

University of Adelaide
Elder Conservatorium of Music

Portfolio of Compositions and Exegesis:

Leitmotifs and their development

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements

For the degree of

Master of Music (M Mus)

By

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CONTENTS

Abstract	4
Declaration	5
Acknowledgements	6
Section A : Exegesis	7
Introduction: Leitmotifs and their development	7
A.1 <i>The Gingerbread Man</i>	12
A.2 Jazz Quintet	16
A.3 String Quartet	17
A.4 Horn Quintet	19
A.5 <i>Alone</i>	24
A.6 Sonata for Horn and Piano	28
Conclusion	34
List of Sources	
a) Musical scores	36
b) Discography	38
c) Bibliography	40
Section B : Portfolio of Musical Scores	42
B.1 <i>The Gingerbread Man</i>	43
B.2 Jazz Quintet	129
B.3 String Quartet	137
B.4 Horn Quintet	146
B.5 <i>Alone</i>	174
B.6 Sonata for Horn and Piano	183

Section C : Sound Recordings

(CD of sound recordings located inside back cover)

C.1 *The Gingerbread Man* (midi recording)

Duration: 18:02 mins

C.2 Horn Quintet (live performance recording)

Duration: 25:40 mins

Musicians: Andrew Bain (solo Horn), Ferry Road Chamber Players

Track 1: Movement 1, *Allegretto* (4:08 mins)

Track 2: Movement 2, *Andante* (5:07 mins)

Track 3: Movement 3, *Lento, Allegro vivo* (3:25 mins)

Track 4: Movement 4, *Nocturno, Cantus Firmus* (5:18 mins)

Track 5: Movement 5, *Rondo Humoresque with Interlude* (7:40 mins)

C.3 Sonata for Horn and Piano (live performance recording)

Duration: 18:10 mins

Musicians: Philip Hall (Horn), Jamie Cock (Piano)

Track 1: Movement 1, *Allegro Moderato*

Track 2: Movement 2, *Andante*

Track 3: Movement 3, *Scherzetto, Allegro con brio*

Track 4: Movement 4, *Vivacetto* (Funky)

Philip Jeremy Hall

Portfolio of Compositions and Exegesis: Leitmotifs and their development

Abstract

This submission for the degree of Master of Music at the Elder Conservatorium of Music, University of Adelaide, consists of a portfolio of original compositions supported by an explanatory exegesis.

The portfolio consists of six works: *The Gingerbread Man*, for a sinfonietta ensemble (woodwind quintet, two violins, viola, cello, double bass and percussion); a Jazz Quintet (alto saxophone, fluegel horn, vibraphone, tambourine and double bass); a Horn Quintet and String Quartet (violin, two violas and cello); *Alone* (for solo horn and 3 female voices – SSA); and Sonata for Horn (or Tuba) and Piano.

The supporting exegesis explains the creative and investigative processes that have taken place, exploring the idea of the leitmotif and developing it through the six compositions within the portfolio.

Declaration

NAME: PROGRAM.....

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my exegesis (only), when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. I do not give consent to the copying of either the musical scores or the sound recordings.

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SIGNATURE: DATE:

Philip Jeremy Hall

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Supervisors: Professor Graeme Koehne and Professor Charles Bodman Rae for their support, knowledge and direction. Their expertise as practicing composers within the academic environment has been invaluable in helping steer the candidate through endless questions and answers, debates and disagreements, all of which are invaluable when discussing the creative content of the portfolio of compositions.

Musicians: Terence Tam, Keith Crellin, Janis Laurs, Michael Robertson, Andrew Bain and the Ferry Road Chamber Players for their time and input in rehearsing and performing the *Horn Quintet*. Pianists Jamie Cock and David Barnard for their patience, musicianship and understanding into a first attempt at writing for piano in the *Sonata for Horn and Piano*. Christie Anderson, Greta Bradman and Emma Horwood for sublime singing and giving up valuable time to work on the vocal composition *Alone*. Steve Peterka for his knowledge of all questions related to percussion instruments. Nelson Green whose unfailing sense of right and wrong, good and bad taste in the musical world; and for always keeping a grounded and informed base that integrates the organic side of music with the academic side.

To all the individuals on both a musical and non-musical level who have at some stage within the last four years found themselves becoming sounding-boards on which to bounce ideas off. These people whose comments and opinions have unknowingly been observed have been integral to research on a cultural level, which has then become central to the creative and decision processes.

Section A: Exegesis

Introduction

The decision to use leitmotifs and their development as the basis for this Master of Music degree was made after lengthy and thorough discourse with supervisors. There were multiple contributing factors that helped to solidify this idea of delving into what constituted a leitmotif and how leitmotifs were utilised.

It seemed a logical step as a composer to have an absolutely solid foundation in the understanding and practice of leitmotifs and their progressions. A secondary contributing factor emanates from being a professional musician sitting in an orchestra every day for the last 24 years. Playing some of the greatest iconic compositions ever to utilise leitmotifs has heavily influenced how I listen to and perceive a composition. I instantly relate to leitmotifs on a performance level; the passing of a motif from one instrument to another within the orchestra is at the heart of musicianship. The development of a motif helps strengthen the imagination within the performer, thus leading towards a greater understanding of the music, which then leads to a greater performance.

The use of leitmotifs in a composition instinctively creates an awareness of relevance within the music being played. This is because of the very concept of what makes a leitmotif: this representation of an idea, of a character or the symbolism portrayed on a musical level. These are all powerful elements that can be found within music with many composers using leitmotifs as a foundation in linking thoughts and ideas together in the form of a coherent musical expression that the musician can then interpret.

Having rehearsed and performed so much music that has owed its very existence to leitmotif elements I found myself asking the question, “do I really understand what constitutes a leitmotif?” I understand and recognise thematic material and sequences, but do I have a solid understanding of what a leitmotif actually is? With so many master

composers having created and manipulated leitmotifs with such consummate ease and skill, and the extreme contrasts of genres which have all at some point employed leitmotifs, I found myself as a performer wanting to know more about the conceptualisation and implementation of leitmotifs.

Arnold Whittall in *The New Grove Dictionary* defines a leitmotif as: “A theme, or other coherent musical ideas, clearly defined so as to retain its identity if modified on subsequent appearances, whose purpose is to represent or symbolize a person, object, place, idea, state of mind, supernatural force or any other ingredient in a dramatic work, usually operatic but also vocal, choral or instrumental. The leitmotif may be musically unaltered on its return, or altered in its rhythm, intervallic structure, harmony, orchestration or accompaniment and also may be combined with other leitmotifs in order to suggest a new dramatic condition.”¹

This definition by Whittall constitutes the embodiment and make-up of a leitmotif. I however also needed to understand this definition on a more practical level so I revisited my past experiences within the context of an orchestral musician. One of my strongest memories pertaining to a first introduction to leitmotif use was Berlioz’s *Symphonie Fantastique*. The recurring love theme *Idée fixe* (fixed idea) found in each of the movements of this landmark symphony was an extremely powerful experience. The transformation of this motif within each movement was a perfect example of sustaining the relevance of an initial idea (*Idée fixe*) whilst adhering to the programmatic architecture of the composition. The programmatic nature of this symphony is a strong driving force; it tells a story that instantly interacts with a listener’s imagination.

There are other musical experiences also instrumental in influencing the decision to use leitmotifs. Participating in two complete productions of Wagner’s Ring Cycle was perhaps the most defining experience in leitmotif development. The leitmotifs found within the Ring Cycle contain strong elements of symbolism. It is this use of symbolic ideas such as creation, destiny, renunciation and redemption that form the corner-stone of the

¹ Arnold Whittall: ‘Leitmotif’ *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 2nd edition. Stanley Sadie, ed. (London: MacMillan, 2001) : vol 14, p.527

relationships between leitmotifs. It is interesting to note that Wagner did not use the German term 'leitmotif', for which the literal translation into English is 'leading theme'. He preferred the terms *Hauptmotif*, *thematisches Motiv* and *Grundthema*. One of first people to use the term 'leitmotif' was F.W. Jähns in a book on Weber written in 1871 "to describe a musical motto or theme which recurs throughout a piece of music (usually an opera) to portray a person, object, emotion etc."²

Other more obvious and simple methods of leitmotif use can be found in character representation such as Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, where each theme represents actual characters within a story line context. Contemporary use of leitmotifs can be found in the film industry; John Williams soundtrack to *Star Wars* is a perfect example of character portrayal within a film being reinforced by musical themes.

When planning this composition portfolio it was thought distinct methods of approach would be the best way of showing diversity. After researching the concepts and elements of leitmotifs in compositional practice, it became obvious that the musical elements employed within the portfolio would have to define and clearly support the idea of what depicts a leitmotif. The overall methodology and structure employed was to introduce the initial leitmotif /theme and investigate its transformation in combination with other additional motifs.

The different approaches and comparison between each composition of the portfolio evolved into four separate categories.

Category 1:

The first composition of the portfolio *The Gingerbread Man*, is a work that is dependent upon recurring character motifs representative of a person/animal or place and is structured around a storyline.

² Wendy Thompson. "Leitmotif." *The New Oxford Companion to Music*. Denis Arnold, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) : vol 2, K-Z, p.1055-1056

Category 2:

One main motif is used as the basis for the entire composition. Both the Jazz Quintet and the vocal/horn composition *Alone* utilise this method. The main motifs are supported by secondary motifs that act as bridging themes and developmental sequences between the original motif elements. This helps both compositions to perpetuate the main motif in its original form whilst simultaneously creating a somewhat natural progression that strives to maintain the energy of the main motif with its constant use.

Category 3:

The third portfolio method is more complex. The Horn Quintet uses multiple theme combinations, where recurring motifs often evolve into new motif elements within the tonal structure of each movement. This was the most difficult method to explore within the portfolio. Juxtaposed thematic motifs were at times difficult to control; what started as the main motif quite often became consumed by new introductory themes. The overall use of motifs within this composition was one of restraint, keeping developmental aspects to each motif simple and concise.

Category 4:

The final portfolio method can be categorised as incorporating a neo-classical approach with the use of motif elements. The Sonata for Horn and Piano has a formal and recognisable structure in its use of motifs. In composing a sonata for the first time, a more classical approach was the best method to articulate the parameters of the themes and motifs. It was also a wonderful opportunity to adhere to very structured and disciplined tonal and rhythmic architecture: themes adhering to the classical format of subjects (initial and secondary themes), bridge passages between the subject themes, and development of the themes leading to a recapitulation of the initial motif.

Concept basis

In addition to these four discrete categories of how leitmotifs were used within a composition, it must be noted that different conceptual approaches were also used, and that

there is a subtle distinction between *how* a leitmotif is used and what drives the *concept* behind how the leitmotif is used.

The Sonata for Horn and Piano was the last of the portfolio compositions to be completed. It was during the formal planning stages of this composition that it became clear that the concept basis of each of the previous portfolio compositions seemed to fall into two distinct areas. These areas were dependent on how each composition was initially planned out, or in some instances it represented a lack of formal planning. Although there was recognition that there was divergence of conceptual beginnings to compositions, there was no clear labelling of just what these two divergent concepts were called.

Leonard B. Meyer's book *Emotion and meaning in music* attempts to clarify similar concepts in addressing what constitutes musical meaning; the first being what he refers to as an absolutist concept, a conscious decision made on an intellectual level about form and development, "musical meaning lies exclusively within the context of the work itself, in the perception of relationships set forth within the musical work of art".³ This seems to imply that the music is driven by the formal structure of the work.

The second conceptual approach that Meyer describes is of a more organic nature and owes its evolution to what he refers to as a referential, expressionistic approach. This is a less formal, less intellectual approach, one that utilises an "extramusical world of concepts, actions, emotional states, and character."⁴ This concept is less to do with formal structure as such and more to do with the emotive content within the music. Meyer also states that even though there are two distinct groups that they are "by no means mutually exclusive," and "that they do coexist in one and the same piece of music"⁵

The observation that Meyer makes in his description of different concepts in regards to musical meaning seems to also complement the distinct differences in how one goes about composing music.

³ Leonard B. Meyer. *Emotion and meaning in music*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956) : p.1

⁴ *ibid.*, p.1

⁵ *ibid.*, p.1

Examples of these two distinct conceptual groups can be found within this portfolio. The Sonata for Horn and Piano is a more absolutist composition with its formal sonata structure and overall form. The *Jazz Quintet*, however, is a more referential composition, because of its organic and evolving qualities that are removed from any strict formal structure. An example of both referential and formalist ideas coexisting together can be found with the Horn Quintet. The formal structures of the second, fourth, and final movements are clearly defined here. The first and third movements, however, are not driven by a recognized conventional form such as sonata or ternary form, but perhaps could be classified as rhapsodic in form.

A 1: The Gingerbread Man

The Gingerbread Man; is a work intended for children (as listeners) and is scored for one flute, one oboe, one clarinet, one bassoon, one horn, two violins, one viola, one cello, one double bass and two percussionist's. This work has a performance duration of between 20 – 25 minutes.

The Gingerbread Man is based upon the well-known children's story and utilises leitmotifs that refer to the story's many characters. The plot pivots around an eponymous character (a Gingerbread Man) who magically comes to life in the oven of an elderly couple, and he escapes from them when he realises they want to eat him. Subsequently, every new character the Gingerbread Man meets also wants to eat him: a squirrel, horse, rooster, pig, cow, and, most importantly, a fox.

Each character has its own particular motif/theme. These themes only occur once, with the introduction of each of these characters, and there is a reference towards the end of the composition, which briefly uses segments of all main character motifs. There are, however, two motifs that recur more than once: the Gingerbread Man "running" theme and the Fox motifs (the fox has two motifs: a wanderer motif, and a sly fox theme).

Amongst the character motifs lie other small counter-motifs. These are more of a symbolic nature where the music supports a condition or object; for example there is an oven alarm bell played on a rolling triangle, knocking on the oven door (bass drum), and a river motif played by the strings and based upon a whole-tone sequence.

The architecture for this piece was an organic process; there was no real plan as such with the simple idea of introducing each main motif one after the other. The overall tonality was the only planned aspect of the composition. Because this is a children's piece it was thought to give a folk-like quality to its overall flavour. The end result is a work that is full of modal elements: pentatonic patterns, church modes, and whole tone sequences are used throughout.

Part 1, Introduction, and sections 2 – 5:

An introduction was needed briefly to introduce the main motif (the Gingerbread Man) with a woodland/forest setting. This introduction was composed first without any reference to the “Gingerbread Man” motif. Upon completing the Gingerbread Man motif (see section 6) it became clear that it would be wise to incorporate this motif within the context of the introductory musical elements, thus preparing the listener for theme recognition when this main motive finally appeared in its entirety.

The remaining character motifs are then introduced in the chronological order that each character appears.

Section 2, (bb34 – 55) Little old man and little old woman motif:

The little old man and little old woman are represented by a quirky rhythmical sequence in the woodwind supported by a sedate motif in the strings and horn. It was thought having these two motif elements in juxtaposition on top of a stuttering clipped, staccato accompaniment would portray the couple with a quirky, humorous nature.

Sections 3 and 4 (bb57 -86) Fox, sneaking, wanderer motif and Fox, sly motif :

It was important that the fox motif needed to contain elements that would be considered stereotypical to a fox. Romanian music⁶ containing stylised gypsy elements seemed a good starting point as it immediately drew parallels between the cunning, opportunistic fox and what would typify as traits that could be found in the life of a nomadic gypsy. This section introduces the Fox character motif in two parts. The first Fox motif represents the physical aspect of a fox, moving and sneaking around the forest, always hidden and hard to see. This motif uses a 7/8 rhythm rich with gypsy, folk elements; this is intended to portray the fox as an opportunist who is perpetually on the move, looking for the next meal. The second Fox motif symbolises cognitive, sly thoughts and this motif endeavours to associate the listener with decision-making processes a fox may perhaps go through – everything stereotypical of a fox’s cunning character.

Section 5:

This is a continuation of the little old man and little old woman motif with a few once off mini-motifs, for example a rolling triangle depicting an oven alarm, and a sequence of repeated bass drum crotchets symbolising the Gingerbread Man knocking from within the oven.

Part 2, sections 6 – 11:

Section 6 (bb130 – 158) is the Gingerbread Man motif. This motif endeavours to portray the playful yet earnest nature one might associate with the Gingerbread Man character. This main motif (bb135 – 142) in the strings was created to simulate a children’s folk song, a nice simple but “catchy” melody that could easily be associated directly with the Gingerbread Man. When trying to assess what type of theme/motif to use here, it was important that a child’s perspective be paramount in attaining the correct mood and flavour. The Gingerbread Man needed to contain playful, naughty elements as well as a strong element of vulnerability, as the Gingerbread Man was always running away from other characters within the story.

⁶ Béla Bartók. *Studies in Ethnomusicology*. Benjamin Suchoff, ed. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

Section 7, (bb160 – 184) Fox, sneaking, wanderer motif and Fox, sly motif:

This section re-introduces the Fox who comes across the Gingerbread Man for the first time while he is running away from the little old man and the little old woman. He stealthily pursues the Gingerbread Man, waiting for the right moment to spring a trap.

Sections 8, (bb186 -218) Little old man and little old woman chasing after the Gingerbread Man:

It was thought necessary to add a chase sequence starting with the little old man and the little old woman. The music here contains elements of the little old man and the little old woman motif (bb190 in the strings and bb191 in the woodwind) under which runs a hectic semiquaver funk-based motif depicting the chase. This is a light-hearted chase with the old couple obviously unable to run fast enough. The ever-increasing layering of the semiquaver sequences endeavour to symbolise the bickering of the old couple as they lose sight of their quarry. The Gingerbread Man easily scurries away with the little old man and the little old woman finally grinding to a halt.

Sections 9 – 11, Squirrel, Cow, Horse, Rooster and Pig motifs:

These next three sections introduce more characters; the cow motif (bb269 – 282) in the Double Bass utilising a canon sequence with other instruments, the Horse motif (bb341 – 348) in the Horn and woodblock parts symbolic of a neighing horse (horn) who gallops (woodblocks) off after the Gingerbread Man. The Horse sequence segues directly into the Rooster motif (bb355 – 360) played in the woodwind/oboe and the Pig motif (bb360 – 363) in the horn, cello and double bass. It becomes quite messy with so many motifs going at one time; depicting all the main characters chasing after the Gingerbread Man at the same time.

Part 3, Section 12, 13 & 14 (bb376 – 462) The River motif, Sly Fox motif, Crossing the River motif:

The Gingerbread Man finally stops by a river. This sequence continues to magnify the tension of the chase by means of a barrier (river) finally stopping the Gingerbread Man.

The river is depicted by a whole-tone semiquaver string pattern over which the main Gingerbread Man theme also in whole-tone form is played by the woodwind. The Fox finally re-appears to spring his trap, the sly Fox motif interjects (bb430) on the bassoon to trick the Gingerbread Man. This Fox motif appears three times in total here, each time more sinister and dangerous (bb430, bb493 & bb534) with a simple accompaniment of rumbling bass drum with a long held pedal F# in the double basses. The alarm of a loud rolling triangle symbolises the demise of the Gingerbread Man (bb538). The end of the Gingerbread Man occurs in bars 543-544 (Vivo) with a loud short quaver sequence symbolic of the triumphant snapping jaws of the Fox.

The conclusion of this composition remains focussed on the Fox wanderer motif as he slips off back into the forest in search of another free meal and was difficult to finish. The entire work was an accumulative build up of tension surrounding the Gingerbread Man. The question was: once he was gone would the ending be strong enough with the Fox simply slinking off into the shadows? After much experimenting it was decided to briefly introduce a new motif, which would depict the mortality of the Gingerbread Man. Chopin's Piano Sonata in Bb minor influenced the motif element in this conclusion. Even though it is not an original idea, the decision to utilise the funeral march segment from the Sonata within the Gingerbread Man and Fox wanderer motifs proved to be successful in the build up to a strong finale (bb588 – 592).

A2: Jazz Quintet

Jazz Quintet is a composition scored for alto saxophone, flugelhorn, tambourine, vibraphone and double bass. This work has a performance duration of 5 ½ minutes.

The Jazz Quintet characterises a continually evolving work. This composition is based entirely upon a single triplet motif first heard in bars 2 and 3 in the alto saxophone and vibraphone parts. There is a more expansive melodic structure encompassing this small motif, but it is of a secondary nature owing its existence only as a vehicle for the triplet motif. It is this small triplet motif that is the basis for the dialogue between the alto

saxophone and the flugelhorn. The accompanying instruments, the tambourine, vibraphone and double bass are continually playing throughout this piece. The double bass portrays a quasi-walking bass figure on top of which the rhythmic pulse of the tambourine sits with the vibraphone laying down the key changes and chordal progressions.

The concept for this composition was to simply see for how long the treatment of the triplet motif could be sustained. A binding architecture was disregarded during the conception of this work; it needed to be a flowing piece with no real defining sections. The flugelhorn part was initially written for voice. This worked up to a point, but the tonal flavour sounded too much like a “Swingle Singers” (an English a cappella ensemble) concoction, and there were going to be challenging balance problems between the voice and saxophone.

The overall tonality is in D minor with modulating sequences. The overall architecture of this composition had no pre-conceived structured plan other than to adhere to leitmotif development. A chordal plan was formulated on the piano, but this was designed purely as a tonal map; the overall object was to be free (jazz portrayal) and uninhibited by structure.

A 3: String Quartet

String Quartet, a long composition of three parts with introduction and conclusion has been reduced in duration to a single movement composition of approximately 8 minutes. The longer 18-19 minute piece had become stale with the final representation evolving into a long piece, which had elements of *theme and variation* but had lost much of its focus and relevance. The final submission is the original first part with introduction of the longer 3 part quartet. This composition has a performance duration of approximately 8 minutes.

The *String Quartet* was composed immediately after the *Jazz Quintet*. It was inspired by American contemporary jazz guitarist, Bill Frisell who has a strong connection with music traditionally linked to the America’s “deep south”. His music typically has dark, twisted “hillbilly” blues jazz flavours.

The idea driving this composition was to have long motifs that were related to each other via a short insistent internal motif present throughout the entire work. This short motif is initially a two note blues descending sequence (b. 12, Bb – G, Violin 1). These two notes get altered somewhat as the piece develops, early examples are of the minor 3rd changing to a major 2nd (b. 16, B – A, Viola), back to a minor 3rd (b. 20, Bb – G, Viola) and to a major 3rd (b. 21, B – G, Violin 1).

This composition initially opened with the Violin solo in bar 11. Although fulfilling the purpose of introducing the main long motif found in this composition it wasn't really a very strong beginning. The introduction (bb. 1 – 10) was one of the last sections to be composed. It sets up the two-note descending motif which is present throughout the entire composition.

The overall flavour has jazz elements that have been fused with more classical concepts. Influence from certain mainstream composers appeared as the piece progressed. This was important, in that the overall flavour not be purely of a jazz styled work, (even though this composition was inspired by a jazz artist), it needed to contain strong classically-based elements for an ensemble such as a string quartet to sound at its best. The opening introduction and figure A (bb47 – 99) were heavily influenced by Bill Frisell-styled progressions with blues chords and strong bass line (cello). Bars 11 through to 46 have chordal sequences and rich harmonic and show developments which evoke a Mahler-like influence, particularly with the use of suspensions and discord resolutions. Bars 106 – 116 contain qualities reminiscent of Shostakovich, with a melodic line doubled in octaves in the two violin parts while the main motif is played in the cello part under which the viola plays repetitive arpeggio patterns. The next change occurs in bar 117 where the arpeggios in the viola are joined by the two violins playing arpeggio patterns with differing articulations. This accompanying pattern contains elements similar to Holst's *The Planets*, under which the cello solo becomes more expansive.

The recapitulation occurs in bar 157 after a short interlude, bridge passage (bb. 130 – 156).

Having such a short composition contain so many stylistic influences was fraught with danger. It was a composition that evolved so it was important that the jazz influence pervade throughout but not be the one driving factor in this composition. The lack of bowings in the score was a decision made due to advice from professional string players on the basis that a chamber string ensemble would insert their own bowings during the rehearsal process of the piece and that there was no real area within the composition that required a specific type of bowing technique.

A 4: Horn Quintet

The Horn Quintet is a suite of five movements for solo horn, one violin, two violas, one cello. Not from the original portfolio list – the original Brass Quintet portfolio piece was to be based upon elements of an educational nature; theme recognition and association with brass instruments. It was removed because *The Gingerbread Man* composition already fulfilled an educational role within the portfolio. A performing opportunity in 2007 needed an accompanying work so the Horn Quintet was conceived. The performance duration of this work is 25 ½ minutes.

In 2007 I was engaged to perform a series of concerts, the core work being Mozart's extremely popular Horn Quintet KV 407 (366c) in E flat Major scored for solo horn, one violin, two violas and one cello. Because the Mozart uses such a rare combination of instruments the Horn Quintet (using the same combination of instruments) evolved.

The Mozart Horn Quintet is an iconic composition within the horn chamber music repertoire, but with its combination of instruments makes it an oddity and there is very little to partner this piece using the same instrumentation.

As with the Mozart, the horn plays a dominant solo role, however the emphasis on the string writing has endeavoured to move away from Mozart's "mini-concerto" feel.

The Horn Quintet was initially conceived to be played on the hand horn (18th century horn with no valves). The idea behind this was strongly influenced by the fact that the Mozart Horn Quintet was composed for such an instrument. The first and third movements were written with this intent and were completed before any other movements were conceived. It soon became clear that writing for an instrument with no valves meant that the tonality became dependent upon the key in which the horn was fixed. A hand horn becomes locked into the key of the “crook” which it is utilising at any one time (different length crooks change the overall key i.e. a “C” crook puts the Horn into the key of “C”); the changing of crooks to this day remains a cumbersome and time-consuming factor. It was felt that such an approach, however possible, would be limiting the composition somewhat, making it clumsy and not what was initially intended. A compromise was reached, and this is evident mostly in movements 1 and 3 where specific motifs utilise the hand technique (opening and closing within the bell) whilst emphasising the gliss effect between the opened and closed notes.

The first movement of the Horn Quintet is in a clearly defined binary structure. The first part of the binary form begins with an *Allegretto* which is followed by the second section marked *Allegro*.

The *Allegretto* begins with a 4 bar motif in the second viola. This introductory motif is then picked up by the remaining strings before the Horn enters in bar 23 with a two-note fragment of the initial motif. This first part is not overly developed and acts as a bridge to the slightly faster second part (*Allegro*). Although the melodic structure of the second part is of a different nature, it does contain elements of the original first motif, in particular the fragment first played upon the horn in bar 23. This two-note fragment becomes intertwined with the slightly faster second part of the first movement. It endeavours to show the use of hand-horn technique.

The solo horn part in this first movement was sketched out in a rough draft and put to one side. The string parts were then composed utilising material based upon the sketched horn draft. This process seemed quite organic at the time of conception with the overall

architecture being quite loose rather than a formalised set of ideas. A different approach from the mini-concerto element Mozart used meant that individual string parts would play a more soloistic roles within the dialogue between strings and horn. This is evident in the opening string introduction of the first movement; all of the motif elements of the Allegretto are first heard in the string parts. When the horn enters it picks up on fragments from this opening section becoming more expansive as the movement evolves.

The *Andante* 2nd movement utilises a simple melancholic melody in D minor introduced by the strings (violin). The violin drops out and the horn enters with a slightly altered version of the opening violin motif. It is not until after a short lullaby interlude (bb. 53-77) based in C# minor and played on the horn, that the horn takes up the original notation of the 1st motif (b. 79). There is a juxtaposed secondary accompanying motif first introduced by the 2 violas (b.5) and later developed by the horn (b. 92) which modulates back to the tonic of D minor based on the original motif played in octaves between the horn and violin.

The conceptual approach to this movement differs from the 1st and 3rd movements. All of the string writing was composed first with themes and motifs conceived particularly with a strong string character in mind. The horn part was added afterwards, and in some areas the violin part was removed and replaced with the horn. This ultimately gave this movement a nice balance in the dialogue solos between the violin and the horn.

The 3rd movement, *Lento, Allegro vivo* opens with a slow (*Lento*) and strong motif played by the solo horn (bb1-5). This motif is then repeated by the horn in bar 6, in unison with the violin in the fast tempo of *Allegro Vivo*. This movement was composed immediately after the 1st movement, with the opening 5 bars being absolutely dependent upon hand-horn technique; with the original idea to have this sequence of notes all played on a hand horn. The scoring for hand horn in this opening motif was originally scored as (see Figure 1):

Figure 1:

The image shows a musical score for two horn parts. The top staff is for 'Horn in F' and the bottom staff is for 'Hn.' (Horn in G). The tempo is 'Lento' and it is a 'Solo' piece. The Horn in F part begins with a forte (f) dynamic. Both parts use specific note markings: 'O' for open notes, '+' for closed notes, and 'O+' for half-closed notes. The Horn in F part has a series of notes with these markings, and the Horn part follows a similar pattern starting at measure 4.

The symbols O and + indicate open notes and closed (stopped/muted by closing off the bell with the right hand) notes, with the cross in a circle being a half-closed note. As with the 1st movement, a compromise was reached which utilised aspects of both hand horn technique with contemporary techniques. Removing the hand horn aspect from the opening phrase transformed this motif into a more strident opened sound. It also had a flow on effect that influenced the hand horn methodology being utilised sparingly and in a more controlled and effective manner (bb. 50 -52 and bb. 55 -57).

This main motif of the 3rd movement was conceived upon the Horn, much like the 1st movement. The Horn part was sketched out in a rough draft with the string parts being composed around this motif.

The 4th movement, *Nocturno, Cantus Firmus* initially began where the Horn enters at bar 22. This motif is based upon a section of plainchant (Figure 2) extracted from a liturgical manuscript of mediaeval Polish-Latin plainchants.⁷

⁷ Anon. *The Rhymed History of St Jadwiga*. Jerzy Morawski, ed. (Kraków: PWM Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1977).

Figure 2:

In I Nocturno

antiphone

Ex prae cla - ro co - nu - bi - o Nata du - cis_ Me - ra - ni - ae,

2
Co-pu-la- tur___ con - iu - gi - o Hen-ri- co, du - ci_____ Sle-si - ae.

A 21 bar prologue and epilogue was added in the string parts to set up the original plainchant. The idea supporting a prologue and epilogue to the main plainchant motif was to create a folk styled mediaeval quality, which would move into and out of the plainchant whilst keeping the integrity associated with a liturgical setting. Rehearsals with musicians proved to be enlightening, and it was decided to remove all traces of vibrato in the string ensemble in these opening and closing sequences. The lack of vibrato in the strings added enormously to help embody a mediaeval, folk-like quality. The overall form had now become a ABCA structure – A (bb.1 -21), B (bb.22 – 43), C (bb.44 – 87), A (bb.88 – 109).

The final and fifth movement, *Rondo Humoresque with Interlude* is based upon a Rondo styled hunting call (bb.1–13) played by the solo horn. This motif drifts in and out of this movement in many guises. The opening horn call is the original motif. Bars 18 – 55 introduce a secondary motif containing elements of the 1st motif. This secondary motif is somewhat displaced with its rhythmical fluctuation between 2/4 and 3/8 and is designed to add to the humour and overall light-hearted nature of the movement. A short lyrical third motif (bb. 54–78) is tied to the end of this second motif and acts as a bridge sequence back to fragments of the initial 1st motif. The 2nd motif reappears again (b.119) unaltered, and is sustained right up to the Interlude section.

The Interlude section proved to be the most difficult section to come to terms with in this composition. The need for a middle section provided an entirely different style of character that was too hard to ignore. It contains elements which are related (eg. b.169, horn part;

bb.192 – 194, horn part) and non-related to the 1st motif. The overall effect of this Interlude is one of interconnecting melodies that continues evolving around mini segments of the 1st motif. This continues until bar 234 where the secondary motif is re-introduced for the third and final time (a recapitulation) moving through the short bridge of the lyrical 3rd motif before reaching the final version of the 1st motif (b.299) which continues to the end of the movement.

The 5th movement was the last to be completed. It was the most difficult to compose, and at the time raised the question, was a 5th movement needed? After many rehearsals and three performances and with the feedback from both colleagues and audience members a re-visiting of this question proved to substantiate what the candidate's "gut-instinct" was concerning this last movement. Although it works on one level it also seems to detract from the overall serious nature of the composition as a whole. This 5th movement will remain with the portfolio of compositions for this Master of Music submission, but will be removed from any future performances. The overall future make-up and balance of this composition will be redefined in this order:

1st Movement (Allegretto and Allegro), 2nd Movement (Andante), 3rd Movement (Nocturno, Cantus Firmus), and 4th Movement, finale (Lento, Allegro Vivo).

A 5: Alone

Vocal composition titled *Alone* is scored for three female voices (SSA) and horn (or cor anglais). This composition is based upon a poem (titled *Alone*⁸) that dates back to the Tudor Court in England. The performance duration for this composition is approximately 7 ½ minutes.

Alone is a composition that is similar to the Jazz Quintet. It owes its development to an evolving sequential motif. The concept began with the search for an appropriate text. Both

⁸ John Stevens. *Music & Poetry in the Early Tudor Court*. (London: Methuen & Co, 1961) : p.342-343.

Medieval and Elizabethan poetry are an incredibly rich source from which to set music to and this particularly mournful poem seemed ideal, it had a flowing quality to the text and the stanzas were not too involved or long. The language utilised within this poem is quite beautiful in its original Elizabethan prose:

*Alone, Alone,
Mornyng Alone,
And all for one;
Alas, why so?
My myrth ys gon
For on Alone
Whych causyth my mone;
Fortune ys my fo.*

*Sumtyme was I
A lover trewly,
And now, fy, fy,
Apon fals love!
Love I deny;
Hyt ys foly
To love vainly;
This do I prove.*

*Wheras I sought,
And love dere bought
Settyth me at nought,
This ys my chaunce;
Alas, with thought
My hert ys braught
Full low forfought
Yn lovys daunce.*

*All lovers beware,
 For Y am bare
 Of yoy, yn care
 To lede my lyf;
 Takyn yn a snare
 As carles doth ane hare,
 Thus evyll Y fare,
 Lyving yn stryf;*

*Lyving yn vayne,
 Hade yn dysdayn;
 What remedy?
 Wher I wold fayn,
 Love doth refrayn,
 Not lovyd again,
 Thus ever fynd I;*

*Thus ever y fynd
 My lover unkynd,
 Turnyng as the wynd,
 No place to resorte.
 I am put behynd,
 As man that ys blynd,
 Allmost owt of mynde;
 Alone ys no comfort.*

The immediate strength of the word “*Alone*” stands out like a beacon, and this is what drives the poem. To establish the same effect in music meant that a motif was needed that characterised the isolation depicted within the poem.

The initial concept before a text was found was to compose a piece for three solo voices. Once the text was found the need to change the instrumentation was obvious almost immediately. How could one depict the solitary sadness of this poem with three voices? The choice of adding a Horn to the ensemble of the three female voices seemed a possible solution; the solo Horn could symbolise the mournful quality of loneliness.

Before beginning the musical insertion of notes to accompany the text, the comprehension of what the text portrays is most important. This is a poem that deals with most aspects about what it is to be in love; denial of love, seeking love, the pain of love, spurned in love, and the desperation and consequence of unrequited love.

The main motif (bb6-13) was first composed in the three vocal parts to establish a strong relationship between the text and music. It was not until this section had been finalised that the opening horn part (bb1-5) was then added as an introductory motif. This set up the solo horn as the symbol of loneliness within the composition and helped establish a tonal base upon which the singers could rely upon in bar 6. The vocal parts have the motif split over all three voices (bb6), this technique of taking a melodic line and integrating it over multiple parts whilst developing a sustained chordal frame work within the theme can be extremely effective; it works particularly well in instruments/voices of similar sound groups and timbre.

The horn plays an integral part in both the symbolic nature of the text and to the composition's overall sound concept. The difficulty of placing such a sonorous instrument with three female voices was a challenge particularly with the overall balance. A dialogue approach between the horn and voices seemed the only solution in getting the balance right. The text needed to be heard, so the treatment of the horn part had to be sympathetic to this. To achieve a good balance outside of the dialogue styled methodology required the vocal parts to either sustain long chords (bb.26 – 28, 36 – 37) over which a more prominent horn motif could then be brought out, or to have the vocal parts simply sing no obvious text (bb.56 – 63) over which the horn then played. The reverse of this also applied; the horn would

sustain a long soft note (bb.19 -21, 31, 36 & 38) over which the vocal parts would sing the text.

To further solidify the “*Alone*” concept of the composition the horn part at the very opening should be played off-stage (or muted on stage) and has the horn player walking off-stage at the end of the composition playing repeated staccato quavers (C’s on the horn); this gives the effect of gradually giving way to the elements within the last stanza of text:

“I am put behynd, As man that ys blynd, Allmost owt of mynde; Alone ys no comfort.”

The horn retreats into the background, forever *Alone* with the re-emphasis of the text “*Alone*” reinstated over which the last mournful motif from the now distant, disappearing Horn sounds.

A 6: Sonata for Horn and Piano

Sonata for Horn and Piano is a four-movement composition of non-related movements for horn (or tuba) and piano. Adhering to a classical format/architecture with Sonata Form, this work was conceived to make up for minutes lost with the pruning of the string quartet. This work has a performance duration of approximately 20 minutes.

The concept and overall musical architecture of the Sonata for Horn and Piano required a much more organised and formalised approach. Revisiting and researching the framework of sonata form was needed to be done before a note was composed. This composition more than any other within the portfolio required a more disciplined and involved structural and tonal plan. The desire was for this composition to contain more traditional sonata form architecture.

Charles Rosen’s book *Sonata Forms* (revised edition) was a strong source of information, which helped cover almost all aspects of sonata form. His description of what dictates a

traditional sonata form helped reinforce what was already known and enlightened more peripheral, subtle aspects of the sonata form. The basic “standard terminology”⁹ description of sonata form elaborated by Charles Rosen is as such:

“Sonata form, as that term is most frequently encountered, refers to the form of a single movement rather than to the whole of a three-or-four movement sonata, symphony, or work of chamber music. It is sometimes called *first movement form*, or *sonata allegro form*. In its standard meaning, it is a three-part form, in which the second and third parts are closely linked so as to imply a two-part organisation. The three parts are called exposition, development, and recapitulation: the two part organisation appears most clearly when, as often happens, the exposition is played twice (the development-and-recapitulation section is also sometimes, but more rarely, repeated).”¹⁰

This quite basic description is at the heart of what was driving the overall form concept for this composition. More detailed aspects (involving a traditional approach) such as first and second subjects within the exposition, bridge passages, the tonality comparison between tonic and dominant keys when entering the development section, and the return of the first theme coinciding with the recapitulation are all contained within the more complex aspects found in a sonata form.

An idea that found its way into helping co-drive this composition was of a cultural interest. The thought that this *Sonata for Horn and Piano* needed to contain “Australian” flavours was important. However, the difficult question of just what is depicted as Australian was asked. Should this composition follow a more mainstream ideology that composers such as Peter Sculthorpe sometimes utilise? That is to say, compositions of a more landscape styled approach which incorporate nature and quasi-indigenous elements. Upon reflection it was thought that however attractive this might be, a different approach would be best.

The use of Australian Bush Ballads was investigated, and this seemed to accommodate the idea that an Australian folk-song motif could be the basis on which to compose the first movement. There are two Bush Ballads which have been incorporated into this sonata;

⁹Charles Rosen. *Sonata Forms*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc, 1988) : Revised edition, p.1

¹⁰ idem

Very little of the original ballad remains within this first subject motif, only the essence of the original notation underpins this motif. The repetitive elements of the song were removed, the key changed to A minor and a rhythmical structure implemented to help drive the melodic momentum of the *Allegro moderato* (b.5).

It is important to note that there is a departure from what is considered to be a classically structured sonata as it lacks a development section; in its place is a small transitional section (bb.31 – 48) utilising elements of the original motif, but this could also be referred to as a bridge passage between the first and second subjects.

The second subject essentially replaces the development section thus retaining the overall traditional ABA (tertiary) form one comes to expect from first movement sonata. It is a more lyrical section in the dominant key of E minor and it is also based upon another Australian Bush ballad *The Lime Juice Tub* (Figure 5). This second subject (Figure 6) is a minor key version of the original ballad.

Figure 5:
(Original ballad)

The Lime Juice Tub

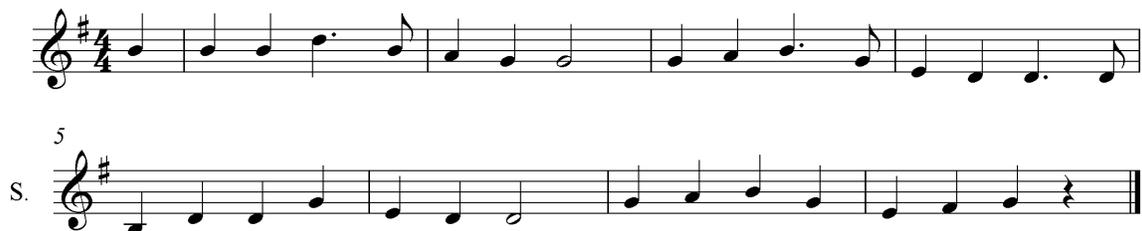


Figure 6: (2nd Subject)

SONATA FOR HORN & PIANO
1st Movement

Horn in F

Hn.

The recapitulation (bb.93 – 116) is a direct reference back to the first subject moving into a small coda (bb.117 -125) to close the movement.

The second movement *Andante* portrays the piano as an equal collaborator within the sonata. It was important that the sonata be a composition that treats both instrumentalists equally. The piano opens this second movement with the main motif, which is repeated many times throughout this movement. The horn enters in bar 10 with a secondary version of the original piano motif. The *Moderato, ma non troppo* is a lyrical interlude in the horn part under which the piano plays a torrential arpeggio accompanying passage. Multiple modulations within this section move back into the secondary horn motif (bb.63 – 71). A recapitulation of the first section occurs in bar 73 with the overall structure of the movement adhering to an ABA format. This movement ends strongly with a fragment of the main motif.

The third movement, *Scherzetto, Allegro con brio* was initially thought of as a minuet and trio format. The resulting *Scherzetto* in 7/8 was decided upon in place of a 3/4 minuet. This was to reinvigorate the metre, which had become fixated in a steady 4/4 (1st movement) and 4/8 (2nd movement). A scherzo-based movement in 7/8 could also retain an element of the minuet and trio three beats per bar feeling by sustaining a 2 + 2 + 3 through out the entire movement. The overall form of this movement was to adhere to a minuet type format of A

(bb.1 – 14 repeated), B (bb.16 – 24 repeated) moving into C (bb.28 – 70, trio) back to A (bb.71 – 92) with a finishing coda (bb.93 – 105).

The fourth and final movement was composed with a complete departure from the previous three movements in both style and energy. There are only two main motifs, the first being a strong funk-styled broken semiquaver sequence (bb.1 – 10) and the second motif based upon a scale sequence (bb.12 – 25) also with strong funk elements. These two motifs behave as first and secondary subjects upon which the entire final movement is based. The overall form is more in line with an interconnection of repeated sections; A (bb.1 – 11), B (bb.12 – 36), A with piano modulation and development (bb.37 – 62), to B (bb.63 – 72), and finishing with A (bb.73 -86).

The invaluable aspect about being both performer and composer for such a composition is inestimable. This composition changed in many subtle ways during rehearsals, the piano part in particular, as this was only the third attempt at writing extensively for the piano. All attempts at keyboard writing in the past have resulted in an overly conservative approach and result. This sonata was an opportunity to expand and take more risks with the keyboard writing. Workshopping this sonata with two different pianists has been a wonderfully enriching and informative experience and has driven home that less is indeed more.

Before starting to compose this sonata, research and studying of piano scores (sonatas) with other instruments was also invaluable. Schubert lieder, Beethoven sonatas, Brahms sonatas were all instructive as to where the first compositional steps would lead. It became clear when studying compositions composed by pianists that a pattern seemed to emerge; pianist/composers such as Schubert, Beethoven and Brahms had an ability not only to compose in the horizontal plane (melody) but also have absolute control of piano scoring in the vertical plane (chordal/harmony) and that the combination of both seemed in perfect balance. The challenge of this Sonata has at times exposed the penchant for horizontal writing (melodic), and that this would often create problems that were at odds with fundamental piano technique. Quite often the need to eliminate notes and simplify the

piano part by thinking with both a horizontal and vertical mindset helped to counteract problems as they arose.

Conclusion

It is obvious that a leitmotif can represent many different ideas within a musical composition and that the diversity in approach and the techniques used within this portfolio has been an example of the many different ways leitmotifs can be used. As outlined in the four different categories stated in the introduction of this exegesis (pp9-10), the differences of approach when using leitmotifs can be at times pivotal to the overall integrity of a structured piece of music composition. The germination of initial motifs and ideas within the different approaches found in this portfolio always asked the same important questions which are at the heart of any melodic development. Does it make sense? Is it relevant?

Sometimes, however, the testing of boundaries which dictate what is a leitmotif has at times asked questions that do not necessarily have clear and concise answers. A simple example of this can be found highlighted in a composition such as *The Gingerbread Man*. Many of the character motifs (motifs that are clearly symbolic and representative of an animal/person/place) constructed within this composition are of a somewhat long duration. Is this where a leitmotif stops becoming a motif? Has the motif now entered into a thematic stage where a longer melodic line has evolved? There is an argument that states a motif is a small segment of a larger more expansive idea. If this is the case, then it could be argued that the character motifs found within *The Gingerbread Man* are leaning more heavily towards themes than motifs. However, in regard to *The Gingerbread Man*, this is not the case. The long character motifs found within this composition all contain small segments of clearly defined motifs, and, more importantly, the symbolism representing the individual characters would be significantly weakened if important aspects were left out, because of the desire for the motif to adhere to more concise and brief parameters.

This comparison between theme and motif was initially an area that caused great consideration. The Sonata for Horn and Piano in particular, also brought to light more

questions that seemed to challenge the perception of motif versus theme. It was because of this it became clear that even though long thematic lines were evolving, the leitmotif element needed to be reinforced during the creative process. This meant that small segments of the longer thematic lines would be broken up and highlighted throughout the composition. Ultimately this would be shared between the Horn and Piano in such a way that these small motifs would in fact become the dominant aspect of a longer melodic line.

The outcome of developing a portfolio based upon leitmotifs has been an enriching and rewarding method of creating a musical composition. There is no doubt that creating compositions based upon motif development can help enhance a work's overall ability to communicate ideas. The repetition and symbolism of these motifs can also help drive a composition in its overall progression and development. A leitmotif can help enhance an idea. It can imbue flavours and colours determine a mood or impression, change direction quickly, and help bestow an aura of freedom to a composition.

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Section B : Portfolio of Musical Scores

NOTE:

Section B is included in the print copy of the thesis held in the University of Adelaide Library.

Section C : Portfolio of Compositions:

Leitmotifs and there Development

(Audio CD)

NOTE

**Music CD is included with the
print copy held in the
University of Adelaide Library.**