South African Music in Transition: A Flutist’s Perspective

by

Liesel Margrit Deppe

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Faculty of Music
University of Toronto

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ABSTRACT

In April 1994 the citizens of South Africa found themselves in the unique position of contemplating a new national culture; one that would for the first time embrace all South Africans, regardless of race, colour or religion. Official segregation, which began in 1948, ended with the first democratic election held in 1994. Cross-cultural awareness in South Africa emerged in the 1980s. Within this temporal context, this investigation will trace parallel developments in the South African classical music genre and will relate these developments to the concurrent socio-political environment. Looking specifically at music written for the flute, the selected works were composed for the flute as a solo instrument, or in combination with up to four other instruments by a cross-section of South African composers who either live in South Africa or who have South African roots. The works included in this study were composed roughly ten years before and after 1994; the purpose being to document the changes that were taking place in South African Art Music leading up to the first democratic election and during the exciting times that followed.

The main component of this research is the analysis of the works of nine South African composers, examining cross-cultural content in the musical form: Michael Blake (Honey-Gathering Song, Leaf Carrying Song), Robert Fokkens (Inyoka Etshanini, Cycling to Langa), Hendrik Hofmeyr (Marimba), Hans Huyssen (The Cattle Have Gone Astray), Bongani
Ndodana-Breen (*Visions I and II*), Isak Roux (*Sketches, Four African Scenes*), Martin Scherzinger (*Whistle of the Circle Movement*), Becky Steltzner (*Hambani Kakuhle Kwela*) and Kevin Volans (*Walking Song*). Biographical information and compositional philosophies are also included for each composer. In addition, publisher and recording details are provided where they exist. The works contained in this document are organized by cross-cultural borrowing technique: overt cross-cultural borrowing, borrowing guided by African music-making principles, African paraphrasing, and inspirational landscape painting. A brief history of Art Music in South Africa is provided, as is an overview of African musics and instruments. The analysis of each work considers African musical influences and their incorporation, while performance suggestions will also elucidate unique African aspects of the music.
Acknowledgments

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

In April 1994 the citizens of South Africa found themselves in the unique position of contemplating a new national culture; one that would for the first time embrace all South Africans, regardless of race, colour or religion. Racial segregation began in South Africa in colonial times, but became the official policy of the Nationalist Government in 1948. Apartheid ended with the first democratic elections held on April 28th, 1994. Before the end of apartheid – a South African word for segregation - the ruling National Party promoted the culture of the white Afrikaner minority at the expense of non-white cultures. The culture of the white Afrikaner was based on that of his European ancestors, mostly the Dutch, French and British settlers. Before and during apartheid culture was also defined along racial lines. Cultural awareness has gradually transcended these racial lines since the 1980s. While European and African cultures still remain largely distinct from one another, some blending of styles has occurred. It is in this context that this dissertation investigates the developments in the South African classical music scene.

This document examines selected works for flute as a solo instrument and in combination with up to four other instruments. These works were composed between 1985 and 2006 by a cross-section of South African composers who either live in South Africa or who have South African roots. This time frame was specifically chosen to include a period of roughly ten years before and after 1994; the purpose being to document the changes that were taking place in South African Art Music in the lead-up to the elections of 1994, as well as in the period afterwards. Only works that exhibit influences from traditional African music in sub-Saharan Africa have been included. Following an analysis of the selected works four categories of cross-cultural borrowing emerged: overt cross-cultural borrowing, borrowing guided by African music-making principles, African paraphrasing, and inspirational landscape painting. A more detailed discussion of these categories and how they relate to Transethnicism, Nationalism and Exoticism can be found in Chapter Three.

While there are many kinds of music that make up the cultural fabric of South Africa, not all have been treated equally by scholars in the recent past. For example, indigenous music and
twentieth century popular music have received the most coverage, with less attention being paid to African choral music, and virtually none to the music of the Afrikaners. Some consideration has been given to composers of classical music, but less so to the meaning of classical music in a South African context as opposed to a European context. Christine Lucia, a leading scholar of South African Art Music, regards the study of classical music in South Africa from the seventeenth century to the present as a long-overdue project.¹

This chapter is divided into three parts. It will begin with a definition of terminology, as some terms used in this dissertation may be unfamiliar to many readers, while others have ambiguous meanings. The second section will concentrate on the meaning of culture, its effects on a society, and how it supports music in transition. Since many readers will likely be unfamiliar with the development of classical music in South Africa, the third section will provide a brief summary of its history since the late seventeenth century and offer a summary of current classical music trends in that country.

1.2 Definition of Terms

The term Art Music has different meanings to different people. In its broadest sense it may refer to any music that requires thoughtful participation by the listener. Such careful listening is not only required of classical music, but other musics, for example jazz or traditional musics of other cultures as well. In a narrower sense, however, Art Music refers to all music descended from Western classical music²; music that is written down and transmitted thus from generation to generation. It is this definition that is most often favoured by musicologists. Ghanaian ethnomusicologist J. H. Kwabena Nketia defines it as music that is intended as a “concert” presentation; a listening experience.³ By contrast, popular music does not generally demand a high level of concentration from the listener and is in this regard the polar opposite of

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² Classical music here refers to the Western classical music tradition, spanning roughly from the ninth century to the present.

Art Music. In some places, including South Africa, Art Music is synonymous with serious music, and the terms are used interchangeably.

What is African Art Music? African Art Music uses the same narrow definition of Art Music, i.e. a tradition that is based upon the Western classical music tradition. Composers of such music have been trained in the techniques of Western Art Music, usually in their country of origin, but many African Art Music composers have also spent time in Europe. Ademola Adegbite, a Nigerian scholar, views African Art Music as a genre with elements of both Western and African origin. He describes it as a synthesis and cross-fertilization of African and Western musical building blocks. Furthermore, South African Art Music is African Art Music composed by South African composers. It is a genre on its own; one that reflects the rich cultural history and diversity of its people.

The question of who or what is an African can be a controversial one. A very strict interpretation of what constitutes an African individual relies on skin colour and place of birth. It is believed in some quarters, and reinforced for political gain, that an African is a non-white person who was born and raised in Africa, and whose ancestors in the area can be traced back for several centuries. It is this restrictive definition that will be used in this document when referring to indigenous or traditional African music and the people who perform it. Traditional African musics have their own musical systems, instruments and social uses. These systems are referred to when discussing particular works included in this dissertation.

A distinction must be made between two very similar terms: African and Afrikaner – with the latter group a subset of the first. As discussed above, the question of what constitutes an “African” is quite contentious, however if one were to use the term in its broadest sense, then all persons born and raised in Africa are Africans. Such a definition would necessarily include the Afrikaners. The term Afrikaner denotes a group of white Afrikaans-speaking people and they are a distinct group from the English-speakers in South Africa. The Boers (a Dutch word for farmer) are a distinct subset of Afrikaners; however, all Afrikaners have Dutch ancestry, with a trace of French Huguenot, German and Frisian (Germanic people from an area where Germany meets the Netherlands and Denmark) extraction. The original Dutch settlers arrived in the Cape

of Good Hope between 1652 and 1795, when the Dutch East India Company had established a
way-station or a station to pick up fresh food for its ships.

The word ‘traditional’, when used in conjunction with South African music, has received
several changing and contradicting explanations. Opposing views about national and cultural
identity have added to this problem, not least by apartheid legislation, that has promoted the idea
that Africans of various tribes and regions are traditionally divided. This has led to a lack of
black national unity. When the terms “indigenous,” “native” or “traditional” music are used in
this document, reference is being made to music from South Africa that originated in that
country several centuries ago and that is unique original and characteristic to that area. The term
“original” or “native” people can in itself be somewhat misleading and problematic. Most
historians believe that the Bantu from northern Africa eventually migrated south and displaced
the nomadic Khoi-San,5 who actually still exist, albeit in small numbers. For the purposes of this
dissertation, “indigenous,” “traditional” and “native” will refer to both the Khoi-San and
African black people. Traditional, native or indigenous music will refer to both the type of
music that is centuries old and the more modern genres, such as kwela, mbaqanca and marabi.6

For the purpose of this dissertation the term “culture” will be used in anthropological sense, one
that was defined by Edward B. Tylor in 1871. He used it to denote the totality of the humanly
created world, one that included material culture, such as music and art, through social
insitutions, such as religious and political ones, to knowledge and meaning.7 Although Tylor’s
views are still being debated, his book from 1871 informs contemporary cultural anthropology
even now. Tylor was amongst the proponents of cultural evolutionism and through his theories
was able to explain long-term cultural changes. Similar to the idea of culture itself, questions
about how culture changes have been of ongoing concern among anthropologists,
ethnomusicologists, sociologists and the like.


6. Kwela – jazzy, street-based pennywhistle music; Mbaqanca – jazzy 1960s music with rural Zulu roots;
Marabi – the oldest of the three, is a keyboard-based type of jazz with African roots. It was popular in the shebeens
(illegal bars serving homemade beer) and existed throughout most of the twentieth century.

7. Edward B. Tylor, Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy,
1.3 Culture and Society: A Music in Transition

Understanding the history, traditions and transformations in South Africa will augment the appreciation of the country and its music. During the last century apartheid has, without a doubt, had a profound impact on all South Africans and subsequently on their musical traditions. Apartheid is an Afrikaans word used to describe legalized segregation and discrimination practiced in South Africa between 1948 and 1990. Considering the link between politics and culture, Carol Muller writes:

…Any real understanding of musical performance in the twentieth century has to factor in the making and dismantling of the apartheid system of government. There can be no real understanding of twentieth-century South African performance without knowledge of the politics and struggles of everyday life. This means we must examine musical performance as situated in historical, cultural, and political contexts.

Music does not exist in isolation from the society in which it is produced. In fact, in many African cultures, including those of South Africa, there is no separate word for music or the context in which it takes place. In addition, music reflects society, its customs, norms and political views.

“Music in Transition” was the theme of the Nineteenth Annual Musicological Congress held at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in August 1992. Although this conference took place before the first democratic elections were held in South Africa, the theme itself indicated that changes in South African culture were already taking place, while at the same time hinting at the changes that were still to come. Even now, nineteen years later, one could say that South African culture is still in the process of working itself out. Or as Erlmann states:

Post-apartheid South Africa seems to be characterized by a strange Janus-faced mood, by a symbiosis between constitutionalism and nationalism, rainbow-pluralism and

Africanism. In short, its present is both a future that has not quite arrived and a past that has not quite died.⁹

In 1992 there was a general recognition that profound social and political changes were taking place in South Africa. It was also assumed that these political and social changes would have a direct effect on the cultural transformation as well. Furthermore, it was taken for granted that a South African musical style acceptable to all South Africans would evolve from this transformation. This assumption presupposes a connection between society, its ideas and its music.¹⁰

*Zeitgeist*, which translates as ‘spirit of the time,’ is a pivotal concept of *Geistesgeschichte* (the history of ideas, people and the undercurrents of culture). *Zeitgeist* manifests itself in the music of a specific period and is a way of describing the relationship between a society, its ideas and its music. As Blume writes:

…not only in the sense of a factor in itself inexplicable, operating to impel the people of a time and area to think, feel and express themselves in a common form, but also in the sense of a definite manner in which those people look upon themselves and place themselves in relation to the physical and metaphysical worlds.¹¹

Differing views, although with the same outcome, are held by Dahlhaus, Marx, Adorno and Ballantine. These authors place the cause of the relationship on social structures or social forces. As Marx expressed: “it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.”¹²

An example by Adorno about the music of Beethoven further illustrates this view: “…for all the idealism of its tone and posture, the essence of society…becomes the essence of the music itself...The central categories of the artistic construction can be translated into social

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ones.” Christopher Ballantine, a South African musicologist, writes: “What actually happens is that social structures crystalize in musical structures; that in various ways and with varying degrees of critical awareness, the musical microcosm replicates the social macrocosm.”

South African music has never been, and will never be aligned with any particular musical style. In addition to traditional African music, which in itself is a collection of tribal and regional music, one can find European classical music, jazz, boeremusik, as well as synthesized styles, such as kwela, marabi and isicathamiya.

Before 1994, “music” in South Africa referred mainly to the music of the dominant minority, also known as Art Music. Music by other groups within South Africa were mainly ignored. Evidence can be found in the support given only to Western Classical music, in that the former Nationalist government built European-style edifices, such as the State Theatre in Pretoria (now Tshwane), but did nothing to promote African music and musicians. However, different attitudes currently prevail. As Christine Lucia writes: “Now South African music sees itself differently, as part of a set of interlocked histories, a patchwork of collective initiatives and individual efforts.”

With the end of apartheid a myth developed among black South Africans that everything would “go back to the way it was before apartheid.” What such a scenario would look like, other than achieving freedom, was never articulated clearly by politicians. What did become clear, however, is that culture, more specifically African culture, was a good vehicle to achieve this. During the late 1990s a common belief was that black South Africans can and should go back to their cultural roots from about the mid-nineteenth century, unadulterated by Western influences. Lucia attacks the myth concerning the music of the future South Africa. She believes it is not possible for the music of South Africa to go back to the “way it was before colonialization.” One cannot just imagine that it did not happen: “There is no timeless and unproblematic past

15. Isicathamiya means ‘to walk stealthily.’ It refers to a Zulu style of singing that is popular amongst men’s choirs, such as Ladysmith Black Mambazo. It has its roots in European hymn singing.
where cultural contact never occurred."

This myth was also used for political ends in the *African Renaissance*, a popular concept at the beginning of the twentieth century, through which the African continent was expected to achieve social and cultural cohesion. So far, the concept has been watered down and no particular or further progress has been made of it in recent years.

While music of the apartheid era should be viewed in a different context from that of 2000 onwards, it is important to note that composers of Art Music in South Africa did not abruptly shift their compositional style; in fact, many creative artists, including composers, expressed their discontent with apartheid in their art. While the apartheid government generously supported the arts, composers of new music were generally non-conformist. The composer and musicologist, Michael Blake, does not rule out that some self-censorship amongst composers might have occurred, but suggests that composers might have actually experienced more freedom than today. Blake’s reasoning is that perhaps such dissent did not really matter, indeed it may have given the regime a radicalism in art that it lacked politically. Blake is not saying that the former Nationalist Government was radical in any way; rather this government wanted to show that it was a leader in the international arena, whether it be sports, medicine or the arts, since it would conveniently draw away attention from its controversial policies. Furthermore, Art Music was not on the frontlines of the struggle against apartheid; that was the role taken up by popular music and jazz musicians.

Blake also identifies another trend in current new compositions: new music seems to have both regressed into the ‘traditional’, but been modified to reflect a post-apartheid perspective. Blake offers two possible reasons for this trend: new music has lost its radical edge, simply because democracy has been achieved. The second reason is that composers bow to the pressures of economics and survival. In other words, they compose what the public wants to hear, or what an arts council wants to commission. Some composers may also feel that they need to conform to perceived “African” aesthetics, or as Blake calls them, “cultural

17. Ibid., xxiii.


19. Michael Blake, e-mail message to author, 9 May 2011.
The interviews conducted for this dissertation bear out this notion. Hendrik Hofmeyr suggests that the National Arts Council of South Africa has become so politically correct that it has begun to smother creative spontaneity. He also mentions that while the South African Music Rights Organization does not stipulate a specific style, it does strongly imply an “African” aesthetic in its commissions. Other composers not mentioned in this document have also expressed their yielding to external pressures when composing. In an interview conducted for a separate purpose, composer Allan Stephenson revealed that his own style tends away from using Africanisms, but that he will comply when commissioned to compose in an African style. Furthermore, Michael Blake believes that arts councils in South Africa are usually ill-advised; that grants frequently go to the “wrong people,” and that the “right” people therefore often do not bother to apply. While no empirical evidence or study exists to substantiate Blake’s assertion, a recurring theme throughout the interviews for this dissertation was that arts councils in South Africa have a mandate to support “African” works. Such a directive is frequently issued to artists, and it appears to many composers that those who comply, receive the majority of the commissions.

In a paper presented at the Fifth Annual Symposium on Ethnomusicology held at the University of Cape Town in 1984, Peter Klatzow, still a leading composer in South Africa today, examined the use of indigenous material by Western-trained composers. His view was that any composer who wished to use African elements in his or her work, had essentially two options: ‘nationalism’ or ‘exoticsm’:

My impression is that at this stage of our musical development, we are in a crucial stage of transition both politically, culturally and in terms of our awareness of the country that we live in and its traditions, and there may well be an analogy [sic] between our

22. Allan Stephenson, e-mail message to author, 14 October 2007.
situation and[the] situation that Bartok and Kodaly found themselves in.\(^{24}\)

By Klatzow’s definition, ‘nationalist’ music completely absorbs the traditional music of a country, using it as the basic material for a composition. Klatzow cites in Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph’s *Lifecycle* as an example, because the composer uses female Xhosa overtone singers in combination with a classical ensemble of woodwinds, strings and percussion. By contrast, ‘exotic’ music selects only certain elements from a country’s traditional music, using them as building blocks within a personal musical style. An example of exoticism would be Rimsky Korsakov’s *Capriccio Espagnol*, a work in which he does not quote Spanish music, but merely alludes to it through the use of typical Spanish rhythms, as well as through the use of select percussion instruments.\(^{25}\) A third possibility may be found in what Lou Harrison has coined as “transethnicism.” David Nicholls has aptly paraphrased Harrison’s views as “…the employment or evocation of musical styles and techniques from cultures other than the composer's own.”\(^{26}\) Transethnicism is similar to nationalism in that it employs compositional techniques from other musics, but whereas nationalism relies on one’s own culture, transethnicism goes beyond it for inspiration.

It should be pointed out at this stage that classical music composed by South African composers is frequently referred to as “Serious Music,” or “African Art Music.” Perhaps the use of the term “Serious Music” unintentionally contributes to the misconception that this type of music is Eurocentric by implying that any other music, including traditional African music, is not serious music. South African composers, however well-intentioned, may be unwittingly fostering views of Eurocentricity as well. Hans Huyssen states that he regrets the tainting of traditional African music by contemporary popular music, but he does not mention the influence that Art Music, mostly choral music, has had on traditional African music.\(^{27}\) Likewise, Martin


\(^{25}\) Ibid., 226.


\(^{27}\) See page 84.
Scherzinger’s comments about copyright requirements demonstrate a Eurocentric viewpoint by ignoring the meaning of music to different people.  

Central to the notion of Eurocentricity is a belief that South African Art Music has existed in a vacuum, untainted by influences from local musics. This mistaken belief is perpetuated mostly by the Cultural Desk of the African National Congress (ANC). While the ANC’s Draft National Cultural Policy of 1996 states clearly that it affirms all of South Africa’s diverse expressions of culture, it also communicates unambiguously that it intends to promote mostly what it has identified as neglected cultures. It is a policy that it has continued to this day, and one where the financial effects have been felt most keenly by the Art Music sector. Furthermore, it is virtually impossible to find any type of music that has not been influenced by, or itself influenced another music genre. With globalisation and the power of the internet, cultures tend to spread their influence much more rapidly. If there is any particular trend that presents a danger today, it is the African popular or ‘light’ music sector that should be concerned about the influence of Western and American trends. While there is currently a distinct African essence in ‘township jazz’, its survival in its current form risks being jeopardized by commercial influences. On the other hand, composers of Art Music have been looking at their own continent for inspiration, and cannot really be considered more Eurocentric than composers of black South African popular music.

Indeed, South African Art Music showed signs of cultural integration long before any political signs became apparent. The original version of Kevin Volans’ Walking Song, discussed in Chapter Four, dates from 1983, well before any significant political changes were taking place in South Africa. More proof of cultural assimilation may be found in the South African Music Rights Organization (SAMRO), which fullfills a similar role in South Africa as the Canadian Music Centre (CMC) does in Canada. It has been, and still is in a financial position

28. See page 78.
31. SAMRO has a large popular music section, while the focus of the CMC is on classical music. In addition, SAMRO also manages royalties, which the CMC does not do.
to sponsor annual composer and performer competitions, as well as commission new works by South African composers. It stimulates the musical scene in other ways as well: it funds masterclasses, concerts, musicological research and has a publishing division. In 1992 it introduced its first publishing project, known as “SAMRO Scores,” which aimed to promote South African works at home and abroad. The first volume contains commissions featuring cross-cultural music.

While the SAMRO membership has been traditionally, but not exclusively white, it is encouraging to see the numbers of white and non-white members rise. This occurrence is part due to increased worldwide interest in music from other cultures, mostly in the popular music genre. Since SAMRO has a vested interest in keeping membership numbers steady at the very least, or ideally to increase them, it has been involved in a number of outreach programs to invest in future generations. It claims that its policy has always been to be inclusive, meaning that it has never been involved in racial discrimination, as the Board of Directors observed in the Annual report for 1991:

…for our Organisations did not require any change of policy, for since its inception, SAMRO has never practised any distinction of membership on any basis whatsoever – neither race, nor colour, nor creed, nor sex.

Stephanus Muller has indentified another influence on South African Art Music. This influence, while not new, has not actually been recognized before. He describes a ‘local’ influence; one that is a hybrid, in-between cultural space connecting Europe and Africa. This ‘local’ space is one that is no longer European, nor is it African, and it is a space occupied by white South Africans. How this come to be is explained in the colonial history of the country. Conflict, both peaceful and violent, between white Europe and Africa since colonization in 1652 intensified in 1948 with the enactment of apartheid legislation. In addition, conflict between the British, who arrived towards the end of the eighteenth century, and the Afrikaner Boers, led to nationalism amongst the Afrikaners. Only language set these two groups apart, since race and culture were unifying elements. Over two centuries the Afrikaner and English people in South

32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., 272-4.
Africa had developed a culture that was derived from, but distinct from European culture. Musical examples of this hybrid culture can be found in the works by Johan Cloete, Darius Brubeck, Stefans Grove, Christopher James, James Khumalo, Gideon Mxumalo and others.

As mentioned earlier, South African Art Music is a genre that has not been researched thoroughly at all in the last two or three decades. Further evidence may be found in the intermittent studies of music research done in South Africa. The last two studies were done in 1986 and 2001 respectively. The latter study focuses on the research done in the period from 1990 through 1999. Most musicological research at the postgraduate level has demonstrated a strong European or American direction in the topics that were studied. Further perusal of journals published since 1999 also confirm that not much has changed yet. While composers have been writing new works, some with a distinct South African sensibility, South African musicologists have lagged behind in their analyses of these works. Beverly Parker is of the opinion that it is time for South African musicologists begin asking questions about music researchers and the contexts within which they work.

In a private conversation, Parker pointed out that it is very difficult to obtain scores of compositions by South African composers, which in turn complicates the task of providing a fair and unbiased overview of South African Art Music. Composers do not necessarily live in South Africa and many decline to cooperate. While the South African Music Rights Organization has an Art Music Section, it is not comprehensive and pales in comparison to the Popular Music Section.

1.4 A History of Art Music in South Africa

South Africa was colonized by Europeans in 1652 with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck, a Dutchman, in what is now known as Cape Town. Since then, South Africa’s history has been tumultuous, with people of both African and European descent involved in recurring conflicts.

34. Carol Muller, South African Music: A Century of Traditions in Transformation, 70-5.


These conflicts were mostly over land ownership, political power and religion, which in turn have had an effect on the people and their culture, including their music.

The development of Western music in South Africa can be divided into two periods: between 1652 and 1900, and 1900 to the present. During the first period music was initially provided by soldiers of the Dutch East India Company, who were stationed at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town. The early inhabitants of the Cape in South Africa hailed from Holland and from northern Germany. They brought with them their traditions, which were similar to those of the communities of the Lowlands of Northern Europe (along the North Sea). With the passing of time and the arrival of the Hugenots, the new influences modified the culture of the Cape into something more unique. Links to the European motherlands were maintained due to the shipping traffic between Europe and Asia which stopped for supplies in the Cape of Good Hope.  

The Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or VOC in Dutch), which held a monopoly until the end of the eighteenth century, had a very specific list of rules. The day-to-day business of the company was regulated in detail. Since music played an important role in the daily lives of the Europeans, it too, was planned out in detail. Music had a dual purpose in the VOC: it was part of service on board the ships as well as on land. Musicians of the VOC announced the start of a new day, played military signals, and warned of dangers. Music was also used for unofficial purposes, such as chamber music in the salons of European homes and dance music in bars. In addition to musicians employed by the VOC, one could also find soldiers and sailors who were able to play the organ, harpsichord, harp or guitar. Some of these musicians also taught music in the wealthier homes of Cape Town.  

Though music was regarded as a necessity in the military, the soldiers and sailors did not receive any special training. There was no system yet in place to train military musicians anywhere in the world, but its influence on the music of the colonies is unmistakable. As Helmut Kallmann has noted, parallels may be found between Canada and South Africa regarding the influence of regimental music on the development of local music:

…the British regimental bands stationed in Canada exercised an influence far beyond the military sphere. They gave impetus to the


38. Ibid.
cultivation of secular Art Music and made orchestral concerts possible.\textsuperscript{39}

Presumably travelling musicians who stopped in the Cape Colony on their way between London and Calcutta also enriched the local cultural life, but this is difficult to establish, as no newspapers or magazines were published in southern Africa before 1800.\textsuperscript{40} The other type of music available in the Cape Colony in the late seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century was church music. The first church was completed in 1704, but it did not make any attempts at purchasing an organ until 1720, and even then it took until 1737 for it to be installed.\textsuperscript{41} Owning an organ was clearly not a priority as music in Calvinistic churches after the Reformation was limited to prelude and postlude music, i. e. no accompanying of hymn singing was permitted.\textsuperscript{42}

During the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War of 1780-1784, France supported the Republic of the Seven United Provinces (of the Netherlands). Therefore, it was not surprising that a French ship arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in 1781 to support the Dutch. The arrival of the French eventually brought opera companies that stopped in the Cape on their way to Mauritius.\textsuperscript{43}

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Dutch East India Company had ceased to exist in the Cape Colony. France had occupied the Netherlands provinces by this point and the British had occupied the Cape Colony to prevent the French from taking possession of southern Africa as well. There were some new developments that coincided with the British arrival: for example, more English was heard in parliament, the courts and in schools. There were some cultural developments as well: the building of the African Theatre (Afrikaansche Shouwburg) on Riebeeckplein attracted theatre shows, ballet groups and touring musicians from Europe.\textsuperscript{44} In addition, the military and local population offered a sufficient number of musicians who had had

\textsuperscript{39} Helmut Kallmann, \textit{A History of Music in Canada 1534-1914} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), 61.

\textsuperscript{40} Jan Bouws, \textit{Die Musieklewe van Kaapstad 1800-1850} (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1966), 54.

\textsuperscript{41} Bouws. \textit{Solank daar musiek is}, 6.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{43} Bouws, \textit{Die Musieklewe van Kaapstad 1800-1850}, 54.

\textsuperscript{44} Jan Bouws, \textit{Komponiste van Suid Afrika} (Stellenbosch: Albertyn, 1971), 26.
experience playing in smaller and larger ensembles to also mount shows at the Schouwburg. Many amateur companies from the Dutch, German, English and French population groups made use of the Schouwburg. Most popular though, were the productions of Italian opera buffa and French opera comique. It is known, for example, that Pergolesi’s La serva padrona and Rousseau’s Le devin du village were presented there in 1752.  

During British control of the Cape Colony the Amateur Music Society was established, which had a profound influence on local culture. It managed to set up its own orchestra in 1844 and essentially introduced the Cape Colony to the music of Bach, Mozart and Haydn. Opera also became quite important in the Cape Colony in the first half of the nineteenth century. Archival documents show that Weber’s Der Freischütz was performed in 1831. While it may seem that southern Africa had an active musical life by this time, it was in actual fact still sporadic during the nineteenth century. The reason can be found in the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which made sailing around the bottom of Africa unnecessary. This in turn meant that fewer musicians made their way to the southern part of the continent. Fortunately, the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa in the second half the nineteenth century prompted the arrival of more Europeans in search of riches. The borders of the colonies were expanded, and with the Europeans came more of their music. Operas by Verdi and Gilbert and Sullivan were staged in the 1890s in Johannesburg. Most of the music was still presented by travelling musicians, many of whom travelled to and from the various British and French colonies situated in the Indian Ocean. These musicians were not shy to make sure that their audiences were aware of their pedigrees: violinists declared themselves students or friends of Paganini, while pianists had allegedly studied with Hummel, Thalberg and Mendelssohn.  

The second period of Western classical music history begins in 1900, when South Africa founded its own musical institutions and began training its own professional musicians.

45. Bouws. Solank daur musiek is, 25.

46. Bouws, Die Musieklewe van Kaapstad, 112.


48. Bouws, Solank daur Musiek is, 72.
article dating back to 1951, Ernest Fleischmann wrote that there was not much worthwhile music by South African composers until about 1925. It must be noted that when one describes the Art Music of South Africa, the key centre of music was in the Cape of Good Hope, at least until the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910. The Church – chiefly the Dutch Protestant Church – wielded the most powerful influence over the Cape’s musical activities. Religious music was the norm, but it came most often in the form of hymns, not in works by the old masters, such as Handel or Bach. Music composed locally at that time was not of the same quality as what was being produced in Europe. The restrictive elements of the Calvinistic Church perhaps also put a damper on creative pursuits and endeavours in the Cape. While there were exceptions, such as the operas mentioned before, most of the musicmaking in South Africa was somewhat dull compared to what Europe was producing at the same time.49

Towards the end of the nineteenth century several “music lovers’ associations” began to appear and the first theatres opened in the Cape. In 1909 the South African College of Music (now the Faculty of Music at the University of Cape Town) was founded. Interestingly, one of the first composer graduates of the College was Priaulx Rainer, who chose to live in “exile” in London, where she taught at the Royal Academy. Fleischmann gives us an idea of what her music sounded like, which may very well have been one of the first instances of African elements appearing in a Western composition. He cites her String Quartet in particular and mentions her “irregular rhythms and curiously flavoured themes” as evidence of the “music of the native people of Southern Africa.”50 With its three orchestras in the major cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, the South African Broadcasting Corporation also contributed to the new scene in South Africa in the 1950s. Not only did these orchestras program familiar works by known European composers, but they made a serious effort to perform and broadcast contemporary works by South African composers.51

Another somewhat overlooked detail in the development of South African Art Music is the emergence of the Lied in Afrikaans. Afrikaans is derived from a Dutch dialect, but it is also influenced by Portuguese, Malay and other Bantu languages. It received equal status to Dutch in


50. Ibid.

the late nineteenth century. The mandate of the Afrikaans Language Movement was to promote Afrikaans as a language, and many South African composers responded by composing art songs with Afrikaans texts in the European Romantic fashion. Art songs were the preferred genre for composers at the time.

The development of all types of music amongst black people in South Africa took place in a different way. Music played an important role in both the Catholic and Protestant liturgy, while collective singing was part of everyday life in pre-colonial Africa. Therefore, four-part hymn-singing introduced by the missionaries from Britain and Europe in the nineteenth century particularly resonated with the indigenous people. Four-part singing is a tradition that still continues today. Consequently, the black people of South Africa have been significantly exposed to the religious and classical music of Europe for about two centuries. This is also why so many black musicians are singers rather than instrumentalists, and why black composers tend to compose choral rather than instrumental works. Western musical styles were synthesized to create styles such as marabi, isicathamiya and others.

Studying composition in South Africa is still mostly divided along racial lines. White composers, even those incorporating African elements into their music, are still educated at institutions at the tertiary level, mostly universities. These students pursue careers as composers both in South Africa and abroad. African composers, by contrast, are not generally considered professionals, in part because they do not have the necessary training. Many of these composers are choral composers and avoid instrumental composition. White composers have generally been exposed to international trends and developments, while black composers have not had these opportunities. Michael Blake writes that modernity has passed these composers by, as they are trapped in the European choral traditions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Handel and Mendelssohn), and know only American popular music and the South

52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., 24.
African choral tradition, which has existed for over a hundred years.\textsuperscript{56} There is an inherent contradiction in this statement: South African choral music can be viewed as a product of modernity, while American popular music is associated with modernity, even post-modernity. Nevertheless, Blake offers two reasons for this divide between white and black composers: The first focuses on the instrumental versus vocal music, which possibly also has a bearing on household income, as the voice as an instrument costs nothing. The second, and perhaps more challenging reason, is that white composers rely on the Western notation system, while choral composers come from an oral tradition and rely exclusively on the solfège system.\textsuperscript{57} Therefore, a traditionally divisive educational system, together with cultural differences in notation, have both contributed to a musical segregation. This does not mean that there have been no composers of colour; just fewer of them. Since desegregation began in South African schools in the early 1990s, high quality education has become more available to all. It will, however, take some time for the musical education system to produce a larger number of composers of all races.

In the meantime, several successful attempts have been made to foster musical integration amongst the various races. One such venture was the “Growing Composers” project presented by the \textit{New Music Indaba}. It was the first attempt of its kind after the end of apartheid and was presented at the “National Arts Festival” held in Grahamstown, South Africa in June of 2000. This new music festival had three goals: the first was to provide a performance platform for new South African Art Music; the second goal was to expose South Africans to international Art Music trends by inviting international composers and artists. The third goal was to enable South African composers of all races and (educational) backgrounds to interact; to exchange ideas, to study new or different techniques, and to be coached by other composers.\textsuperscript{58} One-week workshops were added in 2002 and 2003. Black composers who had never studied composition were exposed to new music from Europe and the USA, while also receiving instruction on orchestration. All of the workshop compositions were performed and some were given opportunities to have their works performed abroad. This was not a one-way project in which


\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
inexperienced African composers benefitted from more experienced white composers: the “Bow Project” was introduced in 2005 and it inspired black and white composers alike to incorporate African elements into their compositions. White South African composers had begun to incorporate African elements into their music just over thirty years ago, but with the exception of perhaps one or two, black Art Music composers had not done so. Therefore, participants in this project were asked to transcribe a traditional “bow song” and to incorporate it into a composition for soprano and string quartet. Using their transcriptions, they were then asked to write a free paraphrase for string quartet. The results were astoundingly diverse, including South African jazz, popular music, gospel, minimalism and even serialism. As Blake has said, one cannot teach composers to use African techniques, but one can help them to meet the challenge by exposing them to other types of music, either through live performances or recordings.  

59. Ibid.
Chapter Two

All of the composers discussed in this study have been chosen because of their prominence in the South African Art Music scene and their contribution to it since 1985. There are many more works that could have been included here, but further limitations were needed to contain the size and scope of the study. All subjects but for one - Becky Steltzner – were born and raised in South Africa. A decision was made to include Steltzner, due to her longstanding ties to South Africa. Furthermore, only those works composed after 1985 and which also exhibit African musical influences, have been included. Since the focus is on chamber music for flute, the size of the ensemble ranges from a solo flute in Hofmeyr’s *Marimba* and Ndodana-Breen’s *Visions*, to the woodwind quintets of Roux’s *Four African Scenes* and Steltzner’s *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela*.

An effort was made to include composers of various race groups, but the majority of South African Art Music composers are still of Caucasian origin. Fortunately, there are composers of various other ethnic groups who are beginning to make their mark, both locally and internationally. Of those included here, Ndodana-Breen is perhaps the most prominent. A lack of black representation in this study can also be attributed to a dearth of chamber music compositions by composers of colour, as these composers generally favour composing for bigger ensembles, such as choirs. It will be evident that all of the composers included in this study come from a musical background. In all instances they were exposed to music at home and at school, though Ndodana-Breen’s experience was perhaps unusual. Ndodana-Breen was educated in a private school with a music department; an advantage not many of his peers would have been able to afford. In fact, an economical disadvantage is likely also an important reason why there have been so few composers of colour in South Africa. Apartheid forced many black Africans into inferior schools with few amenities, and only the wealthy who could afford private, multi-racial schools, were able to expose their children to art and sport activities.

The composers’ backgrounds reveal certain similarities in influence, but with very different results: Michael Blake and Kevin Volans are of the same generation; they spent time in Europe in the 1970s and were influence by the “new simplicity.” Volans has remained abroad and currently distances himself from his earlier Africa-inspired works. Blake, on the other hand, has returned to South Africa and has embraced African influences in his works. Through his
various projects he has encouraged local composers to do the same. One of these projects was the *Uhadi* Bow Project, which has significantly influenced a younger generation of composers, such as Hans Huyssen and Robert Fokkens. Huyssen’s work discussed here does exhibit African influences, but not *uhadi* bow music in particular. Fokkens, however, presently cites this as a major influence on his work, such as the two compositions discussed in Chapter Four, *Inyoka Etshanini* and *Cycling to Langa*. Volans, Huyssen and Blake have all experimented with Baroque instruments and styles as a vehicle to merge African and Western musical styles. Volans and Huyssen accomplished this by using Baroque instruments, such as the harpsichord and cello, while Blake uses the form rather than instrumentation. Initially, Blake’s *Quintet for Winds* was to be included for discussion, as it was a reworking of one of his Baroque-African pieces for piano – until he discovered that he had actually reworked it for a sextet; its size making it too large to fit the parameters of the dissertation. Hofmeyr and Roux, although of a similar age, have different backgrounds and approaches: Hofmeyr is an unashamed romanticist, which gives his African-inspired works a unique perspective. In Roux’s work one can detect some influences by Volans, perhaps attributable to having followed in his footsteps: Volans and Roux studied at the same university in Durban, South Africa, and both spent some time in Germany before embarking on their careers.

Of all the composers mentioned here, Scherzinger is the only one who has learned to play African percussion instruments. His experience playing *mbira dza vadzimu* is very evident in his compositions. Ndodana-Breen is the only composer of colour in this discussion, and as such approaches composition from the opposite perspective, i.e. from an African point of view. Steltzner has the least compositional experience of all the individuals, but her work is included here, because there are very few Africa-inspired works that utilize Kwela music as inspiration. Furthermore, there are very few woodwind quintet works by South African composers, which makes *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela* particularly appealing, not only because of its upbeat character.

The composers are organized by year of birth to highlight the chronology. A perusal of their individual biographies and compositional methods reveals how attitudes towards using African elements in Art Music has changed over the last two-and-a-half decades in South Africa.
2.1 **Kevin Volans (b. 1949)**

2.1.1 **Biography**

Kevin Volans was born in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. He studied piano from the age of twelve and graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of the Witwatersrand in 1972. He wrote a thesis on Stockhausen’s piano works for his undergraduate degree, which led to an invitation to study with the composer in Cologne. He studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Köln for just one year, from 1975-1976, during which time he was also Stockhausen’s teaching assistant.\(^{60}\) While in Germany, his work became part of the *Neue Einfachkeit* (New Simplicity). After completing his studies, he made several field recording trips to Africa, which in turn led to a series of pieces based on African compositional techniques. He returned to South Africa in 1981 to lecture in composition at the University of Natal.\(^{61}\) In 1985 he also obtained his D. Mus. in composition from the same university. In 1986 he also spent a brief period in Paris, France, as well as in Cork, Ireland. In that same year he took up a post as composer-in-residence at Queen’s University in Belfast, Ireland. He held the same position at Princeton University in the United States of America in 1992. He became a naturalized Irish citizen in 1994. One of the most famous recordings of Volans’ music, *White Man Sleeps*, was recorded by the Kronos Quartet in 1983.\(^{62}\)

2.1.2 **Compositional Style**

During the 1980s, Kevin Volans was one of the first South African composers to openly attempt to reconcile African and European aesthetics. He now concedes that it was perhaps a somewhat naïve effort. However, in an article published on his webpage, he explains his intentions as follows:

> I wanted to reflect in the music an image of a multicultural society – one in which the traditions of different cultures are represented honoured and, above all, shared – no more ‘separate development’! In order to achieve this I planned a series of pieces which were graded as a learning curve from pure transcription (in

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\(^{61}\) Now known as the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

the manner of Bach), through paraphrase (as in Liszt), quotation an objet trouvé, assimilation (in the tradition of Stravinsky and Bartok) to what was then called an “invented folklore”- what I thought of as a new music of southern Africa.  

Volans began his series with Mbira (1981) (now withdrawn), which involved traditional patterns and some newly composed patterns. This was followed by Matepe in 1982, which he describes as “non-traditional”. In She Who Sleeps With a Small Blanket (1985), only the title is African. In White Man Sleeps, Volans believes that he has equally represented each of the Venda, San, Basotho, Nyungwe, Baroque and contemporary Western musics.

Volans explains that he had no intention of westernizing African music, as the popular music industry had already accomplished that. Rather, he wanted to achieve the reverse: his desire was to introduce some strictly non-Western aspects of African music into the European-based repertoire, a practice he describes as an “African colonization” of Western music and instruments. He does mention that he wanted to preserve some unique qualities of Western music, but never elaborated on what these were. He concentrated on the anti-hierarchic nature of traditional African music, specifically the interlocking techniques, shifting downbeats, the predominantly non-functional harmony, the open-ended forms, the non-developmental use of forms and the contrasting and irregular patterning of this genre of music.

Volans describes his early compositional style as being in “stark contrast” to the previous generation of composers. According to him, earlier composers in their quest for “world music” had succeeded in integrating the music of many cultures into one Western music style, usually by means of electronic music. Instead, he and his colleagues from Köln were more interested in “cross-fertilizing” techniques and arriving at a new musical awareness. These composers not only avoided electronic music, but they also avoided introducing “exotic” instruments into Western music. By eschewing the direct use of African instruments, Volans stands in direct contrast to later composers, such as Hans Huyssen.


64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.
On the other hand, Volans was not averse to approximating the sound of African instrument through manipulation of Western instruments. By carefully considering the type of instruments, their registers and dynamic levels, he believed that a composer could convey a new or foreign world not usually associated with those particular instruments. To this end, he found the sound of the modern, industrialized piano inappropriate for African music. He considered the sound too bland and inflexible, while, on the other hand, a harpsichord is easily retuned and its percussive sound can be reminiscent of the percussive sounds of traditional African music.

Volans admits that he has avoided any direct reference to African music in his compositions since 1988. He states that: “For me, the moment for this kind of work has passed, along with the apartheid State.” During an email exchange in 2007, flutist Alain Barker speculates that one reason Volans moved away from this style might be attributed to a dispute Volans had had with the ethnomusicologist Andrew Tracey in the late 1980s. This dispute seemed to be about whose music Volans was borrowing from, and therefore, to whom his compositions belonged. When contacted Volans was initially keen to be interviewed for this dissertation. However, upon learning that my focus was to be on ethnic elements in Walking Song, he declined to be interviewed. He mentioned that he finds this work “unimportant” in his output and would rather focus on his current work. Other interviewers have had similar experiences. Timothy D. Taylor in his article “When we Think about Music and Politics: The Case of Kevin Volans,” notes that Volans was quite reticent when asked about the music sources he had used for his compositions during the 1980s. Volans would apparently describe the music in detail, but would avoid any direct questions about the source of music. Volans generally deflects questions about influences in his music, accusing music critics of not understanding what he was attempting to do. Ironically, given his statement mentioned above regarding the “African colonization” of European music, he criticizes the critics for viewing some of his works as an attempt to bring Africa into Europe. Nevertheless, Volans believes that while his string quartet White Man Sleeps does have some African elements, it should be viewed


67. Alain Barker, e-mail message to author, 23 November 2007.

68. Kevin Volans, e-mail message to author, 16 November 2007.
as a string quartet and not as a piece about African dance.\textsuperscript{69} It certainly appears as if he has had a change of heart about his early musical influences, and like many artists, is perhaps embarrassed by the work of his youth.

Kevin Volans has established a very successful international career: he has created over 100 commissioned, published, performed works; ensembles and individuals who have performed his works include the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Philharmonic Orchestra, Marc-André Hamelin, the Duke and Smith Quartets and the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. This list is not exhaustive, but merely a sampling. Many of his works have been recorded on major labels and his works are published with Chester Music. While not much that has been written about him is of a scholarly nature, there have been many media profiles, reviews of his new works, as well as recordings. Commercial success was also enjoyed by, for example, his first two String Quartets. However, Volans is better known to the overseas public than in the country where he was born and raised.

Furthermore, Volans is no longer a member of SAMRO (South African Music Rights Organization), nor is he affiliated with a Music Department in South Africa. He has not composed pieces for the University of South Africa (UNISA) graded exam syllabus, nor has he received any commissions from national organizations in South Africa in recent years. Few libraries in South Africa hold his works, and not many local musicians perform his work. However, it is expected that his profile in South will improve over the next couple of years, in part due the efforts of the South African pianist Jill Richards, as well as scholars, such as Christine Lucia.\textsuperscript{70} Jill Richards has made a conscious effort to learn and program Volans’ works, while Christine Lucia has begun the task of researching his works, particularly the early compositions. Most of her articles have been published by South African journals in recent years.


2.2 Michael Blake (b. 1951)

2.2.1 Biography

Michael Blake was born in Cape Town, South Africa, where he also spent his early years. He studied piano at the University of Cape Town, as well as the University of the Witwatersrand. He obtained his Bachelor of Music from the latter university in 1970, completed a Master of Music degree at Goldsmiths College, University of London (1977), and was awarded a doctorate degree by Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa in 2000. His formal studies focused primarily on piano, and while he took some composition courses, he never studied composition as a postgraduate student. However, he did attend master classes with other composers such as Mauricio Kagel, György Ligeti and Peter Maxwell Davies.

Blake spent twenty years (1977-1997) in London, during which time he lectured at Goldsmiths College. He was also involved in several new music groups and founding, amongst others, the Goldsmiths Contemporary Music Ensemble and London New Music. He moved back to South Africa in 1998, taking up a lecturing post at Rhodes University. During his time there he also established an annual new music festival that runs concurrently with the Grahamstown Festival, a major arts festival in South Africa. The new music festival is known as New Music Indaba. Blake has always been interested in nurturing young composers, and upon his return to South Africa in 1998, he perceived a need for opportunities for young black composers in the education system. This led to the establishment of a “Growing Composers” project within the New Music Indaba. Blake has also held a postdoctoral research fellowship and the University of Pretoria and lectured in theory and composition at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

2.2.2 Compositional Style

As white composers of so-called Art Music in South Africa, we start from a very level playing field – a position of total irrelevance. We are a minority, we are marginal, we write music that few people care about or listen to. If we are able to make a point at all, we can probably consider ourselves successful. And if


72. Ibid.
we work in an intuitive way (Adorno’s *Musique informelle*), then we’re probably a minority within the minority.\textsuperscript{73}

At first glance this may have the appearance of a defeatist statement, but Blake’s tireless work in the new music scene in South Africa seems to indicate perseverance in spite of the odds. The musicologist Stephanus Muller has described Michael Blake as “the most important and most influential South African Art Music composer to have worked in South Africa since the advent of democracy.” Furthermore, the *Musical Times* described him as “one of the two leading protagonists (along with Kevin Volans) of the South African Art Music scene.”\textsuperscript{74}

If Blake’s music can be categorized into various periods, his first period could be described as the “African” period – and that is not to say that his later works are “un-African” but less overtly so. From the mid-1970s his compositional approach is largely based on an engagement with the materials and playing techniques of African music. He composed a series of pieces loosely collected in what he calls his *African Notebook*. These pieces explored, amongst other things, *mbira* music and “sometimes produced new variations or mapped the figuration onto arrangements of music by Bach and Purcell.” Eventually he added more works to the *Notebook* and those are collected in his *African Journal*. This period ended upon his return to South Africa in 1998.\textsuperscript{75} Another aspect of Blake’s early compositions is the move towards a “new simplicity.” (\textit{Neue Einfachkeit} in German) In this respect he shares the same views that Kevin Volans held in the 1970s. Blake describes experimental music as exploring only one idea, usually one that is non-goal-oriented. Blake describes much of his music as being cyclical, minimal, post-minimal, and post-modern.\textsuperscript{76} What Blake has described is essentially the compositional approach of Steve Reich and Philip Glass, in whose music frequently only one musical parameter, usually rhythm, is dealt with. This music has no particular overall form, but change happens slowly and gradually through varied repetitions.


\textsuperscript{75} Michael Blake, e-mail message to author, 11 September 2009.

\textsuperscript{76} Stephanus Muller, “Michael Blake 50,” *Musicus* 30, no. 1 (2002), 122.
In the 1990s Blake’s compositional style underwent some changes: whereas his original style in the 1970s had consisted of creative transcriptions of a range of indigenous music, in the 1990s he shifted to a new abstract style. The African influence was still present, but the references to indigenous music became more covert and not so literal. For instance, his French Suite for solo piano barely outlines fragments of patterns of the Western African *kora* and southern African *mbira*.  

Blake entered a new phase in 2000, and as he puts it: “when I woke up in the new millennium I knew I wanted to do things differently.” As this was approximately two years after he made the move back to South Africa, fellow composer Martin Scherzinger has called it Blake’s “South African” period. In the works of this period, Blake’s trademark rhythmic asymmetry and melodic movement are still discernable: contrapuntal lines are never fully aligned with one another and there are constantly shifting time signatures, even if the melodies remain the same. Scherzinger believes that Blake’s music from this period alludes to Morton Feldman’s asymmetrical minimalism, “and yet the resulting musical tableaus are just as often abruptly punctured and punctuated by new tableaus (textures, rhythms, melodies).” Additionally, these tableaus are described as “filmic montages” - these are best described as musical sections that bear no relation to each other, and which are not linked by any bridging material. Such an approach is not surprising, as Blake has been collaborating with the independent South African filmmaker Aryan Kaganof since 2003. Furthermore, Scherzinger makes some generalizations about Blake’s style: he describes Blake’s music as existing on a cultural and stylistic borderline. He believes that Blake’s music is neither tonal nor atonal, neither metric nor contra-metric. It is very patterned, static music with no particular goal in mind. This is reflected in how Blake approaches the act of composition.

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78. Michael Blake, “Biography.”


80. Ibid.

81. Michael Blake, “Biography.”

82. Martin Scherzinger, “Approaching the Patterns of Silence: The Music of Michael Blake.”
When asked how he begins a new composition, Blake responded that he usually begins by improvising at the piano until he “hits on” something that he finds interesting. He then notates it on his computer using the music notation program Sibelius. Depending on the proposed scale of the piece, he continues with this procedure until he gauges that he has collected enough material. At this stage he starts playing with the ideas and tries to fashion these into some form of a structure; however, he rarely has a preconceived idea of the structure before he begins. This method can be described as “improvising” at the piano and then notated for the benefit of the performer. Blake concedes that this method is unlike traditional African music, which does leave room for improvisation by the performer.  

Focusing on a more microscopic level on Blake’s compositional style, one learns that he is always exploring new ways to compose tunes or melodic fragments using only a few notes, while endlessly varying them to create new patterns. He also states that creating more angst out of the chromatic scale holds no appeal for him, as it has been “abused” for much of the twentieth century. Whether he begins composing melodically or harmonically varies from work to work. Although it does occur, he rarely begins to compose with a rhythmic parameter. When the latter does occur, it most frequently involves un-tuned percussion instruments. When beginning a piece with a harmonic structure in mind, Blake prefers to work with a small number of chords that he recycles and uses cyclically, rather “than [using] every chordal variant and inversion in the book.” He refers to Stockhausen’s Stimmung\(^{84}\) as a model for what can be done with only one chord. He points out that Zulu and Xhosa bow music has existed for far longer using only two chords.\(^{85}\)

\(^{83}\) Tobias Fischer, “15 Question to Michael Blake.”

\(^{84}\) Stimmung is the German word for intonation. Here Blake refers to Stockhausen’s work of the same name, which was composed in 1968. It is in just intonation and performed by six singers, who all sing overtones. Each overtone becomes a fundamental creating even more overtones.

\(^{85}\) Stephanus Muller, “Michael Blake 50,” 126.
2.3  **Becky Steltzner (b. 1956)**

2.3.1  **Biography**

Becky Steltzner is a clarinetist from Wisconsin in the United States of America. She immigrated to South Africa in 1982, married there and became a naturalized South African citizen. She holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and received a Master of Music degree (cum laude) from the University of Southern California. She moved to South Africa to take up a position with the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra, followed by a period with the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra. She is currently a lecturer at the South African College of Music at the University of Cape Town.

She is a founding member of the Amadeus Winds, a group that plays mainly woodwind quintets. She is also the Assistant Director of the Franschhoek Mountain Chamber Music Festival, which is an intensive chamber music workshop for gifted young musicians.

2.3.2  **Compositional Style**

Steltzner never received any formal compositional training, but the need for some arrangements for her quintet, the Amadeus Winds, prompted her to try her hand at composition. After having played in symphony orchestras for a long period of time, she realized that she could “hear” the colour combinations of various instruments, which in turn led to her first arrangements for the quintet. Owing to her hectic schedule as a university lecturer, as well as her other playing engagements, she does not have a vast output of works. In fact, *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela* is her only published work so far. Most of her compositions are as a result of her work with the Franschhoek Mountain Chamber Music Festival, for whom she has written several works over the years. Many of these were as a result of pedagogical needs for the chamber music festival. She mentions the case of a brass trio, two of whom who could perform circular breathing. In order to teach the third to learn this technique, she composed a piece specifically for their needs.

Steltzner credits her good music theory, orchestration and counterpoint courses for her skills. When required, as was the case with *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela*, she did some additional research. This research included listening to recordings of kwela music, investigating the structure – both form and harmony – of typical kwelas. For Steltzner, composing begins at the piano: she starts playing until she finds something – a motif or a melody - that she finds viable.
for a musical work. This is followed by working each section in turn until she is satisfied with it, followed by an overall review of the work to determine whether or not the structure is successful. She considers her compositional style as an eclectic mix of styles, some of it African-inspired and much of it tonal. While she does use dissonance, she admits to feeling the need to resolve these dissonances.  

86. Becky Steltzner, interview by author, 24 June 2009, Cape Town, South Africa, minidisc recording.
2.4 Hendrik Hofmeyr (b. 1957)

2.4.1 Biography

Hendrik Hofmeyr was born in Cape Town in 1957. Although not from a musical family, Hofmeyr’s mother would put her children to bed early so that she could listen to some music from her vast LP collection. Hofmeyr recalls falling asleep to the sounds of classical music, mostly Bach and Beethoven. At the age of seven he was permitted to take piano lessons from Anneline le Roux, while taking music history and theory lessons from Sarie Jacobs and Hans van Eck. He describes Van Eck as an inspirational teacher, who encouraged him to pursue composition as a career option. Hofmeyr could have followed a more lucrative career path, since he was gifted in mathematics and placed in the top three students province-wide in his matriculation exams. However, music in general, but composition in particular, was a calling for him.

Hofmeyr completed his Bachelor of Music with distinction in 1979, and a Master of Music in 1981, both at the University of Cape Town and on full scholarship. Soon after that he left South Africa for Italy on a scholarship to study at the Conservatories of Florence and Bologna. Although he intended to go abroad for only a short period, he eventually remained in Italy for ten years before returning to South Africa permanently in 1992. Hofmeyr concedes that one reason for his lengthy stay abroad was due to his desire to avoid the military service that was obligatory for white males at that time. Studying abroad was a legitimate reason to be exempted from military service. This suited him well, as he had no desire to fight a war for apartheid. Hofmeyr returned to South Africa in 1992 to take up a post at the University of Stellenbosch, where he remained until 1998. In 1998 he joined the faculty of the South African College of Music at the University of Cape Town. The university awarded him a DMus degree in composition in 1999, and promoted him to Associate Professor of Music in 2000.

Hofmeyr has won many prizes for his compositions in South Africa and abroad. Some of the most prestigious ones in South Africa include the Opera Competition (1987), the Nederburg Prize for Opera (1988) and the University of South Africa (UNISA) Composition Competition.

87. Hendrik Hofmeyr, interview.

At the international level, he won the first prize winner at the Queen Elizabeth Competition in Belgium, as well as the first prize in the Mitropoulos Competition in Greece, both in 1997. As a prolific composer, Hofmeyr receives regular commissions within South Africa, as well as from Europe and Great Britain. His works are perhaps performed more regularly than those of any other living South Africa composer’s.

2.4.2 Compositional Style

During a broadcast in the Netherlands of the Queen Elizabeth Competition in 1997, one of the panelists commented that Hofmeyr’s music is not modern music. To this critic, Hofmeyr’s *Raptus* sounded like the “fifth of Richard Strauss’ *Four Last Songs.*” While perhaps not meant as a compliment, Hofmeyr does regard it as one. His musical language is essentially tonal, believing that it is the most effective method to create tension and release in music. Although he dabbled in avant-garde music during his teens, he now openly denounces it. He does not shy away from chromaticism, but his style is essentially still tonal. He utilizes conventional tone colours and prefers standard playing techniques for all instruments.

Hofmeyr has a fundamentally romantic notion about music. He explains that his concept of romanticism is rooted in the views of the musicologist Curt Sachs. According to Sachs, the term “romantic” does not only refer to music of the nineteenth century, but also describes any music in which subjective emotions and passions are emphasized. It is also music in which idealism and the supernatural are present. This view stands in direct contrast to the term “classic,” in which form, perfection and control in music are extolled. These two opposites can be compared to the Greek terms *pathos* and *ethos,* or the Greek gods Dionysus and Apollo. It is between these two extremes in music that tension exists, and it is exactly this tension that also appeals to Hofmeyr. It is a guiding principle he employs to compose and listen to music.

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91. Roos, 49.
This view is also echoed in Hofmeyr’s declaration that the primary goal of music should be to captivate the listener; to draw the listener into a magical world that only really exists in music. A second manifestation of Hofmeyr’s romantic view of music is that he believes that music always transmits an emotional message – and here emotions include life experiences, amongst other things. He believes that the emotional factor is the one that speaks to the listener most persuasively. Thirdly, Hofmeyr approaches his compositions in terms of form and content: Apollo is represented by form, while Dionysus is represented by content. Hofmeyr believes that a successful composition balances these two opposites. This is explained further by his idea that the human psyche consists of a delicate balance between emotion and rational thought. Lastly, Hofmeyr is concerned with symbolism. To him, the pentatonic scale symbolizes simplicity and innocence, because of the absence of semitones. In contrast to this stands the octatonic scale with its alternating whole- and semitones. The octatonic scale, with its various constructions, such as augmented fourths, affords the composer the opportunity to work with chromaticism, without dealing with atonality.

Hofmeyr believes that music should exist for its own sake, and that it should not be the bearer of political messages. This is a belief that at times has cost him dearly. As an example, one could mention his opera The Land of Heart’s Desire, a one-act chamber opera with the libretto based on the drama by William Butler Yeats. This opera was composed for the Grahamstown Arts Festival in 1990, but was never performed, because its topic was deemed irrelevant in light of what was happening politically, as Nelson Mandela had been released only a couple of months earlier. This does not mean that Hofmeyr is against finding inspiration in local music; he just refuses to do so for political reasons. A few of his compositions that do draw their inspiration locally are: Lumukanda, Kalunga and Marimba, the work discussed in Chapter Four.

92. Hendrik Hofmeyr, interview.
93. Roos, 49-50.
94. Roos, 51.
2.5 **Isak Roux (b. 1959)**

2.5.1 **Biography**

Isak Roux was born in Durban, South Africa in 1959. He completed both his Bachelor of Music (1980) and Master of Music (1988) degrees at the University of Natal (now known as the University of KwaZulu-Natal to reflect the amalgamation of the former province with a former homeland). His thesis was supervised by Jürgen Bräuninger and the renowned South African composer Kevin Volans. He was also employed as a high school music teacher in Durban from 1986 until 1988 before relocating to Stuttgart, Germany in 1989. He is currently employed at the Waldorf Schule in Uhlandshöhe/ Stuttgart, but also freelances as a composer, arranger and performer. Recently he has received more widespread recognition through his work with groups such as *Ladysmith Black Mambazo (LBM)* and *Kwela Tebza*. LBM’s recording of Roux’s arrangements, *No Boundaries*, was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2006. Roux also has several other commercial recordings to his name.\textsuperscript{95}

2.5.2 **Compositional Style**

Isak Roux comes from a musical family. Both parents were self-taught lay musicians, but Roux remembers his father’s influence in particular. His father was proficient on various instruments, but the traditional Afrikaner folk music known as *Boeremusiek*, and the gospel music from church where Roux’s father was an organist, left an indelible mark on the younger Roux. Roux credits his own playing in church, as well as in a dance band in twelfth grade for honing his skills as an improviser.\textsuperscript{96} In an unpublished essay “No-man’s Land,” Roux remembers his first realization of the effects of apartheid. Before the end of apartheid, the University of Natal was one of the very few multi-racial educational institutions in South Africa. During his studies there in the early 1980s, Roux befriended a young African man, Sinclair; the initial draw being the fact that the African had noteworthy gospel piano skills. When Roux invited Sinclair and his girlfriend to a movie at a drive-in, it was explained to him that the racial laws of South Africa prohibited this. This experience moved him in later years to experiment with African influences in his music. He was further encouraged by his academic mentor Kevin Volans, who was himself a proponent of ethnic synthesis. This led to his Master’s thesis, “Local

\textsuperscript{95} Isak Roux, telephone interview by author, 11 August 2009, minidisc recording.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.
music: Exploring the Technical Possibilities for Establishing a South African Compositional Style.”

Roux acknowledges the influence Kevin Volans had on him as a mentor, especially regarding the minimalist approach. While both composers made use of African techniques, Roux feels that he set out on a distinct path of his own: Roux believes unreservedly in incorporating the art of improvisation into his Art Music compositions. He found that this was a feature that was lacking in the earlier work of Kevin Volans, but he finds it in a few works of living African musicians. While he does not expect a performer to improvise in his compositions, it is important to him as a composer to attempt to make his works sound like spontaneous improvisations. This is especially true for his piano music.

When he composes music that has an African influence, Roux describes the vocal lines of traditional African music, such as those of the Zulus, that he aims to capture. He points out that a lot of colour is lost when one does not use the local language, but that he endeavours to portray the vocal inflections instead. Other typical South African influences in Roux’s music are Zulu guitar music (isicathamiya) and Cape Malay music. Roux remembers being fascinated as a child by young African males walking the streets, playing their homemade guitars and singing about aspects of their lives. Cape Malay people are Muslim people of mixed race (Caucasian, black and Asian) in the former Cape Province, whose language is Afrikaans. Roux also makes use of the traditional music of the Cape Malay people, mainly because their music was presented as traditional Afrikaner music to the Afrikaner population, regardless of the fact that a considerable percentage of it was created by non-whites.

Isak Roux left South Africa in the late 1980s, because he never imagined that South Africa would abolish its apartheid policies. However, since political change did come about, he has noticed an increasing interest in his music over the last decade since 2000.97

97. Ibid.
2.6 **Hans Huyssen (b. 1964)**

2.6.1 **Biography**

Hans Huyssen was born in Pretoria, South Africa to German parents. He obtained his B. Mus. degree from the University of Stellenbosch, before leaving for Europe. In Salzburg he studied at the Mozarteum with Gerhard Wimberger before obtaining a postgraduate diploma in composition from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München, where he studied with Hans-Jürgen von Bose. He has received several awards, including bursaries from the Steinbrenner Foundation in Berlin, the Bavarian Ministry of Culture, a SAMRO (South African Music Rights Organisation) Special Merit Award and a prize from the Ernst von Siemens Foundation. Huyssen continues to receive commissions in South Africa and Germany and his works have been performed by the Mozarteum Orchestra, Münchener Symphoniker, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, Münchener Kammerorchester, Ensemble Noir and others. He was a senior lecturer in composition at the University of the Freestate between 2007 and 2009 before leaving that position to concentrate on his composition.

2.6.2 **Compositional Style**

During his studies at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Huyssen had the opportunity to attend seminars presented by Nikolaus Harnoncourt, a man respected for his work as a conductor and as a cellist for historically informed performance practice. As a cellist, Huyssen found his sound in the Baroque cello, one that he describes as better-suited to his personality. As a composer, his work is influenced by a continuing relationship with historically informed performance of early music. An awareness of the relationship between historical contexts and specific musical styles has influenced his approach to contemporary music; in fact he calls it the “Period of our Time.” As a composer he attempts to reconnect contemporary music to its various historical roots, some of which he feels have been thoughtlessly cast aside. In this he generally refers to the styles, practices and performance traditions of certain eras. More specifically he refers to Baroque rhetoric, with special emphasis on articulation, phrasing and knowledge of the Doctrine of the Affections. In other words, Huyssen is interested in all the details that are not captured in music.

98. Hans Huyssen, interview.

notation, but that are considered important in performance practice of any ear. In the last decade he has developed a renewed interest in various African traditions. This led him to return to South Africa in 2000 to pursue his own contribution to a relevant South African form of contemporary music. A collaboration with Dizu Plaatjies’ traditional African percussion ensemble Amampondo generated a unique compact disc entitled *Fynbos Calling*. From the performance practice of most indigenous African music he takes the notion of cyclical style, resulting in a specific way to perform “repetitive patterns” as a way of “being in time,” but not as predictable re-occurrences. He achieves this through study of indigenous music, transcribing and arranging it in a contemporary style. He prefers not to use indigenous music as an “ideological signifier,” by which he means for political ends, but views it as an anthropological sphere of musical activity that is just as rich and complex in its artistry as any other type of music.
2.7 Martin Scherzinger (b. 1966)

2.7.1 Biography

Martin Scherzinger is a South African composer with various talents. He studied law and music at the University of the Witwatersrand. He is a percussionist, composer and musicologist and has displayed and cross-utilized his skills in all of these fields at various times in his life. Soon after his studies he left for Germany to work as a percussionist and then headed to New York to obtain a PhD in musicology at Columbia University. He also held a postdoctoral fellowship at Princeton University in New Jersey during the 2004-2005 academic year.

Until 2009 he was a professor at the Eastman School of Music (University of Rochester). He is currently Associate Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at New York University. His research interests are interdisciplinary, ranging from ethnomusicology, musicology and music theory, performance study and critical theory. He is also interested in copyright law – drawing on his studies in law – censorship and the politics of mass-mediated music.100

2.7.2 Compositional Style

Martin Scherzinger is the youngest child of a large German family in Johannesburg, South Africa. He mentions that his parents travelled frequently and that he was practically raised by African nannies. During the interview it was never made clear how many biological siblings he has, but he did make it clear that he considered the children of nannies and other domestic workers as his siblings too. This is important, because it means that he was exposed to African music from a very early age. He also attended the University of the Witwatersrand, known as an extremely liberal and forward-thinking university in apartheid-times. It was during his time as an undergraduate student that he became involved in music, mostly as a percussionist and a composer. The University of the Witwatersrand would hold yearly concerts entitled “Free Peoples’ Concert.” Scherzinger became involved with these concerts as well, which he describes as a “resistance through aesthetics movement.” These encounters were his first exposure to

township jazz, and it exposed him to mbira-playing as well. The mbira turned out to be a major point of resonance for him; its influence is quite conspicuous in most of his compositions.

After completing his undergraduate studies in the late 1980s, Scherzinger moved to East Berlin and teamed up with a former fellow student from Johannesburg. They played on the streets of Berlin to earn extra cash, but these times were significant in that they provided an opportunity for Scherzinger to try out his compositional ideas. They attempted to africanize European music: they would take a Bach fugue, for example, separate the voices, transpose them so that they are in the same range, and then interlock them in the manner of Zimbabwean mbira music. So, instead of playing the voices simultaneously, they would interlock, i.e. playing in each other’s spaces to form a continuous line.\textsuperscript{101} Scherzinger describes this beautifully in a recent article:

> When two mbiras are played together the different paths they take (sometimes referred to as kushaura and kutsinhura parts) are in an interlocking relationship with one another. One player sounds in the silence of the other, or one player sounds one pulse after the other, thus forming figures of intricacy…\textsuperscript{102}

Scherzinger is also interested in mathematical properties of African harmonies; a research area he believes is under-researched and ignored. Most scholarly discourse focuses on the rhythmic properties of African music, an aspect that many composers, such as Steve Reich have also singled out in their work. Scherzinger has studied the symmetry and near-symmetry of African harmony, which he believes is crucial in the African aesthetic. This also ties in with his description of the “phantom third voice,” an effect in African music whereby an unwritten or unplayed voice becomes audible due to rhythmic complexity and harmonic practices. He discusses this phenomenon in detail in his article “Temporal Geometries of an African Music: A Preliminary Sketch.”\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{101} Martin Scherzinger, telephone interview by author, 23 April 2011, minidisc recording.


\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
Lately, Scherzinger has become more interested in a compositional technique he calls “illusionist paraphrases,” where he tries to “become” another composer. He does not make use of quotations, but imitates another composer by inventing his own melodies. An example of such a piece is his “Five Illusionist Paraphrases” for two percussionists.
2.8 Robert Fokkens (b. 1975)

2.8.1 Biography

Robert Fokkens was born in Port Elizabeth, South Africa in 1975. He began to play the violin at age nine and went on to study at the University of Cape Town with well-known South African violinist Jürgen Schwietering. He obtained his Bachelor of Music degree in 1998 from the University of Cape Town, and in 2001 he completed his Master of Music degree at the Royal Academy of Music in London, United Kingdom, an institution from which he also received the Manson Fellowship. During his student years, 1995-2001, he attended master classes in conducting from the likes of Bernhard Güller, Jorge Mester and Patrick Russil. In 2007 Fokkens graduated from the University of Southampton with a doctoral degree in composition where he studied with Michael Finnissy.  

Robert Fokkens has received several scholarships and prizes, such as the South African Music Rights Organization Undergraduate Bursary, as well their Overseas Scholarship for Composers. The latter scholarship was renewed three times. He also received a National Arts Council of South Africa award. While in the United Kingdom he was also awarded several bursaries: from the Overseas Research Countess of Munster Musical Trust, the Royal Academy of Music and the University of Southampton Major Studentship for doctoral studies.  

He has also attended master classes with composers such as George Crumb, Mauricio Kagel, Thomas Ades and Paul Ruders. Fokkens currently makes his home in the United Kingdom and lectures in composition and academic music studies in the junior department at the Trinity College of Music. Since 2008 Robert Fokkens has been vice president of New Music South Africa, a section of the ISCM (International Society for Contemporary Music).  

2.8.2 Compositional Style

Fokkens mentions a broad range of musical styles that have influenced him and shaped his compositions; most of which are drawn from non-classical music: traditional Xhosa music, electronica and techno dance music, jazz, folk music of the Mediterranean regions and classical

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105. Robert Fokkens, e-mail message to author, 9 July 2010.
music as a whole. Of the latter he regards Stravinsky, Bartok, Satie, Ligeti, Berio, Cage, Feldman, Reich and Adams as the most influential composers on his own style.\textsuperscript{106}

Fokkens regards himself fortunate in having had the opportunity to attend African Music classes while he was an undergraduate student at the University of Cape Town in the 1990s. His lecturers for the course were Dr. Deirdre Hansen and Dizu Plaatjies, and he credits Plaatjies in particular for inspiring him as a composer. Fokkens’ interest was first aroused when he heard a concert presented by Plaatjies that featured the famous Xhosa bow-player Madosini. Xhosa bow music has provided Fokkens with a compositional technique since 2004. While he does not imitate Xhosa bow music, he does draw on its other technical aspects, such as the pitch system, its cyclic nature, as well as some textural, melodic and rhythmic features. Fokkens uses all of these elements in the context of the other diverse influences on his music.\textsuperscript{107} He finds his “post-colonial” experience as a young man growing up as a classical musician in Africa very fascinating, and describes it as a potent driving force in his work.\textsuperscript{108}

Although Fokkens feels somewhat isolated from the South African classical music scene, he views his stay in the United Kingdom as beneficial to his career as a composer. He believes that being abroad has aided his understanding and knowledge of contemporary music and culture. He also feels that he has been able to develop more freely in many ways, as the strong culture of contemporary music in the United Kingdom has allowed him to experiment in an uninhibited fashion that would not have been possible in the current cultural climate in South Africa.\textsuperscript{109} He recently became the vice president of New Music South Africa, a position that will likely bolster his musical ties to South Africa and aid in the dissemination of his music in that country.

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106. Robert Fokkens, e-mail message to author, 19 August 2010.
108. Robert Fokkens, e-mail message to author, 19 August 2010.
109. Ibid.
\end{flushright}
2.9  **Bongani Ndodana-Breen (b. 1975)**

2.9.1  **Biography**

Born in Queenstown, South Africa, Bongani Ndodana-Breen is one of South Africa’s younger generation of composers. He received his first musical educational while still at school at St. Andrews College in Grahamstown, where his first compositions were also written and performed. His teenage compositions were for the chapel choir and other ensembles at the school. He won a bursary from the South African Music Rights Organization to attend Rhodes University in Grahamstown, where he received Bachelor of Music degree. He then won another bursary, this time from the Foundation for the Creative Arts, to study composition in Stellenbosch with the prominent South African composer, Roelof Temmingh. In 1998 he won the prestigious Standard Bank Young Artist Award for Music in South Africa.

Ndodana-Breen emigrated to Canada in 1999, where he founded and directed *Ensemble Noir*, which was renamed *Musicanoir* in 2005. This was a Toronto-based contemporary music ensemble that focused on a diverse cultural and artistic range of music, but with special consideration given to the music from Africa and its diaspora.

Ndodana-Breen has gained international prominence over the last decade. His works have been premiered by orchestras such as the Belgian National Orchestra, Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, Symphony Nova Scotia, New York City’s Vox Vocal Ensemble, Chicago’s Cube Ensemble, the Ossia Ensemble of the Eastman School of Music, the Choir of Wadham College at Oxford University, to name a few. In 2006 Ndodana-Breen became one of the youngest composers ever to be featured on the “Composer’s Portraits” series at the Miller Theatre, which is New York’s esteemed contemporary music venue.  

Bongani Ndodana-Breen’s music has been described as influenced by the lyricism and rhythms of Africa, and he has developed his own unique, eclectic approach to contemporary music. He is inspired by the sounds of his childhood – both those heard at his (African) home

110. This ensemble received some media coverage in June 2007, when Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, former wife of Nelson Mandela and subject of Ndodana-Breen’s *Passion of Winnie*, was refused a visa to travel to Canada to attend the premiere of the work.

and those he heard while attending private school. There are many layered voices in his works, some of which are real and some of which are imagined African folk song motifs.  

2.9.2 Compositional Style

As a black South African, Ndodana-Breen was fortunate enough to attend private schools in South Africa. Private schools were exempt from having to follow the segregation rules imposed by the apartheid regime on regular public schools. However, Ndodana-Breen found himself the only black student in a school that focused on European music. This caused some inner tension, and even at a young age he wished to incorporate traditional African music into his compositions. He explains that he is now more frequently drawn towards an African aesthetic within a genre of music (contemporary Art Music) that is filled with European conventions. This appears as a cultural paradox to Ndodana-Breen, one that necessitates a new musical language. By trusting his “inner ear” and musical instinct, he able to draw on a greater reserve of musical concepts. He draws the two paradoxical musical influences together to form a hybrid musical product that is easier to understand for the listener. He regards it as the mirror of the society in which he lives. Furthermore, reviewers, critics and audiences have described Ndodana-Breen’s music as a connection between his geographic origins and his musical objectives. Bernard Holland of the New York Times wrote that

Ndodana’s delicately-made music…has a lot to teach the Western wizards of metric modulation and layered rhythms about grace and balance. He reminds us that most of our notions about musical motion in the last century came in their roundabout way from Africa or Southeast Asia in the first place, and that Africans tend to do it better than we do.

Ndodana-Breen’s subtle motivic development, frequently accomplished by simultaneously unfolding meters, is characteristic of his writing. For instance, in Sons of the


*Great Tree,* the strings have a walking rhythm in binary time against a ternary rhythm in the rattles. Harmonically, his writing tends to be organized around limited pitch collections that are frequently gently interrupted for contrast. Transformation is achieved by repetitions, some of which are unmodified, but the majority display a gradual change. Ndodana-Breen’s unique blend of Europe and Africa is described by Scherzinger as “…less a new African music than an African new music.”

Conclusion

The composers in this chapter have been ordered by year of birth, mainly to show chronology. One becomes aware of how the composers’ compositional methods have evolved by reading through their biographies. For example, Kevin Volans, the oldest composer, was involved in groundbreaking work. Until the emergence of Volans, composers had mainly used African melodies as themes for sets of variations, or similar compositions. This is what Peter Klatzow has termed ‘exoticism’. Volans, by contrast, was more interested in exploring African music-making techniques. He has since abandoned notions of composing in this style and probably has no plans to do so in the future.

By contrast, Michael Blake, a contemporary of Volans, states that he has always composed in an African style. It is, however, possible to divide his work to date into two periods: the works of the first period date from his time in the United Kingdom, while the works from his second period are those composed after his return to South Africa in the late 1990s. These two periods roughly overlap with the end of apartheid. His earlier works are more overtly Africa: he transcribed African melodies and their use in his compositions was evident and recognizable. In his later period the references to African music are not quite so literal. Now, he says, he only deals with one parameter, such as rhythm, at a time in his compositions. Blake has also taken on the role of mentoring younger South African composers, and one of his most influential actions to date has been the introduction of the *uhadi* in workshops he offers to composers. Here, interaction amongst both black and white South African musicians and composers is fostered. These workshops have had an influence on Robert Fokkens, one of the younger generation of composers mentioned in this document.

One cannot particularly trace any big developments that mirror social changes in the music of Hofmeyr, as he does not believe that music should be the bearer of political messages. He prefers to borrow across cultural borders when he feels like doing so, not because someone asks him to do so. This does not mean that Hofmeyr is not a political person: he left South Africa to live abroad for ten years, mainly because he did not want to serve in a military to fight

116. See page 10.
117. See page 30.
for a government whose policies he abhorred. He only returned once apartheid was in the process of being dismantled. He is, however, knowledgeable about African music and can apply certain techniques skilfully when necessary.

Isak Roux and Martin Scherzinger are composers who have dabbled in cross-cultural music from an early age, so that while their compositional styles have become more refined with age, the influences in their music have remained the same. Roux reports that what has changed, though, is an increased interest in his music since the end of apartheid. Huyssen, Ndodana-Breen and Fokkens are younger composers who have been exposed to cross-cultural borrowing for most of their lives, and this is what distinguishes them from some of the older composers. The younger ones may lead the way with their own respective styles, but their works are not as controversial as Volans’ works were thirty years ago.

Black African composers are also under-represented in this document and there are several possible reasons for this deficiency. Firstly, few black African composers write instrumental music, as they are generally more familiar with the choral genre. Secondly, the education system, while it has improved since the early 1990s, has not yet produced the number of black African composers of art music to fully represent the demographic. Great strides have been made at all levels of the South African education system, but it will perhaps take another twenty years to produce a significant number of black African composers.

Therefore, the changes in South African art music that reflect social change can to a certain degree be detected within the compositional output of some composers, notably Volans and Blake, but the main developments are better mapped out from generation to generation. It has become far more acceptable, imperative even, to borrow musically across cultural lines.
Chapter Three

3.1 Indigenous Elements and Ethics

This chapter examines some stylistic characteristics of traditional music and various types of instruments found in sub-Saharan Africa. It is a broad approach, since there is a considerable range of music to be found on the African continent. Following a general overview I then consider how the characteristics of traditional African music have been incorporated into the compositions discussed in Chapter Four. Though the composers discussed throughout the dissertation are all South African, or have South African roots, they have not limited themselves to the traditional music of their immediate regions for inspiration. Generally, South African composers have considered any traditional music from sub-Saharan Africa as suitable for their purposes. For example, Michael Blake and Kevin Volans have looked further north towards Central Africa for musical ideas. They have drawn on indigenous musical practices in addition to those of Western Art Music. None of the composers have been extensively trained in indigenous music practices, but all have done research by consulting field recordings, while Hans Huyssen has attempted to learn some traditional instruments. Most composers have borrowed across ethnic lines, but Bongani Ndodana-Breen, who is a Zulu, has been exposed to indigenous music at home. He therefore does not borrow across ethnic lines. Lastly, consideration is also given to the potential ethical and legal difficulties that may arise when borrowing ideas from outside one’s own culture. Fusing musical styles can easily be viewed as cultural plundering, especially when there is the possibility of financial gain. South Africa has made great strides in addressing the inequalities of the past, but racial, financial and gender divides still exist. The focus of this section of the chapter is on the sometimes contradictory views currently held by scholars and researchers.

3.2 Characteristics of African Music

Traditional sub-Saharan African music displays some distinct features: its role in society, rhythm and pulse, scales, and formal organization. Olly Wilson adds to these characteristics the tendency to approach music-making in a percussive fashion, and an inclination to feature body
movements.\textsuperscript{118} John Miller Chernoff’s book, \textit{African Rhythm and African Sensibility} focuses on the social principles of African music. He stresses the importance of participation: “…the most fundamental aesthetic in Africa: without participation, there is no meaning.”\textsuperscript{119} Since some of these characteristics apply to Western classical music as well, any differences in approach between the African and Western traditions are herein clarified.

J.H. Kwabena Nketia states that music in traditional societies in Africa is predominantly a social activity.\textsuperscript{120} Public performances of music are commonly associated with weddings, funerals, initiations, celebrations, work, such as grinding maize, cleaning, tilling the fields, spiritual rituals, and also purely for enjoyment. Song was and still is a medium of political expression in contemporary African society.\textsuperscript{121} It became customary in Zambia in the 1950s and Zimbabwe in the 1970s to express ideas of protest in song. What could not be stated in public became acceptable when conveyed through song. Such songs were helpful in effecting change in South African in the 1980s.\textsuperscript{122} African societies tend to place more emphasis on group musical activities than on solo ones. As argued by Nketia, such group musical activities have the capacity to involve all members of a society, which in turn strengthens social bonds.\textsuperscript{123} This is an important contrast to Western Art Music, which tends to emphasize talented individuals. Another important distinction is that, where Romantic Ideals in Western Art Music emphasize music as autonomous art, many African musical practices serve particular utilitarian functions. For example, distance can be measured in how many times a walking song is sung; talking drums aid in the transmission of messages, and work songs keep workers working in a rhythm which aids productivity.

\begin{enumerate}
  \item \textsuperscript{120} J. H. Kwabena Nketia, \textit{The Music of Africa} (London: Gollancz, 1975), 21.
  \item \textsuperscript{123} Nketia, \textit{The Music of Africa}, 22-24.
\end{enumerate}
When non-Africans discuss the most striking aspects of the music of Africa, they commonly mention “rhythm.” To be sure, rhythm is a distinctive characteristic of African music, with its varied approaches to musical time organization, and multi-layered, interrelated rhythms. According to Nketia, there appears to be a connection between an emphasis on complex rhythms and the variety of percussive instruments found in Africa. Many researchers focus on the “beat” in African music, but what is it, exactly? To explain this, a distinction must be made between pulses and beats. Alan P. Merriam deduced that researchers have traditionally assumed that African rhythm is based on a framework of equal pulses. Stone believes that Merriam is at least partially correct in that we, as Westerners, assume that a pulse is the smallest unit that occurs in a regular fashion. So, if we assume that both indigenous African music and Western Art Music operate on two levels – the pulse and the beat – a distinction can be observed in the spacing of pulses in the two traditions. In Western Art Music the beat consists of equally spaced pulses, while in African music it is organized into irregularly spaced pulses. African rhythm, in contrast to Western rhythmic organization, often emphasizes an additive approach rather than a divisive one. Additive rhythm is comprised of beats that are not necessarily equal in length. A typical double-bell pattern from West Africa, which is sometimes referred to as the timekeeper by researchers such as Nketia and James Koetting, is an example of beats of unequal length, as shown in the table below. The term “double bell” refers to a double-pronged bell used by the southern Ewe people in Ghana to beat this and similar patterns.

124. Ibid., 24.


Table 1 Beats and Pulses\textsuperscript{127}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Double Bell</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beats</td>
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<td>Pulses</td>
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<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In line one only, \(X\) denotes sound production, e.g. one percussive stroke.

So, the grouping can also be described as 2+2+3+2+3. Musicologists and ethnomusicologists have recognized for a long time that the use of Western musical notation and terminology is an inadequate means of describing and transcribing traditional African music.\textsuperscript{128}

While it is not ideal to represent traditional African music in Western musical notation, the following example does help understand what the Double Bell Pattern (Line one above) actually sounds like:

\textbf{Figure 1 Double Bell Pattern}

Richard Waterman concluded that African musicians constantly feel pulses that are equally spaced, even though the beats may not be equally spaced.\textsuperscript{129} To illustrate, the pulse in Figure One is defined as an eighth note. An analogy may be found in Western Classical music tradition, whereby musicians mentally subdivide every beat, especially when there are changes of meter, for example from 3/8 to 2/4. While this is a linear concept of rhythm, it does reveal the importance of what happens in the minds of the listeners and performers.\textsuperscript{130}


\textsuperscript{128} See Serwadda and Pantaleoni, Akpabot, Kubik, Tracey, Agawu, and others.


\textsuperscript{130} Stone, 140.
Another key difference between traditional African music and Western Art Music lies in the importance attached to various building blocks of music, such as melody, harmony and rhythm. All three elements are present in both genres, but while rhythm is the most important element in traditional African music, in Western classical music it is the harmony and melody that are supreme.

Just as Western musical notation has been inadequate with respect to African rhythms, so too does it create problems for pitch. When drawing on terminology from Western music to describe African scales, researchers such as Hugh Tracey only make reference to the number of notes in African scales, not their pitches. For example, while an African pentatonic scale does consist of five pitches, the African systems of intonation are entirely different than, and separate from the ones in use in Western music. There are, in fact, regional differences of intonation as well, so terms such as pentatonic, heptatonic and the like can only be applied generally. Hugh Tracey also points out that a study of African scales expressed in terms of Western intervals is pointless, since only the interval of a true octave exists in indigenous African music. The regional differences in African intonation systems were identified by researchers such as Gerhard Kubik and Hugh Tracey. As early as 1958 Hugh Tracey remarked on the misconception amongst scholars of the time that the African intonation system was an imperfect version of the Western one. Therefore, the reader should not assume any relationship between Western musical scales and scales found in traditional African music.

Ethnomusicologists have identified several scales in use by African musicians. In his article, “Towards an Assessment of African Scales,” Hugh Tracey categorizes African ethnic groups according to their scale preferences. For example, the Chopi and Ndebele use mainly pentatonic scales; the Tonga and Tswana use hexatonic scales, and the Sena prefer heptatonic scales. He has also found variances in intonation between the ethnic groups.

132. Ibid., 19.
133. Ibid., 17-8.
Traditional African music can be homophonic (mainly in African music south of the Sahara), or polyphonic. All voices are equal, regardless of whether the music is homophonic or polyphonic. Kazarow\textsuperscript{135} lists several techniques for creating polyphonic music that include: melodic ostinato where one person sings or plays a melody, while another sings or plays a different one (call and response); polyphony produced by the hocket technique where two or more parts combine to form a single line; and singing or playing parallel thirds, fourths and fifths. Traditional African music is not defined by intervallic relationships, but according to Lazarus Ekwueme, the vertical alignment of tones does create incidental harmony.\textsuperscript{136}

Repetition is also an important characteristic of African music in that it creates a sense of unity throughout a work. Repetition in African music does not mean that each repetition is exactly the same as the previous one. Typically, African musical form is based on a short line, or pair of lines that is repeated and varied many times. Entrances may be staggered differently each time, so that the resulting musical line is always different.\textsuperscript{137} Repetition in traditional African music is seen as vital, according to Chernoff. Repetition is important in emphasizing the drum language and “…is a corollary to the notion of a rhythmic phrase.”\textsuperscript{138} A repeated rhythmic phrase provides a firm base for other changing rhythms around it.\textsuperscript{139}

For the purposes of this dissertation, the most prominent features of traditional African music are the prevalence of pentatonic scales, strong rhythms, antiphonal singing, call and response patterns, repetition, and the adherence of the melody to speech patterns. This does not mean that other common features in indigenous African music, such as four-part music and other harmonic devices found in certain parts of Africa, are not important; they simply are not present in the music for flute discussed in this dissertation.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{138} Chernoff, 111.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
3.3 African Instruments

Africa is a big continent with a wide variety of instruments, but there is a distinct difference between North African and sub-Saharan music. It is impossible to discuss all sub-Saharan musical instruments here, even in general terms. Therefore, the focus will be on a select few instruments. A number of composers whose works are discussed in this dissertation have drawn on the sounds of traditional African instruments in their works, and those are the instruments discussed here.

Robert Fokkens has been inspired by the southern African musical bow, uhadi, in recent years. The musical bow is the most common string instrument in southern Africa. African string instruments are classified as chordophones under the Hornbostel and Sachs system, but there are many ways that a sound can be produced on these instruments. They are generally bowed (umrhube, segankure, inkinge), plucked (tshihwana), struck (uhadi, umakhweyana, xitende), and scraped (xizambi), but unlike traditional Western instruments, they can also be blown (lesiba).

Musical bows are common among the Nguni and Sotho people of South Africa, but historians believe that they originated with the Khoisan people, the early inhabitants of South Africa. There is some speculation that all musical bows in Africa are derived from the hunting bow. Henry Balfour pointed out that “writers of all ages have drawn attention to the musical note emitted by the bow-string when released in shooting, and dwell upon the delight which it afforded the archer’s ear.” Hunters also realized that tapping the string of the bow with an arrow produced a sound. The hunting bow serves a double function in many African cultures; it is not only used for hunting, but for making music as well. All musical bows have a resonator in the form of a hollowed-out gourd, or even the human mouth. The curve in the bow also varies significantly across the southern part of the continent: it can range from a slight


141. Ibid., 239.


arc to a u-shaped bend. Traditionally, natural fibres were used for the string – from ox sinew, hide and tail hair to plant-based strings, such as sisal or palm fronds. It is currently more common to find nylon or wire strings on these instruments rather than the animal- or plant-based strings.¹⁴⁴

All musical bows have at least two fundamentals: the note produced by an open string and one or more notes produced by a stopped string. The difference in pitch is usually roughly a whole tone, although in some traditions it can be approximately a semitone (Zulu) or a minor third (Tsonga). The Zulu umakhweyana and Tsonga xitende each have three fundamentals, while the Venda tshihwana has four fundamentals. Specific overtones are achieved or emphasized by changing the vowel sound for the mouth-amplified bow, or by moving the instrument away from the performer’s body for the uhadi musical bow.

Kevin Volans, Isak Roux, and to a lesser extent, Michael Blake, have been influenced by African pipe music and the related hocket technique. Blake alludes to the influence of Central African pygmy music, but Volans specifically identifies the hindewho and its performance practice as an influence on Walking Song. The hindewho is a whistle-like instrument played by the Babenzele pygmies who live in the equatorial forests of Guinea. The term hindewho is onomatopoeic, because it imitates the effect produced by the alternation of sung and blown notes. These instruments are typically fashioned from the hollow base stems of a bamboo plant, and are seven to eight centimetres in length. The sound is produced by blowing across the top of the bamboo stem – similar to the modern flute embouchure. The pitch of the hindewho is constant and determines the range of the melody around it. The sounds of the hindewho alternate with the yodeling sounds of the voice. The latter makes use of disjointed intervals, mostly octaves, sixths, fifths and fourths.¹⁴⁵

In Pipe Dance (Sketches) Roux also vaguely refers to southern African panpipe ensembles. Flutes made of reeds were among the first instruments described by European visitors to southern Africa. In 1497 Vasco da Gama reported that he was welcomed in the Cape

¹⁴⁴. Ibid., 18.

of Good Hope by a group of San performing in an ensemble of four to five reed flutes. The Pedi use reeds and bones to make little whistles that they call lengwane. With the exception of the Pedi, there is no use for sets of panflute-like instruments. The Venda, Tswana and Sotho, do however make use of stopped flutes, but each player is responsible for only one note. Simple side-blown flutes that are stopped at one end are found amongst the Zulu people and are called umtshingo. These are only used for harvest celebrations. Double-stopped flutes are found amongst the Venda, Tsonga and Swazi ethnic groups.

Becky Steltzner is influenced by a more modern instrument, the pennywhistle, in Hambani Kakuhle Kwela. Pennywhistles have no antecedents in indigenous Africa music, but were common instruments used for the Johannesburg township jazz in the 1950s known as kwela. Hohner, a German instrument manufacturer, collected samples in Johannesburg and then proceeded to produce copies on a large scale for the South African market. The German pennywhistles came in various keys. Kwela musicians had an embouchure that differed significantly from that of other pennywhistle players: the whistle was rotated at an angle of forty-five degrees before being pushed deeply into the right cheek. Such an embouchure permitted a fuller sound and a louder volume.

Roux mentions the influence of Chopi xylophone music in the second half of Pipe Dance. There are two varieties of African xylophones: one with unattached keys and another with fixed keys. The best-known examples of African xylophone music may be found in the xylophone orchestras of the Chopi people in Mozambique, who play in groups of between five and thirty men on timbila (mbila – singular). The timbila are made in five sizes and are carefully tuned to cover four octaves. A hard wood, such as sneezewood is used to make the slats, which are then attached to a wooden frame. Hollowed-out gourds, which act as resonators, are also carefully tuned and then attached below the slats.

146. Funso S. Afolayan, Culture and Customs of South Africa (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2004), 245.


Roux also mentions the influence of Ugandan harps in *Azande (Sketches)*. Harps have existed in Africa for at least 5000 years and there are approximately 150 varieties to be found on African continent. However, in sub-Saharan Africa, the harp does not seem to have existed south of the equator. Of the twenty-five ethnic groups found in Uganda, twelve view the harp, also known as *kundi*, as their “national” instrument.\(^{149}\) Gerhard Kubik has done extensive research on Ugandan harp music. He comes to the conclusion that Ugandan harps are roughly tuned to the pitches E, D, C, A, G. Note that these are in descending order, because this is the way that the Azande conceive of the scale. Most Ugandan harp music has a vocal component to it, usually duplicating one of the hands. One hand usually has a rhythmic pattern, which consists of two or three notes.\(^{150}\) It is this rhythmic pattern, together with the vocal line, that Roux has chosen to imitate.

Martin Scherzinger has extensively studied the music of the *mbira dza vadzimu*, an example of a lamellophone. Lamellophones only developed in sub-Saharan Africa.\(^{151}\) The *mbira* is one of the most popular instruments across Africa. The most common type is a handheld melodic instrument, which consists of a series of wooden or metal strips organized on a flat sounding board and placed on a resonator. From this basic design, many others have developed. An *mbira* may have between one and three manuals, each of which might have between five and twenty keys. There is no consensus on the African continent on how to tune an *mbira*, as each community has developed its own scale system. The ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey has done extensive research on the tuning of *mbira*, and he has come to the conclusion that most of these instruments are tuned to a pentatonic, hexatonic or heptatonic scale. The tuning process takes into account both the fundamentals, as well the harmonics of a scale.\(^{152}\)

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3.4  A summary of the African influences on the works discussed in Chapter Four

In the 1970s South African Art Music composition experienced a shift in focus: composers began to question the longstanding Eurocentric focus of their music, and decided to search locally for musical inspiration. These changes were probably motivated by personal circumstances, but composers must have been aware of the effects of apartheid and the political unrest it caused. For example, the Soweto protests of 1976, during which black teenagers expressed their objection to the use of Afrikaans as a language of instruction, started peacefully, but ended violently. The tragedy struck a chord with a large number of people in South Africa. Many South Africans, including composers and artists, began to question the practices of the government. By using traditional African elements in their compositions, composers were able to protest the narrow world view held by the government. Turning to traditional African music also provided the composers with a fresh source of inspiration. Initially, those composers who were interested in using non-Western music in their works, simply transcribed and incorporated themes from traditional African music into their compositions, often disguising themes with Western harmony and orchestration. Since the 1970s interest in traditional African music has increased, with most contemporary composers immersing themselves in the various traditional musical styles that abound in the region. A genuine interest in traditional African music now involves studying the structure of the music, its cyclic nature, its interlocking techniques, and its scales and tuning. It also involves studying the instruments, which in some cases means learning to play them. In most early examples of African Art Music incorporating indigenous African music, the original context and meaning do not feature at all. This is still mostly the case for newer compositions, but contemporary composers such Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph and Meki Nzewi are more cognizant of the context of African music performance. The compositions are still presented on a stage, but the communal aspect of traditional African music-making is more frequently observed. During the course of identifying and analysing the African musical elements found in the works discussed in this dissertation, it became possible to identify various patterns of cross-cultural borrowing. I identified four categories (the labels are my own): overt

cross-cultural borrowing, borrowing guided by African music-making principles, African paraphrasing, and inspirational landscape painting.

Overt cross-cultural borrowing is the most explicit form of cross-cultural borrowing and can be further divided into two subcategories: Firstly, there is the transcription of an African melody, such as in Hans Huyssen’s *The Cattle Have Gone Astray* for flute, cello and piano. Huyssen uses a direct transcription of a herding song, called *Ngororombe*. He has lifted the melody directly from a recording made by Andrew Tracey in Zimbabwe in 1972 for the “Music of Africa” series – a series of anthropological recordings of traditional African music. He quotes the melody in the flute part at the very end of the work, while only alluding to it with fragments of the melody at the beginning of the piece. The second subcategory uses either field recordings in combination with Western instruments during a live performance (Huyssen - Kleines Weltporät/Portrait of the World), as well as live performance of traditional African instruments, as heard in *Ciacona and Tshikona* (Huyssen), which employs trumpets made of antelope horns. Huyssen is influenced considerably by the social aspect of African music-making. He specifically chose the *Tchikona*, as it is the Venda national dance - and dancing is an extremely important aspect of communal music. John Blacking mentions that for the Venda the *Tchikona* is a “time when people rush to the scene of a dance and leave their pots to boil over,” or “*Tchikona* makes old men throw away their sticks and dance.”

*Ciacona and Tshikona* was composed for the opening of the 2007 Miagi Festival in South Africa. The festival is dedicated to fostering inter-ethnic relations; it offers a platform for inter-cultural dialogue and aims to bring together artists and audiences that might not meet under different circumstances. Huyssen was very conscious of the worlds he was trying to bring together with this composition: the Western concert-going experience with its passive audience and the African form of musical expression with its embedded context of a social occasion and inclusive participation. He transcribed the *Tchikona* for orchestra, but also involved Venda dancers and instrumentalists in the live performance.

In his article, “Pygmy POP. A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis,” Steven Feld highlights the problematic secondary use of field recordings. These recordings were made only

for the use of ethnomusicologists and not for the widespread dissemination in the popular music
genre, something that he feels is inappropriate. He discusses Herbie Hancock’s use of pygmy
music in “Watermelon Man,” which was subsequently used by Madonna in her song
“Sanctuary.” He cites the remarkable popularity of Colin Turnbull’s recording, The Forest
People, and Simha Arom’s Centrafrique Anthologie de la Musique des Pygmées Aka in the pop
genre. 155

The second group of works are those where composition is guided by African music-making
principles. This category appears to be the most widely applied use of traditional African music
in Western Art Music, likely because it allows the composer to successfully integrate elements
of both types of music. Composers in this category include Robert Fokkens, Hendrik Hofmeyr,
Bongani Ndodana-Breen, and Isak Roux. This type of music neither quotes traditional African
music in a literal fashion, nor is it so vague as to be termed an approximation. Composers in this
category have generally chosen at least one musical parameter from traditional African music.
Principles that appear most influential in these composers' works are repetition, use of primary
chord harmony, rhythmic structures, pentatonic scales, hocket, etcetera. Some brief examples of
how each of these manifest in the works will be discussed below.

Many of the pieces discussed in Chapter Four use (constant) repetition of motifs and
melodies, but just as repetition in African music is not always exact each time a phrase is heard,
the composers of these works have constantly modified or changed each repetition. For
example, motifs are not always repeated exactly, as there may be a slight variation in the length
of the motif, or one or two notes might have been changed. Motifs that are combined may be of
different lengths, so that each entry of a motif combines differently than the previous time,
which is somewhat reminiscent of twentieth century serialism. Examples of this technique can
be found in Honey Gathering Song by Michael Blake, Desert Dance (Four African Scenes) by
Isak Roux, Whistle of the Circle Movement by Martin Scherzinger, and Walking Song by Kevin
Volans. Hendrik Hofmeyr applies the Double Bell Pattern mentioned earlier in this chapter in
his solo flute work Marimba.

155. Steven Feld, “Pygmy Pop. A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis,” Yearbook for Traditional Music,
Becky Steltzner has elected to use a typical four-chord harmonic progression from Kwela music for Hambani Kakuhle Kwela. Kwela music typically uses primary chords over which a distinctive melody is constantly changed and improvised. Hambani Kakuhle Kwela uses the chords I, IV, I, V, all which are of course primary chords. Although Steltzner’s melody is original, it does have some of the characteristics of typical Kwela music: a very happy melody, with intervals that are neither big nor small, and mostly limited to notes of the underlying chords. All eighth notes are swung as is typical in jazz – it was African jazz, after all. Also, various repetitions of the theme include a walking bass-style progression in the bassoon and clarinet.

Scherzinger’s Whistle of the Circle Movement draws from traditional as well as more contemporary African music. The analysis of the composer’s work in Chapter Four identifies all occurrences of “other” music in Whistle of the Circle. From the traditional music of Africa, Scherzinger imitates the old pipe-and-voice music from Tete (Mozambique) and mbira dza vadzimu, music from Zimbabwe. He also alludes to more contemporary African music – the accordion music, pennywhistle songs and jazz of Johannesburg of the mid-twentieth century.

Since 2004 Robert Fokkens has been inspired by uhadi bow music, an inspiration that has manifested itself in many of his works since then. For example, in Inyoka Etshanini he has used only two fundamental tones and their harmonics as a basis for the violin and cello parts of this composition. The uhadi bow can only produce two tones: an open string and one stopped note, roughly a tone above the first. Furthermore, he uses a cycle of fourteen note durations interspersed with rests. While in this composition the same note length is applied to each note of each repetition, what distinguishes the repetitions from one another is the placement of rests. The rests follow no particular pattern, but their random placement is precisely what causes an otherwise exact repetition to be varied. Volans also plays with random placements of rests in his Walking Song. This sounds very much like Steve Reich’s approach to repetition, and although none of the composers, except for Michael Blake, cited his influence in their compositions during any interviews or in any literature, it is very likely that they are aware of his work.

156. Becky Steltzner, interview.
In measures thirteen to twenty of Hendrik Hofmeyr’s *Marimba* we encounter the West African Bell pattern. Hofmeyr’s version is somewhat disguised, because the solo flute plays two separate lines that intertwine to form one continuous phrase. He admits that it is not readily audible to the listener, but that he has applied the Double Bell pattern as a compositional technique.  

Roux’s *Azande* seems to straddle categories two and three. The composer describes the two notes in the left hand of the marimba that permeate the entire movement as typical of Ugandan harp music played by the *Azande*. The title, however, is the first clue to the musical content of the movement, as the *Azande* are an ethnic group in southern Uganda. Roux describes the flute line of this movement as mimicry of vocal lines of indigenous African music in general. He did not attempt to employ any specific African music technique or principle, but tried to imitate vocal lines instead.

In Bongani Ndodana-Breen’s *Visions* one can find examples of African paraphrasing, the third category of cross-cultural borrowing. In this work one can find a variety of pentatonic, hexatonic and even aeolian scales. The pentatonic scale, however, is the main harmonic component in *Visions* and, as discussed earlier in the chapter, it is also an important harmonic and melodic component in traditional African music. Hexatonic scales also frequently occur in African music, and further examples can be found in *Visions*, as well as in Volans’ *Walking Song* and Blake’s *Honey Gathering Song*. While the latter makes use of a hexatonic scale, by favouring only five notes of the scale it has the effect of a pentatonic scale. None of the scales mentioned here are typically African. They are merely used to mimic African melodies and any correlation is purely coincidental.

The popular African hocket technique can be found in Volans’ *Walking Song* and Roux’s *Pipe Dance* (a movement from *Sketches*). In both of these works we find examples of two lines of different sound colours forming one phrase. In the CD liner notes to a recording of *Walking Song*, Volans cites the interplay between the flute and harpsichord is reminiscent of the bamboo flutes of the Central African pygmies, who alternately play their flutes and sing notes of

157. Hendrik Hofmeyr, interview.
different pitches, to form one continuous line.\textsuperscript{158} In \textit{Pipe Dance} the flute plays both lines, but the two lines are delineated by the use of accents and a juxtaposition of octaves.\textsuperscript{159}

Similarly, Ndodana-Breen’s melodies in \textit{Visions} are not quotations of traditional melodies, but are intended to mimic them. By doing this, he tried to evoke certain places for the listener.\textsuperscript{160} This is the third type of Africa-inspired composition, since it relies on paraphrasing of “Africanisms.” While Blake’s \textit{Honey Gathering Song} would seem to fit into the category guided by African music-making principles because of the African compositional techniques that were employed, the composer is adamant that the work bears no reference to the music of the Central African pygmies. The title, which is also used in Central African music, is the only reference to music from that area. Hence it too is more properly an example of paraphrasing.

A fourth type of Africa-inspired composition bears no relation to any type of African music; instead this type of inspiration paints a picture of an African landscape, as Roux does in \textit{Weavers} and \textit{Mopani} (both movements from \textit{Sketches}), or \textit{Market Place Conversations} (a movement from \textit{Four African Scenes}). Giving a descriptive, perhaps even programmatic African-inspired title to their compositions was a very popular practice amongst South African composers in the first half of the twentieth century. Most often these titles depicted landscapes in particular parts of the country, and always demonstrate a composer’s sense of pride in and pleasure of the land of Africa. It must however be mentioned that this was generally the Africa as seen through the lens of a Caucasian individual.

\subsection*{3.5 On Musical Appropriation}

Over the last decade many scholars have raised concerns over cultural appropriation, and many of the issues have been examined from both ethical and legal perspectives. As Coleman, Coombe and MacArailt have pointed out, it is rather ironic that this awareness of cultural rights has also lead to increased sensitivity about possible stifling of creativity, censorship, and other

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159. Isak Roux, telephone interview.

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similar issues. The term “musical borrowing” has been used up to this point in the document, since it seems to be widely used by musicians and has a more benign connotation. There is, however, a fine line between musical borrowing and musical appropriation. Musical borrowing implies that there is an equal relationship between the borrower and the community from which the composer is borrowing. Musical appropriation suggests that the composer has gone a step further and “taken” from another community. Such action seems to suggest an assertion of power, and given historical power imbalances in many parts of the world, it could give rise to perceptions of affirming dominance. Some of the categories of cross-cultural borrowing outlined above may actually stray into the realm of appropriation. The cultural exchange expressed in inspirational landscape painting is clearly not an example of appropriation, since the composers are inspired by the African landscape, not the practices of the African people. However, there is still some meaning embedded in the landscape, especially regarding the question of land ownership. The meaning is not in the music, but has been reconfigured to represent the land, which, in many cases, was appropriated violently. The situation may be different in the overt cross-cultural borrowing category, depending on the power dynamics between the composer and the originating community. As will be seen later, the nature of the collaboration plays a role in determining power relations. Done thoughtfully and with consideration, collaboration can play an important role in ameliorating the damage caused by power imbalances.

3.5.1 **Ethical Concerns**

When examining musical appropriation in any context, but especially a South African one, it is imperative that one investigate the connection between cultural practice and power. In the last two or three decades these issues have been actively debated in literary, cultural, and music studies. The focus has been on issues of culture, race and empire, culminating in a theme of post-colonialism in the 1980s and 1990s. Timothy Taylor identifies three systems of domination from the seventeenth century to the present: colonialism, imperialism, and globalization. All three systems are essentially systems of power. In the first two systems the


power belonged to the social élites, but during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, power shifted to corporate entities.\footnote{Ibid.}

Music studies have for many years neglected important parts of post-colonial theory and criticism. However, precedents have been set in the literary world, beginning with the contributions of black nationalist intellectuals and liberation thinkers of the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, such as Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X and others. Of the late twentieth century, Edward Said’s \textit{Orientalism} is the seminal work in the field of post-colonial analysis. In this work Said analyses nineteenth-century European writings on non-European cultures, and in doing so, elucidates how colonialism operated and manifested itself in this literary era. Although Said’s book is a study of the “East,” which is the original meaning of the term, his ideas speak to colonialism and can be applied more broadly – to music, for instance. In the 1980s when other writers began to develop Said’s ideas, colonial discourse analysis became a part of literary theory and criticism. Studies of post-colonialism are important, because of the significance of culture and knowledge in the understanding of social and political power. Analysing music from a socio-cultural perspective illustrates how power is negotiated through cultural appropriation.\footnote{Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, “Introduction: On Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music,” in \textit{Western Music and its Others} (Berkely and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 2-3.}

Culture, including music, is not devoid of any political undertones. The purpose of postcolonial analysis is to put culture, and in this case, music, into a contextual perspective that takes into account longstanding consequences of colonial power. At its most effective it avoids the two extremes: “the racist conception of colonizers as civilizing agents and the colonized as beneficiaries” versus a reversal of these categories, which would view the colonized people as victims.\footnote{Born and Hesmondaulgh, 2-3.} In a chapter in “Western Music and its Others,” Georgina Born and David Hesmondalgh point out that postcolonial analysis has focused on “official” and “high” art discourses while neglecting to examine the role that popular culture has played in colonial systems. The implication is that popular culture too can support and, at times,
undermine these systems,\textsuperscript{166} thus lending urgency to more serious engagements by scholars in popular practice.

In general, music scholarship has lagged behind other disciplines where relationships between musical cultures, race and colonialism are concerned. Born and Hesmondalgh believe that music studies have avoided reflecting on the political facets of music, or indeed of music scholarship itself. An exception to this appears to be ethnomusicology, as it has always paid heed to how music represents a culture.\textsuperscript{167} This has had a positive effect on general musicology too, which has made strides in this direction too, particularly after the publication of Joseph Kerman’s monograph, “Contemplating Music.”\textsuperscript{168} Musical appropriation and its related problems are perhaps best addressed by scholars working in popular music and ethnomusicology, with the latter group being particularly concerned about the dissemination of popular music throughout the world. Timothy D. Taylor discusses globalization as a domination system his book \textit{Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World}. The distribution of musical styles and instruments across the globe is nothing new, as the movement and migration of people has been occurring for centuries. Migration has increased substantially during the twentieth century, with the result that multi-national music corporations have sought out and found new markets worldwide.\textsuperscript{169} Cultural appropriation has been particularly strongly debated where African American music is concerned, perhaps because it and other musics from the African diaspora have been so popular across the rest of the world. The debate centers around cultural identity and property, but the arguments are not as simple as “racist exploitation” of black music by white people for economic profit. Financial gain is an important aspect of domination, but it is not the only one.\textsuperscript{170}

\textsuperscript{166} Ibid., 6.
\textsuperscript{167} Ibid., 7-8.
\textsuperscript{169} Timothy D. Taylor, \textit{Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World}, 114.
There are two issues that rankle critics more than anything else. The first issue is that white musicians and listeners are perceived to have “diluted” black music, and the second is that the predominantly white recording industry has exploited black culture, and therefore its people. The second issue deals with power, prestige and financial gain – the perhaps justifiable argument is that white musician stars have generally received more attention and accolades than their black counterparts. For instance, Martin Scherzinger discusses the case of Juluka, a South African band formed in 1969 and headed by Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu, a member of the Zulu clan. Scherzinger points out that Clegg has frequently been criticized for his use of African music from South Africa, but not so Mchunu. He questions why Clegg, a white South African, would have had to obtain permission from the Zulu community to use their music, but his (equal) partner, Mchunu was not required to do so. Scherzinger, who studied law in South Africa, tends to focus on copyright issues and generally avoids any discussion of power relations. By contrast, Louise Meintjes’ article “Paul Simon’s Graceland, South Africa, and the Mediation of Musical Meaning,” deals critically with the concept of collaboration as a means of exerting power. She discusses how the collaboration is structured and how it is received by various audiences - whether they value or criticize this collaboration. Meintjes points out that Paul Simon deliberately refrained from making political statements with Graceland and in interviews afterwards. The lyrics of his compositions are also sufficiently vague so as to convey a sense of mutual cooperation between him and the African musicians. The musical (African) origins were aimed to appeal to Africans, while the “cleaning up” was aimed to appeal to white South Africans. However, Meintjes points out several inconsistencies that belie the projected image of equal collaboration, and, rather, point at exploitation: Paul Simon profited from the sale of the recording more than any other musician involved in its creation. While songs are credited on the album, it is Simon who holds copyright on it, and as a producer and songwriter, he had complete artistic control.171

Meintjes demonstrates how white South Africans were able to identify with Graceland since this album offered them a link to traditional African music, and it allowed them to legitimize their own identity as local. This was particularly important during the years of boycotts against South Africa, because by incorporating elements of traditional African music

into their own culture, white people were able to carve out a place for themselves as local South Africans and not as colonial outsiders. Before the success of “Graceland” some white South Africans may have been indifferent to indigenous South African music, but with its success they managed to gloss over history and align themselves with its success. Also, state supporters at the time, usually white people, were proud of Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s success on the international stage. Meintjes states and then demonstrates that a relationship had to be forged that allowed white people to support an ethnic group that undoubtedly did not support the state. This is accomplished by acknowledging Ladysmith Black Mambazo as cultural ambassadors; speaking of them as “our cultural ambassadors,” and by recognizing the ties that the group has to rural African traditions.  

Perhaps white South Africans were embarrassed by the boycotts against the country, or perhaps they were finally ready to begin the process of accepting black South Africans as equals. Either way, white South Africans were prepared to put history behind them and to support indigenous (South) African music. By aligning themselves with black African music during the cultural boycotts, white South African could be viewed as having appropriated the meaning and significance of this music as well. Finally, Meintjes points out that the significance of the social collaboration is ignored, while the musical collaboration is emphasized. This type of response has been mostly observed amongst white South Africans. Meintjes also describes listeners who consider the value of art as being intrinsically transcendent and independent of outside factors as presenting a typical bourgeois aesthetic principle. Critics of Graceland as a collaborative endeavour maintained that the project exploited Black South Africans while breaching the cultural boycott and serving the agenda of establishing legitimacy of cultural ownership for white South Africans.

As mentioned earlier, cultural appropriation in music has been most widely discussed in ethnomusicological and popular music circles, but the arguments have been equally applied to Art Music in South Africa. In his article “Gumboots to the Rescue,” Jürgen Bräuninger critically examines South African composers’ attempts at “musical reconciliation.” He specifically addresses the work of Kevin Volans, a composer whose work is discussed in Chapters Two and Four. Bräuninger regards Volans’ early works and the work of his contemporaries as failed

172. Ibid., 54.  
173. Ibid., 59-60.
attempts at reconciliation, musically speaking. He identifies three issues: a lack of attribution, the “ethics of borrowing” and the “artistic value” of the resultant musical work. The first concern – attribution – is complicated, because most South African composers do acknowledge their sources in program notes and CD liner notes, and at times in the sheet music itself. There is, however, no obligation placed on the performer to acknowledge this in any performance. Doing so, though, would be a goodwill gesture, especially when doing so would improve race relations. Furthermore, the practice of musical borrowing is not new: in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries the Turkish style became very popular, as can be seen in works by Mozart (Rondo alla Turca) and his contemporaries. Therefore, it is not the practice of borrowing that is new; rather, colonial history seems to play a role in the current politics surrounding this practice. At this point the question becomes more a legal one than an ethical one, as the rise of authorship as a cultural value has become more important in the West. Some legal issues will be discussed in detail later. Bräuninger believes that crediting a source moderates the debt, but it does not answer the question of ownership. He asks: “There is nothing wrong with fabricating orchestrations or arrangements of existing music, but is it legitimate to sell those as original compositions?” Since Bräuninger has referred to Volans’ string quartet “White Man Sleeps” in his article, he was presumably also referring to the commercial success this work eventually enjoyed when it was included in the Kronos Quartet’s recording Pieces of Africa. It seems that most of the debate focuses on the financial aspect, and in some instances the social value of traditional music, with the more prominent composers attracting most of the attention. Bräuninger believes that the originating source should be credited in a more prominent way; in fact, he even goes so far as to suggest a collaborative model of music making, one in which the individual is not paramount. This has already been done frequently in South Africa; for example Lungile Jacobs created the Xhosa choral music for Roelof Temmingh’s Enoch, Prophet of God (1995). Hans Huyssen has also experimented with similar collaboration. What needs to be examined in these and other works is the nature of the collaborations to determine how successful they were. This is a very subjective topic, but can we really say that such collaborations are equal yet? Somehow that is doubtful, since many South African Art Music composers are more prominent than their African counterparts and initiate most of the collaborations. This seems to indicate the presence of old attitudes on both sides. Indigenous

African music is not a concert-going tradition, which puts it on unequal footing when performed in such a context, but if every effort is made to ensure equal treatment of all participants, then progress has been made. Aspects to take into consideration are: equal contributions to the finished musical product, representation and acknowledgement in the house program, conduct on-stage, and of course, remuneration. The responsibility lies with all participants to ensure that this takes place. The question remains though: is equality in collaboration perhaps merely an ideal? In many cases it is a worthy endeavour, but an unattainable idea, if only because there are so many subjective opinions.

Bräuninger’s questioning of the artistic merits of Africa-inspired works is somewhat one-sided. He writes: “It is debatable as to whether there is any artistic value in re-orchestrating these pieces.”175 Adopting a rather condescending tone by describing certain composers’ works as “re-orchestrations,” he has taken on the role of artistic judge. Also, he is essentially proposing a form of musical censorship when he offers only two creative possibilities to composers of Africa-inspired works: cross-cultural collaboration (discussed above), or by stating that “…compositionally it would have been much more fruitful to add a new piece to the corpus of mbira or panpipe literature.”176 An argument can be made against such a proposition: white South African composers would have to spend years learning a new musical tradition, and even then, merits of such a composition as a truly indigenous African work might be debatable.

Other literature supports the idea that cultural (musical) appropriation is simply unethical. Steven Feld notes that composers and musicians who appropriate music from indigenous cultures profess deep respect and affection for the original music and the people creating it.177 He also expresses concern about the power and control that the recording companies have. These companies tend to promote a privileged international pop music class, and they have the power to sell recordings.178 Coleman, Coombe and MacArailt find it ironic

175. Ibid.
176. Ibid.
that those musicians who venture in new musical territories generally only focus on a small sample of indigenous music repertoire, which they find misrepresentative of indigenous music as a whole, caricaturing the music and its originating communities.\textsuperscript{179} Anthropologist Michael Brown also believes that appropriation is disrespectful of cultural values, especially since the originating community infrequently has the opportunity to agree to such actions.\textsuperscript{180}

Not all writers regard this musical fusion as threatening, but rather as opportunities for intercultural dialogue between ethnic groups. For example, Dick Hebdige and Simon Jones studied the effect of the Caribbean musical diaspora on white, working-class British youth, and concluded that its popularity was a sign of opposition to racism and state nationalisms.\textsuperscript{181} One of the positive effects was a campaign, “Rock Against Racism,” that began in 1976 and still exists today. The campaign consisted of concerts presented by rock, pop and reggae musicians to send a message against racism, a problem that arose with the emergence of white supremacy groups.\textsuperscript{182}

3.5.2 \textbf{Legal Concerns}

In general, copyright law seems to treat music as a commodity, which in many cultures it is not. It is not that we have to be concerned only about the music, i.e. the collection of sounds, but we also need to consider the meaning that many cultures attach to their music. Anthony Seeger begins his article “Traditional Music Ownership in a Commodified World” with a portrayal of an event. He describes the sounds, movements, drugs and intense personal experiences that can be observed in the participants. He asks whether it is a rave or an Amazonian Indian ceremony, because really, these two events do not seem so different from one another. On a surface level this may be true, but the meanings attached to the two events differ substantially. A rave is a party in a capitalist country where music is secular and commodified,

\textsuperscript{179} E. B. Coleman, R. J. Coombe, and F. MacArailt, “A Broken Record: Subjecting 'Music' to Cultural Rights,” 174-5.


while the culture and music of the Amazonian Indians is considered sacred. When outsiders appropriate the music of another culture and change its meaning, or use it in an inappropriate context, they risk offending the originating culture. Music means different things to different people and Seeger identifies these differences in approach to music as a fundamental problem in copyright.¹⁸³

Cultural appropriation has not only received attention over the last decade because of ethical concerns, but it has also been a domestic and international legal issue. Concern has mounted over the development of intellectual property rights and how they would smother creativity, produce unwanted censorship, and potentially curb the growth of the public domain. To approach this topic, the interpretation of ‘culture’ as advocated by Terry Eagleton will be used. According to him there is a direct correlation between the individual and the universal:

Culture is itself the spirit of humanity individuating itself in specific works; and its discourse links the individual and the universal, the quick of the self and the truth of humanity, without the mediation of the historically particular… What else is the artistic canon, a collection of irreducibly individual works which testify in their very uniqueness to the common spirit of humanity?¹⁸⁴

Coleman, Coombe and MacArailt find that Eagleton’s ideology of culture appropriately describes European intellectual property policies. The language that legitimizes intellectual property in these policies takes into account the unique contribution of the individual and places it into a more universal context; one that is applicable to all human civilization.¹⁸⁵ Geoffrey Galt Harpham goes further to suggest that this concept - one he believes to be flawed - is fundamental to European modernity. Although Europe considers itself to be enlightened, Harpham observes that there is a tendency by Europeans to view the aesthetic as independent of politics, rationality, economics, religion, and ethics. It causes something, in this case music, to


¹⁸⁵. E. B. Coleman, R. J. Coombe, and F. MacArailt, 180.
be viewed as autonomous and separate from historical, social and economic forces. This is exactly what happened to Paul Simon’s *Graceland* mentioned above. Those who viewed the album in a positive light were inclined to regard as a piece of art, nothing more, nothing less. What happened to *Graceland* should not be viewed as a unique situation. The power imbalances present in this collaboration would have existed even if South Africa had been a more liberated country. The passionate debates over *Graceland* might have been caused by a host of factors, such as the prominence of Paul Simon. His presence in South Africa during a period of upheaval – the boycotts and the civil unrest – also contributed to the infamy of this recording.

Other writers have also criticized current copyright law for being too Eurocentric; most of it focusing on origins of copyright law in European book publishing, or the signing of the Berne Convention of 1886186 and it various subsequent conferences.187 John Collins discusses the problem of global copyright protection in a European context in his article “The Problem of Oral Copyright: The Case of Ghana.”188 He states that the assumption that a piece of art or an intellectual idea is created by a single individual or a small number of individuals, is essentially a European one. Therefore, in such a scenario the creator or creators are easily identifiable, unlike in African ethnic groups, where music is a communal activity, for instance, which would render a European-based approach inappropriate. Simon Frith is also doubtful that copyright laws actually protect artists and their works from exploitation, but explains instead how the laws are used by multinational corporations for their own goals.189 So, the problem with European-based copyright law is that it was adequate for its time and place, but it has not kept pace with developments in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, nor has it ever been able to adapt to


188. The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was first held in Berne Switzerland in 1886, hence the name. Subsequent conventions in other cities, such as Paris, Berlin, Rome, and Stockholm, have made changes and revisions as they have become necessary. For example, the advent of the internet has presented numerous challenges, some of which are currently under debate.


many non-European cultures. Travelling has become cheaper and easier, and modern
technologies have made recording and dissemination simpler. We are now more exposed to
cultures that operate differently from the European model, but domestic and international laws
have not changed to reflect the cultural awareness described in the ethical section above.

Scherzinger, in his article “Music, Spirit Possession and the Copyright Law: Cross-
Cultural Comparisons and Strategic Speculations,” disputes that the copyright requirements of
the law are Eurocentric just because they were designed by and for a Western capitalist society.
His ideas fly in the face of Seeger’s statement about the meaning of music to different people.
Firstly, Scherzinger argues that many types of non-Western music are non-copyrightable for the
following reason: many sacred songs are created by ancient spirits or gods, with the humans
acting as ‘keepers’ of the song. Their main purpose is to accurately reproduce the song, not
necessarily to add anything new. For this reason, such music would not be considered original
under current copyright law.\footnote{Martin Scherzinger, “Music, Spirit Possession and the Copyright Law: Cross-Cultural Comparisons and Strategic Speculations,” \textit{Yearbook for Traditional Music} 31 (1999): 103.} The flaw in such reasoning is that, while one may not share the
same spiritual values, those of another culture should still be respected by outsiders. Sherylle
Mills, though, argues that this kind of situation where the laws are ‘indifferent’ to non-Western
such non-Western societies that practice such music-making have not traditionally been
commercially oriented either: “An ethos of ownership and profit-oriented business threatens to
invade a native ethos of profit-indifferent sharing.”\footnote{Martin Scherzinger, “Music, Spirit Possession and the Copyright Law: Cross-Cultural Comparisons and Strategic Speculations,” 104.} In essence, Scherzinger points out the
contradiction of trying to cherry-pick which traditions are going to remain and which ones will
be discarded, especially where financial compensation is concerned. However, he fails to take
into account the role that music plays in some cultures; that many do not view music as a
commodity, but as an essential part of their daily lives. Music may not be a commodity in one
culture, but that does not give others the right to appropriate it and change its meaning.
Different countries – mostly African – have advanced different models attempting to deal with copyright and intellectual property on home ground. The first type is a nationalist model, used by Senegal, Ghana and the German Democratic Republic before reunification. Senegalese law states that “all folklore shall belong originally to the national cultural heritage.”\(^{194}\) The problem with such a law is that it would not provide an equitable solution to cultural bearers, as the widespread corruption in Africa would preclude any likelihood of protection against exploitation, or a fair distribution of money. Again using Senegal as an example, the royalties are paid to the government and not to the individuals. While the government claims that royalty payments are made for “cultural and welfare purposes for the benefit of authors,”\(^{195}\) the language is sufficiently vague to provide the government with ample discretion to do with the funds as it pleases.

The second type of model is one that focuses on self-determination. In such a model, as tried by Brazil in recent years, funds generated through artistic pursuits go directly to the originating community. In Brazil such funds are administered by the “Fund for Indigenous Authorial Rights.” While Scherzinger favours such a model, he rightly asks how and what constitutes such an indigenous community. For example, are communities defined by language, geographically, musical style or politically?\(^{196}\) This task would be complicated even further, because many cultural groups are fluid and constantly changing; how to keep track of it all? Furthermore, if artists constantly borrow from each other, it would quickly become impossible to identify all originating artists they may be indebted to.

The question of whether there is adequate protection of cultural heritage is ongoing in aboriginal and indigenous communities around the world. To date not one of the above-mentioned models has been particularly effective, and these communities are facing a constant struggle to create non-indigenous awareness of the problem. The question is, can the laws be shaped to meet the requirements and unique characteristics inherent in the intellectual property of indigenous communities?

\(^{194}\) Sherylle Mills, 57.


\(^{196}\) Ibid., 117.
South Africa’s new parliament acted relatively swiftly when its Portfolio committee on Arts, Culture, Science, Language and Technology introduced indigenous knowledge as a topic of discussion in 1995. It acknowledged that indigenous knowledge systems should be an important component of science and technology policy. In 2004 the South African cabinet approved the indigenous systems policy. The definition of indigenous knowledge was wide in scope, which permitted the inclusion of creative expression, such as art and music. Julian Jonker points towards an undertone in some of these discussions, namely, to what extent indigenous knowledge should be protected. For instance, he mentions the view that all cultural expressions are part of a world heritage and should be available to all. However, his view is that the South African parliament is more concerned about protecting authenticity and ownership, meaning how does appropriation occur and how does it affect others’ perceptions of the originating community?\footnote{197}

There are still some obvious drawbacks for indigenous knowledge systems in the current bill. For example, the registration system is based upon a first-come-first-serve approach, one that could be abused. Furthermore, some communities may straddle more than one jurisdiction, such as along the country’s borders. Some indigenous knowledge does not belong to a single community, which complicates the identification of beneficiaries.\footnote{198} So, while the bill is in essence a good first initiative, it is still a work in progress. Meanwhile, what can individuals do?

Perhaps composers can become more aware of the pitfalls of cross-cultural borrowing by becoming more sensitive to the imbalances of power that developed during apartheid and that have not been addressed yet. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to bring such problems to the attention of appropriate government agencies that consider the fusion of artistic styles to be imperative for cultural integration. Many composers do not feel comfortable composing in a style that features cross-cultural borrowing, so that making such a practice optional would


prevent others from levelling accusations of Eurocentricity at them. The goal should never be to prevent cross-cultural collaboration from occurring, but neither should it take place in a contrived manner. Finally, as mentioned earlier, composers should proceed with sensitivity towards the sponsoring community, and they should ensure that all borrowings and collaborations are acknowledged fairly.
Chapter Four

A Discussion of Flute Works by South African Composers

Works presented here range from solo flute works to chamber music works requiring no more than five individuals. Each of the chosen works represents a tendency over the last three decades in South African Art Music to incorporate elements of traditional African music. Each work lists instrumentation requirements, duration and publisher details, providing information for flutists wishing to perform these works. Where possible, composers have also provided information about the origins of the works, and for whom they were composed. Each work has been analysed for content and presented in table format. The purpose was to identify the Africanisms first and secondly to deal with the surrounding material. These analyses are by no means complete, due to a general lack of harmonic material, making a traditional analysis of these compositions difficult or impossible. The analyses are therefore idiosyncratic and tailored to describe what is in the music, including the identification of source material where possible. I have concentrated on the overall form, themes or fragments, rhythm, and where deemed appropriate, harmony and scales. Further information about African elements and their application in South African Art Music can be found in Chapter Three.

Certain patterns of cross-cultural borrowing emerged in this repertoire. I have labeled them as overt cross-cultural borrowing, borrowing guided by African music-making principles, African paraphrasing, and inspirational landscape painting. A deeper examination of these elements and their application form part of the analyses.
Overt Cross-Cultural Borrowing

4.1.1  Hans Huyssen (b. 1964)

4.1.1.1  The Cattle Have Gone Astray

Details:

Instrumentation: Flute, cello, piano

Duration: 11 minutes

Published: Self-published. Score and parts available from the composer

Recording: Unreleased Compact Disc recording by Trio Hemanay in the composer’s possession

About The Cattle Have Gone Astray

The Cattle Have Gone Astray was commissioned by the SAMRO (South African Music Rights Organization) Endowment for the National Arts for the Trio Hemanay and was completed in 1999. It received its premiere performance on August 18th, 2000 in Columbus, Ohio at the National Flute Association Convention. SAMRO also requested that the commissioned piece include some indigenous material. Huyssen consulted Andrew Tracey’s African Music Anthology and decided to use a herding tune known as Ngororome as played by Kajori on a mujanje flute. The recording in Tracey’s anthology dates back to 1972. 199

Huyssen is someone who is very concerned about the effect that global development has on people and the environment. From his writings and from conversations with him, one becomes aware of his apprehension about globalization. While he acknowledges that the past is probably not as idyllic as it sounds, he worries about the far-reaching tentacles of global consumerism. With this work he imagines an Acadian200 view of the “road not taken.” He questions what the world would be like had its inhabitants made different choices. African cattle become representative of world order and they have gone astray: traditional forms of social order


200. This is Huyssen’s term, but he probably means “utopian” here.
have disintegrated and the past is no more. In this work Huyssen laments this loss, knowing that it is gone forever. On a musical level he refers to the loss of traditional African musical forms.

Huyssen lived in Europe when he composed The Cattle Have Gone Astray, so he only had access to archival field recordings. Since he returned to South Africa in 2000, he has had more opportunity to work with traditional African instrumentalists. For example, in Songs of Madosini, Huyssen juxtaposes the sounds of traditional instruments with those of a string quartet and a clarinet. He has found it increasingly difficult to find Africans who can play the traditional instruments of their culture, untainted by contemporary popular music. It is the transformation of traditional African culture and music that he regrets; a transformation he views as a deterioration rather than as an improvement.

The Cattle Have Gone Astray is representative of Huyssen’s style in that he unites the diverging poles of contemporary music and traditional African music. In The Cattle Have Gone Astray, he makes do with a transcription of the herding song, Ngororombe. He alludes to the herding song throughout the work, only quoting it directly and in its entirety at the end of the work. Once the other musicians have left the stage, the flutist is left alone to present the herding tune as a solo.

Huyssen requires the performers to employ several twentieth century techniques: pizzicato on piano strings; harsh playing ad libitum by the cellist (measures 296-320); a breathy sound by the flutist. The flutist is also encouraged to imitate the original recording during the solo statement of the herding song by making use of uneven articulation and audible breathing. Both the breathing and articulation are quite noticeable on the field recording and so must be observed.

Huyssen takes snippets of the herding tune and quotes them at various points in the composition. The rest of the musical material, however, does not relate to the herding tune at all. He does make use of some unrelated motivic material, which he states periodically throughout the piece. It is essentially a through-composed work with the structure ABCDEF. Its construction can be seen in the table below:
### Table 2 Analysis of *The Cattle Have Gone Astray*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>The flutist begins the piece offstage with several statements of a theme. This theme (Theme A) is related to <em>Ngororombe</em> in that it outlines the pitches G, D, F#, B. Flute opening notes:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The tune between measures 8-13 is repeated <em>ad libitum</em> to allow time for the flutist to walk to the stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transcription of the herding song at Figure X:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-20</td>
<td>The piano begins with Theme B in measure 14 and then states Theme A in measures 15-20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-26</td>
<td>Motivic material from the <em>Ngororombe</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27-35</td>
<td>The cello begins with Theme B and then states Theme A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36-41</td>
<td>Theme B is in the piano and the cello states Theme A a second time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42-73</td>
<td>Fragments of motifs that are not really recognizable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>74-124</td>
<td>New theme, Theme C in the piano in measure 74, repeated by the cello in measures 82 and 85. Theme A is stated by the flute in measure 90, followed by a new theme, Theme D in the piano in measure 96. Theme D is imitated by the cello in measures 98-107. The flute has a fragment of Theme A in measure 109. Theme D appears in the piano in measures 114-177. Fragment of Theme A in measures 119-123.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>125-188</td>
<td>A new theme, Theme E appears in measure 126 in the piano. It is restated and modified by the cello in measures 139-146. It is heard again in the piano in measures 151-156, followed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme has a changing metre: 2/4; 3/8; 3/4; 6/8 and 5/8.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

immediately by a statement from the cello in measures 157-163.

The flute follows with a statement from the herding song, similar to Theme A, but not identical – termed Theme A1. (Measures 165-171)

The cello states the first four measures of Theme E in Measure 172. It repeats this statement another three times, joined by the flute in the third statement in measure 180.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td>189-236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly fragments of motifs that are not really recognizable. However the embellished fifths from the beginning (Theme A) are heard as birdlike motives in the piano (measures 228-235) and the flute (measures 229-230)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **E** | 237-288 |
|   | Return of Themes A, C, E: |
|   | Theme C is heard in the piano in measures 237-240, followed by Theme E in the right hand of the piano in measure 242. |
|   | Theme A enters in the flute in measures 256. At measure 263 the piano develops fragments of Theme C |

| **F** | 289-364 |
|   | Statement of *Ngororombe* in the flute in measure 289. |
|   | Development of *Ngororombe* at measure 295; cello holds long note. |
|   | In measure 321 the cellist finishes and leaves the stage. |

**Performance Notes**

The composer wrote this work for the *Trio Hemanay*. He provided an archival recording for research material and much of the performance observations are based on this particular recording. The opening material in the flute, while rhythmically notated, can be interpreted somewhat freely. The tempo is marked as a dotted quarter note equals 116, but the composer has not indicated a metre. In the flute part at letter B, the quarter note should be set at 116. In other words, the beat remains the same. This information is contained in the score, but was omitted in the instrumental parts. Furthermore, the octave F’s in measure 5 of the piano are an error, as the pianist is not on stage at this point.\(^{202}\)

The percussive sounds on the flute at letter E are best obtained by fingerling the notes and blowing into the flute, articulating with a strong “t-“ sound. The composer has noted that this is

\(^{202}\) Ibid.
more effective and audible than the original instructions in the score. The flute line consisting of harmonics after letter J in the score should be played an octave higher. This has been corrected in the flute part. At letter X, neither the flutist, nor the cellist should afraid to produce raw, unrefined sounds. In particular, the flutist is expected to mimic the sound of a mujanje flute, and a performance of this work would certainly benefit from a consultation of a field recording, such as those made by Hugh and Andrew Tracey. In order to make the breathing more audible over the sounds of the cello at letter X, it is recommended that the performer breathe through the nose. This would also alleviate the problem of hyperventilation by the flutist!

203. Hans Huyssen, interview.
Borrowing Guided by African Music-Making Principles

4.1.2 Robert Fokkens (b. 1975)

4.1.2.1 Inyoka Etshanini

Details:

Instrumentation: Quarter-tone alto flute, violin, cello

Duration: 6 minutes

Published: Self-published by the composer

Recording: Carla Rees and her ensemble *rarescale* (in composer’s possession)

About Inyoka Etshanini

*Inyoka Etshanini*, which means “Snake in the Grass,” was composed for Carla Rees, a British flutist who specializes in contemporary music for the alto and bass flutes. While a flutist can produce quarter tones on a regular flute of any size, *Inyoka Etshanini* specifically calls for a quarter-tone alto flute – one that was designed to play accurate quarter tones chromatically across its range. Of this work, Robert Fokkens writes:

> Like much of my recent music, *Inyoka Etshanini*, a Zulu phrase, attempts to engage with a number of issues raised by post-colonial critical thinking. Central to my response is a concern with the construction of identity in the context of my experience of cultural hybridity as a South African. On one level, this can be heard in the choices I have made in developing my musical self: it is technically rooted in South African (particularly Xhosa) bow music, but one can also hear traces that range from the work of Cage and Feldman to jazz to fiddle music to electronica.

Fokkens also describes this piece as a “quiet, understated confrontation” between two very different types of music. The end result is a new “entity;” one that echoes Fokkens’ interest in uniting music from different cultures. He describes the title as being more conceptual than

204. The author is aware of only two manufacturers that offer quarter-tone flutes: Eva Kingma of the Netherlands designed and patented a system for playing quarter tones on the flute. Kingma mainly manufactures alto flutes with this particular system, but the company has licensed the design to Brannen Brothers, which now manufactures a C flute that can play quarter tones.

programmatic. It draws its inspiration from a comment that a friend of his made when told that the composer was working on a new composition: “There is always a snake in the grass.”

This work dates from a period in Fokkens’ career when he was fascinated by Uhadi bow music, which uses two pitches which are roughly a whole tone apart, as well as the overtone series of each pitch. The dyads in the analysis below are therefore based upon the overtone series based on the fundamentals G and A:

Figure 2 Overtone series based on G

Figure 3 Overtone series based on A

Table 3 Analysis of Inyoka Etshanini

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-28</td>
<td>A cycle of 14 dyads in the violin, repeated twice in measures 1-22. A third repetition is varied by the addition of a flat G on the second eighth note of measure 24. A cycle of 14 pitches in the cello, repeated three times in measures 1-28. The flute has a rhapsodic melody, based initially on the notes G and A flat, but gradually expanding to a fifth above (E) and a fifth below. Fokkens uses only 6 pitches in total.</td>
<td>The 14 pitches/ dyads total 19 quarter notes in duration each time, but the incorporation of irregular rest lengths in between pitches/ dyads ensures that each repetition differs from the previous one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>29-46</td>
<td>Another cycle of dyads begins in the violin, interrupted in measure 41. Another cycle of 14 pitches begins in the cello, also interrupted in measure 41. The rhapsodic flute melody returns in measure 35, but transposed down a perfect fifth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>47-53</td>
<td>A new cycle of dyads in both the violin and cello parts. A cycle of 14 pitches in the flute in a rhythmic pattern (measures 47-49); repeated in measures 50-52; repeated yet, again, but interrupted with the ending of the piece at measure 53.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performance Notes

_Inyoka Etshanini_ was composed for a quartetone alto flute, but it is possible to play this work on a regular alto flute. There are alternate fingerings to be learned and the fingering chart below (Figure 3) is useful for learning to produce quarter tones on a closed-hole flute. While the sound will not be homogenous throughout, with some pitches a little weaker than others, Mats Möller, a Swedish contemporary flute specialist, believes that a flutist will be far more flexible learning to produce quarter tones on a regular flute than on a quarter-tone flute. In his experience it is well-worth the effort. He also points out that even the Kingma-System alto flute makes use of open holes, which do affect the sound of certain pitches.

For performers who are interested in a Kingma-System alto flute, this instrument has a normal key layout, but has a C# trill and an additional six keys. These keys enable the flutist to obtain the seven “missing” quartetones on an open-holed flute. Note that the Kingma-System alto flute has some vented keys, although normal for a C-flute, is unusual. Figure 3 is a useful fingering chart for quartetone pitches on a closed-hole flute, but for open-hole flutes the reader should consult James J. Pellerite’s _A Modern Guide to Fingerings for the Flute_ and Robert Dick’s _The Other Flute: A Performance Manual of Contemporary Techniques_. The following is a key to Figure 3:

206. Mats Möller, e-mail message to author, 7 July 2011.
1 – Left hand thumb on the B natural key
2 – Left hand thumb on the B flat key
3 – G sharp key
4 – Right hand B flat lever (index finger)
5 – First trill key
6 – Second trill key
7 – D sharp key
8 – C sharp key
9 – C key

Figure 4 (reprinted with permission from Mats Möller.)

4.1.2.2  Cycling to Langa

Details:

Instrumentation: Alto flute, bass flute, electronics
Duration: 5 minutes, 25 seconds
Published: Self-published by the composer
Recording: Carla Rees, recording available from the composer

About Cycling to Langa

Cycling to Langa is another commission by Carla Rees and her ensemble rarescale\textsuperscript{208}, but the inspiration for the work comes from Fokkens’ encounter in 2008 with the leading Xhosa bow player, Madosini in Langa, a township near Cape Town. It is a work for a solo performer who begins playing on a bass flute, but changes to an alto flute in measure 38. The composer intends for the performer to use live electronics and recommends using a software program called Mobius. Fokkens mentions that Mobius had just been released when Cycling to Langa was premiered. The software was experiencing some malfunctions, so the performer decided to pre-record samples which were then triggered live using MAX-MSP. Pre-recording samples is a choice that the composer condones, should the performer prefer it. Fokkens finds the use of electronic equipment an interesting way of allowing one performer to act and sound as an ensemble, hence is generally extensive use of electronics in his other works as well.

Fokkens uses quarter tones in this work, in part due to his interest in Xhosa bow music, but also because he composed specifically for Carla Rees who own instruments capable of playing in quarter tones. While repeating figures is a general characteristic of African music, Fokkens has endeavoured to find a way of working with cycles that allows development and variation beyond basic layering techniques. The climax of the work arrives with Loop 4 in measure 76, which Fokkens describes as a sudden “eruption” of the music in double time.\textsuperscript{209}

\textsuperscript{208} Use of the lower case is intentional in the spelling of this name.

\textsuperscript{209} Robert Fokkens, e-mail message to author, 27 January 2011.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loop 1</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>Track 1: m. 1&lt;br&gt;Track 2: m. 6&lt;br&gt;Track 3: m. 9</td>
<td>On bass flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 2</td>
<td>13-22</td>
<td>Track 1: m. 9 (exactly the same as Track 2 from Loop 1)&lt;br&gt;Track 2: two-note figure from m. 16.&lt;br&gt;New material – long not in measures 11-12.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Tracks 1-3: multiphonic C/D in measure 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 1</td>
<td>24-29</td>
<td>Loop 1 repeated exactly; new material in measures 25-29 (not recorded)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 2</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Same as original Loop 2; new material in measures 31-34 (not recorded).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 4</td>
<td>35-37</td>
<td>Track 1 consists of note recorded in measure 35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 2</td>
<td>38-45</td>
<td>Same as original Loop 2. The new material from measures 31-34 is repeated exactly, but transposed for the alto flute. Measures 40-41 are recorded for Track 3.&lt;br&gt;New material is introduced in measures 42-45.</td>
<td>Change to alto flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 3</td>
<td>46-48</td>
<td>Tracks 1: C/D combined with new Tracks 2-3: concert A flat/ E flat multiphonic in measure 47.</td>
<td>Half-speed selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 4</td>
<td>49-63</td>
<td>Track 2 recorded in measure 53&lt;br&gt;Track 3 recorded in measure 56&lt;br&gt;Track 4 recorded in measure 58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 2</td>
<td>64-75</td>
<td>All three tracks of Loop 2 are heard; the new material of measures 42-45 is repeated and expanded.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 4</td>
<td>76-83</td>
<td>All four tracks present&lt;br&gt;Track 5 added in measure 77&lt;br&gt;Track 6 added in measure 79. New, unrecorded material is heard in measures 82-83 – this is similar to the unrecorded material of Loop 2, measure 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 3</td>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>Loop 3 all three tracks repeated; Track 3 replaced with new material recorded in measure 85.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loop 1 | 87-101 | Loop 1 repeated exactly; new material in measures 87-100 (not recorded) |
---|---|---|
Loop 3 | 102-103 | Loop 3 with three different tracks; heard once only |

**Performance Notes**

For fingerings of quartertones please refer to Figure 3 above. Fokkens recommends the use of the Mobius software for *Cycling to Langa*. This software is available as a free download from the internet at www.circularlabs.com. This site also offers a user’s manual, which is simple to understand, and online technical support. While the original software suffered from technical malfunctions, these have been addressed and Mobius is a powerful and inexpensive tool for electronic music. It is available for both Windows (XP or Vista) and OS X (10.4 or higher) and using a foot pedal to start and stop tracks would be very useful. The performer is nevertheless free to use any software that is available, or to even pre-record tracks. The latter may be deemed a safer option by some.
4.1.3 Hendrik Hofmeyr (b. 1957)

4.1.3.1 Marimba

Details:

Instrumentation: Solo flute

Duration: 5 minutes

Published: Available from SAMRO

Recording: none

About Marimba

The inspiration for Marimba comes from the legend of the goddess of the same name. Marimba was a goddess in Zulu mythology. It is said that she made an instrument by attaching gourds to wooden bars and laying them over a hole in the ground. Sound was produced by striking the bars with sticks. This myth is most likely also the origin of the instrument marimba we know as an orchestral instrument today. As mentioned above, Hofmeyr finds mythology a very appealing source of inspiration for his work. He also believes that an evocative title can guide the performer with the musical interpretation of a work. Marimba was commissioned by the South African Music Rights Organization for its International Music Competition in 2000. Other than requesting a solo flute piece and calling for a specific duration, Hofmeyr was given no other guidelines. The inspiration of an African legend is completely his own. The overall form of Marimba is ABABCBA, which Hofmeyr describes as a modified rondo form. 210

210. Hendrik Hofmeyr, interview.
### Table 5 Analysis of *Marimba*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>Two sets of 6-measure phrases, reminiscent of both Debussy’s <em>Syrinx</em> and <em>Afternoon of a Faun</em>. (The descending and ascending line is reminiscent more of the latter work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>13-20</td>
<td>This is a canonic section, and because the flute can not play two notes simultaneously, Hofmeyr does it in the following way: One voice is in the lower register and the other in the upper register. This is also denoted by note stems upwards for the upper voice, and note stems downwards for the lower voice. Note that Hofmeyr has the lower voice one beat behind and a tritone lower than the upper voice. Hofmeyr also makes uses of a West African bell pattern, which is frequently used as a timekeeper. Such a pattern is generally 12 eighth notes long. Not all beats are equal in length. The best-known bell pattern is one known as the “double-bell patter from Ghana. Its eighth notes are divided as 2+2+3+2+3. There are however lesser-known patterns, but all consist of 12 eighth notes. In this section Hofmeyr uses a smaller denomination: sixteenth notes. In this section, each cycle is 12 sixteenth notes long, which can be divided as: 3+2+2+2+3</td>
<td>Time signature is 2/4, changing to ¾ and then to 4/4. The canonic section only lasts from measures 13-17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>21-32</td>
<td>Hofmeyr takes the opening material, displaces it by an octave and adds embellishment around the main beats. (The first measure is almost Sarabande-like in its rhythm and emphasis on the second beat) Measures 21-24 = measures 1-4 almost exactly – only the ending is different. In measures 25-26 he takes the first two measures and transposes them up a semi-tone. He does transpose the first measure another two times, heightening the tension. Another two transpositions follow in measures 30 and 31.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>33-56</td>
<td>Return of the canonic section, but extended for a total of 24 measures. The rhythmic pattern is still 3+2+2+2+2+3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>57-88</td>
<td>New material; Hofmeyr “plays around” with cross-rhythm” and he was not more specific than that.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>89-103</td>
<td>Return to the canonic section. In this section the time signature is 12/16, which aids in the recognition of the bell pattern. This time, each cycle is one bar long. Hofmeyr plays with the emphasis and alternates between 3+2+3+2+2 (reverse of the most common pattern) and 3+2+2+3+2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>104-111</td>
<td>Return to the opening material, but transposed into the third octave of the flute and embellished with arpeggiated flourishes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Performance Notes

*Marimba* is a technically demanding work. In addition to finger dexterity, the performer needs to be aware of all melodic material that may be obscured by filler notes. For example, the opening material appears again at the end of the work in measure 104, two octaves and a fifth higher and filled with arpeggios over the entire range of the instrument. These arpeggios should be practiced carefully, ensuring that the musical line is smooth and making an effort to maintain a consistent dynamic.

In the canonic section beginning at measure 13 it is difficult to make sure that both voices are heard. It is therefore essential to take care of the notated articulations” the lower voice is marked staccato, while the higher voice is slurred. Contrasting these articulations sufficiently will aid in distinguishing the two voices. Regarding the overall technical demands of the piece, slow, deliberate and intelligent practice with a metronome will ensure accuracy at tempo.
4.1.4 Martin Scherzinger (b. 1966)

4.1.4.1 Whistle of the Circle Movement

Details:

Instrumentation: Flute and piano

Duration: 9 minutes

Published: Self-published. Score available from the composer


About Whistle of the Circle Movement

Whistle of the Circle Movement was composed in 2004 for the Netherlands flutist Eleonore Pameijer and the pianist Michael Worms. It was commissioned as part of a UNESCO project entitled Across Six Continents. The duo invited composers from six continents: Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia and Australia, to compose a work for flute and piano. It was requested that these compositions include elements that the composer regards as fundamental to his or her culture in a broad sense. For the purposes of the UNESCO project, culture could be defined in many ways: it could mean being part of a region, a country, or even part of for example a broader European or African culture. Culture was defined loosely in order to accommodate its constantly shifting parameters.211 In Whistle of the Circle Movement Scherzinger draws on various musical influences from South and southern Africa. He writes:

Although they are placed in the context of a western instrumentarium, the patterns in Whistle of the Circle Movement are no longer Western. They are crafted after southern African musical landscapes and languages, yet the patterns in Whistle of the Circle Movement are not African either. Thematically, they recall the accordion music, the pennywhistle songs, even the jazz of Johannesburg, South Africa, in the 1960s and 1970s; old pipe-and-voice music from Tete, Mozambique; and mbira dza vadzimu, music from Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe. The music dances

through these memories and tries to heed the wind in the movement. Dancing, I suppose, becomes a way in itself.\footnote{Ibid.}

While the latter portion of the quote above is somewhat esoteric, Scherzinger explains some of the concepts as follows: Firstly, the \textit{mbira dza vadzimu} means the \textit{mbira}\footnote{A lamellophone from Zimbabwe, also known as an African thumb piano.} of the ancestral spirits; its main function is to conjure up the spirits of the ancestors. This \textit{mbira} has the power to tempt the spirits to join in the event, while the buzzing sounds of the \textit{mbira} produce an acoustic illusion, one that is high-pitched and sounds like the human voice or flute.\footnote{Martin Scherzinger, “Temporal Geometries of an African Music: A Preliminary Sketch,” (accessed 3 May 2011).}

Apparently when the music sounds like a flute, then the ancestors have come.\footnote{Martin Scherzinger, telephone interview.} Secondly, the slower sections of this work – measures 105 to 166 and measures 244 to 291 – evoke wide open spaces. These spaces can either be interpreted as representative of the open spaces of Africa, or are very similar to African dancers “sitting out” a round while the music continues.\footnote{Ibid.}

During an interview, Scherzinger mentioned the appearance of a “third voice” in Zimbabwean \textit{mbira dza vadzimu} music. Below is an example of a basic interlocking structure. The two lines each represent an \textit{mbira}-playing hand. Note that they play in each other’s spaces. The higher part is known as the \textit{kushaura}, which translates broadly as “leading,” while the lower part is one eighth note behind and is known as the \textit{kutsinhura}, which means “to follow.” Also note that the 12/8 metre in this example is not an indication of grouping in the Western music notation, i.e. it is not a compound metre. Rather, each eighth note indicates a pulse, while a beat is comprised of two or more pulses. In this example the grouping falls into beats of two or four pulses. The second part differs from the first, but that is not always the case: it could be identical, slightly varied, or entirely different. The composite pattern is what is known as the “third voice.”
Figure 5 A fragment of *Nhemamusasa*
performed by Samuel Mujuru, August 1996 (transcription: M. Scherzinger)\(^{217}\)

Figure 6 Bars 35-43 from *Whistle of the Circle Movement*\(^{218}\)


Figure 5 is taken from *Whistle of the Circle Movement*, and the resemblance to Figure 4 is quite striking. In Figure 5 the flute and the right hand of the piano have exactly the same melody. In the second bar they diverge, with the flute leading by two eighth notes. The piano melody is almost identical to the flute melody, but it is slightly varied at the bar line. The left hand of the piano enters in bar seven of Figure 5; it is entirely different, but notice that it does play in some of the spaces left by the right hand in the piano and the flute.

Table 6 Analysis of *Whistle of the Circle Movement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 1</td>
<td>1-21</td>
<td>Opening material (a); Piano and flute in unison.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This section focuses on <em>mbira dza vadzimu</em>—style music.</td>
<td>22-29</td>
<td>Theme (b) in flute; piano begins in measure 23 with material that is reminiscent of the beginning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Similar to opening material, but also similar to material in piano in measures 26-27. Many cycles of <em>mbira dza vadzimu</em> music cover forty eight beats, which would be represented by twelve measures of music, which means this section covers two cycles of 4 bars each.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-42</td>
<td>Flute has exact same material as in measures 22-29; piano has counter-melody.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43-50</td>
<td>Flute has a similar melody as in measures 22-29: order of notes remains the same, but there is some octave displacement and change of rhythm. The same can be applied to the right hand of the piano. A third counter-melody appears in the left hand of the piano in measure 43.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-58</td>
<td>Same material, but varied in the flute, the right and left hands of the piano.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-66</td>
<td>Varied yet again; piano changes to block chords in measure 63.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-74</td>
<td>Flute material varied; it also quotes the opening material in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-71</td>
<td>Piano continues with block chords – measures 63-65= measures 67-69, while measure 70 is a variation of measure 66.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-78</td>
<td>Continuation of opening material in the flute; joined in unison by the piano.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79-90</td>
<td>4-measure phrases; repeated and varied. In the flute, measures 79-82 are repeated exactly another two times for a total of twelve measures. In the piano, measures 79-82 are also repeated another two times for a total of twelve measures; however, repeats 2 and 3 are transposed down by an octave.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-104</td>
<td>In the flute, measures 91-98 are the same as measures 22-29, just transposed up by an octave and with some slight modifications. In measures 91-98 the piano has the opening material. In measures 99-102 the flute repeats the material of measures 91-94, joined by the piano in a counter-melody. Both flute and piano revert back to two measures of opening material at measures 103-104.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2a 105-128</td>
<td>Solo piano with a modified string sound. Paper is added between the strings of the piano, imitating the sound of an mbira. On mbiras of all types the players often attach shells or other items to resonate in sympathy. This is the effect that Scherzinger is trying to recreate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2b 129-166</td>
<td>Solo flute with modified sounds Scherzinger requests a “breathy” sound from the flutist, and has added glissandi and...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Section 3
This section focuses on panpipe and voice music from Tete, Mozambique. It is not entirely idiomatic, but it the accents on certain notes indicate a second voice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>167-196</td>
<td>This section consists of two 15-measure sections: measures 167-181 and measures 182-196. The two sections are almost identical: the last twelve measures of each section are identical, i.e. measures 170-181 = measures 185-196. The first three measures are not identical, i.e. measures 167-169 ≠ 182-184.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>197-226</td>
<td>The left hand of the piano centres around the pitches E, F, A, B, which Scherzinger employs in dissonant chords. Notice that he uses octaves, fourths and fifths to evoke mbira music. In the right hand of the piano he employs all the notes of a C major scale, but the manner in which he combines the notes is reminiscent of mbira dza vadzimu music: it is typical for this music to be constructed on chord sequences between four degrees and displaying bi-chords in fourths and fifths. There also two mbiras playing simultaneously; the parts are represented by the two hands on the piano. The flute is representative of the vocal part.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>227-243</td>
<td>Measures 227-238 are also in the forty eight-beat cycle, with the last measure repeated to lengthen the phrase. The flute repeats measures 167-178, while the piano has a counter-melody also heard in measures 167-178.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>244-291</td>
<td>Measures 244-246: recalls piano of measures 105-106 and flute measures 129-130. Measures 248-253 recall measures 105-110 in piano and measure 129-135, but heard simultaneously – interrupted after six measures. A third start is made and completed: measures 255-291 = measures 105-127 (piano) and measures 128-167 (flute)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>292-350</td>
<td>In the flute, material from section 3 returns, but in a fragmented, dotted rhythm, interspersed with material from section 2b: measures 250-252 resemble measures 167-169 and measures 295-306 resemble measures 128-140. In measure 295 the piano also repeats its material from section 2a (measures 105 onwards.) In measure 330, material from section 3 returns in the piano – cluster chords. This appears to be the pennywhistle variation, indicated by the dotted rhythm.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>351-360</td>
<td>The piano continues with material from section 3, while the flute introduces some new scales, imitating jazz. Johannesburg jazz imitation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
</table>
returns

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>391-393</th>
<th>Repeat of opening material of section 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>394-396</td>
<td>394-396 Same notes as measures 1-5, but different rhythm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performance Notes

As with most African-inspired works, *Whistle of the Circle Movement* presents several rhythmical challenges. It is recommended that the opening section up to measure twenty one be practiced with metronome set to eighth notes. It is also advisable to work out note groupings, i.e. where the main beats occur in each measure. For example, measure one is grouped as two eighth notes plus three eighth notes. From measure twenty two until measure one hundred and four it would be easier to play this section as a 6/4 metre as opposed to the 12/8 metre. This would be perfectly acceptable, since the composer did not intend for it to sound as a compound metre. Although the tempo is marked as a quarter note equals 200, a slower tempo of about 180 would be appropriate, especially from measure twenty two onwards. The flutist should ensure that the notes in lower octave, both accented and unaccented, speak clearly at all times.

In the piano solo at measure 105, the pianist may elect to modify the piano sound by placing a sheet of paper or cardboard on the lower strings of the piano. This creates a rattling effect that mimics the sounds of the *mbira*, which frequently has shells or bottle caps attached to it and vibrating in sympathy. The solo flute section beginning in measure 129 need not be played completely metronomically, but should exploit the pitch bends. These can be produced by turning the embouchure of the flute in or out, but on certain notes and where desired, sliding a finger on and off and open-hole key would be effective as well. According to performance directions in the score, the sound of the flute should be unfocused and breathy.

Care must be taken to ensure that all accents are observed while maintaining a clear sound. Slow, mindful practice is useful for this purpose. The scales in measure 351 are more effective when slurred and should be played in a jazzy style. This work may be shortened by omitting measures 227 to 327, which is the version heard on Eleonore Pameijer’s recording mentioned above.

219. Martin Scherzinger, telephone interview.
4.1.5  Becky Steltzner (b. 1956)

4.1.5.1  **Hambani Kakuhle Kwela**

**Details:**

- **Instrumentation:** Flute, oboe, clarinet in B flat, horn in F, bassoon
- **Duration:** 3 minutes
- **Published:** International Opus
- **Recording:** The Amadeus Winds in Cape Town, South Africa
  Becky Steltzner, personal audio recording

**About Hambani Kakuhle Kwela**

*Hambani Kakuhle Kwela* was composed in 1998 at the request of the bassoonist of the Amadeus Winds. He had a friend who was getting married and for whose wedding the quintet had been invited to play. The bride had requested specific dedications to four special people. For three of those, the Amadeus Winds were able to use existing original pieces or arrangements; however, one individual for whom there was nothing appropriate. The dilemma was solved by composing a piece especially for the occasion. Since then it has taken on a life of its own. The Amadeus Winds use it frequently as an encore piece for their concerts, while many quintets have used the work in competitions when an African-inspired work is required or preferred. Steltzner was also commissioned to rework *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela* for an orchestra in Sweden. She mentions that she added marimbas for a “vibey sort of African feeling.” In addition, the German saxophone quartet “Saxofourte” transcribed the work for their ensemble, which was included in their latest CD, “Bannoutah,” released in 2009.²²⁰

*Hambani Kakuhle* means “go well” in the Xhosa language. Many African languages do not have a word for “goodbye,” hence the use of “go well.” Steltzner mentions that the Amadeus Winds use this work as an encore or “goodbye” piece, hence its current title.²²¹ *Kwela* is a Zulu word that refers to the popular jazzy pennywhistle music of Johannesburg in the 1950 and it was not until the late 1980s that musicologists began to cultivate an interest in this style of music.

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²²⁰ Becky Steltzner, interview.

These studies raised awareness of this style that was popular during the height of the apartheid-era, and led to a resurgence of this type of music. It was popularized again by the South African pop group *Mango Groove* in the 1990s.

The possible origin of the term *kwela* also reveals a darker side to the music of the 1950s: it may refer to the Zulu term “get up”, but it was also township slang for the police vans that cruised the area. These were known as “kwela-kwela.” *Kwela* was shouted as an invitation to dance and as a warning. Since the big South African record companies of the time were able to spot lucrative music when it presented itself, much of this music was documented. From one of the records of the time, we have a telling description: (“Tom Hark” refers to a tune that a boy known as “Kwela Jake” had composed just a day before the recording was made.)

The record started with the sound of money clinking down onto a pavement. Dice rattle, streetwise young voices call bets and argue, the dice stop rolling, cheers and groans as the coins are scooped up again. Feet come running and an urgent voice calls: “E Bops, kom gou -- hier kom die kwela kwela van!” (“Hurry up, here comes the police van”). “Tom Hark” has been watching for police at the corner. Dice and cash vanish, out come pennywhistles and guitars, and the gambling school becomes a kwela band (the music named after the police van) and they swing into the irresistible tune of Tom Hark. The police rumble past in their van. All clear - the music stops, dice rattle down, a new Tom Hark takes his stand at the corner.222

Pennywhistles were – and still are – cheap and affordable instruments. This feature made them attractive instruments to the youth in South African townships of the 1950s, where the Africans wanted to imitate the jazz coming out of America. Even so, a kwela has a very simple structure. Harmonic progressions are, for the most part, limited to the primary chords I, IV and V, which are repeated *ad libitum*. This facilitates improvisation as necessary or desired. Some typical examples of kwela progressions include the following: I, IV, I, V7, or I, I7, IV6, and V7.223 As in the original kwelas, Steltzner uses primary chords at the rate of one chord per bar.


These chords are: I, IV, I, V. When the bassoon enters in bar 21, it outlines the basic chord structure and fills in the remaining quarter notes in a walking bass style.

**Table 7 Analysis of Hambani Kakuhle Kwela**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bars 1-4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Horn <em>kwela</em> motif</td>
<td>Motif 1 in horn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 5-20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute enters over the repeated Horn <em>kwela</em> motif</td>
<td>Motif 2a in flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 21-28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute and horn continue, bassoon enters with “walking bass”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 29-32</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bassoon continues, flute and horn out.</td>
<td>Motif 3 in clarinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarinet enters with the <em>kwela</em> motif, oboe has long notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 33-40</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bassoon continues</td>
<td>All three motifs hear together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute and horn back with their lines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarinet continues its line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oboe: long notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 41-48</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bassoon continues</td>
<td>The triplet figure in the flute is a written-out improvisation, labeled Motif 2b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Horn still has its original motif</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute has a new triplet figure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars 49-56</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute back to its original figure</td>
<td>Motif 2a in flute, motif 2b in oboe, motif 3 in clarinet, motif 1 in horn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oboe now has the triplet figure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarinet and horn have similar, but complementary figures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bassoon still on walking bass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar 57-60</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Kwela</em>- type motif (solo) in bassoon</td>
<td>The bassoon melody is essentially the horn motif 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No flute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarinet now has quarter notes similar to the walking bass heard previously in the bassoon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Horn has long notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Oboe has complementary rhythm to clarinet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar 61-62</th>
<th>New key of F Major</th>
<th>Modulation effected by key change to F major.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bridge to next section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Bar 63-70 | Same as previous section, but add flute with original motif, Clarinet has triplet figure | Motif 2a in flute, motif 2b now in the clarinet; motif 1 back in horn, walking bass in bassoon. Notice the new figure in the oboe, labeled motif 4. |

| Bar 71-78 | Back to opening material in flute and horn, but now in F Major | Improvised solos before or after this section, if desired. Motif 1 in horn, motif 2a in flute. |

| Bar 79-86 | All instruments playing almost all the stated material. | Motif 4 in flute, motif 2b in oboe, motif 2a in clarinet, motif 1 in horn, walking bass in bassoon. Notice that all motifs, with the exception of motif 3, are heard in this section. |

In the 1950s the most prevalent make of pennywhistles found in the townships were those made in Germany by Hohner. These came in the keys of C, B flat and G. Steltzner’s *kwela* deviates from the standard keys in her choice of E flat major for *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela*. She had originally composed the work in C major, but certain pitch bends commonly found in original *kwela* music were more difficult to execute on the flute in C major than in E flat major, hence the transposition to a higher key. In addition to note bends, there is also a particular sound to the pennywhistle that flutists tend to imitate in this piece as well. For *kwela* music the mouthpiece of the pennywhistle is placed quite far into the player’s mouth – towards a cheek - and at an angle. This enabled the player to play it as loudly as possible, in order to be heard over the other instruments of the band. The result is a somewhat sharp, slightly forced sound, which can be imitated in *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela* by the flutist.

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224. Becky Steltzner, interview.

Performance Notes

_Hambani Kakuhle Kwela_ is a relatively easy work to put together as an ensemble, though its challenges lie in the blending and contrasting of sounds when necessary. The flute takes over the role of the pennywhistle. There are frequent pitch bends, which can affect overall intonation; care must therefore be taken to still play in tune. The main role of the bassoon is to act as a walking bass, keeping a steady rhythm for the ensemble. The quarter notes in this part should have a clear attack and not be too long, otherwise the harmonic outline of the walking bass may be obscured.

The trickiest passages in this work are those where are five instruments play simultaneously, as for example beginning in measure 49. The difficulty in the oboe part lies in some tricky passage work with awkward leaps while playing in the low register. The beauty of this line is to achieve the smoothest musical line possible. At this point all instruments should be heard clearly, while still striving to blend with a more homogenous sound. Achieving such a sound in a woodwind quintet can be a problematic with such disparate sounds, but can be solved if all parts strive for a warmer, mellower sound. Similar sections occur in measures 63 and 79, so the same sound principles apply.
African Paraphrasing

4.1.6 Kevin Volans (b. 1949)

4.1.6.1 Walking Song (1984)

Details:

Instrumentation: Flute, harpsichord, hand clappers

Duration: 6 minutes

Published: Chester Novello

Recording: Netherlands Wind Ensemble

London: Chandos, 19-21 October 1995

About Walking Song:

The original version of Walking Song dates from 1983. It was scored for two pianos, two flutes, clarinet, trumpet, bassoon, trombone, violin and double bass. The 1984 version, which is scored for flute, harpsichord (or virginal) and hand clappers, is also a reinterpretation of the original. The original version has been withdrawn and is no longer available. Volans describes the inspiration for Walking Song as follows:

Walking Song for flute, harpsichord and four hand clappers/ finger clickers was written at the request of Jill Richardson of the Durban Art Gallery for the opening of an exhibition…The opening material owes a debt to the music of the Ba-benzele pygmies, who alternately sing and blow notes on a panpipe made from the hollow stem of a papaya leaf.

The panpipe that Volans has referred to is the hindewho, a three-hole disposable bamboo flute used by the Ba-benzele pygmies. In general, the most prominent features of Pygmy music are almost wordless yodeling and the densely-textured multipart singing. A short cyclical pattern is often repeated and varied, while different voices enter informally with parallel melodies, variations and ostinati. Pentatonic and sub-pentatonic forms are most commonly found. African


Pygmy music is predominantly a vocal art form, but there is the occasional use of drums borrowed from non-Pygmy neighbours.\textsuperscript{228}

In \textit{Walking Song} the flutist is required to modify the sound of the notes, either through a breathy sound, or through the use of special fingerings indicated at the beginning of the piece. The modified sounds of the Western flute approximate the sounds of the \textit{hindewho}. In an email message, flutist Alain Barker remembers how he worked with Volans to create the fingerings for \textit{Walking Song}.\textsuperscript{229} Volans also chose to use the harpsichord not only for its percussive qualities, but also because it can be retuned to reflect the tuning used by African instruments. The composer also surmises that the emergence of groups such as Musica Antiqua Köln and Sequentia (a medieval group) in the 1970s probably also had an influence on composers.\textsuperscript{230} Given that Volans was living and working in Germany in the 1970s and that \textit{Walking Song} was composed soon after his period in Köln, there seems to be a correlation between the emergence of early music groups and the use of early music instruments in contemporary music.

Both the original Ba-benzele music and \textit{Walking Song} make use of a pentatonic scale, using the notes D flat, E flat, F, A flat and B flat. Volans occasionally adds the note C, although its use remains unexplained. Chernoff remarks that African music cannot be notated without assigning a different metre to the different instruments in an ensemble. Volans does this in measure 99 of \textit{Walking Song} when he assigns a time signature of 6/8 to the flute and one hand clapper while simultaneously assigning a time signature of 4/4 to the harpsichord and the second hand clapper. This is illustrated in Figure 6.

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{229} Alain Barker, e-mail message to author, 23 November 2007.

\textsuperscript{230} Volans, Kevin. “Composer’s Statement” (accessed 15 November 2007).
\end{footnotesize}
African musicians do not count beats as one would in Western music, but they base their entrances on their relation to the other instruments instead. Furthermore, Chernoff states that establishing several cross rhythms as a background in most African music is what permits a stable base to sound fluid. Stable rhythmic patterns are broken up and rearranged by shifting accents and emphases. When one has two different rhythms and combines them in different ways, one can alter the character of the composite rhythm. For instance, when one shifts the entry of the second rhythm, the composite rhythm would be different and therefore have a different character. Volans applies this rhythmic principle to Walking Song in the following ways: In Figure 7, line two, the rhythm of a dotted quarter note and an eighth falls on the first two beats of measure 192. This figure is repeated on beats five and six, and then again on beats three and four of measure 193. Compare this to Figure 8, where the same pattern appears on beat 6 of measure 195 and beat one of measure 196, and then repeated on beats four and five of the same bar. Note that the flute (top line) and the left hand of the harpsichord (bottom line) repeat a motif that is unchanged in both examples.

---

232. Chernoff, 52.
Accents can also be shifted in melodic material. For instance, the opening material from measure 1 to measure 25 is in common time. This material is repeated exactly in measures 29-56, but in the framework of a 6/8 time signature. When the opening material is first heard, the flute and harpsichord are never heard simultaneously. However in the 6/8 section (measure 29) Volans has added both hand clappers in unison. The shifting of accents is illustrated in Figures 9 and 10:


234. Ibid., 7.
The Overall Structure of Walking Song

The structure of Walking Song can be described as through-composed form. Broadly speaking there are three main sections that are only marginally related:

Section 1: measures 1-115

Section 2: measures 116-159

Section 3: measures 160-the end

When played separately, the flute and harpsichord parts sound disjointed. However, when played as written and at a fast (indicated) tempo, the flute and harpsichord lines blend together to form one continuous melodic line. Given the narrow range of the harpsichord at the beginning,

235. Ibid., 1.

236. Ibid.
one could assume that it assumes the role of the *hindewho*, while the flute with its wider range plays the role of the voice. Each of the sections can be divided further as follows:

**Table 8 Analysis of Section 1 of Walking Song**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Measures 1-28</td>
<td>Flute &amp; harpsichord</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Measures 29-56</td>
<td>Flute and hand clapper</td>
<td>Notice that this section is an exact repeat in terms of pitch and note values as measures 1-25. The only difference is that the metre is now 6/8 and that the entire “theme” is in the flute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Measures 57-84</td>
<td>Flute, hand clapper, harpsichord</td>
<td>The flute plays a variation on the “theme”. The harpsichord enters with another variation, heard simultaneously. It also acts as an ostinato against the flute. Notice how the texture has become increasingly dense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Measures 85-98</td>
<td>The instrumentation remains the same, but the texture becomes lighter</td>
<td>Measures 85-94 in the flute are reminiscent of the harpsichord at the opening of the piece. Notice also in the harpsichord in measure 89 the appearance of the note, which is foreign to the pentatonic scale in use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Measures 99-115</td>
<td>Flute, 2 hand clappers, harpsichord</td>
<td>After a brief respite from the dense texture, we now have 4 instruments playing simultaneously. Notice also that there are 2 time signatures in use simultaneously: 6/8 in the flute and one hand clapper; 4/4 in the second hand clapper and harpsichord. This certainly produces a dense rhythmic texture. Notice also that the harpsichord is repeating the “theme” of the beginning (see mm. 1-15), while the flute is repeating its own variation (see mm. 57-75)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9 Analysis of Section 2 of Walking Song**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Measures 116-150</td>
<td>Flute, harpsichord, hand clappers</td>
<td>The hand clappers still have the same rhythm, but the texture has lightened again in the flute and harpsichord. The figure used here is the same as the one used in measures 85-94. The 2/4 at measure 129 seems to aid the “resetting” of a common time signature of 6/8. At this stage the hand clappers cease playing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Measures 151-159</td>
<td>Flute and harpsichord</td>
<td>Brief restatement of the opening “theme”, see measures 1-9.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3:

There is an ostinato in the left hand of the harpsichord, which is almost continuous from measure 160 to the end. There is no identifiable “theme” in any of the parts, which seems to imply that the composite rhythm or the sum of the parts is more important than any melody. Notice also that there no large intervals in this section, and that both the flute and harpsichord parts remain in the middle range of the instruments.

The figure in the right hand of the harpsichord is very similar to the figure heard in section 2a. It also taken up by the hand clappers in measure 184. Between measures 190 and 201 this figure alternates between the hand clapper and the right hand of the harpsichord. The texture becomes less dense as the piece nears its end.

Performance Notes

The sheet music to Walking Song can be obtained from the British publisher, Chester Music. To date it has not been typeset and contains a small number of errors. What follows is a list of errata:

Flute:

Measure 1: the quarter note rest should be dotted
Measure 2: the last beat of the measure should be a quarter note rest
Measure 4: beat 3 should be a quarter note rest
Measure 53: the first beat (A flat) should be a quarter note
Measure 72: the last note (F) should be an eighth note
Measure 171: the first note should be a B flat
Measure 174: the last note (E flat) should be an eighth note

Harpsichord:

Measure 1: there should be an eighth note rest after the B flat of beat 2
Measure 2: the should be an eighth note rest at the end of the measure
Measure 115: the last note (F) should be a quarter note
For this work the flutist has to learn some new fingerings as indicated in the score. While these may seem awkward at first, they are not that difficult once learned. Most of the altered fingerings are based on the “correct” fingerings with some slight modifications. Since this work only makes use of five pitches, or ten pitches over two octaves, it simplifies matters somewhat. Most of the altered fingerings are based on the “correct” fingerings with some slight modifications. The only fingering that is quite different is for the E flat an octave above middle C (E flat 5). This is fingered as a B flat with the addition of the two trill keys. It will be useful for all musicians of the ensemble to practice diligently with a metronome so that the parts interlock accurately. The addition of two more musicians in a rhythmic or percussive role also serves to keep everyone on track. This is particularly helpful from measure 99 onwards, where the ensemble is divided into two separate, but still interlocking parts. While the flute and one hand clapper play in 6/8, the harpsichord and other hand clapper play in 4/4. The clappers assist with the time keeping. Finger clicking might be a tiring activity, and perhaps not loud enough, so it is suggested to either amplify it, engage more finger clickers, or opt for the hand clapping or claves option. It is also useful to know that the melody of the flutist is doubled in the right hand of the harpsichord part, but diverges from it in measure 170. At measure 170 it is suggested that the flutist listen to the finger clickers or the left hand of the harpsichord for rhythmic guidance.

4.1.7 Michael Blake (b. 1951)

4.1.7.1 Honey Gathering Song

Details:

Instrumentation: Flute and piano/harpsichord (1989); alternate version for flute and string trio (1999)

Duration: 5 minutes

Published: Bardic Edition

Recording: Archival recording of the premiere, available at the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) at the University of Stellenbosch

About Honey Gathering Song:

Honey Gathering Song was originally composed as a piece for contemporary dancers in 1989. The work was choreographed by Gill Clarke and was titled For the Off. Michael Blake then revised it as a concert piece; expanding the more interesting material and leaving out what
he thought was less interesting. He regards the combination of flute and piano as problematic. He decided to solve his problems by integrating the two instruments by giving them almost identical material and by “bringing their timbres as close together as possible in interlocking or heterophonic textures.” In his program notes he also mentions that pieces with the title *Honey Gathering Song* can also be found in the music of the Pygmies in Central Africa. Although he makes use of African materials and compositional techniques, generally filtered and paraphrased, he rejects the notion that there is any direct reference to the music of Central African Pygmies.

When asked about the change of title from *For the Off* to *Honey Gathering Song*, Michael Blake responded that the original title was the one given to the work by the choreographer, Gill Clarke. Apparently, this title originated during a mad dash for the airport, so it was not considered with any particular care. When the piece was revised as a concert piece in 1999, the composer searched for a more fanciful title. The original instrumentation was determined by the opportunity to write a piece Blake could perform with his first wife, Tessa Swade, who is a flutist. Since the budget was small, the couple was able to keep the money in the family.

This work also exists as a transcription for flute and string trio. Blake decided to transcribe the original for “greater currency”, because there is very little to go with the Mozart Flute Quartets. He also wanted to hear the blend of flute and strings, as opposed to the greater opposition of flute and keyboard.

### Table 10 Analysis of *Honey Gathering Song*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
No recognizable theme, but there are two recurring motifs: Motif A in the flute consists of three beats of triplets on a low D. Variations on this motif including an occasional note E or A, i.e. a fourth or fifth above the low D. | Rhythmic vitality is derived from the juxtaposition of triplets and duples or syncopation.  
Harmonically, Blake seems to have used a hexatonic |


238. Ibid.

239. Michael Blake, e-mail message to author, 11 September 2009.
Motif B in the left hand of the piano consists of a duple on beat 4 of most bars, or where the flute has a rest in the low D’s. The duple consists of two chords/ open fourths on E and D.

| B       | 17-30     | In the new section the time signature shifts constantly between 6/4, 5/4 and 4/4. There is constant interplay between the syncopations in the flute and piano parts, two seemingly independent lines. What binds them together is that there is some note overlap between the flute and the right hand of the piano, although the flute line does not always pick out the higher of the two piano notes. |
| A1      | 31-44     | A return to section A, as at the beginning |
| B1      | 45-58     | A return to section B |
| C       | 59-69     | Use of the pentatonic scale: C, D, E, G, A. (no extra notes). There is also some resemblance to material from section B. When regarding the flute line, each corresponding measure has the same notes, for example, measure 17 contains the notes C, E, G, A, and so does measure 59. Similar occurrences can be found in later measures as well. |
| D       | 70-83     | A variation on section B |
| E       | 84-116    | Beginning in measure 186, each instrument has a short motif, repeated, but varied with each repetition: Each measures has three notes using A and G, so sometimes the notes are A, A, G, and at other times they are A, G, G. The rhythm also changes every measure, mainly due to the time signature changes. Similar variations occur also in the piano part. All measures consist of three chords and repeated over and over. |
over again, only changing to accommodate time signature
changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>117-126</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Similar to section C in that the piano and flute have the same notes, but move in contrary motion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This is interspersed with <em>pp</em> chords in the flute and piano consisting of octaves and fifths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Until measure 130, both instruments have the same rhythm. In measure 131 the contrary motion remains, but the piano begins on eighth note later than the flute. The two instruments shift another sixteenth note further apart in measure 133, gaining it back in measure 134.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At measure 137 the two instruments are together again, although still in contrary motion. The shift one sixteenth note apart on beat one in measure 139 and another sixteenth in measure 141, gaining it back in measure 142.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The piece ends rather abruptly, as if the musicians were interrupted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of pentatonic scale, still C, D, E, G, A.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Performance Notes**

Since Michael Blake is particularly fond of the lower range of the flute, this work is primarily a study of low notes. While he scored it sparsely for the piano, making the flutist’s job a little easier, attention must still be paid to clear attacks and staccato articulation in the low register. This is especially important for the low, repeated, staccato D’s. The first section, from measures 1 to 44, should be very rhythmic. The section beginning at measure 45 is more hymn-like and introspective and should be played with a beautiful, rich sound. Measure 59 returns to fast, low notes and pianist should match the dynamic of the flute. The hymn-like section returns in measure 70, but with larger intervals – these should be played smoothly, i.e. the high note should grow out of the lower ones. A soft, floating sound without vibrato is required for the section beginning in measure 84. The piece finally reaches the second and third octaves of the flute in measure 117, which makes it a little easier to play *forte*. Intervals of more than an octave begin to appear in measure 121. Slow practice is necessary to ensure that the transitions between notes are smooth. The lower notes are still more important than the higher ones, so they should be emphasized. It would also be useful for the performers to work out exactly how many pulses the piano plays behind the flute, since it varies. It would also be beneficial to be aware that the piano plays the same intervals as the flute, but always inverted. For example, G to D in the flute becomes D to G in the piano.
4.1.7.2  

**Leaf Carrying Song**

Details:

**Instrumentation:** oboe d’amore (or oboe/ flute) and guitar

**Duration:** 8 minutes

**Published:** Bardic Edition

**Recording:** Archival recording of the premiere, available at the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) at the University of Stellenbosch

**About Leaf Carrying Song:**

The guitarist Simon Wynberg commissioned *Leaf Carrying Song* while working with John Anderson, who is the principal oboist of the English Chamber Orchestra. The Arts Council of Great Britain funded the composition. Wynberg wanted a piece that he could perform with various partners on both sides of the ocean – Great Britain and South Africa. Blake refers to *Leaf Carrying Song* as somewhat of a companion piece to *Honey Gathering Song*, discussed above. *Leaf Carrying Song* was originally completed in 1991, but then revised in 2002 for a performance in Canada that never materialized. It was finally premiered in Pretoria on 2 November 2008.

Of this work, Blake wrote:

> This is the first piece that is a substantial piece [for guitar]. I felt I had got inside the guitar. […] It took me a while to find what I would call a ‘voice.’ A lot of composers have gone the ‘African route,’ and it can be an easy option, and often it is not well integrated. Being a composer in South Africa, it is important to find that [unique] ‘voice.’ […] I started really composing seriously when I was living abroad and then it became a substitution for not being here.


241. In some of the interviews for this dissertation the composers expressed some dismay that there was an expectation to include traditional African elements in their music. Chapter One also discussed the role that granting agencies have played in supporting this type of sanctioning. Many composers may feel that they need to do incorporate traditional African elements in their music in order to receive commissions, and this is why it is considered the “easy” option.

Martin Scherzinger describes Blake’s style as “refracted paraphrases of various genres of African music in a way that menaces the opposition between quotation and abstract invention.”\(^\text{243}\) There are three types of “African” references that can be identified in *Leaf Carrying Song*: the use of polyrhythm, the use of pentatonic and hexatonic scales, as well as the choice of the title. As with *Honey Gathering Song*, Blake emphasizes that there is no direct reference to the Pygmy music of Central Africa, although the title is derived from titles found in that region.\(^\text{244}\) The Central African Pygmies gather honey at certain times of the year, so this type of song tells a story about the activity.\(^\text{245}\) Blake describes the form of *Leaf Carrying Song* as being “non-narrative.” Repetition is a characteristic of this work, and Blake describes it thus:

> There is no formal structure; you will find things that are repeated and fragmentary. It is a bit like a mosaic. It is non-narrative with no teleology. […] I don’t structure things in advance. […] I find that non-thematic material has a life of its own. In that sense it is intuitive. Stravinsky is our great model of an intuitive composer.\(^\text{246}\)

The themes in *Leaf Carrying Song* are not particularly melodic, but one should rather describe them as fragments and permutations of fragments. Frequently, these fragments are pentatonic, and with an occasional note added, become hexatonic.


Table 11 Analysis of *Leaf Carrying Song*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>The guitar has sixteenth notes, while the flute has a much slower rhythm – mainly full notes and dotted full notes.</td>
<td>Pentatonic scale: A, B, C#, E, F#. A sixth note, D, is added in the guitar part in measure 6 and 12, making it a hexatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14-20</td>
<td>Change of rhythm in the flute part – shorter durations, and slightly longer durations in the guitar part. The guitar has a straightforward eighth-note pattern, while the flute has hemiolas above it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>21-24</td>
<td>The pentatonic patterning in the opening of the guitar part now ascends, whereas before it was a descending pattern.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>29-30</td>
<td>Return of C1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Return of C2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>41-44</td>
<td>Return to the opening material. The melodic contour of the flute part remains the same, but the note durations are shorter, but not directly proportional to the original.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>In unison, a range of rhythms and durations: in 12/8: dotted quarters, dotted eighths, dotted quarter quintuplet.</td>
<td>The pentatonic scale has been expanded to include F#, which makes the scale hexatonic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>51-52</td>
<td>Simple rhythm – no syncopations, or hemiolas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>53-72</td>
<td>This section is characterized by a triplet rhythm in the flute, but heard against hemiolas in the guitar.</td>
<td>Essentially D major in the guitar, but the flute uses only A, B, D, E, F# - a pentatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Essentially uni-rhythmic in both flute and guitar parts, with the exception of beats two and three in measures 74.</td>
<td>Hexatonic scale in both parts (No D).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>A brief return to the material of the opening.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>Return to material of measures 73-76, but not as uni-rhythmic – there are more two-against-three rhythms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>84-93</td>
<td>Return to material of measure 25.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>94-108</td>
<td>A return and permutation of material at measure 53.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>109-112</td>
<td>Another return of material heard in measure 25.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>113-127</td>
<td>New material.</td>
<td>Pentatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>128-152</td>
<td>The fragment in the flute consists of an interval of A to B. In the guitar it consists of two chords: A, B, E to D, E, A. This fragment undergoes several rhythmic permutations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>153-156</td>
<td>Return of material from measure 73, but the flute begins a beat later than the previous times.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>157-170</td>
<td>New material, which also undergoes several rhythmic permutations.</td>
<td>Introduction of an A#.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>171-174</td>
<td>New material</td>
<td>Pentatonic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>175-179</td>
<td>Return to material of measure 128.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>180-183</td>
<td>Return of material from measure 171.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>184-186</td>
<td>Return of material from measure 113.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>187-191</td>
<td>Return of material from measure 128.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>192-194</td>
<td>Return of material from measure 113.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>195-206</td>
<td>Return of material from measure 128, but rhythmically substantially varied.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>107-214</td>
<td>Return of material from measure 45, but the flute now has an off-beat figure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>215-217</td>
<td>Same material as measure 128, but retarded substantially to signal the end of the piece.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Performance Notes

The flute and the guitar are treated as equal partners in this work, but this does not mean that the technical demands on both instruments are equal. Alone, the flute part is quite simple, while the guitar part is quite difficult to execute well. The rhythmic complexity adds to the demands on ensemble playing, while some of the notation is not particularly easy to decipher. For instance the 24/8 section beginning in measure 14. There is a ternary beat notated in the guitar and contrasted with the binary beat in the flute. Visually it appears more complex than it needs to be. The flutist needs to be keenly aware of dynamics, not only from a balance perspective, but also from an ensemble perspective: too loud a dynamic may make it difficult for the flutist to hear the fast notes in the guitar, possibly creating an ensemble problem. It is recommended that this work be rehearsed slowly to determine how the inner pulses of each beat interact between the two instruments.
4.1.8 Bongani Ndodana-Breen (b. 1975)

4.1.8.1 Visions 1 and 2

Details:

Instrumentation: Solo flute

Duration: 9 minutes

Published: African Music Publishers

Recording: Wendy Hymes – “African Art Music for Flute”

About Visions 1 and 2

Visions for solo flute was written in 2000 while Ndodana-Breen was in Chicago, Illinois. It was composed at the request of Wendy Hymes-Onovwerosuoke, an American flutist with an interest in music from Africa. Ndodana-Breen composed this work in two parts: Part 1: Andantino & Presto and Part 2: Moderato and Piu Andante.

Both parts of Visions can be organized by pitch collections – mostly pentatonic scales-and rhythmic “collections.” The latter is more difficult to define, but collections can be described a sections that are delineated by rhythmic changes. For example, Ndodana-Breen frequently changes from triplet figures to regular sixteenths, to quintuplets. As discussed below, section changes can be prepared gradually, or executed quite suddenly. Therefore, sections may be organized by pitch collections, or rhythmic collections, or both.

Table 12 Analysis of Visions Part 1 (Unless otherwise noted, all pentatonic scales are anhemitonic.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description/Rhythmic motif</th>
<th>Other Notes/Scale</th>
<th>Link to next section, if any</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andantino</td>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>The pentatonic scale is divided into two parts, each pivoting around the note “E”: A, B, E vs. D, C, E. Mostly quarter note triplets</td>
<td>Pentatonic: C, D, E, A, B (Hemitonic)</td>
<td>The last two beats of measure 13 are a transition to the next section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presto</td>
<td>14-22</td>
<td>This section has two voices: an upper voice focusing on the notes A, G, E, while a lower voice focuses on D, E, D.</td>
<td>Pentatonic: G, A, B, D, E</td>
<td>Measure 20 has an added F, which is not part of the pentatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo primo</td>
<td>23-27</td>
<td>Eighth note triplets</td>
<td>There are also several metre changes, while the syncopations indicate a shift of the beat.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The first pentatonic scale is heard from measures 23-26, while the second pentatonic scale is heard from measures 26-27. The addition of A in beat 1, measure 26 and C in beat 2, measure 26 are the common notes to each scale. Four sixteenths moving to sixteenth note quintuplets</td>
<td>There are two pentatonic scales with overlapping notes. Notes in brackets appear only once before “modulation”: G, (A), B, D, E and C, (D), E, G, A.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-32</td>
<td>From measure 28-30 the rests suggest a missing counter-rhythm, which then appears in measures 31-32.</td>
<td>Pentatonic scale: C, D, E, G, A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tempo</td>
<td>33-37</td>
<td>Triplet rhythm</td>
<td>Measure 37 links to the next section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pentatonic: G, A, B, C, D (hemitonic)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tempo</td>
<td>38-41</td>
<td>In spite of the C major designation, Ndodana still manages to convey a pentatonic feeling with each quintuplet, by using only limited notes from the scale and not alluding to any particular chord. However, when the triplets begin in measure 39, he outlines a d minor chord and an e minor chord. Quintuplets changing to triplets</td>
<td>Measure 41 is a transition into the next section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pentatonic: C major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42-45</td>
<td>Ndodana begins with only 2 notes of the pentatonic scale in measure 42, and then adds another note (A) in measure 43, another note (G) in measure 34, with an E finally appearing on beat 1 of measure 46. Sixteenth notes</td>
<td>Pentatonic: G, A, C, D, E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tempo</td>
<td>46-49</td>
<td>As in the previous section, Ndodana starts out with a limited number of notes. He plays with the notes E and</td>
<td>2 scales: Pentatonic on C, D,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D and then switches to E flat and D flat. He switches back to D and E in measure 48, but adds G and A. He does not add the note C until measure 49, in which the A flat also appears. Triplets and then accelerating to sixteenth notes</td>
<td>E, G, A And (C), D flat, E flat, G, A flat, which is hemitonic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accelerando 50-52 The shift from A flat in bar 50 to A natural in bar 51 suggests a “key change”. Everything else pivots around the note C, which is heard in the syncopated notes.</td>
<td>Uses only three notes: G, A flat, C in measure 50 and essentially the C major scale without the note B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tempo 53-57 Measures 53-54 pivot around the notes C and A, while measure 55 pivots only around C. Measures 56 and 57 are reduced to the notes D and E. The reduction of notes is similar to measures 42 and 46, in which only two notes are used. Sixteenth notes for measures 53-54: accelerating to quintuplets in measure 55, accelerating some more to sextuplets in measure 56, with a slowing down of the rhythm back to four sixteenths in measure 57</td>
<td>Still C major, minus the note B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tempo 58-62 This section actually begins on beat 3 of measure 57.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-67 The triplet figure here (measures 57-62) can be described as a rocking figure. The opening figure is heard again in measures 63, 65 and 67, but this time in A flat major. Primarily a triplet figure</td>
<td>E flat major modulating to A flat major. (Both are missing the F)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68-71 Sixteenth notes slow down to triplets Pentatonic C, D, E, G, A shifts to C, D flat, E, G, A flat, which is hemitonic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72-80 Opening material, but in a different pentatonic key Pentatonic scales: A, B, C#, E, F#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triplet figures: quarter note triplet figures accelerating to eighth note triplet figures</td>
<td>shifts to: B, C#, D#, F#, G# in measure 79 with the introduction of the D#</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-89</td>
<td>Measures 81-83 pivot around B; measure 84 pivots around A, while measure 86-89 pivot around C</td>
<td>Pentonic scale: A, B, C, D, E (hemitonic), which changes to a minor without the note B in measure 84 and another change to the pentonic scale C, D, E, G, A in measure 86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>One would expect the last note of this section to be E, but instead it is E flat, foreshadowing the key to come</td>
<td>Pentatonic scale C, D, E, G, A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92-98</td>
<td>The quarter note triplets in measure 96, while not exactly as the beginning, are reminiscent of it.</td>
<td>A flat major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98-102</td>
<td>Expansion of quarter note triplet figure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103-104</td>
<td>A very brief quotation of the opening figure, but with intervals displaced. Abrupt shift back to A from A flat major</td>
<td>Back to the opening notes: A, B, E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quarter note triplet
### Table 13 Analysis of Visions Part 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description/ Rhythmic motif</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Link to next section, if any</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderato</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>The quarter notes are always on the main beats, whereas the sixteenth notes are upbeats half of the time</td>
<td>Pentatonic C, D, E, G, A. The additional B functions more as an upper auxiliary (Which theoretically could turn it into a hexatonic scale.)</td>
<td>Measures 10-12 are a link to the next section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quarter notes and sixteenths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ndodana continues with the sixteenth-rest pattern he began in the first section</td>
<td>Aeolian scale, transposed to B as a tonic</td>
<td>Bridge to next section: measures 35-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-36</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ndodana begins with a melody that is 7 eighth notes long, which he repeats and varies: The first repeat, beginning in measure 24, is an exact repeat. The second repeat, beginning in measure 25, he repeats the first two notes of the melody. For the third repeat he adds an extra 2 eighths to the melody. For repeat #4 he uses the exact same melody as in measure 21, but changes the last note to a G. In repeat #5 he transposes the melody up a tone and makes the last note one sixteenth longer. This causes repeat #6 to begin on a pickup, rather than on a strong beat.</td>
<td>Aeolian scale continues, initially without the D, making it a hexatonic scale, but when the D returns in measure 28, the Aeolian scale is back</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piu Andante</td>
<td>37-45</td>
<td>Ndodana begins with a pentatonic scale, but by adding notes towards the end of the section, he turns it into an Aeolian scale on B. The off-beat sixteenth figure from measures 1-20 are used, but modified to fit into an off-beat triplet figure</td>
<td>Pentatonic scale F, G, A, D, E (hemitonic)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With an added B in measure 42 and a C# in measure 43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo primo</td>
<td>43-50</td>
<td>I have included measures 43-45 here, because although they belong thematically to the previous section, they also belong in this section in terms of the</td>
<td>Aeolian on B (measures 43-45), morphing into hexatonic G, A flat, B flat, D, E flat, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
tempo change and they act as a bridge into this section. Measures 46-50 quote the opening material of *Visions 1*.

The beginning of this section is still in the off-beat sixteenth rhythm, but changes into a quarter note triplet figure, which is recognizable as the opening material of *Visions 1*.

| 51-61 | This section begins with only two notes: F and G, which is reminiscent of measure 42 in *Vision 1*. The melodic material expands in measure 55 with some added notes, and by measure 56 the sound is more like a dorian mode than C major. Sixteenths – on the beat and off the beat. Hexatonic scale: D, E, F, G, A, B, with added C in measure 56, making it either a dorian or C major scale. |
| 62-66 | The intervals of more than an octave suggest that there is more than one voice here, especially in measures 62 and 63. The voices can be described as two motifs: the sixteenth motif is reminiscent of the beginning of *Visions 2*, while the triplet figure evokes measure 40 of *Visions 1*. The rhythm is a mixture of sixteenths, both on and off the beat, plus eighth note triplets. Two pentatonic scales can be distinguished: G, A, B, D, E and C, D, E, G, A. |
| 67—68 | C major scale, but intervals used are suggestive of pentatonic scales. These two measures link the previous section to the following section. |
| 69- the end | Large intervals and bell-like tones. Ending suggests a surprising d minor chord. Slow rhythm of syncopated quarter notes. Hexatonic scale: F#, G#, A#, B, C#, D# leading to d minor, suggested by the last two measures, which outline a d minor chord. |

Of the title *Visions*, Ndodana-Breen writes:

The piece was inspired by what I can describe as fragments of memories – a vision of Africa, the people and places I once grew
up with now clouded by distance and languid time. I think this is not nostalgia, but an attempt to hold on to fragmented memory and self. Something that I think is shared by most strangers to any strange land, I suppose, the “visions” of distant places and people that shadow any migrant.247

In another email to Wendy Hymes-Onovwerosuoke, Ndodana-Breen writes: “My melodic ideas try to invoke Southern African traditional melodies – I usually attempt to craft melodies with associations to San, Khoi, Xhosa, Zulu and Venda songs…not quotation, but mimicry.”248

As the synoptic analysis above shows, Ndodana-Breen makes extensive use of pentatonic and hexatonic scales and modes. There are several examples one can find in Visions that demonstrate Ndodana-Breen’s imitation of traditional African music he has known. In general, intervals of perfect fourths and fifths are important structural intervals in Nguni249 music. The following selected sections demonstrate this: measures 37-43 in Visions 1; measures 28-30 in Visions 2. There are a few ancient Zulu dance songs that only use three notes, usually C, G, F. Transposed and inverted intervals of these notes can be found in Visions 1 measures 42—44, as well as measures 53-54. Other older Zulu songs also use pentatonic and hexatonic scales, which can be seen from the synoptic analysis above in Table 1 and Table 2. Most hexatonic scales in Zulu music contain two semitones. While Ndodana-Breen does make use of such a scale – such as in Visions 2, measures 43-50 – he mostly utilizes hexatonic scales with only one semitone. Frequently, Zulu and Swazi musicians omit a note in the hexatonic scale, resulting in a pentatonic scale with two semitone intervals. Most often, Ndodana-Breen uses a hemitonic pentatonic scale with only one semitone, but an instance of a pentatonic scale with two semitones can be found in Visions 1, measures 46-49. Xhosa and Zulu speakers also make use of whole-tone root progressions, mainly because of the C- and D-roots of the uhadi bow.250 This can be


248. Ibid.

249. Nguni refers to a group of African people who speak various Bantu languages, such as Zulu, Xhosa, Venda, etc.

250. Uhadi bow – a large musical bow, with a gourd attached to the lower end to act as a resonator.
observed in *Visions* I in the triplets in measures 39-40, where the harmony alternates between a d minor chord and an e minor chord.²⁵¹

The rhythmic qualities of *Visions* are also akin to those of Minimalist music, especially in the sense that rhythmic changes are employed as a method of sectionalizing a work. While Steve Reich layers rhythms to create polyrhythms, Ndodana-Breen unfolds his polyrhythms as a series of rhythms. For example, in *Visions* I, measure 46, he begins with a triplet figure, moves to a figure of four sixteenths in measure 49, quintuplets in measure 55 and sextuplets in measure 56. Sections, although at times short, are homogenous in texture. As can be seen from the analysis in the tables above, sections are demarcated by a change in harmony and a change in rhythmic texture. As an example see measures 14-22 – a stretch of triplets that change into a rhythm that consists of sixteenths and rests at measure 23.

**Performance Notes**

Dynamics and rhythm are the main features of *Visions* I and II. It is important to observe dynamics, particularly when it is marked *forte* in the low register and *piano* in the higher registers. Accents should also be observed carefully, as these often indicate a displaced beat. For example, in measure 81 the accents appear to transfer the beat to the note B, which does not always fall on a main beat. While both pieces are very sectionalized, there is abundant bridging material. This can complicate the breathing choices, but unobtrusive breathing will aid in the creation of a musical line. For example, it is best to breathe quickly after the tied-over B’s in measure 15, rather than on a barline. There is an error in measure 26 of the score: there are only two beats in this measure, so the last three rests are superfluous. In the recording mentioned above, the performer has elected to play trills on the held-over E flats of measure 62 and 63, as well as in measure 65.

In measures 21 to 33 of *Visions* II the sixteenth notes with staccato and slur markings should be separated, but not be played too long or too short. They should have clear, bell-like articulation at the front, but still separated and “lifted.” The quintuplet in measure 35 should be slurred. In the *Andante* of measure 37 the performer should take care that the triplets sound “off

the beat” and not “on the beat.” Slurs should be added to the last two beats of measure 42 and beats one and two of measure 45.

### Inspirational Landscape Painting

#### 4.1.9 Isak Roux (b. 1959)

#### 4.1.9.1 Sketches

**Details:**

- **Instrumentation:** Flute and marimba
- **Duration:** 16 minutes
- **Published:** Self published by composer
- **Recording:** Liesel Deppe (flute) and Gilmar Goulart (marimba)

**About Sketches**

Roux composed *Sketches* for the author in 1998. This collaboration was restricted to determining alternate fingerings to modify the sounds of the flute. *Sketches* was conceived as a collection of African ideas. Roux likens this work to a painter, who makes sketches of scenes he would like to paint or draw.²⁵² *Sketches* consists of six movements, most of which have descriptive titles.

In *Azande* Roux has chosen to make use of some elements of Ugandan harp song music. *Azande* is also the name of a group of people in southern Uganda, whose music Roux has chosen to imitate. In the music of the *Azande*, the harp is of the handheld variety where the left hand plays only two notes, while the right hand plays a set of three notes. This is imitated in *Azande* by the left hand of the marimba playing two notes throughout the entire movement. There is an occasional G, such as in measures 20 and 21, while the marimba is in unison with the flute in measures 26 and 27. The right hand of the marimba also imitates the right hand of the Ugandan harp in the use of mainly three notes: C, D, E. He does add other notes, but those do not make up the main theme heard at the beginning of the movement. Roux indicates that the right hand of the marimba should also be thought of as a vocal line, as he was striving to imitate vocal lines of

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²⁵² Isak Roux, telephone interview.
children’s song. The flute line bears no resemblance to any particular African music, but is simply an improvisation on the part of the composer, who, again, was imitating vocal lines.

Table 14 Analysis of *Azande* from *Sketches*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>Theme A in the right hand of the marimba, four measures long. For the second repeat of Theme A, the flute joins with Theme B, also four measures long. This is repeated once more and varied slightly in both the marimba and the flute. Between measures 13 and 16 the metre changes from 8/8 to 6/8, but the marimba melody remains the same. The material in the flute is bridge-like and leads into the next section.</td>
<td>The left hand of the marimba plays only F#-E, or occasionally G-E for most of the movement, i.e. measures 1-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>17-27</td>
<td>The right hand of the marimba continues to repeat and vary its Theme A, while a new theme, Theme C is introduced in the flute. Theme C makes use of modified sounds by using alternate fingerings.</td>
<td>Metre returns to 8/8, and changes to 12/8 at the bridge in measure 26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>28-44</td>
<td>Measures 28-35 in the marimba are a direct quote from the first eight measures of the piece. The flute also repeats the first eight measures of the piece, but has one measure rest in measure 34.</td>
<td>Both themes are repeated directly, but an extra measure of rest in the flute part in measure 34 causes the lines to combine in a different way. (See description of this in Chapter about African musical devices used in South African Art Music.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>45-52</td>
<td>An abbreviated form of section B.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pipe Dance* is not actually a dance, but “pipe” refers to the use of an African panpipe. Similar to the pygmy music alluded to in Kevin Volans’ *Walking Song*, Roux imitates this music by combining two parts into one in the flute part. The flute begins the movement with a melody that sounds somewhat disjointed. However, in measure 17 the part is fleshed out, while the accented notes denote the second part. The unaccented notes match the notes of the opening motif exactly. The marimba part has two conflicting rhythms (polyrhythm): a triplet rhythm in the left hand of the marimba, contrasted by a duple rhythm in the right hand. This is evocative of Chopi xylophone players Roux used to hear in during his years in Durban, South Africa. The Chopi are a people from southern Mozambique, approximately 1 300km north of Durban. The original term for these xylophones was *timbila*, and both terms can be used interchangeably. As with most African music, it reflects the local tonal language in contour and phrasing.
Table 15 Analysis of *Pipe Dance from Sketches*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-45</td>
<td>Theme A is heard as a fragmented melody in the flute. This theme is eight measures long. It is repeated a second time in measures 9-16, before being expanded to include a second voice in measure 17. Several more repetitions follow in measures 25-32 and a varied repetition in measures 38-45. Theme B in the marimba enters at measure 25. It has a three-note triplet pattern repeated from measures 25-33. Against this, the right hand of the marimba plays a rhythmic pattern consisting of two eighth notes, an eighth rest and another eighth note. The voices are reversed in measures 34-45.</td>
<td>Theme A actually consists of two voices which combine to form a sixteenth-note patterning similar to Central African pygmy music. Theme B is the <em>Chopi</em> pattern Roux refers to above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>46-83</td>
<td>This section begins with a continuation of the <em>Chopi</em> pattern in the marimba: the triplet figure remains the same, but the rhythm in the right hand of the marimba has changed to a dotted eighth note, a sixteenth and two eighth notes. This repeated for a total of five measures. In measure 52 the flute picks up on the rhythm consisting of the dotted eighth note and a sixteenth. It has a theme (Theme 3) that is four measures long and heard twice. Eight measures of a meandering triplet melody follow in the flute part, punctuated by off-beat triplet patterns in the marimba. Measures 52-60 are repeated again in measures 72-83, but with a different ending.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>84-104</td>
<td>A return to section A, but omitting the first statement of Theme A by the flute.</td>
<td>An abbreviated version of section A, and with a different ending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>105-116</td>
<td>A section in 5/8. The flute plays on the beats, while the marimba plays off the beats. The notes for each part are identical, except that the flute is one sixteenth behind the marimba</td>
<td>Includes altered fingering for some, but not all notes. The notes centre around a pentatonic scale: G, A, B, D, E, with one rogue F# in measure 111.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>117-140</td>
<td>The sixteenth-note patterning in the marimba is reminiscent of Theme A in the flute at the beginning of this movement. However, the pitches centre around the same notes of the pentatonic scale heard in the previous section. In measures 132 the flute enters with material heard in the <em>Interlude</em>. Measures 7-11 of the <em>Interlude</em> are very similar to the last eight measures of this movement, which creates a rather abrupt ending.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This section begins with a continuation of *Sketches* by Isak Roux. The following movements fall into a different category than the preceding movements.
Weavers denotes two pictures in this movement. The main image Roux is conjuring up is one of Weaver birds, a type of finch found in sub-Saharan Africa. These small birds flit about, looking for fine material to build their nests, which generally results in a messily woven little dwelling. In another interpretation, Roux relates this movement back to the title, Sketches, using a pointillistic musical technique. He achieves this with a disjointed rhythm with a frequently syncopated rhythm in both instruments. Together the two parts form a whole to paint a picture of birds darting around. Roux describes this movement as a freely improvised one. There are no themes that could be described as recognizable. Instead, once can describe the first section as based on intervals of fourths and fifth in syncopated rhythms; its only cohesive factor. The second section is based on a four-note motif: C, E, C#, E. This is modified by changing one pitch of the motif, but always returning to the original.

The movements Groove, Weavers, Interlude and Mopani are included in the next category.
**Inspirational Landscape Painting**

*Groove* is described by Roux as an African walking song, without directly referring to one. The reference to a walking song is ascribed to the “grooving” of the marimba in this movement. Walking songs were and still are used by Africans to sing while walking. One sings biographical details of oneself while walking. This not only makes the walk go by faster, but it also helps to measure distance. Singing while walking allows the walker to fall into a “groove,” and it is this groove that inspired the title.

The whole movement is based on a motif, consisting of four notes: F#, E, F#, C#. This motif is repeated in the left hand of the marimba part throughout the movement, except in the last bar of each section. The last bar of each section has its own motif, usually consisting of octave C#'s, but here Roux varies the time signature and rhythm for each appearance of the motif. This is described in the table below.

Above these motifs, the flute and the right hand have their own fragmented, but interlocking parts. These fragments are based on the left hand motif of the marimba part in the following ways: when the flute enters in measure 2, it has the exact same motif as the left hand of the marimba, just a fifth higher. This happens several times in the movement, e. g. also in measures 8, 14 and 15. At other times the motif in the flute is varied, mostly by omitting notes, as in measure 4 where the F# is missing in on beat 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>The time signature is 12/16, changing to 9/16 in measure 7, the last bar of the section.</td>
<td>Unison octave C#’s in both the flute and marimba parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>8-14</td>
<td>The time signature returns to 12/16 and changes to 9/16 and 10/16 in the middle of the section – measures 11 and 12.</td>
<td>The four-note motif is interrupted twice: once by the change of time signature in measures 11 and 12, but also by the octave C#’s in measure 14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>The time signature was already 12/16 at the end of the previous section and it does not change for the end of this section either.</td>
<td>The end of the section is again announced by the octave C#’s in measure 20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>21-28</td>
<td>The four-note motif in the left hand of the marimba ceases on beat 1 of measure 26.</td>
<td>The octave C#’s in measure 26 signal the end of the section, but this time the ending is a little expanded to signal the end of the movement. Note also that that the flute hints at the octave C#’s in measure 21.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The movements *Groove*, *Weavers*, *Interlude* and *Mopani* are included in the next category)

This section begins with a continuation of *Sketches* by Isak Roux. The following movements fall into a different category than the preceding movements.

*Weavers* denotes two pictures in this movement. The main image Roux is conjuring up is one of Weaver birds, a type of finch found in sub-Saharan Africa. These small birds flit about, looking for fine material to build their nests, which generally results in a messily woven little dwelling. In another interpretation, Roux relates this movement back to the title, *Sketches*, using a pointillistic musical technique. He achieves this with a disjointed rhythm with a frequently syncopated rhythm in both instruments. Together the two parts form a whole to paint a picture of birds darting around. Roux describes this movement as a freely improvised one. There are no themes that could be described as recognizable. Instead, once can describe the first section as based on intervals of fourths and fifth in syncopated rhythms; its only cohesive factor. The second section is based on a four-note motif: C, E, C#, E. This is modified by changing one pitch of the motif, but always returning to the original.
Table 17 Analysis of *Weavers* from *Sketches*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>No recognizable themes; flute and marimba appear as independent parts. What binds them together is an underlying sixteenth-note pulse</td>
<td>No recognizable themes seem to resemble the chaotic nature of the weavers’ nest-building – but it all comes together in the end! The addition of quintuplet quarter notes in measures 9 and 16 lend a lazy character to the movement as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>21-33</td>
<td>The 12/8 time signature changes to 8/8. This, together with the repetitive motif of C, E, C#, E and its derivatives lends this section a “busy” feeling. The motif is heard first in the flute – measures 21-28 and repeated by the marimba in measures 29-32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Interlude* is a brief movement of eleven measures foreshadowing material from the next movement (*Mopani*, measure 15), and leading directly into it.

*Mopani* is a movement written for solo flute. The title refers to a tree that survives in hot, dry areas in Africa only. In this movement Roux depicts, or imagines an African resting in the shade of this tree during a hot afternoon – the subtitle for this movement is “Afternoon.” With its hollow-sounding alternate fingerings, playing and singing simultaneously and finger slaps, Roux is able to evoke a lazy, hot scene.

Table 18 Analysis of *Mopani* from *Sketches*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-14</td>
<td>Here the flutist is required to employ the following contemporary techniques:Alternate fingerings-measures 1-2; bending of notes – measures 3, 7 and 11; simultaneously singing and playing-measures 11-14</td>
<td>This section is cadenza-like and at times the soloist has the freedom to change tempo, e.g. measures 1-2 and 11-12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>Although there are frequent time signature changes, there is an underlying eight-note pulse throughout this section. Fingerslapping, amplified by hard tonguing to emphasize the sound is alternated with “regular” notes and fingerings. This gives the effect of two voices, similar to the hocket-style of the Central African pygmies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>25-27</td>
<td>In the last measure there is a return to the opening – the altered A flat, G, F trill of measure returns in the last measure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performance Notes

Overall, the challenges in Sketches are rhythmic complexity and legibility of the marimba part. The latter has more to do with the scoring than the score layout. The flute part of Azande is not particularly difficult on its own, but if difficulty is experienced, it is always useful to listen to the two-note eighth note figure in the left hand of the marimba for the pulse. It is tempting to fit the triplets of the flute part with the right hand of the marimba after letter B, so care should be exercised to keep the various rhythms distinct from one another. The title of the second movement, Groove, is quite apt. The flute and marimba should groove with one another. The triplet feeling sounds lazy, which it should, but can be enhanced by gentle tongue use by the flutist. There should be no harsh articulation. Weavers is the most rhythmically complex movement of this work. Initial practicing should be done by counting eighth notes, carefully noting where the flute and marimba rhythms converge and diverge. For example, the subdivisions of beat one in measure 6 are identical in both instruments, but in beat 4 of the same measure the flute and marimba play in each other’s spaces. Also, frequently the subdivisions change from duples to triplets. For example, the main beats of measure 2 can be subdivided into two pulses, but in measure 5 they are subdivided into three pulses. The quintuplets in measures 9 and 17 can be awkward to master, but counting four beats to the bar, combined with the knowledge that except for the first beat of the bar, nothing in the flute part falls on a beat.

Mopani is a solo movement that can also stand alone as a solo movement and may be played on the alto flute (non-transposed). For the notes where the flutist employs the voice, a relaxed embouchure is essential, otherwise the sound consist mainly of the voice. Since the pitches of the flute and voice diverge in measure 12 it is helpful to practice singing the notes alone first, before adding the flute notes. Another practice technique is to finger and sing A flat first and then for the fingers to move to A flat – this aids in forming the correct embouchure for the note A flat. From measure 15 onwards the pitches alternate between regular flute sounds and key slaps. The composer has acknowledged that it is actually more practical to amplify, or even replace the key slaps with and aspirated “t-” sound, similar to beatboxing. A more realistic tempo for this section would be a quarter note equals one hundred and forty. In Pipe Dance the flutist can listen to the right hand of the marimba for a regular eighth note pulse. From measure 52 onwards, the flutist must take care that the dotted eighth note and sixteenth figure does not become a triplet figure to
match that in the marimba part. At letter C there may be a temptation to rush – the flute plays on the beat, while marimba plays all the off-beats.

4.1.9.2  

Four African Scenes

Details:

Instrumentation: Flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and french horn

Duration: 13 minutes

Published: Self published by composer

Recording: Domus Quintett (Dolphin Records: CD70043, 1999)

About Four African Scenes

Four African Scenes was composed for a German woodwind quintet, Domus Quintett. This ensemble commissioned the work for a compact disc recording entitled News for Woodwinds. As a composer, Roux was given complete artistic freedom, but because he was in an “African” phase, Four African Scenes was a natural product of that time. In an email to the author, Roux writes that he drew on “really old African music.” In Desert Dance, Wind Song and Market Place Conversations there are various themes associated with individual instruments. These themes are not particularly connected, but as in the African music Roux mentions, all the lines combine in a rhythmic mosaic and are not intended to produce any harmony. Roux also utilizes short fragments that are designed to be interlocked. For this inspiration he credits the music of the southern African Bushmen.\(^{253}\) The following tables are analyses of the individual movements, illustrating the location of interlocking and independent voices.

\(^{253}\) Isak Roux, e-mail message to author, 28 July 2010.
### Table 19 Analysis of *Desert Dance* from *Four African Scenes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-51</td>
<td>There are four fragmented themes in this section, each of which is associated with a specific instrument: The movement begins with an off-beat theme in the horn (Horn theme 1), followed by an entry of the clarinet in measure 5 (Clarinet Theme 1). The bassoon enters in measure 11 (Bassoon Theme 1). The flute enters at measure 18 (Flute Theme 1) and the horn drops out of the texture. These themes are repeated several times before the oboe enters with the bassoon’s Theme 1 in measure 47.</td>
<td>The following four instruments each receive their own theme: horn, clarinet, bassoon and flute. The oboe is assigned the bassoon theme when it finally enters in measure 47. In this section, the flute and horn are never heard simultaneously. The themes are repeated several times in their entirety, but because they differ in length and enter at different times, the resultant effect is slightly different each time. The themes for the horn, clarinet and flute are slightly fragmented with short notes and rests, while the bassoon has a more lyrical melody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>52-63</td>
<td>A unison section: Measures 52-59 feature the flute, clarinet and bassoon in unison, while the flute and oboe are in unison between measures 60 and 63.</td>
<td>This unison section features a theme that is reminiscent of the contours of the Flute Theme 1, also with the characteristic “fragmented” feeling imbued by the short notes and many rests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>64-91</td>
<td>Introduction of Themes 2 in the clarinet, horn and bassoon in measure 64, followed by the Flute Theme 2 in measure 65. The clarinet, horn and bassoon have themes that are four bars in length, while the flute theme is three-and-a-half bars in length.</td>
<td>New themes are introduced in the flute, clarinet, horn and bassoon, while the oboe repeats fragments of the unison section (B). After the initial statement of Themes 2, the clarinet, horn and bassoon repeat the four-measure Themes another six times. The only changes that occur are in the flute and oboe: The flute only states its Theme once in full, after which it states various parts of it as fragments, including fragments of its Theme 1. The oboe also uses some fragments from the unison before it drops out of the texture in measure 74. It enters again in measure 80 with a pedal B-flat, held over seven measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>92-118</td>
<td>New themes (Themes 3) are introduced in the clarinet, horn and bassoon in measure 92. This time the themes are of dissimilar length: The clarinet theme is three-and-a-quarter measures in length; horn theme is three beats in length, while the bassoon theme is three-an-a-quarter measures in length.</td>
<td>The new themes in the clarinet, horn and bassoon, which are dissimilar in length, are repeated several times between measures 92 and 108. In measure 109 the bassoon changes to a pedal E flat, essentially dropping out of the texture, while the clarinet changes its tune in measure 111. Above all of this, the flute states fragments of its Theme 1 and Theme 2, but never stating any theme in full again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Measure Number</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Other notes</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>The movements begins with an open fifth: The note “A” in the bassoon and clarinet and a concert “E” in the horn. These three instruments also move together rhythmically throughout the introduction. Above this is a melody in the oboe (measure 2), joined by the flute in measure 7.</td>
<td>Long notes; slow harmonic rhythm in the clarinet, horn and bassoon. Complementing melodies in the oboe and flute, moving together rhythmically from measures 8-11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>12-46</td>
<td>This section can be divided into two sub-sections: A1: Roux groups the quintet into two distinct groups: the flute, clarinet and horn constitute one group, contrasted with the oboe and bassoon as the second group. Throughout Section A1, the rhythm is in unison within the group, but there is rhythmic independence between the two groups. This section is between measure 12 and 36. Section A2 is between measures 37 and 46. The grouping remains the same, but new thematic material is introduced. Theme 2 in Group 1 and Theme 3 in Group 2.</td>
<td>Each sub-section can be divided even further: Section A1 has six four-measure phrases, while Section A2 has three three-measure phrases. In Section A1 the group consisting of flute, clarinet and horn (group 1) repeats its theme six times, while the oboe and bassoon (group 2) either join with new themes, or leave the texture altogether, as follows: Measures 13-16: No group 2. Measures 17-20: New theme a. Measures 21-24: New theme a, slightly varied. Measures 25-28: No group 2. Measures 29-32: New theme b. Measures 33-36: New theme c. Section A2: Group 1 repeats its three-measure phrase three times – the first varies only slightly from the two subsequent repetitions. Group 2 repeats its three-measure phrase twice – slightly varied, but only states half of it for the third repeat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>47-70</td>
<td>Group 1 returns to its original Theme 1: the intervals are the same, but the rhythm is different. In Section A1 the rhythm a repetition of a quarter note followed by an eighth. In measure 47 the rhythm has changed to duples. From measure 53 onwards the Group 1 states its four-measure theme a total of six times; each time the intervals remain the same, but the rhythms changes only slightly. Group 2 does not state its theme in the measures 47-50, but states its theme once in measures 51-54, varies it in the last measure (57) of its second statement by substituting F# for E. It leaves the texture again in measures 59-62. Group 2 then</td>
<td></td>
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rhythm continuously changes from duples to triplets.
Group 2 states its first theme in its original form, no changes.
introduces completely new material in measures 63 (Theme 4) and 67 (Theme 5)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>71-80</td>
<td>Group 1’s Theme 2 is stated again and varied to form phrases of various lengths: Phrase 1: two measures; Phrase 2: three measures; Phrase 3: three measures, Phrase 4: two measures. Group 2’s Theme 3 also returns in measure 71. Its two-measure phrases are heard in measures 71, 74 and 77.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>81-89</td>
<td>Group 1 returns with two statements of it original Theme 1, before fading into a ppp chord consisting of B, A, E.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dusk at Loteni* is scored only for clarinet, horn and bassoon. It differs from the other movements, because it does not employ any overt “Africanisms.” It is hymn-like in texture, since all three parts move simultaneously most of the time. The only exception to this is in the first four measures, where the clarinet and horn move together, but the bassoon has a pedal on B flat. Notice that the clarinet and horn are in unison throughout the movement and that the bassoon line creates open fourth and fifth chords. Roux states that this movement is about the last salute at a burial site. Musically, he endeavoured to depict Zulu singing styles, “falling intervals and the like,” he writes. There are two voices present: the horn and clarinet are always in unison, and Roux’s intention here was to create one sound colour, one which is neither clarinet, nor horn, but a unique “new” sound colour. The bassoon depicts the second voice. What is perhaps unusual about this movement is the constant change of metre. With the exception of measures 17 and 18, no two consecutive measures have the same time signature. Roux’s explanation for the constant change of metre is that he built in pause so that the music could “breathe.”
Table 21 Analysis of *Dusk at Loteni* from *Four African Scenes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>Chordal movement of parts; clarinet and horn in unison.</td>
<td>Although Roux states that the harmony is incidental the following is a brief remark on the resultant harmonies: The key signature indicates F major, but the movement begins with a series of open chords (the chords lack thirds) on IV, V IV, I, IV V, IV. These are all primary chords, but the tonic is not clearly established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>Clarinet and horn in unison</td>
<td>Fast melodic movement, slowing down to next section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>21-28</td>
<td>Clarinet and horn in unison</td>
<td>Measures 21-25 are an exact repeat of measures 1-4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>29-32</td>
<td>Clarinet and horn in unison</td>
<td>Again the chords are missing thirds, so there is a series of open fifths. The chord progression in F major would look as follows: IV, V, I, IV.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22 Analysis of *Market Place Conversations* from *Four African Scenes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1-28</td>
<td>Measures 1-12: Fragmented Theme A1 in Flute (four measures long), Fragmented Theme A2 in Oboe (three measures long) Measures 13-28: The flute introduces a new Theme B1, with a similar theme, Theme B2 in the oboe. Both Themes B1 and B2 consist of duples and triplets. The bassoon enters with two notes from the Theme A2 oboe motif. In measure 16, repeated in measures 21, 23 and 27.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>29-50</td>
<td>In measures 29-32 the instruments divide into two groups: the flute and oboe repeat the same two measures six times, while the clarinet and bassoon have a six-measure melody together: the rhythm is the same, but the notes are not. Measures 35-46 are fragments of the themes used to this point. The most common fragment consists of two notes: Either a unison, or an interval of a fourth or fifth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>51-77</td>
<td>This section begins with a pause, one measure long. Characteristic of this section is the use of fragments, mostly intervals of fifths and fourth and interlocking between the parts. The horn has a sustained melody between measures 59 and 74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>78-91</td>
<td>Return of the B section. Instruments are grouped together and the same themes are quoted directly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>92-108</td>
<td>Fragments of Theme B (mostly intervals of fourths and fifths) are repeated in the oboe and bassoon, while the clarinet and horn have a more lyrical melody. The flute returns to a motif that bears a striking resemblance to its opening theme.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performance Notes

The pulse in *Desert Dance* is not well-defined, particularly at the beginning of the movement: the first two beats are empty, while the off-beats in the solo horn certainly sound like main beats in the absence of a reference beat. This is somewhat ameliorated with the entrance of the clarinet in measure 5, and become even more clear with the entrance of the bassoon in measure 11. Therefore, knowledge of the score is imperative for accurate counting by all members of the ensemble. Careful rehearsal of this movement at a greatly reduced tempo will aid in fitting all the parts together.

A good knowledge of the score of *Wind Song* is also beneficial for ensemble purposes, particularly from a rhythmic point of view. At measure 13 the members of the quintet should take care to match note lengths and tone colours for a homogenous effect. At measure 29 the flute, clarinet and horn continue with the theme from measure 13, but the oboe and bassoon have a contrasting melody. The latter two instruments should be aware of this, also taking care to match articulation and note lengths. This arrangement, where the ensemble is divided into two separate entities, continues until the end of the movement. An awareness of this fact aids in an interpretation of the movement: it moves from homogenous to contrasting sections.

*Dusk at Loteni* presents no particular challenges. Since this movement is hymn-like in character, the clarinet, horn and bassoon merely need to ensure that entries are together and that transitions from note to note under slurs are smooth. As with the first two movements of this composition, the main feature of *Market Place Conversations* is its rhythmic vitality. All entrances that dovetail into one another, such as the oboe interjection into the flute melody at the beginning, need to be smooth, on time and not interrupt the rhythmic flow. This is otherwise an uncomplicated movement for an ensemble. In general, the voicing is appropriate for a woodwind quintet, so no balance or dynamic issues should be experienced.
Conclusion

Some of the composers have made an effort to connect the sounds of Western instruments to an African aesthetic. The flute part in Walking Song (Volans) requires special fingerings to achieve a more diffuse sound. This is an attempt to approximate the sound of the hindewho, the Babenzele bamboo flute. At the end of The Cattle Have Gone Astray, Huysen notes that the flutist should breathe audibly, mimicking the sound of the mujanje flute. Fokkens uses quarter tones in Inyoka Etshanini, Scherzinger requests a breathy sound in the middle section of Whistle of the Circle Movement and Blake deliberately prefers the hollow sound of the low register of the flute. All of these requests point to an attempt to mimic an African sound ideal without employing traditional African instruments. Not all the composers have dealt with timbre as a parameter. For example, Hofmeyr, Ndodana-Breen and Steltzner have avoided manipulating the sound of western instruments. With the exception of Azande and Mopani (Sketches), Roux has also chosen not experiment with African timbre on western instruments. Since most of the compositions discussed earlier in this chapter were commissioned by groups that employ a flutist, it is likely that the composers chose a certain sound ideal that could be represented by a flute rather than the other way around.

In his book Knowing Music, Making Music: Javanese Gamelan and the Theory of Musical Competence and Interaction,254 Benjamin Brinner discusses performer capabilities and how these are extended by acquiring different competences: “…new performing competence which reinterprets, enlarges, and replaces older matrices of cultural knowledge.”255 This occurs to a certain in the studied works. In Inyoka Etshanini the flutist is required to learn how to play a quarter tone alto flute. The technical skills required are not limited learning fingerings not know hitherto, but also adapting the ear to recognize quarter tones and to play them in tune. Many of the works are also deceptively easy, at least when learning one’s own part. Putting together an ensemble, however, becomes a little more complicated. Cross rhythms frequently obscure the


beat, requiring careful attention to detail by all performers. For example, the polymetre in *Walking Song* (Volans) in measure 192: 6/8 against 4/4 where the eighth note remains the same. The opening of *Desert Dance* (*Four African Scenes*) begins with a solo horn on the off-beats. It is impossible to hear these as an off-beats until the other instruments enter, which means that the other performers need to be aware of the score and how their parts interact. So, the learned competences for the works in this study include being aware of the rhythmic complexities and learning to groove, i.e. learning where the centre of each beat is within an ensemble.
Chapter Five

Conclusion

South African composers began to incorporate elements of traditional African music into their works during the mid-twentieth century and the techniques in doing so have evolved over the last sixty years. This study aimed to identify contemporary South African flute works that display evidence of cross-cultural borrowing and to situate them within the South African Art Music genre. Unanticipated, however, was the variety of techniques employed by the composers to integrate elements of traditional African music into their compositions. Through analysis of these works I was able to identify and categorize four cross-cultural borrowing trends, from the most overt to the least overt: overt cross-cultural borrowing, borrowing guided by African music-making principles, African paraphrasing, and inspirational landscape painting. The list of categories practically represents the evolution of cross-cultural borrowing. Overt cross-cultural borrowing is a technique that emerged in more recent years, as composers have become more interested in accurately representing traditional African music in their compositions. Grappling with different tuning and scale systems, complex rhythms and dissimilar sound ideals have been the main obstacles to better integration, but attempts have been made by composers such as Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph (Lifecycle) and Hans Huyssen (Ciacona and Tchikona) who have combined western ensembles with groups of African musicians on traditional instruments. Presently, the most commonly-found categories are borrowing guided by African music-making principles and African paraphrasing. The four Categories that I have identified focus on sound, not on African social principles. This music is still presented on stages with an audience present. With the exception of Hambani Kakuhle Kwela, which was composed for a wedding, none of this music is intended for anything but a concert stage. Although there might be an inherent contradiction in creating art in a communal fashion, perhaps the next step in the integration of traditional African music into South African Art Music might be an understanding of the social principles involved in traditional African music-making. A community spirit, together with a fair collaboration as discussed in Chapter Four, might be a worthy goal.

South African Art Music is in a constant state of development and progress. It is nevertheless a topic that merits further study, as some scholars have pointed out that it is overdue
for examination. Much musicological work in South Africa has focused on Western Classical Music from two to three centuries ago, while analysis of current South African Art Music trends has been neglected. The problem is also compounded by the lack of overview of South African composers. This is especially difficult because many active South African composers have chosen to live abroad and do not always register their works with the South African Music Rights Organization. Once a comprehensive study of contemporary South African Art Music is done, it should be possible to gain a better understanding of the nature of Art Music in South Africa. Moreover, it would help to ascertain whether cultural integration in South Africa has occurred fully and successfully, or whether cross-cultural borrowing is indeed the ideal way to achieve cultural integration. Some issues seem to point away from cross-cultural borrowing under most circumstances, i.e. it is only acceptable when there is no power struggle involved.

The biographies in temporal context provide an interesting overview of art music composition in a political environment. Kevin Volans was clearly a musical activist in the 1980s by radically changing the way Africanisms were incorporated in South African Art Music. The days of using inspirational landscape painting as an exclusive vehicle to provide an African flavour to South African Art Music, or using an African “theme” for a type of “theme-and-variations” approach, were gone. Volans did not shy away from “African tuning,” or the repetitive and sometimes disjointed African melodies. This does not mean that the steps taken by earlier composers were not necessary; in fact, they probably paved the way for Volans’ African experiments. Volans though, has moved on to other musical styles, leaving the younger generation to make their own mark on South African culture. All of the composers bring a unique approach to their compositions: Huyssen and Scherzinger have learned African instruments, and Huyssen has certainly endeavoured to bring a uniquely African sensibility to his work by incorporating some of these African instruments in his works. Ndodana-Breen is of a younger generation of talented South African composers of colour, and because of this he is uniquely placed to blend the sounds of Africa with his eclectic approach to contemporary music.

It is, however, not possible to conclusively answer the question of whether the compositions in this study are representative of a general trend in South Africa. Firstly, the sample of works chosen for examination is too small. Secondly, it is possible that these works

are not representative of a composer’s output and therefore not necessarily representative of a musical trend in South Africa. It seems that most South African composers prefer to compose for larger ensembles, likely because the financial rewards and public exposure are greater. Also, the reluctance on the parts of composers such as Volans and Ndodana-Breen to discuss their flute compositions might indicate that they do not attach as much value to these works as they do to their other works. This in turn might point to a notion that their flute works are not as representative of their output and therefore not as worthy of attention as their larger works.

Two other main points of interest inform this survey: the musical instruments of traditional African music south of the Sahara, and a discussion of current literature about ethical and legal issues in cultural borrowing or appropriation. While the traditional instruments of Africa may only influence South African Art Music in a tangential manner, it is nevertheless useful to understand their construction and function within African societies. For instance, the uhadi has only two strings and all of its music is based on the two fundamentals and their overtones. This is the technique that Robert Fokkens has applied in Inyoka Etshanini. Ethical and legal issues have dominated any discussion about cross-cultural borrowing for the last twenty or thirty years. Power and money are key words in any discussion about the ethics of musical borrowing. Exploring these issues has shown that we can never escape our colonial past entirely; that we need to be constantly aware of our learned cultural bias and that we do not abuse our powers unthinkingly. It has also become apparent that, while the ethical and legal issues of cross-cultural borrowing do intersect some of the time, their similarities and differences are occasionally used to further personal agendas. For instance, the question arises, even if it is legal to borrow across cultures, is it ethically, perhaps even morally right to do so? Most scholars would respond in the negative to such a question, while those with legal views would have the law on their side. Furthermore, since there are no known South African composers who have multi-racial backgrounds, it is difficult to determine whether this would change the power dynamics in cross-cultural borrowing in any meaningful way.

The four cross-cultural borrowing principles helped answer the question posed earlier: How did and how do South African composers borrow and represent traditional African music in their compositions? The techniques range from the most overt to the least overt, that is, from overt cross-cultural borrowing to inspirational landscape painting. Additional notes are provided for potential performers: instrumentation, duration and publishing details are useful information.
When programming a concert, while the pedagogical notes are intended to aid in the preparation of the works. Many of the works have some errors, which are mentioned where applicable. Also, ambiguous tempo indications or other performance-related matters that appeared, such as the execution of instructions in the score, are also addressed in the pedagogical notes. Many of these issues were discussed with the composers, but other problems were solved through trial and error when performing the works. For instance, the audible breathing indicated in Hans Huyssen’s *The Cattle Have Gone Astray* is best obtained by breathing through the nose. It became apparent when rehearsing the piece that an alternative to breathing through the mouth was needed, as it was simply not loud enough to balance the cello.

The current study has been extremely informative, but further avenues for research still exist. Since this study has focused only on small chamber works for up to five instruments, within a very specific timeframe and only included those works that displayed evidence of cross-cultural borrowing, this meant that a large body of works has been omitted to contain the scope of the research. There are still many contemporary South African compositions for flute that do not exhibit any evidence of traditional African music-making techniques, some of which were composed by South Africans of colour. There are also works for flute within a larger ensemble, such as concerti, that can be explored; and one should not forget about the works that have been composed since 2006 – the last year included in this study – and will be composed in the future. All of these unexplored works would provide rich material for further research.
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____. E-mail message to author, 27 January 2011.


____. Interview by author, 26 June 2009, Stellenbosch, South Africa, minidisc recording.

____. Program notes for “Viva Baroque Cello” concert presented by Friends of Music, live concert, Durban Jewish Centre, 8 April 2008.


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___. Telephone interview by author, 11 August 2009, minidisc recording.


___. Telephone interview by author, 23 April 2011, minidisc recording.


___ . Interview by author, 24 June 2009, Cape Town, South Africa, minidisc recording.

Stephenson, Allan. E-mail message to author, 14 October 2007.


____. E-mail message to author, 16 November 2007.


Appendix A

Interviews

This appendix contains interviews conducted with composers. Interviews were conducted in person and by telephone, which were recorded with consent. Two interviewees, Michael Blake and Robert Fokkens, preferred to be interviewed via e-mail, as indicated. All interviews have been edited for content and punctuation: neither irrelevant and off-topic conversation, nor unnecessary and habitual utterances or words are included.

Michael Blake

E-mail interview, 11 September 2009.

Q: Do you come from a musical family? Was music-making a regular activity in your household as a child?

A: Not particularly musical family, certainly no professionals, and certainly not in the classical tradition. There was no music-making in our home till I started making it.

Q: Do you play any instruments?

A: Piano (still). Gave up the double bass in 1975. Trying to learn the mbira (still).

Q: What kinds of music do you listen to?

A: All kinds, especially new works which I try to get hold of in whichever way I can. And I listen to the classics a lot – Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Bruckner, Wagner, Debussy, and Stravinsky. I just got a twenty-two CD set of Stravinsky conducting Stravinsky and I’m working my through it, constantly in search of fascinating ‘corners’ which I can appropriate (as Stravinsky had of course already done himself). I’m also a YouTube junkie – discovered the opera section when I was staying in Italy a few months ago and finishing my own opera, and I was in opera heaven. But I cannot answer what now seems to be a stock question in interviews, i.e. what is currently on your iPod? I don’t have an iPod (and I haven’t got around to loading anything on my phone yet).

Q: What formal instrumental and compositional training to you have?
A: B Mus. (Wits), MMus (Goldsmiths), PhD Rhodes. Piano studies with Adolph Hallis; no formal postgraduate composition studies – I always felt that these were death to the imagination, so I tried to work it out myself (what the Germans call ‘autodidakt’). I did however attend masterclasses, consult and argue with other composers.

Q: Could you name composers who have influenced you?

A: Influence more through ideas than through than actual compositions, but certainly all the interesting twentieth century composers like Ives, Cage, Feldman, Scelsi, Nancarrow, Kagel, Ruth Crawford, Webern, Stockhausen. And earlier composers like Machaut, Haydn, Schumann, Mozart, Bruckner, Janacek. And of course the great Xhosa musician Nofinishi Dywili.

Q: Do you have any particular mentors you feel indebted to?

A: June Schneider, an incredible woman and intellect, who taught me as a student at Wits. [The University of the Witwatersrand] She shaped my ideas and fuelled my madness, and without her influence I’d probably be writing sonatas and rondos like so many South African composers.

Q: Where were you born and where did you grow up?

A: Cape Town (southern suburbs) and Cape Town (southern suburbs).

Q: Do you think that this (answer to previous question) has influenced your compositional style?

A: No, especially not the southern suburbs, except in an orchestral composition called Kwela (1992?) which re-imagined the pennywhistle music that I really did hear on the streets of Cape Town played by young kids from the townships - before they were chased away by the police. That was a truly lasting memory.

Q: If you have lived abroad, how has this shaped your compositional style?

A: I lived abroad for most of composing career pre-1998, so my compositional style was inevitably shaped abroad, but the link with (South) Africa was never broken, either
consciously or unconsciously, and most of my music from 1977-1998 has an African aesthetic. Those pieces all have subtitles or catalogue numbers which read “African Journal No xxx”, and prior to that when I was feeling my around African music, they had the suffix “African Notebook No xxx”.

Q: If you returned to South Africa, what are your reasons for doing so?

A: The European winters got to me – the bitter cold, the endless and the dark (I suffered from SAD); Britain deteriorated into capitalist greed under Thatcher and Blair and the arts were badly affected; and so on. But also having only ever spent two years of my life (1977-1979) living under a socialist (Labour) government, I wanted – somewhat naively I guess – to experience that again before I died. How wrong I was!

Q: How would you describe your compositional style/ philosophy?

A: Philosophy/aesthetic (rather than style): Intuitive (rather than structuralist), materialist (rather than conceptualist), reductionist (not minimalist as it is often mistakenly described) or post-minimalist, experimental (in the sense of the American experimental tradition established by Ives. Definitely not post-modern (whatever that is). Often described as African or neo-African, because of the incorporation/assimilation of certain African harmonic, melodic, rhythmic and formal practices. But making constructions from a range of composers (Bach to Cole Porter) is also a line of compositional activity.

Q: Has this style/ philosophy evolved?

A: I guess so.

Q: If so, can you describe it?

A: Pieces on the whole have become more concise/compressed, music has become lyrical in some cases, harmony often more dissonant. The African material became almost completely assimilated between the 1980s and the 2000s. I’ve become more interested in taking instruments to the edge of what’s possible. I’m becoming more interested in other media, using soundtracks and videos with instruments.

Q: How would you describe the past/ history of South African music?
A: I presume you are talking about art music specifically. Like most former colonies, SA music has been closely modelled on European music of the common practice period, and in some cases also serial music and the European avant-garde of the 1950s onwards. Because SA composers viewed European music as superior, they composed in the image of so-called Western Art Music, and only took a different, more local view during the 1980s and 90s when they saw the political writing on the wall and realised the way forward for artistic survival. In post-apartheid South Africa, many have already abandoned that practice, others have reverted to a nineteenth and early twentieth century musical language, others have simply given up altogether, and only a handful are trying to say something significant in a postcolonial South Africa.

Q: How do you view the present and what direction is it taking?

A: There are some younger composers developing strong voices: Robert Fokkens, Braam du Toit, Hannes Taljaard, Clare Loveday, Angie Mullins immediately come to mind. And there are some strong, original voices in the middle generation: Mokale Koapeng (choral and chamber music), Theo Herbst (electronic music), Phelelani Mnomiya (choral music) as well as composers like Paul Hanmer, Carlo Mombelli and Julia Raynham who have made the transition from jazz or rock into exciting new composed music.

Q: How do you see your role in the future?

A: Having been a new music activist here in the 70s, then in Britain in the 80s and 90s and here again since 1998, I feel it’s time to hang up my composer’s AK47 and focus on composing and teaching young composers. There are plenty of other people to organise, lobby and get South African music out into the marketplace, the world stage, etc.

Q: How did you feel about local South African influences in South African Art Music?

A: I’ve mentioned the political issues around this [above]. It was a bad move for SAMRO to specify in their commissioning contracts that composers should use so-called African elements in their works (they have stopped doing that since). Some composers are able to work with these and indeed want to, while others do not feel comfortable with them and don’t necessarily wish to. The sparring around who did it first – viz. the Stefans Grové saga – has been incredibly puerile and needless to say unproductive. (But just for
the record, there are examples dating back to the early part of the twentieth century, and more specifically Stanley Glasser has used African elements fairly consistently since the late 1940s when Grové was a European neo-classicist.)

**Q:** How do you presently feel about these influences?

**A:** As you are aware I have been using so-called African elements – scales, harmonic structure, rhythmic devices, cyclic forms, asymmetries, patterning etc – since the mid-1970s (African Notebook series and then African Journal series). After I came back to South Africa in 1998 I had a commission from the NAC [National Arts Council] for an organ piece for Gerrit Jordaan, which was probably the last work in which the elements were quite overt. I tried to do things differently this century, and assimilate those influences, partly because I tired of comments like “It sounds so African…” and also because I no longer felt the need to wear my identity on my sleeve, which seemed necessary in the vast compositional marketplace of Britain and Europe where I had lived. Kevin Volans has said the need to use African elements fell away with end of apartheid, but someone like Hans Huysse only ‘discovered’ Africa a decade or so ago, so he needs to catch up and has the right to do so, whatever one may think of his difficult musical marriages. And while among the young generation it is not even a consideration for some, composers like Robert Fokkens are developing an exciting language with uhadi bow music, for example.

**Q:** I am interested in the flute works by South African composers between 1985 and the present. Part of the reason for choosing this particular time frame is because it covers the time from just before Mandela’s release through the transition period. I would like to see whether South African flute works reflect a change in style during this period. More specifically, if there is a style change, does it reflect the happenings in the country? If so, how? Does the title of Honey Gathering Song relate at all to the dance For the Off, for which it was originally composed? If so, how? For example, what was the inspiration for the title?)

**A:** Nothing remarkable at all. The choreographer (Gill…forgotten her surname) was dashing to the airport immediately after the last rehearsal, i.e. she was off – to South
America or somewhere. And she suggested the title For the Off as she dashed out the door. When I revised it as a concert piece, I hunted around for a more fanciful title.

**Q:** Any particular reason for the instrumentation of flute and piano?

**A:** (a) It was an opportunity to write a piece to play with my first wife (Tessa Swade); and (b) the budget was small, so that meant we could get all the money. But I’m not crazy about the flute (and that definitely wasn’t what I married her for, nor I think why I left her), except for the low register.

**Q:** Were there any reasons for reworking it for flute and strings?

**A:** Expediency, greater currency – after all there’s very little to go with the Mozart Flute Quartets. But I also wanted to hear the blend of the flute and strings, as opposed to the greater opposition of flute and keyboard.

**Q:** Although you say that no direct reference is made to the music of the Rain Forest pygmies, is there perhaps an oblique allusion? If so, how?

**A:** Absolutely no allusion, though I’m sure a musicologist could invent one. You will find substantial and deliberate references to the music of the Rain Forest pygmies in some of my clarinet pieces (Basset Clarinet Quintet, for example).

**Q:** It looks as if you are using a pentatonic scale, more specifically, D, E, G, A, B. Occasionally I see a C or an F#. Would you like to comment on that, or should I not read too much into that? It seems as if the pentatonic scale is used leads to some fourths and fifths. Any significance in that or just merely a result of the scale?

**A:** I think the passages where you find C as well as D, E, G, A, B are actually in the “key” of C. On the other hand the F# forming a fourth with the B is a particular harmonic device: the whole passage is built harmonically on the pair of fourths of E-A and D-G, and the F#-B fourth has a kind of cadential function or a move to a different harmonic area. They might be seen as second inversions, which I like because they are the weakest diatonically. I’ve never really looked at that before, but I guess that might be what’s going on. Interesting.
Q: It also seems that the rhythm develops in the absence of melodic development. How correct is that? Is this an instance of minimalism?

A: I don’t “do” melodic development. In more recent works I have observed that I repeat or bring back melodies in different environments. But here as in much of my work it is the rhythm that develops most and which is the most complex parameter (like Ives or Nancarrow). You can’t really detach melody from rhythm, but there is certainly no melodic development as found in music of the common practice period (up to about 1950). It has been called minimalist, but then so has Morton Feldman’s music. Certainly not minimalist in the very repetitive sense of Reich or Glass.

Q: Any other comments or observations?

A: A lot of flautists are put off by the fact that the music is so concentrated in the lower register, which as I said before is my favourite. But a good flautist, like Ann Laberge, can bring it off brilliantly.

Robert Fokkens

E-mail interview, 19 August 2010 and 27 January 2011.

Q: I have a copy of Avril Kinsey’s thesis on guitar works by South African composers. I can get most of your biographical information, including education an awards from that. So for me the important questions are the later ones. I am mostly interested in your compositional/philosophical views, especially your current ones. Feel free to add anything you feel relevant and I have not asked. Do you come from a musical family? Was music making a regular activity in your household as a child?

A: I was encouraged to sing and play an instrument, and we listened to a very broad range of music. I sang a lot at school and played violin and piano. My brother is a professional conductor and double bass player, and my sister plays the piano and trumpet.

Q: Do you play any instruments?

A: I play the violin to a semi-professional standard and occasionally sing in public. I still regularly use my keyboard skills.
Q: What kinds of music do you listen to?
A: I listen to a very broad range of music, but naturally keep up with other composers working in 'contemporary classical music' most frequently. I enjoy listening to and learning from any music.

Q: What formal instrumental and compositional training to you have?
A: PhD in composition (University of Southampton) completed in early 2007; MMus in composition (Royal Academy of Music) completed in 2002; BMus (Hons) in composition and analysis (University of Cape Town) completed in 1999; BMus (General - composition and violin as main practical studies) (UCT) completed in 1998.

Q: Could you name composers who have influenced you?
A: Influences are again very broad - non-classical music: Xhosa traditional music, electronica/techno dance music, jazz, folk music of the Mediterranean regions; classical music as a whole - I've learned something from all the composers I've come across; twentieth/twenty-first century 'classical' - Stravinsky, Bartok, Satie, Ligeti, Berio, Cage, Feldman, Reich, Adams are probably most influential.

Q: Do you have any particular mentors you feel indebted to?
A: Michael Finnissy, my PhD supervisor.

Q: Where were you born and where did you grow up?
A: Born Port Elizabeth, grew up Cape Town.

Q: Do you think that this has influenced your compositional style?
A: Yes, particularly in my interest in Xhosa music. But also the fascinating 'post-colonial' experience of growing up and training to be a 'classical musician' in Africa has been a very potent driving force in my work.

Q: If you have lived abroad, how has this shaped your compositional style?
A: In live in the UK. This has sadly cut me off on a day-to-day basis from how things are developing in SA, but has broadened my understanding and knowledge of contemporary music and culture immeasurably. I have also been able to develop more freely in some ways - with a relatively strong culture of contemporary music in the UK, I've been able to experiment and explore musically and conceptually far more uninhibitedly than I would have been able to in SA - this is manifested musically, aesthetically and technically in my work.

Q: If you feel comfortable answering the following question: If you still live abroad, what are your reasons for doing so, and what still ties you to South Africa?

A: I would like to work more regularly in SA as I believe the potential for very interesting musical developments is there (and starting to appear gradually), and I would like to have a connection with this. I'm keen to support young composers and musicians through my experience where relevant and helpful. I will only ever consider myself South African. My family are all still in Cape Town, and I would very much like to be able to visit there more often. I came to the UK to study, and have stayed because of the professional opportunities and the richness of musical life in London. If it were not for being a composer, it is very unlikely I would have left SA.

Q: How would you describe your compositional style/philosophy?

A: My only philosophy as a composer is to try to write music that honestly reflects who I am, what I believe in, and what interests me. The style of the music is determined by this.

Q: Has this style/philosophy evolved?

A: Style is constantly evolving as each piece is a re-exploration of the issues I mention in 12 - style is an outcome rather than a starting point.

Q: If so, can you describe it?

A: Not really - there are features which I think are constant, but other people hear it very differently.
Q: How do the pieces that I requested (flute chamber music) fit into your compositional style?

A: These pieces are quite typical of my work since about 2004-2005 in bringing together a broad range of technical and stylistic influences in a way which are, I hope, well-integrated into a fairly unique voice. To my ears, my interest in Xhosa bow music is very obvious in all of these pieces, but again, many listeners don't seem to hear this as clearly as I do - no bad thing, necessarily!

Q: What was the inspiration for these pieces? (Commission, etc.)

A: All three pieces were commissioned for various concerts over a number of years by London-based ensemble rarescale which is led by alto- and bass-flute specialist Carla Rees. Her work with Kingma-system quarter-tone instruments has led me to write pieces which work with these capabilities quite intensively.

Q: How would you describe the past/history of South African music?

A: As in any country, 'music' takes a huge variety of forms in South Africa. The difference in South Africa - that certain types of music were politically reserved for certain racial groups - has meant that some musics which could have interacted more energetically and productively far sooner have developed very separately. Particularly for classical music and composing, this had a detrimental effect on its development as an art form rooted in South Africa - too much time was spent simply emulating and copying what was being done outside the country, and in general, the results are fairly uninspiring and not particularly original before about 1980.

Q: How do you view the present and what direction is it taking?

A: There seems to be a growing realisation in SA that South Africans could have something interesting, valuable and unique to say, and there appear to be more young composers and sound-artists who are starting to engage with this. Things are still in flux, so I hope that this will continue and grow as it is a massively important step for a country to have creative people creating confidently about themselves in their own voices.

Q: How do you see your role in the future?
A: I will continue to write music which engages with my personal history, which will hopefully contribute to a growing creative 'conversation' in South Africa and outside. I also hope to be able to continue teaching, mentoring and supporting young South African composers whenever I have the opportunity - both personally and in my capacity of the vice-president on New Music South Africa.

Q: How did you feel about local South African influences in South African Art Music? Also, how do you feel these influences can be best incorporated? I found your commentary on “Inyoka Etshanini” Etshanini. In it you mention that you “attempt to engage with a number of issues raised by post-colonial critical thinking.” Could you perhaps elaborate on these issues and how you deal with these issues in this work?

A: As will hopefully already be clear, I think composers should engage with whatever material they feel feeds and nourishes them and their creativity. To me, South African traditional music has been the foundation on which I've built my musical voice because of its beauty, power, resonances with other musics which interest me, and technical relevance to my musical aims. The only critical issue here is that composers should only work with material which is appropriate to them, and with which they can create music with conviction and sincerity. I don't think composers should try to 'incorporate influences' for the sake of it - this will always sound unconvincing - but they should do it if it makes sense to them. Lastly, I think the phrase 'incorporate influences' is very problematic - composers should work with materials as if they were their own, not graft on borrowed musical ideas to their 'normal style' (the approach often attempted - mostly unsuccessfully - in the past in this field).

My thinking in this is strongly informed by the field of post-colonial studies - most importantly the difficulty of locating and pinpointing 'identity' in extra-personal categories, and how much more complex this has become in the post-colonial era.

Q: How do you presently feel about these influences?

A: I think the issues raised and debated in the 80s in various articles and conferences are largely the result of the categorizing mind-set of the time. 'Culture' is constantly being re-invented through creative acts (even the most traditional) - and in a world where cultural identity is so fragmented and uncertain, one needs to find a self in the selection
and re-positioning of various fragments, rather than trying to put a group of similar fragments back together to try to reconstitute any particular unified culture which is no longer there.

Q: In an article you wrote about Tracing Lines for violin and cello you mention that you were fascinated as a student by Xhosa bow music. Could you perhaps describe what it is that fascinates you, if that is possible!

A: I think Xhosa bow music is very beautiful and subtle. The use of overtone melodies (particularly on the “umrhube” bow) is quite extraordinary and the rhythmic nature of the music is very compelling. I have always been interested in cyclic music, so the cyclic patterns and how they are both used and disguised in various ways are also very attractive and interesting.

Q: About “Cycling to Langa.” You seem to use pitch and rhythm cycles, is this correct? Is Langa the township near Cape Town?

A: The piece uses a lot of cycles, as does much traditional SA music. Langa is indeed the township - I met Madosini (the leading Xhosa bow player) in Langa in 2008. Yes, I’m trying to find a way of working with cycles that allows development and variation beyond basic layering techniques.

Q: What was the inspiration for the work?

A: The inspiration was a combination of the above event, the ensemble who commissioned it (with whom I’ve worked a number of times) and my continuing interest in Xhosa bow music. The piece was commissioned by the low flute and electronics ensemble ‘rarescale’ for an anniversary concert.

Q: What electronic equipment did you use?

A: The intention was to use live electronics, but my machinery (a simple software looper called Mobius) actually failed me just before the intended premiere. This recording was done at the actual premiere a few months later and uses samples that are triggered live in MAX-MSP as the electronics ‘performer’ of rarescale felt this was a safer option for him.
Q: Was this work also inspired by “uhadi” music?

A: It is related to my interest in bow music and overtones, yes. It is also one of the attractions of rarescale that the flautist, Carla Rees, has fully quarter-tone alto and bass flutes which makes this sort of material possible.

Q: About “Enyoka Etshanini:” I notice a cycle of fourteen pitches. Are these based on two fundamentals and their overtones?

A: The basic pitch technique of the music taken from Xhosa bow music. The instrument only has two pitches - the open string and a 'closed' string about a tone higher. Melodies are played in overtones over these two pitches. Obviously the cyclic nature of the music is also central.

**Hendrik Hofmeyr**

Interview, Cape Town, 25 June 2009.

Q: I have two of your pieces here. One you sent to me last year.

A: Oh, Right

Q: And the other one I have is Marimba.

A: Okay.

Q: I am mostly concentrating on small works, nothing more than five or six instruments, although I have heard about your flute concerto.

A: Yes.

Q: The one that you wrote for Helen Vosloo. I haven’t heard it, but I hear it’s...

A: I’ll give you a copy.

Q: I heard that it was performed here (referring to Cape Town) by someone...

A: Yes, one of our students did it recently.
Q: What's the instrumentation, just out of curiosity?

A: It’s a fairly small orchestra … double woodwinds, no flutes.

Q: There’s bass clarinet though.

A: Yes, yes, there are alternate instruments such as cor anglais; only two horns in the brass section … and there’s harp and two percussionists and then strings …

Q: Okay. How many strings does it require? Is it like a small chamber orchestra?

A: Yes, a chamber orchestra would do very well. I would say if you’ve got eight first violins, six seconds, four violas, four cellos, two double basses.

Q: So one of these was written for Helen as well, wasn’t it?

A: Yes, the first one, Incantesimo. You see, she actually phoned me out of the blue; I mean I didn’t know her from a bar of soap and she had heard some choral work of mine performed by the SABC choir…and she just got my number from the conductor Richard Cox. And she called and said I like your music, why don’t you write me something?

Q: So, it was a commission?

A: Well, it was a request, shall we say.

Q: A request, oh, okay.

A: She was principal flute with the National Orchestra and they asked her if she wanted to do a concerto and she said yes, but she asked me to write her one, so that’s how it happened.

Q: So may I ask who paid you for that? Was that the orchestra, or did she get a special grant from the Arts Council?

A: It was really just a request. We got money for the making of the orchestral parts from (I think) the National Arts Council. And then, the recording was actually made by the National Symphony Orchestra just before they disbanded unfortunately, so they didn’t issue it. It was their swansong. At their last recording session it was announced that the
orchestra was disbanded, terrible … but then we convinced the Distell Foundation for the Performing Arts to issue the CD eventually…

Q: Okay.

A: ‘cause the orchestra didn’t have the funds to do anything of the kind. They then became a kind of ad-hoc orchestra rather than a permanent body. So the CD is under the Distell label. Unfortunately, it was also the swansong for Distell’s interest in CDs. They don’t distribute, and of course there’s very little point in producing CDs unless you’re also distributing, so they ended up having boxes full of CDs.

Q: There’s no money in that.

A: I think it was more a question of them not having the right channels for this [indistinct]. Distell is really a kind of wine-producing company. It was a kind of tax write-off for them, so they were not interested in distribution, although I tried to convince them. They were really the only body which sponsored the recording of South African music CDs The Foundation still exists, but [they] have kind of a general performing arts interest, and they have decided that they need to scale down [on] classical CDs.

Q: Right

A: Classical music in this country is in dire straits, as there is no publication of either CDs or scores.

Q: So, when you write a piece like Incantesimo, that’s for someone, where does your inspiration come from?

A: If I know the player very well I find that is really enough of an impetus and stimulus for me to work from, but I also like to showcase what I perceive to be the qualities and capabilities of the instrument. It tends to evolve from that … Incantesimo evolved from the idea of creating impalpability, an apparition, ‘cause I find the flute is good at conjuring, evoking that kind of imagery, especially in the running passages … fluttertonguing, all kinds of other things - tremolo that I am rather addicted to…

Q: it’s like…it floats…
A: Yes, yes and the effect of the instrument creates an other-worldly atmosphere, and in this case also, the possibility of writing in two voices, which I use quite a lot in this work and the concerto. I remember showing this to Eva Tamassy [a flautist in Cape Town] when I was writing it and I played it on the piano. She was horrified at all the tremolos and said, “You know, the flute is not the piano!”

Q: Well, there are special books out there where you look up the tremolo fingerings. Have you ever heard of Robert Dick?

A: No, I haven’t…

Q: He’s an American, flautist ... and he’s into all of these kinds of techniques…

A: I might have seen some of his work; he writes “whistly” effects and multiphonics, but in an accessible idiom; it’s not avant-gardist stuff. I think students have performed some of his works where I have examined.

Q: So they [the tremolos] are possible, but he comes out with these books of special fingerings...

A: Yes… I have quite a good orchestration book from the time I studied in Italy, by Italian composer, Casella, which is one of the few orchestration books that actually lists all possible tremolos for all the wind instruments and that kind of thing … So I used that too.

Q: And so when you use that, are you aware of the different sounds of the different tremolos, depending on the register and whether it crosses over registers? Does it teach you that too?

A: Well, it tells me which ones are more difficult and more cumbersome, but I suppose I go by a rule of thumb that where it does cross registers and where the interval becomes larger, it will generally be slightly weirder, shall we say further removed from the sound of a trill. And I rather like that as well. In fact, you might sometimes hear odd overtones as well as undertones.

Q: I like the harmonics and the tremolos in the second bar…
Q: So, I don’t see anything that explains some of the signs, so I am going to guess here... this little sign here... [points] is that a quarter tone?

A: A quarter tone; it’s just embouchure inflection...

Q: So you can just do that...

A: So it’s just tilting the flute and relaxing the lips or whatever; you are not supposed to actually alter the fingering...

Q: and then here, where you have the top notes, that’s the melody line...

A: That’s really just to show the melody. Obviously, it’s not supposed to be sustained.

Q: So that’s the two part thing you were talking about?

A: No, the two part thing is more here [points to bar 10ff]. We have the main tune here and the subsidiary voice. Sometimes it’s above the main tune.

Q: So I would only hear that if I actually played it rather than looking at it?

A: Yes, the subsidiary voice in sense is for the most part really just harmonic, but as you see, it sometimes goes above the melody as well, so the idea is that you play quite emphatically on the first note of the tremolo in order to stress it. Lean on it, time-wise, so the tune is clearly audible.

Q: Okay. And what does the title mean?

A: Literally, “incantation”. The flute up this apparition, then becomes the apparition itself, and then fades out again at the end.

Q: Right. So, it’s a bit mythical in a sense?

A: Yes, it’s got to do with the magic of sounds, and the bewitching qualities that they can evoke. I did write a little programme note on it once.
Q: You sent it to me. And how do you go about composing a piece like this? I know you said you like the tremolo effect. Do you kind of work out a structure ...

A: The structure tends to evolve as I go along. As a composer I am very much attached to the idea of thematicism and thematic development. The structure tends to be very much self-referential and organic. It’s not just kind of an arbitrary sequence of ideas; things tend to evolve and return again at certain points in the structure.

Q: Right. So do you do this just on paper and do you sit at the piano and try out things?

A: I believe firmly in composing at the piano. Obviously when you are dealing with a single line instrument it’s quite easy to hear it in your head, but a lot of this writing is in fact harmonic. Part of the tremolo sections also, most of the third [section] is really arpeggio type figurations.

Q: Right.

A: So, yes, those I generally do like to hear at the piano. And also, I think working at the piano kind of makes you push the envelope, because you can try out new things, whereas when you write by ear, you tend to rely on the things that you know that work, so I suppose sometimes the hands discover things that the head hasn’t thought of yet.

Q: So by pushing the envelope, do you mean also for the flutist?

A: No, not necessarily; more in terms of musical language, whatever the instrument might be. When I write for an instrument that I don’t know, [I] tend to look at quite a lot of repertoire for the instrument first, just to get a sense of what works on this instrument; what’s idiomatic on the instrument. I don’t believe in writing notes and then saying, “Let’s put this on flute!” I start with the idea of writing for flute and writing that will sound good. I’m very interested in the idea of transcendental technique, that idea which Liszt propagated, where you write music that is technically very demanding, but in which technique becomes the kind of medium for transcending what might be the expressive limitations of the instrument. Usually a flute plays one note at a time and makes a nice melody and so forth, and it does that really well, but how can we broaden that; how can we add things to it at the same time, without just creating a kind of study? The technique mustn’t be an end in itself; it is always there to serve the large goal of
increasing the range of expressivity, of increasing the range of timbres, the colours and textures that are possible on the instrument. I suppose in a way I am a dramatic composer.

Q: But...

A: I believe in music as a means of communication, of evocation. Although I am told that my music is fiendishly difficult to play, the intention is never really that idea that technique is an end in itself.

Q: Right, and how would you say this particular piece fits into your overall output? Is it representative of your style?

A: Yes, it’s one in quite a large series of works for solo instrument. I have written quite a number of such pieces. I think in my present chronology - what is the date at the bottom there? I think it’s right at the end of the piece.

Q: I think it’s 2004... 1997.

A: ‘97, yes. I think the first solo piece I wrote was for cello in about 1996, and I rather enjoyed doing that. And in way it’s a similar piece in that it strives to transcend the limitations of the instrument and what is usually done on the instrument, so Incantesimo is the second one and then I.’e written a number of other pieces. Marimba was requested by SAMRO, a commission for their overseas scholarship competition.

Q: And that was in 2000?

A: Yes, and at the same time they also asked me for a solo violin work. I’d written another solo violin work slightly earlier than that as a kind of prequel to a work which I wrote for the Queen Elizabeth Competition for violin and orchestra. So yes, I have written quite a few works, actually probably a large number is not correct, but several works for solo flute, for solo violin, for solo cello, and so forth; a little partita for solo clarinet, but that is, I suppose, on a more modest scale, not technically as challenging as these are. (Referring to the solo flute works).
Q: So, the one reason I ask that particular question about how it fits in your overall output, if occasionally when I have asked other composers about some of their solo works, they don’t really want to talk about their solo works for flute, partly because they don’t find it representative of their output.

A: Oh, hm…

Q: And so, either because it came earlier in their careers and they have moved away from that, or because someone asked them to do it, and they didn’t really want to, but they didn’t necessarily want to say “no.”

A: Okay. (Laughs)

Q: And so, that is why I was asking that kind of question, but it seems that you have a number of these kind of works.

A: Yes, it’s not something I consider as a lesser…

Q: You don’t disown them.

A: Absolutely not. I suppose that there’s also a kind of stimulus and inspiration in being asked. It’s not only a challenge, but it’s supportive and makes you feel that you’re writing for a specific person, which I always find an inspiration in itself. And for a specific performer, rather than just writing in a kind of abstract mode, so I enjoy writing these. I enjoy the aspect of virtuosity and expression which soloists on their own can realize. I am a pianist myself, so I always thought it such a pity when playing something like a wind instrument that you are so much reliant on an accompanist to create a fuller musical work. I played the clarinet for some time and I found it frustrating, coming from the piano, to not have harmony, to not have…

Q: …and to have to breathe and to possibly break the line…

A: All that, yes. I mean, there are limitations in that sense as well, but for me the kind of textural limitations, always playing a single line, which is lovely in its own right. But I always thought, gosh, why do I have to have an accompanist to do more with it? So many of these solo works attempt to do that. I suppose my inspiration is from Bach and
his works for solo violin and solo cello, which are so magnificent in the way in which they suggest a larger musical world beyond just a single melodic line … and incorporate harmonies, textures and things. I find those amazingly inspirational and beautiful works. The first piece I wrote for solo instrument was the work for clarinet, which in fact is a kind of attempt to write contrapuntally for single voice instruments. It introduces the concept of canon into a single line, so it’s a highly structured work in the sense that the single melodic lines are in themselves canonic; whatever notes occur in bar one recur in the next bar, or are transposed or inverted or retrograded within the melodic line. So the piece never goes beyond a single line as these other pieces do, but it incorporates a kind of contrapuntal thinking into a single line.

Q: So is this audible?

A: To a certain extent. The retrograde is of course completely inaudible, unless you have a computer for a brain.

Q: Right, it's like writing serially and the listener not actually realizing that it's serial music.

A: Yes, I always try to write music that is immediately accessible and that can be appreciated at the surface level, a purely melodic level, because I find that that is what a composer like Bach also does. However complicated his music might be, he never neglects the kind of surface attraction, and I think that is what interests people in the first place in a piece of music. They first of all have to say, “Oh, that’s nice!”, before they are going to start looking at all the other interesting things. The other interesting things never compensate for a lack of melodic interest, so for me melodic interest is very important. Again, that probably makes me a very conservative composer, but that’s the kind of music I like to listen to. You know, I had an interest in the avant-garde when I was about seventeen or eighteen.

Q: Right.

A: So I just decided that writing music was in fact more interesting than merely writing organized sound, which I think is an art form in its own right. And I leave it to people who like the idea of organized sound.
Q: So, now on to Marimba... So you used an African legend as inspiration for that. Is that also the mythical aspect?

A: Yes, there is the mythical aspect to it. I think a title like that is also a kind of aid to the interpreter to try and lift them on to a plain where they are not merely saying, “I’ve got to play all the notes; I’ve got to observe all the signs on the page,” because I think musical notation is a kind of shorthand. A kind of very generic and schematic indication of a composer’s intentions and of what the music is really about. So, you want to give the performer as many signs as possible that the music is beyond what is on the page.

Q: Right.

A: I’ve seen it when I coach people on my own works and you sometimes just give them an image when they are playing a phrase in a kind to literal way and then suddenly it lifts off; it becomes a real language. So yes, the title serves that purpose. I did start with the idea of the title, so it’s not something that I tagged on afterwards.

Q: Right, so that was the starting point?

A: That was the starting point, yes.

Q: This is the one for SAMRO, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Did they tell you what they wanted, in terms of for this piece?

A: No.

Q: They said solo flute piece, approximately so many minutes...

A: Yes, and so many minutes and for the competition, so it obviously had to show both interpretive skill and technical skill.

Q: Right.
A: I think I made a slightly different ending for this piece. I was not quite happy with what I had there. SAMRO might not have the latest version. Yes, I think I added a bar right at the end, so I’ll quickly print it out for you on the computer while we talk.

Q: So you tacked on one bar, you said?

A: Uh, yes, and I think I might have taken out a few notes of those dreadfully difficult arpeggios.

Q: When I first saw the title I thought of the instrument and I wondered whether you were trying to imitate the marimba instrument.

A: Oh, yes, of course that’s what everyone thinks immediately, but in this case it was actually the goddess’s name. But there is a little bit of imitation, I suppose, of marimba-like texture in the canonic sections. In fact you have a kind of single line which is canonic, in this case more evidently than in the clarinet pieces where the two canonic voices became one. Because of the registral differentiation you can actually distinguish the two.

Q: Right. What about the cross-rhythms? Is that because this piece with the title evokes some African element, but that seems to be, from your description, more evocative than actual incorporation?

A: No, the actual rhythms used are very much of African origin.

Q: They are?

A: The very common rhythm, not so much in southern Africa, but in central and western Africa, is the twelve quavers divided 2+3+2+2+3.

Q: Okay.

A: The canonic section is based very much on that rhythm. The nice thing about that rhythmic figure I mentioned to you is that you can create two voices that form hocketing where you never have the two voices sounding at the same time, so you get a continuous pattern in semiquavers, but one which can be split into two voices quite easily.
Q: Right, this more lyrical section would that be...

A: This is a reprise of the opening idea which also comes back in the middle, so it is a modified rondo form.

At this point the printer has printed the last page of Marimba, so the discussion is about the last line of notes.

A: I put some notes in brackets. It’s fiendish.

Q: Is that to be left out?

A: If necessary, yes. I find that these arpeggios are very hard to manage for most flautists and I’d much rather have a sense of a melodic line at the top than every single note in the arpeggio. It sounds a bit too abrupt – the ending - in the original version.

Q: So is this new one similar to the beginning?

A: it returns a little bit to that again, yes.

Q: So, I do have a couple of other questions. I was wondering about your musical background. Did you grow up with music, where did you study? The time overseas you mentioned ...

A: Yes, my mother was a pianist herself – an amateur pianist, and used to play at home occasionally, so I was fascinated by it from the start. She had quite a big collection of LPs in those days. She put us to bed quite early at night and then she’d listen to a bit of music, mostly Bach and Beethoven, and Baroque music, lots of Lieder. I suppose I fell asleep with music in my ears. I am one of four children, but was the only one who developed a fascination for music. I pestered her from an early age to be allowed to do the piano, so she eventually allowed me to start at 7. She didn’t want me to start earlier, which in a way is a pity. I suppose she wanted to be sure that I knew what I was getting into. She made me promise I wouldn’t stop my while at school, which was a good thing, because of course in South Africa there was a lot of peer pressure. By the time you got into your teens, everyone else would do sport not music. I was the only one who continued doing music. Then I had a very inspirational teacher at school, for the history
and theory parts. She was the first to encourage me to compose and to look at composition as a career option. This teacher at school said the best thing is going to university to qualify as a musicologist, because then you can apply for a job at a university and you can compose and play the piano and won’t occupy your whole day like another job might. So that’s what I did, and then I spent ten years in Italy, partly to study, partly to not do military service.

Q: Oh, was that when it was still...

A: Apartheid, yes. I had objections both to apartheid and to the idea of military service in the first place. It was compulsory only for white males and most of them got sent to the border where they had to fight the apartheid wars. I was not interested in doing it, so I decided I would go overseas until apartheid came to an end, which it fortunately did about ten years after that.

Q: So where in Italy did you go?

A: Florence.

Q: And how long were you there for?

A: Ten years exactly.

Q: Ten years?

A: You enter the conservatoire at the about the age of ten of twelve and you finish when you are twenty or twenty-two. You get a state diploma at the end of that, which is about the equivalent technically, to our fourth year, final year of the whole B. Mus. So I only did the last two years of that, having already done an MMus in piano here (referring to Cape Town) and then went on to do composition, also just the corso superiore. The composition course, I think, is eight years, and I did the last three years of that. At that stage I did want to sever my ties with South Africa completely, so I had to legitimize my stay overseas by continuing to study. If I had stopped studying I would have to go back and do my service.

Q: So they actually allowed you avoid military service if you were a student?
A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: In the final years it started relaxing and they didn’t require you to provide proof that you were still studying overseas; you just had to say when you intended coming back, so the signs were already there that the thing was tailing off. And in fact, when I was appointed at the University of Stellenbosch as a lecturer, I applied for the job, got it and said, “Oh gosh, do I go back?”, because military service was still on the books. But people said to me, “Look, if you come back and you don’t report for military service, they won’t come looking for you,” because at that stage they had already scrapped the race register, so they didn’t really have a legal leg to stand on. They used to send out letters saying, “Because your family and friends consider you a white male you are being called up for military service.” They couldn’t say you were a white male, because the register had been scrapped. People had been taking them to court, and so if you didn’t report, they kind of assumed that you weren’t interested and they weren’t going to come looking for trouble. So that’s what I did and no-one, I must say, ever came looking for me.

Q: Right, so you must have been glad to go; to have spent some time in Italy, but would you have gone, had it not been for that?

A: I would have, but probably not for that long. I might have gone for a few years. In fact, my original intention was to go to England to further my studies in musicology, but that was exactly the year that Maggie Thatcher decided she wasn’t subsidizing foreign students anymore. I had gotten a bursary from UCT [University of Cape Town] to go, but it was based on the idea that it was a subsidized fee, so suddenly this bursary was completely inadequate, and in Italy the conservatoire education was free. I also knew someone who was studying with a really good pianist in Florence, so that’s where I went.

Q: But you had every intention of coming back?

A: Yes, I always knew that I wanted to come back. I missed South Africa very much. The Italian musical scene was at that stage very disorganized and very politicized. It didn’t feel like the kind of world I wanted to enter, or where I wanted to make a career,
Q: And did you come back to UCT immediately?

A: No, to the University of Stellenbosch, where I taught for seven years. I then applied for this position and got it.

Q: And so, when did you make the shift to composition? I mean, you probably always composed, but you said you were a trained musicologist, what kind of musicology, what did you specialize in?

A: I tended to focus on what they call systematic musicology: analysis, the music itself, rather than the historical aspect or sociological aspect. I did my dissertation for my B.Mus. on Schoenberg’s Moses & Aaron, which of course was a serial work, although by that stage I had more or less abandoned the idea of the avant-garde, or of serial music itself or atonality. But I think it’s a really impressive and a fascinating work, so although I didn’t really write serially beyond my seventeenth year, it was one of those pieces that I thought was worth looking into. But I focused on the symbolic use in the work. Musicology was a means to an end for me. I love analyzing works, but I love composing and playing more, so I enjoy my teaching very much, but wouldn’t consider myself a musicologist in the first place. And, you talked about the shift to composition. I suppose I always knew that while I loved playing the piano, I never saw myself as a concert pianist. I don’t think I got a natural enough technique; it’s too much hard work for me and I get bored practicing eight hours a day; and of course your chances of making a success of concert pianist are fairly remote, and then when you do make success, you end up having a horrible life, living in hotel rooms … I suppose composition is for me my primary activity.

Q: So, I am interested in how South Africa has shaped its composers and their output, specifically the incorporation of indigenous elements. In this case, you have used a little bit in the Marimba piece. How do you feel about doing that?

A: I don’t know. I am a little bit sceptical about the idea of a South African style, or the national style of any kind. I suppose I am an anti-nationalist. I think nationalism is one of mankind’s worst ideas and it is mostly a tool for politicians to pit one group of people against another. Now, this country has had a very sad history in terms of nationalism, so I don’t really like the idea of striving for a neo-nationalist idea. I used African elements
at times, and at other times I don’t, as I see fit. If it fits in with my work, but there is a lot of pressure on South African composers …

Q: to do so…

A: Yes, a great deal of pressure, and I think that is particularly unhealthy. In other words, subscribe to our nationalist ideologies, or we cast you out. I have been attacked for not subscribing sufficiently.

Q: and others have been attacked for doing so…

A: Not really, I think the easy way to make a career in this country now, is to do the “ethnic” thing. That will get you everywhere.

Q: in this country, but not necessarily overseas…

A: I don’t know. I think Kevin Volans, for example, is a sterling example of someone who has used African music to get everywhere. And in fact, people are much less interested in Kevin Volans now that he doesn’t do that any more.

Q: Okay, I wasn’t aware of that…

A: So, he made his career on that and he has become a kind of role model for a lot of other people. And it is the easy way, because the people who organize culture in this country and who give commissions and who organize festivals and so forth are all of them on the “ethnic” bandwagon. So, if you’re prepared to kowtow to their demands, they will see to it that you get ahead. And it has meant relative fame and fortune (in South African terms) for quite few people, and those people then feel entitled to attack anyone who hasn’t done the same. So there’s a lot of prescriptiveness, far more than is healthy in any culture, I would think. I really don’t think people should be prescribed to in what they write. Now I don’t think that not writing ethnic music means anything about your being attached to the past or anything like that, but of course that is a very easy line to draw and people draw it. I have been the target of some of that casting of suspicion.

Q: In what form?
A: In peoples’ writings. People have taken it upon themselves to question my motives and my style and how I dare to write in the style that I do and so forth. I believe that the current musicological congress is about “racist” music. I am sure I am probably the prime example of what they mean by “racist” music - what they would describe as a “Eurocentric idiom”.

Q: But you feel comfortable doing what you want to do, so when you use these elements because you want to...

A: Yes, I think it’s a little bit more than feeling comfortable with what I am doing. I feel almost it’s a duty to not succumb to that kind of pressure. It is a far too easy and expedient path to success and it has very little to do with the merits if the music, but simply with whether you do what is expected of you. I think it is always dangerous for artists to do that. And as I say, I am one voice in the wilderness.

Q: Right, now I have had one or two who said “I do it, but I do it reluctantly,” so this was just something completely different.

A: Ja, as I say I have no resistance against it. I find African music very interesting in many ways and very compatible with many things that I do, and therefore I have incorporated it in a great number of works. There has at times been pressure in commissioned works, such as Marimba...

Q: Yeah, I was going to ask about that. Was it overt pressure?

A: No, they stipulate they would prefer it if your work incorporated African elements, so you are still free in a sense to not do that.

Q: But the message is clear?

A: The message is clear, yes. And in other cases it has been more overt and the pressure has been greater. For example, fairly early on in my career I won the South Africa Opera competition, and there was then talk of having that chamber opera, and another opera I was asked to write to go along with it, produced at the Grahamstown Festival. But this was then turned down by the Grahamstown Festival committee as being not “relevant” enough, i.e. not politically correct. So, they didn’t look at the music, they didn’t look at
the merit of work, they looked at the subject matter and decided South African composers may not write such things. Now, that is the kind of thing that makes me bristle.

Q: Right, I can imagine...

A: It is like Soviet Union at its worst...

Q: It’s censure in a sense...

A: Yes, in some senses even the worst kind of intervention than, intrusiveness than was practiced by the Soviet Union, because the prescriptions of the Soviet Union left the composers still quite free in many ways and this doesn’t. So yes, I suppose it will take us a long time to get past this point. I don’t know whether we ever will, but I have toyed with the idea of emigrating, not because I have anything against the country, but because the country seems to have something against me, I suppose. I love writing opera, for example, but I know that most of my opera simply won’t get done here, because I happen to not toe the line.

Q: So, in a sense you feel artistically stifled?

A: Not really, I continue to do what I do. I write music fundamentally for musicians who seem to appreciate what I do. I have been very fortunate, I don’t think in the past ten years there’s been any time that I haven’t had a commission or request pending; I have always had people asking me for work, which is great. From that point of view I can’t complain at all. I suppose I gave up long ago on the idea of writing for fellow composers, because they tend to be either of the politically correct fraternity, or resilient avant-gardists, who see my music as too romantic, too accessible.

Q: So, you’re saying this is mostly from your colleagues, or anybody in arts councils, arts bodies, not so much the audiences, because when you say “accessible,” that implies that that audiences like what you do.

A: Yes, I have had good feedback over the years and I have also been very fortunate in having quite a number of performances from symphony orchestras in the country and so forth. I think my music is still difficult for a lot of audiences. South African audiences
are, for the most part, fairly conservative and I suppose, even Ravel makes them kind of blanche, but I write music for people who love classical music, because that is my field; that is what I love in the first place. When I do import things like African elements, it’s still within the context of classical music, because I don’t consider classical music a Western art form anymore; it’s universal; it’s played and appreciated everywhere. I see no reason for apologising for classical music; that is my first love and as I say, I love to share it with as many people as possible. I don’t see it as exclusive or elitist, or if it is, that is regrettable, and that is something I fight against.

Q: Not your intention?

A: No absolutely not. I’d like to be understood by as many people as possible. I work as an educator to try and bring as many people as possible to an understanding and expertise within this medium – which I realize is less immediate and less accessible by its very nature than pop music. But I think it’s very dangerous to equate the inaccessible with the undemocratic. That tends be the kind of rather simplistic argument that is used at the moment. I think modernism did a lot of harm, in terms of writing music and producing art in general that was far too inaccessible and too elitist and really, in a way killed the connection between audience and composer or creator. So, I think I am one of the great many composers who are trying to rebuild those bridges, but for many people the only option seems to be to incorporate populist language into classical music. I don’t think that that is necessarily the solution. I think the great composers of the past managed to write works that people grew to love.

Q: Well, they were contemporary composers during their time...

A: Exactly, and although they didn’t write in a populist style, people grew to love their works through repeated listening. I think that is the kind of real connection between audience and composer that I strive for. Now, I don’t think it’s unachievable, but to simply capitulate by writing popular music within a kind of classical guise, is in a way a cop-out for me.

Q: In summary that would be your compositional philosophy then?
A: I suppose, yes. I grew up loving classical music thinking this is what I want to spend my life doing. I remember the joy of discovering composers of the twentieth century. How amazing it must be to do that for a living. So that’s just what…

Q: Something you love, to do what you love…

A: Yes, and of being able to speak to others in that language. I think there are, apart from music, many art forms that strive for something which isn’t necessarily immediately accessible, because even in that there is a kind of value. The effort required, also from the audience, is in a way a challenge, but it is also an invitation to go beyond that which is necessarily immediately understandable. I think that is the way people grow; that’s the way people learn, is through challenging themselves and through being challenged. I believe in writing music that is attractive so you can invite people to challenge themselves; to also bring their side in getting to an understanding. Something like that…

**Hans Huysken**

Interview, Stellenbosch, 26 June 2009.

Q: Do you come from a musical family, or was music-making a regular activity in your household as a child?

A: I suppose, yes. There were no professional musicians in the family, but my mother made a point of really singing a lot with us. My parents entertained a circle of friends who were regularly made to sing, so we would spend four or five weekends in a year where they would gather and sing – retreats to literally sing for two or three days, morning, afternoon and night.

Q: So the singing was really the most important thing?

A: Yes. They also took us to concerts. We all had to learn the recorder from an early age and we were all involved in music at school and church and so on.

Q: And when did you start cello?

A: I think I was eleven.
Q: In Pretoria?

A: Yes, there was a need for a cellist in the school orchestra and so they were looking for someone to play, and coincidentally my godmother had played the cello when she was a kid, so she had an instrument, which she then gave me. It was circumstantial; I didn’t choose the instrument; it sort of came my way and I took it up without really considering any alternatives. It just sort of stuck.

Q: And you don’t regret that?

A: No. I wasn’t sure that I was going to study music. My father was an engineer, and my two brothers have become engineers. Topics over the dinner table were usually of a technical nature. I decided quite spontaneously and fairly late that I was going to pursue music. And I thought I would just give it a try for a year and maybe go back to engineering afterwards. It just happened that I stuck with it after I had stumbled onto these things as a kid.

Q: Do you play any other instruments?

A: Well, I play the recorder, which I was quite proficient at, when I was young. I don’t play it anymore. I play a little bit of piano. And I have to specify, I started with Romantic cello, but left that. I currently only play baroque cello.

Q: You haven’t played romantic cello in a while?

A: Not for a decade, or so.

Q: Does it interest you?

A: Well, I wouldn’t say it doesn’t interest me, but it seems that the idiom of the romantic playing is somehow foreign to my preference, or maybe my personality. And it was a relief when I found Baroque playing, which has other priorities, which are also mine. So for instance, the matter of articulation, rather than sustained note; resonance rather than continued vibrato on the note. Just the feeling of gut strings with their rich overtones as opposed to the steel strings.

Q: And you have more freedom in the expression, or in the performance?
A: Not necessarily. In Romantic music there is a lot of freedom in a different sense, but I found the Baroque repertoire very appealing as well as the sound texture of contrapuntal music. I think that music is essentially a language, so articulation is more important to me, than drawing long lines. I was struggling to play the romantic cello. There were always complaints that my sound wasn’t rich enough or big enough, and I sensed that I wasn’t interested in that sort of thing. I wasn’t after that sound. I was after the articulation. So when I had the option in Salzburg to try out a Baroque cello, immediately I had a more natural affinity to the way it worked.

Q: So you really found your niche?

A: Yes, and I suddenly had work. I was asked quite soon to play in orchestras, which didn’t happen readily for the modern cello. And so by coincidence and serendipity, it stuck. Maybe also because for the performance practice approach, there’s a huge need for scholarly engagement, to philosophize, to read up. And that also interests me. I am not the guy who can practice for seven hours a day and be solely interested in the technical questions. The issue of putting music into a certain context, and coming up with individual decisions, which is necessary in early music, because this tradition that has been cut of, is far more important to me. And I don’t think it’s just a post-romantic thing. I think some people have an affinity for early music and some are by nature, just romantic personalities. I belong to the former.

Q: What kind of music do you listen to?

A: I listen to music very rarely - usually only, when I need to find out something specific, when I need to study. I find it strange myself and other people find it very strange, but, but I don’t have an urge to listen to music a lot. I’d rather have it quiet. It’s not a pastime anymore. The pastime is really to enjoy silence. But of course, I occasionally listen to music. (There was a phase when I listened to Bach Cantatas. I was looking for pieces for a certain concert, and then got fascinated by the sheer magnitude, and different forms and different settings and the way Bach would ply the form of the cantata and creatively experiment with it each time.) If I listen, it is usually early music, so Monteverdi, Schütz or something. And then, for interest I would go and find new scores of contemporary music. But it’s not the sort of listening where you sit back and relax and listen; it’s serves
Q: What formal instrumental and compositional training do you have?

A: Well, I started playing the cello when I was eleven at the music school in Pretoria. I went on to study in Stellenbosch and did a B.Mus. majoring in cello and composition; then went on to Salzburg and did my “Kleines Diplom” on the cello. Studied composition, there as well, and then went on to Munich and did my Masters in Composition, (called “Meisterklasse” in Germany).

Q: Could you name composers who have influenced you?

A: Well, Bach plays a role, mainly because of the six solo suites for cello. Those are a staple diet; I played that quite often – it’s very easy find or hire a pianist or a harpsichord to do them. Monteverdi has also been quite influential... With my ensemble in Munich (così facciamo) we performed two Monteverdi operas so far. Schütz, is also important – they way he treats text, setting words to music. As far as the contemporary composers are going: Benjamin Britten has been important. What I like there is his, shall I say his diligent conservatism. It’s not as though he needs to prove an avant garde point, and yet it’s not run-of-the-mill music; it’s always very cleverly adapted to a certain context. I am not an avant garde composer. My teacher, Hans-Jürgen von Bose, was of course highly influential, although not so much his music, but rather his reflections on music.

Q: Any other mentors that you feel indebted to?

A: Well, Heidi Litschauer on the cello side. I had a very positive experience in a single course with William Pleeth, although that was at a stage when I had almost decided to not pursue the romantic cello anymore and specialize on baroque music. Very significantly, Nicolas Harnoncourt.

Q: Harnoncourt?

A: who was still teaching in Salzburg when I was there. I didn’t quite realize the importance then, but went to his seminars fairly frequently. In hindsight, that was extremely influential, not only as far as early music was concerned, but also regarding his general thinking in terms of ‘context’. This opened a way for me to engage with contemporary
music - not so much by means of a style study of what was contemporary, or what was belonging to a certain contemporary school, but rather by trying to fully perceive my own complex situation and find something that would make musical sense in that context or would contribute to that context. On returning to South Africa, one of the contexts I find here is that of traditional African music. I think I am indebted to Harnoncourt for the openness to allow the given environment to influence its music.

Q: Has your time in Pretoria influenced your style?

A: Well, I think it probably hampered my musical development, because I grew up in an environment which was not conducive to culture at all. I remember cycling a lot and exploring the place - it’s quite a beautiful place. But it’s not a cultural centre in any way and I had to really catch up when I arrived Salzburg. I had a complete culture shock. I had to play open strings for six months and I had to really learn playing the cello from scratch. So what Pretoria has given me is probably some sort of very peaceful and undisturbed childhood, which is a benefit in its own right. But it certainly hasn’t prepared me sufficiently for the profession.

Q: You have lived abroad. How has this shaped your compositional style?

A: I was nineteen or twenty when I got to Salzburg and could experience a manifestation of history for the first time. Seeing old buildings and cobblestone roads and the seasons... and partaking in a vibrant cultural scene - that was a complete shock - fascinating, but also terrifying. I was naïve and inexperienced in every way then, without the European experience, I wouldn’t be who I am now. I would say I have an ambivalent double identity. The one being African; European – connected by the language of course and my ancestry, but also, it still is foreign...

Q: Salzburg?

A: Europe as a whole. Salzburg was getting a bit too small and museum-like after a while, and Munich was more representative of the real word, although is also pretty. But I also discovered that I am not European through the European experience.

Q: So you returned to South Africa?
A: I returned to South Africa. It just shows this ambivalence in my being. And currently I am thinking of going to Europe again, because I see too few perspectives to really engage significantly with music here, even though I wish I could to stay. I’ll always miss something, in which ever country I might be.

Q: So what are your compositional reasons for returning to South Africa?

A: Well, currently I don’t have any real reasons and this is a bit of a crisis. When I came back, I was busy writing an opera, “Masque”, which had an African topic and which I found I could only do here, so there was a pressing need to come back. I didn’t think I would come back for good, then. I was contemplating to return for a couple of months, meet South African musicians and get some information so that we could do the piece, but it proved to be a life-occupying endeavour, which in the end took ten years to materialize - until 2005. In the wake of that there have been some smaller projects, which have been quite rewarding with some commissions from Miagi (a music initiative and festival which is dedicated to cultural dialogue). But for the rest, there has been very little resonance on my intercultural musical initiatives, with no lack of severe criticism though...

Q: Here in South Africa?

A: Yes, and some very negative rejections of people feeling that I have ‘betrayed my culture’ or something. Nobody comes up to you directly of course, but I hear that certain circles consider me to be a political opportunist for engaging with black traditional musicians. (Some Afrikaans people dismiss my work, because I have been ‘messing’ with black African traditions. On the other side the Africans see me as some sort of exotically strange fellow. I think they appreciate me for my interest in their cause, but they also keep me at arm’s length. I’m being made to feel very clearly that I am not an African. They sometimes call me hoping for gigs, but not primarily to pursue the quest for a sincere musical exchange.

Q: Is this the kudu horn ensemble?

A: There was Dizu Plaatjes and his kudu horn ensemble, also Madosini, a veteran Xhosa musician and some others. Nowhere do I get the feeling of ‘a genuine return’. I’ve invested a lot of time and interest in establishing mutual collaborations, but there hasn’t
been a single invitation in return. The expectation is that I should create the work and the opportunities.

Q: You would like them to come with ideas and projects and involve...

A: Well, I would have liked to, but I have now given up hope, because it simply doesn’t happen. And I think I failed somehow to make these projects work effectively, to communicate them well enough in the circles that would have had the power to actually facilitate their continuation. *Masque* was an experiment, which really had to be tried. It was conceived as a forum where diverse cultural identities could be expressed in close proximity and on a par. The strategy was writing dedicated roles for black singers in an African idiom, accompanied by indigenous instruments; on the same level create roles for European voices with early European instruments. After establishing these respective stylistic and historical positions, a dialogue and ensuing interaction would evolve accompanied by contemporary instruments. But it proved that the infrastructure to do just this does not exist! Black singers are nowadays solely trained in western styles, so it was impossible to find an ‘African voice’, impossible to raise that voice and let it make its point as a counterpoint to the European voice. That would have been the whole point of the exercise, to face, appreciate and accommodate the differences and investigate a mutual way forward, but nothing has come of that. Then an invitation came from the theatre in Koblenz (Germany) to stage *Masque* in a second production there in 2010. All was scheduled and even financed, there was already a date for the premiere. But it was cancelled about a month ago, due to the financial crisis in Germany. The municipality of Koblenz had to cut its theatre budget and *Masque* is not going to happen. And I think that this is probably the end of this project, as I don’t see the necessary infrastructure in place anywhere, to pursue such an ambitious undertaking.

Q: It’s a big opera.

A: It’s a big opera, but the size is not the problem, it’s the specific requirements, which cannot be met. The five main roles of the masks require black singers to sing in a traditional African folk idiom, while they have to be able to read music and perform professionally; focus and project their voices such as an opera stage demands. And even more difficult, the score includes players on traditional African instruments, who master
their ancient techniques and be steeped in their tradition performance conventions, but yet can read music and follow a conductor. In reality no singers or instrumentalists with these mutualistic abilities exist.

Q: Don’t you think that this is the perfect place to do it?

A: South Africa with its given diversity of cultures would be perfect place to do this, but ironically nobody really engages with the richness of this diversity. We tend to eliminate the differences and settle for some kind of smallest common denominator. That sort of thing. We do have our opera schools train hundreds of black singers, but do so in an anachronistic 19th century Italian style. All the political talk of the rich diverse heritage, the African Renaissance, indigenous knowledge systems, etc. remains insubstantial. Since my return to this country 10 years ago I have argued for structures that foster diversity. But not even the universities see a need for transformation in this direction.

Q: What kind of structure would you like?

A: I’m currently motivating and setting out the principles for a ‘performance practice institute,’ a kind of university centre, which would place the emphasis on musical, historical and geographic contexts, on the subtexts of conventional musical forms, not so much on mere proficiency of instrumental technique, but rather relating and contextualizing stylistic and idiomatic traits, investigate their originate and meaning and probe how to best translate them into the here and now. This would include historical performance practice of European early music, but I would very much like to see a strong link to indigenous musical practices so that the musical results of such an endeavour would reflect a genuine South African quality.

Isak Roux

Telephone interview, 11 August 2009.

Q: Do you want to tell me about your undergraduate degree and your masters degree, where you did those?

A: I did my Bachelor of Music at the then University of Natal. I think it is now called the University of KwaZulu Natal.
Q: Yes, KwaZulu Natal and I believe they have merged with UDW.

A: Yes, the then UND, University of Natal, Durban, and then I went on to a Diploma in Education, a one-year course and then there was a break where I had to do military service in South Africa, the South African Army at that time.

Q: Right.

A: And then I returned to Masters work. When that was done I completed my Masters in Composition at the same university.

Q: I know you play the piano. Do you play any other instruments, have you learned anything else?

A: The flute.

Q: I think I do remember that.

A: I did that for two years, second practical instrument.

Q: I know you learned classical piano, but you also play Jazz, correct?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you come from a musical family? I do know that music was important to some extent in your family, right?

A: Yes it was important; well my parents were self-taught, lay musicians, especially my father. He played various instruments, but essentially folk music. Folk music and the so-called Boeremusiek on the concertina, that sort of thing, and a lot of music was made in the church as well. We went to one of these Advent, Full Gospel Church of God, but I suppose it is a Baptist religion. So a lot of gospel music was sung and played and my father was always playing the organ in the church and I sort of played along on the piano, which also helped develop my, my skills as an improviser.

Q: Some of the Boeremusiek in your music; I know there are a couple of influences, correct? Does that stem from that time in your life?
A: I think so. And at one stage I also played in a band, a dance band when I was very young. I was probably in the twelfth class, and there was one of the teachers who had a band and he played the accordion actually. And he played a lot of Boeremusiek as well in the dance band. So, you kind of played along and picked up the odd sort of riff. I also looked at how my father played the concertina and that later on helped me a bit when I tried to emulate certain things. Now that is actually my tribute in those days…

Q: To your father?

A: It’s my father and his concertina, actually.

Q: Right, and by observing, do you mean mostly in the musical aspect of it, not the actual technical aspect of playing the concertina?

A: Yes, just the musical, and the effect of what he achieved.

Q: Right, so what kinds of music do you listen to?

A: Anything under the sun, really. It depends on my mood: Bach Brandenburg Concertos, Keith Jarrett. In the early days there was a heavy Rock phase, Pink Floyd…Somewhere along the line the whole Pop scene just got too much for me. The repetitiveness, and, and, noticing the whole market was just repeating on itself, really. I didn’t see anything there much more to learn from, really.

Q: What formal instrumental and compositional training do you have? I know you said you have a compositional degree; I had a look at your Masters thesis, so did you have any compositional training during your undergraduate, or in high school, considering that you learned to improvise?

A: You know, I never had any formal training. I started improvising at a very early age, maybe eight, nine, maybe even earlier. In fact, I remember my first instrument was piano accordion, and I remember playing all sorts of atonal things and my godmother often said “What are you doing?” I would play away all across the keyboard and then on the bass and, I think it started then. And once I discovered the piano for myself I started improvising, I mean, popular sort of stuff. And then I wrote my first little Cantata when I was about sixteen and I was given a chance to produce it at my old high school and then
a year later, I decided to study music. And only then did I start getting formal training. In fact, I did not even know anything about harmony.

Q: So you didn’t actually have piano lessons?

A: No, I had. I had a lot of piano, but harmony was dismissed. That was just swept away under the carpet and I played so well. What I knew about harmony I just basically caught. I think I only really learned about four-part harmony and writing proper voice leading once I started my Masters, because I then redid all that training. I went to Mrs. Moira Kearney for my lessons and I did exams through UNISA, just to do harmony and theory and that actually jacked me up a lot.

Q: For your masters degree, what kind of training did you have there and which composers did you work with? Did you do any supplementary types of things outside of the university in terms of working with other people?

A: Well, I continued work with (indistinct), but of course it was jazz and pop mainly and I also started doing some research into the ethnomusicological field. Then came Kevin Volans and turned everything upside down and introduced Stockhausen.

Q: The avant garde type...

A: yes, and then they made me reduce my style a lot more. That was actually a major turning point.

Q: Working with Kevin Volans?

A: Yes. And then he of course went away and with me going to the army and I had to take a teachers’ course for a year. I was off the studies for a while and then by the time I got back to the masters degree he was gone and Jürgen Bräuninger had arrived on the scene. He basically said “Write, just write. Write what is in your heart, “and that really started with the Africanist thing, which was Kevin’s influence, but Kevin never saw the initial work, because by the time I produced it, he had already left.

Q: So you’re saying basically that Kevin Volans had an influence on in terms of the African music, the ethnomusicological...
A: Yes, perhaps less that, but his whole approach to composition was different than anything else I had come across before. In a sense he made me realize that I should abandon all this European stuff that I had been meddling with, trying to find my own style.

Q: Right and that happened then with Jürgen Bräuninger who said...

A: Not so much Jürgen Bräuninger; he assisted, but what happened is that I was in the army, which was the darkest time of my life and then I suddenly realized that something had to be done musically that actually shows where you are from. So the impetus then became a hole that needed to be filled.

Q: So how would you describe: “where are you from?”

A: Well, of course I am from South Africa. I was born there.

Q: But it’s more than that, right?

A: It’s very difficult as a white person to say that you are an African, but even if you feel it in your heart, you are always frowned upon. But I see myself as someone who comes from Africa, but I also count myself as European and like living here in Germany. I am called by most people a German South African. I actually wrote an essay once, which maybe I should send you.

Q: Actually, that would be really interesting.

A: I wrote an essay called: Upon leaving no-mans land, which is very personal. I wrote it in the year 2000, which was the beginning of all my international writing in composition, and I sat down one day and decided to write an essay so that I could understand why it is that I am doing what I am doing. But it’s never been published by anybody. I’ve kept it to myself. It was translated into German by my friend Eugen. I think if I had stayed in Africa at the time, I probably would not have composed, I doubt it strongly. Certainly not the sort of music that I do.

Q: So you mention a couple of composers you studied with. You did say some of them influenced you. Are there any others; are there any particular mentors that you feel a debt to, or did you go your own way and just...
A: I think I went my own way. People tend to try and prove that I was vastly influenced by the music of Kevin Volans, but then the ironic thing is, the only music of Kevin Volans that I really actually ever heard was the Kronos Quartet playing “White Man Sleeps.” Of course I looked at his scores. I always asked myself, what can I do that is not Volans, and what can I do that is not Pop?

Q: It occurred to me that since you had a similar approach and not long after Kevin Volans - you know he doesn’t want to talk about that – I can see why people would think that, but I think you went a different direction with it. Is that correct?

A: I think so. The only difference that I did saliently different is that the art of improvisation was something that I wanted to bring into my more serious work. I don’t find it in Volans; I find it in few works of living African, or Africanised [people], as I suppose one could say. Whenever I write piano music, I try to make the work sound like it has been improvised at that moment.

Q: It’s not as if it lacks structure, yours is, as you said improvised; it conforms more to the African type of idea.

A: It is trying to find a way of moving from the over-intellectualised Europeanised approach to art music and to the whole African folkloristic scene. It is always the old question: when does folk music become art music and vice versa? It’s probably one of the hardest things to do in musical composition.

Q: So, has your compositional style been influenced by Africa? I know the answer to that question, but what parts of Africa, not necessarily what other countries, but what things about South Africa influenced you?

A: I try to capture vocal lines, the Zulus and the way they sing. I have been working with Ladysmith Black Mambazo (LBM) a lot, and I always listen very carefully to how people sing, because the primary instrument is the voice. The interesting thing there is, if you don’t use the actual language, you lose a lot of the colour, but you still can pick up a lot of inflections and try and use them in writing, even piano writing. I was very influenced by Zulu guitar music, mainly because I remember as a child being fascinated by the all these young black men walking around singing bits and pieces of their own
lives and playing on their own self-made guitars. I found it fascinating and that fascination came back later on.

Q: Are you referring to “Iscathamiya?”

A: Yes. Yes, very much so.

Q: So, are there any other things that influenced you about South Africa? You did mention the Boeremusiek...

A: The so-called Cape Malay music that influenced me by virtue of the fact that we always had to sing it at school. We had to sing a lot of it in school. It was in Afrikaans. It was sold as Afrikaans music, Boeremusiek, and I always had to laugh about, I suppose my own people – not that I now feel that I belong to them any longer, but in the way they actually thought they were selling the music that was “white” and ninety percent of that music “coloured” music. It was produced by black people who actually spoke a white language. Now really, there you had integration, but nobody really wanted to know that.

Q: Do you try not to think about your Afrikaans heritage; do you disavow that in a sense?

A: No, the Afrikaner was the main reason why I left Africa. Because it just simply became impossible. It became impossible in those structures, especially in the late seventies and bits of the late eighties. I just couldn’t do the sort of research that I wanted to do, as you well know… I was not allowed to do the black songs; I was called in by the headmaster. I just couldn’t stay there; I couldn’t teach there any longer.

Q: You mean at that particular school?

A: Not just that particular school. I think it was a general tendency in South Africa. Certainly in the army I had enormous problems, not only because of my physical, but also because of my sexual orientation. So the entire thing just became too much for me, and I really thought I must go to Europe, where the whole humanist approach, the education is just so incredibly different…

Q: And you found in Germany or in Europe what you were looking for? It was actually different?
A: Yes, absolutely. It was much easier for me to live and be the way I am, musically and my private life.

Q: And did you sense any change in South Africa in the late eighties, or weren’t you sure which direction it really was going to go in?

A: No, I was actually terribly surprised once the change came. I did not expect this would come about. You know, sort of the early nineties - I never thought that they would release Mandela. It just seemed impossible. But with the way things went, what with the violence going on, I just didn’t see any way out.

Q: Did you ever think of going back to South Africa? If you did, why were you thinking that? If you did not think so what made you stay?

A: I had thought of going back, you know. In the last six, seven years I have worked in the Miagi Festival and I have been able to work with black musicians and the Festival made it possible for me to do things which I would have loved to have done in the eighties, but there was no support.

Q: Do you have suspicion about why it is so difficult to communicate?

A: Certainly among the Afrikaner there is the idea that I ran away; that I should just stay here with the Germans and not come back and I think many whites think that too.

Q: And you feel that you have been accepted by the Germans, musically speaking? Is there an interest in your music in general and by Europeans in general?

A: Yes and no. Certainly in terms of big orchestral works and certainly in the academic scene the answer is “no,” but that has to do with the fact that I am not an academic. I have always shied away from the academic world and I have always seen the role of composer as one who actually composes…

Q: Not being an academic, does that also have a bearing on not being accepted as an orchestral composer. Is that what you’re saying?

A: I think so, yes.
Q: So how would you describe your compositional style and/or philosophy? I have mostly concentrated on the Africanness of your music, but is there anything else; have you experimented with avant gardist type techniques? Is there anything else to your compositional style - you mentioned the pop music...

A: Oh yes. I suppose one could say that the minimalist movement intersected me, but in the sense that I decided somewhere along the line that if you reduce, what you want to say stylistically, it is much easier for people to notice what it is that you are saying, but the danger of course is, if you are going to reduce, the margin of success is just so slight. Once you use minimalist effects, or a reduced structural approach, you demand from the listener to be far more widely awake, and to really get into the material. For example, if I went out and wrote a splashy avant gardist sort of work, and I splashed all sorts of orchestral effects and I had two harps, and they were all making a noise, you simply overwhelm people in the audience with the noise. They all clap and they think “wonderful”, because there was a crash-bang, but they do not actually get into the music. If it is minimalist and people do not want to listen, if they are not prepared intellectually to get into the material, you end of getting crits, as I have had in the past, saying the orchestration is mediocre, and it’s all so snide, and this that and the other. But that to me is just a misunderstanding.

Q: So you mean they missed any kind of tone colour changes, or any other very subtle changes, that you...

A: People seem to miss those. But you see, this is the problem here of course, is that the media have inundated all of with sound, you’ve got cell phones going, you’ve got this and you’ve got that and people just don’t listen any longer.

Q: Simplicity. There is a lack of that, is that what you’re saying?

A: Well, I think if people were prepared to listen, then the reduced style could actually, you know, the answer. I do really believe it’s much harder to say something new in a reduced style than it is using avant garde techniques. I’ve done some work with…. I’ve reverted to using tone rows. I wrote a piece for the school; we did a Eurythmie performance of a section of “Also Sprach Zarathustra” and they asked me to write the music, so I used the piano, partially prepared. I actually played on the strings with wooden sticks, etc., and
then I had a violin and a cello, and as a trio, and I actually used simple motives, and used typical row transpositions as we learned them. But the interesting thing is that my style still remained, so you had this atonal backdrop, it’s recognizably Isak Roux.

Q: Would you say your style, philosophy, either one, have they evolved at all? Has it changed in the last ten, twenty years?

A: Well, if you listen to Mambazo album, which unfortunately had to fight against so many financial odds and problems, the orchestration is very, very much reduced. Only someone with classical training could have done that. But at the same time, one had to understand the African milieu and one also had to understand the pop. And I think I did manage to do something there in a sense, which was probably entirely misunderstood, because people could not hear past the bad production. You know, the orchestra was recorded very poorly by someone who had never recorded an orchestra before. But it was our first attempt in Africa. The point I am trying to make - I am not trying to whitewash the production – it didn’t quite work – the ideas I thought were good, but you can’t talk about it - that’s not an example for my stylistic evolvement - it’s just that I try to jump across this whole divide and, and work with Mambazo in that sense, but I think if I now sat down and wrote – I am about to write a marimba concerto for somebody in Karlsruhe, I think the Africanist element would still be there, but I don’t think I would be as careful as I was fifteen years ago at using bitonality and simply free-formed, just heavy improvisational things where you just tell what things are improvisatory sections, where you just tell the person: “here, give him a couple of splotches and say now go for it.”

Q: So you’re saying to the soloist, that he or she should improvise, give them an idea and say run with it?

A: Yes. I am writing for a wonderful man, Frank Lemay, who can do that sort of thing, I’ve seen him do that with an orchestra and he is very well versed and also knows African instruments, etcetera. But it’s very difficult for me to tell you whether I have evolved, I don’t really know. I am now doing a jubilee concert on the second of October to celebrate my fiftieth. I’ve been using a lot of music from the past, some I am just re-orchestrating for smaller groups.
Q: So, what you’re really saying, what I’m hearing is, that you found your stride fairly early on what you have mostly done by evolution of your style, is mostly a refinement of style, not a complete change, is that, is that probably the direction you’re going in?

A: Yes. If you listen to the pop stuff that I have done, there for instance, there is the “Piano Afrika One,” you can already tell I am playing folk music, but you can tell that this is a person who has learned to reduce. It does not go to the excesses of a jazz person, who is playing himself into a state of nirvana. In fact, it’s, sometimes actually almost sorely missing. Then suddenly you will have a boogie woogie number, where you can tell I can actually really play the piano. So people must also learn to listen differently. To me it’s also about emotion, the African music always has to do with movement and communication and certainly the traditional stuff. And a lot of that is really missing. I mean, we don’t have gatherings where people sing anymore. Certainly no political gatherings. I think what I am aiming at, is to find a product which is devoid of this intellectual baggage. On the other hand, you need intellectual training in order to get there.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add to this, your philosophy, or anything else that you think that I perhaps forgot to ask?

A: No, not really, I don’t think so. I think, somewhere, somewhere in there it really, you’ll find what it’s all about. Sorry, what I did not mention to you is that you may have noticed that I went through an electronic phase. I worked with electronic collages and that sort of stuff. That was also in the nineties. I also experimented there, but to me it was a cul de sac; I just gave up after a while. The problem being for me, that just about anybody then who had a personal computer and some sort of sampling machine, called himself a composer. If you listen carefully to most films you see – I don’t know what it’s like in Canada, but in Germany, you look at your normal films in the evenings and it is disastrous. You hardly hear live recordings anymore; I mean you always hear pathetic orchestral samples being played, pedal points, humming along, and this sort of thing. There’s just no creativity on the whole electronic scene, I find. I think what I wanted to say was what interested me at the time, was that electronic music gave me the possibility to create sound in machine, which an orchestra cannot create.
Q: I have a couple of other questions about your perception of South African music; the history of it, where it’s been, where is it going. I am mostly referring to it in your lifetime; what have you experienced? Where do you think it is going, because I do notice your name is on some of these, I guess the Music Indaba does not exist anymore, but there are some other websites and I do see your name on there, which suggests to me that you are involved in it, other than Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Am I correct in thinking that?

A: Well, I’m not, I suppose I am not really involved directly – I think people just notice what I do and they include me in their dictionaries or their websites, or whatever. But there’s very little interaction between myself and other living composers in Africa.

Q: My impression was that this is a common complaint, is that there is a lack of communication amongst composers. But are you aware of what anybody else is doing, in general? Do you take note, can you take note?

A: When I can… I usually do when somebody’s work is included with mine on the Miagi Festival, like Hans Huyssen. He would be doing his own stuff and I would be doing my cross-over thing. So then I do take notice of what he is doing. And then once or twice, I think there was that other person from the Cape who had won so many prizes…

Q: Oh, Hofmeyr?

A: Hofmeyr had something, but in fact they didn’t play it in end, because there was no time. I once heard a rehearsal of something he wrote.

Q: Michael Blake, maybe?

A: Well, Blake is a name and he even invited me to be part of some sort of forum once, but it never came to fruition and I still don’t know what it is he does.

Q: So, do you have a sense of what the music is doing, in terms of reflecting what they call the “New South Africa”? Do you think that’s happening? You said earlier that you didn’t really see that things would change, but it had changed musically, because Kevin Volans was already doing this kind of stuff, incorporating African music, and others were starting to, in different ways…
A: Yes, it, I think a lot white academics started doing that, not a lot, but a few. But as I wrote - I interviewed some of them for my thesis – and it did, probably because out of political reasons, and certainly just to show, of social awareness of anything else that was going on under the apartheid regime. And I expected it to be more, I think. Somehow once this whole change came about and you had the first generation of young up and coming black students emerging…

Q: That didn’t really happen, did it?

A: No, compositionally I have the feeling that most young people in South Africa just want to become wealthy. They want to write American-style musicals and film music and yes, it’s just a race after money. What interests me though, is that a lot more people of the younger generation are now interested in what it is that I have done in the past and what I am still doing now. And I became friendly with (indistinct), who studied at the University of Pretoria, but he played some of my stuff and he also wrote a very nice article on my music, and introduced my music to other young black academics, and that actually, I find is quite a compliment - when young black people actually stand up there and they say it doesn’t matter Roux is a white man; he has actually done something, which shows where he is from. I said to Michael Spencer in Durban years ago. I said, you know if I can write this sort of music, this Africanist type of music and a black person can hear Africa in it, then I would have achieved what I wanted to achieve. And I have done concerts – some years ago I did a couple in South Africa – and a lot of black people came to me said I could actually hear my father’s “kraal.” And that to me was proof that I had done the right thing.

Q: So, were you surprised about that in terms of – not so much that they would accept you- but that they weren’t offended that you did that?

A: Yes, I was surprised.

Q: What I have also noticed in academic writing - and there are two sides to this - white people especially are being criticized for using African music; that you are plundering all over again. It’s colonialization and that you as a white person have no right to do this. I don’t know whether you have come across this criticism in your own work, or whether you are aware of it in general?
A: No, I have not come across it. I actually did meet a professor of music in the University of Pretoria actually sent me a wonderful letter, in which he congratulated me on composing “Township Guitar” and once on an airport I actually met him. He said I have just come back from a symposium and he said I heard Miau perform your “Township Guitar.” He said to me, all I can say it’s, it’s what any African composer can dream of. There was no condescension; he really meant it. It’s not to say that I haven’t had other problems. I mean, I work with a group called “Kwela Tebza,” a pennywhistle group, and that finally came to naught. We even got as far as having a performance with the (indistinct) Symphony Orchestra. But they found it very hard to work with a man with the name of Isak Roux. To them, at the end of the day I was still just representative of the old apartheid Boer syndrome. And in the end we just parted company. It just didn’t work. It was very bitter for me, because I noticed that we are in many ways haunted by the past. So, if it’s like this in a sort of popular field, then, then it stands to reason that among academics, you, you would have a similar effect.

Q: So perhaps it’s good that South Africa is still isolated to a certain extent?

A: Oh I think so. Well, more or less. She, South Africa has one foot on a banana peel and the other in a grave. Musically, that’s what’s going on and I’m actually worried. Perhaps this gets me now to the point, what you wanted to ask me. I am worried about the future of South African music… but there is hope.

Q: Do you happen to have time to talk a little bit about the pieces?

A: Yes.

Q: So, let’s start with the flute and marimba one, the one you wrote for me. And how did that come about? I know I kind of asked you, but it was a vague request at the time, wasn’t it?

A: It was a vague request and I was experimenting with the idea of writing something for the harp. And I suddenly had this idea that it would work much better if I did something for flute and then I thought harp and then I think finally it was flute and marimba. I am always happy when people commission something or whether they request me to write something, because it gives me a reason to write. Because my teachers all said to me,
don’t compose the music unless you know it will be performed. Otherwise the piece lies simply in a drawer.

**Q:** *The movements, what inspired each one? Did you have an overall plan in mind, or African Sketches, was that just different African ideas?*

**A:** No, I think it was just different ideas, and hence the title. “Sketches” I thought of - painters often just make sketches of what it is they are going to paint, later on.

**Q:** *So this was the musical equivalent?*

**A:** I think so, yes.

**Q:** *“Azande,” what does that stand for?*

**A:** “Azande” is a tribe. It’s a tribe in the South of Uganda.

**Q:** *Is that why you used the Ugandan harp song music?*

**A:** Yes, and you ask here why (referring to some questions sent via email the previous day). It is essentially the harp. In Uganda the harp music – it’s a little hand-harp – and they hold it: the left hand plays, as far as I gather only two notes. As a cantus firmus thing ding, ding, ding, ding (sings).

**Q:** *So that would be the left hand?*

**A:** Yes, and then the other one is, we do it in three notes. I think it’s usually only five strings, if I am not mistaken. And there they improvise, but that is the Ugandan harp illusion. And the flute is almost like a vocal line to me. It’s walking, this is the walking song idea you still remembered. Somebody walking and singing, and that you hear in “Groove” as well.

**Q:** *What about the other notes in the right hand of the marimba or the flute? Is that also based on anything Ugandan?*

**A:** No, not really. I was just thinking vocally when I wrote it. Because a lot of the Ugandan music that I have ever heard was sung often by children and then they had high voices, and it would sound like ja, ja, ja (singing).
Q: Right. So you did contours, really?

A: Yes. In fact, I think that the flute part, I actually just improvised. I tried to think in terms of flute and voice line at the same time. I had played flute, you know, in my youth, so I had a bit of feeling for the instrument and what it can do in terms of its range.

Q: The next one was “Groove” and that’s the walking song. I think I asked you, was there any particular walking song?

A: No, walking songs you find in South Africa. Apparently you find them in the east of Africa and the west of Africa as well. Somebody walks and sings, usually biographical details. Somebody suggested that in some tribes they actually measure the distance by the songs. In this case it was the ka-kang, ka-kang (sings). There is something almost kwela-ish, but not really. That’s this loping character that you referred to here.

Q: And what about the title? How does that relate to the walking song?

A: That’s just because I thought the marimba actually does groove.

Q: The next one was “Weavers...”

A: Weavers are birds I was thinking of when I lived in Churston Road. The weaver birds would come in the evenings and tear off strips of grass to build their nests.

Q: Oh, the yellow birds with these messy little nests?

A: Yes, and they, and they sort of “schwimm” (German for “flit”) about. That’s when they fly about and swirl about and carry on. And also because it’s called “Sketches,” I wanted to write something like the pointillists painters; you know these pointy colours that you look at the whole thing and it looks like a rug.

Q: I think I mentioned it last night, the open fourths and the fifths, and the rhythms, is that deliberate as well?

A: No, that was just a free invention, and I play with rhythm all the time. As I said, a pointillistic sort of playing. In “Mopani” I did mean the tree. Afternoon refers to the time and I see in my mind’s eye, a young African just lying under the tree in the heat and
playing the flute. The Germans like it a lot. You know, somebody here played it on the alto flute. It works beautifully. It’s much warmer.

Q: And then the “Interlude” just links “Weavers” to “Mopani,” right?

A: Ja.

Q: That leaves “Pipe Dance.”

A: It’s not a specific dance, but some tribes use many pipes for single notes. And so of course where the flautist is left to play actually many single lines on your own. That’s why you’ve got those two distinct lines. It works very well, if, if you’ve got enough breath and control to carry it through.

Q: Are you trying to do a hocket-type thing with the many pipes with each one a different person playing it?

A: I think that’s what it is, yes. And of course the accompaniment is really – I used to listen to the Chopi xylophone players in Durban a lot and I wanted to have a little bit of that idea.

Q: In the marimba part?

A: Ja, that’s why you’ve got the conflicting rhythms that he is playing. That exactly gives you that tribal effect, I find.

Moving on to the “Four African Scenes” for woodwind quintet:

“Desert Dance:”

Q: Yeah, it does really sound African. Is it the polyrhythm?

A: Yes, it’s the pentatonic nature too.

Q: Right, so that’s something you use quite a bit, is the pentatonic scale?

A: Yes, I think so. It’s also a bit pointillistic in a sense. But I did expand it. The actual work for “Domus” (the woodwind quintet that recorded the work) is longer and they did other
things, which are even more African, and they suddenly have breaks and they’ll go ka-
kang, king-king. King-king-ting-ting. (sings).

Q: *Now to the other three movements. Are those...*

A: “Dusk at Loteni” does sound African in a way, because I try to use the declamation of
the Zulu voice singing at a funeral. You have a slight feel almost of gospel quality, but
because it is essentially the horn, the fagot and the clarinet - the other two don’t play - it
almost has an alpine quality.

Q: *Who is JH?*

A: That is a person it’s dedicated to. Loteni is where he is buried. He lived there in this; he
was the only white man in the black village; a whole valley was full of black people.

Q: *That’s why it’s like a funeral song?*

A: It was my tribute to him, really.

Q: *“Marketplace Conversations:” is that just like going to the Victoria market in Durban?*

A: Yes and there’s this chirping and jabbering and people talking and every now and again
you hear a sad little moment, like someone is begging for money. It’s just again, this
pointillistic effect and full of jobbery jabbery. Whether it’s African or not, I don’t know,
but it’s just a scene painting.

Q: *And the other one is...“Wind Song.”*

A: I imagine sitting on the clouds and looking down at KwaZulu Natal. It’s almost like
someone playing the harmonium on an old farm on the sugarcane plantations. This
undulating, duh-di (sings), it’s like the rolling, undulating hills. That’s what I was trying
to paint. And every now and again you have a slight sort of hint of India, because there
are just so many Indians living there and they used to work in the fields, so it tries to
depict that as well.

**Martin Scherzinger**

Telephone interview, 23 April 2011.
**Q:** I just wanted to know a little about your background. I know that you have a couple of degrees and that you were born and raised in South Africa.

**A:** That is correct. In terms of my official stuff: I went to university in South Africa. I was heading to a law degree and then switched to music. Then I went overseas for two years to Berlin where I did some translating for someone. I lived in the formerly Eastern part.

**Q:** Oh really?

**A:** And travelled around Europe playing on the streets - which was interesting - and then I moved to the United States where I did a PhD and got a position at the Eastman School of Music. Then I did three years at Princeton, as a post-doctoral fellow and now I work at NYU.

**Q:** When you went to Germany, you went as a percussionist, is that correct?

**A:** Yeah, I played with a former colleague, or student of mine in South Africa, and we tried to work with rendering European music in a kind of Africanized way. For example, I would take a fugue by Bach, separate the four voices, or the five voices, and then interlock them as if they were amadinda xylophone players, so that one line is in the space of the other line, as opposed to being simultaneous. Then [I would] collapse all four registers into a kind of middle register, so that if you can imagine soprano, alto, tenor, bass: that the soprano and the alto are now interlocking and so whenever one is on the other is off; playing in the silence of the other. Then bringing the other two voices – the bass and the tenor – into the same range, so that the tenor voice now begins to interlock with the soprano voice, if you’re following my thinking…

**Q:** Yes...

**A:** And the same with the lower voices. That created really interesting sort of music. The Europeans are quite sophisticated, I think, and they sort of understood that it was through a very different kind of logic it has been rendered. And of course all the different melodies were quite different.

**Q:** Yes...
A: So it was an interesting time, just to work across these two continents and to try to bring the perception of one continent into, infuse the properties of one music with those of another. Unfortunately, when it comes to really brazen music-making, being on the street, literally, you ultimately start to do the things that make you more money, which means that you are going to start playing virtuosically and just circus music. So we would play like these gigantic Chopin Fantasy Impromptus, stuff the audiences would like. It was an interesting time of experimentation; bringing one kind of language, musical language into the sphere of another, infusing it with another.

Q: Your bachelor’s degree, was that in performance, ethnomusicology, or what?

A: No, it was in composition, actually. You know, they weren’t as specialized as all that. It was a kind of general degree and you took a major. I remember doing composition and the thesis I wrote at the end of that was probably an entryway into much more interesting work I did later, which was to look at the geometric properties of African harmony. Very little work has been done on African harmony, which is a testament to the failure of, I think, the imagination - in the sense that African music is amply endowed with rhythmic significance in Western discourse, but much less about the other parameters.

Q: Yes, everybody assumes there is none (referring to harmony).

A: Right and it is just a much more complex field. One of the theses I laid bare - you are taking me back a long way – but it was a kind of entryway into some work I was doing on the transcending properties of African harmonies and how they work in symmetric and near-symmetric ways, which is crucial to the African aesthetic. When someone like Steve Reich quotes small fragments, it kind of misses the harmonic point, even though he does capture beautifully some of the rhythmic features of the music and renders them almost exactly. He understands the mathematics of rhythm in Africa, but you can hear that harmony does not matter, as if there weren’t any, and that’s the kind of work I did to close off. There was that and one might call it a cross between mathematics and music. So when you say what did I specialize in, that was probably the most significant thing I did in that time.

Q: Well, that kind of answers my question about how were you exposed to African music. That must have been then, right?
A: Well, I mean, living in South Africa, it was impossible not to be. It was everywhere: the sounds that would pipe through the air, that was popular music from America and stuff, and of course that was around as well, but if you were in any way attached to the land, or if you just had your ears open, it was impossible not to notice. So, in my case, my parents were often travelling; not around that much, and so we were raised really by the people that worked for them. I was raised by black people. I was the youngest of lots of kids. I had enough other brothers and sisters who were the children of the other people that lived there, so I had black younger brothers and sisters and white older ones. It was a strange kind of setup, but it was a temple of activity. There were all these people. I was exposed to a very different way of doing things. The first encounters are just everywhere. In terms of actually taking a conscious interest in it, I was not really involved with music until I was studying law and then a friend of mine, who was in my philosophy class, decided to build an instrument. That was tinkering around, experimenting with rhythm and soon enough we were in a free peoples’ band, which in those days meant the kind of resistance through aesthetics movement, and you just had a few black people and a few white people, and so we mixed it up that way. My first encounter with African music was really through a light-hearted township, jazzy type thing, and then I came into contact with mbira players and it just went from there. Mbira was a major point of resonance for me.

Q: I noticed that in some of your pieces.

A: Not like the free-flowing character of rock or jazz. It is quite digital and in that sense became very interesting for me, intellectually. I can’t remember exactly how it all began, but mbira players started showing up in the scene we were playing in, and then I would play with the mbira players alone. I was travelling with mbira players for a little bit. I got up to Zimbabwe and got different instruments. There were “matepes”, different instruments and very different structures, very different layouts. The mbira is laid out very differently to a western instrument. The piano has a left – right structure with high notes and low notes. An mbira has high notes moving off the edges, a very different conception how these constellations are laid out and how one kinaesthetically relates with that layout. My first contact was really with the mbiras and so when I started to take
a conscious interest in music, I began to think, my goodness, Beethoven is fascinating as well.

**Q:** So what you just said, is that also a summary of your compositional style or philosophy, or is there anything you’d like to add to that as well?

**A:** Well, it’s funny; recently I have been writing these illusionist paraphrases, which are very different to what I was writing in the piece that you know, and the music I sent you. With illusionist paraphrases you try to become another composer, and not write in a style that just sounds deadly from a creative point of view, but to try and become another composer and see what happens when you do that to the best of your ability - but passionately - and then what happens is there is a sort of imprint of where you come from on that music. That’s fascinating to me too, because when I listen to the piece ‘Brahms through the Looking Glass’ I laugh, because it sort of can’t help itself, but move itself into those extreme kinds of African gestures. If one were to describe it, it just sounds so dull. I would say, yes, it's informed by African ways of making music. There is something very interesting about the western instrument by treating it like an African instrument. Other times it’s just working in that sound world, whether it’s the harmonic factors, or some other thing - the way rhythms are put together. In a way, the way rhythms are put together is really fascinating. The dynamics of interlocking and oscillation. Interlocking instruments in the context of oscillating pitch tones I find interesting.

**Q:** So that means you still compose fairly frequently, or is your academic work the main thing at the moment?

**A:** I do both. I just recently worked with a percussion duo and have just come back from a trip to New Mexico, where some of my music was played and I was there in the capacity of the composer. During the semester whenever time opens up in any kind of way, I will compose these illusionist paraphrases.

**Q:** It’s just that I have not been able to find a lot of your stuff online...

**A:** I am pretty useless at doing that, quite hopeless. I don’t nurture it in that respect very well. I have a pile of stuff…
Q: I just wasn’t sure whether that was deliberate or not, because I found some items through SAMRO...

A: Yeah, it’s not deliberate, it’s just it’s not my focus. (Inaudible until 17:42) The motor patterns are out of sync with the oral patterns. It’s almost like a visible acrosmatic, and that’s an African principle, a sort of magical effect where the players will be doing, different, regular patterns on alternates sides of the instrument, for example like an amadinda, or akadindo - they’ll be playing very high C’s and all of sudden there’s a third phantom pattern that you notice and that what’s it’s all about, but no-one is actually playing it. It’s like a character from afar. And I use a lot of this in my work.

Q: Now to the piece. About the title: “Whistle of the Circle Movement.” Is there a meaning in that, or am I reading too much into that?

A: They definitely mean something. It’s sort of funny being asked that. What did you think? Sort of that circular. I don’t think they have meaning. I think the circularity refers to the kind of dances and sort of the kinds of ways music is around me, circles and circles within circles and so on, as opposed to a linearity or oscillation. There are other ways of structuring form, aesthetic form, whether it is dance, whether it is music. Some people argue that Beethoven’s linear and it’s all problematic, but there is a sense that African music does not move along the lines of modular trajectories, rather it stays within a kind of a circle and tries to clarify what is in that circle. The whistle, I am not sure exactly, but I would say now, if I were to think about it, it is something like that third voice that is elicited out of the interactions between the elements within the piece. If we go back to the amadinda, since we have talked about that already, these xylophone players at opposite ends, playing within the same register, eliciting a third thing, which is played by nobody - very often in African music there will be in fact a third player who listens, who is just there to listen to the result, what Steve Reich would call the resultant pattern. Inherent patter would be a better word, as Gerhard Kubik calls it, and which the Ugandan people call ukukoonera. Ukukoonera, which is to sing above, and emerge out of, that, is also often when mbira players listen this kind of phenomenon in music. They will often say something like when the mbira sounds like a flute, and then the ancestors have come. You get that kind of notion that it’s music made by nobody, and therefore of unknown authorship and that gives it its special character, and it’s somehow inherent,
it’s hovering, it’s neither here nor there, absent and present, and so on. I think that the piece you are dealing with is kind of light-hearted. There is something urban about that piece.

Q: Right. I made a note of the CD liner notes. I am guessing you wrote this: “the music dances through these memories and tries to heed the wind in the movement.”

A: Ah… there you go.

Q: It’s what I was thinking, maybe the whistling has something to do with the wind and movement, and …

A: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Yeah, that’s good as well. I like that. It also implies a space between movement, which is not that far away from the inherent movement. Look, I the whole point is not really to be decisive about things, but to let things appear, to transfigure something at it’s best, it’s an old-fashioned theory …

Q: Because in the liner notes it also says evokes musical landscapes and languages, so I am wondering whether that might be more evocative than actual borrowing of any kind…

A: I am so far from this piece that I have to try to think my way back into it. There is another possibility for approaching those open spaces, the uzumu agona idea, which is where people stop dancing and let the circle be silent for one round and come back in and back out, back in and back out. The music keeps going, but there’s no sound, but you can kind of hear it. Like in the Nyungwe region of Mozambique, there are these beautiful dances that have that character. It’ll sort circle around and there’ll be two phases of it and then it’ll stop and there’ll pulsing going on, and the pulsing just slips right in and then it will come back again, but the timing is all perfect, but the silence is extended. A long silence, an entire cycle of silence. But it just opens up that space. So there are a lot of reference points for working with a certain kind of pulse and silence and to open space. There is also something about the African landscape. I was just thinking, when I play mbira, whenever I am playing it in an environment that’s African, the acoustic is just so much better, and it’s the way it interacts with the environment. I don’t want to get romantic about it; it’s foolish, but there are many recent theories that African music is made in a sensual relationship to the environment, but I think that’s
eco-friendly fantasizing. But I do also think that there is something about the landscape that imposes itself.

Q: On the recording that I have, the piano is modified, but it is not in the score in one of these slow sections. It sounds like it has a piece of paper in the strings. Would that be in order to do in a performance? Is that anything you are aware of?

A: I can’t remember that, but if it works, definitely do it.

Becky Steltzner

Interview, Cape Town, 24 June 2009.

Q: So let’s start with some basic questions. I see here that you studied clarinet with Glenn Bowen and Mitchell Lurie. That’s a Master of Music degree from the University of Southern California. Where did you do your undergrad?

A: The University of Wisconsin at Madison. I am originally from Wisconsin. Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Q: When did you come to South Africa?

A: 1982. Mitchell Lurie actually phoned me to tell that there was a job going with the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra and that I should apply for it. I applied and I got the job. And before I even came out, the Dean of the College of Music here had contacted me to see if I wanted some part-time teaching. I was in the Symphony Orchestra for nearly twenty years and during that time we’d transformed a couple of times. One of those times was to merge with the opera orchestra. Then it went financially bust. And there was an option of auditioning for the next sort of version of it, but it would have been the fourth version. I just decided it wasn’t the way it used to be when it was just symphonic music and I didn’t deal with a lot of the pit work all that well. And this (referring to her teaching) was starting to grow and I eventually just became full time here.

Q: Do you do any playing?

A: Yes.
Q: Are you playing substitute?

A: I don’t play with the current full-time orchestra, because the principal is using her students from Stellenbosch mostly, but I do freelancing in other orchestral stuff around town. And then my woodwind quintet…

Q: The Amadeus Winds?

A: Yes.

Q: And when was that formed?

A: That was in ’83.

Q: So about a year after you arrived. And when you came to South Africa did you have any intention of staying long?

A: No… I eventually married a South African, but I only got married in ’98, so I was here for a good fifteen, sixteen years before I got married.

Q: When you were at university, did you study performance only, or did you have some composition background?

A: No, I didn’t have any composition background. I basically needed to do arrangements for the quintet and there just kind of came a point where I realized that because I had spent so much time in symphony orchestra, I could look at something and hear the colour combinations. I could hear it and I thought, well let me try this. It’s kind of gone from there. I don’t have a huge output and that’s the only one that’s been formally published. The other thing I do regularly is... every year there is a chamber music camp for high school kids in a township. (The camp is held in Franschhoek.) I’ve done a few arrangements for them and I have done some original things for them. One of them was a fanfare for brass players for circular breathing. It’s called “Fanfare for Circular breathing,” because we discovered that two of the three of this trio could circular breathe and they promised that they would teach the third one how. And there’s a piano trio called “Haunted House.”
Q: *Would you say your composition experience is mostly through trial and error, or did you take any...*

A: I have never taken a composition course. I’ve had good theory courses and I’ve had good orchestration courses, and I had good counterpoint courses.

Q: *Do you have any other pieces that involve flute, or is this the main one?*

A: That’s the only one that involves flute, but I have always intended - and it’s something I have never gotten around to - it was the one that most suited the woodwind quintet because the penny whistle is a type of flute. But there are other flute things, instruments. I’m not that clued up on ethnomusicology. Somebody mentioned Venda, but I mean there are groups in southern Africa that have the flute as their main instrument. I have always meant to do a bit of research on those and then add another couple of movements to this.

Q: *This is original though? The melody...*

A: Yeah.

Q: *And did you do a lot listening in terms of research for this one?*

A: I went to a CD shop and I got a couple of CD’s that had kwela’s on them. We have a few here. It was after listening to a whole bunch of those. Most of my composing is at the piano, but I did have to ask the flute player. I originally got it in a key that was not the best for bending. There’s another one I have done, but I made the oboist the feature there. That is an arrangement on my favourite African folk tune. It’s the lullaby “Tula, tula.”

Q: *Did you do any reading on how kwela is...*

A: I did…

Q: *The structure of it at all?*

A: I did. They use the primary chords and there is not much else. I did get some material from Grove. I don’t think it had anything on the harmonic structure, I don’t remember
where I got that. A lot of this material, well it isn’t exclusively from Grove, but the thing is, the Grove article wasn’t modern enough to include “Mango Groove.” It seems to be a Johannesburg-based type of music. It only became internationally popular through Malawi and I am not quite clear why it happened that way. But if you ask people in the States what they know of kwela, the ones that are old enough to remember it probably would call it Malawian. But it isn’t really, because it came from Johannesburg. This piece has also been flute published for flute and string quartet.

**Q:** Oh, it has?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** By the same publisher?

**A:** Yes. What I did not realize at the time, was flute and string trio is a more popular combination.

**Q:** So string quartet. Do you mean flute, two violins, viola, and cello?

**A:** Yeah, standard string quartet, but the problem with this was… there was a crowd here that just took this music and they tried to reduce it as were; take the four string parts and put the first violin trying to catch as much of the second violin stuff as he could and it and it didn’t go very well. It’s a bit too complicated. This one doesn’t sit well with three strings.

**Q:** Was it also done for orchestra, did I read that somewhere?

**A:** Yes, and I, that got premiered in Sweden.

**Q:** Did you do the arrangement?

**A:** Yeah, and I added marimbas, so it’s got a nice, vibey sort of African…The one arrangement I didn’t do ….was just a few months ago I got an email from a saxophone quartet in Germany. They put out a CD of African…”Saxofourte.”

**Q:** Yes, I do know they have an interest here, because I know another South African composer who composed for them.
Q: A couple of other questions: was your family musical at all?

A: Yeah. Anyway, they arranged it for saxophone quartet. “Bannoutah,” that’s the CD.

Q: A couple of other questions: was your family musical at all?

A: My mom played completely by ear. When she was growing up they sent her for lessons, but she got her older brother to play the lesson for her at the beginning of the week and by ear she would pick it up. They worked out that she wasn’t reading music. And one day she made some or other mistake in the lesson and it’s something as a mistake he made when he played it. When the teacher said something about not … whatever it was, in bar whatever… she couldn’t, she had no idea what the woman was talking about and so it became really clear that she wasn’t doing any reading. So they eventually tried to force her to read and she was frustrated with it and she just quit, ‘because it was too easy for her to do it the other way.’ My dad played the trumpet, but I have never heard him play, so I don’t know how good he was. It was probably just normal high school band stuff, but I have three sisters and they all play. I have another that did a music degree. (Referring to one of the sisters.)

Q: So, you mentioned your mother playing by ear and you said you kind of listened to, or when you played in the orchestra you heard sound colours. Is that maybe something that you inherited from her? That facility?

A: Yeah, I think so.

Q: And when you start composing you say, you said you do it at the piano?

A: Yeah. I started piano when I was four years old, so I’ve played piano much longer than clarinet. But I’ve got tiny hands and there would have been no real career on piano for me. I also ended up liking the social aspect of being in ensembles, so I think being a pianist is a lonely life anyway. There was just more of a future on clarinet for me than there was on piano.

Q: And then you just used the piano? Do you just start playing?

A: I start playing until I start getting something that I can work with. Then I sit and work around that until I get that section right and then I can go on and do the next bit. At some point you have to just keep running it through your head to try and get an overall [idea].
**Q:** About your style: how would you describe your compositional philosophy, if you have ever thought about that, or your style? In your own words?

**A:** It is very eclectic, because if you look at my stuff that isn’t ethnically oriented, there’s quite a bit of dissonance. It does resolve in the end. I am not trying to be blatantly tonal, but I just seem to need some kind of resolution. I like Berg. I guess my philosophy is it’s gotta seem to be a complete and a whole piece to me…I don’t know how to describe it…

**Q:** So you are composing for yourself and not because of what other people want, this or that style?

**A:** Well, I don’t consider myself an experienced enough composer to handle long length things like a forty-minute symphony. It’s also not my bread and butter, so I’m just doing what I….

**Q:** …something you’re good at?

**A:** Yeah. I know that a lot of time, I’m writing for basically what’s available, because there will be like a particular combination. So I feel a bit more like a Baroque “Kapellmeister” that has to do with what he’s got. And there’s a certain amount of discipline I suppose that goes with that, because you’ve gotta make it successful with what you’ve got.

**Q:** How does this piece fit into your overall output so far?

**A:** It was actually written for a wedding initially. It’s the only wedding gig we have ever done. The only reason we did it was because the bassoonist had a colleague who was getting married, who insisted that she wanted him to play - and promised that it would be a concert setup where people wouldn’t be eating while we were playing. And she wanted four pieces dedicated to specific people. So she came and told us the people… that she wanted to dedicate things to and we chose pieces accordingly, but there was just nothing African. So that’s when I decided I would just sit down and write.

**Q:** Was that a Zulu person?

**A:** Yes, actually, she was. But having said that, then it got published and then we’ve used in many, many, many concerts since then. A couple of times when there have been
chamber music competitions in the Cape, woodwind quintets have used it to compete with. Not all competitions require a South African work, but it’s better if you can present a South African work.

**Q:** Since you used an African kind of theme here, how do you feel about using local influences in music? It’s been fairly controversial...

**A:** I have my own type of opposition to it. In the 80’s when I was in the orchestra, you could see that things were going to have to change in South African society. Everybody could feel it coming a long way off. And one of the things that was happening was everybody was running African. One of the things I found really annoying was to continually have to play pieces that we were supposed to take as seriously integrated music, but it was like a Zulu theme done in a theme and variations. Now a theme and variations form... I can go through any number of, the Paris Conservatoire competition pieces where they use themes and it still comes out cheesy, tacky and...in bad hands it can come absolutely just completely tacky. If I look for integration of elements, what I really want to feel like nothing’s been superimposed on anything else. I want to feel like the piece is a whole and one thing can’t be separated from another. That would be integration of elements.

**Q:** So you think it’s necessary to find a style that incorporates all elements of either Western or African elements. Like a South African musical style?

**A:** I don’t think my attitude would be different than it is now. If I felt it relevant for what are my purposes at that time, or whatever my enjoyment is at that time to put something together that combines the elements, that would be fine. If I felt like doing something completely Western European, that would also be fine. If you’re looking for what’s relevant - it’s a multi-faceted society, so it’s going to be different for different people at different times, and it is probably going to be different to me at different times. But I don’t think we have to blend everything together. When we do, it needs to be something that isn’t one thing superimposed on the other, then it really does need to be a good blend of stuff that is seamless. I wouldn’t be looking for one way of doing things; I would just want whatever that composer is doing at that time to be well-integrated, seamless, cohesive, and those are subjective.