2013

Julie, & Aaron Copland's Development of The Opening Idea Through Quartal Harmonies, Pitch Space, and Register in the first movement of his Third Symphony

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"JULIE"
AND
AARON COPLAND'S DEVELOPMENT OF OPENING MATERIAL
THROUGH INTERVALIC RELATIONSHIPS, PITCH SPACE AND REGISTER
IN THE FIRST MOVEMENT OF HIS THIRD SYMPHONY

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in
The School of Music

by
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May 2013
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my teacher and major professor, Dr. Dinos Constantinides, for his high standards, guidance, and patience. His well-chosen words and careful consideration of my work through five years of education always motivated me to work the details of every composition. I would also like to thank the members of my committee, Dr. Stephen David Beck, Dr. Brett Boutwell, and Dr. Michelynn McKnight for the difficult work of appraising both my document and composition. In particular I would like to thank Julia Carey for her poetic libretto that so often inspired the composition of the opera.

Most of all, I thank my wife, Susie, for believing in me and leaving home, family and friends behind to start a new life.
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ABSTRACT

The first part of this dissertation is an original opera, *Julie*, composed on a libretto by Julia Carey. The opera consists of a prologue, 4 acts, and an epilogue, with an instrumentation of (2-2-2-2, 4-3-3-1, timpani, 3 percussion, harp and strings). The style is pluralistic and is determined at any moment by the demands of the text.

The *Prologue* is an instrumental section of about 4’30” and introduces the primary themes employed in the opera. The music employs a simple leitmotiv system, associating certain themes and instruments to particular characters and emotional states. Additionally, though themes are recycled and developed throughout, the opera is through composed, and though there exist clear cadences at the end of each act, the music continues *attacca*, without stopping between acts.

The second part of the dissertation is an analysis of the first movement of Copland’s *Third Symphony* and studies the relationship of the entire movement to the pitch space, perfect fourths and perfect fifths, and registral juxtapositions of the opening material of the movement. Chapter one introduces and clarifies various terms and how I will employ them in the document, as well as identifies and discusses other theorists who have written relevant studies of Copland’s music. Chapter two offers historical context of the music, composers and social conditions preceding and precipitating Copland’s creation of the *Third Symphony*. Chapter three is an analysis of the 1\textsuperscript{st} movement of the symphony. The opening material (about 9 measures) is analyzed for quartal content, width of pitch spaces, and juxtaposition of registers and timbres. The remaining analysis refers back to these opening musical statements, identifying ways in which Copland has fragmented, condense, expanded, and recycled material to build the entire movement.
LIST OF CHARACTERS

Julie ............................................. Soprano
Charles, her lover ......................... Tenor
The storyteller .............................. Alto
Two visiting gentlemen (silent roles)
Servant (silent role)
SYNOPSIS

Julie is the mistress of Charles. She is a quadroon kept in the 1800’s New Orleans custom of plaçage in an apartment on Royal Street. Under this custom, Charles is financially responsible for Julie and any children they might have, but they cannot marry as it is against the law for him to legally unite with a woman of color. Instead they live together in their apartment and are socially accepted as a couple, as the keeping of a mistress was expected among the men of the culture.

Charles and Julie are a couple in love, but Julie has grown impatient with the custom and wants Charles to marry her. Should they marry, Charles would lose all social standing in the community, would be shunned by his family and subsequently lose his fortune. After many months of her pleading leading to fighting which was damaging their relationship, Charles finally gives Julie an ultimatum. He will marry her if she will do one thing. If she will sit on the roof of their apartment without a stitch of clothing on, he will marry her. Just as he delivers this ultimatum, two business partners of his knock on the door and Charles must retreat to entertain them. His evening is spent in the parlor drinking brandy, smoking cigars, and playing chess with his colleagues, and they lose track of time. Charles realizes the late hour and apologizes for keeping them all night and sends the businessmen home in their carriages, turning his mind to Julie.

Upon entering their bedchamber, Charles is struck by the open casement blowing winter air and sleet in the room. He realizes Julie has done what he asked, and as a man of his word, he must now marry her. He climbs to the roof in a panic, removing his coat to warm her and finds her cradled next to the chimney, dead from exposure.
INSTRUMENTATION

Flutes 1 & 2 (Flute 2 doubles Piccolo)
Oboes 1 & 2
Clarinets 1 & 2
Bassoons 1 & 2
Horns 1, 2, 3 & 4
Trumpets 1 & 2
Trombones 1 & 2
Tuba
Tympani
Percussion 1, 2 & 3
Harp
Violin 1 (minimum 10)
Violin 2 (minimum 10)
Viola (minimum 8)
Cello (minimum 4)
Basses (minimum 3)

Percussion 1
   Marimba, Large Wind Gong, Xylophone, Vibraphone, small triangle

Percussion 2
   Snare Drum, Wood blocks, Small triangle, Suspended Cymbal, Crash Cymbal, Tam-Tam, Timbales, Chimes

Percussion 3
   Celesta, Bass Drum, Small Triangle, Crash Cymbal, Glockenspiel, Congas, Chimes, Suspended Cymbal
PART I. JULIE, AN ORIGINAL OPERA
Prologue, Scene 1

Score in C

David Cortello
Storyteller slowly enters stage
been all year
perhaps you will see her smell the jasmine she tangles in the winter air the summer scent strand and
It is said she will come if only her name is lonely in a season to which it does not belong.
Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Obo.
Bc.
Bar. 2
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
C Tpt.
Tbn.
Tuba
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Db.
Storyteller exits
When he's near when he's gone
Yet I choke
When he is near me

thn  nr when he's gone

p
t

\begin{align*}
\text{flutes} & \\
\text{ob.} & \\
\text{cl.} & \\
\text{hv.} & \\
\text{tb.} & \\
\text{ch.} & \\
\text{perc.} & \\
\text{perc.} & \\
\text{hp.} & \\
\text{bass} & \\
\text{vn.} & \\
\text{vc.} & \\
\text{dr.} & \\
\end{align*}
If I could take all that away
His tears still would salt my spine
Julie enters, dissolve into despair.
dawn held by a numbing cold
and you shall be my wife in the nude in the night.

Show you my self without? in the night.

and you shall be my wife

In the nude in the night.
Scene 3
Who-ever looks to the tops of the trees, to the birds in the leaves.

fl. 1
fl. 2
ob. 1
ob. 2
bn. 1
bn. 2
hn. 1
hn. 2
c. tpt. 1
c. tpt. 2
tbn.
tuba
 timp.
perc. 1
perc. 2
perc. 3
hp.
Jl.
Vln. I
Vln. II
vla.
v. c.
db.
hp.
perc. 1
perc. 2
perc. 3
hp.
On - ly drea - mers turn their eyes to the glo - ry in the skies. And what bet - ter dream than a
With weather such as this
The clouds' icy split
will keep heads low and hurried

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 2
Bb Clar. 2
Bassoon 2
Horn 1
Horn 2
Cornet 1
Tuba
Timpani
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Percussion 3
Harps
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Marimba

Chimes
Help me pass as night
Help me wait this night
In stead of white
light Fades as Julie walks out to roof

Perc. 3

To Celesta

Perc. 2

To small triangle

Perc. 1

To Chimes

Perc.

mp  p  pp

To vib

Timp.

mp  p  pp

Hp

mp

Fl.

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Bsn.

Hns. 2

Hns.

C Tpt.

Tbn.

Tuba

Timp.

Perc. 2

Perc. 1

Perc.
To stay warm and dry the two men stayed to supper a meal rich and filling.
sort need-ed bran-dy and bran-dy ci-gars to help with the smoke they played chess wagers were lost and mut-chess re-chal lended
Suddenly slower

While the wind trembled the trees, waiting for Charles...
men took their leave and Charles locked the door remembering to think of his Julia.
Brighter, \( \frac{2}{4} \), \( \frac{3}{4} \)

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob

Bb Cl. 1

Bsn

Vln. II

Vln. I

Hn. 2

Hn. 1

Cl. 1

Tuba

Tpt.

Stry.

Tbn.

Hp.

Fl. 2

Fl. 1

Ob

Bb Cl. 1

Bsn

Vln. II

Vln. I

Hn. 2

Hn. 1

Cl. 1

Tuba

Tpt.

Stry.

Tbn.

Hp.

Fl. 2

Fl. 1

Ob

Bb Cl. 1

Bsn

Vln. II

Vln. I

Hn. 2

Hn. 1

Cl. 1

Tuba

Tpt.

Stry.

Tbn.

Hp.

Brighter, \( \frac{2}{4} \), \( \frac{3}{4} \)

Ju - lie

How the ev - ning stole my time

Suddenly faster, This bed em-braced no sleep last night My
Julie, the air is still the night's  Though the sun sends its first spears
 through the open window
We have no thing now The pride be neath your chir is feed for the pigeons What have you
But you
dark curly hair pass you on the stairs with a smile and a nod then disappear
Or how it priced at your chest it's Julie it's

Of time I think your love and the chill that follows pride and then wonder how it priced at your chest it's Julie it's
PART II. AARON COPLAND’S DEVELOPMENT OF OPENING MATERIAL THROUGH INTERVALLIC RELATIONSHIPS, PITCH SPACE AND REGISTER IN THE FIRST MOVEMENT OF HIS THIRD SYMPHONY

Chapter 1
Introduction

There have been a number of studies on the music of Aaron Copland, often focused on the construction and sources of motivic material in his works. Invariably, the scope of such studies does not allow for a thorough examination of the orchestration or vertical construction of Copland’s works; in fact, one might often surmise from these studies that the orchestration is viewed as a mere expansion of the melodic material, or perhaps a musical arrangement. I hope to show how Copland built the bulk of the melodic material as well as the orchestration of the first movement of his Third Symphony through a distinctive use of quartal harmonies, pitch space and register. Additionally, I will show how the greater part of this movement is drawn from material present in the opening theme.

This recycling of the opening theme through motivic variation is, of course, nothing new. The most famous example may be the opening 4 notes of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, reused in various forms throughout much of the symphony. Later, Schoenberg described the technique of “developing variation”:

variation of the features of a basic unit produces all the thematic formulations which provide for fluency, contrasts, variety, logic and unity on the one hand, and character, mood expression, and every needed differentiation, on the other hand—thus elaborating the idea of the piece.¹

Schoenberg also wrote about developing variation in the music of Brahms with a “persuasive, account of how two Brahms themes are generated by the process of developing variation” in the A minor String Quartet (Andante) and “O Tod” from *Four Serious Songs*.² Like his predecessors, Copland similar techniques, reusing, mutating and varying both the horizontal and vertical intervals of the opening theme, spinning it out into an entire movement.

To begin this discussion I must first define a few terms as I will use them here. For simplicity’s sake, “quartal” will always refer both to the perfect fourth and its inversion, the perfect fifth. Because I am examining motivic phenomena as well as harmonic, I will often refer to harmonic and orchestrational elements as vertical constructions. I will use the word “motive” to describe any recurring sound that may be judged to be memorable due to its aural distinctiveness, or simply because one may claim to have heard the sound earlier in the composition.

Another element of musical construction I will refer to often is “pitch space.” Joseph Straus describes *pitch class space* in terms of Mod 12, comparing it to the hours in a half-day, each numerical hour returning 12 hours later. The theorist uses *pitch space* only as a stepping-stone towards his description of pitch-class space when he says, “we locate pitches in an extended *pitch space*, ranging in equal-tempered semi-tones from the lowest to the highest audible tone.”³ This describes the pitch space of all sounds, in any audible range, organized within an equal-tempered system. To analyze almost any composition in terms of pitch-class space necessarily shrinks the space; this analytical

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tool applied to my study would only obscure the very thing that I wish to illuminate.

Instead, I will examine Copland’s placement of notes within the practical pitch space available on the instruments chosen for the score of the Third Symphony, the composer’s widening of the employed pitch space through octave doublings and registral positioning, and his frequent use of large pitch-spaces which may sometimes themselves be perceived as motives.

Lerdahl discusses the same, more common conception of pitch-space as Straus, defining its parameters through every possible mathematical and analytical method in *Tonal Pitch Space*. The methods employed by Lerdahl are beyond the scope of this paper and would only serve to muddy the musical waters. Additionally, tonal pitch-space refers to tonal distance, and is related to keys, the circle of fifths, and even Schoenberg’s “Chart of the Regions.” The conclusions I draw here are not about relatedness of pitches, but about the geography of the score, which attempts to symbolize the sounds that are not heard until the composer’s sketch has become a fully realized orchestral work. Though not explored in this paper, I have considered Lerdahl’s comments on the relationship of music to language. His examination of the melodic contours of spoken language invoke an analogy between musical pitch and linguistic pitch space and by correlation, raise questions about the communicative nature of music, something known to be of importance to Copland since his well-known comments on “imposed simplicity.”

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For a conversation on pitch space simplified by a lack of tonal relationships one might consider Morton Feldman’s “For Frank O’Hara.”\(^7\) This piece is written for only 6 players, but due to selected instrumentation, represents a microcosm of the orchestra.

Flute doubles both piccolo and alto flute and is joined in the woodwind section by a clarinetist; the percussion part (1 player) ranges from the timpani through the glockenspiel and is complemented by the percussive piano; two string players – violin and cello – represent the string section. Throughout the composition one hears the interplay of register as well as the contrast of occupied pitch spaces, and though Feldman repeats many short motives, there is little in the way of memorable thematic material.

Instead, there is the sound of the flute on a D6 followed by the timpani playing an Ab2, or an oblique harmony between the flute and clarinet separated by an interval of about two-and-a-half octaves. The work is so dependent upon this juxtaposition of pitch space and register that the technique itself becomes a dominant sonic motive. Steven Johnson has this to say about the work:

He [Feldman] considered his *For Frank O’Hara* (1973) typical of his style, with its ‘flat’ minimally contrasting surface. Yet the music actually falls into relatively discrete sections, distinguished by the position of events in pitch space, use of distinctive timbral combinations and textural variation. Some sections are unified by the repetition of harmonies, which may return literally or in spatially varied forms.\(^8\)

Example 1, which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 3, demonstrates how Copland employs a technique in the *Third Symphony* that is analogous to Feldman’s, creating sections and stratifications through alternating pitch spaces and timbres.


Example 1: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 1-6. Reduction of score showing all pitch content.

Another non-tonal perspective on the use of pitch space without regard for harmonic and melodic construction may be found in the music of Olivier Messiaen. Messiaen was well known for his attraction to birdsong and was by all accounts, at least an amateur ornithologist. He often depicted birdsong in his music, and perhaps his attraction to these sounds, coupled with his experience as an organist led to his unusual orchestrations of chords built of higher and higher degrees of “artificial” overtones. The quality of these harmonies is not meant to be examined vertically, as chord structures, or even as clusters, but timbrally. Pitches built upon pitches, rather than harmonizing the fundamental melody, are meant to color it. To analyze these particular moments of the composer’s music thematically or harmonically would only undermine his true intentions.

Messiaen was the organist at La Trinité in Paris for more than 60 years and wrote works for both organ and orchestra; in fact, L’Ascension (1932-34) was arranged for both
orchestra and organ. The pipe organ, as well as the modern digital organ, has stops that allow the player to choose a note above the fundamental to play in parallel harmony with the chosen notes on the keyboard. These added partials include, but are not limited to, octaves, an octave and a fifth, and two octaves and a third. Messiaen experimented with such sounds and advanced these colors beyond the limits of conventional organ stops into extremely complex clusters that he described synesthetically as various colors of the spectrum. Example 2 is a chord found in *Sept hakai* (1962) The color of the chord is described by Messiaen as “bleu,” and includes winds doubled on crotales, an instrument with definite pitch, but with strong overtones, as well as triangles and cencerros,

![Example 2](bleu.png)

Example 2. Vertical excerpt from *Sept haikai* by Olivier Messiaen.

without analyzing the full score; even then it would be an estimate that could only be realized by hearing the actual music.

Though Copland’s vertical sonorities are never as adventurous as Messiaen’s, they still create a distinctive sound and a sense of space through the use of chords that sometimes span five or six octaves, as seen in example 3. This sound, created not just by pitch space, but also by the use of open vertical constructions, including chords of

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Example 3: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 125-126. Voicing of horns and wide pitch space created by high treble and bass clef instruments.

octaves, perfect fourths and perfect fifths, is a signature of the Copland sound, and is strongly identified with the “American” music with which Copland was so closely associated.

To take the discussion further one may look to electroacoustic music, in which orchestration techniques are often completely abstracted in a world of sounds that has rendered the word “atonal” obsolete. For example, in Stephen Beck’s *Study For “Unhinged,”* sounds from an old elevator are assembled and manipulated into a composition.\(^{10}\) The work begins with a long, high, barely audible squeak that slowly

\(^{10}\) Stephen David Beck, *Study For “Unhinged,”* recording obtained from the composer.
drops in pitch. This sound is interrupted at about 48 seconds into the composition by sounds derived from the sound of the closing elevator door. The frequency of this pitch is a near opposite of the initial squeak. The squeak continues to drop and at about 1:04 is replaced by a middle range howl that is soon met by the counterpoint of another middle-range howl. At about 1:30 a very low frequency interrupts the mix briefly and is followed by a quickened pace of squeaks, a blast of another low frequency sound and new percussive sounds. The piece ends with a short coda of the original squeak.

In this, as well as innumerable other electronic compositions, the traditional definition of a motive is blurred and then realized in a new light. There is hardly a rhythm or pitch in Beck’s Study that could be written in standard musical notation, and so it is simply orchestrated with sounds. These sounds may be categorized according to percussive effect or timbre, or perhaps even by the original source material, but are also easily identified by general pitch-space locations, such as “high,” “middle” and “low.” Though these sounds do not necessarily have to be notated into an interpretable score, the piece is nonetheless orchestrated, with compositional decisions made during the orchestral process, based on the pitches and timbres of the available sounds.

Because of the many possible forms of motives I’ve described, it would be important to have a working definition of “motive.” In Grove Music, William Drabkin defines a motive as:

a short musical idea, melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, or any combination of these three. A motif may be of any size, and is most commonly regarded as the shortest subdivision of a theme or phrase that still maintains its identity as an idea.”

How does a musical idea retain its identity to the listener? Through aural memorability, precipitated by melodic repetition or distinctiveness of timbre, or both. Though it may often be obvious and easy to define something as a motive, it may also be uncertain and ambiguous. How long is a motive? What about a single shot of the cannon in Tchaikovsky’s *1812 Overture*? Is this single sound a motive? It is both timbrally distinct and memorable. What about a siren in Varèse’s *Ionisation*? This sound is not so famous as Tchaikovsky’s cannons, but, even in a single listening, perhaps as distinctive. As stated earlier, my use of “motive” in this document describes any recurring sound that may be judged to be memorable due to its aural distinctiveness, or simply because one may claim to have heard the sound earlier in the composition. Undoubtedly, these are very subjective parameters, but after the mathematical/theoretical descriptions of any composition have been exhausted, the only thing that remains is the sound; the only means of experiencing music is aural, and so a final, true examination of a composition should be aural.

Like Varèse’s siren and Tchaikovsky’s cannon, Copland’s perfect intervals, wide voicings and contrasting registers might also be viewed as motives. In the first movement of Copland’s Third Symphony we will hear the high motive juxtaposed against the low, and the wind and string timbres contrasted with the brass, as early as the sixth measure of the symphony. Admittedly, these are not novel methods, but rather, very standard tools of the orchestrator. Still, these techniques are often neglected in an analysis in favor of
more minute theoretical details, perhaps because of sometimes valid, and sometimes not, distinction between the words “orchestration” and “composition.”

The common understanding of “orchestration” by the non-musician is easily summed up by Merriam-Webster: “The arrangement of a musical composition for performance by an orchestra.”¹² This definition separates the work of composing and orchestrating, claiming that the music is composed first, then arranged. No doubt, there is an element of accuracy to be found here in the practice of writing a piano score, short score, or sketch before composing the final orchestration. Even Ravel, the “Swiss clockmaker”¹³ of orchestrators, considered orchestration to be a separate practice from composing.¹⁴ Still, this incomplete definition reduces composing to the mere selection of pitches and rhythms and assumes incorrectly that no important compositional decisions are made in the orchestrational process. A broader definition of orchestration is supplied by Oxford Music Online:

The art of scoring music for an orchestra or band. Many composers show special skill in this, e.g. Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, while Berlioz, Wagner, Mahler, Elgar, Strauss, Ravel, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Britten were all masters of the art.¹⁵

The distinction here is in the perception of orchestration as an “art,” as well as the singling out of master orchestrators who are all known as accomplished composers.

One cannot accurately describe Berlioz’ use of offstage horns and 4 harps in the
*Symphonie fantastique*, or Stravinsky’s extension of the bassoon’s range in the *Rite of
Spring* as simple “arranging” decisions that would have been made by any mediocre
composer. On the other hand, George Gershwin may have been accepted in some circles
as a good composer, but was considered by many to be a sub-par orchestrator, and
*Rhapsody in Blue*, perhaps his most famous work, was not orchestrated by Gershwin, but
by Ferde Grofé. Wayne D. Shirley, in a study of Gershwin’s *Concerto in F*,
acknowledges Gershwin’s weak orchestral skills, saying, “Gershwin seems to have
had at least a general understanding of the process of orchestrating.” If one could
assume that the popular success of *Rhapsody* was due in some part to the orchestration of
Grofé, one must also assume the symbiotic relationship of composing and orchestrating.
What the listener hears in the end is not a melody pecked out on a piano, or a sketch, or a
piano reduction. The orchestration itself is the final product, the music that is heard, the
composition.

Nonetheless, many of those who have surveyed the works of Copland have
ignored the elements present in the final orchestration, discussing instead, the bare
thematic material. Arthur Berger, for example, identifies three themes in the first
movement of Copland’s *Third Symphony*. Each of the themes Berger discusses is easily

16 Don Rayno, Notes to *Gershwin by Grofé, Symphonic Jazz, Original
Orchestrations & Grofé/Whiteman Orchestra Arrangement*, CD Harmonia Mundi
(accessed December 27, 2012).

17 Wayne D. Shirley, “Scoring the Concerto in F: George Gershwin’s First

heard as important to the composition and there is no need to describe the harmony of the first theme because each note is doubled in octaves and unisons. There is no mention, however, of the wide expanse of pitch space employed in the first presentation of the first theme. This theme’s orchestration includes one flute and two clarinets as well as the first violins in a three-octave divisi; Copland’s characteristic sparseness is represented in the presence of a single pitch class per beat of the melody, but the expansive signature of the composer is achieved through a three-octave span divided among the winds and strings. The timbres and the sense of space occupied at this moment cannot be analyzed through the most thorough study of the pitches and therefore must be considered to be an additional entity created by Copland’s orchestration. Though the motive itself may be described by a series of notes in a certain order with particular rhythms, it is also represented by a spaciousness not easily identified by the vocabulary of music theory. If, however, Berger neglects the orchestration, he does not ignore it, mentioning, at least in passing, the “wide spacing” of the instruments in some parts of the first movement.19

Elizabeth Crist has done extensive studies on Copland and his music. In Her article, “Aaron Copland’s Third Symphony from Sketch to Score,” she compares Copland’s sketches to the completed score and discusses the history and circumstances leading up to the completion of the Third Symphony. The article is fascinating and insightful, offering a voyeur’s view into the compositional process. Still, Crist falls short of any lengthy discussion of the full score. Though she sheds light on a change of mode in the opening theme from Copland’s original E minor to the parallel E major in the final incarnation, one finds no comment about the remarkable width of pitch space in this

theme’s final orchestration. Crist’s comments are summarized in example 4 in which the melody in bass clef shows the original sketch with no key signature (ostensibly in E minor, but containing no key defining F or F# as an accidental). Copland preserves the melody (written in treble clef in the example) in the first several measures of the final draft, but institutes a change of mode in the last few measures.20

Example 4. Copland, “Third Symphony,” mm. 1-9, comparison of original sketch (bass clef, above) to final score (treble clef, below).

Even though, in this raw thematic material, one sees the leaps of perfect fourths and fifths that reflect the sense of spaciousness towards which Copland gravitated, there is much more to see in the full score of the Third Symphony, which shows the wide vertical spaces

20 Elizabeth Crist, “Copland’s Third Symphony From Sketch to Score,” Journal of Musicology 18, No. 3 (Summer, 2001): 384.
the composer employs. In much of Copland’s music we find a great deal of the quartal content that, in the *Third Symphony*, partners with the wide pitch spaces to create the composer’s signature sound; for that reason studies of the composer’s thematic work is invaluable. Though the source material is not the primary object of my study, I believe the wider leaps, often quartal, are a general, perhaps intuitively realized characteristic of Copland’s writing that expands from the sketch into the full score.

In his Ph.D. dissertation, Quincy Charles Hilliard analyses Copland’s symphonic works. He describes the arch design of the first movement of the *Third Symphony* (as per the program notes), diagrams the entrance of three themes, and lists the instrumentation of the work, as well as a few techniques employed by the players. There is more of the same for the remainder of the movements, but again, no in-depth look at the orchestration.\(^{21}\)

Orchestration aside, Copland’s functional music, too, is often overlooked by theorists, perhaps because it may, on the surface, seem to lack depth, or perhaps his ballets and film scores led him too close to the precipice of popular music, a place where some academics fear to tread; or perhaps it is because Copland is so difficult to nail down stylistically. Compare his early works, such as his *Piano Variations*, to his *Music for The Theatre*; compare his *Short Symphony* (whose performance Koussevitzky cancelled because the piece was too difficult) to what is often called his first “populist” work, *El

Salon Mexico;²² compare his film scores to his twelve-tone Connotations. Exactly what is Copland’s style? I think it would be appropriate, then, to study some of the history leading up to composition of the Third Symphony.

Chapter 2
Historical Background

The style of a composer’s music invariably changes over the course of a career. Paul Hindemith, once a maverick of German music, became an advisor to the Turkish government regarding that country’s efforts to define its musical education and culture. He also went on to compose Gebrauchsmusik—“music for use,” helping to build a repertoire of contemporary music that was nonetheless suitable for children and beginners.²³ Stravinsky’s various musical styles are well known, from his early, conservative (some would say derivative) Symphony No. 1 to the late serial compositions that he created only after his sometime nemesis Arnold Schönberg died.²⁴ Messiaen’s radically modern Mode de valeurs et d’intensités influenced serialists like Boulez and Stockhausen, but Messiaen later abandoned the pre-compositional technique that was the foundation of this serialism in favor of more expressive writing. Many of these

²² Peter Dickinson, ed., Copland Connotations: Studies and Interviews. (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002), 85-6. When Copland asked his long time friend and champion, Serge Koussevitzky, if he cancelled the U.S. premiere of the work because it was too difficult, Koussevitzky responded, “Non, ce n’est pas trop difficile, c’est impossible!”


²⁴ Colin Mason, “Stravinsky’s Newest Works,” Tempo, New Series, no. 53/54 (Spring - Summer, 1960) p. 2. Schönberg died in 1951 and in this article Mason describes three works of Stravinsky—Movements, for piano and orchestra, the Double Canon, and the Epitaphium für das Grabmal des Prinzen Max Egon zu Fürstenberg, as being completed in 1959 and employing twelve tone technique. Further investigation will show no significant serial technique used in Stravinsky’s compositions before 1951.
compositions were based on his transcriptions of birdsongs, the first one known to be *La Nativité du Seigneur*, from 1935.\(^{25}\) Chou Wen-Chung, to whom Varèse entrusted “the core of his own collection of manuscripts, early letters, and personal documents,” says that few of the composer’s European works are extant. Most, in fact, were lost in a Berlin warehouse fire, perhaps offering the impetus or excuse for Varèse to leave his old musical ways behind.\(^{26}\) MacDonald says of Varèse’s pre-American music, “In sharp contrast to his later works, the titles – and therefore perhaps the inspiration–of Varèse’s early pieces refer to the countryside, landscape, nature.”\(^{27}\) Compare this aesthetic to his American works with scientifically referenced titles, such as *Ionisation*, and *Density 21.5*.

Aaron Copland is perhaps less enigmatic than some of these other composers, if only because so much has been written about and by him. Nonetheless, his powerful and enduring impression on the American musical landscape is justification enough for an attempt to demystify his turn from an earlier, modern style, to a more popular one. His new “populist” music included works for film and stage, and when he finally wrote his *Third Symphony*, the work seemed almost an interruption of his career, or even a self-indulgent retreat into composing for himself, rather than for a general audience.

This change in style is at once a simple and a complex issue. Simple, because much of the evidence is public and easy to obtain; complex, because there seem to be so many reasons for this shift. The core of this change lies within Copland’s own nature and


extroverted personality. Though simple, this explanation has profound implications for all creative individuals who struggle with artistic identity. Just as there may have been an internal motivation for Copland’s transformation, there were also external agents motivating the composer’s choices as well. Studies cite the Depression as a substantial factor.\(^{28}\) Moreover, there were political issues involved, including his relationship to the Communist party that eventually resulted in an invitation to the McCarthy hearings.\(^{29}\) Additionally, and perhaps obviously, Copland made his living not from the university, but as a composer, and one could assume that popular success was important to him. Technology also played its part in the drama with the popularity of the radio, film, and the consequential new, much broader audience. To fully understand the evolution of Copland’s music one should consider the years leading to the Great Depression and the composers who thrived in the modern ether of the times.

The 1920’s were an exciting time for modernist composers. The Copland-Sessions series produced performances by new composers from 1928-1931.\(^{30}\) These composers were on the cutting edge of new music and the first season’s program included works of the “commando unit,” which included: Thomson, Copland, Piston, Sessions, and Harris, as well as the group associated with Henry Cowell–Rudhyar, Weiss, and Ruth Crawford.\(^{31}\) Henry Cowell, who composed the tone-cluster based piano solo *The Tides of Manaunaun* founded the New Music society of California in 1925 and led the Pan

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\(^{29}\) Elizabeth B. Crist and Wayne Shirley, eds., *The Selected Correspondence of Aaron Copland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 192.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 44.

American Association of Composers for several years. Charles Seeger, musicologist and teacher, taught dissonant counterpoint to Cowell at the University of California at Berkeley. Seeger eventually married his student Ruth Crawford, one of the rare female composers of modern American music who was remembered by history. Ultimately, both Crawford and Seeger would make an about-face in musical style due in no small part to changing socio-economic conditions. At the same time, the Pan American group, a collaboration between Edgard Varèse and the Guild of International Composers, was an active advocate of new music which sought to bring the music of new composers to public performance during the group’s tenure of 1928–1934. Additionally, Varèse established a name for himself quickly upon his move to America, and in 1919, with Varèse as the only candidate for conductor, the New Symphony Orchestra was launched for the purpose of promoting new music. Varèse himself was such a staunch supporter of new music that when asked to change his season’s program after the orchestra’s highly criticized opening concert, he chose to resign instead.

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34 Judith Tick, *Ruth Crawford Seeger*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997): pp. 235-237. Charles and Ruth moved to Washington D.C. in 1936 after Charles accepted a job with the Resettlement Agency (music division). Charles was charged with bringing music to the resettlement camps and both Ruth and Charles soon discovered that the inhabitants of these camps could relate to folk music, rather than the modern music of their own experience.
Aaron Copland was one of the most influential members in this group of composers. Moreover, he was ostensibly one of the best known of these composers in the 1930s and indeed went on to become the most famous composer of American music, completing works beyond his 80th birthday.\textsuperscript{37} One might argue that Copland was not really a modernist, and when compared to Cowell or early Crawford, the title is somewhat inappropriate. Despite the \textit{relative} accessibility of some of these early works, there was still a clear Second Viennese aesthetic at work in some of them. The \textit{Andante} of Copland’s first symphony (The \textit{Organ Symphony} without the organ) is dark and Schönbergian with a taste of Berg’s implied tonality. The Scherzo reflects clear Lydian elements and the influence of Petrouschka with the implication of an extended dominant through the first two minutes. Although these Stravinskian components tie the Scherzo to a more tonal affect, the final Lento of the work returns to Second Viennese sonorities.

Other Copland compositions from the pre-Depression era include \textit{Movement for String Quartet} (1921-24). Although this piece contains some rhythmic seeds from his later works, like a typical modernist composition, the Quartet exhibits no clear tonal center. Like the \textit{Quartet}, Copland’s \textit{Music For The Theatre} (1925) also prefigures his later music, but is still radical enough to include Copland in this group of modern composers. His last completed composition before the Great Depression, \textit{Vitebsk}, named for a region in Belarus, fully embraces the modern aesthetic while again foreshadowing his future music through the use of folk-like material.\textsuperscript{38}


\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
The Great Depression was linked to a change of style for many composers and artists who sought to find new modes of expression in response to the suffering experienced by so many. In all actuality, despite the wide swath of socio-economic destruction, many of these modern artists and musicians actually benefitted from the catastrophe, thanks to the Works Progress Administration bill, signed into law by Franklin Roosevelt in 1935. The musical branch of the program, the Federal Music Project, provided funding for the employment of musicians, “employing more people than any other arts projects, reached more Americans through it’s artists performances, and steered clear of political scandal.”

The Depression seemed to be the axis around which turned the WPA, modern composers, a new audience, and a new American music, to be later exemplified more often in the works of Copland than any other composer.

Arthur Berger, in his 1945 article says:

The recent Americana movement in the arts has origins that are unknown even to some of those engaged in it. It is no coincidence that this new ideology came around the time of the “popular front” and the rediscovery of America by WPA artists. The vein of optimism and patriotic sentiment which had been confined to rotarian, conservative artists, became chic in the ranks of the avant-garde.

In the same essay Berger also connects this movement to the new pro-Soviet sentiment:

Reinforced by the Soviet attack on the “bourgeois modernism” of Shostakovich’s Lady Macbeth, the artistic movement dragged in its wake many creative individuals who were not directly identified with the political left. Others, whose allegiances had been doubtful, began to beat their breasts in an ecstatic national devotion. . .

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39 Kenneth J. Bindas, All Of This Music Belongs To The Nation, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press,1995): xiii.

Aristotle said, “The mother of revolution and crime is poverty,” and the Communist Party USA (CPUSA), founded in 1919, began to flourish in this fertile, revolutionary (pre-McCarthy) soil. Though our modern-day conception of Communism doesn’t adequately explain the political system as a patriotic movement in the 1930’s, those who viewed the new America through red-colored glasses often considered themselves revolutionary patriots. Copland himself was sympathetic with and even embraced Communist party ideals, although history sees him only as progressive and left-wing, not a CPUSA member, but rather a “communist with a lowercase c.”\textsuperscript{41} Still, in a letter to Israel Citkowitz, a Polish-American composer, Copland recounts a visit to Minnesota:

> When C.K. David, Communist candidate for Gov. in Minn.[,] came to town, the farmers asked me to talk to the crowd. It’s one thing to think revolution, or talk about it to one’s friends, but to preach it from the streets—OUT LOUD—Well I made my speech (Victor says it was a good one) and I’ll probably never be the same! Now, when we go to town, there are friendly nods from sympathizers, and farmers come up and talk as one red to another.\textsuperscript{42}

Copland’s naïve enthusiasm over this event offers a revealing look into his personality, and provides a telling clue regarding his populist shift; he was not only simply friendly and outgoing, but he also had a natural proclivity to connect with others around him.

Another group in which Copland held a membership was the Composer’s Collective, the primary contributors to the \textit{Worker’s Song Book 1934}, a book of revolutionary songs associated with the communist ideal of workers’ rights.\textsuperscript{43} Copland himself published a song in the second volume of \textit{Workers Sing!}, “Into The Streets May

\textsuperscript{41} Elizabeth B. Crist, \textit{Music for the Common Man: Aaron Copland during the Depression and War} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 19.

\textsuperscript{42} Crist, Shirley, 106.

First.” The music is simple and diatonic with a clear melody plus accompaniment style. Though this may be what one would expect from such a song, the composition still marks a definite departure from his modern compositional aesthetic. The story of Copland’s Communist bent continues with abundant statements in the literature that identify his Socialist sentiments including, “Every participant in revolutionary activity knows from his own experience that a good mass song is a powerful weapon in the class struggle.”

Noteably, other such statements and related activities would eventually get the attention of the House Un-American Activities Committee, whose file on Copland was largely responsible for the removal of his *Lincoln Portrait* from performance at the inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Copland found more connections with the “common man” when in late summer of 1932 he began a five-month stay in Mexico City. There, he wrote to Virgil Thomson: “The best is the people–there’s nothing remotely like them in Europe. They are really the ‘people’–nothing in them is striving to be bourgeois.” The history of exoticism in the arts has always revealed an unsophisticated romanticization of foreign cultures, and in five months Copland probably could not have experienced the real life of common Mexicans. Nonetheless, his perceived notions shaped his future music. For instance, an evening in a Mexican dance hall, the Salón México, inspired his own *El Salón México*, which he completed later in 1936. This piece also marked a shift in Copland’s orchestral music and the composer himself coined the term, “imposed simplicity” to describe the more accessible harmonic and melodic style on which the work is based.

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44 Ibid.
46 Crist, Shirley, 89.
47 Ibid., 89.
Copland’s new philosophy was based not only on changing socio-political factors, but also on a changing audience. And although popular success as a composer seemed to easily find Copland, he was not a reluctant participant. He wrote scores for films, including, “Of Mice and Men,” “Our Town,” and “The Hei bress,” for which he won an Academy Award. His most famous works were written during and immediately following the Depression, and he speaks in interviews and letters of his desire to compose on a level to which more people could relate. He also embraced the technologies of radio and phonograph, viewing them as vehicles for communication with a wider audience. In his essay, “Composer from Brooklyn,” (1939) he expresses these sentiments:

> It seemed to me that composers were in danger of working in a vacuum. Moreover, an entirely new public had grown up around the radio and phonograph. It made no sense to ignore them and to continue writing as if they did not exist. I felt that it was worth the effort to see if I couldn’t say what I had to say in the simplest possible terms.\(^\text{48}\)

It would be difficult to argue that *El Salón México, Billy the Kid, Fanfare for the Common Man, Rodeo* and *Appalachian Spring* were not among Copland’s most famous works, some with a life beyond their original purpose. For Example, Martha Graham’s choreography of *Appalachian Spring* may have been her most famous work, but the composition lives today as a standard work of the orchestral repertoire.\(^\text{49}\) *Hoedown*, from the ballet *Rodeo*, is probably most famous today for its use in the commercials for the

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Beef Checkoff Program, which incorporates the slogan, “Beef–it’s what’s for dinner.”

Like Appalachian Spring and Billy the Kid, Rodeo too is most often performed as an orchestral work.

Copland eventually became the beneficiary of his own predictions about radio becoming an important medium of communication. On VE (victory in Europe) Day, May 8, 1945, CBS radio presented a show, written by Norman Corwin, titled “On a Note of Triumph,” that glorified the role of the working class that fought in the war and prominently featured Fanfare for the Common Man. Sean Wilentz says Copland’s fanfare “contributed enormously to the cultural mood that made Corwin’s radio play sound, to some, electrifying.”

By the time of the Fanfare broadcast, Copland was already a year into the composition of the Third Symphony. Though he was earning a good living in film, including a $10,000 fee for five months of work on 1943’s North Star, he accepted a $1000 commission for the Third Symphony, composed from 1944-1946. Copland’s peers maintained a tentative respect for him during his years of writing functional music, but there is no doubt that pressure was brought to bear on the author to write something “serious.” As a matter of fact, David Diamond was speaking of Copland’s new, accessible style when he told the composer he was “dazed about your choice of direction”

52 Pollack, 379.
53 Elizabeth B. Crist, “Aaron Copland’s Third Symphony from Sketch to Score,” The Journal of Musicology 18, No. 3 (Summer, 2001): 381.
and begged Copland not to “sell out.”\textsuperscript{54} In a 1943 letter to Copland, Diamond told him about the opinions in New York: “Everyone keeps saying, why doesn’t Aaron write a symphony when he’s capable of getting such wonderful ideas down . . . make lots of money, come back and write a wonderful large orchestra work and show people that you can pull it off.” Arthur Berger wrote Copland: “What I expect next is to see you try some of the larger symphonic proportions, à la Shostakovich . . . . And I would like to see you now write the big work: a concerto or cantata or symphony.”\textsuperscript{55} Copland even heard from Samuel Barber, who said: “I hope you will knuckle down to a good symphony. We deserve it of you, and your career is all set for it. Forza!”\textsuperscript{56} Despite all this encouragement, the \textit{Third Symphony} was not begun in earnest until the promise of payment was made through the Koussevitzky commission, demonstrating again Copland’s existence as a working composer.\textsuperscript{57}

Chapter 3
Analysis

Both Berger and Crist offer analyses of the \textit{Third Symphony}, beginning with a focus on the opening motives. This opening theme reveals Copland’s proclivity for angular, quartal structures, as well as his tendency towards segmentation. Furthermore, this segmentation can be seen here in the four cadential points (marked by arrows-  

\textsuperscript{54}Ibid., p. 378. David Diamond to Aaron Copland, June 15, 1939. 
\textsuperscript{55}Ibid., p. 379. Arthur Berger to Aaron Copland, April 12, 1943. 
\textsuperscript{56}Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, \textit{Copland Since 1943}, (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1989), 64. 
\textsuperscript{57}According to Crist, “rough sketches of what was to become the thematic material for the symphony date back to 1940 . . . The earliest sketch is dated 19 November 1940. . .” Elizabeth B. Crist, “Aaron Copland’s Third Symphony from Sketch to Score,” \textit{The Journal of Musicology} 18, No. 3 (Summer, 2001): 382.
Example 5; Copland’s attraction to perfect intervals is elsewhere manifested via timbre and register changes. Harmonic direction is only implied because the theme is scored here only in unisons and octaves. However, the quartal content is very clear in the linear intervals, which include five perfect fourths and three perfect fifths, discounting motion interrupted by rests.

An ideal melody, considering styles as far back as plainchant, avoids consecutive leaps. Copland’s opening melody leans toward the opposite chronological end of the style spectrum, and if the melody were atonal, it would, to a degree, meet some of the pointillistic requirements of modernist composers whose goal was to undermine all traditional musical values, including melodic shape. Table 1 outlines the intervallic content of the melody.

This table shows the progression of intervals Copland employs in the opening theme; this theme includes six major intervals, no minor intervals, and seven perfect
Table 1: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 1-8. Intervallic content of pitches in opening theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Direction</th>
<th>Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-B</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>P 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-G</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>M 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-E</td>
<td>Up</td>
<td>M 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-A</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>P 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-B</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>P 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-D</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>M 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-C</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>M 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-E</td>
<td>Up</td>
<td>M 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-B</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>P 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-G</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>M 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-D</td>
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<td>P 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-A</td>
<td>Up</td>
<td>P 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-E</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>P 4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

intervals. Though Copland’s design probably meets the standards of motive defined in this paper because of its repetition in various full and fragmented forms, comparison of the Copland melody to a more stepwise melody would reveal Copland’s as less memorable. Additionally, in a symphonic score, built on timbres and harmonies as well as on melodies, there is much more for the listener to comprehend; consequently, the ear is drawn to many other sounds that may be remembered as motives. These could include
timbres, rhythmic figures, and pitch spaces perceived as “high” or “low.” Though the average listener may not be thinking of a motive or a melody, and though the compositional processes may even be invisible to the audience, the techniques of composition are still greatly affected by a composer’s particular perception of “motive.”

If a composer understands a motive only in the most traditional sense, the music will bear out this belief and will depend on melodic/rhythmic figures for compositional coherence. If the composer espouses a wider view of the word, then the compositional choices will reflect such a view. This larger concept of motive can be heard in Beck’s *Unhinged*, just as it can be heard in the Copland’s *Third Symphony*. Still, whether the composer understands all these choices, either consciously, or on a more intuitive, subconscious level, built on habit and experience, is immaterial. Voluntarily or otherwise, the individual voice of a composer is created by each philosophy, experience, technique or belief he or she embraces.

In his well-organized, empirical study of melody, David Huron postulates several defining traits of recognizable melody, two of which are very relevant to this discussion melody is most memorable when the pitches are continuous and include few or no rests, and according to Huron’s *Pitch Proximity Principle*, melody recognition is strongest of Copland’s melody. Huron claims in his *Principle of Temporal Continuity*\(^\text{58}\) that a when smaller intervals are employed.\(^\text{59}\) Examining the multiple cadential points, each followed by a rest (see example 6), as well as the many large, perfect intervals, Copland’s


\(^\text{59}\) Ibid. p. 159
opening theme meets neither of these conditions for a strong melody. This, however, does not disqualify the theme as melody, but at least qualifies it as atypical in lacking the characteristics that might make the theme more memorable. Consequently, the ear is more open to other sounds that may include various timbral “conversations” between families of instruments as well as juxtapositions of register and pitch space occupation.

Example 7 is a reduction of the first six measures of the *Third Symphony* score, and includes all pitch content. Utilizing terms such as “antecedent” and “consequent” to describe these phrases strains their definitions, because of the lack of harmonic content in the first phrase and melodic structure in the second. Still, on an intuitive, aural level, these terms make perfect sense, even to the untrained listener. These two phrases offer a typical example of Copland’s use of contrast in both register and voicing. The antecedent phrase, which includes three short resting points, consistently spans two octaves and includes only one pitch class; the consequent phrase is nearly as large, spanning two
octaves and a fifth, but it is built on close voicings, different timbres and a much lower pitch space. The antecedent phrase only implies harmonic motion, as a result of the a single pitch class at each point of vertical alignment; the second phrase acts as a final cadence to the period, and though the final chord contains some trademark Copland ambiguity—an E major triad above an “E” and “A” in the bass—the V-I movement of the lowest bass pitches adequately signals the cadential motion. Though the antecedent melody is somewhat weak and the listener is not likely to hear a melody at all in the consequent phrase (in partial thanks to the unstable cadential chord), the registral and timbral differences create a clear and memorable interaction between the two phrases, meeting the expectations of the listener in a common question and answer format.

The next pair of phrases, condensed in example 8, below, follows the same format and include the same juxtaposition of register and timbre. Though the first five pitches of the antecedent phrases meet the requirements of Huron’s *Pitch Proximity Principle*, containing melodic intervals of a major second, a minor second,
and a minor third, conversely, the second half of the phrase wanders back into quartal territory, with intervals of perfect fourths and fifths. This consequent phrase, like the consequent phrase in the previous example, is merely a cadence, but its separation from the antecedent phrase by pitch space, timbre and density still set the phrase apart as independent. Viewing the score simply as a picture, one can clearly see the separate levels of the two phrases; this “picture” is further clarified by listening to the music. Together these phrases complete an introductory gesture that is then followed by an acceleration of the question-answer format.

In measures 16-19 (Example 9), material from the two opening periods is fragmented and at the same time, condensed to create three question-answer structures in just four measures. This juxtaposition of registers is not to be confused with chord voicing. Clearly Copland could well have chosen to drop the first violins an octave at measures 16-19 since there are only octaves in the strings (no harmony) and the pitch content would fulfill its function in any octave. Instead, he creates a wide expanse of pitch space in the strings that is contrasted against a much narrower
Example 9: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 16-19, registral oscillation in strings and brass.

space in the horns. Independently of the wide pitch space, the respective registers of the horns and strings create another contrasting level and this contrast alone, with no consideration of the melodic content reinforces the motivic quality found in the oscillation between the high and low registers of the strings and brass.

As the movement develops, there is less segmentation of the orchestra into registers. Instead, Copland continues his recycling of the opening material through fragmentation of the initial themes, employing perfect fourths and fifths, both vertically

Example 10: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 27-30. Quartal harmonies in the trumpets and trombones.
and horizontally. The brass parts in example 10 feature prominently in the score and exhibit more use of quartal harmonies, linking them melodically to the 1st antecedent phrase and timbrally to the consequent answer. Admittedly, the timbral link may pass unnoticed as a typical orchestral choice, but this additional statement of alternating timbres underscores the unity of the entire movement. The two chords in rectangles are triads; the two chords within the ellipses remain aurally ambiguous through the presence of both a minor third and a perfect fourth, as well as the absence of a potential fifth scale degree, which would complete a triad. The remainder of the vertical harmonies, in keeping with this development of original material, are quartal.

Additionally, the first two phrases of measures 27-30 are a fragmentation and reconstruction of the opening idea (example 11). The circled pitches on the bottom staff are the two pitches present in each of the three cadential points in the first phrase of the

Example 11: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 27-30. Relationship of brass to opening idea.
opening idea. These pitches are also present in the brass in measure 27-30. In the original idea, all three cadential points were first presented, then followed by a strong cadence on a triad (colored by the added fourth scale degree). In this iteration, the triadic cadence is presented after each cadential point.

An imitative section begins at measure 35 in the strings and woodwinds, building in intensity via gradually increasing rhythmic activity. Though the imitative nature of this section does not call for the contrasting registers of the previous section, Copland continues to employ wide voicings in the strings, as demonstrated (example 12) in this excerpt from measures 45-48. In this example the violas are participating in the imitative action with the winds and have been left out for clarity. The remaining strings, with their slower rhythms, appear initially to act as an accompaniment, but are marked with a

Example 12: Copland, Third symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 45-48 Wide voicings in strings.
louder *mezzo forte* than the *mezzo piano* and *piano* of the imitative instruments, and in the Eiji Oue/Minnesota Orchestra recording, the faster rhythms (mm. 45-53) of the winds act as accompanimental texture to support the strings as melody. The first and second violins are doubled at the octave, as are the cellos and basses. This results in a pitch space spanning at its smallest, four octaves, and at its largest, four octaves and a seventh. Here, still, the perfect fourths and fifths continue to dominate the linear motion.

A look at the imitative portions in these same measures reveals additional quartal motion, but does include step-wise motion, particularly in the quicker rhythms. I’ve included an excerpt from the first oboe below in Example 13. The ellipses denote the quartal motion and the rectangles mark the faster stepwise motion.

![Example 13: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt., mm. 46-48, oboe part extracted from imitative section.](image)

In measures 46-48, some eighth-note movement is step-wise as is all of the sixteenth-note movement. The smaller intervals clearly make for more lyrical playing and may also be perceived as passing tones between larger intervals. In both excerpts enclosed by rectangles in example 13, the pitches could be viewed as moving from C to Ab, with three passing tones between.

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Example 14: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. Cadential points of opening idea, original key and transposed, compared to oboe part at m. 46.

A closer look at the oboe part in example 13 will also show that Copland makes use of the opening theme in the first four notes of the oboe, which are a transposed diminution of the cadential points in the opening idea. Example 14, above, shows the cadential points of the opening idea, first, in the original key, then transposed to the key of measures 46-49. Compare these transposed pitches to the pitches of the oboe part written just below the original transposed pitches. In measures 48-49, this series is repeated again with a retrograde of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} pair of notes – Bb-F, Bb-Eb becomes Bb-F, Eb-Bb. These slight changes offer opportunities for development and variation while still retaining a strong connection to the original idea. The wide voicing of the string accompaniment continues through measure 55, culminating on an interval of six octaves between the basses and the first violins.

The next section, the boldest so far, and a departure from the sparser textures that dominate the movement thus far, begins at measure 54 and ends at the approximate halfway point of the first movement, measure 97. This new idea opens with big brass in the trombones and bass trombones, accompanied by contrabassoon, accented by bass
drum, and answered by *forte, marcato* horns. The strings retain some to the connection of the fourths in an ostinato pattern. In example 15 the horizontal quartals are within the rectangles.

Example 15: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 55-58, string ostinato accompaniment, fourths marked by rectangles.

The first big climax after the opening of the section (m. 65, example 14, below) features an open quartal chord. In a more standard scoring technique, the winds and strings are doubled at the octave. The bassoons, cellos, and contrabasses, however, open up a big space that creates a span of five octaves. Meanwhile, the lower brass returns with the original theme of this section, now a major second higher. The trumpets and horns fill in the space between as part of an open E-B chord. This filler diminishes the effect of the wide pitch space momentarily, but the horns drop out in the next measure and the trumpets join the first violins and clarinets in a statement of the second phrase of the this statement includes one change from the original sketch: the C sharps (circled in example 16) of the completed symphony were originally C naturals in the sketch.  

At measure 77 there is a tempo change from 92 BPM to 108 BPM. In the Bernstein/New York Philharmonic recording, there is an unmarked *accelerando* from 108 BPM at measure 77 to about 120 BPM at measure 85. Crist, in charting

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61 Crist, “Aaron Copland’s Third Symphony,” 384.
62 Aaron Copland, *Symphony No.3, Quiet City*, Leonard Bernstein, dir.,
metronomic changes between the 1947 version and the 1966 revision, makes no note of such an addition to the score; 63 this is not a great surprise since Bernstein was not shy about offering Copland advice. Still, the suggestion to delete ten measures from the end of the finale seemed to have been begrudgingly agreed upon by Copland who said:

I thought it was pretty nervy of Lenny to take it on himself to make a cut. Being a careful and slow worker, I rarely felt it necessary to revise a composition after it was finished, and even more rarely after it was published. In the case of the Third Symphony, however, I came to agree with Lenny and several others about the advisability of shortening the ending. 64

At the tempo change in measure 77, Copland continues to use his opening material, accompanying the main low theme (trombones, bass trombones, bassoons and contrabassoon) in this section with winds and strings in a diminution of the second phrase from the opening theme of the movement (example 17). The top staff shows the second phrase of the original theme (in diminution) with the exact transposition a tritone lower that occurs in measures 77-78.

Through the end of this section at measure 92, the textures are generally full, building to a fortississimo climax. This is immediately brought down to a piano and an unusual instrumental pairing that is indicative of Copland’s use of contrasting registers. Copland again reinvents the opening theme, this time played by solo trombone, and


63 Crist, “Aaron Copland’s Third Symphony,” 384.

64 Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, Copland Since 1943, (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin), 1989.
Example 16: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 65-67. Wide voicings between lower brass and winds and strings; open E\(_B\) chord in trumpets and horns.

Example 17: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 77-78. Comparison of opening theme, second phrase to winds and strings.
paired with a flute on a countermelody (example 18). This counterpoint includes some imitation and emphasizes the opening figure of the symphony, a descending perfect fourth (in this case Bb to F, inverted in the flute). The trombone then appears to continue on to the second period of the opening theme, and though some variation occurs, the trombone part retains a melodic curve similar to that phrase, a shape immediately imitated in the flute.

Though the pitch space encompassed at its widest by this pairing is much smaller (two octaves and a tritone) than that present in many other locations, the sudden sparseness of texture brings a great deal of attention to this contrast. Additionally, the space is quietly extended in the first few measures of the statement to five octaves by long notes in the strings. Copland builds more counterpoint into the score after this statement that soon expands into a thicker texture before a *forte* climax in measure 109. Even on the upper crust of this thicker texture, the composer insists on the thinner, high-range octaves in the flutes and violins.

At the climax in measure 109, Copland introduces a new figure of four sixteenths-notes followed by a quarter-note. The section marked by this figure extends through measure 119 and marks the most active counterpoint thus far encountered in the movement. Here, again, Copland continues to invokes quartal linear motion, and also introduces a minor triad via the new rhythmic motive. Perhaps to punctuate this rhythm, the quickest so far, Copland orchestrates much of this section with more percussive instruments, including the harp, the piano, the glockenspiel and xylophone. I’ve reproduced in example 19 the instruments of the score generating these rhythms.
Example 18: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 93-100, trombone and flute, opening theme and countermelody. Figures in rectangles relate this section to the opening theme of the movement.

The rectangles enclose triadic figures, including an F# major triad in the glockenspiel, three occurrences in C# minor, and one in its (enharmonic) parallel major, Db. Thus far in the score Copland has used triads (vertically or horizontally) very selectively. The spare use of potentially functional collections creates a strong sense of pandiatonicism, as well as the concomitant ambiguous sense of direction; yet, these same non-functional harmonies, because of their instability, move the work forward. The
paradox here is that although the chords built on fourths serve no harmonic function, one could hear portions of this movement as an extended dominant – that is, an unstable chord waiting for resolution. Each of these quartal chords is only a portion of its completed self and must move forward to find its completion.

In example 20 (the same score excerpt as example 19, this time with the quartal content circled) we see that even as Copland includes a few triads here, he waters down any perceived functionality with interspersed quartals, as he does throughout the movement. Viewing the pitch classes contained within each of these figures as members of a major scale, they each contain the 1st, 4th, and 5th degree of their respective scales. The opening phrase of the movement has this same content, with the addition of a single 3rd scale degree. However, the cadential points in this phrase de-emphasize the 3rd degree and prioritize the quartal structure (see example 21).

The contrapuntal texture built on this new, quicker rhythm continues through measure 119 to a fortississimo at measure 120. Here, in harmony, rather than as juxtaposed units, Copland employs more wide voicings. In example 22 the top staff summarizes the pitch content of the treble winds, violins, violas, and cellos. At the same time the middle, treble clef staff represents the close voicings in the center of the pitch space while the bass clef summarizes the low winds, low brass, timpani and contrabass. The upper voices span three octaves, but the sense of space is further accentuated by the presence of only a single pitch class of “Eb” within the particular timbre created by the strings and winds. Content in the bass clef in example 22 shows an expansion of the pitch space, including the treble instruments, to just short of 6 octaves. The bass clef voicing
Example 19: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 109-112, includes instruments using new figure, triads enclosed in rectangles.
Example 20: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 109-112. Quartal content circled.
Example 21: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 1-4. Opening phrase of movement I.

Example 22: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm 120-121: Summary of pitch content and voicing.

Imitates the treble voicing, creating space by using octaves. Although the middle is filled in by the trumpets and horns, which disguise the open voicing to some degree, Copland’s intention to create a wide pitch space here is very clear.
This three-register texture continues through measure 126 and into a 2-measure transition at measure 127. This transition retains most of the registral divisions present in the previous few measures, adding a short-lived, but marked increase in the rhythmic activity of the horns and trumpets just before the treble instruments drop out. Example 23 summarizes the pitch content of measures 125-126. Here, still, we see octaves in both the high treble instruments as well as in the bass clef instruments.

Example 23: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 125-126. Voicing of horns and wide pitch space created by high treble and bass clef instruments.

Measures 129-131 (example 24) mark one of the narrower pitch spaces employed by Copland in this movement. The contrabasses, trombones and low winds continue the lower expansion of the space, but the treble winds and violins have dropped out, leaving
only the violas on a (relatively) low G5. The respite, however, is only temporary as the glockenspiel (m. 130) and first violins (m. 133,) begin to expand the space again, but not as widely, and with fewer octave doublings. Copland’s use of vertical quartals proliferates after this short transitional passage, beginning with a figure in the clarinets (example 25). The initial descending figure, written in two parts, includes intervals of a m7, a M6, and aP5, but recurs similarly as m7, and P4, as well as m7, P5 and P4. Though these intervals include some non-quartal sonorities, the sevenths and sixths are de-emphasized as notes of shorter durational value. Additionally, this figure, which Copland employs eight times in this section, is itself a cadential gesture, suggesting a moment of rest on the perfect fourth or fifth at the bottom of each three-chord series.

More connections to the opening theme of the movement assert themselves in an insistent accompanimental figure built on fourths and fifths, which continues almost
Example 25: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 134-136, clarinet figure.

nonstop from measures 133–152. The part is traded between the violas, horns and bassoons and is always a diad of a P4 or P5 (example 26). Though Copland has on paper created a quartal picture, the moving bass line below the accompaniment affects the character of the chords and creates a strong modal progression. Though the accompaniment, as well as the bass line, are marked piano, the Bernstein/New York Philharmonic performance to emphasizes the bass progression, played both by the cellos and the contrabasses an octave lower.

There is additional activity present in a theme played by the first and second violins that is pervasively quartal. All melodic fourths and fifths in this line are marked in example 27. Figure 2 illustrates in a more concise format the prevalent quartal content of the string theme, connecting this theme again to the opening theme of the movement. Though the theme is nearly equally divided between quartal intervals and non-quartal intervals, a more standard melody would be much more heavily weighted towards stepwise motion.

Table 3 outlines the quartal content of the accompaniment. The quartal harmonies account for 82% of the vertical intervals; the non-quartal harmonies make up only 18% of
the accompaniment and include both sixths and sevenths. The final judgement, however should be reserved for the ears and the bass progression, which still seems to undo Copland’s emphasis on fourths and fifths.

At measure 153 the earlier wide voicings return and continue through measure 165. The narrowest gap in this passage, at measure 159, is 4 octaves plus a major second, and the largest gap occurs at measures 160-165, in which the first and second violins, and violas hold a pianississimo “B” and the cellos and basses and “E.” The open fifth contributes to the sense of space here, but the harmonics in the upper strings create a total width of six octaves plus a fifth, the widest pitch space so far. Additionally the space between the cellos and their nearest neighbor, the second violins and violas, is four octaves plus a perfect fifth.

Whether or not all of the second violins are playing harmonics is somewhat unclear in the full score. They are divided at the octave and there is an articulation for harmonics above the score, but not below. Because of the ambiguity of the notation, however, it would be safest to assume that the exception-lower second violins not playing harmonics-would be noted if it were so. Regardless, the total pitch space of this voicing remains the same.

Copland continues to recycle the texture of perfect fourths and fifths in the winds through measure 165, after which the strings drop out for seven measures. The characteristic quartal sound, however, is disturbed by the softer intervals of thirds and sixths, as well as by sevenths and their inversion, seconds. Example 25 outlines the
Example 26: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 131-152. Reduction outlining quartal content.
Table 2: Mm. 131-152, Melodic intervals in string theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perfect 4th</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect 5th</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major 2nd</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor 2nd</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major 3rd</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor 3rd</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Quartal content of accompaniment, mm. 131-152.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harmony Type</th>
<th>Beats</th>
<th>Percentage of total beats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beats with quartal harmony</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-quartal harmony</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total beats (4/4) 88 BPM</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 27: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, m. 160. Voicing in strings; note the harmonics.
occurrences of these intervals. Each chord marked with an “X” contains at least one interval of a third; each chord marked “Y” contains a seventh; all chords include either a perfect fourth or perfect fifth.

Example 28: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 161-165.
Reduction of pitch content in winds.

At measure 166, the strings drop out, and in measures 167-172, the quartal texture regains prominence, here in the winds. Example 29 shows the pitch content of these measures. The chords in rectangles contain octaves and quartal intervals and the circled chords include both quartals as well as the softer sixth. The structure echoes the opening material, which presented a melody shaped primarily by fourths and fifths followed by a cadence on an E Major (with an added pitch of “A”). In this statement, the opening theme is reconstructed in a fragmented, condensed form. The first two chords in rectangles are quartal, like the antecedent phrase of the opening theme, and are followed by a cadence on an E major triad. While the second and third phrases are very similar, but cadence on an incomplete F# minor seventh chord. Though the F# minor seventh is a departure from the opening material, we find similar content in measures 27-30 on the last beat shown in example 27.
Example 29: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 167-172. Pitch content of full score in woodwinds, excluding glockenspiel and harp.

Example 30 compares measures 27-30 with the opening material. As in measures 167-172, we see two quartal chords followed by a first inversion E major triad, the second cadence is again on the E triad, but the third cadences on the same incomplete F# minor seventh that we see in measures 170 and 172. The circled pitches note the coincidence of the pitches from the opening theme (lowest staff) along with the pitches in the brass.

Finally, at measure 173, (example 31) Copland bookends the movement with a restatement of the opening motive, ending with the widest pitch space of the movement (also seen in measure 160), six octaves and a perfect fifth. The contrabasses, cellos and violas play and hold an open fifth E chord for the final seven measures, in anticipation of the final cadence. Except for two rests that have no bearing on the rhythm, the first and second violins replicate the opening phrase exactly and three solo violins expand the range with harmonics in the final three measures, joined by the flutes and clarinets who fill in some of the middle range. On the final cadence, Copland gives the listener a rare
root inversion major triad, but in the subtest manner, with only the first flute and harp playing a G#, while the remaining players have only E’s and B’s.

Example 30: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 27-30. Relationship of brass parts to the opening idea.

Example 31: Copland, Third Symphony, mvt. 1, mm. 173-179. Open voicing in closing of 1st movement, Contrabasses in sounding range.
Before texting, email, and Twitter, legends were made in retrospect: Bach’s music, thought to be old-fashioned in the composer’s lifetime, was dead and buried with him until it was exhumed 100 years later by Mendelssohn’s 1829 performance of Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*. Charles Ives struggled to get his works performed, and finally gave up composing in 1927. Twenty years later he won the Pulitzer for his *Symphony No. 2*, and Ives’ *Symphony No. 3* was not premiered until 40 years after its composition. Despite the efforts of Harris and his supporters to mythologize his persona, his legend was still to be overshadowed by Copland’s.

Copland, closely identified with the early Communist Movement in America, was called to testify before the McCarthy hearings, and later, because of Copland’s purported communist connections, his *Lincoln Portrait* was removed from the program of the inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Yet today, he is considered the quintessential American composer of the twentieth century. What American music is, exactly, will always be in question, but Copland’s American sound has a signature and a fingerprint.

that is unique and identifiable and is exemplified in the prevalent use of quartal structures in his Third Symphony. He employs them horizontally, in the opening theme and throughout the first movement in various fragmentations of the opening theme and he seldom strays from this path. Rare exceptions include the second half of the opening theme in which he uses stepwise motion for only five beats, and later, in mm. 46-48, a figure including 16th notes in stepwise motion.

These less melodious themes seem to stand more as sonic images than melodies, and appear in structures of stratified and juxtaposed pitch spaces and timbres. These juxtapositions, which recur throughout the movement, are drawn from the opening material in which the strings and winds occupy the higher registers and are answered by the brass in the lower registers.

Vertically, quartal harmonies dominate the landscape. One result of this approach is a nebulous tonality that places the Third Symphony in the middle ground between the true modernism of some of his earlier works, such as the Piano Variations, and the accessibility of his more popular works of the Depression era. Additionally, the non-functional harmony of the Symphony contributes to the non-melodic aesthetic, once again leaving room for structures that contrast register and timbre.

Despite Copland’s avoidance of obvious thematic connections, he has created a very united movement, something that is achieved primarily through the composer’s constant variation of the opening material into melodic figures and harmonic sonorities. These techniques of variation connect Copland to predecessors such as Beethoven and Brahms, as well as Schoenberg who all used motivic development and variation in some form.
The textures of his music, so often constructed with the open voicings and quartal melodies and harmonies on which the 1st movement of his *Third Symphony* is built, have inspired the common use of the word “Coplandesque,” and if the meaning of “American” concert music of the last century was defined by Copland, it must be these textures and wide open spaces with which Americans identified.
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APPENDIX - LETTERS OF PERMISSION

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JULIA CAREY ARENDELL

DAVID CORTELO
February 25, 2013

David P. Cortello
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Coordinator, Copyright & Licensing
VITA

David Cortello was born in New Orleans, Louisiana in December, 1959. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of New Orleans in 2007 and his Master of Music from Louisiana State University in 2010. Dinos Constantinides was his principal teacher of composition. His compositions have been featured at the NACUSA National Conference in Portland, Oregon, the Round Top Music Festival in Round Top, Texas, as well as in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Ruston, Louisiana. He has fulfilled commissions from Athanasios Zervas, Trio Angelico, and the Louisiana Sinfonietta. His compositional experience is broad, covering contemporary concert music, pop/rock music and liturgical music, for solo instruments, mixed ensembles, orchestra and voice. He received an award of “Highly Commended” from the Shipley Arts Festival in West Sussex, England for Sinagua, for string orchestra; his work, Nilchi, for flute, violin, clarinet, and percussion was featured in the NASM Student Showcase at LSU. Additionally, Mr. Cortello recently received his first film music credit for a five-minute segment in the feature-length documentary, Tarzan, Lord of The Louisiana Jungle. He currently serves on the board of the Louisiana Sinfonietta and is the Vice-President of the Mid-South chapter of NACUSA. Cortello will receive his Doctor of Philosophy in music composition in May 2013.