THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

A PROPER VERNACULAR: GEORGE ROCHBERG'S AMERICAN BOUQUET (VERSIONS OF POPULAR MUSIC)

By

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ABSTRACT

George Rochberg’s *American Bouquet (Versions of Popular Music)* is a thirty-minute solo guitar work that repositions popular songs from the 1920s and 30s into a collection of art works for the concert stage. The piece appears amidst a burgeoning trend in art music written for guitar in the United States. In addition to Rochberg, Lukas Foss, Robert Beaser, and George Crumb have each contributed significant works to the instrument’s repertoire that either quote or borrow from the American vernacular music canon. This project examines compositional elements in Rochberg’s *American Bouquet (Versions of Popular Music)*, noting his methods of setting preexisting material for the concert stage, and comparing those methods to recent guitar works that also borrow from the American vernacular tradition. Rochberg’s earlier pieces such as *Music for the Magic Theatre* and the *Concord Quartets* have received broad scholarly attention, partly due to the pluralism of superimposing atonal techniques with quotations from Western art music. This project views *American Bouquet* as a departure from Rochberg’s other treatment of pre-existing materials. Rather than quotation or juxtaposition, the Tin Pan Alley-era songs are treated organically, using the tunes as the basic musical material, whereas Rochberg’s introductions, new themes, or cadenzas play a role of superimposing Rochberg onto Gershwin rather than inserting Mozart onto Rochberg. *American Bouquet* presents a new, final epoch in the composer’s oeuvre: synthesis rather than pluralism.
INTRODUCTION

George Rochberg’s *American Bouquet (Versions of Popular Music)* is a thirty-minute solo guitar work that effectively repositions popular songs from the 1920s and 30s into a collection of art works for the concert stage. Pieces include Richard Rodgers’s “My Heart Stood Still,” Harry Warren’s “I Only Have Eyes For You,” Hoagy Carmichael’s “Two Sleepy People,” George Gershwin’s “Liza,” and Peter De Rose’s “Deep Purple,” Rochberg’s own “How to Explain” from *Eleven Songs for Mezzo-soprano and Piano*, and the original composition “Notre Dame Blues.” Eliot Fisk premiered the work on 13 February 1997 at the Manhattan School of Music.

Rochberg comments: “By ‘versions’ I simply mean that I have not made ‘arrangements’ but ‘compositions’ in which the tunes are embedded as the essential melodic thread.” American Bouquet appears amidst a burgeoning trend in art music written for guitar in the United States. In addition to Rochberg, Lukas Foss, Robert Beaser, and George Crumb have each contributed significant works to the instrument’s repertoire. All of these works either quote or borrow from the American vernacular music canon. Lukas Foss’s *American Landscapes* for Guitar and Orchestra quotes themes from a variety of American vernacular sources including the banjo tunes “Cotton-eyed Joe” and “Old Dan Tucker,” patriotic music such as “America the Beautiful,” and a large-scale theme and variations on the Appalachian folk tune “Wayfaring Stranger.” George Crumb’s *Quest* for guitar and chamber ensemble quotes the hymn tune “Amazing Grace.” Robert Beaser’s 1984 *Mountain Songs* for guitar and flute employ Southern Appalachian ballads including “Barbara Allen,” “The House Carpenter,” “He’s Gone Away,” “Hush You Bye,” “Cindy,” “The Cuckoo,” and “Fair and Tender Ladies.” Beaser’s subsequent *Shenandoah* sets the sea chantey for solo guitar.

All these composers have employed musical borrowing throughout their respective careers. Both Crumb and Rochberg are particularly renowned for their use of quotation. With the exception of Robert Beaser, each composer’s use of American vernacular music is, to a certain extent, limited to his guitar works. Though George

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Crumb uses a small portion of the Southern Appalachian folk tune “The Riddle Song” in the fifth movement of his 1987 Zeitgeist for two amplified pianos, no other American music appears in his writings for instruments other than guitar. Similarly, Lukas Foss’s quotation of “Sweet Betsy From Pike” in the opera The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County marks his only direct quotation of American vernacular music aside from American Landscapes. No scholarly research has examined any of these pieces individually or as a body of works. The trend of appropriating American vernacular music for classical guitar is also unexplored. This project therefore examines compositional elements in George Rochberg’s American Bouquet (Versions of Popular Music), noting his methods of setting preexisting material for the concert stage, and comparing those methods to recent guitar works that also borrow from the American vernacular tradition.

Rochberg was born 5 July 1918 and died 29 May 2005. His earlier pieces, such as Music for the Magic Theatre and the Concord Quartets, have received broad scholarly attention. This is partly due to the pluralism of superimposing atonal techniques with quotations from Western art music. Though Rochberg’s style continued to evolve, most of his activities throughout the 1990s are yet to be examined. This project will view American Bouquet as a departure from Rochberg’s treatment of pre-existing materials. Rather than quotation or juxtaposition, the Tin Pan Alley-era songs are treated organically, using the tunes as the basic musical material, whereas Rochberg’s introductions, new themes, or cadenzas play a role of superimposing Rochberg onto Gershwin rather than inserting Mozart onto Rochberg. American Bouquet presents a new, final epoch in the composer’s oeuvre: synthesis rather than pluralism.

Aside from the Bouquet, Rochberg’s guitar works include the 1991 Muse of Fire and Ora Pro Nobis (Nach Bach II) for flute and guitar, and the 1998 Eden: Out of Space and Out of Time, a concerto for guitar and chamber ensemble. Despite having composed

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2 George Crumb, Zeitgeist (London and New York: C.F. Peters, 1987). The “Riddle Song” is perhaps better known as “I Gave My Love an Apple.”
3 Rochberg was aware of this project and had some correspondence with Eliot Fisk about it. Unfortunately, in 2005 he became too ill to participate in an interview.
A substantial body of works for the instrument, Rochberg’s guitar music has not received detailed analysis.

Throughout this paper, the term "American" refers to music in the United States, in accordance with the writings of Wiley Hitchcock and Richard Crawford. Likewise, the title *A Proper Vernacular* is borrowed from Hitchcock's concept of musical "streams" in which two types of music have simultaneously developed in the U.S.: "vernacular" or popular styles, and "cultivated" or art music.4

The project begins with a survey of musical borrowing in Rochberg’s works. Chapter 2 examines the musical material upon which *American Bouquet* is based. These materials include the songs “My Heart Stood Still,” “I Only Have Eyes For You,” “Two Sleepy People,” “Liza,” and “Deep Purple.” Because the guitar versions use melodic, harmonic, and formal aspects of each piece, the examination will include analyses of each work. In Chapter 3, these source materials will be referenced in a study of *American Bouquet*’s compositional method. Though topics include analyses of formal and harmonic materials, the study primarily examines how the composer incorporates the original material into what he deems a version. These findings are referenced throughout Chapter 4 during the discussion of guitar works by Beaser, Foss, and Crumb, in which each composer’s treatment of preexisting material is compared to Rochberg’s methods.

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CHAPTER 1
A SURVEY OF MUSICAL BORROWING IN ROCHBERG’S WORKS

It is necessary to examine *American Bouquet’s* use of popular music in context with other examples of borrowing from Rochberg’s works. Though his choice to employ American popular song is striking, it is not the only example of American vernacular music in his works. Miles Davis’s “Stella By Starlight” briefly appears in *Music For the Magic Theater*. In *Prelude on “Happy Birthday” for Almost Two Pianos* the performer may choose quotes by John Phillip Sousa and others, while the entire work is based on Mildred and Patty Hill’s “Happy Birthday” tune. David C. Thomas’s pop song “Spinning Wheel” is referenced in *Electrikaleidoscope* for amplified flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and electric piano. Aside from these examples, the majority of Rochberg’s quotes are derived from the European art music tradition.

Rochberg has made use of musical borrowing throughout his career. When he championed serial techniques from the 1950s through the early 60s, his sources were decidedly modernist. For example, his 1956 *Sonata-Fantasia* for solo piano quotes Schoenberg’s *Funf Klavierstücke Op. 23, No 1*. His final serialist work was a Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano, which was completed in 1963. Throughout the next three decades Rochberg’s use of preexisting music became one (and perhaps the only) discernable stylistic trademark of his works.

As his compositional style evolved, so did his methods of borrowing. Rochberg’s purpose for employing preexisting music also changed. The ensuing study examines three methods of borrowing—collage, homage, and synthesis—that are quite different in both intention and technique. These methods do not suggest a series of Beethoven-like compositional “periods.” Rather, each of the three methods has been at least somewhat present throughout most phases of Rochberg’s work.

After his rejection of serialism in 1963, Rochberg’s source material diverged from the *avant-garde*. European masters became jumbled with modern works. This is particularly evident in the 1965 chamber work *Music for the Magic Theater*. Commissioned for the University of Chicago’s seventy-fifth anniversary by the Fromm
Music Foundation, the piece was first performed in its entirety 24 January 1967 with Ralph Shapey conducting. The title of the piece is derived from Hesse’s *Steppenwolf*. *Magic Theater*’s seemingly incongruous style shifts create a kind of timeless stasis in which Beethoven, Mahler, Stockhausen, and Miles Davis coexist. Rochberg’s program notes provide a sense of the composer’s intent for the piece:

His [the conductor’s] directorial role becomes particularly sensitive when it comes to establishing the juxtapositions of and movement to and from style to style. Each style characteristic must be projected as though it existed by itself; regardless of what lies on either side... The “collage” or “montage” formulations which result in sudden changes of attitude, gesture, speed and dynamics as well as frequent interruptions in the flow of events comprise the essential articulations of the musical structure, i.e. the way it happens. It may prove helpful to approach the work as “cinematic,” its discontinuous, non-narrative aural images combined in ways not unlike the handling of visual images in films by Fellini, Antonioni, Resnais and others. I am not commenting on similarities of context but rather on the relationships of compositional attitudes which tend toward the art of combination and the disruption of “normal” expectations of continuity and temporal relations. Neither my work nor the films I have in mind (*Marienbad, Hiroshima mon amour, Morgan, Juliette of the Spirits*) relate to the old logic of cause and effect or of the linear movement. On the contrary they deal with contradictions and paradoxes.¹

These paradoxes infuse Rochberg’s post-tonal language with that of Classical and Romantic masters. In fact, the most controversial aspect of *Music for the Magic Theater* is the middle movement, in which Rochberg transcribes the “Adagio” from Mozart’s Divertimento K. 287 in its entirety. Again, *Magic Theater*’s program notes indicate that Rochberg is attempting a kind of comment with his choice of source material:

The presence of the transcription abrogates the 19th to early 20th century notion of “originality,” puts the paraphernalia of its aesthetic completely aside; but precisely because of this it creates responses which have little, if anything, to do with musical values per se but rather with vested interests in cultural conditioning—and people do not like to have their vested interests challenged whether in art, religion, or politics.²

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The large-scale Mozart passage comments on both originality and the modernist movement’s need for newness. The juxtaposition of periods and styles throughout *Magic Theater* creates a connection between history and the present. Though Rochberg’s impetus for the use of collage is singular, the technique is at least somewhat common by the late 1960s. Luciano Berio structures the third movement of his 1968 *Sinfonia* around the “Scherzo” from Mahler’s Symphony No. 2. Berio then layers abundant quotes ranging from Monteverdi to Stockhausen over the Mahler movement. Similarly, Bernd Alois Zimmerman’s 1960 *Die Soldaten* combines Bach fugues, Gregorian chant and jazz over his own serialist language to create a sense of temporal flux.

Historical connection is perhaps the most pervasive conscious consideration behind any Rochberg work using preexisting material. One of his most ambitious undertakings, the 1970 *Caprice Variations* for solo violin, employs a collage approach setting 50 variations to Paganini’s Caprice No. 24 in a myriad of styles. Variations in the style of Brahms’s *Paganini Variations* (see Example 1.1) appear alongside movements styled after the “Finale” from Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7, (Example 1.2) and Rochberg’s own atonal variations. In 1997, Eliot Fisk created a guitar arrangement of *Caprice Variations* with Rochberg’s permission. Because this project focuses on Rochberg’s guitar music, it is fitting that the examples are from Fisk’s transcription.
Example 1.1 Rochberg: *Caprice Variations*, Var. 12

Example 1.2 Rochberg: *Caprice Variations* Var. 21

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4 Ibid., 24.
Using Paganini’s harmonic framework, both European masters and Rochberg himself are introduced in what is effectively an a historical vacuum.

This same vacuum is the impetus behind the String Quartet No. 3, Rochberg’s most debated work. The piece contains some quotation, but primarily emulates the styles of Beethoven and Mahler in large sections. These sections are juxtaposed against Rochberg’s atonal movements. Steven D. Block’s oft-quoted article “George Rochberg: Progressive or Master Forger?” criticizes the composer on grounds of originality:

While George Rochberg is not felonious, his “quotation” music (and this aspect still marks his 4th, 5th, and 6th quartets) simulates a vision that singularly belongs to the composer he’s impersonating. Rochberg’s Beethoven slow movements have the slow, expressive, and deeply thoughtful nature of a real Beethoven movement and the same use of terse thematic material is present. The spiritual nature of Beethoven is also sought after but here is where Rochberg necessarily fails. His technique is masterly but the more Rochberg succeeds in forging a Beethoven slow movement, the more vacuous the substance of the work becomes.5

Rochberg’s answer to this criticism turns to the concepts of renewal rather than progress:

The acceptability of such a work hinges no doubt on whether one is able to reconcile a juxtaposition of musically opposite styles. In order to effect such a reconciliation, one has to be persuaded, first, that the idea of history as “progress” is no longer viable and, second, that the radical avant-garde of recent years has proved to be bankrupt.6

The concepts initiated in Quartet No. 3 are later developed in the three Concord Quartets written from 1977-79. Rochberg freely infuses atonal movements with completely tonal passages, combining music by Mozart, Schubert, and Beethoven with sections of newly-composed absolute music. One of the most disorienting aspects of the works is the unapologetic placement of major-key sonata movements against Bartók-inspired canonic movements, evidenced in Quartet No 5.

Movements 3 and 5 in Quartet No. 6 perhaps best display Rochberg’s willingness to “fix” European masters. Movement 3, a set of variations on Pachelbel’s Canon,

5 Steven D. Block, “George Rochberg: Progressive or Master Forger?” Perspectives On New Music 21 (1983), 408.
refashions one of the archetypal works from the European heritage. In the following example Rochberg presents the first phrase of the *Canon*, but quickly begins to tinker with the harmonic language. His addition of harmonics in the first violin portends that the ensuing eight minutes will be far from Pachelbel’s original.

Example 1.3 Rochberg: *Quartet No. 6* “Variations (on Pachelbel)” mm. 1-127
The final movement of Quartet No. 6 is a G-major sonata form that quotes Mozart’s Quartet No. 14 and Schubert’s Quartet No. 15 (both of which are in G-major). Perhaps in a gesture toward Charles Ives’s *Concord Sonata*—a work that also incorporates works

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from the European canon—Rochberg also includes bits from Beethoven’s Symphony No 5.

Beginning in the late 1960s and continuing throughout the next decade, Rochberg’s method of borrowing not only incorporates commentary via numerous diverse sources, but also explores single composers by way of homage. With the 1966 *Nach Bach: A Fantasy for Harpsichord or Piano* Rochberg limits his sources to both a single composer and a single work. The “Toccata,” “Allemande,” “Air,” and “Sarabande” from Bach’s Partita No. 6 are each used in the single movement fantasy. Rather than simply inserting the sections, Rochberg weaves Bach’s work through his own, creating an organic new work that could nonetheless not have existed without J.S. Bach.

Example 1.4 Rochberg: *Nach Bach*

In 1991 Rochberg returned to that format with *Ora Pro Nobis (Nach Bach II)* for flute and guitar, this time reworking the second movement of Bach’s BWV 971 *Italian Concerto*. Similarly, the 1972 *Ricordanza (Soliloquy for Cello and Piano)*, presents a commentary on Beethoven’s Sonata for Cello Op. 102, No. 1. Again, Rochberg chooses a single movement fantasy as the form. This technique is similar to Stravinsky’s “recompositions” of early music in *Pulcinella*, also Lukas Foss’s 1967 *Baroque Variations* for orchestra, in which the composer bases each movement on a specific work by a specific composer.

*American Bouquet* presents a number of contrasts to Rochberg works that use preexisting sources. The piece appears after a long series of pieces written almost

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exclusively in the style of absolute music. His decision to devote a substantial guitar piece to Tin Pan Alley tunes seems a decidedly personal one.

I’ve always had a soft spot in my heart for American popular songs—especially vintage 1920s and 1930s. Not only did I grow up hearing them, I played them thousands of times in small jazz “combos” and arranged them for local “big bands” from the time I was fifteen and on through the Great Depression. It was my way of earning enough money to put myself and later my wife-to-be through college and to help support us after we were married. This was the music that caught the spirit of wit, hope, and energy—not to speak of the romantic yearnings for love and a better life—that helped America through a very bad time.9

Music by Gershwin, Carmichael, and others appears to offer a different inspiration to the composer than those of the European tradition. The Bouquet’s dedicatee, Eliot Fisk, refers to Rochberg’s relationship with these songs as an extension of his own personal history.

…He had started his career as a jazz pianist. He’d done some gigging in bars and restaurants as a jazz pianist. So he, of course, is very familiar with all of these tunes. If you’ve spoken to George at all you know that he’s a pessimist about the state of the world. He thinks that things are going from bad to worse, and remembers fondly an earlier, simpler time.10

Rochberg mentions the Great Depression, and that he used Tin Pan Alley tunes to fund his education; he also refers to his involvement in the World War II. These events are, to Rochberg, portions of a personal history. “Two Sleepy People” and “I Only Have Eyes for You” are pieces that affected the composer in both a collective historical context and in a profound private manner. This use of preexisting material is clearly in contrast to examples of collage or pluralism due to Rochberg's personal investment with the subject.

Another manner in which the Bouquet contrasts the composer’s previous works is the piece’s identification with an American heritage. This heritage extends beyond superficial trappings such as the work’s title or the birthplace of a collection of songwriters. Eliot Fisk describes the inception of the work as an initiative to create a body of literature that is specifically American.

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American Bouquet is actually an outgrowth of Rochberg attending a concert at Carnegie Recital Hall, where Paula Robison and I premiered the big piece for flute and guitar called Muse of Fire... On that occasion, I played as my solo set four Villa Lobos pieces. Which, of course, Villa Lobos writes for guitar so perfectly, so Rochberg said, ‘boy if I could write something that would do that in an American idiom—that would be wonderful!’

The Bouquet is the only instance in which Rochberg referred to any of his music as “American.” It is curious that this identity with place is affixed to the composer’s only solo guitar piece. Again, Eliot Fisk comments on the absence of a North American tradition in the guitar’s repertoire.

In fact it is kind of funny that, as guitarists, we grow up always playing the music that is inspired by Spanish traditions, Latin American traditions but not very much North American traditions. We really don’t have music that, if you hear it you say ‘well that’s got to be an American composer.’ Whereas with Falla you know that’s a Spanish composer. Even if you don’t know that it’s Falla, you know that it’s a Spanish composer. That’s kind of a funny thing, isn’t it, to be a musician from a certain country and grow up without a national identity? I think it’s a nice thing now that we’re starting to have a repertoire that is identifiably American.

Seemingly, the guitar itself would factor into the inspiration for the Bouquet. When asked to what degree does the guitar effect Rochberg’s decision to employ music from the American popular song tradition, Fisk responded:

I don’t think the guitar had much influence on Rochberg’s compositional style—apart from knowing my playing. It’s like a message from him to me, or something like that. I don’t think the sonority of the guitar particularly influenced the composition of the pieces. I think rather that what he succeeded in doing is doing a set of pieces almost as if they were written for piano, but transcribed for the guitar from some imaginary piano. I don’t think he thinks Guitar; I think he thinks Music, and then puts the music on the guitar.

The Bouquet appears as a personal collection, a message of sorts from the composer to the work’s dedicatee. This message includes snippets from the composer’s personal history, a sort of listing of favorite tunes that clearly identify with a national heritage. American Bouquet represents the final epoch in Rochberg’s compositional output. It is a shift away from juxtaposing Mozart over atonal techniques, or programming

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12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
Beethoven or Brahms-inspired movements to create a sense of continuity throughout the Western musical tradition. Instead of “improving” upon Pachelbel’s *Canon*, he works more within the constructs of the piece to create something organic and quite personal. When presented with this assertion, Fisk affirms:

Well…I think you said it pretty well! I don’t have much to add to that. I think it’s his take on these pieces, which he has absorbed very profoundly into his being from having known and having had to live with them his whole life. But, again, I don’t think it’s much different from what Falla did…or what Bartok did in the *Romanian Folk dances*. It’s part of that twentieth-century urge of art composers to be one of the boys, you know?\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{14} Fisk, interview, 3 March 2004.
CHAPTER 2
AN EXAMINATION OF AMERICAN BOUQUET’S SOURCE MATERIAL

In his versions of American popular music, Rochberg employs specific musical elements from the original tunes. Form, harmony, and melody are arranged to create a new hybrid that nonetheless relies heavily on the source material. It is therefore necessary to study the five songs in their original form. This chapter explores musical, historic, and lyrical features of “My Heart Stood Still,” “I Only Have Eyes For You,” “Two Sleepy People,” “Liza (All the Clouds’ll Roll Away),” and “Deep Purple.” Though “How To Explain” is a movement from a preexisting source, that source is Rochberg’s own Eleven Songs for Mezzo-soprano and Piano. Because self-quotation is such a prevalent feature in Rochberg’s works, his arrangement of “How To Explain” will be discussed in Chapter 3 along with the other versions.

Aside from pure chronological grouping, the listener must question whether the songs of American Bouquet form something other than a pastiche. Musically, the songs have few facets that can form a cohesive thread. All the Bouquet’s songs are about love. But then, most popular songs are in some way about love. All the Bouquet’s songs were adapted many times by various artists. So were countless others by the same composers. Rochberg’s conviction of the quality of these tunes seems to be the one invariable factor throughout the cycle. Allen Forte, who analyzes “My Heart Stood Still” in his book The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era: 1924-1950, shrewdly approaches works by Rodgers and his contemporaries, stating: “in a very real sense, these songs are the American ‘Lieder’ of a particularly rich period in popular music.”¹ This certainly echoes the sentiments of Rochberg who claims these songs constitute “the real music of America before WWII.”²

The earliest song in the Bouquet is Rogers’s and Hart’s 1927 “My Heart Stood Still,” while Hoagy Carmichael’s 1938 “Two Sleepy People” is the most recent song in the collection. The success of the 1927 film The Jazz Singer ushered in a new era for

² George Rochberg, American Bouquet, 1.
movies. The boom of “talkies” propelled the popularity of songs written for these films. Now that the silent pictures had lost their attraction, the film industry was clamoring for composers who could not only provide appropriate music to fit a mood, but could also sell a picture with a hit tune. In fact, with the exception of “Deep Purple,” all the songs in this cycle were originally conceived for a stage or film production. Eventually all the songs included in the *Bouquet* were used in movies.

**Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart “My Heart Stood Still”**

Richard Rodgers (1902-1979) teamed with lyricist Lorenz Hart (1895-1943) in 1919. They spent several years toiling in amateur productions until their review *The Garrick Gaieties* scored a hit with the song “Manhattan.” By 1938, the songwriting team was featured on the cover of the September 26th issue of *Time* magazine. The team’s stage productions from 1927 through 1940 include *A Connecticut Yankee, Spring is Here, Babes in Arms,* and *Pal Joey.* After the death of Lorenz Hart, Rodgers formed another partnership with Oscar Hammerstein (1895-1960). That partnership produced a collection of songs including “Some Enchanted Evening,” “It Might As Well Be Spring,” and “Bewitched,” along with film and stage productions of *The Sound of Music, South Pacific,* and *Oklahoma!*

“My Heart Stood Still” was first performed at the London Pavilion on 20 May 1927. Its success in the musical *One Dam Thing After Another* convinced Rodgers and Hart to reuse the song overseas. American audiences were familiarized with the ballad later that year when *A Connecticut Yankee* opened on 3 November at the Vanderbuilt Theatre in New York.

Rodgers recalls the genesis of the song in his memoirs *Musical Stages: An Autobiography.* Hart and Rodgers went to Paris during pre-production of *A Connecticut Yankee,* where they met two acquaintances from New York:

> We were escorting the girls back to their hotel one night in a taxi, another cab darted out of a side street and missed hitting us by a matter of inches. As our cab

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came to a halt, one of the girls cried “Oh, my heart stood still!” No sooner were
the words out than Larry casually said, “Say, that would make a great title for a
song.” But I told him that he was a crazy fool to be thinking of song titles at such
a time, but I guess I’m a crazy fool too because I can’t get the title out of my
head. When the cab stopped at the girls’ hotel, I took out a little black address
book and scribbled the words “My Heart Stood Still”…It was early and Larry was
still asleep, so I simply sat down at the piano and wrote a melody that seemed to
express the feeling of one so emotionally moved that his heart had stopped
beating.5

Rodgers chooses a rather conventional structure to oblige this sentiment. Example 2.1
illustrates that the entire piece is sung twice, with a new verse at the repeat:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Verse 1 and 2 (2nd time)</th>
<th>Refrain 1</th>
<th>Bridge</th>
<th>Refrain 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>21-35</td>
<td>36-44</td>
<td>45-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmonic areas</td>
<td>F  D♭  A  C  I  V  V♭  i  ii  V  V♭  ii6</td>
<td>F  g  C  i  ii  V7  i  V  V7  ii6</td>
<td>F  C+ C7  g6  F  F+ B♭  C♭  F  I  V+/IV  IV  V♭  I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyric</td>
<td>“I laughed at sweethearts”</td>
<td>“I took one look at you”</td>
<td>“Not a single word was spoken”</td>
<td>“Until the thrill”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 2.1 Rodgers: “My Heart Stood Still” formal and harmonic outline

Like other examples in the Bouquet, Lorenz Hart portrays romance in hyperbole
(a sort of hyper-reality that will be further explored during the discussion of Gershwin’s
Liza). Notably, “My Heart Stood Still” is the only work in the collection presented in the
past tense. Two stanzas of background information, presented by “He,” open the song:

I laughed at sweethearts
I met at schools;
All indiscreet hearts
Seemed romantic fools.

A house in Iceland
Was my heart's domain.
I saw your eyes;
Now castles rise in Spain!6

In the second verse, “She” depicts her previous relationships. Like his, all other loves are
depicted as bagatelles in comparison to the current manifestation. In his 1990 book The

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Poets of Tin Pan Alley: A History of America’s Great Lyricists, Philip Furia considers Hart’s unusual rhyme scheme. An earlier study appears in Lehman Engel’s 1975 *Their Words Are Music*. Engel notes that “A house in Iceland” is the only line that contains no rhyme. He explains: “the idea is: ‘Was my heart’s domain. (It was cold.)’” Afterward, Hart concludes the idea: “I saw your eyes;/Now castles rise in Spain!”7 Philip Furia argues:

Suspecting Hart of *not* rhyming is as dangerous as suspecting Shakespeare of *not* punning: in the very lines Engel quotes there is a slant rhyme on *Iceland* and *eyes* and *rise*, then, I believe, a faint tie rhyme: *I* saw.8

Rodgers sets these rhymes with the atypical harmonic motion from F major to a tonicized III (A major). These harmonies are outlined in the voice by a series of chordal leaps that are first presented as scale degrees 3, 5, and 1 in F major to scale degree 3 in Eb major (mm 5-8, see Ex. 2.2). This motive is transposed down a whole step in mm 9-10. Seemingly returning to the tonic in m 13, Rodgers instead inserts a jarring C#:

Example 2.2 Rodgers: “My Heart Stood Still” mm 5-209

Alen Forte’s analysis of the song in *The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era 1924-1950* makes note of the cascading thirds in m 15.10 This motive prepares the listener for the unrelenting cycle of thirds throughout the refrain:

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Hart’s rhymes in the refrain are equally unrelenting. He sets a collection of single-syllable utterances:

I took one look at you,
    That’s all I meant to do;
And then my heart stood still!

My feet could step and walk,
My lips could move and talk,
And yet my heart stood still.12

Hart’s depiction of suspended time (and bodily function) affords Rodgers the opportunity to experiment with unusual harmonic progressions that accompany primarily step wise melodies. This is particularly evident in the bridge section between refrains 1 and 2. Tonic F is quite suddenly altered to minor, while the voice climbs briefly an interval of a ninth from c’ to d”.13

This melody sets the rather poignant sentiment of both lovers discovering that their feelings are reciprocated:

Though not a single word was spoken,
    I could tell you knew,
That unfelt clasp of hands
    Told me so well you knew.15

12 Ibid., 71-72.
13 Octave designations in this paper will adhere to the following format: C₁, C, c, c’, c” etc. (c’ is middle C).
14 Rodgers and Hart, The Best of Rodgers and Hart, 72-73.
The synchronous nature of this stanza is notable. Both people feel something, but nothing happens. No one says anything, and no action takes place. That nothing is what is explored in the song. Hart depicts an immeasurable moment without language or activity in which time stops and both people feel exactly the same connection. It is not until the final stanza of the song that the listener is even given an emotion to attach to the moment. Rodgers uses the song’s highest note d” (m 48) to accompany the lyric “thrill.”

I never lived at all
Until the thrill of that moment when
My heart stood still.16

Example 2.5 Rodgers: “My Heart Stood Still” mm 45-5117

Harry Warren “I Only Have Eyes for You”

Harry Warren’s (1893-1981) musical career began when he was sixteen, playing drums for his godfather’s traveling carnival band.18 By 1915, Warren contributed mood music and sang in a vocal quartet at the Vitagraph movie studio in Brooklyn. He served for a brief period in the Navy Air Corps beginning in 1917. Stationed at the Montauk base in Long Island, he began to write songs as entertainment for enlisted men. After the military, he worked as a song plugger for Ruby Cowan in Tin Pan Alley. His first hit song, “I Love My Baby, My Baby Loves Me,” was published by Shapiro, Bernstein and Co. in 1926. The Remick publishing house hired him as a songwriter in 1927. However, Warner Brothers soon bought the company in a hasty attempt to gain rights to the songs

15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
and composers that were being included in the burgeoning market of movie musicals.\textsuperscript{19}

Though Warren initially resisted moving to Hollywood, film music provided the songwriter with steady employment.

His first film was an adaptation of Rodgers’s and Hart’s musical \textit{Spring Is Here}. Warner Brothers employed him to add extra songs to the film version. Though he obliged, the process struck Warren as curious:

\begin{quote}
I could never understand the business manipulations of the movie business…I couldn’t figure out why they would buy a movie musical, dump most of its songs, and ask us to write new ones…It was just that the studios owned the publishing houses, which the public didn’t seem to realize, just as they owned chains of theatres and radio stations.\textsuperscript{20}
\end{quote}

Regardless of these manipulations, the movie musical became the primary outlet for Warren’s songwriting. He wrote songs for the four major Hollywood studios: Warner Brothers, Fox, Metro-Goldwin-Mayer, and Paramount. Some of his film credits include \textit{Wonder Bar}, the four \textit{Gold Diggers} movies, \textit{Naughty But Nice}, \textit{Ziegfeld Follies}, \textit{Skirts Ahoy!}, and \textit{Cinderfella}.

From 1935 to 1950, Warren wrote forty-two songs that appeared on \textit{Your Hit Parade}’s top ten list.\textsuperscript{21} His most well known include “You’re Getting To Be a Habit With Me,” “Lullaby of Broadway,” “Jeepers Creepers,” “You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby,” and “That’s Amore.” Many of Warren’s biggest hits were written with lyricist Al Dubin.

“I Only Have Eyes For You” first appeared in the 1934 Warner Brothers picture \textit{Dames}. Dick Powell plays a struggling songwriter whose love interest/muse is played by Ruby Keeler. The song accompanies a dream sequence while Powell’s and Keeler’s characters fall asleep on a Long Island subway. A flurry of activity begins to surround the lovers. The legendary choreographer Busby Berkeley designed an unusual human-


\textsuperscript{20} Hemming, 255.

geometry dance sequence on revolving stages. However, the two lovers remain unaffected by the distraction. The dance eventually culminates with 100 Ruby Keeler look-alikes, some on stairs to nowhere and others astride a huge white carousel. The spectacle, along with the Warner’s promotion, left Warren beleaguered:

On screen they go through the song about twenty-five times, but on the set and at the recording session it seemed like nine-thousand. Buzz never knew when to quit. I got sick of hearing the melody and began to hate it. Warners had given it a lot of promotion before the picture came out, so that it was already a hit. But once the movie was out it stopped selling. I guess the public felt saturated, the way I did. Whatever the public’s saturation point with the song, it was short-lived. “I Only Have Eyes For You” remains Harry Warren’s and Al Dubin’s most durable success. During the media blitz of Dames, the song spent eighteen weeks on the top ten lists. In 1934 several hit recordings were made; Eddy Duchin’s version reached #4 on the Billboard charts, while Ben Selvin secured #2, and later Jane Fromann achieved #20. Subsequent recordings by the Flamingos (1959), The Lettermen (1966) and Art Garfunkel (1975) also achieved commercial success.

“I Only Have Eyes For You” begins with a four-measure statement that is extracted from the refrain. The song progresses with a sixteen-measure introduction in which Al Dubin immediately sets up the song’s hyperbole:

My love must be a kind of blind love,
I can’t see anyone but you.
And dear, I wonder if you find love,
an optical illusion, too?

Warren’s rhythms are notably square in the introduction. Nearly identical eight-measure phrases prepare for the hemiolas that are scattered throughout the refrain.

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22 Berkeley worked on a number of movies in which Warren was also involved. Perhaps most notable are the Gold Diggers movies.
23 Thomas, 62.
24 Harrison, 987.
Example 2.6 Warren: “I Only Have Eyes For You” mm 5-19

Like most of the songs in the *Bouquet*, the introduction ends with a half-cadence that prepares the listener for the song’s tonic harmony. Virtually all the other songs in the collection begin their respective refrains in the tonic key except “I Only Have Eyes For You.” Instead, Warren creates a sense of disorientation with alternating subdominant and dominant harmonies.

Example 2.7 Warren: “I Only Have Eyes For You” mm 22-28

In example 2.7, Warren experiments with the mode of dominant G and subdominants F and D. The sonorities are presented as both minor and dominant-seventh chords. This ambiguity illustrates Dubin’s queries:

Are the stars out tonight?
I don't know if it's cloudy or bright
’Cause I only have eyes for you.

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27 Ibid., 87.
The moon may be high,
but I can't see a thing in the sky,
’Cause I only have eyes for you.28

Finally, the listener briefly detects C major in the first hearing of the song’s title (m 26) with an added scale-degree 7 in the vocal part. In fact, the refrain is structured around three utterances of the song’s title. Each time the phrase “I only have eyes for you” appears, the final word is sung at a different pitch. Warren also sets the line “they all disappear from view” with the same hemiola figure. He does not apply the first scale degree to this line until the last word of the song. This grouping of four different phrase endings (B, C#, E, C) bookends a bridge that expands D minor.

I don't know if we're in a garden,
Or on a crowded avenue.
You are here, so am I.
Maybe millions of people go by,
But they all disappear from view,
And I only have eyes for you.29

Because the hemiola figure is incorporated into the section, the bridge is by default part of the refrain:

Example 2.8 Warren: “I Only Have Eyes For You” lyric-harmonic structure of chorus

Alec Wilder describes “I Only Have Eyes For You” in American Popular Song: The Great Innovators 1900-1950: “It’s a very lovely melody, beautifully and dramatically fashioned. It is another of those songs that needs no harmony to please.”30 Wilder’s
assertion may be correct, but Harry Warren nonetheless inserts rich harmonies and an active countermelody to please further.

**Hoagy Carmichael “Two Sleepy People”**

“Hoagy” was born Hoagland Howard Carmichael in Bloomington, Indiana in 1899. He experienced early success with tunes such as the 1924 “Riverboat Shuffle,” written with cornetist Bix Beiderbecke. After a number of bands began to perform his song “Washboard Blues,” he moved to New York in 1929. Carmichael’s recording and songwriting career continued throughout the next three decades with a remarkable series of songs that have become jazz standards. Among his most identifiable are “Stardust” and “Georgia On My Mind,” staples for bandleaders such as Louis Armstrong, the Dorsey Brothers, Benny Goodman, and Johnny Mercer.

In 1936 Hoagy moved to Hollywood where, along with lyricist Frank Loesser, he wrote film music for Paramount Pictures. This collaboration produced songs such as “Heart and Soul” and “Two Sleepy People.” In 1946 he published his first book of memoirs, *The Stardust Road.* His second book *Sometimes I Wonder* was published in 1965. Contemporary artists continue to record Carmichael’s songs. Reissues of Carmichael performing his own tunes are currently available, and both of his memoirs are still in print.

Carmichael and Loesser teamed up to write the song “Two Sleepy People” for the 1938 Paramount Pictures movie *Thanks For the Memory.* The film is based on the Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger song of the same title. Earlier that year, Bob Hope and Shirley Ross performed the song “Thanks for the Memory” in *The Big Broadcast of 1938* to great success. The movie version of the song was made as a performance vehicle for Hope and Ross, who star as an estranged couple that meets by chance on an ocean liner. Though initially unwilling to admit it, the couple eventually rediscovers their affections. Hope and Ross sing “Two Sleepy People” to each other while reminiscing about earlier times.

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during their affair. Carmichael recorded the song 14 October 1938, shortly after Hope and Ross premiered the tune.

The song depicts a couple so enthralled with one another that they are unwilling to break away to sleep:

   Here we are, out of cigarettes,
   Holding hands and yawning, look how late it gets.
   Two Sleepy People by dawn’s early light,
   And too much in love to say “Goodnight.”

   Here we are, in the cozy chair,
   Picking on a wishbone from the Frigidaire.
   Two Sleepy People with nothing to say,
   And too much in love to break away.

Though the couple is accustomed to forgetting themselves, Loesser’s lyrics belie self-awareness. The couple sings the line, “here we are,” and the listener inserts the phrase ‘here we are again.’ Although this is a familiar circumstance for the couple, there is a reservation from the more effusive dialogue that often accompanies Hollywood depictions of love. In his book *Let’s Face the Music*, Benny Green refers to the song as “a flippant piece whose unspoken sentiments, delivered in an elusive compromise between talk and song, imply a passionate romantic attachment.”

Carmichael’s implication of passion through flippancy is evidenced by his use of a simple, ii-V-I progression, and melodic material that implies more than it actually states.

The structure of “Two Sleepy People” is a seamless, through-composed thirty-six measures. Loesser’s lyrics place the refrain in the last couplet of each stanza. After a four-measure introduction, two statements of the verse are sung (mm 5-20). A bridge follows (mm 22-28), expanding the predominant B♭ for six measures. The final verse ends the song in tonic F.

   Do you remember the nights we used to linger in the hall?
   Father didn’t like you at all.
   Do you remember the reason why we married in the Fall?
   To rent this little nest and get a bit of rest.

Well, here we are, just about the same,
Foggy little fellow, drowsy little dame.
Two Sleepy People by dawn’s early light,
And too much in love to say “Goodnight.”

Carmichael’s melody is a playful one. Loesser’s lyric “Here we are” is set with
one of the song’s very few chordal leaps of an ascending fifth followed by a descending
sixth. The scalar passages of the ensuing measures lazily fill the space, describing
various actions (or inaction): holding hands, yawning, and checking the time.

Example 2.9 Carmichael: “Two Sleepy People” mm 5-12
When the singer finally reaches the refrain “Two Sleepy People,” it is a semitone short of
the tonic on F. The resultant major-seventh chord allows the couple to put off their
farewells. Even the phrase “Goodnight” resolves the couplet with a half cadence on a C⁹
chord. It is not until the second stanza of the verse that the couple must finally consider
the unpleasantness of breaking away, a thought Carmichael demonstrates with the finality
of a perfect authentic cadence.

Carmichael’s harmonies are dreamily static throughout the verse material.
Measures 5-20 are structured around two statements of a four-measure I-ii-V-I
progression. These statements are interrupted in mm 10-11 by modally mixed minor-iv
in m 10, and a major-II in m 11.

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35 Carmichael, Two Sleepy People, 3.
36 Ibid., 1.
Example 2.10 Carmichael: “Two Sleepy People” mm 9-12
Though the second phrase is otherwise identical, the modally mixed predominant chord in m 10 is replaced with a definitive sequence of applied dominant-seventh chords in mm 19-20.

Example 2.10 also outlines a five-note chromatic descending motive from D to B♭ in the right hand of the piano accompaniment. This motive occurs throughout the song, suggesting borrowed harmonies in the refrain. In mm 5-6, the first statement of the motive is from scale degree 5 to 3 (C to A, though A doubles as both an accompaniment figure and a melodic note, and is therefore placed an octave higher than the other pitches).

Example 2.11 Carmichael: “Two Sleepy People” mm 5-6
Carmichael uses this descending chromatic motive to connect the verse material to the bridge. This first occurs in the melody line with the lyric “Do you remember.” G♭, the song’s only non-chord tone, ushers in the predominant harmony. Example 2.12

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38 Ibid.
illustrates that $G^b$ is a decorative tone that connects two statements of the melodic pattern F, E, D over a $B^b$ chord.

Example 2.12 Carmichael: “Two Sleepy People” mm 21-30 (circled notes outline the descending four-note motive throughout the section)\(^{39}\)

George Gershwin “Liza (All the Clouds’ll Roll Away)”

George Gershwin (1898-1937) gained notoriety as a songwriter in Tin Pan Alley and by his 20s had attained a reputation on Broadway. Within ten years he would become one of the most influential American art music composers of his generation. Though “Liza (All the Clouds’ll Roll Away)” has not attained the fame of other Gershwin hits such as “I Got Rhythm” or “It Ain’t Necessarily So,” the tune helped to promote the song’s vehicle, Show Girl. The show opened in New York’s Ziegfeld Theatre 2 July 1929, starring Jimmy Durante. Show Girl is based on Florenz Ziegfeld’s famed chorus girls. Written by J.P. McEvoy and produced by Ziegfeld, the first

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 2.
performances featured the Duke Ellington Orchestra in the pit and a little ballet choreographed by Harriet Hoctor based on *An American in Paris*.\(^{40}\) Due to time constraints and an agreement with Ziegfeld, Ira Gershwin teamed with Gus Kahn to write the lyrics.\(^{41}\)

The structure of the lyrics is simply ABB: an introduction followed by the refrain sung twice. The introduction presents a request in which the singer attempts to separate his beloved from everyday life and listen to his amorous intentions:

```
Moon shinin’ on the river
Come along, my Liza!
Breeze singin’ through the treetops
Come along, my Liza!

Somethin’ mighty sweet
I want to whisper sweet and low,
That you ought to know, my Liza!

I get lonesome, honey
When I’m all alone so long;
Don’t make me wait;
Don’t hesitate;
Come and hear my song:\(^{42}\)
```

The rhyme scheme of the introduction creates an unusual grouping upon which the composer must set a melody. There is no end-of-line rhyme throughout the section. Instead, slant rhyme, such as “low” and “know,” is capriciously distributed in the middle of some lines, or at the end of others. In the first stanza, the name “Liza” ends two sets of couplets. In the second stanza, “Don’t make me wait/Don’t hesitate,” the only end-of-line rhyme is inserted at the “wrong” place. This forces the listener to wait for the name “Liza” while the lyricists hesitate.


\(^{41}\) Though George’s brother Ira is most often associated with the composer, the Gershwins sometimes employed outside help for some projects. German-born lyricist Gus Kahn is perhaps best known for hits such as *It Had to be You* and *Makin’ Whoopee*.

Aside from the occasionally worthwhile joke, slant rhyme is the poetic equivalent to many harmonic and rhythmic devices that George Gershwin employs throughout the song. The intention for both of these lyrical and musical devices is the same: displacement. The listener anticipates a resolution, but is parlayed into a brief holding pattern. Sometimes, the singer makes jocular references to that pattern as in “wait” and “hesitate.” In other cases the result is more poetic, underscoring a profound message behind the theme.

George Gershwin treats Ira’s and Kahn’s lyrical displacement with a variety of musical devices. In the introduction, this is achieved with clear cadences and brief phrase groupings. Example 2.13 displays the first and last word of each large phrase along with the phrase’s harmonic function. Under the larger groupings are shorter subdivisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrase Grouping:</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section/Lyric:</td>
<td>(Introduction)</td>
<td>“Moon” / “Liza”</td>
<td>“Somethin’” / “Song”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonal Function:</td>
<td>Sets up tonic E♭</td>
<td>I-V</td>
<td>IV-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdivisions:</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>4+4</td>
<td>4+4+2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 2.13** Gershwin: “Liza (All the Clouds’ll Roll Away)” structure of introduction.

After four introductory bars, the words are grouped in two, 8+10-measure phrases with sub-phrases 4+4+4+4+2. Gershwin maneuvers the tricky grouping of Ira’s and Kahn’s displacement of the word “Liza” by placing it within a larger harmonic framework.

In previous examples such as “I Only Have Eyes For You” and “My Heart Stood Still,” love is explored as hyper-reality. The Earth still rotates. Life goes on around the characters. However, the laws of both gravity and time do not affect those who experience shared amore. Gershwin and Kahn describe this feeling as a displacement of all unpleasantness. If the title character accepts the terms of the song—first a smile, followed by companionship, and finally marriage—she will then create such happiness that even the weather will desist. E.g.:

Liza, Liza, skies are gray,
But if you’ll smile on me
All the clouds’ll roll away.
Liza, Liza, don’t delay,
Come, keep me company,

30
And all the clouds’ll roll away.

See the honey moon a-shinin’ down;
We should make a date with Parson Brown.

So, Liza, Liza, name the day
When you belong to me
And all the clouds’ll roll away.43

George Gershwin illustrates this displacement in the song’s refrain. Chromaticism outlines the disharmony of everyday life in two phrases. Gershwin returns to the tonic E♭ only on the last syllable of “away” at the end of each phrase. This is perhaps a rudimentary use of text painting, but Gershwin’s choice of dissonance is notable. This is particularly true in the first four measures of each grouping. Example 2.14 demonstrates a mostly-chromatic ascending bass line E♭, F, G♭, G, A♭, A. The bass creeps up on the slower moving melody B♭, C, E♭, F. The first four measures of the refrain are a series of parallel fourths interrupted by lower-neighbor motion on the first beat of each measure.

43Ibid., 159-160.
Example 2.14 Gershwin: “Liza (All the Clouds’ll Roll Away)” refrain mm 23-38

In his 1984 article “Gershwin’s Art of Counterpoint,” Steven E. Gilbert notes Gershwin’s rules of dissonance: “The triad was still necessary for closure, but dissonances such as ninths and so-called thirteenths did not require resolution.” Though Gershwin’s outer voices

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44 Ibid., 159-160.
45 Steven E Gilbert, “Gershwin’s Art of Counterpoint,” The Musical Quarterly 70 (Fall 1984), 423. For Gershwin, this is particularly true, but Gilbert’s statement is also applicable in all the songs from Rochberg’s collection.
progress in parallel fourths, the resolutions at mm 20 and 28 are safely in the confines of common-practice counterpoint.

Gershwin’s arrangements of his own songs provide excellent insight into his compositional approach. The 1932 *Song Book* includes previously published tunes such as “Fascinating Rhythm” and “The Man I Love,” along with a solo piano arrangement of each song. Most tunes are presented without verses. In the case of both “I Got Rhythm” and “Liza,” the composer includes at least one variation on the chorus. By the early 30s Gershwin’s tunes had become standards for jazz combos. Most fake-book appearances of the tune (and most songs) leave out introductions or codas so that the chorus may be improvised as a “head.” It is notable that Rochberg’s version of “Liza” also omits any material from the introduction. Gershwin was never hesitant to re-work his own material. The playwright S.N. Behrman famously recounts, “George Kaufman complained that he played his stuff so much at parties that by opening night, when the audience heard the overture, many of them must have thought it was a revival.”

The solo piano version of “Liza” features two highly decorated statements of the chorus. This arrangement transposes the song down a whole step. Although Gershwin progresses with the same structure as the chorus from the *Show Girl* version, the only aspects of the song that remain truly unaltered are the melody and basic harmonies. Predictably, George Gershwin adds filigree to turnaround sections such as the last measures of the two statements of the chorus (mm 8 of Example 2.15): “roll away” in the *Show Girl* version. Most striking, however, are the figures that are added to the opening. Rather than the ascending arpeggios of the vocal version, Gershwin implants a countermelody: a four-note chromatic descending motive (Eb, Eb, Db, C in m. 1) that ascends by a fourth in m 3 and takes over the melody in m 4.

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Example 2.15 Gershwin: “Liza (All the Clouds’ll Roll Away)” solo piano version mm 1-8

Ultimately, Gershwin displaces his own music by artfully arranging it. Liza undergoes a series of removals from the song’s subject. The meaning of the words is obscured through slant rhyme and commentary, and expected cadences are displaced. Finally, a series of versions of the song combines to create a work that is enhanced beyond its initial environment.

Peter DeRose “Deep Purple”

Peter DeRose (1900-1953) began his career during the pinnacle of radio’s popularity. He performed with his wife, May Singhi Breen, on a number of New York radio stations. They were billed as Peter DeRose and the Ukulele Lady. DeRose’s early songwriting successes include the 1927 “Muddy Water,” which reached #5 on Billboard’s charts, and the 1928 tune “When Your Hair Has Turned to Silver,” co-written with lyricist Charles Tobias.

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48 George Gershwin, George Gershwin’s Songbook (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1932), 137.
“Deep Purple” was first conceived as an instrumental piano piece in 1934. Though the Paul Whiteman Orchestra had some success with the instrumental version, the addition of lyrics by Mitchell Parish made “Deep Purple” the defining hit song of 1939. By that year, Parish had already contributed lyrics to several works by other songwriters. He worked with Hoagy Carmichael in 1931 and 1934 to co-create “Stardust” and “One Morning in May” respectively. Later hits include “Volare” and “Dream, Dream, Dream.”

In 1939 a version of “Deep Purple” reached #1 in the U.S. and was recorded on Victor Records by Larry Clinton and his Orchestra with singer Bea Wain. The same year Bing Crosby’s recording reached #14, Guy Lombardo’s #9, and both Artie Shaw and Paul Weston each achieved #17 with their adaptations. As a result of these successes, DeRose performed the song during the 1940 Golden Gate Exposition. “Deep Purple” won a Grammy Award for Best Rock and Roll recording in 1963 for a version by Nino Tempo and April Stevens on Atco Records. The most recent version to achieve commercial success was performed by Donny and Marie Osmond in 1976. The Osmonds’ arrangement earned #14 in the U.S. and #25 in the U.K. 50

“Deep Purple” consists of nearly-identical sixteen-measure phrases, each with two sub-phrases. The simplicity of the song’s phrase rhythm belies an unusual chromaticism found in both melody and counterpoint. The first sub-phrase skips immediately from a (below middle C) to a’ with a total range of a’-e’’ (an octave plus a perfect fifth). Under these chordal leaps and octaves, DeRose supplies a chromatically ascending bass.

---

Example 2.16 DeRose: “Deep Purple” mm 21-35

The second sub phrase answers the previous example with a descending, chromatic melody that outlines a ninth from a-b’. Chromaticism therefore becomes a sort of character throughout the song. Mitchell Parish exploits this character with the addition of lyrics.

So far, most of the discussion of the songs used in *American Bouquet* has examined music that fits a certain lyric or mood. For example, Carmichael’s depiction of laziness in “Two Sleepy People” employs musical gestures to highlight a poetic idea. In these cases, the lyrics and music appear to have been conceived somewhat organically. The melodist and lyricist worked closely with each other to achieve a song that was intended to be collaborative. After Paul Whiteman’s success with the song in 1934, the instrumental version of “Deep Purple” waned in the dance band repertory for five years.

---

Mitchell Parish’s words must therefore be examined as the art of a lyricist fitting a subject onto an already existing melody. The chromatic, descending motion that permeates the song fits perfectly as backdrop for Parish’s depiction of an affair that can only be realized in memory and dreams:

When the deep purple falls,  
Over sleepy garden walls,  
And the stars begin to flicker in the sky,  
Through the mist of a memory  
You wander back to me  
Breathing my name with a sigh  

In the still of the night  
Once again I hold you tight  
Though you’re gone your love lives on when moonlight beams  
And as long as my heart will beat  
Lover, we’ll always meet  
Here in my deep purple dreams.52

An introduction was attached to the song along with Parish’s words in 1939. Two aspects from the introduction are worth noting briefly. A three-note chromatic motive is introduced immediately in the first four measures, first A, A#, B and then G, G#, A.

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52 Mitchell Parish, *Stardust*, 75-76.
Example 2.17 DeRose: “Deep Purple” mm 5-19

In this example, chromaticism is used as a decorative passing tone from one chord tone to the next via augmented harmonies (m 5 beat 4 and m 6 beat 1). DeRose hints that chromaticism will become the primary musical tool employed throughout the song.

Another notable aspect of the introduction is DeRose’s setting of the word “thrill.” In the previous discussion of “My Heart Stood Still,” Richard Rodgers employs the word “thrill” as a major structural point—a final high note expressing the crescendo of emotion of the song. In the introduction to “Deep Purple,” the word is used to complete the opening scenario. All the motion in the introduction leads up to the word, and DeRose supports its importance with the 6/4 suspension of the dominant A.

Parish specialized in fitting words to a preexisting melody. In 1933 he collaborated with Duke Ellington on “Sophisticated Lady.” Along with DeRose and songwriter Bert Shefter, Parish adapted Maurice Ravel’s *Pavane pour une Infante défunte* to create the 1939 hit “The Lamp is Low.”

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53 Ibid., 74.
Notably, both songs became hits in 1939, and both deal with the subject of dreaming. Later Parish hits take up the topic; the most noteworthy is “Dream, Dream, Dream.” In the case of “Deep Purple,” it is unclear what caused the end of the affair. Simple separation is a possibility. Death seems a likely or, more appropriately, romantic cause. Whatever the reasons for conjuring the image of slumbering lovers, Parish’s characters are in good company. Stephen Foster’s preoccupation with sleep as a position of repose or an analogy to death is evidenced in his 1851 setting of Charles G. Eastman’s “Sweetly She Sleeps, My Alice Fair.” In “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair,” Jeanie is a “lost one that comes not again.” Further examples of the theme of sleep-death can be traced throughout song repertory, such as John Dowland’s “Come Heavy Sleep.”

---

“My Heart Stood Still”

Like most other examples in this collection, Rochberg’s version of “My Heart Stood Still” omits introductory material from the original song. This omission limits Rodgers’s version to a structure of refrain 1, bridge, and refrain 2. Rochberg honors the order of the remaining three sections, but he inserts his own introduction, a cadenza between the bridge and the second refrain, and a coda. The following example compares the structure of the two versions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Verse 1 and 2&lt;br&gt;(2nd time)</th>
<th>Refrain 1</th>
<th>Bridge</th>
<th>Refrain 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harmonic areas of interest</td>
<td>F D♭ A C  I♭VI III♭ V(in F)</td>
<td>F g C  I ii V♭</td>
<td>f C+ C♭ g♭6 i V V7 ii6</td>
<td>F F+ B♭ C♭ F  I V+/IV IV V7 I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyric</td>
<td>“I laughed at sweethearts”</td>
<td>“I took one look at you”</td>
<td>“Not a single word was spoken”</td>
<td>“Until the thrill”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 3.1a** Rodgers: “My Heart Stood Still” formal and harmonic outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Refrain 1</th>
<th>Refrain 1 variation</th>
<th>Bridge</th>
<th>Cadenza</th>
<th>Refrain 2</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congruent to Rodgers’s original</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>8-18</td>
<td>18-26</td>
<td>27-33</td>
<td>33-48</td>
<td>49-55</td>
<td>55-63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of interest</td>
<td>Material derived from two whole-tone sets</td>
<td>mm 15-17 includes insertion of static harmony also derived from two whole-tone sets</td>
<td>More literal setting of melody</td>
<td>Melody placed on bass notes of the guitar</td>
<td>Elongation of diminished harmonies</td>
<td>Ends with deceptive motion to bVI</td>
<td>Section 1 of introduction transposed down a third</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 3.1b** Rochberg: “My Heart Stood Still” formal and harmonic outline

Rochberg’s introduction is an ascending scale superimposing two whole-tone sets.
The harmonic A is used as a pedal tone while the ascending scale unfolds in additive rhythm: first seven tones (mm 1-2), then nine (mm 3-5), and finally ten (mm 6-8, counting the E in m 8 beat 1 as the final note of the scale). The stasis of motive 1 creates motionlessness—a sense of standing still. Motive 1 reappears in the coda (mm 55-63) with the pedal tone on F:

Example 3.2 Rochberg: “My Heart Stood Still” mm 1-8

Several features from the introduction of “My Heart Stood Still” appear throughout the Bouquet. Rochberg uses additive rhythm as a primary motivic idea in “I Only Have Eyes For You.” The scale created by combining the entire "odd" whole-tone scale with passing tones reappears in “Deep Purple.”

The first variation of the refrain (mm 8-17) employs the primary descending motive from Rodgers’s original lyric “I took one look at you/That’s all I meant to do.”

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2 Ibid.
Transposed up three semitones, Rochberg’s setting is harmonically decorative and employs a counter-melody in ascending augmented thirds a perfect fifth apart.

Example 3.4 Rochberg: “My Heart Stood Still” mm 8-17

Though ornamented, Rodgers’s descending thirds are nonetheless intact (see the circled pitches mm 8-13).\(^3\) In mm 12-13, Rochberg sets the melody an octave higher than the previous four measures (e‴, d‴, c‴‴). Due to the thick texture of Rochberg’s guitar writing, it may prove difficult for a listener to discern the original melody on an initial hearing. Placing sections of the melody in a higher register allows the most recognizable material to stand out though it is part of a larger quotation.

The final four measures of both variations of the refrain never realize the melody in its entirety. Rather than setting the lyric “heart stood still” with Rodgers’s original A, F♯ and E, the melody halts at the word “stood.” In the place of “still,” Rochberg inserts four chords in mm 14 and 16 (see example 3.4). Like the first section of the introduction, the chords are derived from two whole-tone sets (A, B, C♯ and E, F♯, G♯). Though E is included in the clusters, the note’s presence is less discernable in a whole-tone setting in

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\(^3\) Ibid., 2.

\(^4\) For the following examples, pitches from the original melody appear circled. When appropriate, quotations will appear circled throughout the musical examples in this chapter.
which all tones are equally distributed. This motive reappears at the end of the variation of refrain 1 (mm 18-25).

**Example 3.5** Rochberg: “My Heart Stood Still” mm 18-25

A wild change of texture and tempo mark the bridge material. The melody is set in the bass register under rapid sextuplet arpeggios. The ensuing cadenza is a large-scale elongation of diminished harmonies connecting an $E_{7}^{b13}$ chord in m 33 as the dominant of A in the final refrain. The cadenza is not without motivic development, however. In mm 41-42, $E_{7}^{b}$ presupposes the sixth scale degree (the word “thrill” from refrain 2). This creates the following melodic outline between the bridge and the second refrain (mm 33-61):

**Example 3.6** Rochberg: “My Heart Stood Still” mm 33-61 melodic outline

“I Only Have Eyes For You”

If Rochberg’s “I Only Have Eyes For You” tells a story, its subject is peripheral to the lovers in the original song. Warren’s melody is unaffected. The song’s structure

---

and essential harmony are intact. However, in Rochberg’s version the original material
does not always command the listener’s attention. Instead, a constant stream of
descending sixteenth-notes creates a secondary narrative that sometimes overpowers the
melody.

Rochberg’s version is a rondo in which an original introduction, transition, bridge,
and coda provide new material:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Lyric</th>
<th>Areas of interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-23</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Motive 1: descending fourths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24-31</td>
<td>“Are the Stars out tonight”</td>
<td>Motive 2: “interruptive” gesture Fm6 chord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32-43</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Melody floats over the constant motion of altered motive 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44-50</td>
<td>“The moon may be high”</td>
<td>Alteration of motive 1 using 7th double-stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51-58</td>
<td>“I don’t know if we’re in a garden”</td>
<td>Same as Verse 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59-65</td>
<td>“You are here, so am I”</td>
<td>Literal setting; “missing” cadenza section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66-82</td>
<td>“And I only have eyes…”</td>
<td>Same as verse 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Two sections: wandering melodic pattern from Verse, transforms to motive 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 3.7** Rochberg: “I Only Have Eyes For You” formal outline

All three appearances of the verse are unaltered. That is, the verse material in
Rochberg’s version uses the same variations as Warren’s original. Each time the phrase
“I only have eyes for you” appears, the final word is set at a different pitch. This
recreates the large-scale pitch collection B, C#, E, C from the original, transposed up a
whole-step to C#, D#, F#, D.6

The song opens with a series of descending fourth sixteenth-notes in D. As in
“My Heart Stood Still,” the introduction is a repeated melodic fragment that proceeds in
additive rhythm: a three-beat grouping is followed by a four-beat grouping, then eight
beats, etc. (see example 3.8). Motion is interrupted by a four-measure phrase that first
arpeggiates Fm6, then Em9 (an applied bII to ii). This interruption occurs five times
throughout the song, and will be referred to as motive 2.

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6 Refer to Chapter 2 for the discussion of Warren's large-scale pitch collection.
Example 3.8 Rochberg: “I Only Have Eyes For You” mm 1-15

The introduction continues using fragments of the above example, again ending with an arpeggiated $E^m9$ (motive 2).

The descending motive from the introduction becomes arpeggiated triads in the setting of verse 1. Instead of cascading fourths, the sixteenth-notes provide accompaniment while expanding Warren’s original harmonies.

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Example 3.9 Rochberg: “I Only Have Eyes For You” mm 24-31

The original song plays with the mode of dominant G and subdominants F and D. The sonorities are presented as both minor and dominant-seventh chords.

Example 3.10 Warren: “I Only Have Eyes For You” mm 22-28

A transition between verse 1 and 2 further develops the descending motive from the introduction. A bass line is added a seventh below the sixteenth-notes. Rather than descending fourths, the upper line proceeds in descending fifths a fourth apart.

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8 Ibid., 3.
9 Warren, Lullaby of Broadway, 87-88.
Example 3.11 Rochberg: “I Only Have Eyes For You” mm 32-43\textsuperscript{10}

These fragments are arranged in sub-phrases. The first fragment (mm 32-33) outlines an E\textsubscript{b} scale prepared by the B\textsubscript{b} triad in m 31 beat 4. The second and third sub-phrases return suddenly to tonic D. The section closes with the third appearance of motive 2.

Verse 3 ends with a final statement of the song’s title…almost. The cadential material is set one word short: “I only have eyes for,” while “you” never actually appears in the coda.

Example 3.12 Rochberg: “I Only Have Eyes For You” mm 65-69\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10} Rochberg, American Bouquet, 6.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 8.
Fermatas are placed over the words “eyes” (d") and “for” (e"), with a minor-iv leading to a half-cadence. The e" in m 69 beat 1 functions as both the penultimate pitch for the refrain and the first note in a return to the song’s opening question “Are the stars out tonight?”

Fragmentation of cadential material appears throughout the Bouquet. For example, “Deep Purple” closes with an unfinished statement “here in my deep purple…” The word “dreams” is left out. This feature provides unity to the cycle, calling attention to the fact that the songs are part of a larger whole. “I Only Have Eyes For You” appears in the Bouquet as part of a continuum of works that make up a sort of American pastiche. The composer calls attention to his presence by setting the song with cascading figures that take focus away from the original tune. Ultimately the song, the setting, and the composer become enveloped in a larger whole.

“Two Sleepy People”

While Carmichael’s “Two Sleepy People” implies passion through flippancy, Rochberg’s version opens with a bagatelle, then proceeds like a cartoon dream. The ascending motives of the original are augmented with overlapping chromatic figures and jerky cross rhythms. Statements of the melody are transposed in the middle of a phrase. The cadenza is a wild interruption, a sort of nightmarish outburst at the end of the bridge section.

The form of Rochberg’s “Two Sleepy People” is conservative. With the exception of a four-measure introduction and a striking cadenza, the Bouquet’s version remains true to the original. A bridge section interrupts two verses and a third verse closes the song. Each statement of Carmichael’s verse appears in its entirety. Unlike most other examples in the cycle, the original material is not fragmented and is set in the same range rather than leaping from one octave to another.

The Bouquet’s adaptation of “Two Sleepy People” uses a downward-sloping motive made up of chromatic semitones from F to D. This motive first appears in the introduction in which three-note portions of the melody appear in a sequence of whole steps.
Example 3.13 Rochberg: “Two Sleepy People” mm 1-4

The motive pervades this version. Like the above example, the F to D motion is used in a melodic context. A formal outline displays that the half-step motion from F to D also affects the tune’s overall harmonic scheme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Verse 1</th>
<th>Verse 2</th>
<th>Bridge</th>
<th>Cadenza</th>
<th>Verse 3</th>
<th>Codetta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>13-20</td>
<td>20-26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28-32</td>
<td>32-41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section/lyric from original song</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Here we are” 3-note motive</td>
<td>“Here we are, out of cigarettes”</td>
<td>“Here we are, in a cozy chair”</td>
<td>“Do you remember”</td>
<td>“Here we are, just about the same”</td>
<td>“Two sleepy people”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key area (of melody)</td>
<td>F/Eb/D7/A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>F/E (in refrain)</td>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>F/Eb/D7/A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation to tonic</td>
<td>bVI-VII</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>bVI-VII</td>
<td>bII</td>
<td>bVI-VII</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 3.14 Rochberg: “Two Sleepy People” formal outline

Beginning in verse 2, F is lowered to E. The bridge is set in E. After the cadenza material (itself an elongation of the motive), verse 3 completes the work in D.

Verse 1 opens in D. Verse 2 begins in F, but the refrain material slides down a half-step to E. It is as if the melody itself is too sleepy to be realized in the same key. This overstates the lazy seventh scale-degree that begins the refrain in Carmichael’s version. The following examples compare the refrain in the two versions.

Example 3.15a Carmichael: “Two Sleepy People” refrain

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12 Ibid., 9.
13 Carmichael, Two Sleepy People, 2.
Example 3.15b Rochberg: “Two Sleepy People” mm 13-20

While the original refrain puts off “goodnight” by opening a half-step lower than the tonic F, Rochberg’s melody is so lethargic that it can only attain a flat seventh scale degree!

Aside from pleasant thirds and some harmonic substitution, Rochberg’s bridge material proceeds without many additions to Carmichael’s melody. M 24 sets Loesser’s “Father didn’t like you at all” lyric with some humor (minor-ii as opposed to IV in the original). However, before the bridge material can be completed with the line “To rent this little nest/and get a bit of rest,” Rochberg inserts a wild cadenza. Instead of resting, the guitar version makes a complete change in mood, texture, and tempo. Dominant chords announce a series of eight ascending triplets. After three statements of this figure, the section deteriorates into an improvisatory passage.

---

In spite of this digression, the cadenza is nonetheless a large-scale composing out of the F-D chromatic descending motive that appears throughout the rest of the piece. The first group of ascending triplets opens on F. Though the spelling is altered, the next group begins in E♭. Finally, a D⁷ chord appears marked *veloce*, sending the passage into an improvisatory frenzy.

If “a bit of rest” is afforded to the performer anywhere in the work, it is in the coda. Arpeggiated figures outline the descending motion of the original tune. A final

---

Example 3.16 Rochberg: “Two Sleepy People” m 27 (cadenza)\(^\text{15}\)

In spite of this digression, the cadenza is nonetheless a large-scale composing out of the F-D chromatic descending motive that appears throughout the rest of the piece. The first group of ascending triplets opens on F. Though the spelling is altered, the next group begins in E♭. Finally, a D⁷ chord appears marked *veloce*, sending the passage into an improvisatory frenzy.

If “a bit of rest” is afforded to the performer anywhere in the work, it is in the coda. Arpeggiated figures outline the descending motion of the original tune. A final

---

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 11.
motive is explored in a sequence of four descending pitches (e'', b', g', f#'), (f#'', c'', a', g'), and (f#'', c#'', a#', g#'):

Example 3.17 Rochberg: “Two Sleepy People” mm 35-40

The sequence connects E-minor with D by way of chromatic voice leading on the first beat of each measure: (e'', f'', f#'') in the upper voice and (e, db, d) in the lower voice. A final dreamlike arpeggio outlines an A♭ triad (flat-VI) in harmonics.

“Liza”

Rochberg’s version of “Liza” is brief and extroverted. Under two minutes in duration, the piece is riddled with difficult left hand stretches and virtuosic, country-style scale patterns. The fast sections halt comically with overwrought fermatas and interruptions. This manic realization is an excellent companion to “Two Sleepy People.”

The guitar version is based on the refrain from the original tune. As described in Chapter 2, Gershwin’s refrain consists of two statements to the title character beginning “Liza, Liza” followed by a two-line appeal to the “honey moon” in the relative minor. A third “Liza, Liza” ends the refrain and returns to the tonic key:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Liza, Liza 1”</td>
<td>“See the honey moon”</td>
<td>“Liza, Liza 3”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (E♭).ii (f)</td>
<td>I.…….V(B♭)I</td>
<td>I(E♭).…….V(B♭)…I(E♭)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Liza, Liza 2”</td>
<td>Vi (c)…………….V(B♭)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 3.18 Gershwin: “Liza” refrain

Rochberg uses Gershwin’s rounded binary model, but adds some changes. For example, a series of interruptions halts the refrain in every section. Like other movements in the cycle, the interruptive material is later developed in the cadenza.

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16 Ibid., 11.
Example 3.19 Rochberg: “Liza” formal outline

In the second sub phrase of the A-section (mm 11-19) Rochberg inserts a variation on the primary motive (see Examples 3.20a-3.20c). Another variation appears at the return of the A-section:

**Example 3.20a** Rochberg: "Liza" m 1 (primary motive)\(^{17}\)

**Example 3.20b** Rochberg: "Liza" m 11 (variation 1)\(^{18}\)

**Example 3.20c**: Rochberg: "Liza" m 30 (variation 2)\(^{19}\)

Gershwin’s solo piano version uses variations to separate both statements of the refrain. In comparison, Rochberg’s version appears to be in a hurry, stuffing as much music as possible into a single refrain.

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\(^{17}\) Ibid., 12.

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 12.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 13.
Interruptions to full quotations of the melodies are an identifiable compositional tool throughout the Bouquet. Interruptive motives appear in virtually all the settings, though the technique is highlighted in “I Only Have Eyes For You.” Like the other songs, interruptions in “Liza” provide musical material that is explored in the cadenza sections. Due to its placement in the set, “Liza’s” treatment of interruptive gestures can be viewed as a forbear of sorts to “Deep Purple,” in which Rochberg’s interruptions are primary motives throughout the piece.20 However, “Liza’s” interruptions serve a different purpose than “Deep Purple.” “Liza’s” interruptions are more jocular: Rochberg winking to the listener rather than creating major structural points.

The first interruption in the song appears in the initial statement of the refrain “But if you’ll smile on me/All the clouds’ll roll away.” The final syllable of the refrain is cut short in Rochberg’s statement:

Example 3.21 Rochberg: “Liza” mm 7-1021

Gershwin’s clouds don’t receive a final syllable until m 19, in which D7#5 suffices for tonic.

Later occurrences develop the interruption as an autonomous motive. For example, Rochberg’s Latin-inspired arrangement of the B-section lingers on the words “Parson Brown” (mm 27-29). Similarly, the interruptive motive makes up much of the material throughout the cadenza.

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20 This will be explored in greater detail during the analysis of “Deep Purple.”
21 Rochberg, American Bouquet, 12.
Example 3.22 Rochberg: “Liza” mm 33-51 (cadenza)\textsuperscript{22}

In mm 33-34 and 36-37, in the incessantly repeated f\textsuperscript{"} adds a new rhythmic gesture to the already familiar motive, while four statements of the original interruption end the piece.

“How to Explain”

“How to Explain” is adapted from Rochberg’s 1969 \textit{Eleven Songs for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano}. \textit{Eleven Songs} uses poems by Paul Rochberg, and is the second of several pieces in which George Rochberg sets his son’s work.\textsuperscript{23} The poems in \textit{Eleven Songs} are brief. Paul’s use of simple language is inspired by Eastern writings. “How to Explain” explores the attempt at communicating an intangible intimacy:

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 14.

\textsuperscript{23} Rochberg’s 1968 \textit{Tableaux} is based on fragments of Paul’s story \textit{The Silver Talons of Piero Kostrov}. 

55
How to explain
What cannot be told in words?
What is known between two quietly
I’ve tried to tell
But always ended breathless
Wordless with nothing more to do but close our eyes.24

George Rochberg describes his intentions in setting the poems in the “Preface” to the cycle:

These are “songs” then in the most traditional sense; and I have attempted to reveal through each setting the particular world of each poem, however brief some of them may be. The piano “accompanies” the voice at times; but it also behaves in other ways--commenting as the need arises or creating an environment in which the singer can project the verbal phrase and its imagery on her own.25

The care used to set the poems in their own world displays an intimacy with both the text and its creator. This intimacy is further evidenced in the decision to include “How to Explain” in the Bouquet. Eliot Fisk explains that the version is a sort of message from the composer to the guitarist:

…My relationship with Rochberg is extremely close. He’s sort of a second father to me. So it was perhaps appropriate that he put “How to Explain” into the Bouquet. Which, of course, the poem was…[by] his actual son, Paul...26

Self-quotation can serve a number of possible functions, and at times these functions are particularly poignant. The song pays homage to important relationships for the composer, while the entire cycle recalls the music of Rochberg’s youth.

Rochberg’s atonal music is thorny territory for analysis. His derisive attitude toward serialism dictates a cautious approach to any discussion of extended twelve-tone topics. Though he certainly wrote twelve-tone music, he remained guarded about his methodology. Most of the Bouquet is tonal, and periodic post-tonal techniques have so far been explained in a case-by-case basis. “How to Explain” uses a different tonal language than other movements in the cycle. It certainly fits in with the other pieces, given the song’s combination of jazz chords with an angular and chromatic melody.

25 George Rochberg, “Preface” to Eleven Songs: 2.
However, “How to Explain” is from a particularly developmental period in the evolution of Rochberg’s style. The song’s inclusion in the cycle can be approached as a stylistic half-way point between the composer’s early serialist works and the synthesis of the *Bouquet*.

The song opens with a six-measure introduction, and then divides the poem’s six lines into four phrases.

Example 3.23 Rochberg: “How to Explain” from *Eleven Songs for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano*, melody with phrase groupings

The phrases contain similar, but never identical pitch classes. This chromaticism is perhaps most akin to the expressionism of early Schoenberg. This expressionism is particularly evident when the melody is combined with jazz-affected harmonies. The opening six measures provide an example of this combination:

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Example 3.24 Rochberg: “How to Explain” from *Eleven Songs for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano* mm 1-6

Seventh chords and jazz-derived figuration dominate the left hand.

“How to Explain” provides insight into Rochberg’s outlook on arrangement. The limitations of the guitar’s voicing dictate that musical ideas are condensed. Five and six-note chords in the piano version are altered to quintuplet arpeggios (see Examples 3.25a and 3.25b):

---

In mm 9-10, the guitar plays both the melody and the countermelody. In the original song, the piano’s answer is in the same octave as the voice (see m 9 beat 4). The melody and accompaniment are offset by range in the guitar version. Another change occurs in beat 1 of mm 10 and 12. The performer bends the string to raise pitches f'' to g'' (m 10) and c'' to e'' (m 12). Though this affect is not specific to the guitar, it certainly recalls blues techniques that are well associated with the instrument.

Eliot Fisk’s knowledge of guitar effects influenced the arrangement in mm 15-16. A rapid tremolo chord with the fleshy pad of the finger highlights the lyric “Breathless, wordless.” He explains:

There’s that sul surando, tirando with the chord like Yamashita does sometimes…that was my suggestion. In fact he got so entranced with that sound that, as you know, he used it to open the piece called Eden, Out of Space Out of Time.\(^{31}\)

---

\(^{29}\) Rochberg, * Eleven Songs*, 34. 
\(^{31}\) Eliot Fisk, interview, 3 March 2004. Kazuhito Yamashita is a Japanese guitarist known for his creative approach to the guitar’s repertoire through extended techniques.
Fisk refers to the chamber concerto that was Rochberg’s last work for guitar, *Eden, Out of Space and Out of Time*. The piece not only opens with the tremolo chord, but also marks one of the most expansive uses of the technique in the guitar’s extant repertoire. Example 3.26 displays Rochberg’s use of the technique in the *Bouquet*’s version.

Example 3.26 Rochberg: “How to Explain” from *American Bouquet (Versions of Popular Music)* mm 16-17

The issues of arrangement that permeate “How To Explain” can probably be applied to other songs in this cycle. Like most works by Rochberg, the *Bouquet* was written at the piano. Fisk explains:

I don’t think the sonority of the guitar particularly influenced the composition of the pieces. I think rather that what he succeeded in doing is doing a set of pieces almost as if they were written for piano, but transcribed for the guitar from some imaginary piano. I don’t think he thinks Guitar. I think he thinks Music, and then puts the music on the guitar.33

“Deep Purple”

DeRose’s “Deep Purple” refrain consists of two sixteen-measure phrases, each with two sub-phrases. The structure of Rochberg’s “Deep Purple” is equally straightforward. An original introduction precedes the first phrase of the refrain. When the melody appears, it is unaltered, maintaining both its original key and rhythm. A transition utilizing motivic material from the introduction is followed by the second phrase of the refrain (first eight measures only). The tune is fragmented in the last two sections of the version. A cadenza and a coda each receive four measures of the source material. The piece ends with four measures repeating a motive from the introduction.

## Section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Section/Lyric from the original song</th>
<th>Areas of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-17</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Introduces two contrasting motives that develop throughout the piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-36</td>
<td>“When the Deep Purple Falls”</td>
<td>Melody appears unaltered, while material from motive two is countermelody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-46</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>Uses material from the Intro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-57</td>
<td>“In the still of the night”</td>
<td>Variations on the synthetic scale used as countermelody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58-76</td>
<td>“And as long as my heart will beat”</td>
<td>Portion of melody placed in higher register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-82</td>
<td>Here in my Deep Purple Dreams”</td>
<td>Ends with Motive 1 (T2) replacing the word “dreams”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Example 3.27 Rochberg: “Deep Purple” form

The introduction is composed of two contrasting motives derived from the original tune. These motives are developed throughout the piece, making up the melodic material used in Rochberg’s countermelodies and creating major structural points. The first motive serves to interrupt motion throughout this version of the song. In both opening and ending the piece, motive 1 combines two half-step fragments a minor-sixth apart: (e#, f#, g’) and (c##, c##, d##).

![Example Music Note](image)

### Example 3.28 Rochberg: “Deep Purple” m 10

This motive appears in every section of Rochberg’s “Deep Purple,” sometimes halting the original melody altogether. Later, a transposed version of motive 1 propels the cadenza with the direction “pressing ahead.” The half-step fragment also ends the song, replacing the final d’ (on the word “dreams”) with the set (d#, e’, e##). Though motive 1 can be derived from a number of descending chromatic fragments in the original tune, the most probable source of the material is DeRose’s introduction:

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Example 3.29 DeRose: “Deep Purple” mm 5-8

The collection of three ascending half-steps in motive 1 seems to mirror the above passage. Aside from the nominal example in “I Only Have Eyes For You,” the tunes in the Bouquet avoid material from the songwriters’ introductions. It is likely, however, that the final borrowed song in the collection provides an exception to this rule. This is an ironic decision because the introduction to “Deep Purple” was retroactively attached to the original tune after Mitchell Parish’s lyrics were added. The tacked-on introduction would have appealed to Rochberg’s cyclical view of history; it is tempting to speculate that this influenced his setting of the tune.

The second sub phrase of the original tune features a descending chromatic scale (see Example 3). This row becomes the material for motive 2.

Example 3.30 DeRose: “Deep Purple” mm 29-35

Choosing a collection of pitches from the original melody, Rochberg arrives at two complementary pentachords: (A, B, D, E, F♯) mm 2-6, (E♯, G♯, A♯, C♯, D♯) mm 7-9—both belonging to the (0, 2, 4, 7, 9) set class. This set (motive 2) consists of three whole-steps and two minor-thirds. These sets are first presented as two separate phrases, interrupted by motive 1:

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35 Mitchell Parish and Peter DeRose, Stardust, 74.
36 Ibid., 75.
Example 3.31: Rochberg: “Deep Purple” mm 1-12

Motive 2 provides the material later used as a countermelody against the setting of the original tune. The following two examples display both sections of the refrain. The countermelody freely combines notes from both pentachords, suggesting an eight-note synthetic scale (C#, D, D#, E, F#, G#, A, B). The two refrains are shown below with the original melody circled.

Example 3.32 Rochberg: “Deep Purple” mm 17-36

37 Rochberg, American Bouquet 17.
Performance notes abound throughout the versions. However, “Deep Purple” is strikingly notated. Shifts in tempo and constant use of *rubato* are stressed. In his “Preface” to the *Bouquet*, Eliot Fisk recalls the following exchange:

> Rochberg has said, “What you performers may not realize is that it pains me to have to reduce musical thought to notation…” Often when I would play parts of the *Bouquet* to him he would say, “But you’re counting! I don’t want you to count! It’s the gesture that counts! You’ve got to get inside these pieces! You’ve got to make them your own!”

Indeed, Rochberg’s notation style is a curious mixture between freedom and specificity. He is exacting in rhythmic and interpretive markings. However, broader gestures often seem to overpower minutia. This style is a reaction to the interpretive control expressed in serialism.

**“Notre Dame Blues”**

To complete his cycle of American popular tunes, Rochberg revisits the Blues; a form he explored in the 1971 suite *Carnival Music* for solo piano. *Carnival Music* is perhaps Rochberg’s most stylistically similar work to *American Bouquet*. Written for

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38 Ibid., 18.
Jerome Lowenthal, the suite combines elements of ragtime, jazz, and blues along with Ives and Stravinsky.40

The piano version and the Bouquet’s “Notre Dame Blues” share a number of common elements—both use variations format, and both make use of repeated motivic fragments to create tension. The primary difference between the two is that the “Blues” from Carnival Music is a slow stride number while “Notre Dame” is an up-tempo romp. Specific similarities with the piano “Blues” will be noted in the following examination of “Notre Dame Blues.”

Eliot Fisk recalls that, instead of “Notre Dame,” “Liza” was originally conceived as the last movement of the Bouquet: “I convinced him to switch the order between ‘Liza’ and the ‘Blues.’ I just didn’t think anything could really follow the ‘Blues!’”41 Though Fisk is referring to an artistic consideration, the ordering is also pragmatic. The technical demands of “Notre Dame” are substantial, and would unduly tax the performer to continue to other movements in the cycle. Fisk’s fingering suggestions require an inordinate use of the thumb. Rapid scalar passages, left hand stretches and constant fortissimo place the movement among the more difficult works in the repertoire.

“Notre Dame Blues” has four sections of variations in D with an introduction and a brief coda. Meter changes and rhythmic displacement obscure the twelve-measure structure. Nonetheless each of the four variations makes use of the twelve-measure form. Example 1 demonstrates that sections 1 and 3 are twelve-measure groupings while sections 2 and 4 are twenty-four-measure augmentations of the I-IV-V harmonic rhythm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Section 1</th>
<th>Section 2</th>
<th>Section 3</th>
<th>Section 4 (cadenza)</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>1-19</td>
<td>20-32</td>
<td>33-57</td>
<td>58-70</td>
<td>71-95</td>
<td>96-104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect/mood</td>
<td>Free meter, phrase Grouping: 5+4+9</td>
<td>“Whimsical and quirky,” 12-bar form</td>
<td>“Hard and driving,” 29-bar augmentation</td>
<td>“Mourning, slow” 12-bar (Paganini Blues)</td>
<td>“Tempo 1 but not strict time”</td>
<td>Beginning slow, getting faster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 3.34 Rochberg: “Notre Dame Blues” formal outline

The introduction and first two sections of the tune are decidedly up-tempo, with section 2 as the work’s centerpiece. Rochberg’s tempo indications are noteworthy. For the introduction he states “Solid, steady beat, gargoyle and angular.” This is in part

intended as a joke. However, this direction is also used in a particularly angular movement from his 1997 *Circles of Fire* for two pianos titled “Gargoyles.”

“Notre Dame’s” angularity derives from a steady pulse with accented rests. The following example is from the opening of the work, in which fragmented, almost pointillist rhythmic modules are set into relief against silences.

![Example 3.35 Rochberg: “Notre Dame Blues” mm 1-8](image)

By section 2, (mm 33-58), the accented rest has shrunk to a sixteenth-note. Repeated scalar fragments fill in the space while sforzando chords appear at odd intervals:

![Example 3.36 Rochberg: “Notre Dame Blues” mm 33-38](image)

The use of repeated fragments also appears in the earlier “Blues” from *Carnival Music*.

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44 Ibid., 21.
Both examples use brief motives over a steady bass pattern (or chord grouping, in the case of “Notre Dame”). The repeated material begins on an offbeat. This creates tension as the motive continues over bar lines.

After the driving tempi of section 2, Rochberg allows the motion to falter. A Paganini-inspired slow section recalls portions of the Caprice Variations, albeit without any direct quotation. The ensuing cadenza (section 4) combines motives from the introduction with chordal triplets and descending double-stops:

Though section 4 returns a tempo, Rochberg’s performance notes qualify: “but not strict time; freely, with lots of bravura.” Constant interpretive markings remind the performer to be flexible with time. Effectively, the second half of the piece is an extended cadenza amended onto a fast blues number.

A nine-measure coda ends the cycle with what Eliot Fisk refers to as “…that furious rasgueado that glissandos all the way up to the top.” The idea was not Rochberg’s original intent. Fisk explains:

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46 Rochberg, American Bouquet, 24.
47 Ibid., 23.
“I’m remembering him playing it for me on the piano and it just sort of growled on the bass and it sounded good. That’s how a pianist would end that; it sounds great on the piano. Those low notes make a lot of jangle…but on the guitar I didn’t feel that it was very effective. The low register of the guitar is not the one to make a hysterical fortissimo statement, not in a chord. That type of thing does not have the same type of effect.”

The result of that discussion is the following coda:

Example 3.39 Rochberg: “Notre Dame Blues” mm 96-104

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49 Rochberg, American Bouquet, 24.
Within the past fifty years, the appropriation of American vernacular music for the concert stage has become a hallmark of many American composers. However, the use of American music in art works for guitar is a relatively new phenomenon and should be explored in context with *American Bouquet*. The following study examines both the source material and methods of setting preexisting music in Lukas Foss’s *American Landscapes* for guitar and orchestra, George Crumb’s *Quest* for guitar and chamber ensemble, and Robert Beaser’s *Shenandoah* for solo guitar and *Mountain Songs* for guitar and flute.

Though Crumb, Beaser, Rochberg, and Foss have each borrowed from the American vernacular lexicon, each composer has approached the material in a different manner. In the case of Rochberg and Beaser, both comment that their settings are not arrangements. Beaser claims to have created “hybrids” in both *Shenandoah* and *Mountain Songs*, while Rochberg refers to “versions” of popular music. George Crumb is the only personality to refer to his use of “quotation.” Further, due to the breadth of what is considered vernacular, each composer’s choice of source material is as varied as its treatment. For example, while Lukas Foss and Robert Beaser set music from the Appalachians, Rochberg reworks popular songs of the 1930s and George Crumb opts to set the hymn tune "Amazing Grace."

**Lukas Foss: *American Landscapes***

Lukas Foss’s guitar concerto *American Landscapes* was written for guitarist Sharon Isbin and commissioned by Michel Roux, president of Carillon Importers.¹ The Concerto quotes themes from a variety of American vernacular sources, from banjo tunes to patriotic music. The concept of the piece was apparently a collaborative effort between Foss and Sharon Isbin. The guitarist recalls:

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I gave Foss many recordings and scores of American folk themes… I asked my mother to look through stacks of square dance recordings...She made a tape of the tunes she liked and thought might be of interest. One of her favorites was “Cotton-Eyed Joe,” which, coincidentally, ended up in the concerto.

The concerto was premiered 29 November 1989 at Avery Fischer Hall in New York. Initially, much fanfare surrounded the piece. Guitar Review ran an article announcing the advent of a “distinctly American guitar concerto.” Isbin predicted that the piece would become a cornerstone of the repertoire:

I believe that this new concerto is going to be the equivalent of what [Joaquin Rodrigo’s] Aranjuez has been to Spain. American Landscapes will capture the cultural essence of certain styles of American music, particularly spiritual and bluegrass, which have been influential in the development of other forms of American music. I think that American Landscapes is a piece that people will love to hear, as much as they love to hear the Aranjuez.

Several years after its premiere, American Landscapes has yet to gain the popularity of Rodrigo’s work. After Isbin’s initial performances and subsequent recording for Angel records, the concerto all but disappeared from the concert stage. Carl Fisher, Foss’s publisher, provides only rental copies of parts, and has yet to make a printed score. The musical examples in the following discussion are from the composer’s manuscript.

American Landscapes is structured in three movements. Part One includes the children’s tune “Dog’s Tick,” the “Bird’s Courting Song,” and the political number “Jefferson and Liberty.” Part Two is a theme and variations on the white spiritual “Wayfaring Stranger.” Part Three is a rondo that sets the banjo tunes “Cotton-Eyed Joe” and “Old Dan Tucker” along with a rather chaotic rendering of “America the Beautiful.”

The Concerto’s first and third movements employ a setting of preexisting material that differs dramatically from any of the other works in this project. The tunes are treated as subjects of a collage. One song overtakes the other, and the piece becomes more of an American junkyard than a landscape.

Before viewing Foss’s treatment of the borrowed tunes, it is necessary to examine some of the less familiar sources of the Concerto’s inspiration. The following examples

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2 Ibid., 3.
3 Ibid., 1.
4 Ibid.
5 Sharon Isbin, American Landscapes, Angel 7243-5-67672-2-5, 1995, compact disc.
provide excerpts from the three original tunes employed in Part One, followed by a section of the movement that quotes all three sources simultaneously.

“Jefferson and Liberty” was the official campaign song for Thomas Jefferson’s 1800 presidential bid. The tune’s words were written by Robert Treat Paine Jr., who was also the author of the 1792 Federalist campaign song “Adams and Liberty.” The song’s first verse mentions a “reign of terror” (“Its gags, inquisitors and spies/Its hordes of harpies are no more”). This particular terror refers to two pieces of legislation from 1799: the Alien Act (which enabled the President to expel foreigners without cause), and the Sedition Act (prohibiting the rights of an individual to speak out against the Federal government). Paine set “Jefferson and Liberty’s” lyrics to the Irish reel “Gobby-O.” The tune’s fast 6/8 meter, E-minor tonality and one-octave range gave the early Republican party its first hit:

![Example 4.1 “Jefferson and Liberty”](image)

Example 4.1 “Jefferson and Liberty”

“Bird’s Courting Song” was originally known as “The Woody Queristers” in seventeenth-century English broadsides. Versions of the song appear in collections from Maine, Vermont, North Carolina, and even Florida during the heydays of W.P.O. folksong collecting. Also called “The Hawk and the Crow” or “Leatherwing Bat,” the song depicts a variety of birds comparing notes on their amorous successes and failures:

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Example 4.2 “Bird’s Courting Song”

In the children’s song “Dog’s Tick,” a simplistic tune repeats several times with nonsense words set to a pentatonic scale.

Example 4.3 “Dog Tick”

Foss modifies the rhythm of the above tunes to form a cohesive structure. In the following example, “Dog’s Tick” and “Bird’s Courting Song” are played by the guitar and solo violin respectively. The tunes fit together by an invented motive of two sixteenth-notes followed by one eighth-note. The flutes continue with “Jefferson and Liberty,” seemingly unaffected by either the other songs or the orchestra’s rhythmic chords.

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Example 4.4 Foss: *American Landscapes* Part One rehearsal no. N\textsuperscript{11}

Though this technique is well ordered, the tunes appear almost as puzzle pieces whose angles are cut to fit the section.

Foss chooses a conventional modified sonata form to expedite his collage. In Part One, original material opens the movement, and returns at the recapitulation. The borrowed tunes provide motives for an extended development section that culminates with an original, “Americana” cadenza:

\textsuperscript{11} Lukas Foss: *American Landscapes* reproduced from a photocopy of the composer’s manuscript (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 1989), 10-11.
Example 4.5 Foss: *American Landscapes* mm 204-211\(^{12}\) The guitar line indicates Americana by a bass-strum pattern often associated with folk guitar styles. Rather than obtaining his inspiration from direct quotes, Foss chooses a more oblique reference to the genre.

In contrast, the quotation of patriotic music as an indicator of Americana seems a direct appeal to the collective conscience. “America the Beautiful” is so familiar that its appearance in the Concerto’s final movement can only be regarded as a joke, albeit a cultivated one. An extended rondo alternates portions of “Cotton-eyed Joe” and “Stay a Little Longer” (see Examples 4.6 and 4.7 for source material) throughout the movement.

Example 4.6 “Cotton-eyed Joe”\(^{13}\)

Example 4.7 “Stay a Little Longer”\(^{14}\)

The piece culminates in a frenzied rendering of “America the Beautiful,” Katherine Lee Bates and Samuel A. Ward’s 1895 Congregationalist rouser:

Example 4.8 Foss: *American Landscapes* Part 3 rehearsal no. EE$^{15}$

The guitar’s strummed chords and the violin line quote portions of “Stay a Little Longer.” The piano part recalls pentatonic banjo or fiddle tunes without a specific reference. At the same time, the orchestra is instructed to stand during its own rendering

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$^{15}$ Foss, *American Landscapes*, 64.
of “America the Beautiful.” Foss’s collage becomes a sort of caricature of itself by the end of the work, employing all the Concerto’s elements of Americana indicators.

**George Crumb Quest**

George Crumb’s *Quest* for guitar, soprano saxophone, harp, contrabass, and two percussionists was written for guitarist and Bridge Records founder David Starobin. The work was commissioned by the Albert Augustine Foundation and completed in 1994. *Quest* uses the hymn “Amazing Grace” as its only borrowed source. The song is directly quoted in two of the piece’s five movements. Its appearance differs dramatically in scope and context from the guitar works of Beaser, Rochberg, and Foss. As in Crumb’s other works, preexisting music is indicated with quotation marks in the score. “Amazing Grace” is initially heard at the end of the “Dark Paths” movement. The saxophone plays the melody over what the composer describes as “a delicate web of percussion sonority.”

![Example 4.9 George Crumb: “Dark Paths” rehearsal no. 10 from Quest](image)

Crumb’s presentation of the melody is straightforward, set in C over Japanese temple bells playing an ostinato figure with the pitch class set (0, 3, 5, 8).

“Amazing Grace” is used again in the final movement, “Nocturnal” first in Eb over a repeated pattern of fifths between the harp and bass (rehearsal #33-34), and later in B♭ with similar accompaniment (rehearsal #34-34). The saxophonist changes instruments to a chromatic harmonica at the end of the piece and suggests the tune using fragments of the melody:

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17 Crumb, *Quest*, 7.
Example 4.10 George Crumb: “Nocturnal” rehearsal no. 42 from *Quest*

The American idiom does not pervade *Quest*. Any American identity appears, if at all, as a sort of afterthought, the presence of an Appalachian hammered dulcimer in the percussion part and possibly the harmonica serve as the only other indicators of regionalism. In fact, Crumb’s own inspiration for the work is somewhat ambiguous:

The poetic basis for *Quest* was never very clearly articulated in my thinking. I recall pondering images such as the famous incipit of Dante's *Inferno* ("In the midway of this our mortal life, I found me in a gloomy mood, astray...") and a line from Lorca ("The dark paths of the guitar"); also the concept of a "quest" as a long tortuous journey towards an ecstatic and transfigured feeling of "arrival" became associated with certain musical ideas during the sketching process. But although the movement titles are poetic and symbolic, there is no precise programmatic meaning implied.  

Crumb’s quotation of the hymn tune “Amazing Grace” differs dramatically from the vernacular settings of Rochberg, Foss and Beaser. Crumb’s use of the tune, though well integrated into *Quest’s* texture, appears as an indicator for listeners but not as the piece’s main idea. That is, Crumb effectively sets “Amazing Grace” in reaction to *Quest*.

Crumb’s employment of *Amazing Grace* is remarkably understated in comparison with other examples of vernacular settings. Composer Robert Moevs has criticized Crumb’s seemingly rudimentary use of musical materials:

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18 Ibid., 25.
19 Ibid., 1.
Heterogeneous borrowings, superimpositions, sometimes rudimentary transcriptions...an assemblage of spooky effects and symbols chosen to evoke a particular mood, and a compositional method reduced essentially to their simple concatenation. The lack of musical substance, in turn, exposes the emptiness behind the assortment of symbolic-expressionistic titles and descriptions not to be taken seriously.  

Moevs’s statements about conservation of musical materials and use of evocative effects are accurate. However, the criticism of these aspects incorrectly assesses the purpose of Crumb’s quotation. “Amazing Grace” is a reference for the listener to draw conclusions about the mood of an unfamiliar work. Rather than adding complexity to Quest, the hymn provides clarity to the piece’s intent.

Crumb’s program notes clarify Quest’s title, providing insight to the employment of the hymn tune for quotation. “Amazing Grace” embodies the notion of process, particularly the “transfiguration” and “arrival” (to use Crumb’s terms) of a metaphysical rebirth. These concepts couple well with the arduous life of “Amazing Grace’s” author John Newton (1725-1807). Newton was born into an English seafaring family. From 1736-42 he sailed with his father along the Mediterranean. During a trip to Africa, the 20-year-old Newton became sick and was sold into slavery. After two years he was rescued in Guinea and, ironically, by 1749 became the captain of a slave transport ship from Africa to Northern Europe. In his middle years, Newton became associated with British religious leaders George Whitfield and John Wesley. By 1764 Newton was ordained and founded a ministry in Olney, becoming an outspoken abolitionist from the pulpit. Newton died in 1807, the same year slavery was declared illegal in Britain.  

Newton’s 1779 publication Olney Hymns includes what is perhaps his most famous contribution, “Amazing Grace.”

Although “Amazing Grace” connotes matters of faith and religious transformation, it is doubtful that Quest shares such associations. Rather, Crumb relies on a listener’s familiarity with Newton’s words to augment the experience of a “quest.”

In a 1988 Fanfare interview with Edward Strickland, Crumb states his use of quotation is often intended to produce

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...Nostalgia for a past world, or a strange spanning of time—by juxtaposing something that was written two centuries earlier with something new...It’s the feeling that only this serves the emotional function of the piece.22

On another level of process, the hymn tune has traversed continents to become an integral part of the American musical vocabulary. By the 1850s, “Amazing Grace” was ensconced in U.S. hymnody. One notable North American appearance includes an entry under the moniker “New Britain” in Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha J. King’s third edition of The Sacred Harp (Philadelphia 1859).23

Robert Beaser: Mountain Songs and Shenandoah

Robert Beaser’s 1984 Mountain Songs for guitar and flute employs Southern Appalachian ballads including “Barbara Allen,” “The House Carpenter,” “He’s Gone Away,” “Hush You Bye,” “Cindy,” “The Cuckoo,” and “Fair and Tender Ladies.” Beaser’s subsequent Shenandoah for solo guitar also employs recognizable source material that is “interleaved with original melodies, harmonies, and counterpoint to form an entirely new hybrid.”24 Beaser’s treatment of the folk tunes is strikingly similar to Rochberg’s style in the Bouquet. While Crumb and Foss employ quotation for associative or collage purposes, both Beaser and Rochberg use preexisting tunes organically. Melodies are reworked or fragmented. New harmonic material is introduced. Structural elements elongate and formalize the original material. It is notable that both Beaser’s and Rochberg’s guitar works are dedicated to guitarist Eliot Fisk, who worked closely with the composers during the writing process.

Though Beaser and Rochberg’s treatment of melodies are akin, their choice of source material could not be more polarized. American Bouquet’s Tin Pan Alley explores urbanite songs from an era of social liberalism. Topics are lighthearted and whimsical: hearts stand still, clouds roll away. Many of the Mountain Songs are based on simple melodies that portray stories of betrayal and loneliness. “Barbara Allen,” in all its permutations, describes an anguished lover whose impending death is viewed with ambivalence by the title character:

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Was in the merry month of May
When flowers were a-bloomin’
Sweet William on his deathbed lay
For the love of Barbara Allen.

Slowly, slowly she got up,
And slowly she went nigh him,
And all she said when she got there,
“Young man, I think you’re dying.”

A pentatonic melody accompanies the story. Alan Lomax’s collected version is plainsong in D:

Smoothly $\frac{4}{4}$ $\mathop{\text{q}=176}$

Example 4.11 “Barbara Allen”

Beaser opens his cycle with the tune. His treatment is unpretentious and sparse. The guitar and flute alternate solos for three strophes then enter together:

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26 Lomax, *Folk Songs*, 183.
Example 4.12 Beaser: “Barbara Allen” mm 24-31 from *Mountain Songs*\(^{27}\)

The guitar recalls a dulcimer with grace-note slurs. The flute employs quarter-tone bends to achieve an almost Japanese affectation.

As the cycle progresses, themes become more ornamented and forms more ornate. The fourth song in the cycle is a fantasia based on the southern lullaby “Hush You Bye.” The song opens with four measures of guitar introduction, followed by the flute playing the melody:

Example 4.13 Beaser: “Hush You Bye (Fantasia)” mm 1-9 from *Mountain Songs*\(^{28}\)

Variations gradually become more virtuosic through a culminating section of thirty-second-notes with scalar passages and pedal tones:


\(^{28}\) Beaser, *Mountain Songs*, 12.
Example 4.14 Beaser: “Hush You Bye (Fantasia)” mm 71-74 from Mountain Songs

The movement closes with a calmer section with Beaser’s indication “childlike, dreaming.”

*Mountain Songs* do not stray far from the original song’s intended meaning. “Barbara Allen” is sparse and sad, “Hush You Bye” proceeds like a child’s dream. Similarly, the cycle’s unusual adaptation of “The Cuckoo” achieves a sort of text painting in the flute line. Like “Fair and Tender Ladies,” “The Cuckoo” is a warning to enthusiastic lovers:

Come all you young women,  
Take warning by me,  
Never place your affections  
On the love of a man.

For the roots they will wither  
The branches decay.  
He’ll turn his back on you  
And walk square away.29

The following example of the original tune is an arrangement by the folksong collector and composer Matyas Seiber, included in Alan Lomax’s collection *The Folk Songs of North America*. Beaser’s version is remarkably similar to Seiber’s (see Examples 4.16

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29 Lomax, *Folk Songs*, 217.
and 4.17). The dyads in the lower line of the piano version correspond to the guitar part in the later arrangement.

Example 4.15 The Cuckoo arranged by Matyas Seiber

Example 4.16 Beaser: “The Cuckoo” mm 1-14 from Mountain Songs

These settings perhaps refer to the dyadic character of the original tune: the first part praising the truth of the cuckoo’s song, and the second part warning of the truthless

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30 Lomax, Folk Songs, 217.
31 Beaser, Mountain Songs, 24.
beauty of an inconsistent lover. Beaser sets the cuckoo’s song with a *senza misura* flute cadenza:

Example 4.17 Beaser: “The Cuckoo” m 42 from *Mountain Songs*\(^{32}\)

While the source material from *Mountain Songs* is landlocked, *Shenandoah* is derived from the sea shanty tradition, work songs of fishermen, haulers, and oarsmen used to mark time for the coordination of labor or entertainment.\(^{33}\) The two prevailing forms of the genre, “windlass” and “capstan” are used respectively for heaving (raising masts and anchors) and hauling (rowing). In the U.S., regions west of the Mississippi probably contributed the greatest number of original material to the shanty genre, including several versions of “Shenandoah.” Alan Lomax posits the song probably originated in what is now the region of Virginia, its title an indigenous reference to the geographical region.\(^{34}\)

Though the shanty’s lyrics are varied, its melody remains reasonably fixed. Hugill, Lomax, and Cecil Sharp have each collected and published nearly identical versions of the chant. The following is from another Lomax collection:

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Example 4.18 “Shenandoah”\textsuperscript{35}

Though set in a regular meter, the odd ten-measure strophe is offset by the inserted refrain “Away, you rolling river.”

Beaser’s *Shenandoah* is a through-composed fantasy in six sections, the first three in D major and the last three in E major. The sections are set apart by double bars or interpretive indications like “Broadly, with great power” (mm. 65-87) in which the performer may opt to play chords as they appear, or to employ a number of plectrum strumming or American finger-style patterns inspired by influences like Merle Haggard.

\textbf{Example 4.19 Beaser: Shenandoah} “Broadly, with great power” (mm. 65-6)\textsuperscript{36}

Though portions of the melody pervade the work, only three full quotations of the chant occur (sections 2, 3, and 5). This technique fragments melodic material, allowing Beaser to deviate from strophic forms and instead shift textures seamlessly from tremolo and strummed chords to chorale-style, two-voice counterpoint.

\textsuperscript{35} Lomax, *English Language*, 53.
\textsuperscript{36} Beaser, *Shenandoah*, 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Texture</th>
<th>Key-Area</th>
<th>Section/Indications</th>
<th>Melodic Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>“Chorale” two and three voice counterpoint</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Fragmentation of “Rolling River refrain/quotation “Danny Boy” (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-26</td>
<td>Tremolo</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Full setting of ten-measure chant with augmentation of rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-64</td>
<td>Chorale/1 to 1 counterpoint</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>“Stately”</td>
<td>Full setting of ten-measure chant with melodic material in bass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-87</td>
<td>Strummed chords: “variety of strumming effects from various folk traditions”</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>“Broadly, with great power”/cadence on V7 chord</td>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-107</td>
<td>Arpeggio</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>“A tempo, luminous, floating”</td>
<td>Full setting of ten-measure chant with melody in middle voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108-129</td>
<td>“Chorale” and one-to-one counterpoint</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>“Slowly, cantando”</td>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example 4.20** Beaser: *Shenandoah* formal outline

Beaser is careful to qualify that his setting of both work chants and Appalachian tunes are not mere arrangements but entirely new, through-composed entities intended for the concert guitarist. Beaser’s term “hybrid” is strikingly similar to Rochberg’s titling of “versions” of popular music. Like Beaser, Rochberg takes pains to separate his efforts from mere arrangements:

By “versions” I simply mean that I have not made “arrangements” but “compositions” in which tunes are embedded as the essential melodic thread. This approach allowed me to compose introductions, transitions, codas; to invent motifs based on an aspect of the tune I was working with and to weave it through; or to expand the harmony inherent in the original tune in directions it could still support without destroying its identity.

Both *Shenandoah* and *American Bouquet* rely upon source material to create a musical reaction, thereby transforming the piece into something new, either a “version” or a “hybrid.” This trend may be attributed to wistfulness. George Rochberg’s comments on American song from the early half of the twentieth century are curious:

The older I become, the more I admire and love these marvelous songs, which are to me the real music of America before WWII—the music of Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin…among other supremely gifted melodists, easily superior to the

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<sup>37</sup> Most original texts from Beaser’s *Mountain Songs* for flute and guitar are from lower Appalachia.

passionless stuff of the academicians and self-consciously “serious” composers in America during the same decades.\textsuperscript{39}

Another reason for this musical borrowing is its innate attempt at infusing music from the concert hall with the “reality” of actual life. Beaser and Foss choose Appalachian music to achieve this, whereas Rochberg looks to popular song and Crumb relies on spirituals.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., 1.
REFERENCES


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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Matthew Cochran (M.M., B.M., Eastman School of Music) is an active soloist, lecturer, and chamber musician. He is a founding member of the Tantalus Quartet and has arranged over one hundred works for the ensemble ranging from European masters such as Brahms, Handel, and J.S. Bach to Astor Piazzola and jazz standards. As a proponent of new music, he has commissioned and premiered several works for guitar and often programs music by many of today's leading composers. Highlights of the 2005-06 season include a lecture/performance of works from *A Proper Vernacular* at the 2005 Guitar Foundation of America International Convention in Cleveland, OH, concerts throughout the Southeastern U.S., and appearances with Tantalus Quartet including the 2006 Acadia International Guitar Festival in Nova Scotia, Canada. His major teachers have been Pablo Cohen, Nicholas Goluses and Bruce Holzman.

A dedicated teacher, Cochran currently directs a pre-college classical guitar program at Palmer Trinity School in Miami, FL. He has been adjunct guitar faculty at Bainbridge College (Bainbridge, GA) and Finger Lakes Community College (Canandaigua, NY), and held assistantships at the Eastman School of Music and the Florida State University. He has designed music programs for adults with developmental disabilities, and has performed outreach for both inner-city and rural schools, and for victims of domestic violence.