

An Examination of Selected Works for Percussion: Song for a Reading Partner, Sonata
Pathétique for Marimba and Track, Jump Up Superstar, My Funny Valentine, Mood Swings for
Drum Set and Track

by

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Abstract

This report is designed and intended for musicians and scholars planning to perform or seeking a deeper understanding of, the following compositions: Sonata Pathétique for Marimba and Track by Ludwig Von Beethoven arranged by Alexander Shallenberger, Song for a Reading Partner by Alexander Shallenberger, My Funny Valentine by Lorenze Hart and Richard Rogers, Mood Swings by Alexander Shallenberger, and Jump Up Superstar by Naoto Kubo and Nobuyoshi Suzuki.

Jan La Rue's *Guidelines for Style Analysis* served as the primary guide for analysis in this document. For each composition, I have added relevant performance considerations to help percussionists perform these compositions. Therefore, all pieces within this document will be analyzed using the following categories: Sound, Harmony, Melody, Rhythm, Growth, and Performance Considerations.

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Preface

For the sake of clarity and consistent writing style, I will use first-person perspective for the entirety of this report.

I will present the analysis of all these pieces following the framework established in Jan LaRue's book *Guidelines for Style Analysis*. LaRue's framework establishes five components for musical analytic work. I will list the five components below with definitions I have derived from LaRue, as well as additional terms that fall under those components

1. Sound – observations of sound can be grouped under the following headings.
 - a. Timbre: the vocal, instrumental, and other colors chosen by the composer
 - b. Dynamics: the intensity of the sound, both as indicated by markings, and as implied by the disposition of forces employed for the piece.
 - c. Texture and Fabric: the arrangement of timbres in the continuing unfolding of the piece¹.
2. Harmony – The component of music that encompasses stages of tonality, movement relationships, chord vocabulary, and part exchange.
3. Melody – The profile formed by any collection of pitches. Analysis of melody will include discussion of:
 - a. Range – the distance between the lowest written pitch and the highest.

¹ LaRue pg. 23

- b. Mode – the selection of pitches a melody is formed from. Can include major scales, minor scales, and other designations.
 - c. Motion -
 - i. Stepwise, skipping, leaping, chromatic,
 - d. Patterns
 - i. Rising vs. falling
 - e. New vs Derived
 - i. Primary themes vs secondary themes.
- 4. Rhythm – the vocabulary and frequency of durations and patterns. Analysis of rhythm will include discussion of:
 - a. Meter
 - b. Tempo
 - c. Motives
 - d. Phrases and Subphrases
 - e. Textural rhythm
 - f. Harmonic rhythm
 - g. Contour rhythm
- 5. Growth – How a piece of music leverages sound, melody, harmony, and rhythm to elicit a sense of movement, change, and shape. Movement change and shape can come from change in any musical element.

Chapter 1 - Song for a Reading Partner

Biographical Information on the Composer

I (Alexander Shallenberger) was born on August 4, 1993, in Erie, Pennsylvania. For the first two years of my life, my mother and I lived in apartments near my grandmother. After my mom married in 1995, my parents and I moved to a house in Millcreek Township.

My musical roots grew from both of my parents: my father, a self-taught pianist, and my mother, a professional music educator and vocalist. Their influence shaped my musical taste and compositions. I started violin at age eight in our elementary school orchestra but switched to piano by age twelve. One year later, I joined Walnut Creek Middle School's percussion section. In high school, I marched with McDowell High School, the Erie All City Marching Band, and two seasons with Fusion Percussion, a short-lived Erie indoor group. I also performed in my church's worship band and a variety of school ensembles such as choir, wind ensemble, jazz band, orchestra, and some rock/metal projects outside of school.

I graduated from Collegiate Academy in 2012 and earned a dual degree in Music Education and Percussion Performance from West Chester University in 2017. At West Chester, I studied with Dr. Ralph Sorrentino, Dr. Christopher Hanning, and David Nelson. During college, I taught private lessons and spent four summers at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, balancing teaching and performing. In my final year there, I toured France and Germany as both a counselor and jazz ensemble drummer. From 2017 to 2019, I pursued my master's in percussion performance at Kansas State University under Dr. Kurt Gartner, with additional studies in

composition (Dr. Craig Weston) and jazz theory/performance (Dr. Wayne Goins). Since 2019, I have taught music as a faculty member of Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Programmatic Summary

I composed *Song for a Reading Partner* during my studies at Kansas State. The composition is meant to capture the feelings of a romantic relationship where both partners enjoy reading and quiet tranquility, while also containing passion, energy, and at times turmoil. I premiered this work during my master's recital on March 31, 2019, in Kirmser Hall on the campus of Kansas State University.

Sound

During the composition process for “*Song for a Reading Partner*,” I was inspired by the opening of “*Daphnis et Chloe*”: a choreographic symphony for orchestra and wordless chorus composed in 1912 by Maurice Ravel. During a live performance of “*Daphnis et Chloe*”, in which I performed, I was immediately struck by the shimmering and fluttering effects produced by the ensemble. Since I had settled on vibraphone as the solo instrument for this composition, I decided to use the instrument motor at a medium speed to create the desired shimmering timbre. As in all keyboard percussion pieces, mallet choice was considered, and I chose to perform with four medium-soft mallets to create a tone that doesn't have a harsh attack, while being able to use accents and dynamics to bring out voices when appropriate.

The texture of the piece is largely homophonic, with melody and accompaniment present throughout the piece. The introduction of the piece is monophonic. At rehearsal mark A, a homophonic texture sets in with a main melody and accompaniment inspired by material I performed in “*Concerto for Vibraphone*” by Ney Rosauro, as well as a beloved piece of video

game music from my childhood titled “Dire Dire Docks” by Koji Kondo. Homorhythmic moments occur at rehearsal B to break up cadenza passages that serve the programmatic purpose of conveying turmoil in the relationship, while also showcasing the virtuosity of the performer. The harmonic and melodic material in this section is inspired by the “Oath to Order” piece written by Koji Kondo for the *Legend of Zelda: Majora’s Mask* game. The C section showcases a monophonic triplet figure like the beginning, signaling a return from turmoil to jubilation in the relationship. The piece then returns to a homophonic texture that keeps the triplet rhythmic pattern going until m. 139, where the accompanying voice switches to duple patterns. The piece then ends a sequence of block chords meant to communicate stability, closure, and peace.

Harmony

In his chapter about harmony, Jan LaRue discusses harmony in large dimensions and the evolution of tonality throughout music. Within that evolution of tonality, he defines stages of tonality that can be used to delineate and define the tonality of a piece. This piece uses elements of expanded tonality that are defined by LaRue in this section. One of those elements is enlarged diatonicism, which LaRue defines as music that freely exchanges between the major and minor forms of the same key. The piece also uses chromaticism, which LaRue defines as including chord alterations and modulation between related keys, and neomodality, which includes chords that go from I - flat VII².

The opening of the piece through m. 12 uses a series of arpeggiated chords that intentionally avoid the establishment of a tonal center. These chords are meant to convey the

² Jan LaRue, *Guidelines to Style Analysis* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1970), 54.

sense of unfamiliarity felt when an individual is in a new environment trying to navigate social dynamics.



Figure 1.1 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 1-2

At m. 13, the piece settles into B minor while using chords that aren't diatonic to B minor: C dominant 7 in m. 14 and G minor in m. 16. After a cadenza that outlines A dominant 7 and A minor 7 in m. 20, the mode of the piece shifts to G mixolydian in m. 21 and stays while the main theme is stated. This section fits the criteria for being neomodal, as it features a I - flat VII modal progression. At m. 91, the key changes to A natural minor with cadences in C major occurring in mm. 97 and 99. At m. 103, a D major chord occurs, which implies A dorian mode, but then a G minor triad occurs in 105 that is followed by a quick sequence of D minor, G minor, F major, A dominant 7 flat 9, and then non chordal material that leads toward a strong A dominant 7 at m. 111 which moves the piece solidly into D minor at m. 112 as seen in Figure

1.2.

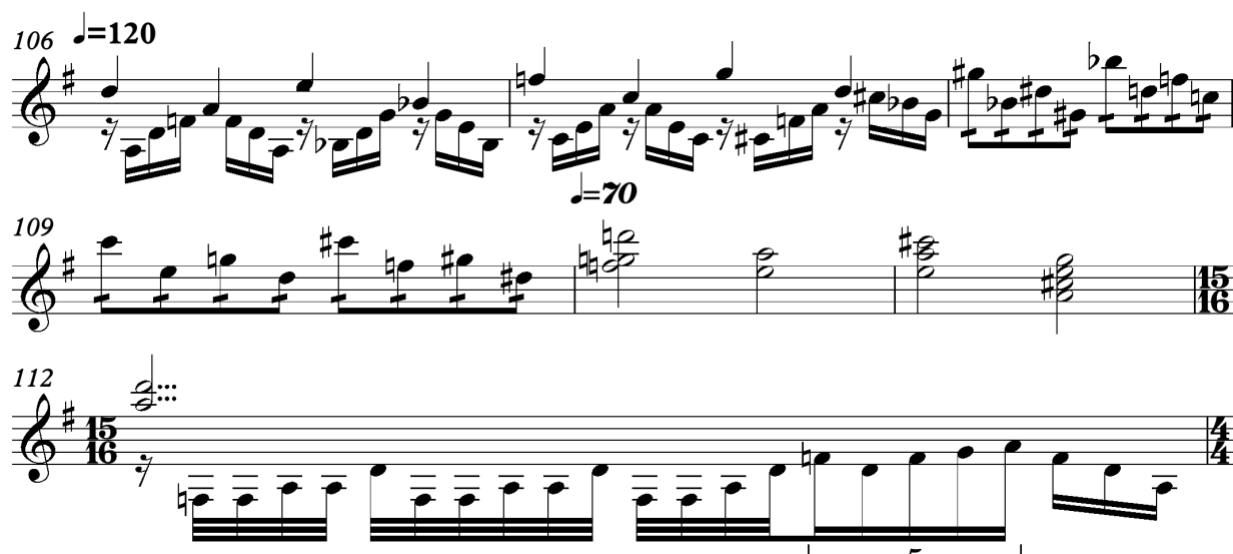


Figure 1.2 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 106-112

In m. 112, a cadenza section occurs in D minor. Within D minor, the neapolitan chord of E-flat major occurs in m. 113, adding dissonance and tension to the cadenza section. The cadenza has occurrences of both D natural minor and D Dorian within the cadenza section. In measure 124, a deceptive cadence occurs with B major 7, which marks the end of the cadenza. Measures 125 and 126 have the chords B-flat major seven, G minor 7, and C dominant 7. These chords move the piece to the final key area of the piece, which is F major. The C section of the piece, beginning at 127 through the end, exhibits the most consistently diatonic material thus far in the piece, except for D major functioning as a secondary dominant to G minor, which is the ii chord that starts the ii – V – I progression in mm. 143-147.



Figure 1.3 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 143-147

The end of the piece utilizes F major, B-flat major, and C major, which serve as the I, IV, and V chords, respectively. This straightforward progression is meant to convey tranquility and stability earned after the conflict and rigor of the modal material in the B section of the piece. I was very intentional with my use of harmony in this piece, wanting the concepts of tension, release, unpredictability, rigor, and angst to serve the overall narrative of the piece and the romantic relationship.

Melody

I composed a melody early in the process of composing this piece because I wanted the piece to have a narrative throughline. I wanted to put the melody in different contexts, alter it, and develop it through the piece to show the romantic relationship evolving, growing, and being put through tribulations. Jan La Rue discusses this style of melodic composition in his discussion of the middle dimensions of melody.

The first fragment of the main melody appears mm. 13-16 as seen in Figure 1.4. The melodic fragment, which has been highlighted, is stated in D major even though the accompaniment is in the relative minor key of B.

13 Vib.

14 Vib.

15 Vib.

16 Vib.

Figure 1.4 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 13-16 with melodic fragment highlighted.

This first occurrence of the melody is only a partial statement. The full melody occurs in mm. 33-49, this time in G major.

The image displays a musical score for a vibraphone (Vib.) across five staves, corresponding to measures 33 through 47. The key signature is G major (one sharp). The melodic fragment, highlighted in yellow, consists of the following notes: G4 (half note), A4 (half note), B4 (quarter note), C5 (quarter note), D5 (quarter note), E5 (half note), F#5 (half note), and G5 (half note). This fragment is presented in a partial statement across the five staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, rests, and accidentals (sharps and naturals) for the lower voices, while the upper voice (melody) is primarily composed of the highlighted notes. The staves are labeled with measure numbers 33, 37, 41, 45, and 47. The word 'Vib.' is written to the left of each staff.

Figure 1.5 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 33-47 with melodic fragment highlighted.

The melody is transposed directly from D major to G major with no alterations to its function in the diatonic structure. This occurrence is the only statement of the full melody in the piece as future recurrences begin with the same initial melodic statement but diverge.



Figure 1.6 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 61-64 with altered melodic fragment highlighted.

The melodic material in the introduction and A section of this piece has an opening motif that is identical in each statement shown thus far. The rhythm of the motif is altered slightly in m. 57 with a dotted quarter note to eighth note rhythm occurring instead of two half notes.

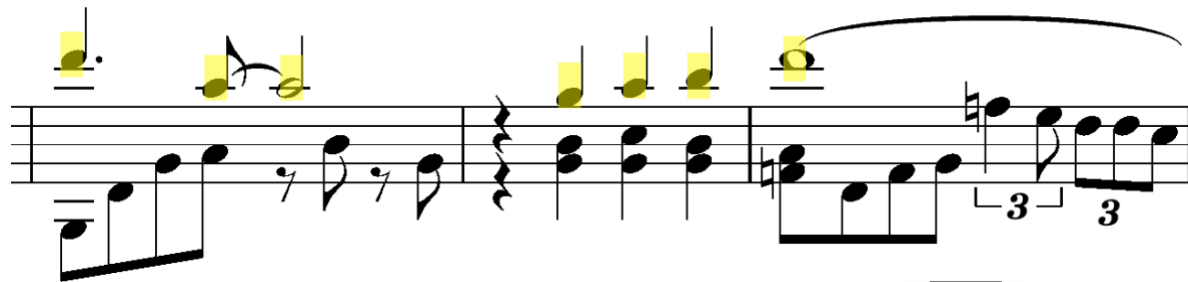


Figure 1.7 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 57 - 59

This alteration gives the motif a slight syncopated effect and occurs in m. 61 and m. 69. In the B section of the piece, the melody is placed in a minor mode for the first time.



Figure 1.8 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 91-92

The contour and rhythm remain the same, but the shift to a minor mode has the intended effect of communicating that the romantic relationship is experiencing hardship. The altered motif appears again in mm. 100-101 and is altered even further in mm. 103-104.

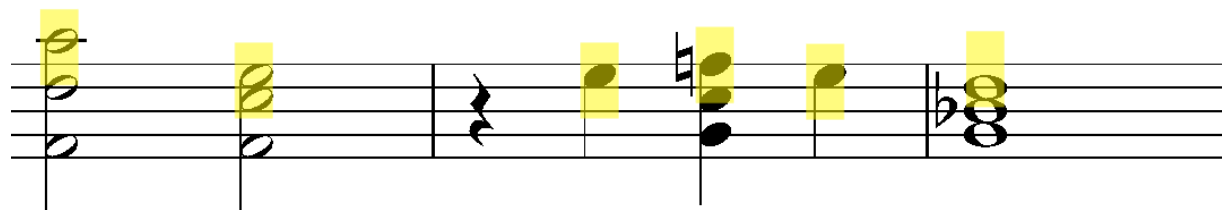


Figure 1.9 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 99-103

The melody is absent from m. 106 to 123, which is the cadenza section. The opening motif of the melody reappears at the end of the cadenza and is repeated three times in different key areas.

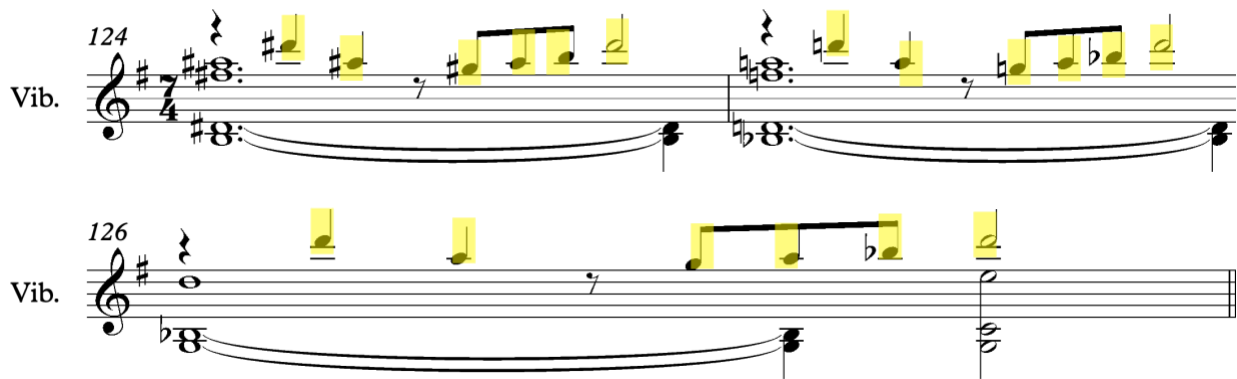


Figure 1.10 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 124-126 with melodic content highlighted

In the final section of the piece, the melody appears in m. 131. The opening motif is repeated several times throughout the ending portion before the final statement of the melody which ends by ascending to the tonic in the final measures of the piece.

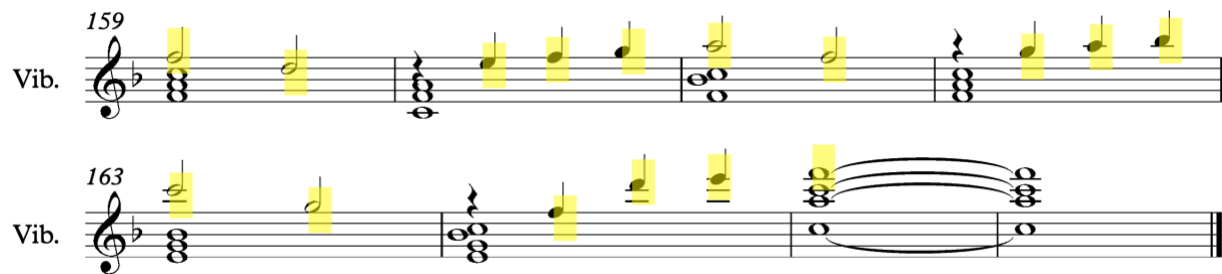


Figure 1.11 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 159-165 with melodic content highlighted

Rhythm

In *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, LaRue writes about how rhythm provides moments of stress and lull within a piece. Stress is defined as having high levels of rhythmic activity and moments of accent within the material, where lull is a condition of relative stability or rest because of low levels of rhythmic activity³. This piece makes use of these concepts with contrasting sections of rhythmic stability and steady tempo, as well as frantic sections of quick rhythms and rubato. The sextuplet arpeggiated chords at approximately 60 beats per minute build a low level of stress in the first twenty measures of the piece.

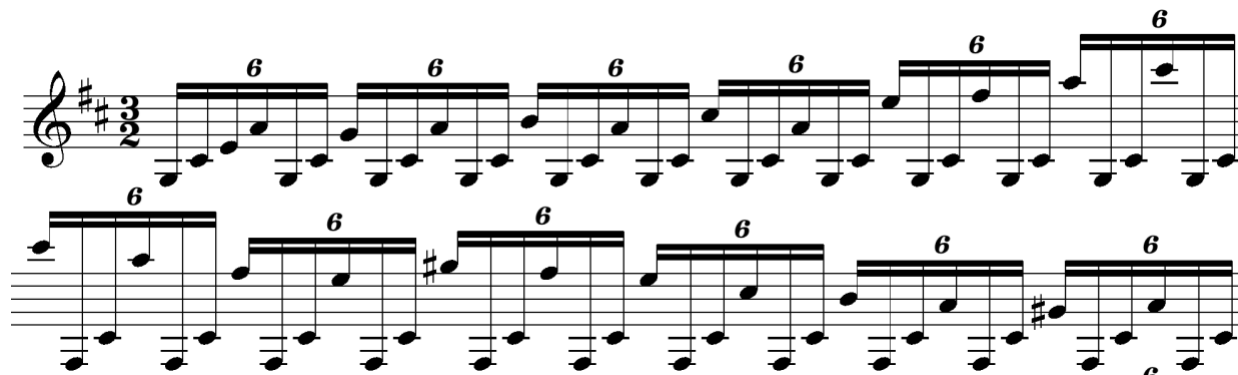


Figure 1.12 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 1-2

These rhythms aren't meant to be highly articulate as this section was inspired by the tremolo technique in the strings during the opening of Ravel's "Daphnis et Chloe."

By contrast, the section that begins in m. 21 provides a lull, with a pair of simple eighth note patterns inspired by "Dire Dire Docks" by Koji Kondo. The written tempo of 140 is meant to be followed more rigidly so that the syncopated eighth note patterns in the accompaniment groove when the melody and accompaniment appear together at m. 33.

³ LaRue pg. 97



Figure 1.13 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 21-33

The repeated eighth note pattern breaks at m. 53 with triplet figures and quarter note triads accompanying the melodic statements. This break with pattern adds stress to the passage, adding more varied rhythmic activity which is relieved by the lull provided by the repetitive dyads beginning at m. 69.

Figure 1.14 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 53-72

The chords are changing over the bar line which hints at a 3:2 hemiola effect between the dyads and the established 4/4 time signature. This effect appears again in mm. 83 – 90, after a section of block chords provides a lull between the dyad sections.

In the B section, the tempo decreases to 60 bpm, which is a less strict marking than in the previous section. Stress and lull are very prevalent in this section. m. 91 – 95 and m. 100 – 105 are mostly quarter, half, and whole note values, which at the written tempo have a grounding lull effect that is broken up by the broken sixteenth note figures in mm. 96 – 99. Then in building up to the cadenza section, we see an accelerando with double lateral sixteenth note patterns with all four mallets in 106-107, followed by doubles in the right and left hand that lead to m. 110, which provides the final lull before the cadenza section as seen in Figure 1.15.

91

96

98

102

106 $\text{♩} = 120$

$\text{♩} = 70$

109

15

Figure 1.15 Song for a Reading Partner mm. 91-111

The cadenza section is the most rhythmically stressful part of the piece, both for the performer and within La Rue's stress vs. lull continuum. Thirty-second notes, mixed meters, and sextuplet doubles all appear in this section, as it was my intention for this to be the most challenging section for the performer, and the section of the piece where the relationship is at a point of emotional conflict. After the cadenza, there is a lull in measure 124 – 126 that allows the performer to reset.

At m. 127 a triplet figure accompanies the melody which contrasts with the eighth note figures in mm. 21 through 56. The triplets add a more driving feel that is meant to evoke a more triumphant and joyous when combined with the main melody returning F major. In mm. 139 – 146 contrasting eighth and sixteenth note figures add stress to the piece which is then gradually dissipated as the eighth note ostinato from m. 33 appears again in m. 147. In m. 155 through the final measure, the piece slows down with a tempo change, and with all note values being increased to wind down the piece and end on a feeling of relaxation and finality.

Growth

This piece follows a romantic relationship. In the A section from mm. 1 – 20, the character feels adrift and melancholy, which is supported by the modal nature of the harmonies, absence of melody, and a repetitive rhythmic ostinato. In m. 21, the relationship enters a place of tranquility, playfulness, and joy supported by the stable G mixolydian mode and repetitive syncopated rhythms. In the B section at m. 91, the relationship enters a period of conflict, represented by a sudden shift to a minor mode where the melodic sequence is placed over a minor tonality, the tempo slows dramatically, and there are more moments of dissonance. The conflict escalates, leading into the cadenza section with virtuosic passages in D minor, which are

fast and dissonant passages that generate momentum. In m. 123 the relationship exits the conflict, and at m. 127 the relationship enters a new period of joy and excitement represented by a return to the stable tonality of F major and steady rhythmic figures that slow down the piece, relieving the stress from the B section.

Performance Considerations

This piece requires techniques. In the opening, the double lateral strokes must be as even and subdued as possible so that the audience hears connected chords rather than individual attacks. The performer will also have to consider the narrative of the piece and adjust to the written dynamics while making sure to draw out the melody when it's present. The eighth note pattern in the right hand is paired with the melody in the left hand at m. 69 will present the performer with the challenge of keeping the eighth notes beneath the melody.

The sustain pedal on the vibraphone will also need to be approached with intentionality. The performer must make sure the sound isn't becoming harmonically cluttered with dissonance while maintaining the legato effect the vibraphone is well known for. Ascending scale figures should not be allowed to ring through, while arpeggiated sections can be played with the pedal depressed as these figures will not create too much dissonance if sustained.

I encourage future performers to play the cadenza with rubato and at a tempo that is most comfortable to them. The tempo throughout the piece should be informed by the performers comfort level with the material, while adhering to the shape and pacing within the score.

Chapter 2 - Mood Swings

Programmatic Summary

I started playing drum set at the age of 14, and it was the first instrument I played onstage with other professional musicians. For my master's degree I wanted to create a piece to showcase my years of study of the drum set and some of the musical styles I enjoy performing.

During my undergraduate studies at West Chester University, I arranged an original piece that my professor, Dr. Christopher Hanning, composed for his post-graduate work called "Backlash". The arrangement was in two parts: one was a new play-along track for me to perform, and the other was a percussion ensemble arrangement that was performed by Dr. Hanning and a percussion ensemble at PASIC in 2016. This experience inspired me to create my own original piece for drum set and track, which over the course of my master's work became Mood Swings. I also took inspiration from some of my favorite works of progressive rock, such as Liquid Tension Experiment and Haken, and some influence from the fusion jazz group Return to Forever.

Sound

Since this piece is a chamber piece that debuted in a recital hall, I opted to use darker sounding cymbals which would contrast with the high frequencies in the track. Those cymbals were a Bosphorus Master Vintage Ride, Bosphorus Groove Series' Hi Hats, and a Zildjian Medium Thin Crash. I also wanted to use a smaller drum set with this piece to make balance more attainable.

I composed the backing track in Logic Pro X using Virtual Studio Technology (which will now be shortened to VSTs) plugins that are built into the software. I selected the VST plugin Chip Tune Lead, which provides a bright synthesized lead sound. I selected the VST called Chimera Bells, which provides a softer accompanying sound used for rhythmic figures in the middle ground. I added the VST called Grand Piano, which provided a contrasting acoustic voice to the synthesized plugin sounds. I added the VST called Expansion, which provided a sustained choral sound for chordal figures. I selected the VST Bass Synth which provided the low-end frequency needed for a balanced sound. Finally, I selected the VST called Insight, which has two arpeggiators, a low buzz sound, and two delay effects, with the resulting sound being a bubbling, steady low end for the opening sustained pitches.

The Chip Tune Lead, Chimera Bells, and Grand Piano VSTs all have melodic and accompaniment material programmed throughout the piece, while the Expansion VST provided a sustained pad of chordal material that provided harmonies in the background of the piece. The bass synth provided necessary low-end support to the melodic material as well as support for the rhythmic sequences in the piece.

Within Logic Pro X, the volume of any VST can be automated to change in specific moments of a piece, simulating dynamic changes in an ensemble. VSTs can have the volume changes programmed on a straight line or a curve at the discretion of the composer. A visual example of what that automation process looks like can be seen below.

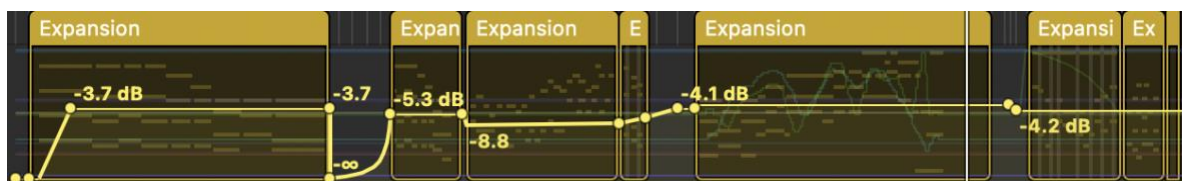


Figure 2.1 Volume Changes within the Expansion Plugin on Logic Pro X

These automation changes allowed me to affect the balance of the piece, choosing certain plugins to bring into the foreground of the piece at specific times providing needed dynamic effects and allowing for adjustments to be made for balance between the digital ensemble and the live player.

Harmony

“Mood Swings” utilizes diverse modes and abrupt switches between them. The piece operates within a framework of expanded tonality, utilizing neomodality and chromatic pivots to create a sense of shifting emotions.

The piece starts with a progression over a sustained D pedal tone. The opening chords alternate between the bright, stable D 6 add 6 chord and the tense, darker D minor 6 flat 9 chord, creating a sense of harmonic unease and shifting mood. The overall key area is D Mixolydian, but the frequent use of the D minor flat 9 implies an altered D Dorian tonal area.

Table 2.1 Chords

Measure Number	Chord
2	D6 add 9
11	Dm6 flat 9
15	D6 add 9
18	Dm6 flat 9
22	Gm7
26	B flat
29	Cmaj9/D
39	D6 add 9

This same progression reappears at the first melodic statement in m. 48, but its character is transformed. The chords change rapidly, compressing the introductory chords into a more discernable chord progression.



Figure 2.2 The Piano Part for Mood Swings mm. 48-55

From m. 66, the harmonic center of the piece vacillates between D Mixolydian and D minor. This modal mixture creates a prolonged state of tension, as the piece vacillates between two modes centered on the same tonic, which is a technique Larue identifies as enlarged diatonicism⁴.

An abrupt modulation occurs at m. 82, pivoting to A-flat Mixolydian. This shift is intentionally jarring. The pivot chord, a G minor triad (iv in D minor), is an "incorrect" or distant pivot; the D natural in the bass is not diatonic to the new key of A-flat Mixolydian. This non-functional, chromatic shift is another example of mode changes creating shifts in the mood of the

⁴ LaRue, pg. 54

piece.

A brief shift to E-flat Mixolydian in m. 90 is followed by a destabilizing sequence starting in m. 94. As seen in Figure 2.3, descending figures escalate into a chromatically descending sequence, which systematically dismantles the established tonal centers. This sequence acts as a large-scale transition leading to a cadence on a C minor drone for the battery solo section at m. 106.



Figure 2.3 Mood Swings mm. 94-97

The final section, beginning at m. 121 alternates between the bright C Mixolydian and the darker C Aeolian, before settling on C Dorian for the conclusion of the piece.

Melody

The first discernible melody of the piece appears in measure 48. This melody makes use of the perfect 5th interval by skipping up and down the interval. These interval skips are intentionally reminiscent of a kick drum and snare drum alternating.

The quarter note, dotted eighth, and eighth note durations in the melody indicate an increase in rhythmic intensity as defined by Larue⁵. This stress followed by the lull of whole notes, and the transition material of the syncopated rhythm in m. 54.

As seen in Figure 2.4, this melody reoccurs from mm. 56 to 63 with the sustained pitches being altered in length to match the meter changes in this section. This time with the drum set playing.

The musical score for Figure 2.4, 'Mood Swings mm. 56-65', is presented in two systems. The first system begins at measure 56 and concludes at measure 63. The second system starts at measure 60 and ends at measure 65. The top staff represents the melody, while the bottom staff represents the drum set (Dr.). The melody is composed of quarter notes, dotted eighth notes, and eighth notes. The drum set part features a syncopated rhythm with snare and kick drum patterns. The score includes meter changes from 5/4 to 6/4 and back to 5/4. A 'fill' is indicated in measure 64. A bracket labeled (8) spans measures 60 to 65.

Figure 2.4 Mood Swings mm. 56-65

⁵ Larue pg. 184

This melody reoccurs much later in the piece from m. 121 through m. 135 with significant alterations to the meter and rhythm, as well as added transitory material between the familiar themes.

The melodic material at m. 66 uses ascending and descending perfect fifths followed by new melodic material that is more relaxed. The differing modes give the melody more variety as the piece goes between D mixolydian and D dorian. The melodic material from m. 66 through m. 93 is largely through-composed, however there are cells of the melodic material the reoccur in the closing section of the piece that begins in m. 136.

Rhythm and Meter

The tempo of “Mood Swings” is largely felt as (quarter note) = 110. This tempo allows the drum set to explore a variety of grooves and styles. “Mood Swings” uses meter changes to add stress and lull to the composition and add spontaneity. The meter changes and their locations in the piece are listed in the table below.

Table 2.2 All time signature changes in Mood Swings

Time Signature	Measure Number
4/4	1
5/4	48
4/4	49
5/4	50
4/4	51
5/4	52
4/4	53
5/4	54

6/8	59
5/4	60
4/4	61
6/4	62
4/4	64
7/4	94
3/4	98
7/4	99
4/4	121
5/4	122
3/4	123
4/4	124
7/8	125
4/4	127
7/16	135
4/4	136
7/8	140
4/4	141
7/8	148
6/4	149
7/4	151
4/4	155

Meter changes occur in bursts, with sections of consecutive measures of different meters as well as long stretches of measures with the same meter. The frequency of meter changes fit within Larue's framework of stress and lull that he writes about in his chapter on rhythm. The meters 4/4 5/4 and 7/4 largely feel stable, while the appearances of 6/8 7/8 and 7/16 give feelings of instability.

The soloist performs steady grooves, technically challenging fills, improvised solo sections, and over the bar line figures to add to the stress and lull of the piece. Many of the rhythmic figures present in the melody and accompaniment portions of the track are mirrored or expanded within the drum set performance on this piece. One example of this is in m. 56 where the rhythm and leaping fifths of the melody are emulated by the Drum Set Part as shown in figure.

The figure shows two staves of music. The top staff is a melody in 5/4 time, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It features a wobble lead with leaping fifths. The bottom staff is a drum set part in 5/4 time, using 'x' for cymbals and 'z' for the drum set. It mirrors the melody's rhythm and includes 'fill' sections indicated by diagonal lines.

Figure 2.5 Wobble Lead and Drum Set in Mood Swings mm. 56 - 59

Similarly, the written ride cymbal in measure 66 emulates the syncopated rhythm in the chimera bells' part as seen in Figure 2.6

The figure shows two staves of music. The top staff is a chimera bells part in 4/4 time, featuring a syncopated rhythm with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff is a drum set part in 4/4 time, featuring a ride cymbal pattern that emulates the chimera bells' rhythm, with 'x' marks for cymbals and 'z' marks for the drum set.

Figure 2.6 Drum Set and Chimera Bells Part in Mood Swings mm. 66 – 69.

Moments of rhythmic synchronicity like this create a stable groove within the music that carries melodic moments and creates rhythmic tranquility to contrast with the intensity of the meter changes.

A recurring rhythmic figure throughout the piece first appears in the bass VST at m. 94 as shown in Figure 2.7

94



Figure 2.7 mm. 94 of the Bass Part in Mood Swings

This syncopated rhythmic pattern is present through the most rhythmically stressful parts of the piece, which are the open drum set solo and the lead into the open drum set solo. While the pattern repeats, the soloist should play figures that both line up with this figure and clash with the figure and alter the perceived feel,

An over-the-bar line figure can be seen in Figure 152 in the piano part. A 16th note melodic figure occurs in a pattern of 11 pitches with no rhythmic break in between. Since this figure is repeated in measures of 7/4, the pattern goes over the barline eliding the downbeats of

each measure. This creates an asymmetrical feeling within the already asymmetrical 7/4 section near the end of the piece.



Figure 2.8 – The Piano Part from mm. 152-155. Red lines delineate the repeated pattern.

Growth

As with “Song for a Reading Partner,” I composed “Mood Swings” with a narrative in mind. Each section represents a different mood: the excitement and joy of the opening drum set statement, the relaxed but active groove sections, the angst and anger within the extended open drum set solo, and the excitement and determination in the final section.

The instrumentation, thematic material, and metric variety all contribute to the growth of the piece. The melodies and themes are introduced and explored in differing harmonic and metric structures. The digital instrumentation is sparse in some sections and abundant in others, depending on the intended mood of the section. The metric variety allows spontaneity to pervade

the piece, and the diverse meters allow for the other elements to exist in a variety of contexts.

The drum set performance uses grooves, fills, improvised solo figures, and dynamics to bring the narrative to the forefront.

The drum set performance serves as the main driver of the growth of the piece. The performer plays specific rhythmic patterns during sections that are exciting and joyful, syncopated groove patterns for the relaxed portions of the piece, and loud driving grooves for the climax.

Performance Considerations

Since this composition is for drum set and playback, each performance will require a sound check to ensure that the two are balanced within the room that the piece is being performed in. I encourage any future performers to use the gear they are most comfortable with while taking care to play in a way that allows the accompanying track to be heard.

My preferred approach to drum set playing has been to perform settled grooves with some variety and improvised fills that mark phrase endings. I often want to draw attention to, or mirror musical elements performed elsewhere in the ensemble. In my experience with written drum set parts, there's an unspoken expectation for the performer to play rhythmic material that is not on the page and add more variety to the repetitive written material. In the spirit of that tradition, the drum set part was prepared to allow performers to play what is comfortable for them. The written material is limited on purpose, providing grooves that work musically with the track while leaving fills and the expanded solo section up to the performer's interpretation. I would suggest that the performer's choices align with musical elements of the track to provide a cohesive interpretation of the piece.

However, there are sections of the piece that have notated syncopated rhythms that line up with the playback audio intentionally. In these sections, the written rhythm should be performed accurately, with room for some embellishment and allowing the performer to choose which voices on the drum set they wish to utilize.

Chapter 3 - Sonata Pathétique for Marimba and Track

Programmatic Summary

In an article titled “Sonate Pathétique” published in *The Musical Times* in August of 1924, H. Scott-Baker makes the case that this work drew heavily from the opera entitled *Medea* by Luigi Cherubini. According to Scott-Baker, *Medea* is a “story of intense hatred and passionate grief,” and there are similarities between both works that Scott-Baker makes clear⁶. While Beethoven himself never acknowledged any inspiration, the atmosphere of passion and grief is present within the work⁷.

Sound

For the main marimba project of my graduate studies, I decided to arrange a beloved piano piece. I have personally been envious of the vast repertoire of piano material written by composers enshrined by history, such as Beethoven. When I listened to the first movement of “Sonata Pathétique,” I was struck by the rhythmic intensity and high energy of the piece. I believed that I could create an arrangement that brought new life to the composition through four mallet marimba and electronic track.

The limitations of four mallet marimba necessitated some form of accompaniment to perform the material, which is omitted by the marimba part. I opted to develop an electronic

⁶ Scott-Baker (1924)

⁷ Ibid.

track to accompany the marimba player as it would provide a new twist on a seminal work in the piano canon.

I arranged the backing track in Logic Pro X using VSTs. All the VSTs in the track are stock plugins, meaning that they are built into the software itself. I selected theAlchemy Synthesizer with the preset entitled Chimera Keys for its bright but soft harpsichord-like sound. A second track used the Alchemy synthesizer as well, but this one was set to a preset called Wobble Lead, which has a bright, sustained pad sound that is ethereal and alien. These two tracks often play in unison to combine the crisp rhythmic attack of the Chimera Keys and the sustained pad of the Wobble Lead. These tracks perform the accompanying broken chord material that is scattered throughout the piece.

For the multiple instances of left-hand ostinati, I wanted a punchy low bass sound that captured the angst of the part but wouldn't drown out the marimba part. I used two different VST tracks to capture this effect, both based on the Alchemy synthesizer built into Logic Pro X. The first VST track was set to the preset titled Clean Synth Bass, which provided a warm tone that had a steady sustain. The second VST track was set to the preset titled "1963 Semi Acoustic Thumb," which has a slightly distorted, punchy growling sound.

In addition to the VSTs themselves, I utilized many automation techniques available in Logic Pro X to create timbral effects and emulate the written dynamics of the piece. As seen in Figure 3.1, it is possible to program Logic to raise or lower the volume of each track according to

the engineer's preferences.

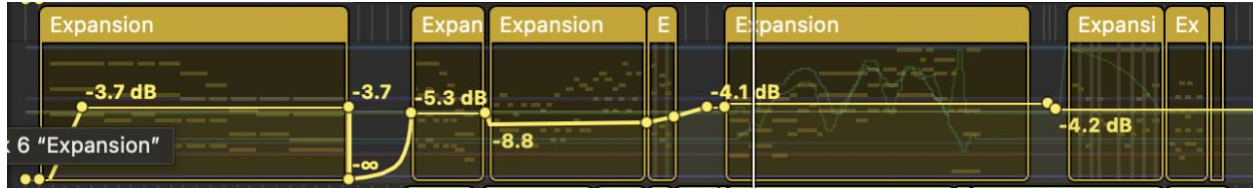


Figure 3.1 Volume Automation within Logic Pro X

Additional effects were created by altering elements such within the plugins such as drive, filter cutoffs, and gains within equalizer frequencies. Figure 3.2 demonstrates the automation programming on the filter cutoff in Chimera Keys in m. 1-20

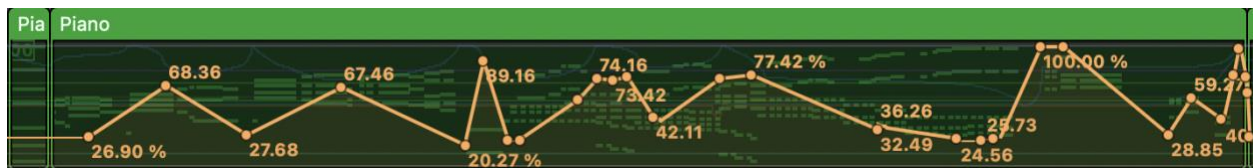


Figure 3.2 Cutoff Automation in Logic Pro X

Similarly, within the Wobble Lead track, I would program events where the drive of one of the filters would increase, causing the sound of the plugin to become harsher and muddier, which increased the intensity of the arpeggios being played in both the track and the marimba part. See Figure 3.3 to see a section of the Alchemy Synthesizer and see Figure 3.4 for a section of the piece where the drive is being automated for the wobble lead track. Note that the automation data in Figure 3.4 will increase the value of the drive controller in Figure 3.3.



Figure 3.3 An example of the Alchemy Synthesizer display.



Figure 3.4 Automation affecting the drive value within Logic Pro X

The automation techniques became an essential part of the development of the track as they allowed for expression to be programmed within the track at set times. This allowed me to sync the written expression of the piece with the track.

Harmony

Sonata Pathétique is primarily set in C minor, with material that is in other key areas throughout the piece. The introduction section marked *grave* modulates very rapidly through several chords, before ending in a half cadence in C minor in m. 9. At m. 10, the exposition begins in C minor then modulates to E-flat minor in m. 50. At m. 88 a modulation to Eb major

occurs and the exposition stays in Eb major until an abrupt G dominant seven chord in the first ending signals a half cadence back to C minor. In the second ending, an abrupt D dominant seven chord signals a half cadence in G minor.

At the beginning of the development, another *grave* section occurs in m. 135 in G minor. This section ends in m. 138 on a B dominant seven chord which functions as a half cadence in E minor. After a descending chromatic passage, the piece sits on G dominant 7 flat 9 for an extended amount of time landing back in C minor in m. 197. A C major chord in m. 220 signals a modulation to F minor in measure 222. This F minor section does not last very long. In measure 238 the piece is back in C minor and stays in that key for the rest of the movement.

Melody

As with many sonatas, melody is ever present throughout the piece. For the purposes of this analysis, I will be referring to these melodies as themes and assigning them a numerical value to streamline the analysis and give clarity when stating when the themes are repeated throughout the piece. The introduction features a homorhythmic chordal melody that serves as theme I. A fragment of this theme can be seen in Figure 3.5. In m. 5, theme I is accompanied by

pulsing sixteenth notes in the track and continues to be restated through m. 9.



Figure 3.5 Sonata Pathétique mm. 1-2



Figure 3.6 Sonata Pathétique mm. 12-19

As seen in Figure 3.6 at m. 12, the tempo speeds up and there is a second theme introduced with dyads that ascends the C minor scale in quarter notes and descends in half notes. I will refer to this subject as theme II. The ascending dyad motive is also used in sequence to modulate to E flat minor. At m. 50 a new theme appears, which is seen in Figure 3.7. I will refer to this theme as Theme III.



Figure 3.7. Sonata Pathétique mm. 52 - 59

Theme III continues through m. 87, after which there are ascending arpeggio patterns, followed by a fast eighth note line that serves as transitory material. Theme II is restated this time in E flat major, leading to the end of the first A section of the sonata.

In the sections after the repeat signs, there are restatements and iterations of all the themes introduced thus far. In 136, the tempo reverts to the introduction and theme I is restated this time in G minor.



Figure 3.8 Sonata Pathétique mm. 136-138

11



In the Allegro portions of the piece, Beethoven uses eighth notes that oscillate between

Beethoven also features eighth note arpeggios in both hands in spots of the piece such as at m. 90-99 as seen in Figure 3.10.

5

Figure 3.10 Sonata Pathétique mm. 90 - 101

Growth

As with most pieces designated as Sonatas, this piece follows the Exposition, Development, and Recapitulation template. This form is a recipe for musical growth as it establishes multiple themes and strengthens them through repetition and alteration. In Table 3.1, I have provided a breakdown of the sections of the piece with the three sections labeled as well as when the thematic material I have identified occurs and recurs.

Table 3.1 Analysis of Thematic Material from Sonata Pathétique.

Measures	Macro Form	Thematic material
mm. 1 - 4	Introduction	Theme I
mm. 11 - 34	Exposition	Theme II
mm. 51 - 88	Exposition	Theme III
mm. 135 - 138	Reintroduction – mm. 135-138	Theme I
mm. 139-196	Development	Transitory Material
mm. 197 – 223	Recapitulation	Theme II
mm. 301-311	Recapitulation	Theme II
mm. 223 – 254	Recapitulation	Theme III

Chapter 4 - Jump Up Superstar

Biographical information on the composer

Naoto Kubo is a Japanese video game composer who was born in Tokyo Japan. After growing up in Tokyo, Kubo attended Berklee College of Music from 2004 to 2008. After graduating from Berklee, Kubo worked for Azure Gaming before joining Nintendo in 2013. Kubo worked on several games for Nintendo before being made the lead composer for Super Mario Odyssey.

Programmatic Summary

The song “Jump Up Superstar” plays within the video game Super Mario Odyssey during an in-game level called “A Traditional Festival”⁸. Within the level, the player explores sections of gameplay reminiscent of the original “Donkey Kong” arcade game released in 1981, playing as a pixelated 2D Mario in a game that contrasts with most of the game, which occurs in 3D.

Sound

According to an interview with Kubo published on Nintendo’s website, he was inspired to compose this song after playing a prototype of one of the levels in Super Mario Odyssey that was inspired by New York City⁹. Kubo suggested that Mario could run around the city gathering members for a band, and as the individual band members were assembled at the live venue, each member would add their part to a song. As this idea developed, the idea for a music festival in the game was suggested, and it became necessary to compose a song for said festival. Given that

⁸ (Kubo, 2013)

⁹ (Kubo, 2013)

NYC has a storied history of big band jazz, Kubo decided to compose a song in this style that contained repeated melodies, several sections, and lyrics that would respond to the player's actions in the game. The result was a big band jazz anthem that was used prolifically in the marketing for the game.

For my arrangement of this song, I opted to create a lead sheet of the piece and use a live jazz combo with myself on the drum set, a pianist, a bassist, and a vibraphone player. This arrangement allowed for the melody to be featured on the vibraphone while the bass and piano covered the harmonies and bass lines.

Melody

Jump Up Superstar was written as a song featuring a vocalist accompanied by a big band; as such, the melody is lyrical and is divided into verse, chorus, and a refrain. The melody for the verse features a question-and-answer phrase that both begin with the notes G-A-C. The question phrase follows the G-A-C sequence with material that ends on a low G, which is the fifth scale degree in C, whereas the answer phrase resolves on C. The verse then contains some transitory material that leads into the chorus.

The chorus is built largely on three pitches descending and then ascending. It's a repetitive motive figure in E flat that has more melodic material filled in. The melody ends on E flat before going into the refrain.

The refrain melody quotes the melody of the original Donkey Kong game, which is an arcade game that features the first appearance of Mario. The single melodic line is displayed in Figure 4.2, while the melody that accompanies the refrain can be seen in Figure 4.1



Figure 4.1 The refrain melody from Jump Up Super Star

Harmony

This piece features several elements of harmony common within the blues and jazz traditions. The verse section of the piece that takes place from mm. 5 – 30 is in C blues as outlined by the C7 to F7 back to C7 progression. There are also multiple instances of ii-V-I cadences, such as m. 8 and m. 12.

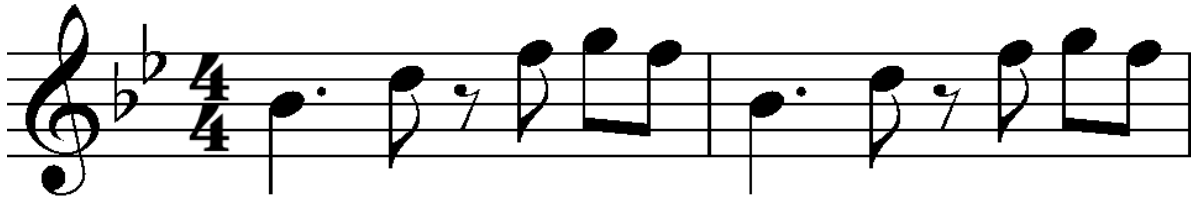


Figure 4.2 The melodic line from the original Donkey Kong game released in 1981

A			
C ₇	F ₇	C ₇	G ₋₇ C ₇
F ₇	F [#] _o	E ₋₇ E ₇ ^b	D ₋₇ G ₇
C ₇	F ₇	C ₇	A ₇ ^{b9}
D ₋₉	G ₇	C _{Δ7}	C ₇
F _{Δ7}	F [#] _o	E _{ø7}	A ₇ ^{b9}
D _{7sus}	D ₇	D ₋₇	G ₇
⌵	B ₇ ^b		

Figure 4.3 The chords for the A section of Jump Up Superstar as transcribed into iReal Pro

An abrupt shift to E flat major occurs in the chorus section of the piece. The chorus uses repetitive instances of ii-V-I in E flat major, which occur every four bars. An interesting modified ii-V-I occurs from mm. 37-39, where a G half-diminished seventh and a C dominant 7 flat 9 leads to an F minor 7 chord. The F minor 7 chord functions as a ii-V-I in Eb major. Using a ii-V-I in a different key to tonicize the ii of the home key is an effective device used in jazz songwriting that allows soloists and composers to briefly explore new key areas and add variety to their songs.

Rhythm

The original recording uses a distinct big band swing feel at approximately 200 beats per minute, which is often characterized as a medium up swing. Accented off beats appear frequently throughout the piece, adding excitement and unpredictability to some of the figures the big band plays behind the melody. A unison rhythm is used to transition between the verse and the chorus at m. 29, which uses the quarter note triplet, adding a three over two polyrhythm effect. This unison rhythm also builds tension into the key change.

The refrain contains two repeated rhythms, one in the band and one in the vocal line. These repetitions build in intensity by increasing in volume and adding instrumental lines that

respond to the refrain in the gaps.

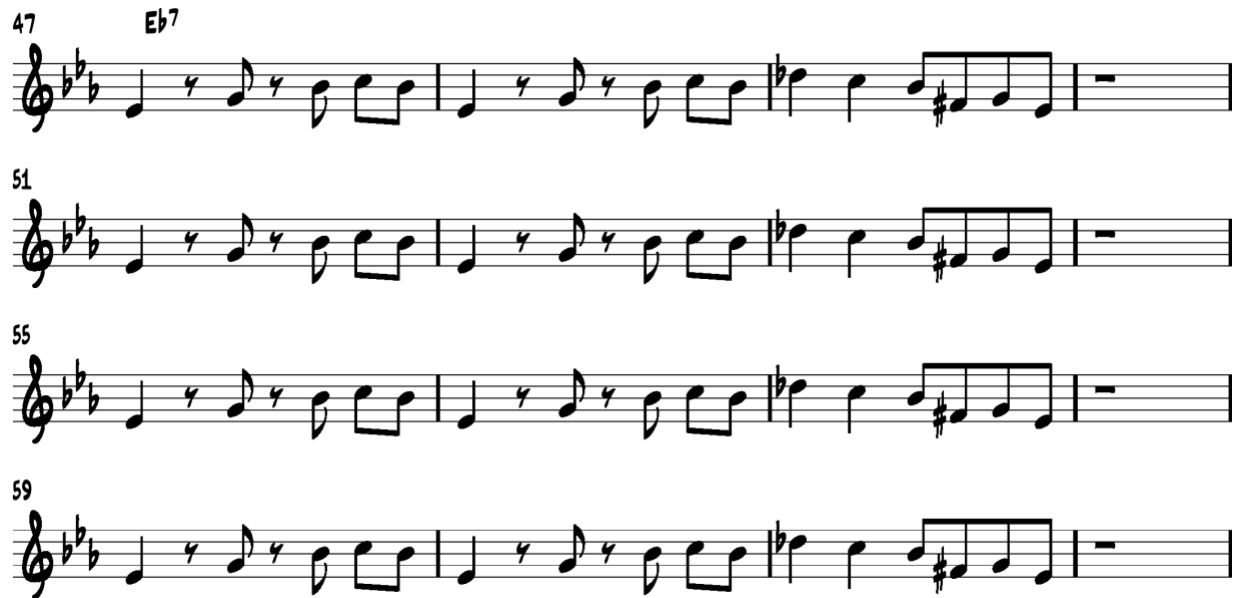


Figure 4.4 The refrain the band plays from mm. 47 – 61 in *Jump Up Superstar*

Growth

Since this song has a very simple melody, most of the growth comes from the harmonic language and the unorthodox structure of the piece. This song features two distinct key areas, C major blues and E flat major blues, with the verse being in C major blues while the chorus and refrain are in E flat major. The key changes delineate between the verse and the chorus. The unison rhythm at measure 29, followed by the solo melodic line, helps this key change feel brighter. This song form is meant to be looped until the end, as is the case with video game music and jazz standards. Having distinct sections and transitions between them allows the song to feel fresh for longer periods of time.

Performance Considerations

I prepared a fake book-style sheet for the musicians who performed this alongside me, as well as some alternate parts, such as the refrain that didn't fit on the real book sheet. Given that this was performed as a jazz combo, it was important to determine solo order, decide how many times the form would be repeated, and work on the balance and sound of the overall ensemble. Jazz combo playing is an exercise in listening and responding to other players as well as playing the written melody, form, and harmonic structure.

Chapter 5 - My Funny Valentine

Biographical information on the composers

Richard Rogers was born on June 28, 1902, in New York City. He became most known for his works in musical comedies and contributed to more than 1,500 songs and more than 50 musicals. Musicals such as *Pal Joey* (1940), *Oklahoma!* (1943), and *The Sound of Music* (1959) went on to become historic landmarks in musical theater. Rogers' work allowed him to achieve the storied EGOT status, which is an award for entertainers who have won an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tony. Richard Rogers died on December 30, 1979.

Lorenz Hart was born on May 2, 1895, in Harlem, New York. He became most known for his 25-year collaboration with Richard Rogers, which resulted in about 1,000 songs. While attending Columbia University to study journalism, he took various literature and playwriting courses and wrote skits for the university's shows. While he dropped out of school without a degree, his contributions to musical theater led to his being inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1970.

Richard Rogers and Lorenz Hart met each other in 1918. As a songwriting duo, they contributed to several successful Broadway musicals and films. Their musical *Babes in Arms*, which premiered in 1937, produced several songs that became pop standards within the great American songbook, including the subject of this chapter, My Funny Valentine. The musical follows the story of two teenage boys who produce a show to avoid being sent to a work farm.

Programmatic Summary

Rather than being about Valentine's Day, this song, within the context of the musical *Babes in Arms*, is about the protagonist Valentine, often called "Val" for short. The character

Billie, Val's main love interest, sings this song after a confrontation between the two lovers leads Val to storm away. Billie calls attention to Val's flaws while insisting that he not change and that he stay with her. The lyrical and musical content make for a mournful, longing love song.

Sound

This song was composed for the 1937 musical *Babes in Arms*. It was then recorded many times as a jazz ballad by luminaries like Miles Davis on the record "Cookin' With the Miles Davis Quintet" recorded in 1957¹⁰, and Chet Baker on the record "Chet Baker Sings" recorded in 1954¹¹. Since it was recorded within the jazz tradition, it's become most associated with the jazz combo sound, typically a vocalist, a horn player, and a rhythm section. For my recital, I wanted to play piano on one of my pieces, so I assembled a trio of myself on piano, Matthew Meals on bass, and Brandon Collins, who used brushes on the drum set.

Melody

The melodic material during My Funny Valentine is based in the keys of C minor and E-flat major. The melodies use repetition, stepwise motion, and neighbor tones to build intensity and relief throughout the piece. As seen in Figure 5.1 mm. 1-2 are identical to mm. 3-4 which

¹⁰ Miles Davis Quintet (1957)

¹¹ Chet Baker (1954)

establishes a melodic motive that is present throughout the piece.

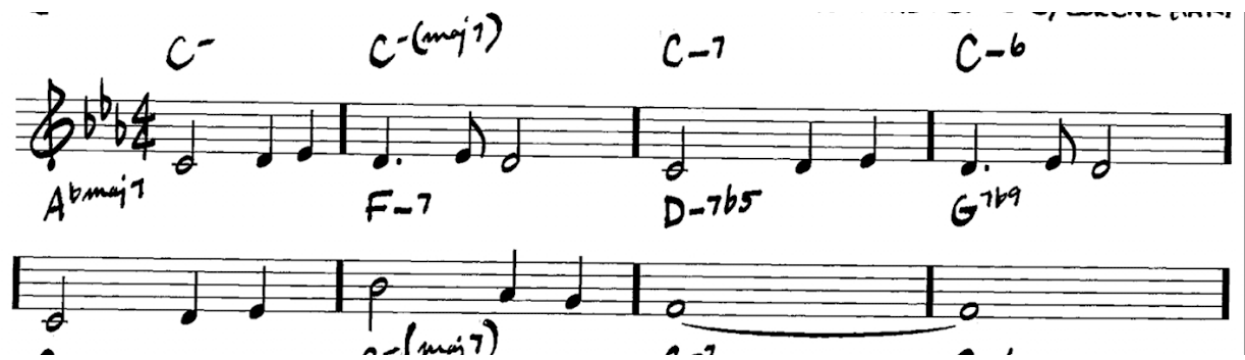


Figure 5.1 My Funny Valentine mm. 1-8

Measures 9-12 see a restatement of the melody starting on E-flat instead of C, keeping the same shape and rhythm, as well as staying in the key of C minor. While the melody repeats the same motive, the bassline descends chromatically from C to A flat, creating tension to contrast with the repeated motive. This two-measure melodic motive appears throughout the piece several times, making it the bedrock of the melody.

Within mm. 17-24, a different pattern emerges with leaps that increase in intervallic value with every repetition, going up and back down to land on E-flat. This consistent landing on E-flat supports a key area shift to E-flat major and the distinct feeling this section of the song has.

The initial motive from mm. 1-2 is initially repeated in mm. 25-26. However, it isn't repeated in the following measures immediately, rather mm. 27-28 repeat mm. 3-4. The motive from mm. 1-2 is repeated an octave higher in mm. 29-30, followed by a sustained E-flat pitch that lasts for two measures. In mm. 33-34, the initial motive is performed starting on E-flat, followed by a whole note on E-flat that resolves the piece on a cadence in E-flat major, whereas much of the piece is in C minor.

Harmony

This song largely stays within the confines of C minor and E-flat major, which share a key signature. The A section is built on the C minor key area with a descending chromatic line from C minor to A-flat in mm. 1-5. On the “Chet Baker Sings” album recorded in 1954; this descending chromatic line occurs in the upright bass over a repeated C2. This chromatic line occurs in mm. 1-5 and mm. 9-13 during the verse section. The combination of the melody in C minor and this chromatic line creates a series of dissonances and consonances that create a longing and solemn effect.

The B section stays within the area of E-flat major with chords ascending and descending diatonically on the half note from mm. 17 – 20. In m. 21, the stepwise chord pattern is broken by going from E-flat major seven to a G7, which resolves to C minor again, ending the brief detour into E-flat major.

The final section of the piece that I have designated as A' is distinct from the initial A section. Firstly, the A' section is 12 measures, whereas the initial A section is 16. The first five measures of A' begin the same as A harmonically, but cadences with a $ii^{\emptyset}$ -V-i progression in C minor at mm. 31. This cadence is immediately followed by another cadence in A-flat Major, which uses a device commonly referred to as a tritone substitution, having an A dominant 7 sharp 11 chord precede the A-flat major 7 chord rather than an Eb Dominant 7.

Rhythm

This song is in 4/4 time and is typically performed as a slow ballad. The melody is primarily made of two primary rhythmic motives that are iterated on throughout the piece. Each motive in full contains two measures. Figure 5.2 shows all instances of these rhythmic motives.

MY FUNNY VALENTINE
(BALLAD) - RICHARD RODGERS / LORENZ HART

Rhythmic Motive 1

Rhythmic Motive 2

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Figure 5.2 The lead sheet for My Funny Valentine with rhythmic motives marked

The two rhythmic motives identified make up twenty of the thirty-six measures in this chart. Rogers and Hart emphasize on beats one and three in both motives by using half notes and dotted quarter notes on these beats. The consistent emphasis on one and three adds to the steady halftime feel. The tune does not change meter or tempo at any point in the song. The 36-bar form is unusual in that the A and A' sections are different lengths.

Growth

My Funny Valentine follows a 36-bar ABA' form. Table 5.1 shows where the different sections are with the measure numbers.

Table 5.1 Form Analysis of My Funny Valentine

Form Designation	Measure Numbers
A	1-16
B	17-24
A'	25-36

The C minor and E-flat major key areas provide the biggest contrasts between the A and B sections, as well as different melodic material and rhythmic motifs. These contrasts give the music a clear sense of movement from one section to the next and a sense of resolution by the end of the chart.

In a jazz combo performance, the ensemble plays the entire chart as written twice, once at the beginning of the performance and once at the end, with solos in the middle. The soloists are also responsible for adding to the contrast and shape of the piece. In a song like this with very clear harmonic parameters, the soloists will largely stay within the established tonal centers, in

this case C minor and E-flat major. The slow tempo will allow soloists to alternate between sweeping runs and licks within their solo, as well as deliberate slow sustained material, as the soloist feels is appropriate.

Performance Considerations

As it was with Jump Up Superstar: solo order, balance, and understanding of real book interpretation will be required for a successful performance. Careful attention should be paid to the tempo of the piece and not allowing it to speed up, as can be the case with ballads. For myself, performing on piano, I needed to memorize both the melody and chord progression of the piece to ensure that I could solo reliably on the piano over the form. I asked that the Drum Set player use brushes, and the bass player was permitted to switch between using a bow and fingerstyle playing as deemed appropriate.

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