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Scott Boerma: A Study of His Musical Compositions and Conducting Career

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Abstract

Scott Boerma is a well-known wind music composer and conductor. In this paper, I will examine his career development as a composer and conductor. I will include brief analyses of some of his musical compositions based on form, orchestration, usage of harmonic and melodic devices, etc. I will also talk about his conducting methods when he conducts different pieces and conveys various musical ideas. There are three sections in this thesis: 1) Scott Boerma's musical journey (how he became a successful composer and conductor); 2) Analyses of his compositions: *Fanfare for a Golden Sky*, *Bora Bora*, *Shadows*, *Poem*, and *Cityscape*; 3) His educational concepts and conducting methods which he teaches young music educators and conductors.

Keywords: wind band music, composition, conducting, music education, music pedagogy, conducting methods, musicianship



Scott Boerma: A Study of His Musical Compositions and Conducting Career

Part 1: Musical Journey

Scott Boerma was born on May 15, 1964 in a musical family in South Haven, Michigan. His father, Robert Boerma, was a high school band director. Scott Boerma showed great talent at music composition at a young age. He started playing the piano at 5 years old. He enjoyed sitting at the piano for hours working with chords that his father introduced to him. He loved doing “experiments” on the piano, discovering the sounds of different combination of notes. Boerma used various chords to compose pieces during his childhood. Driven by his curiosity, he experimented with combinations of sounds to express emotion by designing which chords to use and the order of the chords in phrases. In his wind music compositions, he often uses traditional harmonies in non-traditional ways. He uses different ways to manipulate the harmonies and make them unique and creative.

Boerma started to play the trombone in fifth grade band in elementary school. He invested himself into it and learned to play well. He started taking private trombone lessons with his middle school band director in the seventh grade and then studied with a new teacher beginning in the ninth grade. He performed in bands, choirs, and orchestras throughout middle and high school. He decided to study music education in college and applied to four schools including University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Western Michigan University, and Central Michigan University. Scott Boerma got offers from all of them and finally chose Western Michigan University because he felt it was the best fit for him. When he studied at Western Michigan University, he participated in every instrumental ensemble possible, including

Symphonic Band (former Wind Symphony), Bronco Marching Band, Jazz Band, Symphony Orchestra and Gold Company Big Band.

After graduating from Western Michigan University in 1986, he went directly to the University of Michigan to study composition (with Pulitzer-prize winner, William Bolcom) and music education. His main career goal was to be a high school band director. He served as band director at Lamphere High School in Madison Heights, Michigan for five years (1988-1993) and then at Novi High School in Novi, Michigan for seven years (1993-2000). Besides his job as a band director, he also composed and arranged for concert bands and marching bands. After leaving Novi High School, he became a full-time composer/arranger for one year and was quite prolific. During that time, he began doctoral studies in Wind Conducting at Michigan State University with the Director of Bands, John Whitwell. At the end of that year, he was recruited and then appointed as the Associate Director of Bands at Eastern Michigan University. After two years in that position, he served as the Director of Bands for four years. While there, Boerma conducted the Symphonic Band, Wind Symphony and Marching Band, and taught music education and conducting classes. After six years at Eastern Michigan University (2001-2007), he was recruited and hired by the University of Michigan as an Associate Director of Bands, Director of the Michigan Marching Band, and the Donald R. Shepherd Associate Professor of Conducting. He served in this role for six years (2007-2013). In 2013, Boerma “returned home” to his alma mater, Western Michigan University, as Director of Bands and Professor of Music, and he has served in that position ever since.

Boerma has been invited to be a guest conductor throughout the United States, and his compositions have been performed all over the world. As an active composer, Boerma’s concert band works have been performed by many outstanding ensembles, including “The President’s

Own” Marine Band, the Dallas Wind Symphony, the University of North Texas Wind Symphony, the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra, the University of Illinois Wind Symphony, the University of Michigan Symphony & Concert Bands, the Interlochen Arts Camp High School Symphonic Band, and the BOA Honor Band of America, to name just a few. His music has been heard in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Hill Auditorium, the Myerson Symphony Center, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, and at the Chicago Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic. Boerma’s works have been featured in the popular GIA series, “Teaching Music Through Performance in Band.” He is commissioned each year by high school, university and community bands to write new works for the repertoire (“Scott Boerma,” 2020). Numerous students from across the country apply each year to be his Wind Conducting graduate assistant. He is well regarded for his conducting techniques and teaching methods.

Part 2: Compositions

Dr. Scott Boerma is a prolific and highly regarded wind music composer. I have analyzed several of his pieces composed for wind band. Throughout the history of music, composers in different periods created their own unique sounds. When asked what he believes gives his compositions a unique sound, he responded with several ideas. According to Boerma, all of his pieces have different purposes, so works develop as a result of those intents. A composer develops a language with which he or she is comfortable. Boerma enjoys writing music while working at the piano; he likes to see the keys and visualize how chords work together. He tries to think of the emotion that he is trying to convey, and what kinds of harmonies, melodies, and instrumental combinations might evoke that from the audience members. As mentioned before, he uses traditional harmonies in non-traditional ways, purposely avoiding common chord

progressions. He shows great interest in chordal relationships: half step relationships, common tone relationships, etc. For example, in his piece *Poem*, he uses many harmonic effects shifting between G minor and G-flat major, in which one note remains the same (B flat), while G moves to G flat and D moves to D flat. Other examples can be seen in major chords shifting to other major chords a major third away. This device creates unity between the progressions while providing unexpected shifts in sounds.

While composing, he experiments with various combinations of sounds and tries to come up with things that just sound interesting to him. He tries to find unusual ways of manipulating chords to create tension and release. Using *Poem* as an example again, Boerma's use of the harmonic shifts from minor to major chords (with common tones) creates moods that shift from sad to hopeful. He is also interested in complex jazz-influenced harmonies with sevenths, ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths, orchestrating them in unique inversions. However, his orchestrations give them a symphonic sound instead of a jazz one. Boerma is always striving to find different ways to manipulate complex chords to create unique textures.

When Boerma starts to write, he tends to first consider the "colors" of the piece, which correspond to the moods he is attempting to create. Harmony is usually his first priority, and then the melodies evolve from the harmony. For example, his *Fanfare for a Golden Sky* uses quartal harmonies, built on intervals of perfect and augmented fourths, to create brilliant and striking sounds. Orchestration also plays a crucial role in his work; he strives to choose just the right instruments and combinations of colors to portray the mood of the passage. Every instrument is equally important in his works, but it is clear that he makes conscious decisions about what instruments will best represent his ideas at any given time.

Boerma is frequently commissioned to write new works for many different ensembles for various reasons. For example, his symphonic fanfare, *Cityscape*, was commissioned by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Wind Symphony to open its Carnegie Hall performance. *Poem*, *Shadows*, and *Son Song* were commissioned by individuals in memory of someone who had passed away. *Radiowaves* was commissioned by the Western Michigan University School of Music to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2013. In this example, however, he was given freedom to write a piece about whatever he would like. He chose to write a work reflecting an experience he had when in high school. His girlfriend's father had a ham radio which connected him with people from all over the world. Sitting in a dark corner of their living room, he would can talk late into the night with strangers from other lands. Boerma remembers wondering if someday someone from outer space might join the conversation. *Radiowaves* was inspired by that wonderment.

I have chosen five of Boerma's works to study. Using musical examples, I will demonstrate some features of his composition techniques and styles.

1. *Fanfare for a Golden Sky*

This work was commissioned by the University of Illinois Wind Symphony, James Keene, conductor, in conjunction with the Mark H. Hindsley Memorial Commissioning Project. Meter changes abound in this work, shifting between 4/4, 3/4 and 2/4. Boerma frequently uses syncopation as a rhythmic device. There are unexpected accents on unexpected beats, often normally weak beats (i.e. mm. 1-3 and m. 7, see example 1a and 1b). In mm. 23-24, whole-tone scales provide a departure from the sounds heard prior (see example 2a). Whole-tone scales are again employed in mm. 28-30 in a highly rhythmic woodwind transition (see example 2b). In m.

31, the horns state a quartal-influenced primary theme, orchestrated with trombones and euphoniums in striking contrary motion (see example 3). This counterpoint is also seen/heard in the alto saxophone lines in m. 48, creating a completely different mood (see example 4). A developmental passage in mm. 62-67 uses fragments of the quartal theme passed through all of the brass instruments (see example 5). Although the woodwinds sometimes portray the main melodies, they are often used in “roller coaster style” runs that propel the music to arrive at climaxes (see example 6).

The heart of this piece is a five-note recurring motive borrowed from the inspirational Rodgers and Hammerstein song, *You'll Never Walk Alone*. The work is dedicated to Boerma's friend, Scott Stewart, the long-time director of the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps. *You'll Never Walk Alone* is the “corps song” of this organization, so this tune has great personal meaning to the composer, who performed with, taught, and arranged for this ensemble for many years. The motive is taken from the second half of the phrase, “At the end of the storm, there's a golden sky,” hence the title of this work. Although often dark and menacing, this fanfare maintains an optimistic hopefulness throughout (“Fanfare for a Golden Sky,” 2003).

The melody of “there's a golden sky” appears many times in different ways throughout the work. For example, in m. 18, horns and trombones play the motive in parallel quartally influenced chords (see example 7a). The trumpets state it in a similar way in mm. 39-40 (see example 7b). The motive, still in parallel chords, is used in mm. 72-86 to accompany the fanfares stated in the brass (see example 8).

Example 1a:

Example 1a is a musical score for a woodwind and string ensemble. The score is written for Piccolo, Flute 1-2, Oboe 1-2, Bassoon 1-2, Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Clarinet 3, and Bass Clarinet. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked *ff* (fortissimo). The Piccolo, Flute 1-2, Oboe 1-2, and Clarinet 1-3 parts are marked *ff*. The Bassoon 1-2 and Bass Clarinet parts are marked *ff*. The score shows a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a dynamic range from *ff* to *ff*.

Example 1b:

Example 1b is a musical score for an anvil and strings. The score is written for Anvil only and strings. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked *f* (forte). The Anvil part is marked *f*. The strings are marked *f*. The score shows a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a dynamic range from *f* to *f*.

Example 2a:

Example 2a is a musical score for a woodwind and string ensemble. The score is written for Picc., Fl. 1-2, Ob. 1-2, Bsn. 1-2, Clar. 1, Clar. 2, Clar. 3, B. Cl., and Sax. 1-2. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked *f* (forte). The Picc., Fl. 1-2, Ob. 1-2, Bsn. 1-2, Clar. 1-3, B. Cl., and Sax. 1-2 parts are marked *f*. The score shows a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a dynamic range from *f* to *ff*.

Example 2b:

Example 2b is a musical score for a woodwind and string ensemble. The score is written for Piccolo (Picc.), Flute 1 & 2 (Fl. 1-2), Oboe 1 & 2 (Ob. 1-2), Bassoon 1 & 2 (Bsn. 1-2), Clarinet 1 (Clar. 1), Clarinet 2 (Clar. 2), Clarinet 3 (Clar. 3), Bassoon (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone 1 & 2 (A. Sax. 1-2), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), and Baritone Saxophone (B. Sax.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes dynamics such as *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). The second system includes dynamics such as *p* (piano), *pp* (pianissimo), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score is written for a woodwind and string ensemble.

Example 3:

Example 3 is a musical score for a woodwind and string ensemble. The score is written for Flute 1 & 2 (Fl. 1-2), Oboe 1 & 2 (Ob. 1-2), Bassoon 1 & 2 (Bsn. 1-2), Clarinet 1 (Clar. 1), Clarinet 2 (Clar. 2), Clarinet 3 (Clar. 3), Bassoon (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone 1 & 2 (A. Sax. 1-2), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), and Baritone Saxophone (B. Sax.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes dynamics such as *mf* (mezzo-forte). The second system includes dynamics such as *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score is written for a woodwind and string ensemble.

Example 4:

Example 4 is a musical score for a woodwind and string ensemble. The score is written for Flute 1 & 2 (Fl. 1-2), Oboe 1 & 2 (Ob. 1-2), Bassoon 1 & 2 (Bsn. 1-2), Clarinet 1 (Clar. 1), Clarinet 2 (Clar. 2), Clarinet 3 (Clar. 3), Bassoon (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone 1 & 2 (A. Sax. 1-2), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), and Baritone Saxophone (B. Sax.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes dynamics such as *p* (piano). The second system includes dynamics such as *p* (piano). The score is written for a woodwind and string ensemble.

Example 5:

Example 5 is a musical score for a brass ensemble. The instruments listed are Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Tpt. 3, F. Horn 1-3, F. Horn 2-4, Trb. 1, Trb. 2, B. Trb., Euph., and Tuba. The score is written in 3/4 time and includes various dynamics such as *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). There are also markings for *p* (piano) and *fz* (forzando). The word "Tutti" is written above the first staff. The score shows a progression of notes and rests across the staves, with some instruments playing in unison and others in harmony.

Example 6:

Example 6 is a musical score for a woodwind and brass ensemble. The instruments listed are Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Tpt. 3, F. Horn 1-3, F. Horn 2-4, Trb. 1, Trb. 2, B. Trb., Euph., and Tuba. The score is written in 3/4 time and includes various dynamics such as *ff* (fortissimo) and *f* (forte). There are also markings for *p* (piano) and *fz* (forzando). The word "Tutti" is written above the first staff. The score shows a progression of notes and rests across the staves, with some instruments playing in unison and others in harmony.

Example 7a:

Example 7a shows five staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing slurs and accents.

Example 7b:

Example 7b shows three staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *ff*. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing slurs and accents.

Example 8:

Example 8 shows ten staves of music, labeled as follows: Trpt. 1, Trpt. 2, Trpt. 3, F. Horn 1-3, F. Horn 2-4, Trb. 1, Trb. 2, B. Trb., Euph., and Tuba. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing slurs and accents. Dynamic markings include *mf* and *f*.

This image shows a page from a musical score for a brass ensemble. The score is written for seven parts: Trumpet 1, Trumpet 2, Trumpet 3, French Horn 1-3, French Horn 2-4, Trombone 1, Trombone 2, Baritone Trombone, Euphonium, and Tuba. The music is in 2/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into four measures, with the first measure being the most complex, featuring many beamed notes and rests. The second measure is a continuation of the first, and the third and fourth measures are simpler, with many rests. The dynamics range from *ff* (fortissimo) to *f* (forte). The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with a large, clear font for the notes and a smaller font for the dynamics and other markings.

Trpt. 1

Trpt. 2

Trpt. 3

F. Horn 1-3

F. Horn 2-4

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

B. Trb.

Euph.

Tuba

2. *Bora Bora*

There are three movements in this suite. The first depicts the primary mountain in Bora Bora; the second imitates the lagoon which surrounds the island; the third brings to life the traditional music of the Bora Boran people.

The first movement is entitled *Otemanu*, which is the tombstone-shaped mountain that stands in the center of the small island. The introduction is meant to depict the initial flight into Bora Bora, seemingly lost in the clouds until the island and its mountain magically appear. At the beginning of first movement, Boerma uses half-step relationships between oscillating major chords in the clarinets and alto saxophones, shifting back and forth from E-flat major to G major to C-flat major. As the chords progress, each of them shares a common tone, with the other two notes shifting by half steps. This effect conjures images of flying through clouds. The main theme of the entire work is introduced in m. 5 by the euphoniums and consists of a descending step plus a fifth. This motive is then traded to the horn, trombone, and tuba. Nearly every passage throughout the movement uses this motive in some way: the first full statement of the main melody in mm. 11-16 (see example 1), horns and low brass statement in m. 38 (see example 2), lyrical flute countermelody in mm. 40-42 (see example 3), trumpet solo in mm. 41-45 (see example 4), euphonium solo in m. 45 (see example 5), upper woodwind interjection in m. 49 (see example 6), doubled melody in mm. 55, 57, and 61 (see example 7), flute melody in mm. 76-79 (see example 8), walking bass line in mm. 73-76 (see example 9), canonic trumpet statements in mm. 83-91 (see example 10), and so on. The motive is always used in inversion for transitional and developmental passages throughout. This tight usage of a single motive to bind an entire movement provides terrific continuity. As a humorous aside, a quote from the late-seventies

television show, “Fantasy Island” appear momentarily in the horns and alto saxophones in mm. 123-124 (see example 11).

The second movement, entitled *Moana*, explores the beautiful lagoon of Bora Bora. Flutes and metallic percussion instruments imitate the sparkling surface during the aleatoric introduction (see example 12). The motive from movement one appears for the first time in the euphonium and horn parts in mm. 9-12, however inverted from its original form (see example 13). Descending sixteenth-note lines in the woodwinds and then the brass in mm. 15-19 create the illusion of diving beneath the surface (see example 14). According to the composer, the horn melody in mm. 20-25 was inspired by giant manta rays that came from the depths to greet him (see example 15). A nod to John Williams’s *Jaws* theme, played by the low brass in mm. 25-27, introduces the lagoon’s plentiful sharks (see example 16). Undulating and ascending lines in mm. 29-31 float the music back to the glistening surface, once again imitated by the metallic percussion in mm. 32-end (see example 17).

The third movement is entitled *Nuna ’a*, which is a loose Polynesian translation of “The People.” Beginning with the traditional conch-shell call and vocal imitations of the ocean surf, a conga and bass drum play an authentic, soothing rhythm (see example 18). A flute solo imitates a traditional Polynesian chant that would normally be played on a wooden flute (see example 19). The saxophones then introduce a more modern influenced Tahitian ballad, complete with trombones imitating the glissando of a steel guitar (see example 20). The final section of the movement depicts a festive gathering of the people, complete with log drums and boisterous melodies, again incorporating the main motive used in the first two movements. A call and response passage between the winds and percussion set up an improvisatory, competitive log

drum interlude, conjuring up fire dancers (see example 21). The movement concludes with a *tutti* celebration, wrapped up with a final homophonic fanfare featuring the primary motive.

Example 1:

Example 1 shows a musical score for five instruments: Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Tpt. 3, F. Horn 1-2, and F. Horn 3-4. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It begins with a rest, followed by a strong (*ff*) fanfare. The first three staves (Tpt. 1, 2, 3) play a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The fourth and fifth staves (F. Horn 1-2, 3-4) play a lower melody, with the horn parts marked with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a crescendo hairpin.

Example 2

Example 2 shows a musical score for six instruments: F. Horn 1-2, F. Horn 3-4, Trb. 1, Trb. 2, B. Trb., and Tuba. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It begins with a rest, followed by a strong (*ff*) fanfare. The first four staves (F. Horn 1-2, 3-4, Trb. 1, 2) play a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The fifth and sixth staves (B. Trb., Tuba) play a lower melody, with the tuba part marked with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a crescendo hairpin.

Example 3:

Example 3 shows a musical score for a single instrument. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It begins with a rest, followed by a solo melody marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, followed by a half note and a quarter note.

Example 4:

Example 4 shows three trumpet parts. Trpt. 1 has a solo marked "Solo" and "mp" (mezzo-piano) starting in the second measure. Trpts 2 and 3 are silent throughout the example.

Example 5:

Example 5 shows an Euphonium (Euph.) part. The solo is marked "Solo" and "mp" (mezzo-piano) in the first measure, followed by a crescendo to "f" (forte) and then a decrescendo to "p" (piano) in the final measure.

Example 6:

Example 6 shows three staves of music. The first two staves are marked "mf" (mezzo-forte) and "Tutti". The third staff is marked "mf".

Example 7:

Example 7 shows two sets of three staves of music. The first set is marked "mf" (mezzo-forte) and "ff" (fortissimo). The second set is marked "mf" (mezzo-forte).

Example 8:

Example 8 shows two staves of music. The top staff has a melody starting on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. The bottom staff has a bass line starting on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. Both staves are marked *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Example 9:

Example 9 shows a Tuba part. The Tuba is marked with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody starts on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. The Tuba is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Example 10:

Example 10 shows three staves of music. The top staff has a melody starting on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. The middle staff has a bass line starting on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. The bottom staff has a bass line starting on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. All staves are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Example 11:

Example 11 shows four staves of music. The top two staves are for F. Horn 1-2 and F. Horn 3-4. The bottom two staves are for A. Sax. 1 and A. Sax. 2. The top two staves have a melody starting on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. The bottom two staves have a bass line starting on a half note, followed by a quarter note, and then a half note. All staves are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Example 15:

Example 15 shows musical notation for French Horns 1-2 and 3-4. The notation is in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first two measures are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). The French Horn 1-2 part begins with a melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The French Horn 3-4 part begins with a similar melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The notation includes dynamic markings (*mf* and *f*) and articulation marks (accents).

Example 16:

Example 16 shows musical notation for Trb. 1, Trb. 2, B. Trb., Euph., and Tuba. The notation is in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first two measures are marked *f* (forte). The Trb. 1, Trb. 2, B. Trb., and Euph. parts begin with a melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The Tuba part begins with a similar melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The notation includes dynamic markings (*f* and *ff*) and articulation marks (accents).

Example 17:

Example 17 shows musical notation for three staves. The notation is in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first two measures are marked *p* (piano). The notation includes complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The first staff begins with a melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The second staff begins with a similar melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The third staff begins with a similar melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The notation includes dynamic markings (*p*) and articulation marks (accents).

Example 18:

Example 18 is a musical score for a brass and woodwind ensemble, along with a percussion section. The brass instruments (Trumpets 1-3, French Horns 1-2 and 3-4, Trombones 1-2, Bass Trombone, Euphonium, and Tuba) all play a melodic line of 'Surf Sounds' (Air through Teeth, w/Lips in 'Oo' Shape) in a staggered breath pattern. The woodwinds (Flute, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Bassoon, and Eb Cornet) also play this melodic line. The percussion section includes Small Conga or Large Bongo (played with sticks), Bass Drum (played with stick/end), and Timpani (played with mallets). The score is in 4/4 time and includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *mf*, and *simile*.

Example 19:

Example 19 is a musical score for a Solo section. It features a melodic line in 4/4 time, starting with a *mf* dynamic marking. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with a final measure ending on a quarter rest.

Example 20:

Example 20 is a musical score for a melodic line. It features a melodic line in 4/4 time, starting with a *mp* dynamic marking. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with a final measure ending on a quarter rest. The score includes a *w/vibrato* instruction for the melodic line.

Example 21:

Example 21 is a musical score for a melodic line and a percussion section. The melodic line is in 4/4 time, starting with a *mp* dynamic marking. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with a final measure ending on a quarter rest. The score includes a *w/vibrato* instruction for the melodic line. The percussion section includes Hi and Lo Pitched Wooden Drum Shells (played with wooden stick shafts, not tips) and a *mf* dynamic marking.

3. *Shadows*

This work was commissioned by the Redford (Michigan) Thurston High School Bands, directed by Edward J. Lucius. The work was written in memory of Ted Smith, a former band director in that district. Boerma's program notes describe the inspiration behind the work: "A devoted advocate for kids and a passionate musician, Ted was extremely active in the Michigan School Band & Orchestra Association and played his trumpet in several community bands throughout his life. I was fortunate to have gotten to know Ted later in his life, and he was one of the most sincere, warm-hearted people I have ever met. Wherever he went he left behind soft, comforting shadows that will remain forever."

The piece poses a challenge to conductors, since the meter changes often between 3/4 and 4/4 throughout. There are many tempo changes and dramatic effects that contribute to the mood of the work. The initial motive introduced is a simple four-note descending, stepwise line (see example 1). However, a more complex motive binds the work together throughout. This motive consists of a step in one direction, a sixth in the next, followed by a fifth-leap return to the first note (see example 2). This idea appears throughout the piece in its original and inverted form. A middle passage in 6/8 interrupts the normal flow and provides a relaxed, free floating diversion (see example 3). The work is almost always leading to or away from climactic, passionate arrivals, which are never predictable. Orchestra bells play a prominent voice in the opening as an ascending scalar accentuation and in the closing for the last statement of the initial descending motive (see example 4).

Example 1:

Fl. 1

mf

Fl. 2

Example 2:

rit.

Example 3:

f

f

f

Example 4:

Bells

f

to vibes

ff

Bells

mf

4. *Poem*

This work was commissioned by conductor Dale Reuss for the Southshore Concert Band in southwestern Michigan as a tribute to one of Michigan's finest music educators, Bernie Kuschel. Boerma's program notes describe how the piece came to be: "Following Bernie's death on May 14, 2002, Mr. Reuss called to ask me if I would be interested in composing a work in his memory. Coincidentally, Bernie happens to have been my private trombone teacher from my junior high through high school years. I fondly remember my weekly lessons in the Benton Harbor High School band room, where Mr. Kuschel taught the bands for many years. He challenged, nurtured, and encouraged me in my studies, and I credit him as one of several extremely influential people in my life who helped pave the way for my musical career. Naturally, I was honored and excited to accept the commission. *Poem* expresses not only the sadness of losing this great man, but also the beauty and joy that his life represented. The final, distant trombone solo that closes the work is, of course, not a coincidence."

Similar to the chordal manipulations used in *Bora Bora*, this work's harmonic language is based on a unique progression throughout. The piece begins with G-minor chords that shift to G-flat *major* chords (see example 1). These chords share a common third, with the other two notes shifting down by half steps. These shifts create unexpected harmonic arrivals and are employed throughout different keys throughout the work.

Several varying melodies are treated with evolving orchestrations and styles. The opening melody consisting of suspension-like eighth-note duplet motives seems to portray wringing hands (see example 2). Unlike *Bora Bora* and *Shadows*, the melodies are not rigidly connected through recurring motific fragments. Changing time signatures throughout give the work a

continuously satisfying flow. Lighter dance-like passages in the middle of the piece break up the more somber styles in the beginning and ending (see example 3).

The piece's final climax is angst-ridden, not satisfyingly resolved. Suspensions, *sforzando* entrances, and descending lines illicit a sense of heartache (see example 4). However, the distant trombone solo at the end, a clear homage to Mr. Kuschel, is finally accompanied by hopeful major chords (see example 5).

Example 1:

Example 1 shows a musical score for measures 8, 9, and 10. The score is written for three staves. The first staff has a melody starting in measure 8 with a *mp* dynamic, moving to *mf* in measure 9. The second staff has a melody starting in measure 9 with a *mp* dynamic, moving to *mf* in measure 10. The third staff has a melody starting in measure 9 with a *mp* dynamic, moving to *mf* in measure 10. The dynamics are indicated by *mp* and *mf* markings with crescendo and decrescendo hairpins.

Example 2:

Example 2 shows a musical score for measures 12, 13, and 14. The score is written for five staves: Picc., Fl. 1, Fl. 2, Ob. 1, and Ob. 2. The Picc. staff has a melody starting in measure 12 with a *pp* dynamic, moving to *cresc. poco a poco* in measure 13. The Fl. 1 staff has a melody starting in measure 12 with a *pp* dynamic, moving to *cresc. poco a poco* in measure 13. The Fl. 2 staff has a melody starting in measure 12 with a *pp* dynamic, moving to *cresc. poco a poco* in measure 13. The Ob. 1 staff has a melody starting in measure 12 with a *pp* dynamic, moving to *cresc. poco a poco* in measure 13. The Ob. 2 staff has a melody starting in measure 12 with a *pp* dynamic, moving to *cresc. poco a poco* in measure 13. The dynamics are indicated by *pp* and *cresc. poco a poco* markings with crescendo and decrescendo hairpins.

Example 3:

Musical score for Example 3, featuring a solo part in 3/4 time. The notation is on a single staff with a treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked *mf*. The solo part consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing rests. The score is divided into six measures.

Example 4:

Musical score for Example 4, featuring a full orchestral arrangement. The score is divided into two systems, each with six measures. The instruments listed on the left are: Trpt. 1, Trpt. 2, Trpt. 3, Horn 1-2, Horn 3-4, Trb. 1, Trb. 2, B. Trb., Bar., and Tuba. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked *ff poco rit.* in the first measure of each system, and *sfz* in the second measure of each system. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 5:

Musical score for Example 5, featuring a solo part and a full orchestral arrangement. The score is divided into two systems, each with six measures. The instruments listed on the left are: Solo (Back-Stage), Trb. 1, and Trb. 2. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked *mf (p if on stage)* in the first measure of the solo part, and *rit. poco a poco* in the first measure of the Trb. 1 part. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

5. *Cityscape*

This fanfare for winds and percussion was written for and dedicated to James F. Keene and the University of Illinois Wind Symphony. Boerma's program notes describe the commission: This symphonic fanfare was designed to make a bold opening statement for the ensemble's 2006 performance in New York City's Carnegie Hall. Intense, clashing harmonies and tight, vertical rhythms combine with moments of calm, yet unsettled release to depict the atmosphere within the endless canyons of metal and cement in the heart of the city.

As in *Fanfare for a Golden Sky*, Boerma uses harmony stacked in fourths to create many of the chord voicings in this work. However, unlike *Fanfare for a Golden Sky*, the harmonies include much more complex extended chords with sevenths, ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths, orchestrating them in unique inversions that employ quartal spacing (see example 1). These thick, yet dynamically voiced chords create the clashing sounds intended for this project.

Written in 12/8 time, the work features triplet-based motives that spin and dance throughout. Melodies and countermelodies are highly chromatic and often include leaps of fifths and fourths. Boerma uses contrary-motion counterpoint often in the work. For example, the primary theme and countermelody are stated in the horn and baritone parts in mm. 23-26, and the contemporary voicings and chromatic counterpoint is reminiscent of the music of Paul Hindemith (see example 2). As the piece progresses, wider leaps of sixths and sevenths begin to appear.

A middle passage calms the intensity with flowing, homophonic chorales that exchange from upper woodwinds to trumpets and horns to low brass and reeds (see example 3). The chord progressions are similar to the shifting relationships found in *Bora Bora* and *Poem*. A steady, relentless Timpani pedal point continues the drive and forward motivation of the piece (see

example 4). This peacefulness is then interrupted with a percussion interlude, accentuated with flitting woodwind lines (see example 5). A startling brass fanfare interrupts this and returns the piece to its original intensity (see example 6).

The recapitulation of the primary theme and countermelody treats them in a broad augmentation in mm. 102-114 (see example 7). A return to some of the work's opening ideas then builds to a thrilling coda. The final chord is far from resolved, essentially a D-flat-based chord that includes every diatonic note in a D-flat Lydian scale voiced in tight, crushing orchestration (see example 8).

Example 1:

Example 1 shows a musical score for measures 15 through 18. The score is written for a brass section, with measures 15 and 16 marked with a box containing the number 15. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (e.g., *fff*, *ff*, *f*, *mf*, *ffz*). The score is organized into systems, with measures 15 and 16 on the first system, and measures 17 and 18 on the second system. The notation is complex, featuring many accidentals and dynamic markings. The label "(Brass)" is placed to the right of the score.

Example 2:

Example 2 is a musical score for woodwinds and brass. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a woodwind section (flutes, oboes, and bassoons) and a brass section (trumpets, trombones, and baritone). The second system includes a woodwind section (flutes, oboes, and bassoons) and a brass section (trumpets, trombones, and baritone). The score is written in 4/4 time and features various musical notations, including dynamics (mf), articulation (accents), and phrasing (breath marks).

Example 3:

Example 3 is a musical score for a full brass section. It consists of a single system of staves. The section includes three B♭ Trumpets (1, 2, 3), three Horns in F (1, 2, 3), three Trombones (1, 2, 3), a Baritone, and a Tuba. The score is written in 4/4 time and features various musical notations, including dynamics (mf, f, p, mp), articulation (accents), and phrasing (breath marks). A rehearsal mark [70] is present at the beginning of the first staff.

Example 4:

Temp.

(E to E^b)

This musical score for the Timp. (Timpani) part shows a single melodic line across 12 measures. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, B3. The key signature has one flat (Bb), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo marking 'Temp.' is at the beginning, and '(E to E^b)' is at the end.

Example 5:

78

15

(Woodwinds)

This musical score for the Woodwinds part consists of two systems of staves. The first system has 6 staves and the second has 5 staves. The music features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo), *p* (piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). There are also markings for *acc.* (accelerando) and *rit.* (ritardando). The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

(Percussion)

This musical score for the Percussion part includes staves for Choke (Stick End), Ctr. Cym. (Center Cymbal), and Choke. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings such as *ff*, *p*, and *mf*. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

Example 6:

(Brass)

This musical score for the Brass part consists of 8 staves. The music features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Dynamics include *f* (forte), *ff* (fortissimo), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

Example 7:

(mm. 102-107)

(mm. 108-113)

Example 8:

(Woodwinds) (Brass) (Percussion)

Part 3: Conductor/Educator

In an interview with Dr. Boerma, he expressed that as a professional band/orchestra conductor, he strives to inspire musicians to play emotionally. He believes that it is his responsibility to interpret the composer's intents and guide his musicians to a realization of them through their performance. He believes that student musicians need to be inspired to learn, so their conductor/teacher must be engaging and passionate about what he or she does. Effective teaching for him involves emotion, passion, and excitement, not just information. "Passion is infectious; people want to be around people who are passionate about things, so when students are excited, they want to learn more." Boerma's philosophy is: life is too short; you should be excited and passionate about it.

As for conducting techniques, Dr. Boerma believes that conducting motions should imitate movements we see in the natural world: ball bouncing, leaves falling, birds gliding, boulders falling, etc. Effective conductors create illusions of these motions. The more naturally we can move and imitate those kinds of motions, the more the musicians will naturally respond, because they are used to seeing those natural motions in the real world. He strives to model those principals to his conducting students and seek ways to assist them toward effective mastery of those ideals. Dr. Boerma encourages his students to experiment with movement exercises that require them to "feel" imaginary weight and to move their hands as if moving in water, creating the illusion of resistance through the air. He also discusses the importance of the space, distance, and speed of each gesture to correspond with the specific music being conducted. When teaching his conducting lessons or classes, Boerma encourages students to imagine what aspects of conductors inspire them to perform at their highest levels, and how they can strive to do the same for their future student musicians. He believes that he learns the most about his conducting by

evaluating his students' conducting. Boerma stated: "You can't expect your students to do something a certain way if you're doing it incorrectly!"

This has been a gratifying project for me. Dr. Boerma is an inspiration to me, and I am so fortunate to have been able to spend this semester talking with him, studying his music, and refining my conducting. I hope this paper properly illuminates his work and portrays him as the wonderful educator, conductor and composer that he is.

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