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Joshua: Symphonic Suite No. 2 and James Aikman, The Violin Concerto, and the Principle of Limited Economy

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JOSHUA: SYMPHONIC SUITE NO. 2
AND
JAMES AIKMAN, THE VIOLIN CONCERTO, AND THE PRINCIPLE OF LIMITED ECONOMY

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 Musical Arts

in

The School of Music

by

Chad Edward Hughes
B.M., Music Composition, University of Michigan, 2000
M.M., Music Composition and Music Education, Kansas State University, 2011
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This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved mother,
Bessie L. Henderson
(1948-2013)
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................... III

ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................ VII

PART ONE. JOSHUA: SYMPHONIC SUITE NO. 2 ................................................................. 1
   INSTRUMENTATION ............................................................................................................. 1
   PROGRAM NOTES ............................................................................................................... 2
   I. JOSHUA AND CALEB ....................................................................................................... 8
   II. RAHAB AND THE SPIES ............................................................................................ 33
   III. THE RIVER JORDAN .................................................................................................. 54
   IV. THE WALLS OF JERICHO ........................................................................................ 77

PART TWO: JAMES AIKMAN ............................................................................................... 116
   CHAPTER ONE: JAMES AIKMAN, THE VIOLIN CONCERTO, AND THE PRINCIPLE OF LIMITED ECONOMY .............................................................................................................. 116
   CHAPTER TWO: VIOLIN CONCERTO MOVEMENT ONE ............................................. 123
   CHAPTER THREE: VIOLIN CONCERTO MOVEMENT TWO ........................................ 132
      Group I .......................................................................................................................... 134
      Group II ......................................................................................................................... 142
      Group III ......................................................................................................................... 146
   CHAPTER FOUR: VIOLIN CONCERTO MOVEMENT THREE .................................... 152
      Group I .......................................................................................................................... 153
      Group II ......................................................................................................................... 159
      Group III ......................................................................................................................... 162

SUMMARY ............................................................................................................................ 169

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................................................................. 172

APPENDIX A. PERMISSIONS ............................................................................................... 175

APPENDIX B. PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH JAMES AIKMAN ......................................................................................................................... 176

APPENDIX C. LIST OF WORKS BY JAMES W AIKMAN .................................................. 182

APPENDIX D. DISCOGRAPHY OF JAMES W AIKMAN ................................................... 185

VITA ........................................................................................................................................ 186
ABSTRACT

The objective of this dissertation is to present an original work that represents this writer’s perspective as a composer and to examine the work, *Violin Concerto No. 1*, by American composer and educator, James Aikman. The first component of this dissertation is this writer’s composition *Joshua: Symphonic Suite No. 2*. This work, which portrays the Old Testament Bible story of Joshua, son of Nun, is a neo-tonal ballet, which features the violin extensively. The ballet is divided into four movements, each of which corresponds to a segment of Joshua’s story, including “Joshua and Caleb,” “Rahab and the Spies,” “The River Jordan,” and “The Walls of Jericho.” This writer’s compositional techniques used for this work included the Principle of Limited Economy, or POLE technique, and Musical Numerology.

The second component of this dissertation is an examination of James Aikman’s compositional technique in his *Violin Concerto No. 1*. Written in 2009, the work is divided into three movements: “Prologue/Improvisation/Prologue,” “Quasi una fantasia,” and “Toccata.” Through analysis and interviews with Aikman, research demonstrates that he used the POLE technique as a principle compositional device throughout the piece. In the first movement, he applied the POLE technique to texture. In the second and third movements, he applied the POLE technique to motivic development. Ultimately, Aikman used the POLE technique to develop his musical ideas and to help create cohesion in his work.
PART ONE. JOSHUA: SYMPHONIC SUITE NO. 2

INSTRUMENTATION

1 Piccolo
2 Flutes
2 Oboes
1 English Horn
2 Clarinets in Bb
1 Bb Bass Clarinet
2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C
3 Trombones
Tuba

Timpani
Percussionist 1
   Snare, Suspended Cymbal, Crash Cymbals, Ride Cymbal, High Hat
Percussionist 2
   Triangle, Temple blocks, Bell Tree, High Hat, Cabasa, Congas
Percussionist 3
   Bass Drum

Harp

Violin 1
Violin 2
Violas
Violoncellos
Double bass

Duration: circa 26 minutes
PROGRAM NOTES

In November 1998, I attended a Cleveland Orchestra concert that featured Stravinsky’s arrangements of Variation d’Aurore, Entr’acte, and Bluebird Pas de Deux from Tchaikovsky’s ballet Sleeping Beauty. When William Preucil, concertmaster, began his first solo in the performance, I was immediately captured by his sound and virtuosity. I had never heard such beautiful playing, and I was intrigued by the prominence of the solo violin in a work that is not a concerto. Although there were several great works on that performance, Preucil’s masterful playing and the music of Sleeping Beauty lingered in my head not only at the end of the concert, but during the following weeks.¹ I had just experienced one of the most memorable concerts of my life, and I knew I wanted to write a similar work in the future.

In my ballet composition, Joshua: Symphonic Suite No. 2, I also use the solo violin prominently. It represents Joshua, one of the central figures in the Bible’s chronicle of the Israelites’ journey into the Promised Land. Additionally, I use several other instruments to portray key figures in this story, including the following:

• The solo cello represents Caleb, Joshua’s faithful companion.
• Two trombones represent the two spies Joshua sent to Jericho before conquering the city.
• The English horn represents Rahab, a prostitute who assisted and hid the spies Joshua sent to Jericho.
• The solo tuba represents the King of Jericho, who was defeated by the Israelites as they entered the Promised Land.

¹ In addition to Sleeping Beauty, the Cleveland Orchestra performed “China Dreams” by Bright Sheng, Piano Concerto by Tchaikovsky; and Symphony No. 4 by Tchaikovsky. November 1998 with Christoph von Dohnányi conducting.
Deuteronomy 34 (NIV) 7 Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. 8 The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over. 9 Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So, the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

Joshua 1 (NIV) 10 So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: 11 “Go through the camp and tell the people, ‘Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.’”

The piece begins tranquilly in a Largo 4/4 meter as Moses sees the Promised Land, dies, and is laid to rest. After Moses’s passing, Joshua and Caleb become the new leaders of the Israelites. Their mission is to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land as God commands. As Joshua and the Israelites begin their journey, the meter shifts to 6/8 and the tempo increases to Allegro. The change reflects the excitement of the Israelites as they anticipate the fulfillment of a long-awaited promise. Caleb, represented by the solo cello, makes his first appearance in this movement as he talks to Joshua about the Promised Land. He, too, is looking forward to an assured victory in Jericho. This movement is inspired by the following music artists: Beethoven, whose orchestration in the Seventh Symphony proved to be a great model; Paul Dukas, who writes brilliant French horn and bassoon lines in his Sorcerer’s Apprentice; Emmanuel Chabrier, who displays mastery for brass writing; and Camille Saint-Saëns, who presents virtuosic solo violin work in Danse Macabre.
Movement II: Rahab and the Spies

Joshua 2 (NIV) Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim.“Go, look over the land,” he said, “especially Jericho.” So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.

2 The king of Jericho was told, “Look, some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land.” 3 So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: “Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land.”

4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from. 5 At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, they left. I don’t know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them.” 6 (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof.) 7 So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

8 Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof 9 and said to them, “I know that the LORD has given you this land and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. 10 We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. 11 When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone’s courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.”

The second movement chronicles Rahab’s interaction with the Israelite spies who are sent to look over the land. It incorporates elements of Jazz, contrasting the neo-Romantic style of the first movement. After the introduction by the hi-hat cymbals, Joshua, represented by the solo violin, speaks to the Israelites. He then sends spies, represented by two trombones, to Jericho. Thereafter, the solo tuba enters, depicting the King of Jericho. The King, who has heard about the spies, demands that Rahab send them to the palace. Instead of turning the spies in, Rahab, who is portrayed by the English
horn, saves them from the King. She diverts the King’s servants and helps the spies escape to safety. Inspirations for this movement include the following musical artists: Sonny Payne, famed drummer of the Count Basie Orchestra; freelance-Atlanta oboist Allison Kummerfeldt; tubist, Bernard Flythe, instructor at Kennesaw State University; tubist Velvet Brown, Professor of Tuba at Penn State University; and Camille Saint-Saëns, whose Bacchanale from the grand opera Samson et Delilah features the English horn.

Movement III: River Jordan

Joshua 3 (NIV) 6 Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people.” So they took it up and went ahead of them. 7 And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses. 8 Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: ‘When you reach the edge of the Jordan’s waters, go and stand in the river.’” 9 Joshua said to the Israelites, “Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God. 10 This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites. 11 See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go into the Jordan ahead of you. 12 Now then, choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. 13 And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the LORD—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap.”

The third movement depicts the Israelites’ crossing of the Jordan River. The beginning of the movement is atonal, reflecting the Israelites’ frustration with an apparent lack of a plan. Joshua, represented by the solo violin, instructs the Israelites to follow the Ark of the Covenant to the Jordan River, but there is no feasible way to cross it. As sentiments boil over, the music shifts to tonality, and the Jordan River begins to part.
Miraculously, the Israelites are now able to cross the Jordan River on dry land and undoubtedly are reminded of the parting of the Red Sea forty years earlier. This movement is inspired by the following composers: Bedrich Smetena, who portrayed running waters of the Moldau River in his *Ma Vlast*, and Jean Sibelius, who wrote masterful melodic lines in *Finlandia*.

Movement IV: Walls of Jericho

Joshua 6 (NIV) Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.
2 Then the LORD said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. 3 March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. 4 Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams’ horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. 5 When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in.”
6 So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant of the LORD and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it.” 7 And he ordered the army, “Advance! March around the city, with an armed guard going ahead of the ark of the LORD.”

The final movement chronicles the dramatic moments of the Israelites’ entry into the Promised Land, as the walls of Jericho collapse and they storm the city. The movement begins with the percussion section playing in an allegro tempo that reflects the energy of the Israelites as they prepare to march around the city of Jericho. As Joshua proclaims, “Advance! March around the city, with an armed guard going ahead of the ark of the Lord,” the solo violin plays the most virtuosic solo material in the piece.

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3 Joshua 6, NIV.
4 ibid.
The middle section of the movement transitions to a largo tempo, as the Israelites rest for
the night and prepare for battle. Joshua also meditates on the Word of the Lord. When
the music transitions back to an allegro tempo, the percussion plays with the same energy
that defines the opening of the movement. The Israelites now journey toward Jericho and
march around the city for seven days. At the end of the piece, the trumpets and trombones
sound their horns as the Walls of Jericho fall. Joshua has succeeded in leading the
Israelites to the Promised Land and now they begin a new chapter of life. Inspirations for
this movement include the following musical artists: Charles Ives, master of polytonality;
Gustav Holst, who used French horns prominently in *The Planets*; and the music of John
Williams, acclaimed film music composer.
III. The River Jordan
IV. The Walls of Jericho
CHAPTER ONE: JAMES AIKMAN, THE VIOLIN CONCERTO, AND THE PRINCIPLE OF LIMITED ECONOMY

James Whitton Aikman’s *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* was premiered on June 21, 2009 by the St. Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra in St. Petersburg, Russia. The performance took place at the Beloselsky-Belozersky Palace and featured Vladimir Lande, Principal Guest Conductor, and Charles Wetherbee, violin soloist and Assistant Professor of Violin at the University of Colorado. This composition was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Music and the Grawemeyer Award in Music in 2010.\(^5\) It was also recorded on the Naxos Label’s *Venice of the North Concerti*, an album by the St. Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra devoted to Aikman’s musical compositions. In addition to the violin concerto, *Venice of the North Concerti* includes *Aikman’s Ania’s Song: Pavaune for String Orchestra* and *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra*.\(^5\)

James Aikman (b. 1959) earned a bachelor’s degree in Music Composition and Theory from Butler University and a master’s and doctorate degree in Music Composition from Indiana University, where he studied with Michael Schelle, Earle Brown, Frederick Fox, Donald Erb, and Harvey Sollberger. As a Fulbright Scholar, Aikman traveled to the Netherlands to study with Louis Andriessen, an acclaimed

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\(^6\) Taimur Sullivan is currently associate professor of saxophone at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois and a member of the award-winning PRISM quartet.
European composer whose approach to composition includes “economy of material.”

Aikman’s compositions have been recorded by Joshua Bell, the Saint Louis Symphony, and Hidetaro Suzuki; commissions by the Indianapolis Art Museum; and performances conducted by renowned conductors Michael Morgan, Christopher Russell, David Wiley, H. Robert Reynolds, David Dzubay, Kenneth Kiesler, Nan Washburn and Lawrence Golan. Aikman is currently Composer in Residence of the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra in Indianapolis, Indiana.

In his own words, Aikman describes his violin concerto as follows:

Violin Concerto: Lines in Motion, a concert piece for violin and orchestra, is set in three movements. The first section contains patterned lines, which gradually appear, instrument by instrument, overlapping and cascading, while generating the backdrop or canvas that eventually presents an emerging violin soloist. The instrumentalists of the orchestra perform contrapuntal angular lines with a regular pulsation, whereas the violinist takes the solo line in a brand-new direction entirely, rising above the orchestra—as if actively and creatively splashing paint over the canvas. My intent is to create the sensation and beauty of improvisation for the violinist—lending the part perceived flexibility and freedom.

The foundational composition technique Aikman uses to write his Violin Concerto No. 1 can be described as the “Principle of Limited Economy,” or “POLE” technique. The POLE technique is as a method by which the composer creates a main musical idea, or a strong musical fragment, and develops it, transforms it, shows it from various angles and highlights its subtleties. Some composers, musicologists and music theorists have previously called this technique “melodic variation” or “motivic development.” Although this list is not exhaustive, key components of the POLE technique include intervallic

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8 Program note from the U.S. premiere at the National Gallery of Art, with Mr. Wetherbee, violin and Mr. Lande leading the National Gallery Orchestra, in celebration of the Meyerhoff Collection, November, 2009.
variation, rhythmic variation, augmentation, diminution, ornamentation, fragmentation, inversion, and transposition.

The term “Principle of Limited Economy” is not a term Aikman generally uses to describe his compositional style, just as Richard Wagner did not use the term “leitmotif.” Aikman used the term once in a composition lesson, and it is now a term this writer bestows on his methodology, just as Hans von Wolzogen created the term “leitmotif” in analyzing Wagner’s work.\(^9\)

The purpose of the POLE technique, is to create cohesiveness and congruence, and to maximize one’s material. Because the composer applies a “less is more” approach to creating musical ideas, performers, conductors, and listeners can experience how one or more short ideas are developed throughout a piece. This eliminates the need to keep track of a large number of new ideas, and may make it easier to process how a piece develops.

A similar approach to economizing material appears in Beethoven’s 5\(^{th}\) Symphony in C minor, Op. 67. In this famous symphony, Beethoven economizes material by using a short motive as the melodic foundation of the work (Example 1). At the beginning of the symphony, Beethoven presents this four-note motive, which he repeats throughout the first movement, primarily in a sequential pattern.

After the introduction, Beethoven presents the first sequence in measures 6-13 (Example 2). In this passage, the 2nd violins enter first. Thereafter, the violas answer the 2nd violins, followed by the 1st violins.

In measures 14-19, Beethoven writes a slightly altered version of the original motive in the 1st violin line (Example 3). He applies intervallic variation to the motive by changing the third note of the musical idea. After the first violins present this idea, the second violins and violas answer with an inversion of this variation. Beethoven creates counterpoint by adding this inversion in a “call and response” manner.
Beethoven repeats the inversion in measures 25-29 as he orchestrates the main motive through the string section (Example 4). The first violins begin this sequence in measure 25, and the second violins answer in measure 26. Beethoven continues this pattern with the violas and, finally, the violoncello and basses.

Example 4: Repetition of Inversion, Beethoven’s 5th Symphony, Mvt.1, mm. 25-29

By this point in the first movement, Beethoven has established his approach to composing the piece. He is deliberate in presenting the opening motive in different ways, and continues to economize material throughout the symphony.

In addition to Beethoven, other prominent composers use economy of material, including Bach, Brahms, Wagner, Mahler, Puccini, Holst, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Ravel. Modern composers, including William Bolcom, Erik Santos, Joel Puckett, Louis Andriessen, Bright Sheng, and Michael Daugherty also subscribe to this technique. This concept of “economizing material” is relevant today, just as it was relevant in the past, and, it endures in the writing of composer James Aikman.

Frederick Fox, former Department Chair and Professor of Composition at Indiana University, first introduced James Aikman to the idea of economizing motivic material.
During Aikman’s master studies at the University of Indiana, Fox “stripped his style bare,” forcing Aikman to focus on developing only his most important musical ideas.\textsuperscript{10} In an interview with artist and critic David DeBoor Canfield, Aikman states, “[Fox] highly valued craft, and would point out what he considered the most significant elements in sketches and challenge students to build works entirely out of these.”\textsuperscript{11}

Aikman is widely recognized to be a composer of great talent and success. Critics have embraced his music, highlighting musical ideas and colors that permeate his writing. In a review of Aikman’s concert, Canfield writes the following:

Aikman’s violin concerto, subtitled “Lines in Motion,” opens with a series of block chords that impart a sense of mystery in the walking tempo to which they are set. There is simply no other opening like this in any concerto that I can think of.\textsuperscript{12}

After listening to Aikman’s \textit{Violin Concerto No. 1}, Andrew Mead, former Chair of Theory at the University of Michigan and current Professor of Theory at Indiana University, said the following about the opening movement:

(The opening) begins with what seems like a simple series of chords in the orchestra, out of which eventually floats the soloist in long supple lines. But those chords are a kind of key to this work: the listener will notice that they are constantly changing color and density. In fact, they are the product of an intricate counterpoint of motives running through the orchestra, and we are being taught at the outset that this will be a work that will yield its greatest beauties to the listener who can hear how the individual voice contributes to the song of the whole.\textsuperscript{13}

Ruth Crystal-Zaromp, classical music critic from Detroit, also writes of Aikman’s concerto:

\textsuperscript{10} James Aikman, Interview by author, Indianapolis, May 7, 2016.
\textsuperscript{11} Interview, David DeBoor Canfield. Fanfare Magazine 2011.
\textsuperscript{12} David DeBoor Canfield. Fanfare Magazine, Issue 35:3, Jan/Feb 2012.
\textsuperscript{13} Liner Notes, 2009.
“There is something very enticing in this music — nice elements that are classical in style yet individualistic in quality. At times, it sounds like a light melody of a bird but it tends to carry into the dreamy horizons.”

Gramophone music critic Laurence Vittes writes of the concerto (and Aikman’s saxophone concerto):

The two concertos are meditative, deeply focused pieces in which the soloist is pitted against a continually evolving kaleidoscopic orchestral backdrop. Both offer the soloist opportunities to dig deep into reserves and encourage them to give their all; it’s that kind of enthusiastic, generous music.”

This could easily be a best-seller in the USA if there were any mechanism to make innovative American composers the talk of the town.

The musical quality of Aikman’s writing is indeed corroborated by critics, but the POLE technique is the foundation on which his writing is built. In the following chapters, I will examine of the ways he utilizes the POLE technique in each of violin concerto movements. In the first movement, “Prologue/Improvisation/Prologue,” Aikman applies the POLE technique to texture. In the second movement, “Quasi una fantasia,” and the third movement, “Toccata,” Aikman applies the POLE technique to motivic development. Ultimately, Aikman’s use of economy helps create cohesiveness in a substantial piece.

16 Ibid.
CHAPTER TWO: VIOLIN CONCERTO MOVEMENT ONE

James Aikman’s *Violin Concerto No. 1* begins with the movement “Prologue/Improvisation/Prologue.” This introductory movement is relatively free in form and melody, as Aikman aims not to create a rigid structure, but an open landscape of shades and colors. The movement unfolds gently as he presents sections of chords created by layering instruments in the orchestra.

For the purpose of this study, each section of chords is defined as a “cycle.” The horizontal, melodic lines in each cycle are less important than the vertical, textural lines that create density. As Aikman increases the number of instruments in a cycle, density increases. As he subtracts the number of instruments in a cycle, density decreases. In a movement of this nature, listeners are most likely are able perceive textural rather than melodic development. Aikman is deliberate in delineating the beginning and end of each cycle, and creating density by including specific instruments in each cycle. Thus, Aikman’s economy of texture provides a foundation for understanding the movement.

The first movement of the violin concerto contains five cycles and two transitions. The cycles are distinguished not by melodic content, but by instrumentation and length. Notably, the solo violin does not play a key role in creating texture in the movement. Instead, Aikman writes improvisatory melodic lines for the solo violin that contrast the landscaped textures behind it. The following table provides an overview of the movement’s form:
Table 1. Analysis of First Movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cycle Number</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>25-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>38-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>42-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition (Cadenza)</td>
<td>47-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>58-64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cycle 1

The first cycle of the movement provides a template for cycles to come (Example 5). It begins with the 1st flute, which presents steady eighth notes that alternate between high and low registers. The eighth note rhythm and leaps between pitches are hallmarks of the instrumental lines in each cycle. After the 1st flute begins, Aikman successively adds instruments to the texture in the following order: 2nd flute, oboe and English horn together, 1st clarinet, 2nd clarinet, 1st bassoon, and finally, 2nd bassoon. This completes the textural construct of Cycle 1.

Example 5: Woodwinds, first half, Cycle 1, mm. 1-6
In the second half of Cycle 1 (Example 6), Aikman maintains the density created by the woodwinds, establishing the prominence of texture in this movement.

Example 6: Woodwinds, second half, Cycle 1, mm. 7-13

The cycles that follow are similar in scope, reflecting Aikman’s economical approach to texture. He maintains the leaping motion in the lines, changing pitches only slightly to help create a sense of movement throughout the piece. He also adds string instruments in several successive cycles to further increase density.

Cycle 2

In Cycle 2, Aikman recalls the textural landscape of the first half of Cycle 1. He begins with the same sequence of entrances in the woodwinds, building from the 1st Flute to the full section (Example 7).
Coincidently, Aikman incorporates strings in this cycle, increasing the density of the ensemble by imitating the woodwinds (Example 8). The upper string sections enter one by one, starting with the 1st violins, which play in the same register as the 1st flute, and ending with the violoncellos.

Example 8: Strings, Cycle 2, mm. 18-23
The solo violin enters in this cycle, presenting an improvisatory line in a high register (Example 9). Notably, the solo violin generally plays contrasting rhythms to juxtapose the static eighth notes in the cycle and plays continuously into Cycle 3.

![Example 9: Solo Violin, mm. 21-28](image)

Cycle 2 is six measures in length, corresponding to the length of the first half of Cycle 1.

**Cycle 3**

Like the previous cycles, Cycle 3 builds from the 1st flute, successively adding woodwinds through the entrance of the bassoons (Example 10). This cycle is thirteen bars in length and Aikman reverts to the instrumentation of Cycle 1 by eliminating the upper string instruments.

![Example 10: Woodwinds, first half, Cycle 3, mm. 25-31](image)
At the end of this cycle, Aikman alters the texture by removing several instruments after all have entered, including the bassoons and 2nd clarinet (Example 11).

Example 11: Woodwinds, second half, Cycle 3, mm. 32-39

The solo violin continues to present an improvisatory line in its higher register (Example 12). These ascending lines greatly contrast the constant eighth notes in the cycle.

Example 12: Solo Violin, mm. 32-38
Cycle 4 and Cadenza

Cycle 4 begins after a four-measure transition from Cycle 3 (Example 13). It closely resembles Cycle 2, building from the 1st flute and 1st violin to the lower instruments of the woodwind and string sections. Like Cycle 2, it is short in length, containing six measures. By its conclusion, Cycle 4 is relatively dense.

Example 13: Woodwinds, Cycle 4, mm. 44-47

When the orchestra suddenly disappears from the musical landscape, the solo violin presents a dramatic cadenza that serves as a transition to Cycle 5 (Example 14).

Example 14: Solo Violin, Cadenza, mm. 32-39
Cycle 5

At the end of the movement, Aikman presents a seven-measure cycle that incorporates both woodwind and string sections (Example 15 and Example 16).

Example 15: Final Cycle, woodwinds, mm. 58-64

This cycle most closely resembles the first five measures of Cycle 3, even incorporating some identical note groupings. The movement ends without fanfare. Moreover without the last measure, which includes an eighth-note stinger in the 1st flute, lower woodwinds, 2nd horn, and strings, Aikman could easily begin another cycle.

Example 16: Final Cycle, strings, mm. 58-64
In summary, Aikman applies economy of texture to the first movement of his Violin Concerto No.1. Although the POLE technique is likely easier to discern when applied to motivic material, Aikman demonstrates that the principle of economizing can apply to other musical elements. In his violin concerto, Aikman presents five textural cycles that serve as a backdrop for the solo violin. He maintains a steady pattern of eighth notes with leaps throughout, subtly adjusting pitches from one section to the next. This helps create continuity in the movement, and binds the sections. It also provides a neutral canvas for the contrasting improvisational material in the solo violin.
“Quasi una fantasia,” or “Almost a fantasy,” describes a “musical composition with a free form and often an improvisatory style.”\textsuperscript{17} Aikman uses this term to describe the second movement of his violin concerto, which he writes with a “freer approach to structure, rather than being confined to a traditional sonata form.”\textsuperscript{18} Although Aikman exercises structural freedom in his “Quasi una fantasia,” he centers the movement on a motive, or short musical idea, that appears in some form in nearly every section of the piece. Thus, Aikman applies the POLE technique to melodic material, making the most of a single motivic idea.

The defining motive of this movement includes a descending Major 7\textsuperscript{th} interval followed by an ascending Major 6\textsuperscript{th} interval (Example 17). The distance between the first note and the third note is a Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{motive.png}
\caption{Main motive of the second movement}
\end{figure}

In some passages, Aikman presents or transforms the motive as a whole. In other passages, he highlights intervals included in the motive. Ultimately, his development of a single motive helps create cohesion in the movement. Because he presents material from

\textsuperscript{17} Oxford Dictionary. \url{https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/fantasia}
\textsuperscript{18} "Interview No. 2." E-mail interview by author. May 2, 2017.
the same motive throughout the piece, there is motivic relationship between the sections. However, he varies his presentation of the motive, and its intervals, to ensure the movement does not become monotonous.

For the purpose of this study, the second movement is divided into three large groups. The following table provides an overview of these groups and their sections:

**Table 2: Form Analysis of Mvt. 2 “Quasi una fantasia”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Sub-description</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Rehearsal Letter(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1 - 7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>8 - 20</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
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<td>b’</td>
<td>41 - 48</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>49 - 64</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>65 - 92</td>
<td>F, G</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>93 - 114</td>
<td>H</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a’</td>
<td>115 - 138</td>
<td>I, J</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td>139 - 152</td>
<td>K</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a’</td>
<td>162 - 179</td>
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<td>Transition</td>
<td></td>
<td>180 - 187</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
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<td>b’</td>
<td>188 - 230</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>231 – 246</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>247 – 278</td>
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<td>279 – 288</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CODA</td>
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<td>299 – 325</td>
<td>Y, Z</td>
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</table>

Group I includes an introduction and Sections A-D. Each section, with the exception of Section C, presents the main motive, or intervals from the main motive, in different ways. Groups II and III contain recapitulations of select sections from Group I. This analysis will highlight the various methods Aikman uses to treat the main motive in each group as he applies to POLE technique to melodic material in the movement.
In Group I, Aikman introduces the main motive and transforms it in different ways. In the introduction, he presents the motive in its simplest form and begins to alter it. Thereafter, each section has a distinct transformative property or setting, with the exception of Section C.

**Introduction**

Aikman presents the main motive of second movement in its simplest form at the beginning of the piece, establishing the descending Major 7th interval between the first and the second note, the ascending Major 6th interval between the second note and the third note, and the Major 2nd interval between the first note and the third note (Example 18).

After presenting the motive, Aikman changes it slightly by eliminating the ascending Major 6th interval at the end of the idea (Example 19). This short melodic fragment is an answer to the main motive, melodically distinguished by this singular change. Thus,
Aikman applies intervallic variation to the motive for the first time in the movement, using the same rhythm as the original idea, but changing an interval.

![Diagram of intervallic variation of motive](image)

Example 19: Intervallic variation of motive, Violin Concerto No. 1, Mv. 2, mm. 3-4

Thereafter, Aikman embellishes the opening motive by adding an ornament to the third note of the musical idea (Example 20). In the measure that follows, he presents the main motive in its entirety the interval of a 3rd lower in the percussion and harp lines, transposing it for the first time in the movement.
Thus, by the conclusion of the introduction, Aikman presents the main motive, and uses intervallic variation, ornamentation, and transposition to develop it. These elements reoccur in the select sections of the movement.

**Section A**

At the beginning of Section A, in the first solo violin phrase, Aikman restates melodic material from the introduction, presenting the main motive three times (Example 21). He first writes the motive in its original form; then, with the added ornament on the third note of musical idea; and finally, he writes the motive transposed down the interval of a Minor 3rd.
In the second solo violin phrase, Aikman presents the original motive, or elements related to the motive, four times in succession (Example 22). He first presents the motive with an added ornament; then the motive transposed down the interval of a 3\textsuperscript{rd}; next, a motivic fragment that highlights the Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval from the original motive; and finally, an intervallic variation of the motive.

Example 22: Second solo violin phrase, mm. 13-16

In the third solo violin phrase, Aikman presents alterations of the main motive (Example 23). In measure 18, he repeats the intervallic variation presented in measure 16. In measure 20, he highlights a minor 7\textsuperscript{th} interval, which is the parallel of the Major 7\textsuperscript{th} interval in the opening motive. Additionally, in the same measure, he applies intervallic variation to the motive, using the same rhythm as the opening motive but writing different intervals. In measure 22, he applies rhythmic variation to the intervallic variation in measure 20.

Example 23: Third solo violin phrase, mm. 18-23
Later, in measures 40-48, Aikman continues to use elements from the main motive (Example 24). He writes an ascending 6\textsuperscript{th} interval, which is featured in the opening motive. He then applies intervallic variation to the main motive, replacing the descending Major 7\textsuperscript{th} interval with an ascending Minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval, and, the ascending Major 6\textsuperscript{th} interval with a descending Perfect 4\textsuperscript{th} interval. Additionally, Aikman applies rhythmic variation to the intervallic variation of measure 40, incorporating sixteenth notes into the phrase. He also incorporates the syncopation and the juxtaposition of entrances on and off strong beats. Aikman writes three immediate variations of measures 40-41 by either changing notes or adding ornamentation to the motive.

Thus, by the conclusion of Section A, Aikman expands his treatment of the motive, adding fragmentation and rhythmic variation to the methods used in the introduction.

**Section B**

In Section B, Aikman further transforms the opening motive by partially inverting it (Example 25). In the first violins, he inverts the descending Major 7\textsuperscript{th} interval between
the first two notes of the motive to a Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval, while maintaining the ascending the Major 6\textsuperscript{th} interval. The Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval that follows (m. 50) recalls the distance between the first and the third notes of the opening motive. This partially inverted motive serves as a “call” before the solo violin and oboe “respond” immediately thereafter.

Example 25: Intervallic structure of transformed motive in 1\textsuperscript{st} violins, mm. 49-50

In the measures that follow, Aikman writes a melodic “response” in the solo violin and oboe lines, presenting an ornamented version of the motive at the beginning of Section B (Example 26). This ornamented “response” is transposed down the interval of a Major 3\textsuperscript{rd}.

Example 26: Ornamentation and transposition of motive in Section B, mm. 50-52

Thus, by the conclusion of Section B, Aikman has added inversion to his methods of economizing material.

**Section C**

In Section C, Aikman writes new material to transition from Section B to Section D (Example 27). Having already applied a wide range of treatments to the opening motive, he departs from the motive to provide melodic contrast. Notably, Section C and
its restatement later in the movement are the only sections that are not based primarily on the opening motive.

Example 27: Contrasting motive in Section C, mm. 65-68

Section D

In Section D, Aikman highlights intervals related to the opening motive, including the Major 7\textsuperscript{th} and Minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} intervals (Example 28). The Major 7\textsuperscript{th} interval appears in the original motive and the Minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval is its inversion.

Example 28: Intervallic structure of motivic material in Section D

By applying augmentation to this intervallic structure, Aikman increases the duration of the motivic idea (Example 29). At the beginning of the movement, the main motive, in its simplest form, is written in one measure. In the augmented motive that shapes Section D, the melodic idea is expanded to seven measures.

Example 29: Augmentation applied to opening motive, mm. 95-101
Two measures after the soloist enters, Aikman builds harmony and counterpoint by placing the augmented motive in the viola and 2nd violin lines when the solo violin changes notes (Example 30).

Example 30: Harmony and counterpoint in Section D, mm.98–102

Thus, as Aikman concludes Group I, he has firmly established the main motive and demonstrated a diverse range of options for presenting it, or highlighting intervals related to it. He has also laid a foundation for the rest of the movement. In the groups that follow, he builds on motivic ideas of Group I, proving that the main motive can still be used and transformed in inventive ways.
Group II

Group II is the shortest of the three large groups in the second movement. In Group II, Aikman presents restatements of Section B and Section A, followed by a transition to Group III. In these restatements, he adds to the catalogue of motivic treatments in the movement.

First Restatement of Section B

Although one might expect the Restatement of Section A to precede the Restatement of Section B, Aikman writes the opposite in Group II; he presents Section B first. In this Restatement of Section B, Aikman recalls the partially inverted motive featured in Section B, presenting it down the interval of a Minor 3\textsuperscript{rd} (Example 31). He writes an ascending Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval, inverting the descending Major 7\textsuperscript{th} interval between the first two notes of the original motive, and maintains the ascending Major 6\textsuperscript{th} interval. He also includes the descending Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval written in Section B. He ornaments the line with trills to provide a subtle difference in the writing.

![Example 31: Partially inverted motive, mm. 139 - 142](image)

Notably, Aikman eliminates the “call and response” gesture in the first Section B. Previously, the solo violin and oboe enter together in response to partially inverted material played by the first violins. However, in the First Restatement of Section B, the
solo violin enters alone after a dramatic pause, and, the oboe joins the violin in unison a few beats later.

**First Restatement of Section A**

In the First Restatement of Section A, Aikman blends the motives from Section A and Section C of Group I (Example 32). He writes the first two notes of the contrasting motive in Section C, then writes the main motive from Section A. Thereafter, he presents the main motive transposed down the interval of a 3rd.

![Example 32: Blending of two motives, solo violin, mm. 153-156](image)

This blending is unexpected, and perhaps reflects Aikman’s desire to write with a “freer approach to structure.” Notably, Aikman presents the blended material in the same key as the parallel sections of Group I. Aikman also recalls the ornament on the second note of the ascending Major 6th as it appears in Group I. Thereafter, Aikman presents motivic material in the bassoon and flute lines, placing the motive in the orchestra as well (Example 33).

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19 "Interview No. 4." E-mail interview by author. June 4, 2017.
Later in the First Restatement of Section A, Aikman uses the main motive to create a “miniature fugue” (Example 34). He presents the main motive, written a Perfect 4th interval lower than the original key, as a subject in the solo violin line. A few measures later, he presents an answer, written in the motive’s original key, in the flute line. Thereafter, he writes transposed versions of the original motive in the solo violin and flute lines, and, he highlights the Major 7th interval in the solo violin line.
Transition

In the transition after the First Restatement of Section A, Aikman prepares for Group III. This transition is only eight bars long, but Aikman includes the opening motive, applying intervallic variation and rhythmic variation to the example (Example 35).

![Example 35: Transition to Group III, solo violin, mm. 183-186](image)

Notably, this transition is derived from material in Section A (Example 36).

![Example 36: Motivic material in Section A, mm. 20-23](image)

By the conclusion of Group II, Aikman has incorporated two new elements related to motivic development. First, he blends material from two different sections, namely Section A and Section C. Second, he uses the motive as fugal material, drawing inspiration from a baroque style.
Group III

Aikman concludes the movement in Group III. In this group, he presents material from Groups I and II, and continues to use transformative techniques of economy. Group III is nearly equivalent to Group I in length, but Aikman omits Section D and presents a Coda instead.

Second Restatement of Section A

In the Second Restatement of Section A, Aikman applies rhythmic variation to the opening motive (Example 37). In measures 188-189, he extends the syncopated rhythm of the opening motive. He ends this melodic phrase with a descending 7th interval, the first interval of the opening motive.

Example 37: Rhythmic variation of motive, Solo Violin, mm. 187-190

Later in the same section, Aikman applies a different rhythmic variation to the motive (Example 38). This variation is similar to the rhythmic variation in the parallel section of Group I (see Example 12). In this figure, Aikman incorporates syncopation and the juxtaposition of entrances on and off strong beats.

Example 38: Restatement of rhythmic variation from Group I, Solo Violin, mm. 225-230
Second Restatement of Section B

In the Second Restatement of Section B Aikman presents a substantial tutti section that recalls previous motivic material (Example 39). In measures 232-235, he presents the same intervallic variation of the opening motive written in Section B of Group I and in the First Restatement of Section B in Group II. This passage appears in the same tonal construct as presented in Restatement of Section B in Group II.

Example 39: Intervallic variation in the tutti section, mm. 232-235

Second Restatement of Section C

In the Second Restatement of Section C, Aikman presents the melodic material from Section C in Group I. Like that of the first Section C, most of the material in this passage is not directly related to the opening motive. This provides melodic contrast to other sections of the movement. However, just before concluding this section, Aikman highlights two key intervals related to the opening motive (Example 40), namely the Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} and the Minor 7\textsuperscript{th}. The shaping of this phrase is dramatic, demonstrating a
substantial range of over three octaves on the violin. Notably, Aikman varies the motivic rhythm, writing triplets instead of the eighth notes in the original motive.

Example 40: Melodic material the Second Restatement of Section C, Solo Violin, mm. 275-278

**Third Restatement of Section A**

In the Third Restatement of Section A, Aikman first transposes the original motive down the interval of a Perfect 5th and then transposes the motive down the interval of a 3rd (Example 41).

Example 41: Transposition of motive in Third Restatement of Section A, Solo Violin, mm. 279-280

In the next phrase, he writes a Major 7th interval, the first interval in the opening motive (Example 42). He then transposes the main motive the interval of a Perfect 5th higher (m. 283). Immediately thereafter, he presents the motive down the interval of a 3rd (m. 284) before writing it a final time at its original pitch (m. 285). In measure 286, he applies intervallic variation by inverting the direction of the motive, after which he extends the melodic phrase over two bars.
Example 42: Varied treatment of motive in the Third Restatement of Section A, Solo Violin, mm. 282-289

Transition

In the brief transition to the coda, Aikman places the main motive in the oboe at original pitch, followed by a transposition of the motive down the interval of a 3rd (Example 43). He then restates the opening motive at its original pitch, and writes an intervallic variation of the motive thereafter.

Example 43: Motive in transition to Coda, Oboe, mm. 289-292

Coda

In the coda, Aikman makes his final statements in the movement. In the fourth measure of the coda, he adds ornamentation to the opening motive as the soloist plays the musical idea a Major 2nd interval higher (Example 44). He continues to expand this motive by transposing it and varying its intervals. In measure 302, he writes the motive up the interval of a Major 2nd. In the next measure, he writes the motive down the interval of a 2nd from the original pitch. In measure 304, he writes the motive up the interval of a Perfect 5th. In the following measure, he changes the direction of the motive by varying
its intervals and adds the transposed motive twice. Thereafter in the final measure, he transposes the motive down an interval of a 3rd.

After this phrase, Aikman’s use of the opening motive becomes elusive. As the movement approaches its conclusion, he embeds 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 7\textsuperscript{th} intervals in the melodic material, rather than presenting the motive as a whole (Example 45). In the last phrase of the movement, for example, Aikman writes a group of measures with long note values followed by virtuosic runs of 32\textsuperscript{nd} and 16\textsuperscript{th} notes the solo violin line. He highlights the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 7\textsuperscript{th} intervals in the long notes and repeats 2\textsuperscript{nd} intervals in the last measure of the virtuosic runs. Aikman’s presentation of intervals, rather than the full motive, coincides with the surprise ending of the movement. Rather than providing a final cadence, or, final motivic resolution, Aikman ends the movement abruptly.
Example 45: Final passage of Mvt 2, Solo Violin, mm. 302-308

In summary, Aikman uses a single motive as the basis of melodic material in his “Quasi una fantasia,” transforming it using augmentation, rhythmic variation, intervallic variation, transposition, ornamentation, and fragmentation. He also blends the motive with contrasting melodic material, specifically in the Restatement of Section C, and uses the motive as fugal material. Additionally, he highlights intervals related to the three-note motive, including the intervals of a 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 7\textsuperscript{th}, and 6\textsuperscript{th}. Upon examining Aikman’s “Quasi una fantasia,” one can observe how Aikman applies the POLE technique to develop the movement melodically, and to help create cohesion between its sections. Even though he writes a movement that is structurally free, Aikman binds the sections through motivic development until the movement comes to a surprising end.
CHAPTER FOUR: VIOLIN CONCERTO MOVEMENT THREE

A toccata is defined as “a piece intended primarily as a display of manual dexterity.”\textsuperscript{20} Aikman’s third movement, subtitled “Toccata,” reflects this definition. It is virtuosic for the soloist and is characterized by a vigorous and energetic tempo with long passages of sixteenth note runs. Although this movement is significantly shorter than the second movement, Aikman uses the same principle of economizing material. He applies the POLE technique to three motives instead of one, repeating the motives often with subtle differences in restated sections.

For the purpose of this study, the third movement, which is in Rondo form, is divided into three large groups. The groups are characterized by the predominance of the A Sections, which generally alternate between B and C Sections of the movement. The following table provides an overview of these groups:

Table 2: Form Analysis of Mvt. 3, “Toccata”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Sub-Chapter Heading</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Rehearsal Letter</th>
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</table>

Group I

In Group I of “Toccata,” Aikman introduces the three main motives of the movement. Each section contains a distinct motive, but the first motive is prominent as it is presented more frequently than the others.

Section A

Aikman begins the “Toccata” with the first motive, which includes two pitches the interval of a Major 2nd apart written in running sixteenth notes (Example 46).

Example 46: First motive of Mvt. 3, m.1

After presenting the first motive, Aikman immediately alters it. In measure 2, he applies intervallic variation to the motive as he expands the phrase. Two measures later, he transposes the phrase up the interval of a Major 9th and then shifts the octave downward. In measure 5, he presents the original motive an octave higher than that of the beginning, then varies the rhythm by writing sixteenth note triplets that lead to a transposition of the motive up a tritone in measure 6. (Example 47).

Example 47: First solo violin phrase, mm. 1-6
By the end of the first phrase, Aikman establishes the adventurous character of the movement, not just through the quick tempo, but also through his treatment of the motive. In the first six bars, he presents the motive in some form seven times, with five variations of the original idea.

In measures 7 and 9, Aikman presents an intervallic variation of the first motive in select woodwinds, piano, and percussion lines (Example 48). He also applies rhythmic variation to the motive in the clarinets by incorporating sixteenth rests in the melodic idea.

Example 48: Variation of first motive in select woodwinds, piano, and percussion, mm. 7-9

In measure 8, while most of the orchestra is at rest, Aikman applies augmentation to the first motive (Example 49). In the solo violin line, he writes six eighth notes, rather than the twelve sixteenth notes in the first motive. This lends power to the role of the violinist as soloist.
Thus, by the conclusion of Section A, Aikman establishes the first motive, presenting it in both the solo violin and orchestra parts. He uses intervallic variation, rhythmic variation, and augmentation to transform the motive and create virtuosic lines for the soloist.

**Section B**

In Section B, Aikman introduces the second motive of the movement, which includes a G harmonic minor scale followed by sequential pattern of Major 2\textsuperscript{nd} intervals (Example 50). The motive is significantly longer than the first motive, providing contrast in both length and melodic content. Nevertheless, it reflects the “display of manual dexterity” characteristic of a toccata.

**First Restatement of Section A**

After Section B, Aikman returns to Section A, presenting the first motive a tritone higher than that of the original statement (Example 51). He incorporates transformative elements used in Section A, including transposition and intervallic variation. Notably, this presentation of motivic material is three measures longer than that of the Section A.
Thus, Aikman extends the duration of the first motive, creating musical intensity. At the end of this section, Aikman writes a transitional gesture into Section C (m. 28). This gesture is an intervallic variation of the third motive that alludes to melodic material in the next section.

![Example 51: Transformation of main motive in First Restatement of Section A, mm. 19-29](image)

**Section C**

In Section C, Aikman presents the third motive of the piece (Example 52), which consists of eighth notes outlining the key of E Major with a raised fourth scale degree.\(^{21}\)

![Example 52: Third motive with scale degrees](image)

In this section, Aikman begins to present the motive in select orchestral instruments before the soloist enters (Example 53). He begins with a fragment of the third motive in

\(^{21}\) This could also be noted as an E Major Lydian Scale, the 4\(^{th}\) mode of B major.
the French horns, trumpet, and percussion. Immediately thereafter, he presents the motive in its entirety in the same instruments, adding a sequential extension at the end of the idea. In measure 31, he transposes the motive up the interval of a Major 3rd in fragments presented by the trumpets and percussion. Thereafter, Aikman pairs a rhythmic transformation of the motive in the French horns with an intervallic transformation of the motive in the percussion. The rhythmic variation in the French horns is accomplished by omitting beats two and five of the third motive (m. 33).

![Example 53: Third motive in French horns, trumpets, and percussion, mm. 28-34](image)

Although Aikman creates significant orchestral activity in the C Section, the solo violin also presents different transformations of the third motive (Example 54).
Two measures after the orchestra begins the third motive, Aikman presents two ornamented fragments of the motive in the solo violin (mm. 30-32). Thereafter, he presents rhythmic variation of the third motive. He creates the first rhythmic variation (m.34) by omitting beats 2 and 5 of the third motive, and the second rhythmic variation by omitting beats 1, 2, 4, and 5 of the third motive.

Example 54: Development of third motive, solo violin, mm. 30-38

Section C Extension

The Section C Extension is a six-measure transition to Group II (Example 55). This extension is not thematically strong enough to be categorized as a section, but it appears two more times in the movement. The extension is loosely derived from the second motive of the movement, which highlights the pitch F#.22

Example 55: Section C Extension, Solo Violin, mm. 39-43

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Thus, by the conclusion of Group I, Aikman presents the three motives that define the movement, and establishes the prominence of the first motive by presenting more often than the others. In addition, Aikman treats motivic material with intervallic variation, rhythmic variation, fragmentation, ornamentation, sequential extension, and transposition, sometimes layering these devices to create an active motivic environment.

Group II

In Group II, Aikman continues to work in the structure of the Rondo form. The relationship between sections in Group I and Group II is easily discerned as Aikman incorporates repetition of motivic ideas.

**Second Restatement of Section A**

Aikman begins the Second Restatement of Section A by repeating the first motive at its original pitch (Example 56). However, he extends the length of this section to 18 measures, providing ample space for transforming the first motive. With more room for material, he adds a new intervallic variation to the first motive in this section, using E5 as a pedal point that ascends on an E minor Dorian scale. This distinctive transformation is easily recognizable later in the piece.
First Restatement of Section C

In the First Restatement of Section C, Aikman presents material derived from the third motive in select orchestral instruments (Example 57). Variations of the motive appear in the flutes, oboes, French horn, and piano lines.
In the same passage, Aikman writes a new improvisational syncopated line in the solo violin (Example 58). This provides contrast to the motivic material in the orchestra.

Example 58: Improvisational line in solo violin, mm. 64-72

**Third Restatement of Section A**

In the Third Restatement of Section A, Aikman presents a duplication of the first motive as it appears in the beginning of the piece (Example 59). The duplication can be easily discerned by the listener.

Example 59: Duplication of first motive, Solo Violin, mm. 74-79

**Restatement of Section B**

In the Restatement of Section B, Aikman presents the second motive, almost verbatim as appears in Section B (Example 60). This repetition is also easily discerned. Aikman extends this section, however, by two measures, adding a fragmentation of the motive at the end of the phrase (mm. 92-93).
Thus, in Group II, Aikman restates motivic material from Group I, sometimes presenting exact repetitions. However, he creates subtle differences by lengthening his presentation of motivic ideas, and incorporating new elements, such as the pedal point in the Restatement of Section A.

Group III

Aikman concludes the third movement in Group III, making his final statements in the concerto as a whole. Group III includes motivic presentations that are identical or nearly identical to those of previous groups. Notably, Aikman omits a restatement of Section B from Group III. As such, the first motive is preeminent, even in the Coda of the piece.

Fourth Restatement of Section A

In the Fourth Restatement of Section A (Example 61), Aikman presents the first motive at is appears in Section A of Group I. He changes only the third measure of the passage by eliminating the meter change to 3/8.
Example 61: Motivic material in Fourth Restatement of Section A, mm. 94-105

Second Restatement of Section C

In the Second Restatement of Section C, Aikman presents a duplication of the third motive as it appears in Section C of Group I. (Example 62), He adds virtuosity to the solo violin line by incorporating double stop octaves in measures 111-113.

Example 62: Duplication of third motive, mm. 106-114

First Restatement of C Section Extension

In the First Restatement of the C Section Extension, Aikman duplicates motivic material from the C Section Extension in Group I (Example 63). At the end of this
extension, however, he writes a sustained C7. Like its predecessor, material in this extension is loosely derived from the second motive of the movement.

Example 63: Duplication of material in C Section Extension, mm. 115-121

**Fifth Restatement of Section A**

The motivic content of the Fifth Restatement of Section A nearly duplicates content from Group II (Example 64). Aikman recalls the pedal point but eliminates a 3/8 meter change previously written near the end of the section.

Example 64: Duplication of first motive with pedal point, mm. 123-139

**Third Restatement of Section C**

In the Third Restatement of Section C, Aikman presents transpositions and intervallic variations of the first motive in the trumpet line. In the 1st violin line, he
recalls a motivic pedal point and an improvisatory melodic line from Group II (Example 65).

Example 65: Motivic transformation that includes pedal point, mm. 140-147

In the solo violin, he duplicates six measures from the improvisatory line in the First Restatement of Section C (Example 66). Thereafter, he extends the improvisatory line to transition to the Coda.

Example 66: Improvisatory Line from First Restatement of Section C, Solo Violin, mm. 140-150

**Coda**

Aikman begins the Coda with an intervallic variation of the first motive (Example 67). He presents the variation initially in the 1st flute, then adds the 2nd flute, oboe, and 1st clarinet a few measures later.
Example 67: Beginning of Coda in upper woodwinds, mm. 153-159

Thereafter, Aikman blends material from the first and second motives in the 2nd flute, 1st oboe, 1st trumpet, percussion and piano (Example 68). In this phrase, he builds intensity in anticipation of the end of the movement.

Example 68: Blending of first and second motives, mm. 174-177
In the final moments of the movement, Aikman returns to motivic material from Group II, which includes a pedal point created by an intervallic variation of the first motive (Example 69). He alters several of the variations slightly, using octave displacement so the material is written in a higher register. Notably, Aikman ends the movement on a virtuosic run that first descends, then quickly rises.

Example 69: Final phrase, Solo violin, mm. 180-200

In conclusion, Aikman uses three motives as the basis of melodic material in his “Toccata.” He uses techniques that appear in the second movement for economizing material, including augmentation, rhythmic variation, intervallic variation, transposition, ornamentation, and fragmentation. Aikman places the three motives in distinct sections of the Rondo form, providing a structural template that helps listeners keep track of and
identify the motives as they appear in the piece. He also duplicates motivic passages in several sections, helping to create cohesiveness in a piece that moves at a fast pace. In short, Aikman’s “Toccata” is a virtuosic conclusion to his concerto. After presenting an opening movement that gently unfolds, and an expansive middle movement with lyrical passages, Aikman generates energy in this final statement of the concerto.
SUMMARY

Examining compositional techniques of composers like James Aikman provides insight into the methodology of writing award-winning music. For Aikman, musical cohesiveness is paramount, and is achieved through economizing material.

In his *Violin Concerto No. 1*, Aikman demonstrates that the “Principle of Limited Economy,” or “POLE” technique, a term this writer ascribes to his compositional style, can be manifested in different ways. Although the POLE technique it is most easily discerned when applied to motivic development, it can also apply to other elements. In the first movement of his violin concerto, “Prologue/Improvisation/Prologue,” for example, Aikman applies the POLE technique to texture. In this movement, he presents five cycles of chords created by layering orchestral instruments. The first textural cycle is the foundation for the other cycles of the movement. He uses this cycle to introduce the pattern of eighth notes represented in each cycle, and the sequence for adding or removing instruments to the texture one or two at a time. In this movement, texture takes precedence over motivic development, and vertical lines are more important than horizontal lines. Notably, Aikman uses the orchestra, rather than the solo violin, as the mechanism for producing economy of texture. The orchestra marks the cycles of the movement as the violin sings above its textural landscape.

In the second and third movements of his violin concerto, Aikman applies the POLE technique to motivic development. Many composers, including Beethoven, Brahms, and Wagner have also ascribed to the principle of economizing melodic material. In the second movement, entitled “Quasi una fantasia,” Aikman develops a substantial piece from a three-note motive. He presents the motive in its simplest form at
the beginning of the movement so it is easily recognizable when repeated in future
sections. Over the course of the movement, Aikman presents the motive in its original
form, but also transforms it using a wide range of techniques, including augmentation,
rhythmic variation, intevallic variation, transposition, ornamentation, and fragmentation.
These transformative options afford Aikman the opportunity to develop a long movement
that does not become melodically dull from a short motive. Because the movement is
“like a fantasy,” and free in form, Aikman does not create cohesiveness through
predictable structure and thematic phrases, but rather through the consistent development
of the short main motive in fresh and inventive ways. In the middle of the movement, for
example, Aikman uses various transformations of motive to create a “miniature fugue.”
Later in the movement, he applies rhythmic variation to the motive in a syncopated
passage to be played, as he designates in the score, “a la rock guitar solo.” In short, in the
second movement of the concerto, Aikman demonstrates the large number of possibilities
for developing a substantial work from a single motive.

In the third movement, Aikman applies the POLE technique to motivic
development in rondo form. He works with three motives in a short movement, rather
than one motive in a long movement. Creating cohesion in this setting requires careful
consideration and organization. Aikman uses a familiar catalogue of transformative
devices in his “Toccata,” including augmentation, rhythmic variation, intevallic
variation, transposition, ornamentation, and fragmentation. This allows Aikman to
maximize options for transforming the motives throughout the movement, which also
helps create cohesiveness in the piece.
Aikman’s violin concerto is widely recognized to be a work of artistic achievement. It was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Music, the Grawemeyer Award in Music, and was recorded on the Naxos Music Label. Thus, the concerto merits examination. An analysis of the inner workings of the piece reveals Aikman’s compositional approach. He economizes material throughout the concerto to help create cohesion in the movements. In addition to incorporating economy of material in his own work, Aikman shares this principle with his students. To this end, he is influencing younger generations of composers who aspire to reach his level of mastery. As Aikman’s violin concerto demonstrates, the POLE technique can help composers create a work useful for study or academic instruction; but more significantly, it can help composers create works that endure, and move players and listeners alike.
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Tchaikovsky, Piotr Ilich. *Sleeping Beauty*.


Non Sequitur Music
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October 12, 2016

To The Louisiana State University School of Music Dissertation Committee of Chad Hughes:

We hereby grant permission for Chad Hughes, a doctoral candidate at your school, to use excerpts of James Aikman’s music within his dissertation. We understand this will include analysis of specific compositional features used by Dr. Aikman and that the analytical points made will reference the exact musical excerpts reproduced. Thus, we grant Mr. Hughes our permission to copy chosen sections of the following works by Dr. Aikman and to reproduce these excerpts within his dissertation:

Sonata for Violin and Piano
Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano
Violin Concerto: Lines in Motion
Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra.

We wish you, and Mr. Hughes, all the best in this important educational reference and endeavor.

Sincerely,

Bruce Hamilton
(on behalf of Non Sequitur)
nonsequiturmusic.com
Bellingham, Washington
APPENDIX B. PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH JAMES AIKMAN

Chad Hughes: Your thoughts on the opening (Violin Concerto No. 1)?

James Aikman: … I would say the opening has individual lines that are very similar and it begins in a sonic sort of wedge gradual addition to the constant eighth notes but it’s a linear derive motion where there are some lines that are totally similar and they start at different points of the line. So, what eventually happens is a polyphony that results because of the eighth note motion in the harmonic motion. It’s a vertical, as well as, a harmonic statement that comes out of it. I mean that seems obvious but just as in Debussy’s parallelisms, you know the way you would parallel, take a melody and basically not have counterpoint at times and just have everyone doing the same melody. You have those parallel chords, it’s like chord is melody. So, that chord is melody concept, I inverted at this beginning and made it be lines, individual lines and lines combined becomes harmonies. I wasn’t thinking about the harmonic aspect except in the melodies that I chose for it and the result in harmonic patterns became something that I was delighted in. It’s a three-part form, there’s the first section and then the same thing repeats with a little bit of more orchestration and then at that point is when the violin comes in.

Chad Hughes: Yes, ok. I see it right before the end of measure 18; the flute comes in with the exact same thing.

James Aikman: Precisely, it’s almost an exact replicate. I mean, that’s the template anyway. There’s a lot of subtle little changes but in any event the focus is the violin at
that point. So, it’s the typical you know, sonata form statement where you have the exposition without the soloist and then you have the soloist come in on the second statement of the exposition. So, that’s like a condensed formal statement.

**Chad Hughes:** Except, you just double it up with the violins when it comes in.

**James Aikman:** Well, yeah exactly. I sail on the violin line in an improvisatory way above that, states the constant. You know always shift the harmonic language.

**Chad Hughes:** At first, I was trying to analyze the chords that you used with the apexes of each phrase but I was like, this is not lining up that way.

**James Aikman:** It repeats but the chords that result are incidental based on the lines creating them because of the eighth notes. (Chuckles), it just creates these chords by virtue of that as a template. You know having tons of eighth notes then the results of the chords are just incidental. But they’re within harmonic language because of the modes. So, that one turned out pretty remarkably as I was fighting to remember a (chuckles)... It was in Finale, the prior version to ‘09. I was fighting with the new one, and so, that’s why I was teaching myself the new Finale.

**Chad Hughes:** Yeah, (Finale) ‘09 is flawless. So, pretty much I look at the next segment is kind of all the way up to where the violin has its solo.

**James Aikman:** Yeah, it’s just a cadenza and then it starts again as if it were going to repeat but it doesn’t. It’s just a hint. It is like a cadenza at the end. So, it is like “A-A-cadenza,B or a prime, I guess. No, A-A’, prime cadenza a double prime or whatever if you want to put it like that and at the first repetition is where my violin soloist enters and the cadenza is a simple little modal shift. One which you can figure out on your own but it is basically again, sort of mimics its overall shape, the same sort of shape as that wedge
that takes place over all of the entrances of the instruments gradually playing their eighth notes. Cadenza does that sort of shape but it still in the notes as you will see only if you think about it that way. But I would not worry about over-analyzing it; it’s just a cadenza. Again, it is just a hint at the beginning, it starts as if it is going to repeat itself but it doesn’t. It gives a hint of it again but I don’t even have that score in front of me so that’s all in my recollection.

Chad Hughes: Ok, cause I see...

James Aikman: I’m sorry, that might be two runs through the pattern with the violins floating above it, but I can’t recall it. So, you can figure that out. When the violin comes in, there might be two additional statements like the opening statement. Just count the measures and you can figure it out. It’s like the harmony in a tune, just count the measures of the tune.

Hughes: The violin comes in at bar 20. The cadenza comes in the middle of 47.

Aikman: So that’s the third statement of the A, or however you want to label that.

Chad Hughes: Hmm...

James Aikman: …it’s like the harmony going under a tune, going through the changes. Just count the measures, however many before the violin comes in, and that will give you the format.

Chad Hughes: Actually, no its not eighteen. The form repeats at eighteen, the middle of eighteen, at the eighteen-and-a-half bar, and the violin doesn’t come in until bar twenty-one.

James Aikman: Yeah, but it’s the same thing it starts it off… yeah…but the form that’s the form so…so…
Chad Hughes: …and then its measure 21. The cadenza starts in measure…

James Aikman: …the fifties and sixties?

Chad Hughes: Not quite, well, it starts in the middle of forty-seven.

James Aikman: Okay. So that would be within the third time.

Chad Hughes: Mmm-hmm…

James Aikman: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So, that’s sort of what’s chopped up a bit the third statement; however, you want to label that. So, “A” without the violin, then “A prime” with the violin. Then sort of another A leading up to the cadenza.

Chad Hughes: Oh, yeah! I see it, because you bring the violin back; no, you bring the flute…

James Aikman: Yep.

Chad Hughes: …you bring the flute in in measure forty-two.

James Aikman: Yep, there you are.

Chad Hughes: Okay, yeah that makes sense. You just shifted a beat, so basically you got it four times?

James Aikman: Yep, well hinting, yeah it’ not the full thing. Yeah, exactly. You got it, so you can write; however, you want to interpret that, but that’s the form of that movement. It’s the hardest one to analyze.

Chad Hughes: I see.

James Aikman: It’s simple but it’s not (laughs).

Chad Hughes: It’s far from it.
James Aikman: They just start at different points on the same line, virtually. Two of them are similar I can’t recall. Like just randomly, um…started in a descending order. In terms of like a descending branch.

Chad Hughes: Woo! Yeah, you definitely gave me something for that…

James Aikman: Sorry?

Chad Hughes: I said you definitely gave me something to think about.

James Aikman: Oh! Good. Good.

Chad Hughes: Alright, now I’m going to pause, because I really need to listen a lot to the second movement, because that’s a long second movement. (chuckles).

James Aikman: Well, it’s the bulk of the piece and yeah, right. It’s like a theme and variations, you can approach it that way. It’s slash, you know it’s almost like a…it’s almost like a rondo, too, because of the press and return like the fifth theme…

Chad Hughes: Mmm hmm.

James Aikman: It comes in after the initial theme. Um… that comes back and the, uh, what I call the rock solo (chuckles). It’s all sort of related and you can just come up with labels for each of the major starting places of you know once you hear a couple of times, you’ll hear those clearly. You know those sections, and then you can just get the measure number and relate it back to similar ones and call it prime or not, you know? But that’s how I would label that one because there are definitely repeating sections that are you know, somewhat modified and sometimes modified but they do come back so that won’t be easy to sort of hear what you hear during those times.

Chad Hughes: No problem. Alright, I know you have a call coming, and I’ll call you back once I get on the second movement.
James Aikman: Okay good luck.

(both men chuckle lightly)

Chad Hughes: Okay, talk to you later. Bye- bye. (end of phone call).
APPENDIX C. LIST OF WORKS BY JAMES W AIKMAN

Orchestra

*A Bottle of Notes and Some Voyages* (1988) 1st playing was during a reading in Chicago’s Orchestra Hall. The work was selected by John Corigliano and Michael Morgan for a reading by the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. Simultaneously, the work was selected by Donald Erb and Leonard Slatkin for a reading by the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra during a regional tour. Then, Donald Erb and Michael Tilson Thomas selected the piece for performance in the American Symphony Orchestra League’s (L.A.O.) American Repertoire Concert by the New World Symphony in Miami Beach.

*Step!* (1992) String Orchestra

*Concert Music for Strings* (1992) String Orchestra in 3 movements. Written with the support of the Indiana Arts Commission and the Indianapolis Museum of Art in honor of the Jackie Ferrara Exhibit. American Music Center Jory Grant. Dean’s Award for Excellence – Indiana University Jacobs School of Music

*Intrada* (1993)

*Ania’s Song: A Pavane for Strings* (2004) String Orchestra (commissioned by Thomas Beczkiewicz, co-founder of the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, for his dear wife, Ania)

*Tempus Fugit* (2008)

*Triptych: Musical Momentum* (2013, in 3 Movements) written for the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, Kirk Trevor, Music Director and Conductor, as the first piece of the residency

Soloist and Orchestra

*Wedding Songs* for Voice(s) and Orchestra (1998) in 4 movements

*Violin Concerto: Lines in Motion* (2009) in 3 movements

*Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* (2010) in 3 movements

Chorus and Orchestra

*Some Things I Love* (2007) on seven poems by JIMMY CARTER

*PEACEMAKERS* (2014-2016) A Filmic Oratorio: written for the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, Matthew Kraemer, Music Director and Conductor, as part of the residency. 94 Minutes, multi-movement work in tribute to the great peacemakers of the 20th Century: Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Robert F. Kennedy, Anwar Sadat, Yitzhak Rabin, Nelson Mandela and Jimmy Carter for Narrators, Videos of Speeches by JFK and RFK, additional videography by Mike Halerz, Sitar, Piano soloist, Mezzo-Soprano, Soprano Saxophone, Children’s Chorus, Mixed Chorale, and Chamber Orchestra. Indiana Arts Commission Masterpiece Grant, Indiana Bicentennial
Commission Legacy Project, A documentary was also created of Peacemakers premiere by WFYI PBS which won an Emmy Award in June 2017

Band/Wind/Brass Ensemble

*Step!* (1996) commissioned by the Butler University Symphonic Band
*Tempus Fugit* (2000) commissioned by H. Robert Reynolds and the University of Michigan Symphony Band on the occasion of his retirement

Large Ensemble

*Tributes and Circles* (2004) in 5 movements (for the Indiana University New Music Ensemble, David Dzubay, Music Director and Conductor)

2 – 5 Players

4 Movements (1980) (Soprano Saxophone, Bass Clarinet, Cello, Percussion)
*Quinella (Due Movementi)* for Flute and Bassoon, 1985, revised 1992, in 2 movements
*Sonata* for Violin and Piano (1986) in 2 movements
*Gig(ue)* (1988) for Saxophone Quartet
*Step!* (1992) String Quintet
*Glossolalia* (1991) Soprano Saxo., Violin, Cello, Piano, Percussion
*Sonata No. 2* for Violin and Piano (1994)
*Piano Quintet* (1997) Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass, Piano
*Trio* (1999) for Clarinet, Cello and Piano
*Sonata No. 3* for Violin and Piano (2001-2002)
*Call and Response* (2002) for Saxophone and Piano
*Ania’s Song* (2003) for String Quartet

Solo (excluding keyboard)

*Fantasy* (1989, revised 1991) for Violin and pre-recorded electronic media
*Great Spirit* (2012)

Solo Keyboard

Collection for Piano (1979)
*Etudes* for Piano (1988)
*Postlude* (2008) for Organ
*Toccata* for Piano (2008)
*JFK* (a dialogue between Piano and video of excerpts from President Kennedy’s American University address, 1963)

Chorus (a cappella or plus 1 instrument)

*St. Francis of Assisi (prayer)*
*Missa Jubilaeus* (2000) with organ
Some Things I Love (2009) with piano

Solo Voice and up to 8 Players

Leaves (1981) for Baritone, Violin, Cello, Piano, Percussion and Electronic Media
Spring is purple jewelry (1990) mezzo and piano
Migratory Song (1996) on a poem by Julie Ellison for Lyric Mezzo and Piano
4 Wedding Songs (1995) for Voice and Piano
A Sonnet on the Loss of Eurydice (2005) for Soprano and Piano
Vertue (2005) for Baritone and Piano
Since You (2012) for Baritone, Soprano, Piano and small band. (commissioned by philanthropist Tom Monaghan for his wife on the occasion of their golden 50th Wedding Anniversary)
3 Songs from Stained Glass: Poems by Elise Aikman. (2013). voice and piano
Grace Notes (on a poem by Jim Thomas) (2013)

Electronic

Differentiation (1980)
Precipitando (1986) 1987 National SEAMUS Conference, Dartmouth College
Tragoidia/Komoidia (1987) with Armando Tranquilino 1988 International Bourges Prize
Fantasy (1989, revised 1991) for Violin and pre-recorded electronic media
After Josquin (1993)
Burton Tower Prelude and Toccata (1997) Centaur Records
House Music for Uncle Don: in memoriam Donald Erb (2008)
Sax Grooves (2009) to Weather Report
Piano Pulse (2010)
Great Spirit (Commissioned by the Eiteljorg Museum of Western and Native American Art with the support of the Lilly Endowment) Electronic Media with Native Flute
Albany Records recording performed by James J. Pellerite, Native Flute

Film Music

Dordrecht verzamelt (‘Dordrecht collects art’) a 2010 Dutch film/documentary by Annemarie Strijbosch on the role and history of art in Dordrecht, Holland. (in Dutch)
De ziel van de stad (The soul of the city) a 2011 Dutch film/documentary by Annemarie Strijbosch on the city of Dordrecht, its vibrant life, scenes and history (in Dutch)
APPENDIX D. DISCOGRAPHY OF JAMES W AIKMAN

Venice of the North Concerti: Violin Concerto, "Lines in Motion" / Ania's Song / Saxophone Concerto (2011)
   St. Petersburg State Symphony
   Soloist(s) Sharon Robinson, Jaime Laredo
   Conductor Vladimir Lande
   American Classics, Naxos Records

Tremors from a Far Shore (2005)
   Soloist(s) Joshua Bell, Alexander Kerr, Davis Brooks, Hidetaro Suzuki
   Centaur Records

Alternating Currents: Electronic Music from The University of Michigan (2001)
   Prelude and Toccata by James Aikman
   Centaur Records

White Sunday Light (1999)
   Piano Quintet
   Suzuki & Friends
   - Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano
     The Ronen Chamber Ensemble
   - Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano
     Hidetaro Suzuki, Violin;
     Zeda Ruga Suzuki, Piano
   - Wedding Songs for Tenor and
     Chamber Orchestra
     Steven Stolen, Tenor; Composer's Chamber Orchestra,
     James Aikman, Conductor
   Non Sequitur.
VITA

Chad Edward Hughes (b. 1977) is a composer and Director of Bands at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. His compositions and arrangements have been performed by the Cleveland Chamber Symphony and Indianapolis Pops Symphony, and band ensembles at Morehouse College, Graceland University, University of Memphis, University of Michigan, Alcorn State University, Bowling Green State University, University of Tennessee - Chattanooga, Clark Atlanta University, and Montana State University. Hughes has also written commissioned works for Weston Sprott, acting Principal Trombonist of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; Demondrae Thurman, Associate Professor of Low Brass at Samford University; Kenneth Thompkins, Principal Trombonist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra; and Tami Lee Hughes, Concert Violinist and Albany Records Recording Artist.

As an educator, clinician, and adjudicator, Hughes has been active in Georgia, Louisiana, and Kansas. He is a member of the Georgia Music Educators Association, National Band Director’s Consortium, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, and Phi Beta Sigma. A native of Detroit, Michigan, Hughes received a Bachelor of Music degree in composition from the University of Michigan and a Master of Music degree in composition from Kansas State University. He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy degree in music composition at Louisiana State University, where he studies composition with Dinos Constantinides and conducting with Carlos Riazuelo. His previous composition teachers include James Aikman, Erik Santos, Bright Sheng, Curtis Curtis-Smith, Craig Weston, and Pulitzer-Prize winning composer William Bolcom.