eight different peaks from various crescendos as instruments enter and exit the texture. Musicians should be encouraged to play the dynamics indicated in their own individual part; at times they may need to disregard what they hear from the other ensemble musicians around them. The soloist also has multiple ever-increasing peaks of intensity here, and the ensemble should not unwittingly follow the soloist. Perrine’s use of contrapuntal dynamics, independent dynamic levels for each instrument or for groups of instruments, allows him to use color in more nuanced ways than is possible with block scoring. For example, his addition of the bass voices in m. 56 at a piano dynamic level allows them to sneak into the existing texture of musicians playing at mezzo-forte. The bass voices will be increasingly noticed throughout the measure-long crescendo in m. 56 which culminates in a tutti forte at m. 57. The reverse, being removed from the texture faster than the other instruments, occurs one measure later. (See Figure 58.)

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Another use of contrapuntal dynamics occurs in III. “Illumine” mm. 38-41. (See Figure 59.) Here, the second oboe and the first bassoon alternate levels of intensity resulting in a subtle shift in the texture among the double reed instruments. These excerpts, as well as others, are reminiscent of Perrine’s descriptions of electronic music and how he enjoyed making gradual changes in dynamics and textures and desired to apply those possibilities to acoustic instruments.

At m. 64, the tonality becomes much more influenced by E-major. In rehearsal, each arrival at new key centers could be treated as a fermata as a means of improving one’s intonation and adjusting to a new key area. This is especially useful for anyone playing the third of the chord. A similar approach may be employed at any significant arrival in a new key area throughout this work. It will be important at times to use the harp, piano, or percussion as a
reference pitch for ensemble tuning. Those instruments are fixed in pitch and are not flexible enough to meet the needs of just intonation. Therefore, the wind musicians will need to adjust to the fixed pitches accordingly.

Any rubato between m. 68 and m. 79 could be rehearsed by the soloist and conductor ahead of time. Tse has issued the following warning:

Obviously, the conductor has to know the tempo extremely well because if you deviate too much. . . . You can’t pull faster. If you go way too fast, then you lose the control. It might not even be possible. So, it has to be just right.477

While rubato works well in portions of this movement, one area which should be devoid of rubato or any tempo fluctuation at all is mm. 82-85.

Accurate time between m. 82 through m. 85 must be achieved in order to accurately place these triplets and sextuplets. They are not gestural, but have specific roles and must be aligned properly to achieve the bubbling and effervescent effect. Too much articulation in the winds will cause a more mechanical style rather than a carefree and effortless sound. The tempo for this bubbling section should be, according to Perrine, “steady, no rubato.”478 For mm. 86-88, the conductor may choose to mark rather than conduct the soloist. As with the other accompanimental chords in the recitative style, the conductor has the option of showing a release in a subtle way or may allow the musicians to release on their own. Conducting is not absolutely necessary in mm. 89-90 if the harpist and pianist are capable of working this out on their own. If the conductor were to conduct these measures, they would greatly assist the harpist in preparing for their entrance. Providing a breath and a cue for the harpist in m. 91 may help to delicately

end this movement. For the final measure, m. 92, the conductor need only give the downbeat and trust the pianist. This will give the conductor a moment to prepare for the third movement.

Despite the instruction to move *attacca* between movements two and three, the conductor must wait for the pianist. One must allow time for the pianist to turn their page and prepare themselves for the third movement. A brief pause will prove sufficient. The conductor should remain ready and poised to proceed into the third and final movement when it is feasible for the pianist to do so. It is recommended that the conductor begin movement three by clearly showing beat two and beat three as the preparation. This will give the pianist enough information to successfully enter on the anacrusis which occurs after beat three.

The style at the onset of movement three is legato in nature. Even the sixteenth notes in m. 2 of the second flute part should be played *tenuto* rather than *staccato*. The conductor should primarily use horizontal motion and avoid too much vertical motion which may create unwarranted bumps in the sound via over-articulated entrances. Between m. 17 and m. 34, the texture thins as the bass instruments fade away. An elevated beat plane will show not only the change of texture toward delicateness but will also indicate that a light and ethereal color is desired rather than a dark and earthy color. The use of gestures of syncopation in m. 38, m. 40, m. 42, and m. 44 may result in greater precision from those musicians playing in duple time.

In mm. 62-68, the conductor should continue to move during the measures marked “Very Free” and without a meter. This will encourage the winds to use their air more effectively than if the conductor were to stand absolutely motionless. Moving inward is recommended in order to facilitate an easier transition to the next chord.

At m. 69, little motion is needed from the conductor. If it is worked out in advance with the soloist and the ensemble, it is possible that m. 69 and m. 70 could be treated as a fermata.
This method, however, may prove riskier because it only allows for one preparatory beat for the woodwinds and marimbas. The B section, which begins at m. 69, is also legato in nature. Therefore, flattening out the conducting pattern and making it more horizontal than vertical is recommended to limit the presence of accents. Elevating the beat plane at m. 71 would elicit a brighter response from the winds and emphasize the valuable role of the percussion instruments. Like much of the concerto, the articulations in the B section are not forceful; only the saxophones have accents in their parts. Even the *tutti fortissimo* at m. 90 does not have an accent but, rather, a *tenuto* to indicate weight. A powerful yet legato conducting style is recommended. The larger arrival points at m. 82, m. 84, m. 90, and m. 94 should carry a considerable amount of weight; low gestures emphasizing the dark, rich sonorities of the bass instruments will help prevent the flutes and trumpets from becoming too bright. The rest of the ensemble is scored in their middle or lower ranges so becoming too bright is less of a risk for those musicians. A number of *forte* and *fortissimo* dynamic levels are present in the B section and should be indicated by weighty gestures with a lowered beat plane. This will elicit a darker, more robust tone than if the beat plane were at a neutral or elevated position.

The Coda, which begins in m. 107, was previously described as thinner in scoring and lighter in color. Here, the conductor’s role becomes less overt. A smaller, more elevated beat plane would reflect the thinner scoring and softer dynamics. There is not as much weight or emphasis on the bass voices, so a conductor’s use of a lower beat plane would seem out of place. In the Coda, a significant amount of trust exists between the musicians on the stage, so they do not need as much information from the conductor. The conductor, however, should be attentive to balance and to the pacing of each multi-measure crescendo and diminuendo. The conductor should be aware of the overall aesthetic but does not need to micromanage during the Coda.
The percussionists would likely appreciate a cue for their entrance in m. 111 since they have had several measures of rest and some have changed instruments in the interim. The texture continues to thin until the soloist is the final voice remaining in m. 119. At the beginning of m. 119, showing a delicate release in the left hand will help unify the end of the accompanimental chord. In m. 119, the tam-tam part indicates to the player that they should let the sound ring. This is often accompanied by the initials l.v. which is the abbreviation for *laissez vibrer*: French for “allow to sound, do not dampen.” Since the winds release their tie into m. 119, it is suggested that the tam-tam player dampen or half-dampen the tam-tam to avoid interfering too much with the soloist. If the tam-tam rings for too long, it may appear to the audience that it was an error. There is no need for the conductor to conduct m. 119 which is similar to the cadenza in movement one. In this instance, it may be beneficial for the conductor to mark m. 120 so that it is clear to the harpist and pianist that the final measure is next. A confident preparatory beat, along with communication with the soloist, will help align the last measure of the concerto.

Communication with the soloist is essential in aligning the entrances of the harp and piano in the final measure. During rehearsals, it will be determined how the soloist can execute the challenging *altissimo* fade to *niente*. Therefore, the length of the final measures should be left to the judgement of the soloist. The harpist and pianist can sustain with much less effort than the soloist can. This is yet another instance in which having the soloist, harpist, and pianist meet with the conductor would prove beneficial musically and would save the ensemble from excessive waiting during rehearsal.

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The concept of illumine begins to materialize at m. 17 in the percussion parts: most notably in the two vibraphone parts. At mm. 16-17, the eighth note remains constant in the transition from 3/4 time to 6/8 time. The challenge at this juncture regards the polymeter. Moving from 3/4 time to 6/8 is not in and of itself a tremendously difficult task. However, the harp melody underpinning this section is essentially in 4/4 time while the ensemble plays in 3/4 time. The harp remains in 4/4 time at m. 17 as the rest of the ensemble transitions into 6/8 time and a feeling of compound meter. Therefore, the harpist must maintain tempo in a most self-assured manner while knowing the conducting pattern of the conductor is moving from simple meter, or duple, to compound meter, or triple. Rehearsing this transition several times without a conductor will help to strengthen the ensemble’s collective metric pulse. The musicians will feel more comfortable listening to the harpist, who provides metronomic eighth notes during the meter change.

At m. 17, it is advisable to rehearse the two vibraphones together at times, then allow them to play in canon as truly notated. This rehearsal technique is similar to that suggested for the rapid figures played by the clarinets in movement one (mm. 1-2, mm. 5-6, mm. 9-10, mm. 23-24, and mm. 27-28). This rehearsal strategy for the vibraphones may be especially necessary if the performance venue is more resonant than the rehearsal space or if the performance venue requires the two musicians to have less physical proximity than they normally would have in the rehearsal space. Increases in reverberation, decreases in proximity, or venues with “dead spots” on stage may necessitate additional time spent on this canonic vibraphone section. Mallet and pedaling choices may help or hinder the execution here and should be monitored.

A ritardando occurs in m. 61. This measure could be effectively conducted in six with the focus on the harpist since the harp is the only instrument with eighth notes. This could be thought
of as an easing of the tempo. Slowing down too abruptly would create an awkward cessation in
energy and detract from the recitative accompaniment in m. 62, which, in turn, prepares an
incantation from the solo alto saxophone. This is a rare example of conducting the eighth note in
this concerto. When asked if it would be beneficial to conduct the eighth note at other points in
the concerto, Heidel said:

Not at all. It would only complicate the lives of the band members. You could . . .
but that would alter the character of the work. This piece is a broad, expansive, slow
work but underneath you have fast, rapid passages usually in the woodwinds and
percussion. It is not important to be absolutely precise. It reminds me a bit of the
opening of the first movement of the Hindemith Symphony in B-flat. You could
spend a lot of time rehearsing it, but it’s not critical that every rhythm is exactly in
place because it provides more of a screen effect than anything else.480

Perrine shared in rehearsal that the grace notes in the accompanimental saxophone parts
“should be played before the beat.”481 These adornments occur in m. 84, m. 90, and m. 91. One
should observe that the accent in this figure is placed on the note which the grace notes push
towards. There are no accents indicated on any of the grace notes, including the first. Tse
described mm. 95-98 of the third movement, which may be seen as that movement’s most
climactic moment, as “intense and painful.”482

At the penultimate measure, m. 120, the conductor may find it best to simply mark the
start of the measure. This will alert the pianist and harpist that the quasi-recitative without a
meter has concluded. It will also be a subtler gesture than conducting through the full measure;
this would be excessive due to only one performer playing at that given moment. Then, one
should provide a confident breath and preparation for the downbeat to the final measure, m. 121,
in order to ensure ensemble confidence and security. Increasing the dynamic indication in the

481 Heidel, Richard Mark, Aaron Perrine, and Kenneth Tse. Rehearsal with the University of Iowa, Symphony Band.
    November 12, 2018.
482 Ibid.
harp and piano parts is advisable. The final chord should be one of closure and should therefore be played assertively. It is important that all notes sound. While the final measure is not a perfect authentic cadence, the overall effect should be one of introspective finality rather than either of the extremes of uncertainty and ambiguity or a triumphant and powerful conclusion to the concerto.
In order to be a world-class expert in anything, be it audiology, drama, music, art, gymnastics, whatever, one needs to have a minimum of 10,000 hours of practice. Unfortunately, it doesn't mean that if you put in 10,000 hours that you will become an expert, but there aren't any cases where someone has achieved world-class mastery without it! So, the time spent at the activity is indeed the most important and influential factor.

– Daniel Levitin

Technical Considerations

*It Has to Be Beautiful* contains numerous challenges for the soloist. Despite not being as technically challenging as many concerti, this piece does present a number of hurdles that could prevent a successful performance. Among these difficulties are the use of multiphonics, the use of circular breathing, extensive use of the altissimo register, intonation, rapidly tongued passages, and endurance factors.

Perrine has been interested in the use of multiphonics since his solo flute composition *...of the Saints* and his saxophone quartet *Primal*. The flute composition *...of the Saints* includes a specific fingering chart to aid the soloist. Unfortunately, *It Has to Be Beautiful* did not initially contain a similar resource for the soloist. However, Perrine has shared that he referred to the book *The Techniques of Saxophone Playing* by Marcus Weiss and Giorgio Netti while composing this concerto. While multiphonics only appear twice in the concerto, their importance cannot be underestimated as a means to pique the listener’s interest and provide variety in timbre and energy. The multiphonic fingerings Perrine selected are 1-2-3-5-6-7-Tf and 1-2-3-5-Tf-C1-

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484 Tse, Kenneth. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. December 11, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
C2 respectively. (See Appendix R.) These instructions, while absent from any drafts of the piece, will appear in subsequent printings of the concerto. Perrine has confirmed the fingerings with Tse, as well as with another college saxophone instructor, his friend and frequent collaborator Joel Vanderheyden. Dr. Vanderheyden holds the position of Professor of Music and Director of Jazz at Jefferson College in Hillsboro, Missouri. There he teaches Music Theory, Jazz Improvisation, Jazz Appreciation, Applied Woodwinds, and directs the Jefferson College Jazz Ensembles. Vanderheyden is “an active supporter of new music for classical saxophone [and] he has also commissioned new works from composer Aaron Perrine, including . . . a sonata for saxophone and piano.”

Besides Tse, other saxophonists have expressed interest in performing the concerto. One such individual, whom Perrine did not name, said that if the fingerings for the multiphonics were not provided in the score, he would have still chosen to use those exact fingerings. The notation for the multiphonic used in mm. 46-48 of movement one is shown in Figure 60. In the April version of the solo part, a number system from Weiss and Netti was used. (See Figure 61.) This draft of the solo part included one extra measure but lacked a crescendo and a fermata. The aural result of the fingering combination 1-2-3-5-6-7-Tf is detailed in Figure 62. The notation for the multiphonic used in mm. 57-59 of movement three is shown in Figure 63. The aural result of the fingering combination 1-2-3-5-Tf-C1-C2 is detailed in Figure 64.

Figure 60 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” mm. 46-48, Solo Alto Saxophone, June Version

Figure 61 – I. “Screaming at the Sky,” mm. 46-49, Solo Alto Saxophone, April Version

Figure 62 – Aural Result of 1-2-3-5-6-7-Tf Alto Saxophone Fingering

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One of the many demands placed on the soloist in this concerto is circular breathing.

Circular breathing is defined as “a technique that enables the wind instrumentalist to maintain a sound for long periods of time by inhaling through the nose while maintaining air flow through the instrument, using the cheeks as ‘bellows’.”\textsuperscript{490} This is accomplished in a four-step process outlined as follows by clarinetist Dr. Robert Spring:

1. As the performer begins to run low on air, the cheeks are puffed.


2. Air from the cheeks is pushed with the cheek muscles through the instrument and used to maintain the sound while inhalation occurs through the nose.

3. As the air decreases in the cheeks and sufficient air is brought into the lungs through the nose, the soft palate closes, and air is again used from the lungs.

4. The cheeks are brought back to their normal embouchure position.  

The segment of the concerto which calls for circular breathing begins in movement three at the anacrusis to m. 46 and lasts through m. 54. Regarding this section, Tse said that for saxophonists, ninety percent of the time people are expected to know how to circular breathe. It’s so different than even fifteen or twenty years ago. . . . Now, a lot of young players just do it. It just happened that [Perrine] wanted to have an extended section of running notes there. And there’s essentially no time to breathe. But I said, people can circular breathe. If a person can’t [circular breathe], it’s ok to take out a note or two to breathe.  

Perrine recalled showing Tse that seemingly endless stream of notes and asking where a rest should go or where the soloist should breathe, to which Tse responded that it would not be a problem. Perrine said, “The circular breathing, [Tse] added that. Which I think is a great effect that is neat. But it has to be rhythmically precise, otherwise it loses the luster there.” Perrine continued to describe how the circular breathing section came about:

That was one of the few suggestions [Tse] made. . . . I did have a rest in there, but [Tse] said, “I don't need that rest. Don't worry about that, I'll just do this as one big phrase.”

An excerpt from the circular breathing section of the concerto is shown in Figure 65.

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Mastery of the altissimo range is another prerequisite for performing *It Has to Be Beautiful*. A considerable amount of the solo part utilizes the middle, upper, and extreme upper ranges of the alto saxophone; and essentially no emphasis is placed on the lower register of the alto saxophone. The range expected from the soloist is shown in Figure 66. For the soloist, the lowest concert pitch is an E₃, which only occurs three times in rapid succession during the initial recitative. Other pitches at the bottom of the treble clef staff are used sparingly. For Perrine, it was the high register that brought out more of Tse’s lyrical and expressive qualities. Throughout the work, frequent use of concert G₅, A-flat₅, A₅, B-flat₅, and B₅ occurs. Several instances of concert C₆, D-flat₆, D₆, E-flat₆, and E₆ also exist. Three concert F₆’s appear in the final movement, as does one grace note of concert G₆. The most climactic moment in the piece, mm. 98-100 in the final movement, includes several seconds of a concert A₆. The substantial regularity of altissimo register in this concerto requires consistency of execution in addition to excellent intonation as outlined above. A number of these altissimo notes are expected to begin pianissimo and end pianissimo or fade into or out of nothingness when notated niente.
Tse also discussed intonation as being a challenge not just for the soloist but also for the ensemble members. To that end, a thorough understanding of the ensemble parts will help ensure success and confidence when challenging harmonies are present. As mentioned before, extended harmonies as well as minor seconds appear frequently throughout the work. It would benefit the soloist to examine the full score thoroughly and note where ensemble members play the same pitch, especially on longer tones. Similarly, it would be beneficial for the soloist to know when ensemble members play pitches which are dissonant, especially those which are a minor second away from the soloist’s sustained notes.

This concerto does not present many challenges related to speed, but the rapidly tongued sections, such as mm. 82-85 in the third movement, could prove problematic. (See Figure 67.) An almost identical passage begins at m. 90 as well. Extended passages of rapid tonguing can be an issue for reed instruments. While double or triple tonguing can be a challenging for brass instruments, it appears far more frequently in music for brass instruments than for woodwind instruments. Tse shared how he approached the rapidly tongued altissimo portions of III. “Illumine”:

This part of the third movement can be hard because in the altissimo range you can’t use a lot of tongue to do the articulation. So, you have to use mostly air and
a little bit of tongue. That takes a lot of understanding and control of the anatomy within your oral cavity. That happens to be difficult for most players.\textsuperscript{495}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure67.png}
\caption{“Illumine,” mm. 82, Solo Alto Saxophone, Rapid Tonguing in Altissimo Register}
\end{figure}

In addition to the articulation and dynamic challenges presented, thinly scored moments exist where the soloist has little to no accompanimental support. The final recitative portion of the work, m. 68 in the final movement, is one such location. Immediately following that challenging figure, in mm. 69-72, is a sparsely unaccompanied D6 which begins at a \textit{piano} indication and fades to \textit{niente} over four measures. The duration of this will last approximately eight seconds.

Tse wants the composer-soloist relationship to be a mutually beneficial one. That is part of his overall philosophy when composers are writing works for him. Sometimes composers focus their energy on creating challenging music that lacks a broader appeal or is not accessible for a significant number of performers. With that in mind, Tse said:

\begin{quote}
I always try to make sure that the composer knows that the piece is not just aimed at the highly capable players. Even if it's performed at a worse level or if that person might not have all the extended technique mastered. Sure, there should be a way to still try to interpret the music. But there is no point if you write a piece and only one or two people ever play it.\textsuperscript{496}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{495} Tse, Kenneth. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. December 11, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
\textsuperscript{496} Ibid.
Another additional consideration is that the slow tempi in this concerto can cause issues with memorization. As an advocate for memorization of solos, Tse issued a warning to future soloists about this concerto:

I thought about trying to memorize the piece when I first played it, and I almost had it memorized, but the level of difficulty is harder if you play it so slowly. Sometimes you forget “How many measures?” I have to focus and remember exactly how many measures of everything. The third movement in particular because of the change between three-four and six-eight and that subdivision continues. It helps to know what the other instruments play and remember the entrances of the different instruments.  

Tse was asked if there were any other technical pitfalls to be aware of or if he had any parting wisdom to share with those who were interested in performing this piece. His reply focused on the intonation and balance demands: not just those of the soloist but also those of the ensemble members playing the accompaniment. According to Tse, items of high importance are as follows:

Intonation obviously, balance between the saxophone and the band. As you might recall in the third movement there is a lot of high tessitura where I mesh with the band itself. So, the balance is very important to bring out the colors.

Rhythm also presents itself as a challenging feature of the solo part. Whereas some of the winds will have little to no rhythmic challenge, the solo part contains intricate rhythms. (See Figure 68 and Figure 69.) Instances of rubato in the second movement may also contribute to a challenge in performing accurate rhythms.

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498 Ibid.
With this particular concerto, problems with mental and physical endurance could be a factor which future soloists need to take into account. Many concerti provide the soloist with a respite while the ensemble, or *ripieno*, has an opportunity to take the lead. This is seldom the case in Perrine’s concerto; the soloist is almost always at the forefront of the main musical material. Being the focal point of a work roughly eighteen minutes long will certainly be taxing mentally as well as physically for many performers. Therefore, the soloist should prepare with this in mind and include full run-throughs in their preparations: both with and without the accompanimental ensemble. This will help the soloist to experience the most realistic endurance demands of the actual performing conditions.

There are many factors in the solo part for *It Has to Be Beautiful* which make it a challenging piece. Prior familiarity with multiphonics, circular breathing, and the *altissimo* register will help prepare performers who are interested in performing this work. Technical challenges await soloists in the areas of intonation, rapid tonguing, complex rhythms, physical and mental endurance, and the optional memorization of the concerto.
**Interpretive/Expressive Considerations**

Tse explained his own emotional state for portions of the concerto. His thoughts are largely based on his personal experiences, particularly the tragic and early loss of his mother in 1999. He said:

I understand how it felt to be helpless and hopeless. That feeling comes about because there's nothing you can do to stop someone from being sick. So that emotion always needs to stay in music like this. So *It Has to Be Beautiful* is also kind of personal.\(^\text{499}\)

Tse continued:

I think the general idea to me is more than suffering. It is not only about the person who is sick. It is more about the people that surrounded that person. At least it is that way for me.\(^\text{500}\)

The primary interpretive and expressive considerations for the soloist involve pacing. Similar to the observations regarding endurance, this concerto requires the soloist to be engaged at nearly every moment. Being focused and actively a part of the music at all times can be exhausting, so the soloist must have an overall plan for maintaining their pacing. The most intense playing must be reserved for the truly most climactic moments. The soloist must also keep in mind Perrine’s “three-in-one”\(^\text{501}\) comment and tell the story through the action in all three movements without overreaching on the initial climaxes of the composition.

The introductory cadenza at m. 17 in the first movement provides significant opportunities for personal expression; the unaccompanied aspect and the feathered beaming notation provides a great deal of freedom. The soloist should keep in mind Perrine’s philosophy, taken from Gompper and others, of trying to avoid losing the audience’s attention. Performing

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\(^{499}\) Tse, Kenneth. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. December 11, 2018. Iowa City, IA.

\(^{500}\) Ibid.

\(^{501}\) Perrine, Aaron. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. April 12, 2018. Aitkin, MN.
the cadenzas in this concerto too slowly will negatively affect the energy of the piece. Playing too quickly, especially at cadential figures, will make it seemed rushed and provide more opportunities for error. The inclusion of many dynamic markings in the cadenza was no accident; therefore, the performer should follow the contour provided by Perrine. An exploration of contemporary saxophone solos would provide the performer with additional perspectives and opportunities to create the most intensity and drama possible in the opening cadenza.

The use of vibrato is never addressed in the score. Since there is no instruction to play without vibrato, the author will make the case for vibrato. As with any opera aria, the alto saxophone soloist is expected to lyrically convey a message to the audience. The use of vibrato therefore should be judicious: not too frequently, not too wide, and not too fast – any of these would quickly become detrimental to the overall performance.

There are certain opportunities where the soloist is instructed to increase the intensity (e.g., m. 33 in movement one, m. 28 in movement two). The written instructions of *furioso*, *appassionato*, or *agitato* indicate an increase in intensity to match the mood and create additional excitement. Knowing when and how to increase intensity (e.g., through dynamics, through vibrato) is important. Again, with the concept of pacing in mind, it is important for soloists to plan out where the most intense moments will be. For example, at m. 28 in movement two, an *appassionato* indication is present in the soloist’s part which is marked *fortissimo*. The author recommends an intensification of vibrato leading into m. 28 while still saving some room to crescendo and intensify one’s vibrato even further in mm. 30-31. This will mirror the ensemble’s crescendo to *fortissimo* – the soloist may play at an even higher dynamic level than marked. It is recommended that the soloist stay true to their notation in m. 30 and remain at *fortissimo* rather than matching the ensemble’s dynamic contour of a *forte-piano* followed by a crescendo. A
crescendo by the soloist throughout mm. 30-31 will not only intensify those measures, it will make the *subito* change at m. 32 all the more drastic.

*Rubato* is also asked for in several locations within *It Has to Be Beautiful*. It is important to be organic with one’s *rubato* and not overly exaggerate the pushing and pulling of tempo. Perrine has warned future conductors, ensemble members, and soloists to avoid “blowing through some of those moments.”

Much of Perrine’s catalogue is comprised of slowly unfolding, lyrical music. Taking too many liberties with the indicated tempo markings would be an egregious error. Heidel noted that for the soloist, as well as the ensemble, this concerto is demanding in terms of nuance, control, and patience with slow tempi. Ultimately, soloists who invest their time and energy into learning this work will reap many benefits, including that of increased sensitivity to color and line.

Pacing is also of importance at the quasi-recitative which begins at mm. 44-48 in movement two. As with the introductory cadenza in movement one, the buildup of energy must be such that it retains the listener’s attention. There is a subjective and fine line between rushing through the silences and taking too much time thereby making the silences seem unnecessarily long and awkward. The many instances of *rubato*, *accelerando*, and *ritardando* must be deliberate and purposeful. In addition to the technical portions of the solo, there are numerous opportunities to shape long notes and create exciting music with a select few pitches. As with each *ritardando* in this movement, the one in mm. 86-88 should organically transition from the initial tempo to the new tempo for the piano solo. Rushing through this change would spoil a reflective moment, while playing it too slowly would make it seem tedious.

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In movement three, the passage at mm. 20-23 is an exquisite example of how the solo alto saxophone can be expressive and shape simple phrases. Regarding the many lyric and expressive moments in this concerto Tse said:

Mostly I focus on the sound. Sound in general is very important to me. . . . I care so much about how each note sounds. Again, I’m not saying other people don’t care. But I want each note to sound a certain way. And so, Aaron’s piece has a lot of long tones. So, for me, it is not just playing the long tones. I ask myself, “How can that sound connect with the audience?”

Vibrato and phrasing are essential to the way Tse approaches music. Perrine said that, “there are certain moments [Tse] just changes his vibrato and he changes the whole mood of the piece in an instant.”

In mm. 46-54 of the third movement, the soloist’s part is in 3/4 whereas a number of performers are in 6/8 time. This circular breathing section is also marked agitato. The author, therefore, recommends that the soloist provide a slight emphasis on the first note of each slurred grouping. The first five measures are divided into predictable groupings but the next three measures, mm. 51-53, are less predictable and will create more excitement when the first note of each slurred grouping is emphasized. This additional emphasis will further bring out the hemiola feel when the soloist is in 3/4 time and the ensemble is in 6/8. It will also add intensity to the solo line when the slurred groupings of thirty-second notes become more erratic. Dynamic indications are not provided during the eight measures of circular breathing. Therefore, the author recommends the soloist’s dynamics follow the upward contour of this line. A gradual crescendo would contribute nicely to this gradually climbing string of thirty-second notes.

The sparsely accompanied cadenza in the third movement, mm. 62-68, is another opportunity for the soloist to explore personal expression and consider the pacing of the

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504 Tse, Kenneth. Interviewed by Nolan Hauta. December 11, 2018. Iowa City, IA.
recitative. It is the author’s recommendation that the two instances of the sextuplet motive in this cadenza undergo a considerable *ritardando* prior to the descending minor second from the soloist’s B-flat to the soloist’s A. (See Figure 70.) This will help draw the listener’s attention to this rhythmic motive which has now been modified melodically; it no longer contains the descending minor third motive as it did in other locations in the concerto (e.g., II. “It Has to Be Beautiful,” mm. 58-59).

![Figure 70 – III. “Illumine,” m. 62, Solo Alto Saxophone](image)

In m. 68, the soloist is free to interpret the cadenza as they wish but the author encourages an *accelerando* to correspond with the instructions *crescendo poco a poco*. (See Figure 71.) Again, the soloist may choose another interpretation but the author advises that an interpretation that does not adjust the tempo at all during the five identical *altissimo* passages may appear to lack direction or musical intent.

![Figure 71 – III. “Illumine,” mm. 68, Solo Alto Saxophone](image)
The author suggests the soloist add a slight *ritardando* in m. 119. As with the many other *niente* releases in this concerto, the soloist should only *diminuendo* as much as is possible in m. 119 and m. 121 without losing control of intonation or tone. It is important to end this concerto in a sublime manner free of any distractions that would take the audience and fellow musicians out of the aesthetic experience.

*It Has to Be Beautiful* provides numerous opportunities for the soloist to explore interpretative and expressive possibilities. This is possible through the numerous cadenzas and the lengthy areas with *rubato*. The distinct melodic motives can take on new character when the emphasis is altered via tempo fluctuation or changes in phrasing. There is immense expressive potential in the many long, lyric melodic lines in this concerto thereby making it appealing to a number of saxophonists. Even though there are a number of challenges that a soloist may need to contend with, those musicians will likely learn and mature through the preparation process of this concerto.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

When one door closes, another always opens, but we usually look so long, so intently and so sorrowfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened. – Unknown

Conclusions

Examining the music of Aaron Perrine is necessary in order to understand the landscape of wind band repertoire in the future. Perrine is a recipient of prestigious composition prizes – some multiple times over. He is also becoming an increasingly performed composer for high school, collegiate, and professional ensembles. Works by Perrine such as *Pale Blue on Deep*, *Only Light*, and *It Has to Be Beautiful* are important compositions for wind band and the extent of previous scholarship on Perrine was such that additional research was warranted.

This study of *It Has to Be Beautiful* yielded many stimulating results particularly because this concerto helped Perrine expand his potential as a composer. One reason for this is that this piece is among his lengthiest works for band and is his only concerto to date. His process of composing the piece and the journey from concept to completion will be of interest to many, especially composers and students of composition. The soloist’s guide, with the input from Dr. Kenneth Tse, will be useful for soloists interested in performing this concerto; and Toni and Tim Diem’s story, which inspired the emotional underpinnings of this work, will serve to further the connection between the musicians and audience members. The transcripts and interviews may also help composers and conductors learn more about the musical and emotional aesthetics of composition.
Perrine recently turned forty years old. He pointed out that David Maslanka had once said that he just finally began to feel proficient at composing after he turned forty. Perrine already has a considerable start to his composing career and is enthusiastic about the new and exciting directions his future compositions might go. For example, he mentioned an upcoming commission that would combine electronics and soprano with wind band. He also indicated a growing desire to compose more works for chamber ensembles. Additionally, a reduction of *It Has to Be Beautiful* may provide additional opportunities for his music to be shared with the world.

It is the position of the author that Perrine will continue to garner respect through the receipt of awards, performances of his works by prominent ensembles, and increased frequency of performance of his music in general. His past achievements indicate a professional consistency and reliability rather than one brief period of success or popularity. His standing in the wind band community is more established now than it was prior to winning multiple national awards and having many prestigious ensembles perform and record his music. An increased interest in, and appreciation for, his music will certainly occur in the coming years.

The author also predicts continued demand for new works by Perrine. Presently, Perrine has nine commissions contracted, including compositions scheduled multiple years into the future (See Appendix L). Perrine is interested in writing for a wide range of genres, including works for high school band, a multi-movement large-scale work, and another concerto. The diversity of ensembles commissioning Perrine to compose for them is another indication of the broad appeal of his music and his ability to craft meaningful music regardless of difficulty level or the age of the ensemble. His future contracts include works for high school bands, a high

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school honor band, an All-State Band, collegiate commissions, and a collegiate consortium. The difficulty levels of these works range from beginner to intermediate to advanced to professional. The approximate durations of the commissions range from “four to six minutes” to “a twenty-five to thirty-minute piece.” The commissioners and consortium members represent several geographical areas of the United States, which further strengthens the case that Perrine’s music is respected and his status is more than that of a local or regional phenomenon. The number of planned works and the existence of a consortium on this list indicates a broad interest in his compositions. Therefore, the author believes that Perrine’s popularity and standing in the profession will continue to receive as he receives new commissions and creates new works for wind band.

Opportunities for Perrine to assist ensembles while they prepare his music occur periodically. These include on-campus residencies, question and answer sessions via Skype or other means, conference presentations, and invitations to guest-conduct his works. The stance of the author is that Perrine will continue to be engaged in these types of interactions with ensembles and that these collaborations will likely increase, in fact, because several of his works remain popular and because he has so many upcoming commissions.

Perrine’s first concerto, *It Has to Be Beautiful*, is clearly a composition worthy of study and performance. The number of original concerti composed with wind band accompaniment, as opposed to those transcribed for wind band, is growing but is not especially abundant. Therefore, Perrine’s contribution to the repertoire is an important one. Perrine’s use of minimalist

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508 Terminology for difficulty levels are listed in Appendix L and are from Perrine’s website, the C. Alan Publications website, and from interviews with Perrine.
techniques and set theory offer opportunities to explore two compositional devices not often experienced in wind band music. The timing of this study was such that Perrine was interviewed prior to completing the concerto, after the world premiere, immediately prior to the North American premiere, and again after the North American premiere. This strategic scheduling allowed the author to document some of the evolution of the work as well as Perrine’s predictions and responses to multiple performances, including the world premiere. Additionally, the author documented the relationships between the major figures who brought about the creation of this concerto.

In summation, there is evidence that Perrine’s music is respected in the wind band profession. Therefore, an examination of his first concerto was warranted. Perrine and his music will likely be the subject of future research as he continues to contribute to the wind band repertoire.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

This study serves as a scholarly resource on *It Has to Be Beautiful* as well as on Aaron Perrine himself. However, there are numerous other works by Perrine which warrant significant study. For example, one of his recipients of the Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Award, *Pale Blue on Deep*, does not have any substantial resources dedicated to it to date. Similarly, Perrine’s 2017 composition *Temperance*, winner of the CBDNA Young Band Composition Contest, also does not have any published documents focusing on it. His existing catalogue includes other works which could be examined more thoroughly as well.
Perrine’s scheduled commissions also warrant study. He hopes to intertwine, in some way, his three high school band commissions which will be completed in 2019. Although the details have not been finalized, his vision is for these three pieces to work together in some capacity which is atypical of commissions, and a study of those pieces may reveal interesting results. One collegiate commission Perrine is working on is for a choral piece that he will then transcribe for band. This would echo the method by which Frank Ticheli’s Rest came into being. Perrine has not published a choral piece before, and a study of how he transcribes his own choral work for wind ensemble may prove fascinating. Another interest of Perrine’s is a clarinet concerto. An examination of that work or a comparison of his two concerti would certainly prove a worthwhile scholarly pursuit. Another research topic would be that of Perrine’s use of electronics with winds for an upcoming large-scale work tentatively labeled a “symphony.”

This work, whose origins may be traced back to as far as December 2016, is currently being planned to be composed for soprano, electronics, and wind ensemble.

In addition to his works for wind band, Perrine’s solo and chamber works could be researched in further detail. Perrine has several compositions available for smaller groups of instruments. Much of Perrine’s music for soloists and smaller groups of instruments incorporate one or more saxophones, so analyses of these and comparisons of Perrine’s works for saxophones would prove a worthwhile contribution to any existing literature on Perrine and his music.

Additional research of concerti with wind band accompaniment is also warranted. While the concerto itself dates back centuries, most concerti with wind band accompaniment are a

513 “From the Beginning, Into the Future: The 70th Annual Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference 2016.” Conference Program, 204.
much more recent phenomenon. To this end, research opportunities exist for concerti by other composers, such as Jonathan Leshnoff, Joel Love, David Maslanka, Joel Puckett, Joseph Schwantner (transcribed by Andrew Boysen, Jr.), and Frank Ticheli. Specifically, those concerti for saxophone which may benefit from additional research include works by Brian Balmages, William Bolcom, Steven Bryant, Eric Ewazen, Stacy Garrop, John Mackey, Johan de Meij, Mark Watters, Satoshi Yagisawa, and Charles Rochester Young. Additionally, future scholarship could be conducted on concerti for saxophone ensembles with wind band accompaniment. Samples of compositions in this genre include works by Warren Barker, Michael Colgrass, James Curnow, Miklós Maros, David Maslanka, and Wayne Peterson. Lastly, future research opportunities also exist for saxophone ensemble works specifically composed without accompaniment.

The compositional process can often be a mystery to those musicians who do not compose their own material. Therefore, these compositional processes could be investigated further. As indicated in Chapter 3, there are composers who share similarities in the way they compose, and some trends involving their methods or the use of technology could be explored. There are numerous wind band composers who could be studied for this research.

There are also many topics related to the ever-expanding world of self-publishing composers that could be mined. The conversations the author had with Perrine only tangentially broached the subject. Increasingly, composers maintain their own websites, establish a social media presence, and connect directly with their clients rather than through a larger publishing firm. Many of the most successful wind band composers have taken this approach and find it tenable. Additional research may shed light on trends and patterns on the part of composers who maintain a more direct control over their intellectual property.
This document is but one of many possible opportunities to enrich the musical world via increased understanding and appreciation of the music of Aaron Perrine. He has reached a point in his career where he has become successful while not compromising his own individuality and distinct voice as a composer. Regarding scholarship, Perrine himself may have said it best when he explained:

I feel like it's a starting point. If you're writing a big paper or you're doing research or whatever you're doing, it's sort of a starting point. It's not an end, it's a beginning. I always looked at it . . . as an end. I was completely wrong in that respect. It's only the beginning.  

The road Perrine has journeyed thus far has already proven quite successful and innovative. It will be exciting to see what Perrine does next and where his music will lead conductors and wind bands. The future is bright indeed – *fiat lux*!

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<th>Composition</th>
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APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORMS

Interview Release and Waiver

I, Dr. Aaron Perrine, do hereby grant permission for interviews to be used in the document “Aaron Perrine’s It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble – An Analysis, Conductor’s Guide, and Soloist’s Guide.” I understand that transcripts and my name will be used in the document as primary source material.

I have read the transcripts of my interviews, agree with the contents, and thereby grant permission for their use in this research document.

_________________________
Participant’s Signature

3/11/2019

Date
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORMS (Continued)

Interview Release and Waiver

I, Dr. Timothy Diem, do hereby grant permission for interviews to be used in the document “Aaron Perrine’s *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble – An Analysis, Conductor’s Guide, and Soloist’s Guide.*” I understand that a transcript and my name will be used in the document as primary source material.

I have read the transcript of my interview, agree with the contents, and thereby grant permission for its use in this research document.

Timothy W. Diem  
Participant’s Name (Dr. Timothy Diem)

3/11/19  
Date
Interview Release and Waiver

I, Dr. Kenneth Tse, do hereby grant permission for interviews to be used in the document “Aaron Perrine’s It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble – An Analysis, Conductor’s Guide, and Soloist’s Guide.” I understand that a transcript and my name will be used in the document as primary source material.

I have read the transcript of my interview, agree with the contents, and thereby grant permission for its use in this research document.

Kenneth Tse

Participant’s Name (Dr. Kenneth Tse)

[Signature]

Participant’s Signature

March 4, 2019

Date
Interview Release and Waiver

I, Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, do hereby grant permission for interviews to be used in the document “Aaron Perrine’s *It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* – An Analysis, Conductor’s Guide, and Soloist’s Guide.” I understand that a transcript and my name will be used in the document as primary source material.

I have read the transcript of my interview, agree with the contents, and thereby grant permission for its use in this research document.

Richard Mark Heidel
Participant’s Name (Dr. Richard Mark Heidel)

Participant’s Signature

03/04/19
Date
The University of Iowa
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
School of Music

presents the

Symphony Band
and

Iowa Honor Band

Richard Mark Heidel, conductor
Stanley Michalski, Jr., guest conductor
Kenneth Tse, alto saxophone

February 15, 2014
Iowa Memorial Union Main Lounge
7:00 p.m.
Iowa Symphony Band

Canzona (1951)  Peter Mennin (1923-1983)

Stanley Michalski, guest conductor

Only Light (2014)  Aaron Perrine (b. 1979)

World Premiere

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble (2013)  Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Mvt. I  Falcon Fantasy
Mvt. II  Silver Swan
Mvt. III  Black Raven

Kenneth Tse, alto saxophone

Huldigunsmarsch (1864/2002)  Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

Edited by Alfred Reed

INTERMISSION

Special thanks to the students and directors for participating in this year's Iowa Honor Band, West Music for providing the music folders, UI School of Music faculty for their participation, Andrew Veit for coordinating the percussion and Steven Riley for coordinating today's events.
Iowa Honor Band
Stanley F. Michalski, Jr., conductor

Exhilaration (2005)  
Fred J. Allen (b. 1953)

Greek Folk Song Suite (2002)  
Mvt. I  O Charalambis  
Mvt. II  Stu Psiloriti  
Mvt. III  Vasilikos tha jino  
Franco Cesarini (b. 1961)

Near Woodstock Town (1903) Percy Aldridge Grainger (1882-1961)  
Arranged by Ray Cramer

Apollo - Myth and Legend (2008)  
Rob Romeyn (b. 1961)

Imperial March (1911)  
Karl King (1892-1972)  
Arranged by Gene Milford
### Symphony Band Personnel

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<th>Name</th>
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<td><strong>Flute</strong></td>
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<td>Anya Egense†</td>
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<td>Rebecca Neal 4</td>
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<td><strong>Oboe</strong></td>
<td>Eliot Czaplewski*</td>
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<td>Andrew Veit</td>
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<td><strong>Librarian</strong></td>
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<td>Josiah Spindler</td>
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<td><strong>Scholarship Recipients</strong></td>
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<td>Iowa Center for the Arts</td>
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<td>Meredith Willson Scholarship</td>
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<td>Thomas L. Davis Scholarship</td>
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<td>Howard Robertson Brass Scholarship</td>
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* Principal Player  
+ Co-Principal Player  

¹ Principal Player  
² Cora Curtis Hayes Scholarship  
³ University Band Scholarship  
⁴ Iowa Center for the Arts  
⁵ Meredith Willson Scholarship  
⁶ Thomas L. Davis Scholarship  
⁷ Howard Robertson Brass Scholarship
### Honor Band Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piccolo</td>
<td>Gabriela Nisly, <em>West, Iowa City</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>Jenna Hye-Eun Choi, <em>West, Iowa City</em></td>
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<td>Gabriela Nisly, <em>West, Iowa City</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Laura Stanish, <em>South Hardin, Eldora</em></td>
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<td>Amy Yan, <em>West, Iowa City</em></td>
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<td>Abby Rubsam, <em>Prairie, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>McKenna Woods, <em>Kennedy, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Katie Moore, <em>Lewis Central, Council Bluffs</em></td>
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<td>Aaron Jencks, <em>Jefferson, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Jazmyn Holderness, <em>Keota, Keota</em></td>
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<td>Makayla Kaune, <em>Jefferson, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Rachel Winter, <em>Clinton, Clinton</em></td>
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<td>Brianne Settlage, <em>Jefferson, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Rachel Edelen, <em>Jefferson, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Ali Harms, <em>Trippoli, Trippoli</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oboe</td>
<td>Anna Ausman, <em>Linn-Mar, Marion</em></td>
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<td>Joshua Yem, <em>Linn-Mar, Marion</em></td>
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<td>Emily Hollingworth, <em>West, Iowa City</em></td>
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<td>Rachel Nettleton, <em>Forest City, Forest City</em></td>
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<td>Alex McPhail, <em>Jefferson, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Bassoon</td>
<td>Katie Plotzke, <em>Osage, Osage</em></td>
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<td>Gabrielle Hartman, <em>Muscatine, Muscatine</em></td>
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<td>Paul Danker, <em>Prairie, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Malcolm Johnson, <em>Prairie, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Rachel Garlock, <em>North, Davenport</em></td>
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<td>Clarinet</td>
<td>Anna Rubsam, <em>Prairie, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Johnathan Sanasinh, <em>Forest City, Forest City</em></td>
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<td>Marie Hardt, <em>Storm Lake, Storm Lake</em></td>
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<td>Karyn Klimes, <em>Muscatine, Muscatine</em></td>
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<td>Megan Schnoebelien, <em>City, Iowa City</em></td>
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<td>Hayley Dunlop, <em>Lewis Central, Council Bluffs</em></td>
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<td>Sam Werner, <em>Washington, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Callie Ochs, <em>Washington, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Sarah Pujol, <em>City, Iowa City</em></td>
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<td>Simon Olivares, <em>Forest City, Forest City</em></td>
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<td>Alyanna Subayno, <em>Jefferson, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Taylor Trimble, <em>Alburnett, Alburnett</em></td>
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<td>Julia Pohlmann, <em>Washington, Cedar Rapids</em></td>
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<td>Elizabeth Schill, <em>Linn-Mar, Marion</em></td>
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<td>Rebecca Tse, <em>Mid-Prairie, Kalona</em></td>
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<td>Jessica Tse, <em>Mid-Prairie, Kalona</em></td>
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<td>Halie Dodd, <em>North, Davenport</em></td>
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<td>Katie Mons, <em>West, Iowa City</em></td>
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<td>Emily Haywood, <em>South Hardin, Eldora</em></td>
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<td>Christin (Paw) Do, <em>East, Des Moines</em></td>
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<td>Emma Alman, <em>Marshalltown, Marshalltown</em></td>
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<td>Lauren DeMotta, <em>Clinton, Clinton</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bass Clarinet</td>
<td>Cheyenne Ragsdale, <em>South Hardin, Eldora</em></td>
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<td>Payton Proud, <em>West, Iowa City</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contra Alto Clarinet</td>
<td>Brayden Legault, <em>North, Davenport</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Honor Band Personnel

### Alto Saxophone
- Grant Kofneh, Storm Lake, Storm Lake
- Andrey Floryanovich, Clear Creek Amana, Tiffin
- Mark Northup, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Gerardo G. Gomez, Mason City, Mason City
- Anna Viner, City, Iowa City
- Annabelle Fawell, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Ethan Sperlsage, Alburnett, Alburnett

### Trombone
- Kathryn Langenberg, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Kate Morin, Storm Lake, Storm Lake
- Trey Voda, Clinton, Clinton
- Raiden Takeuchi, Solon, Solon
- Lucas Maakestad, Osage, Osage
- Zachary A. Martin, North, Davenport
- Kevin Birdsong, North, Davenport

### Tenor Saxophone
- Blake Keating, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Xavier Fields, City, Iowa City
- Calyn Gimse, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Tessa McRoberts, Clear Creek Amana, Tiffin

### Bass Trombone
- Josh Piering, Prairie, Cedar Rapids

### Baritone BC
- Daniel Melby, Forest City, Forest City
- Alyson Cummings, Washington, Cedar Rapids
- Grace Thomas, Iowa Valley, Marengo

### Baritone Saxophone
- Laura Gibson, Washington, Cedar Rapids
- Hailey Franzen, Central, DeWitt

### Baritone TC
- Allyson Pagel, South Hardin, Eldora

### Trumpet
- Jacob Sprengeler, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Jake Leclerc, Storm Lake, Storm Lake
- Jenny Strofer, Central, DeWitt
- Joseph Arch, City, Iowa City
- Ben Stanish, South Hardin, Eldora
- Ben Christensen, Linn-Mar, Marion
- Laura Fischer, Kennedy, Cedar Rapids
- Josh Kacena, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Tommy Waltsmann, Jefferson, Cedar Rapids
- Cooper Horning, Clear Creek Amana, Tiffin
- Seth Hartman, East, Des Moines
- Noelle McPhail, Jefferson, Cedar Rapids

### Tuba
- Dustin Marxen, Exira-Elk Horn Kimballton, Elk Horn
- Kylie Jonas, Jefferson, Cedar Rapids
- Reid Jennings, Clinton, Clinton
- Brooke Chapman, Central, DeWitt
- Zach Long, Iowa Valley, Marengo
- Nate Harris, Marshalltown, Marshalltown

### Percussion
- Tasha Becker, Central, DeWitt
- Emma Van Buer, Clinton, Clinton
- Nathanael Smale, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Ryan Peterson, Linn-Mar, Marion
- Kaleigh DeBont, East, Des Moines
- Stuart Yi, Forest City, Forest City
- Aaron Standerfer, Jefferson, Cedar Rapids
- Miles Lucas, Clear Creek Amana, Tiffin

### Horn in F
- Michael Kegel, Kennedy, Cedar Rapids
- Evan Brown, Linn-Mar, Marion
- Victoria Knudtson, Lake Mills, Lake Mills
- Avan Colah, Clinton, Clinton
- Clark Stevens, BCLUW, Conrard
- Cameron Boman, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Tori Solberg, Prairie, Cedar Rapids
- Claire Jackson, Kennedy, Cedar Rapids
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<th>Participating Schools and Directors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alburnett, Alburnett</td>
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<td>Vicki Meadows</td>
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<td>David Bartling</td>
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<td>Central, DeWitt</td>
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<td>Josh Greubel</td>
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<td>Myron McReynolds</td>
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<td>Clear Creek Amana, Tiffin</td>
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<td>John C. Smith</td>
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<td>East, Des Moines</td>
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<td>Joseph Thering</td>
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<td>Exira-Elk Horn Kimbalton, Elk Horn</td>
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<td>Crystal Fisher</td>
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<td>Forest City, Forest City</td>
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<td>C. David Rutt</td>
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<td>Brian Redington</td>
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<td>Jefferson, Cedar Rapids</td>
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<td>Thad Driskell</td>
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<td>Ben Faugstad</td>
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<td>Rob Medd</td>
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<td>Rich Medd</td>
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Richard Mark Heidel

Richard Mark Heidel is Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music in the School of Music at The University of Iowa where he conducts the Symphony Band, teaches graduate courses in conducting and wind band literature, guides the graduate band conducting program, and oversees the the entire University of Iowa band program. Ensembles under Dr. Heidel’s direction have performed at state, regional, and national conferences including those of the College Band Directors National Association, Music Educators National Conference, Wisconsin Music Educators Association, Illinois Music Educators Association, National Band Association-Wisconsin Chapter, and Iowa Bandmasters Association. He has also led concert tours to Ireland and England as well as throughout the Midwest.

Dr. Heidel has been distinguished with memberships and honorary memberships in numerous national and international honor societies and fraternities including Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Sigma Alpha Iota, Tri-M Music Honor Society, Pi Kappa Lambda, Kappa Kappa Psi, Phi Eta Sigma, Phi Kappa Phi, Kappa Delta Pi, Pi Nu Epsilon, and Golden Key. He was the recipient of the Outstanding Musician award at Texas Tech University in both 1985 and 1986, and in 1997, he received the A. A. Harding award at the University of Illinois for the “highest possible achievement, service, and devotion to the University Bands.” In 2002, Dr. Heidel was named to “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers,” and in 2003 and 2011, he received the Citation of Excellence from the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Band Association. In 2005, he was initiated into Sigma Alpha Iota as a National Arts Associate, and in 2008, he was elected to membership into the prestigious American Bandmasters Association. In 2012, Dr. Heidel was honored with a Collegiate Teaching Award by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at The University of Iowa.

Dr. Heidel maintains a busy schedule as a guest conductor, adjudicator, and clinician. From 2012, Heidel served as the Director of the Big Ten Band Directors Association, and he was recently a member of the Board of Directors of the National Band Association, NBA-Wisconsin Chapter, Shell Lake Arts Center, and the International Music Camp (Honorary Member). Dr. Heidel has presented clinics at state music conferences in Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, as well as guest lectures at Texas Tech University, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Ohio University, Bowling Green State University, Oakland University, Northern State University, and the University of Illinois. Heidel has served as a guest conductor, adjudicator and clinician in Alaska, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, Wisconsin, Washington, D.C., and the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Manitoba.
Stanley F. Michalski, Jr.

Stanley F. Michalski, Jr., Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Music and Conductor of Bands at Clarion University of Pennsylvania, forged a distinguished career spanning fifty-five years as a conductor, educator, performer and clinician-adjudicator and active member of national and international music associations. Currently, Dr. Michalski is serving as Coordinator of Instrumental music for the Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina and Adjunct Professor of Music at Winthrop University where he serves as Associate Conductor of the Carolina Wind Orchestra.

He is the author of numerous published articles on music education, bands, and low brass and was the founder and conductor of the Clarion University Summer Band and Jazz Workshops and Band Front Clinics. He was the first recipient of the Clarion University Student-Alumni Golden Eagle Award for his contributions in furthering the reputation and best image of Clarion University.

In 1973, Dr. Michalski was elected into the membership of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association, the professional association of master conductors and musicians. Membership, by invitation, is considered the highest honor achievable by composers and conductors worldwide. In the same year, Dr. Michalski served as President of the Eastern Division of the College Band Directors National Association.

He is a charter member and past president of Phi Beta Mu, National Honorary Bandmasters Fraternity and extremely active in numerous professional organizations. In 1971, Dr. Michalski was the recipient of a Certificate of Commendation from the American Federation of Musicians and in the same year was cited as Outstanding Educator of America for his noteworthy contributions to higher education. On two occasions, the Pennsylvania State Legislature honored Dr. Michalski with Citations of Commendations associated with his contributions to music education.

The School Musician Journal, in April, 1976, selected Dr. Michalski as one of the ten most outstanding Music Directors in the United States. More recently, Dr. Michalski was awarded the Citation of Excellence by the Executive Committee of the National Band Association in recognition for his numerous contributions to bands and band music; and twice, in 1978 and 1981, he was the recipient of the Clarion University Distinguished Faculty Award.

Dr. Michalski is a member of the Artist/Clinician Conductor Staff of Jupiter Band Instruments, Inc., manufacturers of band and orchestra instruments, located in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.

Tonight’s program is No. 5630 in the 2013-14 recital series at The University of Iowa School of Music.
Kenneth Tse

Widely recognized as one of the leading classical saxophonists in the world, Kenneth Tse is certainly one of the instrument's outstanding proponents on any saxophone aficionado's short list. He burst on the scene in 1996 as the winner of the prestigious New York Artists International Award, which resulted in an acclaimed debut recital at Carnegie Hall and being hailed “a young virtuoso” by the New York Times. The Alex Award from the National Alliance for Excellence led to another Carnegie Hall performance. And these are but two of the multitude of awards that Tse has garnered in less than a decade and a half. Since then he has been a frequent soloist on five continents. He has also been a guest clinician at conferences hosted by the California Band Directors’ Association, Iowa Bandmaster's Association, and the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinics. Prestigious universities and conservatories worldwide, such as Sydney Conservatory, Moscow Conservatory and Paris Conservatory have invited him to give master classes.

Tse has been an active recording artist since his first CD for Crystal Records at age 23. There are now a total of six Crystal CDs—presenting a wide variety of saxophone repertoire, most of it new, some with assisting artists—as well as four other releases and more in process on RIAAX records, Enharmonic records, Arizona University Recordings and MSR Classics. As an advocate for new music, Tse has had over thirty works dedicated to him by notable American composers as well as international composers. Tse has recorded and premiered many of these concertos, sonatas, solo works and chamber pieces. His arrangements for the saxophone are published by Reed Music, Australia, and his articles have been featured in the Saxophone Journal, The Instrumentalist, Fanfare Magazine, Saxophone Symposium, Iowa Bandmaster Association Journal, Japan's Piper and The Sax Magazines, and Yamaha Education Series. Tse has also founded the Hong Kong International Saxophone Symposium which connects saxophonists from Asia and Oceania with world-class saxophone performers and teachers in a week-long event.

Tse is currently Professor of Saxophone at the University of Iowa, President-Elect of the North American Saxophone Alliance, and serving his second term as Vice-President of the International Saxophone Committee. More information and media clips are available at www.kenneth-tse.com.
Iowa Bands

The first band at The University of Iowa was a 13-piece cornet band organized in 1880. Now, more than 600 students, music majors and non-music majors, participate in the Iowa band program.

The Symphony Band is the premiere wind band at the university, and it showcases the talents of 57 of the most talented wind and percussion students at the university. The band enjoys a strong tradition with featured performances at conventions of the Iowa Bandmasters Association, College Band Directors National Association, Music Educators National Conference, and the American Bandmasters Association. In 2008, the Iowa Symphony Band, under the direction of Myron Welch, performed at historic Carnegie Hall in New York City.

In 2008, Richard Mark Heidel was named the fifth Director of Bands at The University of Iowa, proudly following in the rich heritage of previous Directors of Bands including Charles Righter (1930-1954), Frederick Ebbs (1954-1967), Frank Pierson (1967-1980), and Myron Welch (1980-2008).

University Bands

Richard Mark Heidel, Director of Bands
Kevin Kastens, Associate Director of Bands
Myron Welch, Director of Bands Emeritus
Kathy Ford, Administrative Coordinator
Eric Bush, graduate assistant
Kevin Kessler, graduate assistant
Steven Riley, graduate assistant
Carl Rowles, graduate assistant
Andrew Veit, graduate assistant percussion

To learn more about The University of Iowa band program, visit our web site at: www.uiowa.edu/~bands/UI_Bands
## Upcoming Events

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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| March 10 | University Band/Concert Band  
Eric Bush/Kevin Kesslet/Kevin Kastens, conductors  
7:30 p.m., Iowa Memorial Union Ballroom |
| April 17 | Symphony Band  
Richard Mark Heidel, conductor  
7:30 p.m., Iowa Memorial Union Ballroom |
| May 5   | University Band and Concert Band  
Carl Rowles/Kevin Kastens, conductors  
7:30 p.m., Iowa Memorial Union Ballroom |
| May 7   | Chamber Winds  
7:00 p.m., Riverside Recital Hall |
| June 15-20 | Piano and Musical Theatre  
Iowa Summer Music Camps |
| June 22-27 | Jazz and Percussion  
Iowa Summer Music Camps |

For Iowa Summer Music Camp details call 319-335-1635 or toll-free in Iowa: 1-800-553-IOWA, ext. 1635, or visit our website: http://www.uiowa.edu/~bands/ISM/Welcome.html
APPENDIX F: PROGRAM FROM NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE OF IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL: CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND WIND ENSEMBLE
Page 1 of 8

ENSEMBLE CONCERT
Iowa Symphony Band
Richard Mark Heidel, conductor

Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.
Voxman Music Building, Concert Hall
APPENDIX F: PROGRAM FROM NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE OF IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL: CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND WIND ENSEMBLE (Continued)
Page 2 of 8

Iowa Symphony Band
Richard Mark Heidel, conductor
Kenneth Tse, alto saxophone
Aaron Perrine, composer

PROGRAM

Festmusik der Stadt Wien (1943)  Richard STRAUSS (1864–1949)
arr. Eric Banks


It Has to Be Beautiful (2018)*  Aaron PERRINE (b.1979)
Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble
I. Screaming at the Sky
II. It Has to Be Beautiful
III. Illumine
Kenneth Tse, alto saxophone
*North American Premiere

trans. Clare Grundman
I. Sennets and Tuckets
II. Waltz
III. Mazurka
IV. Samba
V. Turkey Trot
VI. Sphinxes
VII. Blues
VIII. In Memoriam; March, “The BSO Forever”
In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Leonard Bernstein.

Washington Grays (1861)  Claudio GRAFULLA (1810–1880)
arr. G. H. Reeves/ed. Tommy Fry

In consideration of our performers and guests, please take a moment to turn off your cell phone.
Festmusik der Stadt Wien (Richard Strauss)
The “Festmusik der Stadt Wien” was completed on January 14, 1943 in Vienna. Between 1942 and 1944, Richard Strauss and his wife spent winters in that city, and during their first stay, Strauss was asked to compose a work for the “Trompetenchor der Stadt Wien,” a famous ensemble that was founded in 1926. When Richard Strauss wrote his “Festmusik” the Brass Choir of the City of Vienna was conducted by Hans Heinz Scholzys. This work shows Strauss’ interest in writing for winds. This important piece, however, is virtually little known, and its score has never been published. Strauss later extracted a brief version from it that served as basis for the arrangement, which Eric Banks made for wind orchestra. (Eric Banks)

Rio Grande (Michael Daugherty)
I have composed concert music inspired by American landscapes such as Niagara Falls (1997) for symphonic band, Route 66 (1996) for orchestra, Gees Bend (2009) for electric guitar and orchestra, Mount Rushmore (2010) for choir and orchestra, Lost Vegas for orchestra (2011) or symphonic band (2011), and Reflections on the Mississipi for tuba and orchestra (2013) or symphonic band (2015). I continue my exploration of creating unique aural landscapes with Rio Grande for orchestra (2015) or symphonic band (2015). Rio Grande is a 1,250-mile river that flows from the mountains of southern Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico near Brownsville, Texas. The river forms a natural boundary between the United States and Mexico as it winds its way through El Paso, Texas down to Big Bend National Park. It is at Big Bend, one of the largest, most arid and remote areas of the United States, that one experiences the magical canyons and spectacular rock formations that line the “Big River,” known in Mexico as “Rio Bravo.” In my Rio Grande for symphonic band, I have composed a dynamic, expansive musical landscape that is stark, haunting, agitated, and majestic. The percussion section, comprised of timpani, bongos, woodblocks, tom-toms and bass drums, creates a rhythmic undercurrent to an angular motif, first heard in the woodwinds, which emerges high above the musical precipice. This jagged motif is passed on to individual instruments, such as the tuba, and eventually in various colorful guises to the entire symphonic band. Reminding us of the long cultural history associated with the Rio Grande, we also hear ghostly Mexican mariachi music echoing far away through the canyons. In the coda, I combine all the musical material heard throughout the composition to create a majestic ending to our journey down the timeless Rio Grande. (Michael Daugherty)

It Has to Be Beautiful (Aaron Perrine)
Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble
The deep sorrow of the grieving process is universal to the human experience. For all who have fought or watched a loved one fight a terminal illness, the choice of treatment for the emotional and spiritual needs can be just as critical as the choice of treatment for the physical. From the moment of diagnosis, we all struggle with our role as patient, spouse, child, parent, sibling, friend. Even as we grieve in a deeply personal way, we are grieving together. Finding ways to share in our grief makes it possible to work through the physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges of these experiences. To share in anger. To share in hope. To share in faith. To share in love.

One such journey has served as the inspiration behind Aaron Perrine’s concerto for alto saxophone and wind ensemble, It Has to Be Beautiful. In the fall of 2013, Perrine discovered a CaringBridge post online written by his friend Tim. It referenced Tim’s wife Toni and her struggle with breast cancer. The initial post provided inspiration for Perrine’s earlier work Only Light. He continued to follow their story as they both regularly posted entries online until Toni’s death in October 2015.
Discussing the concerto, Perrine states: Sometimes you simply need to write a piece of music. From the moment I read Toni’s post, It Has to Be Beautiful, I knew. Kenneth [Tse] and I first discussed the idea of a concerto about four years ago, and I felt he would be the perfect person to further express the message so deeply embedded in her words. I reread those amazingly enlightened words every morning before I composed. The duality of my feelings was apparent; my heart constantly ached for things to somehow be different, yet I was comforted in knowing she was at peace and headed to a place more beautiful than any of us could ever imagine.

The first movement, Screaming at the Sky, is inspired by an entry written by Tim reflecting on his anger and frustration at their current situation. The second movement, It Has to Be Beautiful, is inspired by an entry written by Toni who, in the face of death, found hope in transitioning from this world to the next. The third movement, Illumine, is inspired by an entry that shares words from the homily given by the priest at her funeral.

I. Screaming at the Sky
She can’t be sick, can she? She’s 41. We have plans. She has said from early on that she can’t wait until we retire so we can spend every minute together. When do we get to do that? She is 41, for crying out loud… if you need me, I’ll be outside [screaming] at the sky.

II. It Has to Be Beautiful
I’m thankful for my special team of spiritual friends and guides who help me prepare for the Glory that awaits me. The balance there is difficult—wanting so much to be with Jesus but digging in my heels and wanting to stay here with my boys like I had planned all those years. But the word to notice there is I, not He. It is God’s Will, not mine, that is the best ending to this and all stories. I will ask for your prayers to help me remember to continually ask for and accept His Will for me. It cannot be a bad ending if He is in charge. It has to be beautiful.

III. Illumine
Even though I met Toni towards the end of her bodies’ journey, her soul was far from dimming. Maybe it was the fact that her body was dying before my eyes that was what made her soul so illuminated. It made no sense to see the outside wither while the soul grew and glowed… only God would work such a marvel.

It Has to Be Beautiful was written for Kenneth Tse, Professor of Saxophone at the University of Iowa and premiered at the World Saxophone Congress in Zagreb, Croatia, on July 11, 2018.
(Justin T. Zanchuk)

Divertimento (Leonard Bernstein)
Leonard Bernstein’s Divertimento is an expression of his love affair with the city of his youth and its symphony orchestra, for whose centennial celebration in 1980 it was written. It is a nostalgic album filled with affectionate memories of growing up in Boston, as well as a recollection of hearing live symphonic music for the first time in Symphony Hall, under the direction of Arthur Fiedler (which may account for some of the lighthearted nature of this work). It is a series of vignettes based on two notes: B for “Boston,” and C for “Centennial.” This tiniest of musical atoms is used as the germ of all thematic ideas. Most of these generate brief dances of varying character, from wistful to swaggering.

Sonnets and Vuckets, (a Shakespearean stage direction for fanfares) was originally to have been the entire composition, but such an abundance of fun-filled transformations flowing from the B-C motive suggested themselves to the composer that he found himself with an embarrassment of riches. Nevertheless, the dimensions of the separate pieces are as modest as the motive itself, and
while there are eight of them, each lasts only a minute or two.

The work is replete with allusions to the repertoire with which Mr. Bernstein grew up in Symphony Hall, some quite obvious, others rather more secret messages for the orchestra players themselves. To reveal one of these secrets, the opening section of the final March is a quiet meditation for three flutes, marked in the score “In Memoriam,” recalling the beloved conductors and orchestra members of the BSO who are no longer with us.

Like the original orchestral version, Clare Grundman’s band transcription features various soloists and small groups within the band: a Waltz and Mazurka for woodwinds only, a Blues for brass and percussion.

Bernstein’s Divertimento was premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra on September 25, 1980, at Symphony Hall, Boston, Massachusetts, under the direction of Seiji Ozawa. (Jack Gottlieb)

**Washington Grays (Claudio Grafulla)**

Little of Grafulla’s music is performed today, with the exception of his Washington Grays march and his Freischutz Quickstep, but much is preserved in the archives of band and government libraries around the country. A great deal of his music was included in the band books of the era. The best known of these band books is what has come to be called *The Port Royal Band Books*, housed in the archives of The Library of Congress. Band music of this era was rarely published as we know it today, but was hand copied by members of the various groups and passed along from group to group. Washington Grays was written in 1861 at the beginning of the Civil War in honor of the Eighth Regiment of the State Militia of New York known as the *Washington Grays.* It was first published by Carl Fischer in 1905 in an arrangement by the Canadian composer and arranger Louis-Phillipe Laurendeau under the pseudonym G. H. Reeves.

The Civil War era was an amazing period of development in the history of the American Band movement. By the late 1850s, many American cities took pride in having their own community band. Regimental commanders quickly realized the value of these groups to assist in recruitment efforts, boost morale, and to entertain the troops. Community bands, often the entire ensemble, were quickly recruited for the regimental bands of the army. Regiments proudly presented their “regimental bands” and furnished them with the uniforms of their particular regiment or brigade. (G. H. Reeves)

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**RICHARD MARK HEIDEL** is director of bands and professor of music in the School of Music at the University of Iowa where he conducts the Iowa Symphony Band, teaches graduate courses in conducting and band literature, guides the graduate band conducting program, and oversees all aspects of the University of Iowa band program. Ensembles under Dr. Heidel’s direction have performed at national, regional, and state conferences including those of the College Band Directors National Association, Music Educators National Conference, Iowa Bandmasters Association, Wisconsin Music Educators Association, Illinois Music Educators Association, and National Band Association-Wisconsin Chapter. He has also led concert tours to Ireland and the United Kingdom as well as throughout the Midwest and has appeared as a conductor and clinician in more than thirty states. Dr. Heidel has been distinguished with memberships in numerous national and international honor societies and fraternities, including Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Pi Kappa Lambda, Kappa Kappa Psi, Phi Eta Sigma, Phi Kappa Phi, Kappa Delta Pi, Pi Nu Episcion, and Golden Key. He was the
recipient of the Outstanding Musician award at Texas Tech University in both 1985 and 1986, and in 1997, he received the A. A. Harding award at the University of Illinois for the “highest possible achievement, service, and devotion to the University Bands.” In 2002, Dr. Heidel was named to the “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers,” and in 2003 and 2010, he received the Citation of Excellence from the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Band Association. In 2005, he was initiated into Sigma Alpha Iota as a National Arts Associate, and in 2008, he was elected to membership into the prestigious American Bandmasters Association. He was awarded the Citation of Excellence by the National Band Association in May 2016.

KENNETH TSE. Widely recognized as one of the world’s leading classical saxophonists, Kenneth Tse is certainly one of the instrument’s outstanding proponents on any saxophone aficionado’s short list. He burst on the scene in 1996 as the winner of the prestigious New York Artists International Award, which resulted in an acclaimed debut recital at Carnegie Hall, after which he was hailed as “a young virtuoso” by the New York Times. The Alex Award from the National Alliance for Excellence led to another Carnegie Hall performance. These are but two of the multitude of awards that Tse has garnered in less than a decade and a half. Since then he has been a frequent soloist on five continents, including solo appearances with the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra, Des Moines Symphony, United States Navy Band, Slovenia Army Band, La Armónica Band of Bunol, Spain, Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra, and Hong Kong Sinfonietta among others. He is frequently a featured artist at events such as the triennial World Saxophone Congress and North American Saxophone Alliance conferences. He has also been a guest clinician at conferences hosted by the California Band Directors’ Association, Iowa Bandmaster’s Association, and the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinics. Prestigious universities and conservatories worldwide, such as Sydney Conservatory, Moscow Conservatory and Paris Conservatory have invited him to give masterclasses. He was recently a judge, representing the USA, at the 6th Adolphe Sax International Competition in Dinant, Belgium.

Tse has been an active recording artist since his first CD for Crystal Records at age 23. His discography now includes a total of seven Crystal CDs—presenting a wide variety of saxophone repertoire, most of it new, some with assisting artists—as well as twelve other releases and more in process on RIAI records, Jeanné records, Enharmonic records, Arizona University Recordings, and MSR Classics. Critical review of these discs have yielded such comments from Fanfare Magazine as “Hong Kong-born Kenneth Tse is of the caliber of instrumentalists whose very sound is captivating,” and in American Record Guide, “supremely elegant tone...sheer virtuosity.” Saxophone Journal opined, “Kenneth Tse is a phenomenal saxophonist with incredible technical and interpretive skills. His tone is absolutely lovely. His fingers are precise and rapid. His interpretive skills are excellent having the ability to create vast aural fantasies in the listeners’ musical soul. The true magic of music is to take a series of ink blots on a piece of paper and turn them into temporal living entities that almost live and breathe. And...Kenneth Tse is the ‘master magician’.”

AARON PERRINE. With works in a variety of genres, Aaron Perrine’s music has been performed by some of the leading ensembles and soloists across the United States and beyond. He is a two-time winner of the American Bandmasters Association Sousa/Ostwald Award for his compositions: Only Light in 2015 and Pale Blue on Deep in 2013. Only Light—commissioned by the University of Iowa Symphony Band, Richard Mark Heidel, conductor—was included on the latest University of Kansas Wind Ensemble recording (Of Shadow and Light, Klavier). Another one of his compositions—Temperance—recently won the 2017 CBDNA Young Band Composition Contest. His music for
winds has also been featured at the 2017 CBDNA National Conference, multiple regional CBDNA Conferences, The Midwest Clinic, The Western International Band Clinic, and at numerous all-state, state conference, and honor band concerts.

Perrine's music for saxophone has also received many notable performances. Primal—for saxophone quartet—was performed at the 2014 NASA Biennial Conference in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, and the 2012 World Saxophone Congress XVI in St. Andrews, Scotland. Bridge Suite—for alto saxophone and cello—was performed at the 2012 NASA Biennial Conference in Tempe, Arizona. This past summer, It Has to Be Beautiful, a concerto for alto saxophone and wind ensemble, was premiered by Kenneth Tse with the Symphonic Wind Orchestra of Croatian Armed Forces at the 2018 World Saxophone Congress, in Zagreb, Croatia.

In addition to composing, Perrine is an active conductor and educator. He has conducted a variety of honor bands, with his most recent appearance being the 2018 All-Iowa 8th Grade Honor Band. Future conducting engagements include the 2021 South Dakota All-State Band. He is currently on the faculty at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa.

Perrine has received degrees from the University of Iowa, the University of Minnesota and the University of Minnesota, Morris. For more information, please visit aarontperrine.com.

### Symphony Band Personnel

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* Denotes Principal
** Denotes Co-Principal
APPENDIX F: PROGRAM FROM NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE OF IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL: CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND WIND ENSEMBLE (Continued)

Page 8 of 8

IOWA BANDS STAFF
Richard Mark Heidel, Director of Bands
Eric W. Bush, Associate Director of Bands
Myron Welch, Director of Bands Emeritus
Kevin Kastens, Associate Director of Bands Emeritus
Kathy Ford, Administrative Coordinator, Bands
Nolan Hauze, graduate assistant
Nick Miller, graduate assistant
Joshua Neuenschwander, graduate assistant
JT Womack, graduate assistant
Madeline Womack, graduate assistant

IOWA BANDS
Bands began to appear on the University of Iowa campus by 1875, but the first official band was established on September 14, 1881. Today, more than 600 students — music majors and non-majors — participate in university bands. The Symphony Band is the premiere wind band at UI, joined by the Concert Band, University Band, and Chamber Winds. Additional bands include the Hawkeye Marching Band and Iowa Pep Band.

MYRON D. WELCH CONDUCTING FELLOWSHIP
In 2013, Dr. and Mrs. Myron Welch established the Myron D. Welch Conducting Fellowship to support continued excellence in the graduate conducting program. Recipients of this award include Steven Riley (2014), Joe Cermuto (2015–18), and Joshua Neuenschwander (2018–2021).

UPCOMING EVENTS
For the most up to date listing of concerts and recitals please visit arts.uiowa.edu
All events are FREE unless otherwise indicated.

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<th>DECEMBER</th>
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<td>02</td>
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| 02       | 7:30 p.m. | CNM Ensemble Concert II  
Tim Gill, principal cellist (London Sinfonietta) | Concert Hall |
| 03       | 7:30 p.m. | University Band & Concert Band | Concert Hall |
| 03       | 7:30 p.m. | LOU Concert I | Stark Opera Studio |
| 04       | 7:30 p.m. | Jazz Repertory Ensemble | Concert Hall |

*Tickets available through the Hancher Box Office at (319) HANCHER or hancher.uiowa.edu/tickets
APPENDIX G: PHOTOGRAPH OF CARRIAGE BOLT CHIMES
APPENDIX H: PHOTOGRAPH OF KEY CHIMES
APPENDIX I: PHOTOGRAPHS OF PERRINE, TSE, AND HEIDEL AT THE NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE – NOVEMBER 15, 2018
APPENDIX I: PHOTOGRAPHS OF PERRINE, TSE, AND HEIDEL AT THE NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE – NOVEMBER 15, 2018 (Continued)
APPENDIX J: EXCERPT FROM PROGRAM BOOKLET FROM XVIII WORLD SAXOPHONE CONGRESS INCLUDING WORLD PREMIERE INFORMATION FOR IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL
Friday
February 15, 2019
Public Concert
7:30 p.m.
Member Performances with
University of Lethbridge Wind Orchestra
Chee Meng Low, director

Allison Balcetis, baritone saxophone
Scott Godin (b.1970): *greyhound* for baritone saxophone and big band

Kenneth Tse, alto saxophone
Aaron Perrine (b.1979): *It Has to Be Beautiful* for alto saxophone and wind ensemble
(Canadian premiere)
I. Screaming at the Sky  II. It Has to Be Beautiful  III. Illumine

Luke Vincent, soprano saxophone
John Mackey (b.1973): *Concerto* for soprano saxophone and wind ensemble
I. Prelude  IV. Wood  V. Finale

Glen Gillis, alto saxophone & Richard Gillis, trumpet
Richard Gillis (b.1955): *Dreams & Dances*
APPENDIX L: CATALOGUE OF COMPOSITIONS BY AARON PERRINE

Works are listed by ensemble type and then listed chronologically.

Difficulty levels used below correspond to those listed on Perrine’s website and the C. Alan Publications website or were otherwise described by Perrine during an interview:

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<tr>
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<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Professional</th>
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All works are self-published by Perrine through Longitude 91 Publications except for those pieces indicated as follows:

*Described as available in the future through Longitude 91 Publications

**Available through C. Alan Publications

**Wind Band

*In This Moment* (2001/2011)
Beginner
5’
[Perrine’s first composition for wind band, later revised.]

**April* (2005)
Beginner
3’

**Fever Flash* (2008)
Beginner
2:20

**Shimmer* (2008)
Intermediate
7’

**Inner Sanctum* (2010)
Intermediate
4:30

*I Was Just Looking at the World* (2011)
Advanced
6:30
APPENDIX L: CATALOGUE OF COMPOSITIONS BY AARON PERRINE (Continued)

Pale Blue on Deep (2011)
Advanced
8’

...to the Wind (2014)
Intermediate
5’

Beneath a Canvas of Green (2014/2018)
Professional
20’
Wind Ensemble with Percussion Quartet
[Perrine’s PhD dissertation later revised]

Only Light (2014)
Advanced
8’

Tears of St. Lawrence (2014)
Intermediate
5’

*Ceol (2015)
Beginner
4’

A Glimpse of the Eternal (2016)
Advanced
3:30

*Iris (2016)
Advanced
8’

Temperance (2016)
Intermediate
8’

Child Moon (2017)
Professional
8’
*Floral Larceny (2018)
Intermediate
5’

In the Open Air, In the Silent Lines (2018)
Advanced
6’

It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble (2018)
Professional
18’

*Traces of Amber Sky (2018)
Intermediate
5:30

*High School Commission A (2019)
Intermediate
6-8’

*High School Commission B (2019)
Intermediate
6-8’

*High School Commission C (2019)
Intermediate
6-8’

*Collegiate Commission (2019)
Intermediate
6-8’
[Choral Work and Transcription for Wind Ensemble]

*Collegiate Consortium (2020)
Advanced
6-8’

*High School Honor Band Commission (2020)
Beginner
4-6’
[Perrine will also guest conduct the world premiere]
*All-State Band Commission (2021)
Intermediate
6-8’
[Perrine will also guest conduct the world premiere]

*Collegiate Commission (2021)
Professional
c.20’
Clarinet Concerto

*Collegiate Commission (TBA)
Professional
Large-Scale Work
[Wind Ensemble, Electronics and Soprano]

Redacted Wind Band Works

Perrine indicated he would prefer to not revisit or improve upon these early pieces. While they served their purpose at the time, Perrine shared that he would prefer to begin composing a brand-new piece rather than try to edit these pieces. He believed revisions would be so extensive that it would be better to start anew.

Move
[First Commission for Band]

Snap
[Commission]

Chamber, Electronic, Jazz Ensemble, and Solo Works

The Waiting Game (2008)
Jazz Ensemble
Intermediate
6’

...of the Saints (2009)
Unaccompanied Flute Solo
Professional
8’
Five Turn (2009)
Fixed Electronics
Professional
6’

Flow (2009)
Alto Saxophone and Piano
Advanced
7’

A Look Back at Loveliness (2011)
Soprano and Piano
Advanced
9’

Bridge Suite (2011)
Alto Saxophone and Cello
Professional
10’

Primal (2012)
Saxophone Quartet
Professional
6’

*Forever Radiant (2018)
Chamber Ensemble
Intermediate
9’
APPENDIX M: IT HAS TO BE BEAUTIFUL - INSTRUMENTATION

THIS IS AN EXACT INSTRUMENTATION EXCEPT FOR THE CLARINETS, WHICH ARE DOUBLED

- Flute 1
- Flute 2
- Oboe 1
- Oboe 2
- Bassoon 1
- Bassoon 2
- Contrabassoon
- Clarinet (B-flat) 1
- Clarinet (B-flat) 2
- Clarinet (B-flat) 3
- Bass Clarinet (B-flat)
- Contrabass Clarinet (B-flat)
- Alto Saxophone 1
- Alto Saxophone 2
- Tenor Saxophone (B-flat)
- Baritone Saxophone (E-flat)
- Alto Saxophone Solo (E-flat)
- Trumpet (B-flat) 1
- Trumpet (B-flat) 2
- Trumpet (B-flat) 3
- French Horn (F) 1
- French Horn (F) 2
- French Horn (F) 3
- French Horn (F) 4
- Trombone 1
- Trombone 2
- Trombone 3
- Euphonium (C)
- Tuba
- Double Bass
- Timpani Harp
- Piano
- Marimba & Pitched Gongs 1
- Marimba & Pitched Gongs 2
- Vibraphone 1 & Carriage Bolt Chimes
- Vibraphone 2 & Key Chimes
- Tam-Tam, Medium Suspended Cymbal, & Large Suspended Cymbal
APPENDIX N: PHOTOGRAPH OF PITCHED GONG SET #2 (STAGE LEFT)
APPENDIX O: EXAMPLE OF TONE CLUSTERS FROM HENRY COWELL’S *THE HARP OF LIFE*

The Harp of Life
By Henry Cowell
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APPENDIX P: PHOTOGRAPH OF CLUSTER BARS (CLUSTER MALLET S)

Photograph of cluster mallets for mallet instruments by Kolberg-Germany. Sizes of mallet width include 12cm, 18cm, and 25cm (approximately 4 ¾”, 7”, and 10” respectively). Cluster mallets for tubular bells also exist and have a width of 20 cm (approximately 8”).

LongITUDE 91 PUBLICATIONS

January 22, 2019

Mr. Nolan Hauta
93 E. Burlington St.
Iowa City, IA 52242

RE:  It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble
By Aaron Perrine
Copyright © 2018 by Longitude 91 Publications / Aaron Perrine (ASCAP)
www.aaronperrine.com
All Rights Reserved

Dear Mr. Hauta,

You are hereby granted permission to include excerpts of the publication listed above in your research document. Credit will be given through proper citation of the work indicating that the composer/publisher has given this permission. The permission is limited to use of the publication listed above for purposes of your research document and does not include any right to use the publication, or any part thereof, in any other publications or for any commercial purposes.

The terms of this agreement shall not be deemed effective unless and until I receive a countersigned copy of this letter.

Sincerely,

Aaron Perrine
Longitude 91 Publications

Agreed to:

By [Signature]


1.3 Accidentals

\[\begin{align*}
\uparrow & \quad \text{sharpened by an eighth-tone} \\
\# & \quad \text{sharpened by a quarter-tone} \\
\# & \quad \text{quarter-tone plus an eighth-tone higher} \\
\# & \quad \text{semitone plus an eighth-tone higher} \\
\# & \quad \text{three quarter-tones higher} \\
\downarrow & \quad \text{lowered by an eighth-tone} \\
\downarrow & \quad \text{lowered by a quarter-tone} \\
\downarrow & \quad \text{quarter-tone plus an eighth-tone lower} \\
\downarrow & \quad \text{semitone plus an eighth-tone lower} \\
\diamond & \quad \text{shadow sound, “suono d’ombra”}
\end{align*}\]

The accidentals in Chapter 3.2 apply within the measure in which they appear.
APPENDIX R: EXCERPTS FROM *THE TECHNIQUES OF SAXOPHONE PLAYING* BY MARCUS WEISS AND GIORGIO NETTI (Continued)


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APPENDIX R: EXCERPTS FROM *THE TECHNIQUES OF SAXOPHONE PLAYING* BY MARCUS WEISS AND GIORGIO NETTI (Continued)


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APPENDIX S: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT – DR. AARON PERRINE, MAY 11, 2018

Dr. Perrine’s biographical information is located in Chapter 2. Biographical sketches for the other interview subjects will be provided immediately prior to their respective transcript.

Friday, May 11, 2018
10:00 – 11:30 a.m. CST
Interview in Person, 91st Annual Iowa Bandmasters Association (IBA) Conference - Des Moines Marriott Downtown, Des Moines, Iowa
Abbreviations – Dr. Aaron Perrine (AP); Nolan Hauta (NH)

NH: Can you describe some of the inspirations and some of the origins of It Has to Be Beautiful?

AP: It began on the car ride home from Ball State in Muncie, Indiana. If I recall, I rode back with him [Dr. Kenneth Tse] and Dr. David Gier who was head of the University of Iowa School of Music at the time.

NH: Dr. Kenneth Tse we’re talking about?

AP: Yes. I suppose that would have been 2014. It was kind of a “when you finish school someday,” kind of timeline. I thought that would be great and a lot of fun, but then I put the idea aside. Every once in a while, I would get a random message from him saying, “Hey, is that concerto done?” And I thought, “No.” And he’d say, “I have a group I can do it with in a couple of months if it’s done.” From pretty early on I found the title It Has to Be Beautiful, and it came from that piece of paper there [printed copy of posts from CaringBridge website]. That was definitely the starting point. I put it in the back of my mind that I wanted to write this piece someday. I was aware pretty early on when I stumbled upon that [CaringBridge post]. Does it have a publish date?

NH: Yes, it does. August 10, 2015.

AP: Ok, so basically when I read that. That was a crazy one to read. It’s still tough to process…

NH: Maybe we should sidetrack a little bit here. You and I had spoken on the phone about the Diems, but I don't know all the connections there.

AP: Oh, I just assumed that since you went to [the University of Minnesota] Morris that you know the Diems. When did you graduate?

NH: In 2008. I remember meeting him at some of the alumni events.

AP: That's how I got to know him too; he would be back on campus maybe once or twice a year. I actually met him for the first time when we were doing a recording session with the band.

NH: Recording your music?
AP: No, it wasn't my music. I was maybe 19 at the time and just started to compose. He found out about my music through Dr. Pamela Bustos the director [of the University of Minnesota, Morris Concert Band] at the time. Do you know Pamela? Was she the director when you were there?

NH: No, I was in the band under Dr. John Stanley Ross. But when I was at the University of Minnesota, Duluth that was when Pamela was at the University of Wisconsin, Superior.

AP: Yes, she still is. You had John Ross. He's a good guy. That was the connection though, the recording session. Tim programmed In This Moment at the University of Minnesota and had me down to conduct it. I never met Toni, unfortunately. After college, Tim and I continued to keep in touch. It was mostly a long-distance friendship. I would see him maybe once a year, but Facebook is amazing for that kind of stuff.

NH: You always kind of kept tabs on them through their CaringBridge website?

AP: I kept up with them through their website, but I never knew how sick she had been. I didn’t know all the history until I stumbled upon the CaringBridge post you are holding. That’s when I started to realize what they were going through.

NH: Going back to Dr. Tse, was he aware of their story or was that kind of separate?

AP: No, I don’t think so. And not at the time for sure. At the time, the program note for Only Light was vague and didn’t mention the Diems.

NH: I think the perusal score on your website says, “dedicated to two friends.”

AP: At first, I didn’t even know if I wanted to tell them. I didn’t know if it was my business. In the end I decided that I wanted them to know because their story deeply moved me. I eventually reached out to Tim, maybe six months after the premiere. Fortunately, he was appreciative of the piece. Kenneth wouldn’t have known any of the backstory. I believe he was interested in my music primarily because of the premiere of Only Light.

NH: It’s on the CD that’s down at the Iowa IBA booth right now.516

AP: Yes, that’s a nice recording of the premiere. Overall, I thought the pacing was good. I was pleased with the results, as I wasn’t that involved with the rehearsals. I think Mark [Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, Director of Bands at the University of Iowa] might have sent some rehearsal recordings. I don’t recall. I just remember sending him the parts and showing up for the concert.

NH: But you had worked with him on Pale Blue on Deep?

AP: Yes, I’d worked with him on a few other projects.

NH: So, he had some experience with your music before commissioning *Only Light*?

AP: Yes, and he had pretty set boundaries on what he wanted for a commission. He wanted something cut from the same cloth as *Pale Blue on Deep*. This was all pending acceptance to the CBDNA North Central Division Conference, of course. He told me he’d let me know if they were officially invited to perform. I believe I found out late spring/early summer. The piece was delivered mid-winter to start rehearsing right after break. So that’s the timeline for *Only Light*. For *It Has to Be Beautiful*, I sent the music to Kenneth in January [2018], I shared the title and the backstory. He then informed me his mother had passed away from cancer at the age of 46. He instantly understood. His mother was the one that encouraged him to go into music, and she was the one who got him connected with Eugene Rousseau. She was always supportive of what he was doing. I had no idea about any of that before sending him the title to the work.

NH: Who would have predicted that he would have such a connection with it?

AP: As soon as I told him what the piece was about, he connected to it.

NH: Working with Dr. Tse, have there been times when you have sent him a draft and asked, “How does this look?”

AP: Not until we met a couple weeks ago in person and he played through a few parts for me. There was one spot where he was asked, “Why is there an eighth rest here?” We decided to add more notes and he would circular breathe instead.

NH: Are you going to take out that eighth rest?

AP: Of course, it’s already done. This is what I brought to share with him. It’s the latest version of his part. It’ll be done in early June. I might make changes after the premiere in Croatia.

NH: Do you remember anything else that he suggested?

AP: I was trying to pry, but the more I’ve gotten to know him, the more I’ve found that offering composers suggestions is not his style. I think he views himself as a conduit that interprets the music. He kept telling me, “I want you to write. I don’t want to influence that.” After receiving the initial draft, he offered a few edits…Take this up an octave…that kind of thing. But for the most part, he was removed from the writing process.

NH: Taking it up the octave will help him cut through the ensemble more.

AP: Yes, it makes sense, given the orchestration.

NH: You don’t have to pull any punches.

AP: Yes, I just didn’t know what might be too difficult. But then when I was writing the last page, I added a high F near the top of his range. He said, “That’s pretty high,” but Kenneth sounds great up there. He wasn’t concerned about playing the note as much as keeping it tune at
the right dynamic level. What might change is this [movement three, mm. 82-93]: it’s going to be pretty hard and it may need to be double-tongued. But he said he thought he could make it work. So, if I make any adjustments it’ll probably be to the end of the piece. That’s the one spot where his part might not be finished. The rest of that is more or less all done. He asked me some questions about this [opening cadenza] and I said, “That’s exactly what I was thinking: double-tongue. Just don’t even count notes; interpret it how you’d like. That’s the point.” It’s exactly what I had hoped for in the beginning. I told him, “I want you to interpret this. I don’t want to influence you too much.” He asked me, “How much freedom do I get with this?” I told him that no one else is playing there; he is essentially playing between chords in the piano and mallet percussion. I haven’t decided yet how I’m going to orchestrate it. I might put in some metallic percussion underneath it too.

NH: That’s going to be interesting seeing if future performers try to mimic his interpretation with this concerto or if everyone is going to try to develop their own individual interpretation.

AP: It’s hard to say. I hope we get a good recording next year and it ends up being something people listen to. We’re only doing an hour and a half recording session, but it might be enough time because I don’t see the wind parts as being too demanding. They’re going to be more colorful, but I think by that point getting some good takes of the wind parts shouldn’t be that difficult. And a lot of it will be more about the chamber stuff. Movement three will be the hardest I think. It might actually be doable.

NH: If it’s an hour and a half, I’m guessing Dr. Heidel is planning it just during a regular rehearsal.

AP: You’re right; that’s what I think he’s planning. I know it’s going to sound good no matter what. If the group is ready, and they should be, I think we can do a pretty good job.

NH: You’re going to be in residency that entire week, so I wouldn’t be surprised if they’re recording the dress rehearsal too. It might be split over two days.

AP: I’m not sure. And that could work too. So maybe between that and the session, we can get something good. I would like to play with attacks and releases of the sustains. I’d also like to play with the various textures in the winds. I think of that almost like adjusting volumes with dials.

NH: Dial down the clarinets, bring up the horns a little bit.

AP: Sort of like that. I like to shape things in time, and I kind of like it when they hover. Sometimes I like it when there is stillness, almost to the point of it being uncomfortable. There are also moments where I want texture you can reach out and feel. That’s what I think about a lot. I ask myself, “How can I make this come to life?” Or if I don’t want it to come to life, then it needs to serve a purpose too. There are a few moments in here where I say, “No, they’re just going to sit on this chord.” I like it when time sort of stands still. I think [Tse] is the person to deliver a piece like this because he’s such a captivating soloist. That’s what it’s going to take.
It’s pretty tough music, but his presence…he’s just one of those people that you can’t take your eyes off of. I wouldn’t be as interested if he were doing more back and forth stuff with the group because I would just want to be paying attention to him. As I was writing I thought, “All eyes will be on him.” And I told him, “You have virtually every melodic line in the piece.” And he said, “That Croatian band is going to give me a lot of dirty looks.” [Laughs] That was the premise coming in. To me, that’s more interesting then endless virtuosic passages. I prefer all of the subtleties of the instrument. I’ve been considering adding a few quarter-tone tunings too, but it depends on where the piece ultimately goes.

**NH:** You’re not a saxophone player and Dr. Tse essentially said, “You write it, and I’ll play it.” What was tricky about writing this? I noticed a spot in the solo part that said “multiphonic #17.”

**AP:** I got those out of a book. I took a picture with my phone and texted it to him and asked, “Does this work on your horn? Can you play this?” And I think we ended up going for both of the two that I liked. This was roughly what I was looking for. I believe we just checked them in the office the other day and they should be fine.

**NH:** I didn’t know if you were consulting with anybody else.

**AP:** No, multiphonics are such a touchy thing. And he was more concerned if it was the color I was looking for.

**NH:** Or texture. That particular one, it’s essentially fluttering between two notes.

**AP:** Yes, texture. That rhythmic aesthetic, right? That flutter. That’s more prominent. I think he was concerned about notes being out of tune and I said, “That’s fine. I don’t care.” To me, that’s alright when playing multiphonics. He just wanted to make sure that was what I was looking for. I don’t like when people write extend techniques just for the sake of writing them. They should have a purpose.

**NH:** Used sparingly is best.

**AP:** Yes, and one is going to be the end of the first movement and the second is somewhere in the third. At the end of the first movement, I’m going to do something with pitched gongs. I’m picturing lots of gongs. I have to kind of think about what I can get away with, though, from a practical point of view. A lot of it is going to be dictated by the percussion, the piano, and the harp. The orchestration will be sparse. In that respect, I don’t think finishing the orchestration should take that long. There’s lots to figure out, but it’s not going to be like the last piece I finished for [the University of Kansas Wind Ensemble] that had notes everywhere for the winds.

**NH:** Especially since you have the solo part essentially done.

**AP:** Yes, and that is the story. That is the line. I have a basic structure of chords in place. It’ll be fun. I am just trying to figure out, at this point, what I am truly hearing and how I can best shape and compliment the solo line. That’s the plan.
NH: In one of our previous conversations, you said that this is the first piece in a long time that wasn’t a commission. So, how do you describe this? A gift to Dr. Tse?

AP: It was so long ago, and I thought I would just be teaching full time and not primarily freelancing. I thought, “That’s just something I can do when I have time.” And that’s still essentially what happened. If I tell somebody I’m going to do something, I do my best to follow through. And it was a piece I wanted to write. Honestly, if I could pick a saxophonist to write for, it would be him. If I could pick a large work to write, it would be that piece. And it was a piece I always wanted to write anyways. I mean, it’s just one of those things…

NH: On your timeline, not someone else’s timeline.

AP: Exactly. And that’s why it took as long as it did. I just fit it in when I had a chance to fit it in. But there’s something to be said for that too, because it gives you freedom. There are no expectations. In a way, it’s just me writing for him. And that’s personal. There’s no one saying, “It has to be this long.” Actually, I lied; the World Saxophone Congress needed it to be eighteen minutes. But, there’s nobody micromanaging anything. Nothing. He said, “Just write it, and I’ll play it.” And there’s something kind of liberating about that.

NH: Previously you had mentioned, and of course I’ll ask Dr. Tse too, but you had said something to the fact of that you’re not a fan of consortia?

AP: That’s him.

NH: Ok. Is it because the composition gets less personal? Less catered to the individual performer?

AP: He doesn’t like doing that. And I kind of get that. It’s not so personal. He’s a big believer in collaboration. And I am too. I just fit it in when I could fit it in. If I had two weeks between projects to work on it, that’s what I’d do. I got it mostly done. I started putting notes on the page last spring and wrote maybe four or so other pieces around it.

NH: So, over the course of the year, writing it, was it ever challenging - like you would go back to it and didn’t quite remember what you wanted to do?

AP: I think I was always in it enough.

NH: You had some continuity.

AP: Yes, at least I knew what I was always hoping to achieve. But then I think a lot of hard work was done over the summer. There was a good solid chunk of time where I had most of the preliminary content on the page. I started in the spring when I was teaching [at Cornell College] in Iowa and it spilled into the summer. Going back to it all the time was just to make small edits. Back and forth, back and forth, fleshing sections out and changing a little bit here and there. I know what you’re saying. It’s tough to go back into the middle of the piece when you’re completely away from it. Because you have to totally reacquaint yourself with it.
NH: I remember hearing that Holst, when he wrote *The Planets*, was teaching full time and probably nights and weekends, had the family, and everything. So, it was composed over a long period of time. Something like a couple years. Not being a composer, I wonder if you go back to measure one after finishing it all and say, “Wait, what was I thinking?”

AP: It’s partially that. That’s why I was sure to save all of the sketches. I knew I could get back into the music with them. For me, figuring out the beginning of the piece is always the hardest part. What I ended up doing was use two sonorities. I needed something to get me started. I usually find a vertical sonority which turns into textures and melodic material. And that’s where it began, with those sonorities there [sketches of vertical sonorities, along with one Dallapiccola.]

NH: *This past fall I was in Dr. Stanton’s post-tonal theory class. I thought Dallapiccola’s works were the most accessible or palatable uses of serialism I had ever heard. Some of them are almost jazz voicings.*

AP: Yes. Look at this voicing. It’s a Bb major7 with the A in the bass, which sounds great. And it’s a little darker the way its voiced in the left hand.

NH: A little thicker.

AP: Yes, normally you might not want to voice a chord like that. But I love that with the left hand. But then, it’s just a C major triad on top of it. Those you can think of as a Bb with lots of extensions. But the way it’s voiced is the beauty of it. I remember reading about a composer and he said, “If I can play the voicing on the piano fifty times and not be tired of the sonority, I can write it down.” He isn’t bored with it. It’s still appealing to him. And that’s kind of how I feel. Like the beginning of this, I sat there forever thinking, “Ok, I want it to feel like this. What voicing feels like this?”

NH: *Your overall process, and this may have evolved over the years, but it sounds like your initial stage is you want to find some sounds that you like and that’s where you sort of create everything from?*

AP: Yes, you have to search. Sometimes it’s a texture in my mind. Sometimes I might start with a collection of pitches. A lot of the time it’s the melody that’s the last thing to come. Usually for me, the melody is always coming from the chords…coming from the textures. My ears just hear the melody later.

NH: That’s evident in your music. For some people, the melody is the primary thing, and everything else is secondary.

AP: For me it’s the opposite. And maybe that’s why it took me a while to write this opening. The cadenza took a long time too; trying to figure out what I wanted him to do. And I wrote that all by hand, rather than using the computer. In the Dorico file I just have this skeletal, rough kind of outline of some things and then I went in and fleshed it out.

NH: As you were saying, over the course of last year you wrote four or five new pieces?
AP: These sketches were always on my desk and I continued to come back to them. And this [CaringBridge post] was always on my bulletin board. Every time I started working on this piece, I would start by reading this to put myself back into that place. It started out pretty short and then it got longer and longer, and the cadenza got stretched out. I’ll see how it works; I don’t know. But just to see how far you can make a cadenza go before it gets boring. But that’s what makes it hard, I think.

NH: And you spoke to that yesterday in your clinic [Textures and Timbres in Mid-level Wind Literature: A Composer’s Perspective. Session presented at the Iowa Bandmasters Association 91st Annual Conference held in Des Moines, Iowa on May 10, 2018517], trying to find balance. You said you even refer to other composers, not always cadenzas of course, but how long you can use a certain harmony before it gets boring?

AP: I’ve listened to a lot of saxophone music over the years, but for this piece I looked at the Dahl [Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble]. Do you know that piece?

NH: No, I’m not familiar with it.

AP: He opens with a recitative. I was listening to it to get a sense of timing. I then used a program called Variations Audio Timeliner to map out the form.

NH: I’ve heard of it.

AP: It’s great. You can just go through it and quickly map out the form from the recording. I think I first used the program for a theory class. But I thought, “Oh, I can use this for composition.” Because it helps me clearly see…

NH: You take a file and insert it and then you can make a bubble chart.

AP: Then after that I thought, “This is a great tool for understanding form and how I perceive time.” I still use it sometimes. If I don’t use it, I will just pull out my phone and get the stopwatch going. Thinking, “How long did the composer do that for? Let me see.” I think my tendency is to not stretch things out enough.

NH: Err on the side of caution. You don’t want to bore the listener.

AP: Yes, but then I think you just bore yourself because you’re so used to the material. You’ve thought about it so much that you think, “Am I sick of this yet?” Then you’ve got to remember that the listener is only going to hear this once, and from that first listen they decide whether they want to hear it again.

NH: Certainly not fifty times, back to back to back like you the composer will.

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AP: Right. Now I don’t have to do this as much because I’ve learned this about my writing. Usually I can get away with something longer than my initial impulse would be. And I remind my students of that all the time when teaching composition lessons. I say, “This idea is way too short. Let me show you; you can make this longer. You have five pieces here, right? Let’s just use this one idea and try to do something with it.” That’s what I appreciate about a new piece of mine, In the Silent Lines, In the Open Air. It’s pretty much just one idea. I felt like I was good at developing a minimal amount of material. And I had to be because the commission was for a piece of just three to four minutes. I can’t do anything in three to four minutes! It ended up being five and half, which is still relatively short. There’s no introduction; it just starts. The process though, getting back to the opening of the concerto… What I did was I ended up finding prime form of this vertical sonority. From there, I played around with the idea of using abstract compliments, and what I ended up doing was introduce pitches slowly. There’s a slow change to the music. The idea was for me to introduce pitches to my music that I might not have otherwise chosen. I think everyone gets into the tendency of, “I want to hear this next.” I didn’t want that. I wanted to use a minimalist idea of process. It started with my choosing but it became, “If I follow the plan that I created, I need to work with this pitch next.” It took a while to live with that. I would say, “I don’t know if I want to use this pitch, but I want to stick to the plan.” I wanted to have that structure. It may not be completely perceptible, but hopefully the listener will understand there was a process involved.

NH: It has to be under the microscope.

AP: But I think the fact that there is structure is still perceivable.

NH: How did you decide, “These are the pitches I will use?”

AP: I would just use the next one, based upon the process I created. It’s not twelve-tone. This is just something that I did to get me out of my normal compositional routine. I think it’s good for you to do something that’s a little different. I always try to push myself in various directions.

NH: Are there certain things that one would notice doesn’t sound like your previous music?

AP: I don’t know. Maybe a little bit. I played the MIDI for Paul Popiel [Director of Bands at the University of Kansas] and all of his conducting TAs. He liked it. And the piece that he’s going to record, In the Open Air, In the Silent Lines, and this one [It Has to Be Beautiful] actually have a few similarities. I kind of did the same approach of, “Boom, you’re in. No introduction.” They went different directions, of course. But kind of the same idea in the beginning, just playing more and more with texture.

NH: So, has your compositional process used such a systematic method before?

AP: Here and there, but not too much. A lot of it is sort of a process with some free will. I’m never too rigid with rules, but I like the idea. I mean, I did something kind of similar once and I liked it. I like when you are forced to put yourself in your own little box. “What am I to do with only these three pitches?” It’s a fun challenge. And like I said, my fingers may not have naturally
found those pitches on the piano. So, it forced me to discover different shapes and different contours. It made me think differently about the music. Anything I can do that helps me learn. After the first movement was written, the second movement naturally evolved. And then the third. Kenneth asked if it was only two movements…or even just one. And that was the goal. I wanted it to feel like three extremely connected movements. With some concertos, you can play a movement on a Midwest concert or something, which you see all the time. And it works, because they’re kind of self-contained, and each one is like a five to seven-minute piece. But this is not like that. One of the pieces I was looking at, because the composer did it so well, is Joel Shadow of Sirius by Puckett. When I listen to that piece, it feels like it has the same concept working for it: inter-connected movements. And there’s another piece, Jonathan Leshnoff’s Clarinet Concerto, that has a similar feel.

**NH:** With orchestra, right? Not with band.

**AP:** Both, actually. Jonathan transcribed it later for band. Those two pieces came to mind right away when I decided the way in which I wanted to construct this concerto. I looked at them again from a time perspective. I don’t remember how long each of those pieces are now, but I listened to them before I started writing.

**NH:** Would you discourage somebody from performing *It Has to Be Beautiful* if they only wanted to do a single movement?

**AP:** I think they could do whatever they want, but to me, it would feel incomplete. It would be strange. I think they all feel like they’re connected. I feel like they need to be all be together on this journey.

**NH:** That makes sense with the subject matter - the story.

**AP:** Yes, I would have a hard time hearing just one and feeling like I understood the music. But that’s just me, and that’s the way I constructed it. Maybe someone will hear it and have a different opinion. That’s the beauty of the music. I don’t like to throw too many thoughts at people.

**NH:** And you have said one of the movements uses much more set theory and one of the movements uses minimalist techniques? So not necessarily a cell that evolves?

**AP:** The first movement uses elements of set theory. But with the third movement, it’s more of the principles that I understand minimalism to be. Basically, Reich’s whole idea, in regard to process and form.

**NH:** Steve Reich?

**AP:** Yes, Steve Reich. *Music as a Gradual Process.*

**NH:** Ok.
AP: At one point I read that about his music. That’s some of the stuff I remember coming away with. I like the idea of music slowly evolving. My music is more of a slow change. I’ve started to embrace it more and more, I think. It ended up being a special deal to write this piece.

NH: Do you mind if I ask, was money ever involved in any way?

AP: No, it was never even discussed. I felt it was a piece I needed to write. Hopefully I’ll recoup a little bit at the end with some rentals or something, but that's fine.

NH: Job satisfaction is important.

AP: Right.

NH: At this point you're about to begin the orchestration process. Right now, is essentially everything committed to piano? How do you imagine going forward? Also, a sub question: Is this a process you usually go through with a lot of pieces?

AP: No, this is not normal for me. But it felt like the right approach, given it’s a concerto.

NH: The solo part first?

AP: Yes. I was writing the solo part and then loosely orchestrating as I went. I have colors and things in there but it’s just not full yet. I need to go through and finish all of that. And the piano and the harp are pretty close.

NH: How does this differ from your usual process?

AP: It would be different because I wouldn't have a solo voice. In that case I would be fine-tuning orchestration as I go. In this case, I basically just have all the pitches in place. I had this framework of pitch material I was using and they're just kind of splattered on this part up here, so I was more worried about how that worked down here. And then I just put enough on the page to know how it would fit with this part.

NH: This is your first work for soloist and ensemble?

AP: Yes.

NH: Even in some of your chamber works it’s more equally spread between all the parts.

AP: The percussion piece was sort of half-and-half…maybe not truly a concerto. I didn’t think of it as a concerto; it features two percussionists out front and they have pretty substantial parts. That one still felt more back and forth, maybe fifty-fifty between the percussion and the winds. The winds have a lot of notes; it’s more of a conversation. This piece has a singular melodic voice. Anything else that is going to be done is going to compliment what the soloist is doing. The percussion piece was different because it came from some older material combined with newer material. The process was completely different.
NH: And this is your longest work to date, right?

AP: This one and the percussion one will be the longest two. I think that one ended up being twenty-one minutes as well. I think this will be twenty minutes, maybe twenty-two…

NH: You mentioned the piano part; do you think this concerto would work with saxophone and piano? A recital version?

AP: I don’t know. It’s maybe possible I guess…

NH: Maybe. Color is so important in your music.

AP: I was thinking about that. It would be nice to have a reduction for piano because it would be much more marketable and playable by people at recitals, but I don’t see it. I mean the middle movement could work with just piano, but the first and the third would be a challenge.

NH: You mentioned several times that the texture is long, sustained. That doesn’t translate to piano.

AP: No, not so much. Plus, there’s an actual piano part, so I’m not sure how that would work.

NH: Two pianos.

AP: Or four, like Stravinsky’s Les Noces. [Laughs] Maybe there’s something that could be done…How are we doing on time? I’d love to check off as much as you want right now.

NH: Well, maybe just one more question, and then we can turn the recorder off and we could just listen to it. In a previous conversation, you described the concerto as mostly slow and lyrical, and of course there’s a lot of technical challenges. But it’s not necessarily the typical concerto: first movement is fireworks, third movement is fireworks, lyrical in the middle. Do you see other composers going more of this route? Do you see a trend? Because it clearly fits what I know about your music so far: you’re not about higher, faster, louder.

AP: I don’t know that it’s a trend. I don’t see it as being a trend. In this piece, there were no expectations. I just wrote exactly what I want to write. And then I looked at a few pieces that I knew had a similar construction, like the Dahl [Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble]. But no, I can’t think of this being a trend that I am aware of. I just try to write what is true to me. My inspirations often come from different places. I feel like minimalism is kind of a thing for me. There are elements of pop in my music. There’s jazz, of course. I feel like that’s part of my upbringing. I’m not sure if it’s a trend. You can do some looking. It sounds like a good dissertation topic. [Laughs] I don’t know. Something you can talk about in your introduction.

NH: Shifting gears away from the concerto topic, I feel that over the last handful of years, there are more composers who are taking your direction with things. Textures and colors are becoming more important for winds. Maybe it’s just me becoming more familiar with
what’s out there or having a different vantage point as a graduate student. But between your clinic yesterday and this interview today, I was thinking that in some ways melody may be shifting a little bit towards the back burner and elements like texture and color maybe coming a little more forward.

AP: I don’t know. Maybe that’s a better question for a conductor who goes through a lot more literature than I do. I don’t consume a lot of literature. Mostly, I have ESPN radio on in the car. [Laughs] I’m usually thinking about how to fix things in my pieces. I have those measures going through my head. Usually where I end up hearing a lot of the new music is during concerts, which is nice. From what I know, it just feels like that’s a little bit more of a thing right now. I don’t know why that is, but I’m sure it’s a variety of things. Everyone in some way gets influenced on some level by other people, and that’s inevitable. And maybe players and conductors are getting more comfortable with these different ideas. You can look at the orchestral world; it’s been happening for a long time. If I listen to anything for inspiration, it’s often chamber music or orchestral. David Maslanka was a big influence. He was just such an amazing person. I’m fortunate to get to spend some time with him a year before he passed. I might have told you that.

NH: No, I did not know that.

AP: I finally got to meet and have dinner with him at his last Midwest [Clinic]. I was there early for a rehearsal of one of my pieces which Gary Green was guest conducting. That was where I met Gary Green for the first time too. He and David go way back. And David was hanging out waiting to go to dinner with Gary who said to me, “Hey, why don’t you come along?” And Tim Shade from Wichita State University met us. It was just the four of us at dinner. That was a ton of fun. I got to pick David’s brain on all sorts of things. And he was such a role model. He said, “Look, when I was roughly your age, I quit teaching full time, moved to Montana and started writing full time.” For him, that’s just what he had to do. I felt the same way. I talked to him about it and said “Look, if I’m going to do this, I just need to do it. I don’t want to wait until I’m retired to start actually having time to compose. That’s just missing the boat. If I’m going to do it, it’s got to be a leap of faith.” That’s basically what he did. I remember he told me has wasn’t sure if he had written much good music before the age of forty.

NH: It took him a long time to get comfortable, pay his dues.

AP: I don’t feel like a twenty-year-old necessarily has the life experience and maturity to write music as deeply as a forty or fifty-year-old. I feel like I’m still diving in a little deeper with every piece. And I hope that’s always the case. That’s the goal. I remember reading a quote of David’s where he said [early in his diagnosis with cancer], “There’s so much music left to write. I think there’s more time for me.” And it’s sad, as it turned out, that he didn’t even make it through that next year. But in December he didn’t have cancer; he had a clean bill of health. Being able to pick his brain was wonderful, and I appreciate his music. I feel like his music is just so…everything. He takes his time and let’s things develop at their own pace.

NH: He’s not in a rush.
AP: I love that about him. I definitely appreciate that about his music. And it’s so sincere. It doesn’t feel like he’s writing for anyone in particular. I take a lot from that mindset, just from experiencing his music. He’s not afraid to have just two people playing on stage while sixty people sit. He’s not afraid to do anything like that. And that’s kind of my attitude. I can’t be afraid to just write whatever I want to write. And I’ve gotten much more comfortable with that after finishing school, where you often feel external pressures to write a certain way. I am now further removed from that environment, and I simply try to write what is sincere to me. I try to put as much energy as I can into the process of producing my best music. That’s the approach I’ve been taking over the past couple of years. It’s not for everyone, but I think for me, living in the woods of northern Minnesota has been good. Where are you from originally? Are you from northern Minnesota?

NH: Yes, north of Duluth. Cook.

AP: Ok, so you get it. I sometimes felt constricted in Iowa…it’s nothing like where I grew up. Maybe you can relate? I’m used to the trees and the lakes.

NH: Do you write better in Minnesota?

AP: I feel like I do. I feel like I’m much more comfortable and don’t have as many distractions.

NH: In your own skin.

AP: Exactly. I feel like I’m writing a bit faster these days, too.

NH: More efficient.

AP: More efficient, yes. That comes from doing it more often. I used to always have to teach and try to write at night or on the weekends when I could. But now I write most of the year, and I only teach in small, focused amounts of time. I’m getting better at getting music on the page and pushing through any moments of writer’s block. And as David [Maslanka] would say, “Sit down and do the work.” That’s what he was all about. You have to show up every day and do the work. You can’t just sit around and wait to say, “I’m feeling inspired today. Maybe I’ll do a little writing.”

NH: There’s no lightning bolt that comes down.

AP: No, not usually. You have to just sit down and write, and often it’s uninspiring. But you just find it somewhere. There are many days where I say, “Wow, everything I wrote today was pretty bad.” I had a whole beginning of this piece [It Has to Be Beautiful] that I started and threw away. A whole beginning. I just couldn’t make it work. That was about two or three years ago. I went through multiple drafts before I figured out what I wanted.

NH: You’ve shared with me earlier that you don’t typically hang on to things like sketches. What made you change your mind with this particular piece?
AP: I don’t know. I think it’s just because I had people like yourself asking me about how I compose. So, I’ve become more aware of my own process.

NH: More aware in general, or just with this piece?

AP: In general, I suppose. With this piece, though, the process was important. I thought, “I should keep this because someone may ask me about this someday.” Are you wondering about anything else?

NH: I’m thinking about a lot of things. [Laughs] But I think that this was good for us to talk about this piece and at some other date I can connect things less critical to the piece itself.

AP: Sure; it was good to talk through it. Would you like to give the piece a listen?

NH: That sounds great. Let’s do it.
NH: Thanks again for sitting down to speak with me. I appreciate your willingness to talk this week.

AP: My pleasure. It’s fun to be back on campus.

NH: After this, what’s next? What big projects do you have coming up?

AP: My next big project will be a piece with not only band but with electronics and soprano too. There are many details to work out on that one, though. I have quite a few other projects to get to first.

NH: So far, do you have anything that has electronics with winds?

AP: No, because that scares me. [Laughs]

NH: You don't have a lot for voice yet either, right?

AP: No, not too much. I like to continue to push myself in different directions. Electronics with winds aren’t terribly common, and it’s certainly something new to me. I haven’t worked with electronics since graduate school. Steven [Bryant] and Alex [Shapiro] are two people with multiple works of winds with electronics, so I’ll have to reacquaint myself with their music.

NH: Like Steven Bryant’s Ecstatic Waters.

AP: Exactly. I studied it years ago when it first came out, but I haven’t been back to it in a while. As for the electronics, I think the key will be to do them in such a way that they literally have to work.

NH: Because there are so many components that could go wrong, unfortunately.

AP: Yes. I envision myself using an analog synthesizer; I’m thinking of purchasing a Prophet 6. From a compositional standpoint, I like the idea of doing a lot of the manipulation of sound with the synth rather than in a DAW. At the end, I might collaborate with someone to make sure it’s really user-friendly. A lot of my interest in electronic music comes from Larry [Fritts]. I was a bit reluctant to study electronic music when I was here. I had studied it already at the University of Minnesota and really wasn’t very interested in pursuing it. But the class and lessons were fascinating, and I took much of that knowledge and applied it to my acoustic writing.
Larry commented on one of my posts on Facebook last year. He wrote something like, “You always wrote so well for electronics. Why don't you write something for electronics and winds?” And actually, it was that little Facebook comment, that sparked…

NH: A seed.

AP: Yes. The seed was planted about a year ago. I'd love to have a little feedback from him when I actually write the piece, assuming he’s available. And if nothing else, I’d love to show him what I'm doing because he's always been very supportive of my work. Maybe it’ll be a symphony with voice…

NH: Nielsen has at least one.

AP: Vaughan Williams and his Sea Songs too. That was a choral symphony. So, symphony can mean anything, really. It might be a symphony, but maybe not. I don't really care at this point. I think it’ll be interesting, because electronic music has greatly influenced the way I write acoustically. I'm sure you can tell because of the way I love to combine sounds…

NH: Fading in, fading out.

AP: All of that. Asking, “What can I do on this attack? I want this for an attack, I want this for a middle.” Those ideas, for me, came from the electronic world. In electronic music, you aren’t confined by meter. This thinking of shifting soundscapes without meter has stuck with me in a lot of my writing. I think you can hear the influence.

I spend a lot of time with my voicings; even those voicings that surround Kenneth’s recitative. It took a while to figure out how I wanted to voice those chords and what instruments to use. There is also a spot I love in the third movement where the saxophones sustain a very crunchy chord [m. 28: E-flat, G, A-flat, D or m. 65: E, A, F-sharp, G or others]. So that kind of stuff…

I feel like I manipulate the pitch material to convey a sense of space or to convey a sense of tension. That’s how I tend to do it and that's done through the voicing and then through the instrumentation being used as well, putting certain instruments in certain registers.

Those are a few things I picked up from Larry. It was fitting I had time this week to tell him, “Hey, remember all that stuff that we talked about in lessons? It all sunk in and resonated with me, and it’s a huge influence on what I do now.” I think he was very pleased to hear that because I know he's really going to miss teaching. He's still composing when he can, but I think he really took a lot of pride in his teaching as well. He was always so much fun because of the crazy ideas he came up. But he got me to think in different ways, which was wonderful. Out of everyone I studied with, he was probably the most likely to throw curveballs at me, if that makes sense. So that really opened my mind to these types of possibilities. Like, “Why can't music sound like that? Why can't it feel like that? Why can't that be a thing?” So those lessons always remind me to explore all of my options when I'm writing.
For the concerto, I kind of kept coming back to the text and then asked myself, “How do I want to convey this?” For the third moment, I was really interested in this very long line. It's a big build up to this very vulnerable moment at the end [m. 98]. So, I tried to do different things like that. You have this idea in your mind about how it should feel so you hope that’s how it comes across. It's tough to know. To me, I did the best I could with the time allotted.

But thinking back to Larry for a moment…

Every week he would take out a sheet of paper and a blue colored pencil. By the end of the lesson, he’d scribble all of the ideas that came up throughout the lesson. I'd compose the next week with his scribbles on my desk, working meticulously through the various ideas. Many didn’t make end up amounting to anything, but I loved the different paths they took me down. Sometimes I wasn’t even completely sure what he was talking about, but that was actually part of the point. It's like, “Look here’s an idea we could explore” or “Let's take the retrograde of this and let's manipulate it in this way.” He did a lot of systematic things; he was always interested in the process. I could sense his influence when I composed the first movement of the concerto.

**NH: Let's set the parameters.**

AP: Yes, and then we’ll see what comes of it. Then I like to come in with my own intuition and if I want to manipulate things a little bit, I can. I think it’s such a useful way to generate material that I wouldn't naturally gravitate towards on my own.

**NH: How did your composing look like prior to enrolling at the University of Iowa.?**

AP: I was primarily self-taught. Composition lessons are really just another perspective, really. Again, my lessons at Iowa mostly pushed me out of comfort zone a bit more regularly. I also spent a lot of time thinking about form, pacing and orchestration with David [Gompper]. Lessons with him complimented my time with Larry, and I’m grateful for the multiple perspectives.

Before Iowa I took lessons with Judith Zaimont at the University Minnesota. She was great to work with as well. A lot of our time was spent on mechanics, as I wasn’t as experienced. I feel like a late bloomer in the compositional world.

I met from time to time with Clyde Johnson in my undergrad years, but I was basically just learning on my own back then…sitting in ensembles, looking at scores, and then trying things out. Oh, and there was Doc! [Dr. Jim “Doc” Carlson] I can’t even tell you how many jazz charts of mine Doc programmed. [Laughs]

**NH: I remember a few. [Laughs]**

AP: That was an amazing experience to be able to sit and listen to my music and say, “Oh, that really worked well” or “That was different than I expected” and “Oh wow, those saxophones are so ridiculously high…that was dumb of me.” Stuff like that. I learned so much just by writing those jazz charts with Doc. That's what I got out of undergrad more than anything I think.
NH: The opportunity to actually do it.

AP: Absolutely. Doc just encouraged me to keep going. But yeah, when I got to grad school at the University of Minnesota, I worked with Judith. As I said, she was great; she also really kicked my butt. She'd literally take out her pencil and just erase things like, “No, no, no, not right here.” She'd cross something out and then she’d say, “We're going to overlap these phrases, and it’ll feel more organic.” We did a lot of things like that. I felt like it was really not a discussion, but she was very kind. I feel like that time was just very much about, “Let's get you better at your craft.”

NH: It seems like that's a great progression: to go from no limits, everything is possible, and you get to have a lot of music performed and then later you begin focusing on refining your skills. I'm not a composer, but I think it could be off-putting if you're confined and restricted by the rules initially before you get the chance to have things played.

AP: It worked out really well. I also studied some with Doug Geers at the University of Minnesota. That was where I first got exposed to the electronic music world. When I got to Doug's class it was a whole new world…

NH: Everything was acoustic up until that point.

AP: Yes. The University of Minnesota did a nice job of preparing me for the next step. I was writing pretty tonal stuff when I got to Iowa, and I still feel I am. However, the pitch material I use is now taken from a much larger palate.

NH: Sure.

AP: Some people on the other hand… I have a student who said, “I love writing atonal music.” My response was, “Great, do it!” To each his own. I like some of the processes I have learned through studying atonal music. I like taking those and putting my own spin on them. There's also the whole element of texture and timbre that are so vital to the way I think about music. And elements from electronic music…And elements of jazz…And there are definitely some pop-type things that sneak in every once in a while. I actually started writing the third movement of the concerto right after I listened to a little bit of Bon Iver.

Thinking way back, I started taking piano lessons in third grade. I always had a lot of writing assignments in my lessons. I learned quite a bit about theory at an early age.

NH: So, you had piano all the way through?

AP: Well, I stopped taking lessons formally in eighth grade to focus more on trumpet and the drum set. I was a “jack of all trades” at that point. I also studied jazz piano with Laura Caviani after college. She and her husband Pete Whitman have a group called the X-tet. Are you familiar?

NH: No.
AP: I think they’re still playing. They actually did some of my stuff at the Artist’s Quarter in St. Paul. It was great to hear, and a good experience to hear my music played really well. And Dean Sorenson…I can't forget Dean. He was very influential too. I studied some with him and also took his class in jazz arranging. He programmed a lot of my jazz charts at the University of Minnesota. If Dean had a guest on campus, he made sure I could get a lesson with the guest. Some of the things I learned in lessons with Dean stuck with me. Especially in the way in which voicings can be manipulated, and how if you take a chord and voice it in a certain way, the third of the chord can actually feel like an extension. So those kinds of things stuck with me…In high school I was mostly interested in 90s grunge…Smashing Pumpkins and the like.

NH: Were you composing your own music at that point?

AP: A bit, but nothing too serious. I was really thinking I was going to be a lawyer when I was in high school. I was thinking of studying business.

NH: That was your plan when you were still in high school?

AP: Yes, that's what I assumed I would do. My dad was a band director, so I thought “I don't know if I want to do that.” But then the jazz ensemble from the University of Minnesota, Morris, played at my high school. They opened with First Circle [a composition by Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays] and my mind was blown. Doc said, “Hey Aaron, you're a drummer, right? Go stand behind the drummer back there and see what he’s doing.” I went over and watched with amazement. Doc met me five minutes ago but knew what I needed right away. The drummer was playing with one hand and tracking the music for me with the other. I thought, “I'm going to go to this college.”

NH: This is interesting.

AP: And that’s really my background. I saw my old piano teacher recently. It was at my grandma's funeral, sadly. I played at the funeral. My former teacher is such a sweet lady. And again, that is where I first dabbled with composing.

NH: Exercises out of a book or would she create her own assignments?

AP: I don't even remember. We used books; there was probably a little create-your-own song in there too…I just remember doing it. Then I played piano at a local church when I was a high school student. I didn’t like to practice the hymns, so I got good at chord analysis and playing from chord symbols!

NH: What about your switch from trumpet to trombone?

AP: I switched after my freshman year in college. I played the whole year on trumpet, but my embouchure changed. Rather than trying to reboot the whole thing and start over, Doc [trumpet professor as well as jazz professor] said, “I don't think I've ever done this before, but why don’t you try trombone.” In the meantime, he's said, “While you're learning trombone this summer,
would you write a jazz chart for us? If it's good, we’ll perform it.” I think he knew I’d need a distraction as I learned a new instrument. That’s when I got more serious about writing.

NH: Looking forward, you have this big project on the horizon. Are you gravitating towards larger forms now?

AP: I like larger pieces because they let you stretch out. I feel like shorter pieces are really challenging in a way, because you can only say so much, and you have to say it relatively quickly. So this piece…I took my dissertation and totally reworked it for Kansas [the University of Kansas Wind Ensemble] as a percussion feature. I don't know if you got a chance to listen to it, but I think it works so much better than it used to. In a way, dissertations are a starting point. They aren’t the end; they are the beginning. Another work of mine [Only Light] originated from my dissertation, so I’m glad I was able to rework the rest. Tonya [Mitchell, the leader of the consortium that funded the work] helped me realize “Wait, this would work so well as a percussion feature.” The middle movement is only percussion and done without a conductor. It has a calming, almost meditative feel to it.

NH: Did you retain the title?

AP: I retained the title [Beneath a Canvas of Green]. I felt like it was still the essence of the piece. It’s a bit confusing, but essentially, my dissertation isn’t a thing anymore in its original form.

NH: I’m guessing you are still interested in composing shorter works as well?

AP: Oh, sure.

NH: You’re not going to turn down an opportunity?

AP: Not typically, no. That's what I'm writing mostly this year, actually: shorter pieces. One of the pieces I'm writing this year, started as a band commission only, but I suggested I write a choral version first followed by a version for winds. It really felt like text would be fitting for this particular work, and the voice is such a pure way of conveying emotion. Hopefully the piece will reach more people by living in two different genres. The commission is in honor of his daughter who passed away just hours after she was born.

NH: Oh, wow.

AP: He and his wife came up with the poetry that we're going to set. I just threw the idea at them and said, “If this doesn't feel right, by all means, let's not do it.”

NH: So, you're branching out into the choral world. Are you also looking at other concertos?

AP: I’d love to write more. I really enjoy writing for individuals. It’s such a personal experience.
NH: Did you say Dr. Tse is interested in performing *It Has to be Beautiful* in the spring?

AP: Yes, I have to ask him about that. I think in February or March, at one of the NASA conferences. [NASA Region 9 hosted by Lethbridge University in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada February 15-17, 2019.] After that I'm sure he'll continue to play it. I might do a reduction of the piece. I'm talking with some people who have expressed interest in a reduction, so we’ll see…

NH: You've got a lot going on.

AP: I do! Going forward, I am looking at ways in which I can pass along some of the duties of self-publishing to others. This will allow me to focus more time on writing and collaborating with others.

NH: Doing that things that only you can do. There are so many other things that other people can handle for you.

AP: Exactly. I’ve already begun to arrange things to allow myself to hire a bit of help.

NH: That’s great.

AP: Yes, I think that'll be nice because there are some things only I can do, and I should be worrying about those things more than anything else. It’s tricky to learn how to grow a business; much of it is trial and error.

NH: It sounds like you have a lot of things going on! Thanks again for speaking with me.

AP: Thanks. It was fun.
Dr. Timothy Diem is Assistant Professor of Applied Music and Performance (Conducting), Assistant Director of University Bands, and Director of Athletic Bands at Syracuse University’s Setnor School of Music in Syracuse, New York. Diem previously taught at the University of Minnesota for sixteen years – eleven of which were as the director of the Pride of Minnesota Marching Band. He also conducted concert ensembles in the band area. Additionally, Diem taught conducting, marching band techniques, and courses in music education.

Prior to his appointment at the University of Minnesota, Diem was a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Northern Colorado-Greeley. He also taught instrumental music for four years as a public-school teacher in his home state of Minnesota. Diem completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in instrumental music education and piano performance at the University of Minnesota, Morris. He earned two Master of Music degrees at the University of Northern Colorado-Greeley: one in wind conducting and the second in collaborative piano performance. Diem also completed a Doctor of Arts degree in wind conducting with a secondary concentration in music education at the University of Northern Colorado-Greeley. Outside of the band realm, Diem has a wealth of experience conducting and serving as music director for various stage productions, both in Colorado and in Minnesota. Diem is a member of the College Band Directors National Association, Minnesota Band Directors Association, National Association for Music Education, and the National Band Association. A more comprehensive biography of Diem can be found at http://vpa.syr.edu/faculty-staff/timothy-diem.518

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT – DR. TIMOTHY DIEM

Thursday, August 9, 2018
2:30 – 3:30 p.m. CST
Phone Interview, Syracuse, New York
Abbreviations – Dr. Timothy Diem (TD); Nolan Hauta (NH)

NH: Hello and thank you for being willing to speak with me today. I appreciate your time. Hopefully it will be nice to think about some things other than the marching band for a minute.

TD: Yes. [Laughs]

NH: I have a series of questions which I sent you. This is informally structured, so we can talk about certain questions more in depth or deviate and go off on tangents a little bit. That is perfectly acceptable. To respect your time, I would like to limit this to around an hour, but I don't have anywhere to be after this so if we go longer that's fine with me as well.

TD: I’m happy to follow up later if need be.

NH: Thank you, I appreciate it. My research is coming to an interesting point with this particular composition of Aaron Perrine’s. Essentially, I was interested in it before it was premiered and then the world premiere happened, and the North American premiere will be at the University of Iowa with the Symphony Band in November. Aaron is going to be on campus for a week as a resident composer and so there will be plenty of opportunities for me to follow up later and interview Aaron after its premiere. But, I guess, approaching this interview, some of the readership might not be that familiar with Aaron and they may not be all that familiar with you, so I am starting my questions from scratch here. If you wouldn’t mind just giving some background on yourself?

TD: Sure. I grew up in Minnesota and my undergrad school was the University of Minnesota, Morris which was around a three-hour drive west of Minneapolis. It is a small little town branching off the university. I was there for five years and then I started teaching in a little town just north of there. I had grades 5-12 my first year for instrumental music and then I switched to grades 7-9 instrumental music and general music for the next two years. Then they built a new school and said, “We don’t need two band directors anymore.” So, I went to grad school. [Laughs]

NH: That first school was in Barrett, Minnesota correct?

TD: That’s right; the West Central Area school district. They built a new school, which is great, and it worked well. I had a friend who was going to college, to graduate school, at the University of Northern Colorado. And I was doing a lot of piano playing at the time. I asked how the collaborative piano teacher was and he said that she was fantastic and accepted me, so I ran out to Colorado and did my Master of Music degree in collaborative piano. While I was doing this, I
realized that I was missing the band world, so I decided to get a Master of Music degree in wind conducting, thinking that I would head back to a junior high or a high school or whatever and be on my merry way after graduating. But then this young lady showed up while I was finishing my second degree and I decided it would be good to stay in Colorado and stay for a Doctor of Arts degree in wind conducting. Then, in the fall of 2000, I was lucky enough to go back to Minnesota. I was at the University of Minnesota for sixteen years. I started off as the assistant marching band director and the athletic band director and slid up to the marching band director job after a few years, and then in 2015 my wife passed away from metastatic breast cancer and you know that Big Ten marching band world… We have three young children and I realized I can't do both of those jobs the way they both need to be done. I stepped away and went back to middle school for a year. There was, lucky thing, a middle school four miles from my house and a lady took a sabbatical to have a child and I slid in and took her job for a year while she had her kid and while I was doing that, the Syracuse job opened up. So, then I applied, and that’s how I ended up in Syracuse.

NH: That middle school, was that in Rockford, Minnesota?
TD: Yes, Rockford Middle School in Rockford, Minnesota

NH: You said that was for one year and then you moved to Syracuse?
TD: That’s correct.

NH: Ok. Then you're starting up year number two is it?
TD: Yes, year number two.

NH: So, you don't have to teach that first year ever again right? Is that how the saying goes?
TD: [Laughs] I got to see everything that was going on and I was able to say, “Ok let’s keep this, let’s tweak that, and here we go!” [Laughs] At least with college students, they’re a little more open to what the new person is going to do.

NH: True. They've already been through at least one transition from high school to college. Most of them more transitions than that by that point. Alright, let’s move into more of the relationships and the connections with other people. Would you just tell me a little bit about your relationship and your connection with Aaron Perrine?

TD: This is one of those dumb-luck situations. He went to the same undergrad that I did, the University of Minnesota, Morris. But, we didn’t overlap. He came in after me.

NH: Just slightly, right?
TD: Not by much. He might have been there while I was student teaching. He and I never hung out together or anything. But then I went to graduate school in Colorado for five years. I came
back and started teaching at the University of Minnesota. I was at the Minnesota Music Educators Association Midwinter Clinic. I believe it was a Saturday, the last day of the convention, they had a session for the award winners for the young composer contest that they had that year. I noticed that one of the students that was being honored was a student at Minnesota, Morris so I decided I would stop by and check it out. I think it was a MIDI performance that I heard. It was Aaron’s first work for band which was called In This Moment. And you know, even with a MIDI recording, I thought “Wow, these are sounds I haven’t heard much in the band world. This is interesting, this is different. Here we have a young guy making different sounds - that’s great.” So, I had the chance to meet him after and I told him I wanted to program [In This Moment]. I was directing the third band at [the University of] Minnesota, the University Band. I said, “That’s a perfect piece for that group.” He sent it to me and I said, “You have to come and work with the band.” and so he did. After he worked with the band I asked him, “Have you ever conducted a band playing your own piece before?” and he said, “Well, no I’ve never had the chance to do that.” I said, “Well then you’ll have to come back again, and we’ll have you do that too.” So that’s where our connection all started was with that piece [In This Moment] and him coming in to work with the band and conducting on the concert. It started there and ever since he and I have been connected and talk a lot. He sends me his pieces and I get to try them with the students I am working with at the time. It’s great. We immediately hit it off right there. I don’t know if it was the common bond of Morris, Minnesota or what but I knew this is a guy I want to make music with. It’s been a great relationship ever since.

NH: Sure, that immediate camaraderie, of some good shared memories and things like that.

TD: We could talk about this practice room, that piano...

NH: Would you say piano is your primary instrument?

TD: Yes, it is.

NH: In the band world, does that translate to you being a percussionist most of the time?

TD: Yes, but I have seen great percussionists and I’m embarrassed to say I’m not nearly what they are. Honestly the piano guy should not handle timpani. But yes, I was a percussionist in high school and as an undergraduate. I started college as a computer science and math major. I eventually switched over to music, I think it was my junior year, and piano wasn’t an instrument option for people wanting to be a band director. I needed experience on band instruments. So, I started studying percussion. I have a degree in percussion, but piano is where I spend most of my time. With percussion, I did double lessons a semester and I stayed in the area a couple of summers and I was able to catch back up despite my late switch to a music major. Some people truly know how to play percussion and that’s when I go and sit down at the piano. [Laughs]

NH: There is certainly a skill set for every instrument and percussionists have a lot of instruments. [Laughs] Do you still perform much?
TD: Not nearly as much as I would like. I accompanied a student here at Syracuse last semester who lost his piano player halfway through the semester. That was great for me to get playing again. But largely the last decade I was my wife’s keyboardist. She was a choir director and a music liturgist and so I was there for her.

NH: Oh, I did not know that. The musical inspiration that Aaron used for this alto saxophone concerto, It Has to Be Beautiful, involves both you and your late wife. Would you feel comfortable sharing your story?

TD: We met in 1997, a blind date - mostly a blind date. She was blind I wasn’t as blind. It was my first semester. How it started was that there was a music appreciation course that didn’t have a TA and so it must have been a week before classes started and I said, “I’ll be their TA. I’ll help out those 400 people in this monster course.”

NH: This is at UNC-Greeley? [The University of Northern Colorado-Greeley]

TD: Yes. The first day we're waiting for the class to start and this young lady comes in because she wants to make an announcement. She was leading one of the non-major choirs as a TA and she needed singers. After she left the class, I wandered up to the choir TA office and asked my choir TA friend, “So, tell me about the new person.” [Laughs] About a month later it was her birthday. She said to this friend of mine, “It’s my birthday and I have nothing to do.” And he says, “I think I know a guy who would probably want to go out with you on your birthday.” That's where it started, and we were married a year later, January 1st, 1999. We got married out here in New York. She's actually from just south of Syracuse. It’s interesting this is all tied together. We got married in 1999. She finished her Master of Music degree in choral conducting and we stayed a year in Colorado, so I could finish my wind conducting doctorate. Then I got the job at the University of Minnesota and off we went. She was working with church choirs and doing some other odd jobs but largely she was a church choir director and I was her accompanist. We were just outside Minneapolis area and we had three kids. I grew up just outside of Minneapolis so after our second son was born, we moved to my hometown. That was wonderful. She continued doing church work in Buffalo, Minnesota. In May 2007 she went to her doctor for a routine checkup and they said “I feel something that’s not right. You need to get some tests run.” They had found a lump: breast cancer. She went through all the surgeries and all the radiation, chemo, and everything. I think was February the next year and they said, “You’re ok, we're all good, we're all done, we'll see you in six months.” Six months later the cancer was back, then we were good for two years, and then it was back again, and then I think we got another year before it was back again attacking her lungs. That was the beginning of the end. Once it gets in the lung that’s a tough fight that doesn’t go well. She battled as hard and for as long as she could. One of my future twirlers with the marching band went on GoFundMe and there was all this money available from across the country that sent us to Disney world. Toni got to have one last trip with her three boys.

NH: That’s amazing.

TD: Yes. Thanks to the generosity of marching band people across the country. She called it her “Revitalizing Trip,” hoping to beat cancer one final time. But it didn’t work that way. By July,
she said, “I can’t do this anymore,” and went into hospice for three months before the cancer finally took her. So, then the three boys and I were in Minnesota. They got to grow up where my mother and brother and one sister are. And now, here, Toni’s parents are still alive in Cortland, New York and all her cousins. One of her brothers is up here so now it’s a chance for her side of the family get to know the three boys better. It was a nice move. We left family and we got family.

**NH:** That doesn’t happen often.

**TD:** No, not in the profession we’ve chosen.

**NH:** I’m sure your in-laws are thrilled to have family close and family around.

**TD:** Yes, they are.

**NH:** Aaron had also composed another piece that was inspired by Toni’s fight and Toni’s courage. In some ways that one might be seen a little bit as a predecessor to the saxophone concerto. Would you describe *Only Light* or how Aaron got connected to composing that?

**TD:** Yes, that was another surprise. I don’t know if you’re familiar with CaringBridge.

**NH:** Yes.

**TD:** Online.

**NH:** Yes, you had a website there.

**TD:** It started out with Toni writing and updating and I kind of took it over.

**NH:** Sure.

**TD:** That’s where I worked through things and updated people about what was going on. My wife had a lot of great faith. This whole thing, eight years going through cancer treatment. She’s always about family. She’s watching these three sons of hers as she kept going through cancer, knowing it’s going to take her before the boys get to be teens, but she stayed so steadfast. Her faith and her positivity were much more than I could ever have. Everything she did was so wonderful. She hung on to that concept of light. At one point she couldn’t leave her room. She would say, “Boy I wish I could see a fire. It would be great to see a fire,” So, we started taking pictures of them. There was a thing on the internet for a while with her friends and family. Sitting around their campfires or fire pits. Her thought was once we do Disney, once I get through this, I’m going to start my own blog and what not and it’s going to be called, “Fiat Lux: Let there be light.” That was her rallying cry. In one of my ramblings on CaringBridge I was going on about that concept. Of being caught in the darkness, but I need to get to the place where there’s only light, and that’s what Aaron grabbed on to. He told me he had that online post above his desk while he was working on that piece. After it was all done, he called me and said, “I think this has to be the title.” He said, “Is it ok with you?” “Yes, it’s an honor. It’s a beautiful
piece and makes me think of my wife. It’s a wonderful thing.” She used to say, “Stay in the light Tim don’t go in the darkness,” “stay in the light even though this is happening to me, stay in the light.” That’s who she was. Aaron grabbed onto that. If you listen to that piece the beautiful sparkles and different wind chimes. My wife would've loved that. It would’ve just been fantastic for her to hear.

**NH:** Did Aaron and Toni know each other?

**TD:** You know I don’t know that they ever met outside of CaringBridge. From what I recall I don't think the two of them ever did meet. If they did it would be at that one concert in 2002 [where Perrine guest conducted *In This Moment* at the University of Minnesota] in passing. But I don’t think they ever did.

**NH:** Sure. But even then, like you said, it would’ve just been in passing.

**TD:** Right.

**NH:** Ok.

**TD:** But like I said he followed the postings. If she was writing, then he was reading.

**NH:** Sure.

**TD:** In a way he probably knows her better than a lot of people ever did. Because he read about everything she was thinking and going through.

**NH:** Sure. That’s one of the amazing things about technology. It connects people in ways we never predicted a decade ago, two decades ago. It sounds like he probably knew her very well.

**TD:** Yes. I think he did. Based on his writing, I’m convinced, he did.

**NH:** Were there more opportunities for you to work with Aaron and collaborate?

**TD:** No. Actually, *Only Light* was all done before I was aware that he was doing it. I might have been at the Minnesota premiere of that.

**NH:** The premiere of *Only Light*?

**TD:** Yes.

**NH:** With *It Has to be Beautiful* was the timeline a little different? I know that in speaking with Aaron, he had kind of chipped away at this piece. A little here a little there. When inspiration would strike, when it was feeling right, he would work faster. But he was never under any timeline. Were there other opportunities to work together on this piece versus with *Only Light*?
TD: He was writing this piece and again he had the stuff my wife had written above his desk while he was writing away. Again, I think the title must be based on her. She’d be honored. She’d be thrilled that her writing, her thoughts meant so much to a guy like Aaron and his wonderful compositions. He would keep her in mind, and I think she’d be humbled by that.

NH: At any point did he ever send you: “Here’s a MIDI file” or “What do you think about this?”

TD: No. I mean that’s his world.

NH: Sure. Any thoughts as why saxophone is the main instrument? Did Toni have any kind of special connection to saxophone?

TD: Probably not that he would have known about. Her brother has a Master of Music degree in clarinet performance and plays in all sort of big bands, Dixie groups, rock bands, and stuff on clarinet and saxophone. Unless Aaron picked that up in something she wrote.

NH: True. Maybe just happy coincidence.

TD: If I remember Aaron’s journey correctly, he was playing piano in the same jazz band I played in at Morris. There’s that connection of that same saxophone sound.

NH: Yes.

TD: Makes a lot of sense.

NH: I don’t know if it’s the chicken or the egg, but I do know that when he pursued his PhD here at the University of Iowa, Aaron got to know the saxophone professor here, Dr. Kenneth Tse. Do know Dr. Tse or is there any kind of connection between you two?

TD: No, no. I just know the name.

NH: I see.

TD: Right. I had the great privilege of working with Eugene Rousseau at Minnesota.

NH: Oh, sure. Of course.

TD: The saxophone world was kind of centered around that glorious human being.

NH: Definitely.

TD: People would stop by anytime to get some nuggets of wisdom from Eugene Rousseau.

NH: Oh sure.
TD: He was quite a great guy to work with.

NH: Oh no doubt. The world premiere of *It Has to be Beautiful* was in Croatia just less than a month ago. Have you heard the piece yet?

TD: No, but I heard that it was premiered. I saw Aaron post something on Facebook about Croatia and the premiere, and I thought I should get a hold of it. But, you know, we’re knee deep in marching band land right now.

NH: Exactly.

TD: So, I thought I’m going to do this when I can actually pay attention to what I’m listening to.

NH: Yes, actually give it the time, energy, and focus it deserves.

TD: Part of it is me being nostalgic. Our 20th wedding anniversary is coming up on January 1st, 2019. That would be a good time to sit down with a good recording of that piece and think about my wife some more. That’s the way I am. I’m just a sap.

NH: That sounds like a good plan.

TD: Thanks.

NH: Aaron indicated that Dr. Tse lost his mother to cancer…

TD: Oh.

NH: That was a number of years ago, but that means he also has a special connection to this piece.

TD: A very special connection.

NH: Yes. After Dr. Tse heard *Only Light* he had asked Aaron about a concerto. I believe Kenneth was at the premiere and at a CBDNA performance too I believe.

TD: Ok.

NH: Does that sound familiar?

TD: Yes. Well, Mark Heidel did it first.

NH: Yes, that’s right.

TD: It might have been before CBDNA but…
NH: Sure. So around that time, Dr. Tse heard Only Light at the University of Iowa or at CBDNA and was drawn to the sounds that Aaron was creating. Sounds that don’t, fit the norm for the band world. So, he wanted to collaborate with Aaron. I’m sure to have someone of that stature want to play your music, it would be impossible to say no. The world premiere was at the World Saxophone Congress in Croatia less than a month ago and the North American premiere is coming up. So, I would hope that it begins to get performed more often. And of course, Aaron’s music is rising in frequency of performances and he has two Sousa/American Bandmasters Association/Ostwald Awards. So, I would like to see what happens with this brand-new piece versus a piece that might already be a couple years old.

TD: Well, I’ve got it on my list to do that. I would like to have the chance to program that sometime.

NH: Aaron sent me a score and we talked about it just a little bit. The titles of all three movements are all quotes from the Caring Bridge website that you had mentioned.

TD: Right.

NH: And I believe the piece is more of a loosely programmatic nature, rather than specific events occurring. Movement one is titled “Screaming at the Sky.” Do you happen to recall anything about that Caring Bridge Post?

TD: Yes. It had to be close to the time when she was getting ready to go into Hospice. She was forty-one at that point. She died when she was forty-two. We used to joke around long before she got sick. I was sitting up late at night, with this wonderful young lady that I was supposed to retire with, and she and I used to have arguments of who gets to die first. We were brutally honest. “Let me die first because there’s no way I can do this without you.” And she would say, “No, no, no. I get to go first.” It was that kind of a silliness between us at that time. Little did we know. Later, when she was sick, it was one of those nights I was up asking those questions to the Caring Bridge universe. “This happened. She’s only 41. What about the boys? How do I run a house without her? How do I do this without her?” She liked to say “This is not the story we had written for ourselves. This is not how it was supposed to go.” I said, “Oh, if you need me I’ll be outside screaming at the sky.” Trying to see what the universe was doing and why. That was one of the things we had to grab onto. That sense of hopelessness. “Why is this happening?” And there’s nothing I can do about it. Grab onto that sense in the opening movement with the questioning, the wondering, the pain, and the fact that I can’t fix this problem. “What am I supposed to do now?”

NH: And the title of the second movement is the title of the concerto itself, It Has to be Beautiful. I believe it was a post from Toni.

TD: It was, yes. As she was looking at her fate and the end is near and here it comes. I remember having a conversation with our priest. A nice young guy came over, this guy became a preacher in our parish about a month before Toni went into Hospice.
NH: Oh, ok.

TD: But the connection they made the first time they met was amazing. I’m sure if you called him today he’d be able to talk hours about her, just because of the connection they made. He’d come by and see her, she was basically bed ridden in our house for a while, and he would stop by and I would remember her wanting him to sit down. She said, “We need to have a discussion because he needs to know I’m a person of faith and everything I believe in. This is hard. This is scary. Even though my belief in what is next is even better. And I’m leaving my husband, I’m leaving my sons, this is scary stuff and you need to understand that even if you are a person of faith, this is scary stuff.” She was talking about what’s next.

NH: Sure.

TD: She said, “It has to be beautiful. It has to be. That’s what I believe.” That’s what she believes, that it will be beautiful, that was the account of her post, if I remember the whole thing. That kind of thing. It’s like telling a priest that it’s hard and scary stuff. On the other side, it just has to be beautiful.

NH: And then the final movement, the third movement is titled “Illumine.” I think that was also a post that Toni had written. [It was actually part of the homily at her funeral given by the priest.] Does that one sound familiar?

TD: No, I don’t remember her using that word. I don’t know if that’s a word she used. Maybe I just don’t remember it. But she would talk and write about the light, “Stay in the light.” I’d have to go back and check to see if there’s something she said about that, but I don’t remember that. But, like I said, she was about the light. She would say *fiat lux*. Let there be light.

NH: Yes. As you were talking about light and previous CaringBridge posts, it just sounds like light was such an overarching theme. The light. And now, I’m sorry, but maybe it's just because this is on speakerphone, what is the Latin phrase you’re saying?

TD: F-I-A-T L-U-X

NH: *Fiat lux*. Ok.

TD: I’m probably pronouncing it wrong. I didn’t sing enough Latin. [Laughs]

NH: Well, I would be a little rusty, too. It’s been a while since I’ve been in choir. But the translation is “let there be light.”

TD: Right.

NH: That is a beautiful sentiment.

TD: Yes, it was. I was lucky enough at my last year at Minnesota to conduct the Symphonic Band. A student rallied with me and we did a whole concert with *Only Light* as the centerpiece.
NH: Oh?

TD: *Early Light* was in there too, and just different sparkle, and shimmer qualities. Every piece we did had some reference to light, with Aaron’s piece being the center of it. That was good for my soul. [Laughs] Really good for my soul.

NH: Wow. I’m getting goosebumps just thinking that, that’s her mantra and rallying cry, and to have a whole concert themed around that principle, that idea.

TD: I couldn’t have asked for more and the students were glorious. They understood what was going on and what it meant and so they put their heads down and played with their hearts. And it was a wonderful thing.

NH: That’s beautiful. That’s beautiful, you’re right. Being in music, we’re fortunate in our profession. We can connect with people on a unique level.

TD: Right. Maybe theater people can, I don’t know. [Laughs]

NH: Maybe not every day, but as often as we can, we can have that big group of people feel something and have something stirred that makes them feel like their time is being used well and that they are contributing and experiencing things that are impossible to put into words.

TD: I don’t remember if it was Jerry Luckhardt or Craig Kirchhoff who said it, but someone said, “At the end of the day, twenty years from now, you’re not going to remember what it sounded like. But you’re going to remember what it felt like.” After someone said it first, we all said it a lot after that.

NH: Wow.

TD: “You’re going to think it sounded a lot better probably, but, you’re going to remember what it felt like.” And that, you know, like you said, there aren’t a lot of professions in the world where that’s what you’re given at the end. It’s not just what it sounded like, but everything that came with it.

NH: Yes, I’m going to have to steal that saying as well. [Laughs] You’ve already said how humbling it is to have somebody memorialize and honor someone so dear to you through the medium of music.

TD: I have the belief that, years from now, young band students will be playing Aaron’s music and they will be see this and there will be a little piece of my wife sitting there with them.

NH: Wow. I guess I only have another question or two. We already talked about it a little bit, the elements of symbolism and faith. Like you said you hadn’t heard the concerto and it’s not like you and Aaron compared notes on it. But do you have any thoughts on those types of elements?
TD: As far as textures or....

NH: Naturally not everybody is going to be experiencing the experiences you did. Or how Aaron felt by being closely associated with you. I’m just wondering how can people learn as much as possible from what has happened? Clearly Toni’s faith was a huge part of her life and was strong and never wavered. Themes of light and lighter and brighter textures seems to keep reappearing in Aaron’s music. How can a future soloist or conductor learn from your story?

TD: I hope nobody has to go through what we’ve gone through. I’m sure that everyone who has lost somebody to cancer, diabetes, etc. feels the same way. That would be nice if nobody went through that. Unfortunately, unless you’re young and lucky, you’ve lost somebody somehow, someway, whether a grandparent passing away or whatever. That sense of here comes great loss and again that opening movement for me. “How could I even think about doing this without my better half?” That sense of loss and wonder. But at the same time as people of faith, our faith is going forward. That belief and hope that in the end there’s something better out there. That we’re hanging onto the goodness in the world not the darkness. That was Toni’s thing. This is about hanging onto the light and not slipping into the darkness. I think about, I don’t use the line as much as I used to, but I would go out and work with bands and honor bands. And I would tell them I would love if you would play every rhythm correct. I would love it if you would play every note correct, every pitch. But in the end the only thing I really want is your soul. So as long as you give me your soul, we’re going to be fine. Play with your heart. Don’t let this music become notes. Black spots on a page. It’s what’s not on the page it’s what’s in between and that’s kind of what this is. It’s remembering that we’re telling stories, evoking feelings and memories as we play. I think anyone can think about something like that in their life. Something that they wish they could have not gone through, but they did. And that’s what the music is; it’s life. I guess that’s aesthetic education. We’re playing feelings and memories. And I think for people playing the music and with the sounds Aaron creates it’s that understanding of it’s not about aligning that sixteenth on beat four. It’s the sound. It’s the feeling. It’s the camaraderie. It’s the ensemble playing together as one. I’m sure he’d say what he wants is that overall feeling of “this is what life is.” And it would be nice if it weren’t true, but we’re all going to go through loss and grief. In the end, we’re in this together, and we’ll help each other though. Like I said, we’re going to hold onto that light.

NH: That is powerful to think about. It’s how we approach the challenge or react to the challenge or meet the challenge head on.

TD: Yes, well there’s an old saying about life: “Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% of how you react to it.” Something like that. [Laughs]

NH: That sounds about right. [Laughs]

TD: That’s where Toni was great for me because I could go dark fast. It was easy for me to go dark fast before I met her. She would say, “No, look for the goodness, stay with the goodness, don’t go dark.” Maybe it’s a reflection of the times that our country is going through right now but it seems like everybody is going to the dark side pretty quickly. Let’s not do that.
NH: Have you found yourself change a lot, in regard to that? Are you able to be more glass half full?

TD: [Laughs] I’ve came a long way from 1996-1997 before I met her. It’s an easy concept. “Stay with the positive. Let’s not be negative, not be dark.” The kids would do something that I did not approve of and I would say something short and brusque and she would look at me and say, “Just kind words. Can you just use kind words?” [Laughs] So, I’ve seen myself get better in some ways, “just find the good, let’s stay in the light” because of her. It’s that old Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker thing. She pulled me from the darkness. [Laughs]

NH: Everybody needs someone like that in their life.

TD: Yes. It’s that old saying “If I could be the man she thought I was, I would be a pretty good person.” I thought, “Let’s try to do that.”

NH: Was there anything else that we maybe haven’t covered that you would like people to know either about the concerto, about Aaron, or about Toni?

TD: Well, I think we’ve covered a lot. I’m sure you hear this all the time, but people still say, “I still don’t know what she saw in you” or “Wow, you married up.” I’m sure lucky that she decided that I was worthy of spending the rest of her life with. She was just a phenomenal, unique, wonderful person, to everyone that met her. She brought joy because she stayed in that light. That’s who she was, so and having somebody like Aaron, who can capture that in sound. It gives me goosebumps when I hear Only Light every time. There are moments when I think, “That’s Toni’s sound right there. I can feel it right there.” I love the colors Aaron creates. It’s the feeling, you don’t lose the feeling in anything he writes. It’s wonderful.

NH: That’s great.

TD: If you’re writing and you’re finding that I left some loose ends that you want more about, you can call me anytime.

NH: I appreciate it. I’ve completed my list of questions right now. But I will dig into the score, listen to recordings, and talk with him on campus when he works with the Symphony Band. I will let you know if there are stones unturned.

TD: I’m looking forward to seeing it, hearing it, and hopefully someday performing it.

NH: The November 15th may be live streamed. I will let you know, either way.

TD: Oh, that’d be great.

NH: Or would it would be better to wait for a live performance?

TD: In a perfect world a live performance would be great. November 15th, just my luck, that is the day our wind ensemble concert is too. [Laughs] If I can get a recording before January 1st
though, I will sit down on New Year’s Day, and toast to my wife on our 20th wedding anniversary while listening to a new piece of music.

NH: I want to thank you again for your time and for your willingness to share. It’s clearly a personal piece of music with so many connections to so many people. You’ve been extremely gracious to be able to speak about Toni: a lot of things of which I was not aware.

TD: Well, she is my favorite topic so anytime you need me, I am happy to help.

NH: That’s great. When I have this interview transcript ready, I will send it to you with, so you have the final say on what needs revising or taking out. I view these interviews as your property and I get to share things based on what you want. So, if there are things that you would prefer not to be shared that’s within your rights.

TD: Kind of on this subject, I did Only Light as my first piece with the Syracuse Wind Ensemble. Brad [Bradley Ethington, Director of Bands at Syracuse University] said, “is there anything you want to do this year?” And I said, “Yes, Only Light.” Then, when I was worked on it with the Wind Ensemble I told them the backstory of the piece a little bit without getting too specific yet, and after rehearsal Brad walked up and said, “I didn’t understand until right now that it is you that this piece is about!” Toni’s story means so much to me, that’s fine if people know it. Because that is her light, that is her.

NH: Exactly. Her light being shared with the world.

TD: Yes. Good luck getting this thing done, wrapping it up. That’s a good position you’re in right now. You wrote to me saying you were interested in an interview and it was just a week or two earlier that I wrote to Aaron asking, “Is anyone putting an article about you in The Instrumentalist or has anyone written a dissertation about you or anything?” He wrote back saying, “No.” I thought, “Well, somebody had to get on that.” And then a week or two later you sent me an email and I thought, “Well that’s good.” [Laughs] I’m glad you’re writing about Aaron and writing about Toni and writing about this music.

NH: He’s a great person. It’s kind of interesting; here I am writing about a piece that has only been played once so far. He has other music worthy of study, but it hasn’t been under intense scrutiny yet.

TD: Right. He’s too young I guess. [Laughs] People like read about dead composers evidentially.

NH: Exactly. Well, I shouldn’t take up any more of your day, but again thank you.

TD: Like I said, if you have any more questions, anytime, feel free to contact me. Good luck.
Dr. Kenneth Tse is Professor of Saxophone at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa, President of the North American Saxophone Alliance, and is President of the International Saxophone Committee. He is regarded as one of the world’s foremost classical saxophonists. He gained international attention by winning the New York Artists International award in 1996. This resulted in Tse’s debut recital at Carnegie Hall and being celebrated as “a young virtuoso” by the New York Times. After winning the National Alliance for Excellence’s Alex Award, he would return to the Carnegie Hall stage yet again. Tse has received numerous awards since that time.

Tse has been a featured soloist with orchestras and bands on five different continents. He is frequently invited to play at prestigious events such as the World Saxophone Congress and conferences of the North American Saxophone Alliance. He has also been a soloist or clinician at conferences including California Band Directors Association, Iowa Bandmasters Association, and the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic. He has been invited to provide master classes at prestigious universities worldwide such as the Moscow Conservatory and Paris Conservatory.  

Tse began playing saxophone at age thirteen and was largely self-taught. After seven years’ study of the saxophone, he played for Eugene Rosseau and caught his attention. He would later attend Indiana University in order to study with Rosseau. There he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Music degree. Tse was the first saxophonist to receive the

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prestigious Artist Diploma from Indiana University. He later completed a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Illinois.\(^{521}\)

Tse has had over thirty solo or chamber works dedicated to him. He has recorded frequently since his first CD at age twenty-three. Tse has released seven solo CDs on the Crystal label.\(^{522}\) He can also be heard on numerous releases through Arizona University Recordings, Enharmonic Records, MSR Classics, and RIAX Records.\(^{523}\) Seven of Tse’s students have also received significant recognition at competitions such as the North American Saxophone Alliance Solo Competition, the Music Teacher National Association Solo Competition, and the International Adolphe Sax Competition. In 2009, Tse formed the week-long Hong Kong International Saxophone Symposium as a gesture of giving back to his home city.\(^{524}\) A more comprehensive biography of Tse can be found at [http://www.kenneth-tse.com/](http://www.kenneth-tse.com/).


NH: Thank you again for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my research. You had already asked me about my connection with Aaron Perrine and so I'm curious, how did you get to know him and get connected with his music?

KT: Well, it's kind of a funny story. As you know he graduated from Iowa and when he was studying here he was a close friend with one of my students, Joel Vanderheyden. But at that point I still didn't know much about Aaron. Until one day I heard about his winning America’s Funniest Home Videos.

NH: I forgot about that.

KT: It was like, “Oh wow, we have a famous person here.” It's funny, but it’s true. That's how I noticed. We joked about that. Of course, after that, I heard his pieces being performed by our bands and other bands. And, as you mentioned, he won several prestigious awards and so I was like, “Oh, wow,” and at that point I also was touring with the [University of Iowa] Symphony Band doing a performance of the Frank Ticheli *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble*.

NH: Oh ok.

KT: At that point Aaron also had a piece that was being performed. I think it was premiere, but for sure a piece that the band was playing on tour because he was traveling with us. [The premiere was February 15, 2014 at the University of Iowa by the Symphony Band, Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, conductor. See Appendix E.]

NH: Sure.

KT: And so that’s when I met him formally. And then we talked, and I said, “Would you be interested in writing a saxophone piece?” And he said, “Yes, I’ve been wanting to write something for saxophone,” and that’s how the project started.

NH: Was that about 2014?

KT: Something like that.

NH: Somewhere around there.

KT: Right.
NH: Because I think he had mentioned one of his pieces was performed at the CBDNA North Central Division Conference.

KT: Right. That must be it, it was at a CBDNA conference.

NH: Great, so that kind of leads into the second question. So, you had asked him “would you write a piece?”

KT: Right, and at that point he said no. He was very courteous. And he said, “I’m very interested in writing, but right now I have a lot of commissions I need to finish.”

NH: Sure.

KT: But he assured me that he would contact me later once he finished those commissions. And he did later, and that’s how we started communicating about the concerto.

NH: Sure. I’m getting to some of my later questions already, but in this process was there a lot of communication back and forth or did you just let him make it his own?

KT: Oh no, since he was busy doing this for me, I didn’t want to keep bugging him. Obviously, there were a couple options we talked about. He is composing full-time now and he’s teaching a little bit.

NH: Sure.

KT: So, I understand that he relies on those commissions to feed his family.

NH: Exactly.

KT: Obviously, I didn’t want to just say, “You have to write this, and I can’t pay you.” It’s always difficult when it comes to money or commission. How do we deal with that? And he mentioned, “Maybe you could do like a consortium with several bands and soloists.”

NH: Sure.

KT: Personally, I believe in a close working relationship between the soloist and the composer. That I believe the composition ought to be personalized, if you will.

NH: Sure.

KT: Some people might disagree with that, but I think it’s different. I think if you have a piece that is written for a specific individual then the connection is different.

NH: Well, as a composer you can then focus on and highlight an individual’s strengths.
KT: Yes. It means more to me than the consortium of twenty people playing the same piece. But again, you know that is my thought, so I told Aaron we could do that but because of the Iowa connection I wanted to have this work between you, me, Mark Heidel, and the bands here. And he thought about it and then he decided, “Yes, we are going to do that.” Obviously, he could have said, “No, you know I need to eat,” but he didn’t say that. He was kind and supportive of the idea and he said, “Yes, let's do it.” That’s basically how it went. Of course, I am appreciative of him doing that and at that point I said I can't pay you, but I promise you I will premiere and play for a lot of saxophonists, kind of promote his music.

NH: Certainly, the World Saxophone Congress is an ideal audience for a saxophone concerto to be premiered. In the spring, when I proposed this idea as my thesis, this question came up with the committee: “Is it technically a commission?” How should we define it or how should we label it?

KT: Well, you might want to talk to Aaron about it and see how he wants to talk about it. Obviously because the nature of his work you don’t want to give the word out that he is doing it for free, it isn’t fair to the other people. So, you need to propose that carefully.

NH: Yes, that makes sense. Talking about the piece itself, congratulations on an amazing North American premiere!

KT: Thank you.

NH: I know that having Perrine here on campus that week as a composer-in-residence, he was excited to hear it and be involved in the process. The piece itself is essentially three slow movements, so some people might be a little cautious in programming it because it is more about interpretation and nuance rather than the technical challenge and virtuosity. With so many different slow tempo markings, are you adhering to those, are there more instances of rubato?

KT: Obviously the first movement has parts like a cadenza. I did take some liberty in the tempo a little bit. I think that, the sections with band, we try to stick closer to the tempos. But I think I would say most people would play that a little bit on the faster side because it is quite slow sometimes.

NH: This is a general question: when approaching this piece, what are your primary goals and interpretation? Because Perrine’s music is distinct and not like that of a lot of band composers.

KT: Right. I think for him, it's the same as it is for any composer: trying to avoid being boxed into a certain style and boxed into a certain genre. I’m not sure at this point if people consider him more of a lyrical composer. From what I've heard from him, he has focused a lot on the colors of the ensemble. That’s his focus, he will bring out a lot of unique colors from the band, which he did well obviously. I told him as a matter of fact in the beginning when he sent me the piece, I was a little bit surprised: “Oh, three very slow movements.” I was expecting the normal format like fast, slow, fast or medium, fast, fast, something like that. Like the typical Paul
Creston *Concerto* or something like that. But he decided he wanted three slow movements. I talked to him about this. I treated it like a tone poem, like a continuous tone poem rather than three distinct movements. And he sort of agreed. In fact, and I had to kind of ask him, “Well instead of a concerto would you want to say it is a tone poem for saxophone?” Or something like that, or a rhapsody for saxophone. He said he understands where I am coming from, but he still wants to use the title “concerto.” You can ask him more about that. Of course, I respected his wish and so that’s how that ends. So, in terms of interpretation, for myself I kind of view it as a continuous emotion from the beginning all the way to the end of the piece.

**NH:** And of course, this piece of music has such a powerful story behind it. I was fortunate enough to talk to Tim Diem earlier this fall. I talked to him about his life and about him and Toni and their connections with Perrine. Are there any other specific non-musical elements that you tried to...?

**KT:** Well…

**NH:** It's not as programmatic as *Symphonie Fantastique* or something where “this character enters” or “here's exactly what the action is” but just the overall general mood.

**KT:** Right. Well, I think it's hard to put a story [to the music]. To me it is more about the suffering. I think the general idea to me is more than suffering. It is not only about the person who is sick. It is more about the people that surrounded that person. At least it is that way for me.

**NH:** Sure.

**KT:** Also, my mother passed away a long time ago, in 1999, from cancer, so I understand how it feels to be helpless and hopeless. Because there's nothing you can do to stop any of this. You just have to see it happen. When a person is gone, they’re gone. So that emotion has always stayed with me, when I’m playing music like this.

**NH:** Sure.

**KT:** So, in a way, it’s also personal.

**NH:** Most certainly. Did Perrine know that?

**KT:** Oh yes, I told him as soon as he shared with me the background a little bit of the piece, and I said, “Oh, I can relate to it.”

**NH:** This was a chance to work closely with the composer; is that common for you?

**KT:** Yes, as a matter of fact. I commissioned quite a few composers to write music for saxophone, and I enjoy doing it. As I mentioned earlier, I like working directly with the composer even though I have joined consortia like the Frank Ticheli *Concerto*. That was a consortium and it came out ok, but I enjoy just working directly with the composer and come up
with something that is meaningful and unique to that moment. And so obviously, with Aaron, I enjoyed working with him a lot.

**NH:** Were there ever any times when he would send you something and ask you, “Is this technically possible?” I recall there are some rapid tonguing passages for example.

KT: Yes, a little bit. You know, often it is a scary thing when you just ask, “Can you write a saxophone concerto?” And frankly at that point, I didn’t know how much he knows about the saxophone.

**NH:** Sure.

KT: Or the capabilities. I’ve had experiences before where I worked with a composer, and I trusted that composer’s ability, but that composer came back with something that is not saxophone style.

**NH:** Sure.

KT: If there’s such a thing.

**NH:** Sure, not idiomatic.

KT: Yes, not idiomatic for the saxophone.

**NH:** Yes.

KT: And so, at that point it would be difficult for me to say, “Can you do this? Can you do that?” I’ve tried it before too, but you want to be careful because you don’t want to say, “Write something like this.”

**NH:** Especially if they were already done writing it.

KT: Yes, it’s hard to do that. So, I try to kind of respect the composer because I also truly believe in the inspiration of the composer, himself or herself, so I try to take the hands-off approach. Not breathe down their neck and say, “You should write something like this.” This piece turned out to be challenging, musically challenging, do you know what I mean?

**NH:** Yes.

KT: Unfortunately, the saxophonists, they're used to faster, louder, higher kind of music.

**NH:** A more typical concerto.

KT: Right, and so I had a little bit of hesitation, but then after I talked to him about it, I understood where he’s coming from, the meaning he wants to express and so I just said ok. I’m going to make this. I want to do this work, make it work.
NH: Sure. Do you remember anything that wasn’t idiomatic or didn’t work well?

KT: For instance, the third movement in the back here [flipping through the full score]. In the first movement most of those parts are generally no problem.

NH: Ok.

KT: The second movement, too, is pretty ok. But here. [Movement three, mm. 82-83 and similar material] Here is the place that it is hard to articulate so fast in the altissimo range like that. So that’s the place where I had a little hesitation. But again, it was ok.

NH: I thought it sounded great in performance.

KT: Thank you. It’s hard because in the altissimo range you can’t use a lot of tongue to do the articulation. So, you use mostly air and maybe a little bit of tongue, so that takes a lot of understanding and control of the anatomy within your oral cavity which happens to be difficult for most players.

NH: Do you recall, was there anything that, for lack of a better way to put it, was too easy and you encouraged Perrine to make something a little more elaborate?

KT: No, actually. No, I didn’t change anything on that at all. It came back what you seen now. We might have made a few small changes. I don’t even remember if we did or not.

NH: If there were any changes they must have been pretty small then. Whose idea was the circular breathing section?

KT: Well nowadays for saxophonists, I would say 90% of the time, people are expected to know how to circular breathe. It’s so different from even fifteen or twenty years ago. When undergraduate students were like, “Wow, you can do that?” Now, a lot of young players just do it. It just happened that [Perrine] wanted to have an extended section of running notes there. And there’s no time to breathe. But I said, people can circular breathe. If a person can’t, it’s ok to take out a note or two to breathe.

NH: The big picture being the more important there.

KT: Yes. I've always tried to make sure that the new pieces written for me are not just aimed at the highly capable players. Even if it’s an undergraduate or graduate student at the university level. That person might not have all the extended technique mastered.

NH: Sure.

KT: There should be a way to still try to interpret the music and enjoy playing it. I often try to make sure there’s substance and not just difficulty. Because there is no point if you write a piece and only a few people can play it. So even though I believe in the connection, the relationship
between me and the composer. I always want to make sure other people can play it. There’s no point in writing music for just one or two people.

**NH: Speaking of extended techniques, let’s talk about the multiphonics.**

KT: Right. There are just two multiphonics in the whole piece. And Aaron was pretty resourceful. He already went to a book that just got published recently, and he found two multiphonics that he wanted to use.

**NH: He already had them in mind?**

KT: Yes, so he just sent them to me, and said, “Will these work?” And I tried it on my instrument, and they didn't work as well.

**NH: Ok.**

KT: So, I suggested a couple others for him to put in there. Multiphonics are not as bad as most people think. Just a combination of different fingerings, and you blow the correct way, and it will come out.

**NH: Looking at the music, it says “crescendo into multiphonic.” I’m not a saxophonist so I wouldn't know which combination of fingers to use. Is that kind of a trade secret?**

KT: Oh no.

**NH: He showed me one draft of the solo part where a multiphonic had a number.**

KT: Right.

**NH: It might have been the first one [movement one, mm. 46-48] but one of them was number 17. I remember that.**

KT: You can ask him but there’s a book by Marcus Weiss. W-E-I-S-S. He is a German saxophonist, contemporary saxophonist, and relatively well-known. He wrote a book on multiphonics and other techniques, I think. And Aaron used those numbers. It’s not that universal, so I told him just put the fingerings in the music.

**NH: Oh.**

KT: So, people can just look. Instead of asking, “What’s number 17?”

**NH: Sure.**

KT: And you don’t have to go and search for it.
NH: I think it was the first one multiphonic in particular. Yes, right at the end of the first movement.

KT: Right.

NH: Who else plays there? Two pitched gongs?

KT: Yes, maybe more.

NH: It just seamlessly fades into the other timbres. It's an interesting effect.

KT: Yes. Oh, it's nothing technical. You just play the note, and then you crescendo, and then you just finger the multiphonics. And it sounds and then you do the diminuendo. It’s not terribly difficult.

NH: I guess we kind of already talked about preparing new works and especially those written for you or collaborating with you. Do you have any other additional thoughts about that process? You already said with this piece, especially, you had a personal connection as well as a connection with Perrine. Your life experience brought a lot to the table.

KT: Right. Mostly I focus on the sound. Sound in general is very important to me.

NH: Ok.

KT: Some other saxophonists want to play tons of notes. But for me, I care so much about how each note sounds. Again, I’m not saying other people don’t care.

NH: Sure.

KT: But I want each note to sound a certain way. And so, Aaron's piece has a lot of long tones. So, for me, it is not just playing the long tones but, “How can that sound connect with the audience?” Just to give them that soundscape in a way. And of course, Aaron is good at that with his writing, so that works well I think.

NH: Right. You’ve performed this concerto twice now. How were the performances different? Clearly you didn’t have to start from scratch and prepare as much the second time, but maybe you had to review a little bit?

KT: The premiere was interesting. You always hear stories like this. I think you were there in the rehearsal when I shared with the [Symphony Band] about being in Croatia during the World Cup.

NH: Right.

KT: And the premiere was the day that Croatia was playing France I think. Was it France?
NH: That might be. [Croatia played England on that particular day.]

KT: Anyway, we can double-check on that, but Croatia was headed to the semifinals. On the day of the performance, the premiere, because that night was the game, the Croatian game, the semifinals, the concert was moved up an hour or two.

NH: Oh.

KT: So, we moved an hour or two earlier, but then it conflicted with a lot of other performances.

NH: Right.

KT: Because we conflicted with other performances we didn’t have as many people attend. But it was still good turnout. It wasn’t an ideal situation, but I thought it was ok.

NH: What was the venue itself?

KT: I think it was the National Theatre.

NH: Ok.

KT: In Zagreb, the capital city.

NH: I guess I was under the impression it would be like in a convention center or something like that.

KT: No. The conservatory of music there was the host. But they’re also using different venues, it’s not a big city at all. So, it was kind of a historic site, honestly. The sound was not too bad, pretty good.

NH: And after that performance, was there anything that you decided to do differently? I mean, was there anything in your performance that changed?

KT: Not really.

NH: Sure.

KT: Just remember we both are looking forward to the performance in Iowa, then we can control more. Control the outcome more.

NH: Do it your way.

KT: Right, exactly.

NH: Looking forward into the future, do you see yourself performing this concerto more?
KT: Well, in fact, I just got a confirmation that Aaron sent the music to Canada: the University of Alberta. They're going to host the Regional Conference region 9 NASA Conference (North American Saxophone Alliance). That is in February. So, I’m going to perform that with the band there.

NH: Is that the University of Alberta?

KT: Let me check my e-mail.

NH: Well, that’s exciting.

KT: As I, you know, I promised Aaron, I said, “I would travel with it and do as much as possible with it.” So that fortunately sometimes works out that way.

NH: Sure.

KT: I can assemble several performances. Oh no, not the University of Alberta. The University of Lethbridge. L-E-T-H Bridge. I think the conference dates are February 14th, 15th, and 16th.

NH: Is there someone there that you know? How did they get ahold of you?

KT: Sometimes at these regional conferences they would they invite their own guest artists to play there. The host, I do know him from a long time ago, he is from Malaysia originally, he got his Doctorate from the University of Alberta, and then he went on and got a job at the University of Lethbridge which is good for him, you know, as a foreigner to get a job in Canada, it is not easy. He’s teaching there; he was kind enough to invite me.

NH: That’s exciting; that’s a couple months away. Right now, do you have any exclusive performance agreement with Perrine?

KT: Not that I know of. No, since we recorded it just now. I played it. I think we can have it open.

NH: I see, he would be free to publish it or sell it or whatnot at this point. We talked a little bit about this: with this particular concerto with three slow movements, and how color is important to Perrine’s style, were your preparations for this concerto different than for other solo works?

KT: I wouldn't say different. It's interesting; you wouldn’t think of it as more difficult when you’re playing slower pieces. I thought about trying to memorize the piece when I first played it. I almost had it memorized, but the difficulty I didn’t realize is that actually it is harder if you play something so slow. Sometimes you forget, “Ok, how many measures am I supposed to hold?” So, you have to remember exactly how many measures. In the third movement in particular I have to remember the change between 6/8 and 3/4, but it continues the subdivision so you have to remember exactly the entrances of the different instruments.
NH: I seem to recall that from rehearsal and from the recording session too; occasionally you would double-check somebody was at a certain spot.

KT: Right.

NH: Is performing it memorized a goal of yours? Is it something you would like to do?

KT: Usually I like to do that just to have a better knowledge of the piece and be more immersed in the music.

NH: I noticed that you used a foot pedal. Were you using an iPad?

KT: No, I was using what’s called a Gvido, G-V-I-D-O that’s the name. If you want to search online, you’ll find Gvido; it’s just a sheet music reader by a Japanese company. I’ve had it for several months. Unfortunately, just this last week, I was supposed to perform this past Sunday in Chicago, I needed that thing but then it just stopped working. It just froze, and I worked with the company, so I had to send the unit back to California and they will try to fix it or replace the unit. So that company, a Japanese company, is relatively new. Hopefully it will get better in terms of the consistency but, but for eight months, it was working fine for me. So that pedal is just for turning pages.

NH: Then I would imagine you would probably have a stylus or something and you can write.

KT: Right, that is also another thing that they’ve changed it for the current software. Before I could use a stylus, I had to use my finger. But now I think there is a way that you can, not the screen itself, but there are two sensors here that you can turn pages, but you can also use the sensor to call out the tools you can use.

NH: Well, hopefully they send you a nice new one with all the brand-new features. We already talked a little bit about some of the challenging aspects of this concerto. What are some others?

KT: Intonation obviously, balance between the saxophone and the band. As you might recall, in the third movement there are a lot of high tessitura matched with the band. So, the balance I think is especially important to bring out the colors.

NH: And then we talked about the multiphonics a bit.

KT: Right.

NH: Shifting gears a bit, what advice would you have for conductors who are preparing the piece? Balance of course. You were at several rehearsals because you’re here at the University of Iowa and so is the Symphony Band, but that convenience will not always be the case with every performance of this piece.
KT: That’s right. Well, I think it is important that the conductor has to know the tempo extremely well. If you deviate too much, it will make the performers’ lives a lot harder because he or she then has to adjust to the speed. You probably also remember we worked a little bit on tempo. Sometimes I told Dr. Heidel, “That was a little bit too fast for me. Can I have more time?” Especially in the third movement where I showed you the higher altissimo articulations [e.g., mm. 82-83], that is one area where you can’t go faster. If you go too fast, then you lose the control. It might not even be possible, so it has to be just the right tempo. So, I think for conductors, I think tempo mostly. Be hyper-aware of the consistency of the tempo and just follow the soloist.

NH: Great, thank you. For other soloists eventually preparing this piece, what wisdom would you share with them on your preparations?

KT: Well, as I said earlier, mostly it is just about the sound and the tone. I think it's important to focus on the resonance and colors of each note and the sound. It is so much more than just playing the notes. Because the sound itself communicates to the audience, too. I think a lot of players, they tend to just play through the notes and get on with things. But I think everyone should take the time, especially with this piece, to enjoy the intensity, the emotions, and colors. There’s a lot you can do with long tones in a piece like this. In many ways, they are a lot harder because you have to do something to connect directly to the audience. You need to ask yourself, “Where are you going with things?” It’s hard.

NH: There are quite a few niente entrances as well as releases.

KT: Right.

NH: A lot of subtle interplay. Well, this brings us to the end; is there anything else that we haven’t covered? Anything that you would like people to know about Perrine, the concerto, the recording project, anything that came up throughout this adventure?

KT: No. Of course, I hope that Aaron will continue to write more music for the saxophone, but I know his focus right now is band.

NH: I think he has a couple solo and ensemble works.

KT: Yes, he does for saxophone.

NH: When you mentioned NASA, I think he has had a couple works played at NASA conferences probably through Joel Vanderheyden. But of course, not a concerto, nothing quite on that scale.

KT: Yes, I think he’s written for quartet, a long time ago. Hopefully he continues to write for the saxophone. It’s important that Aaron is getting more well-known in the band world. It’s important that we always try to work with composers that are up and coming, not just the famous ones. Because you never know, maybe someday their music will be played all over and then
having something by them for your instrument would be important. So often I try to do that for up and coming composers.

**NH:** Throughout this process, did he say he would like to write other concerti?

**KT:** No, I don’t think so.

**NH:** Anything for saxophone in particular?

**KT:** If he wants to write something, of course I would be glad to work with him, but I try not to push my luck. [Laughs] He’s already very kind for writing a piece for me as a gift in a way. So, if he has some ideas and he wants to, I would help him the next time he wants to do consortium. I would be more inclined to help him of course.

**NH:** I would imagine he would get the buy-in now that he has had a successful saxophone concerto. Great. Well, that is all that I have for questions.

**KT:** Perfect, thank you.

**NH:** I truly appreciate your time. Thank you.

**KT:** Feel free to e-mail me if you need more additional information.

**NH:** Thank you.

**KT:** You’re welcome.
APPENDIX W: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT – DR. RICHARD MARK HEIDEL, JANUARY 24, 2019

Dr. Richard Mark Heidel is Director of Bands and Professor of Music at the University of Iowa’s School of Music. As Director of Bands he oversees the University of Iowa concert and athletic bands. Additionally, he conducts the Symphony Band and teaches graduate-level courses in conducting and wind band literature. Ensembles under his leadership have performed at state conferences (Illinois Music Educators Association, Iowa Bandmasters Association, Wisconsin Music Educators Association) as well as national conferences (College Band Directors National Association, Music Educators National Conference [now the National Association for Music Education]).

A Texas native, Heidel completed a Bachelor of Music Education and a Master of Music in Conducting at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. He completed a Doctor of Education in Music Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Iowa in 2008, Heidel was Director of Bands at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Director of Bands at Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania, and served as a teaching assistant in the School of Music at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Heidel was also a high school band director for nine years in Texas.

A recipient of numerous awards and honors, Heidel is active throughout Iowa, the United States, and the world as an adjudicator, clinician, and guest conductor. He served as the guest conductor for The Association for Music in International Schools’ 44th Annual Honor Band held at the Mozarteum Orchesterhaus in Salzburg, Austria, February 13-17, 2019. A more comprehensive biography for Heidel can be found at https://music.uiowa.edu/people/richard-mark-heidel.
NH: Thank you for being willing to be part of this project.

RMH: You’re welcome.

NH: Let’s lay the groundwork a bit. I know a little about this but not all of the specifics: how did you become familiar with Aaron Perrine and with his music?

RMH: Sometime back, I became aware that he composed a work: *April*. We're talking some years ago, but I knew that it had been included in the Teaching Music Through Performance in Band series, so it had gained some respect in the profession. However, I hadn't heard the work. That's about as far as I was familiar with his music until a few years later. During my tenure at Iowa, Carter Biggers conducted Aaron’s *In This Moment* in 2012. It sounded familiar, so I don’t know if I had heard it earlier, or if perhaps someone read it, or we did a quick recording for him. I know the University Band performed it in 2012. Upon hearing this work, I knew right away that he had a gift for writing for the medium, and this is a short, Grade 2 junior high piece. I thought this is a person that has a real future as a composer for wind band. I just don't know when I actually encountered that piece the first time. Shortly thereafter we performed Aaron’s *Beneath a Canvas of Green*, which was his PhD project in composition. Those two events occurred in close proximity. A year or so prior to our performing *Beneath a Canvas of Green* he approached me to see if I would be willing to work with him on his PhD project. So, somewhere in that 2010-2011 period was when I first identified him as someone who had a real ability and interest in writing for the medium. *In This Moment* drew me to his style and compositional voice.

NH: Do you know, with his dissertation, was he free to choose any medium he wanted? It probably had to be a large-scale work?

RMH: Yes, this was a large-scale work, but I’m confident Dr. Gompper enabled Aaron to choose the medium. It has been rare that we have composition students that focus on band, but Anthony Donofrio took on a similar project after Aaron did. So, I'm sure that Aaron just wanted to write for band, and Dr. Gompper approved.

NH: That's great. That kind of covers a little bit of the next question: “Why did you decide to commission works Only Light and A Glimpse of the Eternal from Perrine?” Is there anything additionally you would like to add? You said his compositional voice fits the band medium well?

RMH: Well, I guess that is one of the larger reasons for trying to commission several works from him. The inspiration specifically for *Only Light* was that we performed his work *Pale Blue on Deep* in Symphony Band. The challenge for me to remember exact dates is that this was during the period of time that was almost immediately post-flood, and much of my memory from the
period is fuzzy. But it was after performing that work that I wanted to commission a work cut from same the cloth as Pale Blue on Deep. At that time, his real strength seemed to be writing beautiful lyrical pieces, and the wind repertoire tends to be lacking in those types of pieces. However, that deficiency is being met by more composers recognizing that the wind band is expressive, and they are writing lyrical works for the medium. We had been invited to perform at the CBDNA North Central Division Conference in Muncie in February 2014, and I wanted to try to give Aaron as much exposure to the collegiate directors in the field as quickly as I could. I thought that my contribution would be programming a work that he composed knowing that a highly discerning audience would hear it. That would be a great way to introduce him to the collegiate directors plus add another lyrical piece to the repertoire. He was excited about all of that, so the product was Only Light. He had taken a section of Beneath a Canvas of Green that he wanted to spend more time working with, and that actually developed into Only Light. Of course, it has been an extremely successful work winning the ABA Ostwald award. So, with Pale Blue on Deep and Only Light, he won with two pieces. I was extremely pleased with the product. It was simply a request that I had asked him to write a piece for us, and there was no exchange of money. It wasn't like a traditional commission where he said, “Ok, I need $10,000 for the composition.” I simply asked him to do it, and I'm not sure why the money factor never entered into the conversation.

NH: You and he both already knew about the upcoming CBDNA performance?

RMH: Maybe that was part of it. I think it was probably about exposure, and then out of that experience, the School of Music was about to move into our new building. So, knowing that we had the opening of the new Voxman Music Building in 2016, I wanted to perform a work of Aaron’s. The theme of that year for the building was “Coming Home,” and so the idea was that our concerts that year would focus on bringing people back: alumni associated with the program, former faculty members, etc. It was this idea of bringing everybody home to Voxman but in a new building. So, Aaron being a successful graduate of ours and the fact that he had a good relationship with the band, I wanted to commission a work to launch the first Symphony Band performance in the new hall. I asked him to write a fanfare, and I intentionally wanted a fanfare because much of what I had experienced in his writing until then had been predominantly slow, lyrical works. I wanted to create an opportunity, so he could stretch himself by writing a different style of music. Something that wasn't necessarily lyrical and slow but something that had a lot of impact and that was more energetic. So, the result of that effort was A Glimpse of the Eternal, and it is getting quite a bit of attention. It was recently recorded by the U.S. Air Force Band, and the University of Kansas has recorded it. So, there are a number of prestigious groups that have performed it, and I'm proud to be connected to another successful piece of his.

NH: Was that one [A Glimpse of the Eternal] more of a traditional commission?

RMH: Yes, simply because I wanted it to be. I believe I paid him four or five thousand dollars. The piece was about two and a half minutes, give or take. Still quite a bargain but money was never at the forefront of the conversation. I don't know how he is now, but at that time his reaction was, “Sure, I'll write a piece.” I then came up with some funding and asked, “Would you be comfortable with this amount?” “Yes, I'm more than happy to write,” so it's never been a central part of our conversations.
NH: Thank you. I was just curious.

RMH: Sure.

NH: I did not know that about Only Light.

RMH: Again, the topic of money just never came up. On my side of things, it was more about exposing Aaron and his music to an important group of people, but I never viewed that as serving as payment. I probably still owe him a drink or two for it.

NH: It looks like we've already sufficiently covered the third question: “Which works of Perrine’s did you already know prior to commissioning from him?” So, looking down the road, if you were to commission another work by Perrine or be part of a consortium, what would you do the same? Is there anything that you would want to try to do differently? Anything that you would ask him to do differently?

RMH: No, I think composers are the most successful when you give them as much free rein as possible and my request of Aaron for Only Light was simply that I would like something cut from the same cloth as Pale Blue on Deep. That is such a beautiful piece that I wanted something that was similar to it. Then with A Glimpse of the Eternal, it was important to simply set the context that his piece would be the first piece to be performed by Symphony Band in the new Concert Hall. I just requested a fanfare, but I didn't prescribe a length or anything else and he took it from there. I know that we will be collaborating in the future. If I lead the commission it will be that the artistic decisions will be left primarily to him. But it might be driven by some special occasion or even asking, “Have you thought about a multi-movement work?” Maybe I will look at his catalog to see if a genre or style is missing, so maybe an opportunity could be created for him to fill that absence. It gets more complex when you get into a consortium. So, when you collaborate with a group of schools it depends on the ability level of the schools and that's where you begin to run into more stringent parameters about the nature of the work. I know he's being commissioned by high schools and most will probably want a work around Grade 3 or Grade 4, and they will likely set some specific criteria. Obviously, the more criteria you set, the more limited the composer is. If I were the consortium leader, I would try to stay out of his way and just let him write.

NH: I'm just thinking out loud here, but I don't believe many of his works were produced from a consortium. I think most everything was a commission or just a project he was working on.

RMH: There was one commission with Paul Popiel at Kansas who is a big supporter of Aaron's, and I believe Paul extended an invitation to me to join a commission. It could have been the reworking of Beneath a Canvas of Green, but I'm not certain about that. I didn’t join the commission because I have limited funds to dedicate to those type of projects.

NH: Of course.

RMH: I get dozens of invitations a year to join commission projects, and our participation is usually determined on a first come, first served basis.
NH: I have one final question on commissions in general. If someone were to ask you, what would be some advice about commissioning a new work from Perrine?

RMH: Give him free rein. A composer would appreciate knowing is there a special occasion associated with the performance, but I think staying out of the compositional process as much as possible is important. Providing some context such as “I'd like a fanfare for the opening of the Voxman Music Building” enables composers to begin to visualize what the event is going to be, and what kind of piece may be appropriate. Keep out of the inner workings of the piece, and of course, getting on his calendar early because he's already [scheduled] out into 2020, 2021, 2022 in terms of his composition schedule. He is only going to continue to grow in popularity, and he is staying busy now with residencies. So, looking far ahead is important, which is exciting as I know he's extremely busy.

NH: At the end I will ask if you have anything else in mind in general, but let's shift gears a little bit and move on to It Has to Be Beautiful: Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble. A couple of these questions are about preparing the piece, getting in the right mindset or working with a totally brand-new piece that you had never been performed. It was performed once but not even on this continent. How did you prepare for this piece?

RMH: In some ways, it wasn’t any different than any other piece. My approach is no different when preparing a premiere versus a second, third, tenth performance. In my own mind, the essential differences are that you are aware that the early performances of works often establish the interpretation of the work which may influence other conductors that program the work after you. So, there is the added responsibility to make sure you get it “right” and that you are sure you have the composer's support on the initial interpretations. Once the performance is public, conductors who are preparing the work may make the assumption that the performance is more or less the proper interpretation of the work. So, knowing we had the North American premiere, the approach was not different other than the fact that I had access to Aaron. So, I sent rehearsal recordings to him and got feedback, and I asked him questions about the score and anything else that came up. Of course, he was here on campus which is always a delight. We had a full rehearsal with Aaron and Dr. Tse, so that interaction was important and special. That's different than premiering a work without that type of collaboration because Aaron was on the spot in the event we did anything that was a departure from his vision of the work. He could have told us, “This is way too slow” “This is way too fast,” “I don't like the articulation here,” or “I like the balance here.” We were fortunate in that there was a partnership in the American premiere. When you're on your own, you're on your own. A premiere is like a performance of most other works except there are no recordings available to use as a resource. There was a recording from the premiere. In Croatia?

NH: Croatia.

RMH: They had extremely limited rehearsal time and a performance location that did not offer the appropriate space for the positioning of the percussion instruments. So, the process of our preparation wasn’t any different for any other work except that we had the benefit of having access to Aaron. I remember I sent him at least one rehearsal recording without Dr. Tse, so he could hear the band and make some comments without the solo. Being able to do that was important, and that was certainly an advantage. My goal was to present a performance that he
would be pleased with and to know that the interpretation matched his vision. That was my primary goal.

**NH:** We talked about pieces by Perrine which you’ve conducted. Are there other pieces by other composers that helped in the preparation of *It Has to Be Beautiful*?

**RMH:** Dr. Tse and I have collaborated considerably. We produced a CD together. So just collaborating with Dr. Tse and knowing him as a player, just having that relationship helped.

**NH:** True.

**RMH:** Especially the *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Orchestra* by Ingolf Dahl. There are sections that are quite slow and dramatic and there are also slow sections of *Beneath a Canvas of Green, Only Light*, and *Pale Blue on Deep*. I suspect that most of the slow music that I have conducted helped because this work [*It Has to Be Beautiful*] is an extremely challenging work with respect to tempo. Also, the collaborations with Dr. Tse on the Creston *Concerto* and the David Canfield [*Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Symphonic Winds*] all helped to build toward this project. The more you collaborate with the soloist and listen, the more you know their tendencies.

**NH:** Sure.

**RMH:** I can imagine he went to Croatia to give the premiere and maybe has an hour, or two hours, of rehearsal on a twenty-minute work. He doesn't know the conductor’s tendencies and the conductor doesn’t know his tendencies, and so that's a difficult situation. At least here he knows the kind of approach I have with the band, the sound we get out of the band. There is a higher degree of comfort to the process right away. And, of course, knowing Aaron will be involved in this performance was huge. But, yes, all of those experiences helped build toward this and toward the next piece.

**NH:** Digging a little deeper with that same question, there are a few things that I noticed with Perrine’s music that may be similar to *The Frozen Cathedral*, which Symphony Band played a few years ago or some of the music of Steven Bryant. Do you see similarities there? Who else might fit into the Aaron Perrine genre?

**RMH:** There are some glimpses of Ticheli in his writing. Especially where he's writing rhythmic patterns of fives over four beats or fours over three beats in that kind of treatment of rhythm which is quickly evolving in his vocabulary. Aaron’s writing is not as structured as Ticheli’s but there are some shared characteristics. You had already mentioned John Mackey. Some of Mackey's slower pieces and maybe Steven Bryant. I don't know if there is anyone else that jumps out. Jonathan Newman has a number of works in that slow, lyrical, coloristic, style reminiscent of Aaron’s music.

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525 *Martyrs for the Faith: American Saxophone Concertos*. David Canfield, John Cheetham, Paul Creston, Ingolf Dahl. Dr. Kenneth Tse, saxophone and the University of Iowa Symphony Band, Dr. Richard Mark Heidel, conductor and Dr. Ray Cramer, guest conductor. MSR Classics, MS1359, 2012. The Canfield and Cheetham were world premiere recordings. Those works were composed specifically for Dr. Kenneth Tse.
NH: Great. Thank you.

RMH: I would also say Andrew Boss reminds me some of Aaron. He’s another contemporary of Aaron’s. Symphony Band performed Boss’s Tetelestai, and there are lengthy sections that move at extremely slow tempi. That might be a good response to the previous question. That piece had tempi that were extremely slow just like this work and those are difficult pieces to conduct. It took considerable discipline and a lot of focus to maintain the appropriate slow tempo. We had the same kind of relationship where I would send him [Andrew Boss] a rehearsal recording, and he would quickly provide feedback. We had some dialogue during that project, it was wonderful. He would write back quickly, and it was a tremendous help.

NH: That piece [Tetelestai] was only about a year old when the Symphony Band played it.

RMH: Yes.

NH: There probably were not a lot of interpretations out there yet?

RMH: Yes, I would say we were probably the fifth or sixth band to perform it. I’m just guessing but it was still one of the earlier performances. He was complimentary of the performance. I wouldn't call it overly polished. It was on our first concert of that year, last year in October, and so that the band was still getting to know itself. It is a large-scale, difficult work but it was a good performance. That certainly helped with [It Has to Be Beautiful]. And of course, there was Maslanka [Symphony No. 4] last year too.

NH: Continuing down this road a little bit more. I know that Maslanka has been listed among Perrine’s influences. Do you note some similarities there at all?

RMH: Aaron gravitates toward thinner, more economical textures generally and he emphasizes individual colors in thinly-scored sections. In Maslanka’s writing, the orchestrations tend to be more dense. Color is still obviously a prevalent feature in his writing, but Aaron enjoys and excels at transparent, thinner scoring. I think of that like Ticheli. He is an economical writer in that he’s not going to give you more than you need. I see similarities in some of Maslanka’s music because his writing is often broad and expansive. Slow. Slow-moving, slow-developing, and large-scale. I do see some similarities in that respect. There is little of Aaron’s music that I find to be “in your face.” He's pretty reserved about jumping out and hitting you with big impacts. He's careful and thoughtful to pace his music to whatever few climaxes exist. I think of Maslanka’s music as often being quite hard-hitting and aggressive, and quite effective. I think Aaron tempers that aspect quite a bit.

NH: Great. Thank you. When preparing for the next Perrine piece, of course we don't know what that is yet, but it may be a world premiere. Would your preparations be similar?

RMH: Yes, it would be absolutely the same. There would be nothing different. I would bring him in, if possible, based on his demanding schedule now. It is always a wonderful experience for our students to interact with him. Whether it is a premiere or a consortium performance, I would begin a dialogue with him about the piece. At the least, I would send
him rehearsal recordings to get his feedback. I find that composers today tend to be pretty receptive to doing that.

**NH: The next question: compared to other pieces on that concert or other pieces that you've conducted recently, how were your rehearsals or the other preparations different? I'm also thinking of the program of the piece and the weighty subject matter, the story of Tim and Toni Diem, as part of this.**

**RMH:** In terms of my preparation, I spent much more time working with a metronome than I usually do for most pieces. I tried to realize the appropriate tempi, to be steady and consistent, and to internalize as much as possible. So, considering how slow the tempo indications are, I spent a lot of time working with a metronome in subdivision, so I could internalize the pulse of the piece. A number of the rhythms are complex, so I wanted to be sure that I had command of those rhythms at slow tempos. Similarly, in rehearsal I used a metronome a bit externally with the band, so they could work with a steady, unyielding tempo. I don't do that often, but I thought it was important for them in this case. Aaron eventually sent a MIDI recording, and it helped. As far as the program, you ask this in a later question, but I read the program notes to the band at the second rehearsal of the piece. We did perform it with one to a part except we doubled the clarinets just as he prescribed in the score. I think that's the best way to approach it. But with the absence of the solo part, the accompaniment doesn't realize the program. He titles each movement, so you can know a little of the inspiration for each of them, and there's a nice program note related to each movement. So, you do understand what's transpiring but when you're preparing this without the solo part it's difficult to understand the meaning. So, for me it was more about conveying a feeling about the meaning of the movement. Obviously, when you add the solo part, that brings such a much more important level of meaning and expression to the piece, but the accompaniment is largely accompanimental. It is mostly, with few exceptions, background and supportive. So, it would be impossible to realize the program without the solo.

**NH: Was it ever tough for the Symphony Band to sink their teeth into it?**

**RMH:** No. They might have thought, “What is this?” or “This doesn't make sense,” but I never got the sense that they ever didn’t give their best effort. The band sets up the main voice: rhythmic screens and there are chords that are changing volume and changing color. It's when you're just working with background material, the accompaniment, that I'm sure they were curious. “What is it going to be like with the soloist?” Because again you're missing the main ingredient.

**NH:** Yes.

**RMH:** It never came up in our conversations, but I wouldn’t say they had their doubts. You are working in a somewhat abstract way until you get the soloist in a rehearsal, then it all makes complete sense.

**NH: Did you send the MIDI to the band or was that mostly for your own use?**

**RMH:** I don't think I sent it to the band because the way the solo saxophone part is treated. There were a lot of times where the saxophone accelerates and slows down on a single pitch. The tremolos and all the special effects that add such an important dimension just did not come
through. I'm fairly certain that I didn't send it but there wouldn't have been any harm. I could definitely see how the MIDI could be helpful. [Begins checking e-mail to determine whether or not MIDI was sent to the Symphony Band] Ok, I sent them the MIDI. I said, “I've attached a MIDI recording.”

NH: Great. Thank you.

RMH: I know I was debating whether to share the MIDI or not. It's a new piece and it would be another resource just to help them out a little bit.

NH: What was the Symphony Band’s response: either preparing or during the performance? I'm sure you could sense a lot of energy, especially in the performance.

RMH: Yes, the performance was quite emotional. I thought there were a number of striking moments emotionally in the performance, and obviously Dr. Tse is a world-class musician and his performance was stunning. Our rehearsals with him were limited. We just didn't have that many rehearsals with him because he was gone. I don't know for sure how many we had but it seemed like we had one during the week before the concert, and we had the entire Monday rehearsal during the week of the concert with him. I wasn't overly concerned simply because of the way the piece is built. I wasn't that concerned about coordinating the two elements. Aaron was here so we were able to work it hard, quickly. And then we had the Wednesday run-through, the dress rehearsal. Especially during the dress rehearsal and the concert, the students could just focus on enjoying, experiencing the piece. The concert was quite good in terms of emotion. Dr. Tse is an expressive player, and the band fed off of that in their performance. So, I would say they had a positive experience with the work.

NH: Dr. Tse and Dr. Perrine seemed quite pleased with the performance that night. We have touched on this a little bit already: if someone is considering conducting or programming this piece, is there anything else that we didn't cover?

RMH: It's like anything, they want to become familiar with his language and again the subtleties that he brings to bear in his writing. I find with his scores that what you see is exactly what he wants. If you realize what he composed, then you will be in good shape. We had to work through some of the effects like the glissandi, which were a little bit awkward. I think he's still experimenting but it's clear that he knows what he's hearing. When he was here, he actually heard the slow flute four-beat glissando and how difficult it is to perform. He's reading, he's listening, he's researching, and he’s still learning. When I approach his music, I trust that what he has written is exactly what he wants, and my responsibility is to honor that with the performance. From the tempo, to the balances - he's careful about balances. With Aaron’s music, I've gotten to the point where I give considerable focus to the percussion writing. I'm careful. He is inventive in his writing for percussion and so I try to be especially attentive to what he is asking for in terms of the instruments and effects. I find his percussion writing to be quite interesting. The people that are going to conduct his music need to listen, need to look carefully for nuance. Contact him with questions. Have an open dialogue with him.

NH: Next, we have touched on this briefly: what are your thoughts or observation on the slow tempi? Would you see any benefit to conduct an eighth-note at any points in this?
RMH: Not at all. It would only complicate the lives of the band members. You could certainly conduct $\frac{1}{4} = 96$ instead of $\frac{1}{2} = 48$ but that would alter the character of the work. This piece is a broad, expansive, slow work but underneath you have fast, rapid passages usually in the woodwinds and percussion. It is not important to be absolutely precise. It reminds me a bit of the opening of the first movement of the Hindemith Symphony in B-flat. You could spend a lot of time rehearsing it, but it’s not critical that every rhythm is exactly in place because it provides more of a screen effect than anything else.

NH: It is gestural.

RMH: Yes, and that was liberating in a sense. Obviously, we worked with subdivision with the metronome like I mentioned to establish an accurate sense of time, but I didn't lose much sleep in trying to line up most of that. I suggest conducting the quarter note in order to maintain the broad, horizontal nature of the piece. It's slow, its deliberate, so I never considered that [conducting the eighth note]. Aaron offered that as a possibility in a conversation, but I never gave that serious consideration. If you do, you are sacrificing the expressive nature of the work for precision, and precision is certainly secondary in importance in this piece generally speaking. Of course, there are many instances where precise alignment is essential. But the more intimidating sections that you see contain thirty-second notes or six lets and quintuplets. You may think, “I need to work hard to get all of that to line up,” but that’s the least important part. It's simply an effect.

NH: Well that brings us to the final question: in closing, is there anything else that you'd like to share about past collaborations with Perrine, this concerto, his music in general, future projects, etc.?

RMH: I'm glad we have the relationship we do. He is emerging as a prominent figure among wind band composers, having won two consecutive Ostwald awards, and he won an NBA young composition award. I'm glad that we, Iowa, played a role in the early portion of his career and that we have a good relationship. He recently came to us to record a work for him, so tomorrow we’re recording a piece for him to use as a demo recording. In February, Symphony Band will give the second performance of Floral Larceny, a 2018 piece by Aaron. So, this relationship goes both ways. If there's some way that we can help him, I've extended that open invitation to him and he took me up on it by asking, “Can you get a nice demo recording of a piece? One that’s representative.” The answer will always be, of course.

NH: Is that Traces of Amber Sky?

RMH: Yes. Somehow, I was not even aware of the work Floral Larceny, I asked Dr. Bush what he was planning on guest conducting with Symphony Band on this cycle, and he told me about the piece. It’s nice. It is more of an aggressive, harder-hitting piece than he typically writes.

NH: Oh, ok.
RMH: That's working well. I think the relationship is mutually beneficial and obviously we will be involved in more projects with him whether we're leading them or we're part of a consortium.

NH: Sure.

RMH: I think the future is exciting. This particular piece, *It Has to be Beautiful*, is special in large part because of the personal story behind it. The relationship that he had with the Diems as well as the relationship he has with Iowa and Dr. Tse combine to make for a special form of expression. It will be interesting to see what kind of legs the piece will eventually get because the saxophone part is so incredibly difficult. Just the *altissimo* demands alone are formidable. Not every saxophonist is going to be able to perform this work, but it is fairly approachable in terms of the accompaniment. It contains active percussion, but there is nothing that's excessive about the accompaniment. However, finding that world-class saxophone soloist to perform it is going to be a challenge. Dr. Tse made a lot of those extremely difficult sections sound, I don’t know if I’ll say “easy”…

NH: [Laughs] He made them sound possible.

RMH: Yes, he made them sound easy. Playing them flawlessly again and again. It's a little unfair to anyone planning on preparing the solo part. When you hear a recording, what Tse is doing is extremely difficult. Anytime you're asked to be involved in a project like that, it is a special opportunity, and it can be a milestone in a career. This was a special experience for me to be able to collaborate on this particular piece in this venue with these particular people. You have a few of those that will happen within a career, so this one will always rank as one of those memorable experiences. The day after the concert, we got together for a quick recording session. We have not edited that yet, but we should get a nice product. It was good to be able to come back and spend a little bit more time with it.

NH: I learned from interviewing Dr. Tse, that next month in Canada at the North American Saxophone Alliance, he is going to perform the concerto.

RMH: Good.

NH: In the initial conversations with Perrine even back in April and May, he was trying to come to terms himself: “I don't always know what ensemble is going to be backing up the soloist. But if the soloist is Dr. Tse then I can write anything I want for him.” So, he definitely saw the accompaniment as subsidiary to the solo. It will be interesting going forward to see if this is one of Dr. Tse’s signature pieces and other people just won't perform it as much.

RMH: I don't know where exactly it's going to go either. There certainly are a number of saxophonists of his caliber that are able to perform it. It is like any of these works such as the Kernis with the Big Ten Band Directors Association [*a Voice, a Messenger* for trumpet and wind ensemble] or the Mackey trumpet concerto [*Antique Violences*]. Will performers want to take it on? Is it going to be worth their time to learn it? Some will answer, “Yes, I’d like to do this,” and some will say, “I just don't want to invest the time on it.” It is such a *tour de force* for the soloist. They are always at the forefront on this piece, which is something to consider. Three movements, 20 minutes in length, and all three movements are slow. That is something else that has to be
considered. Just the high level of concentration that is required is a concern. Trying to manage pacing in terms of tempo but also pacing in terms of the arch of the piece requires discipline and understanding. The pacing of the climaxes is comparable to most pieces. How are you pacing the highs and lows dynamically and emotionally? Are those high points the true high points? That's what I thought we captured quite nicely at our premiere performance, but it would be exciting to hear other interpretations with other soloists.

**NH:** Dr. Tse said he didn't have exclusive performance rights for a year. He and Perrine never made any kind of agreement like that, so he said he was fine with other people looking at it. I remember Perrine saying he wouldn't necessarily be a fan of somebody doing just one movement though.

**RMH:** Yes.

**NH:** It would be quite the undertaking to program *It Has to Be Beautiful*.

**RMH:** For us, it was our major work on that concert. I programmed *Music for Prague, 1968* that same semester, and I probably should have scheduled it in November because was not ideal for our first concert of the year in October. That's not a developmental piece. That's a piece for an ensemble when they've had a chance to play together for a while. Because of Aaron and Dr. Tse’s availability, *It Had to Be Beautiful* could only be programmed in November. From a programmatic standpoint, it would not be advisable to program those two pieces, *Music for Prague, 1968* and *It Has to Be Beautiful*, on the same concert. One always needs to be careful when building concert programs, and to understand the demands of each composition.

**NH:** That covers all of my questions. Thank you again for your time and your insights.

**RMH:** You’re welcome.
AW: Copyright

Malecki, Katharina <Malecki@baerenreiter.com>

Wed 2/27/2019 7:48 AM

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__________________________
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February 27, 2019

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VITA

Nolan Hauta is a third-year DMA candidate in Wind Conducting and a Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of Iowa. His teaching duties include conducting the three concert bands, writing and teaching drill and arrangements for the Hawkeye Marching Band, and leading the Iowa Pep Band. His administrative duties include work for the Iowa Honor Band, Iowa Summer Music Camps, inventory management, and other duties as assigned. He currently serves as the conductor for the Iowa City New Horizons Band.

Prior to his current appointment, Mr. Hauta taught in the Eden Prairie, Ely, and Roseau school districts of Minnesota. Additionally, he has taught private lessons for band instruments, drum set, piano, bass, guitar, music theory, and conducting. At each school district, he expanded educational opportunities for his students through increased use of technology, classroom guests, and travel. Over one hundred of his students have been selected to participate in honor bands. He has instructed musicians of all ages: elementary, middle school, high school, college, and adult.

Mr. Hauta holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music with high distinction from the University of Minnesota, Morris and earned teaching licenses in instrumental and vocal music. He also holds a Master of Music degree in Music Education from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, where he also completed all the coursework and recitals for a Master of Music degree in Conducting. At both institutions he performed with the bands, jazz bands, small ensembles, orchestras, and pep bands. Mr. Hauta was named the 2013-2014 Outstanding Graduate Student by the University of Minnesota, Duluth’s School of Fine Arts. He has also performed in numerous community bands, orchestras, choirs, and as a freelance trombonist.

Mr. Hauta has frequently served the Minnesota Band Directors Association as a section coach, audition adjudicator, board member, festival host, and guest conductor. Additionally, he has been a section coach for the Minnesota All-State Band, guest conductor for the North Shore Summer Music Experience, and a clinician at multiple middle school band and solo ensemble festivals held in Two Harbors, Minnesota. He has contributed to Connecticut Music Educators Association News, Iowa Music Educator, The Instrumentalist, The Interval, National Band Association Journal, School Band and Orchestra, Teaching Music, and Teaching Music Through Performance in Band. He has also presented original research at the 2015 Minnesota Music Educators Association Midwinter Clinic and the 2016 Historic Brass Society's Early Brass Festival. Mr. Hauta has held memberships in ASBDA, CBDNA, IBA, ITA, MBDA, NAfME, NBA, and WASBE. He is in demand as a clinician, guest conductor, and performer.