A MOVIE SCORE FOR CONCERT BAND:
A MUSICAL ANALYSIS

by

Scott A. Maple

An Abstract
of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in the Department of Music
University of Central Missouri

May 2011
ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the form, compositional techniques and devices, and instrumentation of an original composition, *A Movie Score for Concert Band*, composed by the author as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Music. The paper addresses a quick history of the concert band and the desirability factors in the present time to write for that ensemble. Following that is an analytical discussion of the major motives of the piece. *A Movie Score for Concert Band* is an original work composed in the style of modern movie scores.
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CHAPTER 1
MUSIC FOR CONCERT BAND

In the long history of music, the concert band is a relatively new ensemble. Consequently, the repertoire for it is considerably smaller than that of other ensembles like the orchestra. Even some of the concert band’s most celebrated works are orchestral transcriptions.¹ The concert band, or wind ensemble, lacks strings, the instrumental family that is the most uniform in timbre. The concert band is, however, in no short supply of colors, timbres, ranges, and ability. The last two centuries have seen a growth in the amount of original concert band pieces written by composers exploring the subtleties and variety of this genre. Still, more is needed.² It is with this need in mind and a personal interest in the concert band that this writer undertook a composition for this genre.

The American concert band and its instrumentation can actually trace its history back to the European orchestra. It is an exercise in addition and subtraction. The original orchestras of the early Renaissance were composed of only stringed instruments with little use, if any, of winds or percussion. Claudio Monteverdi’s work *The Combat of Tancred and Clorinda* contained an ensemble of stringed instruments that formed the basis of the orchestra.³ These early orchestras consisted of violins, violas, cellos, and string bass. In the middle

seventeenth-century, Jean-Baptiste Lully created one of the first “bands,” made up of the best virtuosic string players of the time. Finally, an instrumental ensemble independent of singers was made concrete.\textsuperscript{4} Lully did little, however, to extend the use of wind instruments in his band.

In the late 1600’s, instruments such as the flute, oboe, bassoon, trumpet and horn appear in the orchestras of Alessandro Scarlatti. By Mozart’s time, the timpani, as well as the new invention of the clarinet, became standard. By Beethoven’s \textit{Ninth Symphony}, trombones and the piccolo were consistently added. Also, some percussion instruments were being given a larger role, such as triangle, side drum, and cymbals.

These were all added together to form the basis of the modern orchestra, consisting of violins, violas, celli, string basses, flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, French horns, trumpets, trombones, timpani, and other percussion. This ensemble dominated the musical scene in the concert halls of Europe long before America was colonized. Situations arose, however, where an ensemble needed to be mobile while playing. The string family, as musically versatile as the instruments are, was not adept at playing on the move, and the military band was born.

In the 1800’s, the military band grew up separately from the orchestra to play for events, including the marching of troops.\textsuperscript{5} This is the great subtraction of

\textsuperscript{4} Fennell, 5.
the string family from the ensemble that led eventually to the concert band. Side drum, and sometimes its substitute the snare drum, became a staple percussion instrument, keeping time for the marchers. Instruments that projected the best were chosen for melodic purposes. Those instruments consisted of the brass family and the piccolo, which can project through almost any sound and space. Also, the new invention of valves that were being added to brass instruments made them more practical to play on the move. To extend the range of this instrumentation, the tuba, baritone, and euphonium were added. After 1845, the saxophone had been invented and incorporated into the military bands of France. It was the instrumentation of the military band that found its way to the American colonies in the 1800’s. By now the colonists had established their basic human needs for survival and were able to devote their attention to other hierarchical needs, such as organizing musical ensembles.

English bands from the “Mother Country” gave concerts in the American colonies, and local bands quickly formed in their wake. Both sides used military bands in the Revolutionary War and after its conclusion. The military band flourished, and the more attention it got, the more composers extended its use. Soon, civilian bands were growing up independently of the military band, thanks to concert masters of the late 1800’s, such as John Philip Sousa, Giuseppe Creatore, and Patrick Conway. Schools began introducing bands into their

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curricula, starting with Harvard and Yale in 1827.\textsuperscript{7} The word “military” was inappropriate for these ensembles, and they began to be referred to as wind bands. These wind bands found their way back into the concert halls. The titles of Gustav Holst’s \textit{First and Second Suites for Military Band} are an indication of the transition, for although the name says military, the contents were not strictly march tempos and were meant to be played in a concert setting.

By the early twentieth century, having a concert band was a mark of a town’s social status.\textsuperscript{8} Literally thousands of bands dotted the American landscape, from amateur to professional. Bands used what instrumentation was available to them, but the basic instrumentation of the concert band became piccolo, flutes, oboes, clarinets, bass clarinet, bassoons, alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, trumpets, French horns, trombones, euphonium (and/or baritone), tuba, snare drum, bass drum, and cymbals.\textsuperscript{9}

Music education has taken over as the driving force for the concert band’s continued existence.\textsuperscript{10} Even now, almost every town’s school and university in America has a concert band, whereas orchestras are usually found only in large communities. Therefore, the concert band in the twenty-first century is the most practical and available ensemble for which to compose in America. The use of percussion has increased, and composers continue to push the boundaries of these ensembles in new and innovative ways.

\textsuperscript{7} Polk.
\textsuperscript{8} Polk.
\textsuperscript{9} Goldman, 91-94.
\textsuperscript{10} Fennell, 48-49.
CHAPTER TWO

A MOVIE SCORE FOR CONCERT BAND
THE BEGINNINGS

For practical as well as personal purposes, the composition *A Movie Score for Concert Band* is written for concert band. Growing up in a small town that did not have an orchestra, this writer played several instruments in his high school band. In college he continued playing in concert band. Almost every high school and college in America has a band program needing more compositions from which to choose. Why compose for orchestra, with fewer ensembles and a larger repertoire composed by masters such as Beethoven and Brahms? This author is not interested in competing with the greatest composers of all time.

This composer is also not interested in furthering the artistic ability of the concert band. Therefore, one will find no *avant-garde* methods in orchestration or technique. This piece was written to answer a personal question: can this student compose a piece of music that is comparable to the standard and lasting pieces made specifically for the concert band? To accomplish this goal, this writer needs to please himself as well as the instrumentalists who will be playing the piece and the audiences who will be listening to it, making the work as marketable as possible.

The average high school and college concert band audience is usually composed of people who appreciate music but are not necessarily accomplished musicians; those audiences like music that they can understand. Oftentimes, artistic innovations in music are difficult for the average music appreciator to
comprehend, and what is not understood is generally not liked. Directors of concert bands know this and will program works geared to the listening level of their audience. This composer wanted to give this piece every chance to be played and so chose to limit the amount of innovation so as to focus on creating something listeners will enjoy. Even the naming of the piece is an attempt to relate to the audience and players.

*A Movie Score for Concert Band* might suggest to music analysts that the work is programmatic, but there is, actually, no story around which the piece is created. The title has gone through several changes. Initially it was intended that the piece be programmatic with the title of *Nero*, after the eccentric Roman Emperor in whose reign Rome was destroyed by fire, perhaps started by the Emperor himself. Because of this, the overall sinister and driving rhythmic feelings that would have been associated with that story remain. At some point, however, the story was abandoned as the compositional process moved away from it.

It was suggested by several people that the music sounded like a cinema score, so the next title became *Movie Music*. Unfortunately, that sounded like scores from various movies put together in some kind of medley, and after much self-deliberation, the writer settled on the title *A Movie Score for Concert Band*, which hopefully does a better job of telling the listener-to-be that this is, indeed, original music. It was advised that the piece be named in the hope that the audience would relate to the work, beginning with the title.
Although the music is meant to be easy to listen to, it is by no means easy to play. Part of adding to the repertoire of concert band music is balancing the listening ability and interest of the audience with the playing ability and interest of the players. Too often a piece caters to one or the other. The goal here was to make both audience and instrumentalists excited about the work. The individual parts are meant to challenge the players without being so difficult that only the most advanced concert bands can play them. Range and technique were all taken into account during the compositional process to create a piece that is accessible yet not overbearing. Fortunately, the choice of title also caters to the players, for who would not love to play music for a movie?

The title is meant to attract both audience and players, but is most importantly also indicative of the music. How is this score like movie music? In a movie, music serves several purposes but is almost always secondary to the cinematography. Music that is composed specifically for the movie is written and implemented after the filming process. This is so the music may be composed to correlate with the action on the screen; musical effects are often timed to correspond to something that happens in the action. In addition to adding musical effects, movie music helps to heighten whatever emotion is being portrayed on screen and may help set the time period in which the movie takes place.

Examples abound for these musical additions. One of the most famous examples of a musical effect that also heightens the tension of a scene is the
“stabbing music” from the movie *Psycho*, composed by Bernard Hermann. The screeching strings are one of the most recognized sounds in all of cinematic music and can strike fear into the heart of any listener. The same is true of John Carpenter’s moody main theme from the thriller *Halloween*.

A movie-score master, John Williams composes melodies for characters that are used when the character is in the scene. In his music for the *Star Wars Trilogies*, some of the sectional titles include, “Princess Leia’s Theme,” “The Imperial March (Darth Vader’s Theme),” “Yoda’s Theme,” and “Anakin’s Theme,” all characters in the movies. These themes add to the emotional response one has for the character. A great musical effect at the start of each of these movies is the loud chord played by the orchestra, signaling the beginning of the written script that moves up the screen.

Renaissance-sounding music – including the use of lutes and recorders with complex polyphonic lines – are used in the scoring of the movie *Elizabeth*, set during that musical time period. David Hirschfelder, the composer, combined his own music with that from the time period to complete this musical score, which includes several period dance themes.

When a movie has an action scene, the scoring often changes quickly and erratically to match the action on screen. The music for “The Quidditch Match” by Williams in the blockbuster *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* is a great

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12 Ibid.
example of these erratic changes while weaving in several musical themes. Mood, tempo, dynamics, and other musical elements mirror the action on the screen. Sometimes, in order to make a particular musical effect match an action on the screen, musical regularity will be sacrificed to coordinate music to action.

*A Movie Score for Concert Band* is full of these musical changes while weaving in short musical ideas and themes throughout the piece. Ironically, real movie music is usually scored for orchestra. This piece is, however, purposely written for concert band. Now the concert band repertoire contains “movie music” that was never transcribed from the orchestral realm. It is this composer’s contribution to the concert band.
To fully understand *A Movie Score for Concert Band*, one must follow the music itself as well as occasionally explain the function of the music as it might relate to a movie score. However, it is important to remind the reader that this piece is not programmatic, and any comments relating to movies are only hypothetical or imagined.

The tonal key is roughly based on the F Dorian scale; the tempo is quick (dotted quarter note equals 120 beats per second); and the time signature is 9/8, although this changes frequently. The overall structure is a rondo form, ABACA Coda, with A being a returning theme discussed shortly and B, C and Coda all being freely composed sections based on A. Because of this, the piece is a study in conservation.

The entire piece is based on two musical ideas: 1) the half-step and 2) the rhythm of a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth note followed by another eighth note (see Figures 1 and 2). There are no long melodies that continually return as would be typical in John Williams’s movie scores, where a melody represents a character on screen. Instead, these two main ideas are reused, restated, and recycled in various ways and forms throughout the entire piece. This would be more indicative of a chase scene’s music. Listen to any music from chase scenes in a movie and the reader will agree.
To analyze the piece, one must follow the synthesis of the chromatic and rhythmic ideas listed above. This could once again prove tedious, and it is not the author’s intention to point out every time these two musical elements return, but how they return reused, restated, and recycled.

Also, due to its name and nature, some effects will be highlighted. These include sudden changes in mood, tempo, dynamics, instrumentation, and effects through use of the percussion that might relate to something on the screen. For easier analysis, the piece has been broken down into sections that correspond to double bar lines.

Section 1, measures 1-32

Measure 1 introduces the half-step in a chromatic theme that is the foundation of the A section (see Figure 3). The theme itself is one measure long; is repeated in measure 2; and moves up a minor third in measure 3 with a repeat in measure 4. Measure 5 contains the first chromatic scale that will return
throughout (see Figure 4). In this case, the scale descends. The chromatic step and the themes built from it are restated and recycled often in this piece.

Figure 3. Chromatic theme, *A Movie Score*, measure 1.

![Clarinet/Tenor Sax](image)

Figure 4. Chromatic “scale,” *A Movie Score*, measures 5.

![Clarinets/Tenor Sax](image)

Figure 5. Chromatic “bops” and rhythmic motive, *A Movie Score*, measure 7.

![Trumpets and Horns](image)

Measure 6 and a repetition in 7 introduce what will be called from here on “chromatic bops.” The chromatic bops are two notes that are a half-step apart, separated by a rest (see Figure 5). These bops are taken from the first two notes of the chromatic theme and usually function as a finishing effect whenever employed. Oftentimes the bops will be harmonized in thirds.
Overlapping the bops is the first rhythmic entrance (see Figure 5). Played in the trumpets, it occurs after the chromatic scale, allows the scale to terminate, and is harmonized with the chromatic bops. The rhythmic motive changes less often than the use of the half-step and is therefore reused more than recycled or restated. At measure 9, the chromatic theme is repeated, but at measure 11, it is harmonized in thirds, a direct relation to the chromatic bops heard immediately before.

Measure 17 is the first introduction of the four-note chromatic theme, as it will be called from now on (see Figure 6). This theme is actually two sets of chromatic bops with no rests between each note and a leap between each chromatic pair. This is an extremely important theme that will continue to return, although the interval of the leap will vary throughout the piece.

Figure 6. Four-note chromatic theme, *A Movie Score*, measure 17.

This theme is heard several times in a row, starting with the saxophones, who pass it to the trumpets in thirds, followed by the low instruments, which play an augmented version. Measure 17 is also interesting in that the first beat of the chromatic theme, a set of half-step triplets, is played in succession, moving upwards in approximate chromatic fashion, already combining several elements of the young piece.
In measure 21, the trumpets play a melody that starts with the rhythmic motive followed by a short melodic line. This rhythmic melody is not chromatic and thus gives a much needed break from that of the main theme. Its basic up-and-down movement is similar, however, to the overall arch of the chromatic theme.

Figure 7. Extended rhythmic melody, *A Movie Score*, measure 21.

The woodwinds play the rhythmic melody in fourths in measure 25. Fourths will continue to be used. This is accompanied by triangle on the downbeats, creating a light, floating feeling.

Measure 30 combines several musical parts heard earlier. Flutes have the triplet pattern of the chromatic theme harmonized in thirds; clarinets and oboes play half-step chromatic bops; and the bassoons and euphoniums play an ascending chromatic scale. The overall sound of the entire measure suggests the four-note chromatic theme, which may be found in the first note of each beat of the flute’s melody. For the listeners interest, the pattern is continued in measure 31 but changes to a 4/4 time signature. This aids in speeding up the movement of the piece, perhaps in relation to something happening on the screen. The addition of xylophone and snare helps draw attention to this tempo and timbral change, and the addition of the ratchet provides a sense of
something mechanical, perhaps a mechanism breaking down. All of this can be found in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Combining several elements, A Movie Score, measures 30-31.

Measure 32 begins one of the only true suggestions of a perfect authentic cadence in this piece. Its regularity creates a more dramatic effect when this concept is continuously broken later.

Section 2, measures 33-54

The first double bar is followed in measure 33 by a change in the feel of the tempo. Although the beat does not change, the saxophones play a very elongated chromatic step that helps to slow the pace down, as if the movie is resting and the characters can temporarily catch their breath. An effect suggesting thinking is heard in measure 34 with the scrape of a guiro into a syncopated vibraphone rhythm related to, but only distantly, the rhythmic motive. Quietly, so as not to destroy the mood yet as a way to keep the piece moving,
the third clarinets play an ostinato pattern based on the chromatic theme. This is the undercurrent for the elongated chromatic step begun in measure 37 by the first and second clarinets and oboe, this time including dissonant harmonization. A short bass line taken from the clarinets’ ostinato (using the first two beats of the chromatic theme) is added in measure 40 (see Figure 9). This section continues until measures 52, where a transition section using the chromatic theme and rhythmic motive in recycled and restated ways ushers in the next double bar line. The toms are added in measure 54 to facilitate the downward sound of the wind line. It also has the effect of sounding like someone or something is falling or moving downward.

Figure 9. Bass line, A Movie Score, measures 40-41.

Bassoon 2/Bass Clarinet

Section 3, measures 55-78

This section begins with a dialogue between the extended rhythmic melody and the four-note chromatic theme. The trumpets have the rhythmic melody in measure 55, followed by the woodwinds playing the four-note chromatic theme in 56, with measures 57 and 58 continuing the pattern on different pitch levels. There is an additional bass line chromatic scale in measure 58 that foreshadows a similar occurrence in the finale. This alternation finally
ends in measure 59 with a very powerful, extended, rhythmic melody in the horns and euphoniums (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Further extended rhythmic melody, *A Musical Score*, measures 59-62.

In measure 61, the flutes and piccolo have an extension of the rhythmic figure. This will be recycled later in the piece. Measures 67-68 have a curious figure in the solo flute. It combines the four-note chromatic theme with some of the rhythmic extensions just stated by the horns and euphoniums in measures 61-62 (See Figure 11). A fanfare-like theme in the brass based on the rhythmic motive periodically interrupts the flute. These alternate until an almost chromatic bass line leads downward into the rhythmic motive in measure 77 played by the trombones. This is followed by a chromatic motive that is repeated and effects a transition to the next section.

Figure 11. Flute figure, *A Movie Score*, measures 67-68.

Section 4, measures 79-95

Section 4 is relatively uneventful in new devices. The chromatic theme returns with almost the same instrumentation as the first measures of the piece.
This is the second A section. For interest, certain triplet patterns are augmented and the theme is played as a round with the clarinets playing the second part up an octave (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Chromatic theme with augmentation, *A Movie Score*, measure 79-82.

When the chromatic theme in round is repeated in measure 87, the snare drum plays the extended rhythmic figure first found in the piccolo and flutes in measure 61 (see Figure 13). It is a four-beat ostinato pattern played in a three-beat measure; because of this the beat number on which each pattern begins changes. A chromatic scale in the horns exactly like the one they played in measure 6 leads to the next section.

Figure 13. Extended rhythmic figure, *A Movie Score*, measure 87-90.

Section 5, measures 96-121

At measure 96, the timpani takes the rhythmic ostinato from the snare drum, this time in a four-beat measure that matches the four beats in each
ostinato pattern. Measure 98 starts a progression of long-tone half steps in the low instruments that culminates in a muted trumpet line in measure 103 that is a modified form of the rhythmic melody. At measure 104, the flutes have an ostinato part consisting of the half-step triplet pattern harmonized in fourths. In the following measure, the saxophones play a version of the four-beat chromatic theme, which is repeated by the trombones at a different pitch level in the next measure.

The tuba and euphoniums’ pick-ups into measure 107 are derived from a small part of the flute melody from measures 67-68, now inverted. In measure 112, the first trumpets are asked to flutter tongue, which is used as an effect to further intensify the moment. In 113 the four-note chromatic theme returns harmonized and is handed off to a 4/4 measure at 114, which serves the same purpose as before - to add interest to the ear as well as move the piece quickly forward. An augmented version of the harmonized chromatic theme begins in the horns and trombones at measure 115, and by measure 119 morphs into something similar to the dissonant chords found in Section 2, including the bass chromatic theme, which is this time quickly terminated by a single stacatto note that forms the V of a V-I elided cadence on the downbeat of the next section.
A Movie Score

Section 6, measures 122-134

A fugue-like motive begins this part of the work. The subject, which begins in the bassoon, is based on the rhythmic melody with an extended tail of falling triplets (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. Fugue subject and countersubject, A Movie Score, measures 122-124.

The countersubject is a staccato form of the four-note chromatic melody (or perhaps chromatic bops) that begins in the third clarinets. The subject is played four times in a row, the final two at a different pitch level. The countersubject changes pitch level and instrumentation more frequently from measures 122 to 127 until the tuba and euphonium complete it.

An augmented four-note chromatic theme in the low brass similar to that at measure 115 begins in measure 128. Added to this theme is the rhythmic motive followed by an eighth note and two eighth rests, all of which is played as an ostinato in the trumpets and snare drum. This effect is often used in movie scores and other music as filler to heighten anticipation of what is to follow. What
follows in this case is a very long chromatic scale played in the woodwinds that
ushers in the next section, which has been lovingly dubbed the “Creepy Carousel
Section.”

Section 7, measures 135-164

The name “Creepy Carousel” came from a comment made by one of my
colleagues after listening to this portion. The entire section is a 3/4 waltz. There
is nothing strange or exciting about the first statement of the melody in measures
135 to 152 except for an added sixth in the harmony. This does give the listener
a sense of uneasiness, and thus the name. As is typical in a waltz, bass
instruments have the downbeat “oom” and saxophones play the chordal “pah-
pah” on beats 2 and 3. The melody is a mutation and restatement of the
chromatic theme. Compare Figures 15 and 16. The first eighth notes of Figure 1
correspond to the first three measures (flutes) in Figure 16. Beats 2 and 3 of the
chromatic theme are actually switched in the waltz, so that the order of the waltz
theme compared to the chromatic theme is beat 1, beat 3, and beat 2. The
chromatic scale follows to close the waltz’s first statement.

Figure 15. Chromatic theme, A Movie Score, measure 1.
The second statement of the waltz theme, starting at measure 153, adds a very disjunct countermelody based on the chromatic scale in the woodwinds. To complete this section, the trombones and bassoons have a second countermelody of long tones using the four-note chromatic theme. The “Creepy Carousel Section” is a much needed change from the driving pace found prior to it, and the change in mood and meter is a common occurrence in movie scores as scenes change.

Section 8, measures 165-185

This section actually begins with a chromatic scale in thirds that ends the waltz melody, played in the clarinets. This terminates in chromatic bops.
Throughout this section, the xylophone plays an ostinato pattern using the chromatic theme, sometimes with augmentation, as was found in the second A section. This, along with the snare, keeps the rhythm moving. Above this ostinato, the trumpet plays an augmented version of the four note chromatic theme. In measure 174 the flute, clarinet, and bassoon play the rhythmic melody. Measure 175 begins to introduce more instruments into the ostinato, starting with the tenor saxophone. The trumpet restates its melody beginning in measure 176 with a horn echo at a different pitch level.

This section builds to a very grand gesture which uses a chromatic scale moving in both directions. The scale terminates in notes held in the flute, oboes, and clarinets in their upper register, causing an uncomfortable sound. While this note is held, the trumpets, trombones, and eventually horns add one note at a time to the chord. These four notes combine to state the chromatic theme, although this is very hard to distinguish aurally. An ascending chromatic scale is played in measure 185 by the woodwinds, but this time surprises the ear by not finishing as it had previously.

Section 9, measures 186-199

Instead of the normal chromatic scale that finishes on a downbeat, this time the woodwinds leave the listener hanging and let the brass take over in a different pitch relation. At measure 186, the tempo is suddenly much slower. This is to accent the fanfare the brass play, as well as allow the listener to hear
the chromatic step that is found within the rhythmic motive – the first time in the piece that the notes within the rhythm change. Perhaps this is the moment in the movie where something surprising is revealed.

Figure 17. Brass Fanfare, *A Movie Score*, measure 186.

At 189, a solo trombone reintroduces the fanfare theme, with a trumpet echo in measure 191. They continue to trade the theme with less and less space between each, while the woodwinds enter one family at a time with the chromatic scale functioning as an ostinato. In measure 197, the low instruments join with an augmented version of the four-note chromatic theme. All of this suddenly terminates, leaving only silence in measure 199. A sudden silence in movies and other music is effective in highlighting a dramatic moment.

Finale, measures 200 to the End

The Finale begins in measure 200 with a wall of sound, a contrast to the silence that preceded it. All of the major elements of the piece are displayed simultaneously: the clarinets and saxophones have the chromatic theme in echoes; the flutes, oboes and glockenspiel have the extended rhythmic ostinato;
and the brass have an augmented ascending pseudo-chromatic scale, clustering the chord as notes are added (see Figure 18).

Figure 18. Finale, A Movie Score, measures 200-202.

This builds until the third beat of 209 when the trumpets play the chromatic triplet in a fanfare theme that alternates several times with a rip in the horns. Around this, a cacophony of sound is heard, including a written trill using the half step, starting in measure 210 in the oboes, 1st bassoon, 3rd clarinets, and alto saxophones. Two pickup notes to measure 215 begins a bass-instrument chromatic scale that gives way to a chord in the upper winds with an added sixth and ninth in the trumpets. The piece ends with a very slowly dictated rhythmic motive in the low instruments.
The piece *A Movie Score for Concert Band* was created for the concert band with both the listener and the player in mind. It contains no *avant-garde* elements in technique or sound so as to cater to the average audiences’ musical understanding, yet is technically difficult for the interest of the performers. The use of two small musical elements from which the entire piece is created is meant to tie the work together in a concert band setting the way such composers as Beethoven and Brahms did with their orchestras. Concert band repertoire needs expansion, and this piece is meant to add to it. Every element, from the title to the standard instrumentation, to the difficulty level, was decided with the intent to get this piece performed.

As for rating the difficulty of the piece, consider this statement quoted from The Sheet Music Store (grammatical errors have not been changed):

> What is the Grade Level on a piece of music?

What is the Grade Level on a piece of music? This is a complex question. The grading system generally ranges from 1-6 increasing in difficulty level. Unfortunately there is not an agreed upon scale for this grading system and it varies by publisher. They don't [sic] really publish the policy, but experienced players have provided the interpretation as follows:
Grade 1 (Beginner) Music for 1st-2nd year players.
Mainly quarter note values and longer are used, with eighth notes occasionally. Limited number of pitches used.

Grade 2 (Intermediate) More advanced than Grade 1.
Uses more interesting rhythms incorporating dotted-quarter-eighth-note figures, with more pitches used than in Grade 1.

Grade 3 (Late Intermediate) Uses some sixteenth notes in addition to all other note values. Syncopation can be used. More key changes and accidentals are utilized, may call for full range of the instrument.

Grade 4 (Early Advanced) This is a grade level for people with ability who really want to play some cool charts. Players who feel comfortable with their instrument and have good rhythmic abilities will be able to perform music at this level.

Grade 5 (Advanced) Most works at this level are going to take exactly that -- Work! They are not unplayable, however, you don't want to sit down at a gig and sight read one of these charts.

Grade 6 (Advanced +) This is a class of music for people who want to play something hard because a) they like
to play something really difficult b) they really love

the music, and don't mind putting in the work that it
takes to play it well.¹⁴

This chart corresponds to another music publishing website that is one of the
most well-respected and authoritative in the business, Hal Leonard. Their scale
follows:

Instrumental Series Guide

GRADING SCALE

1 = Very Easy - 1 year playing experience
2 = Easy - 2 years of playing experience
3 = Medium - 3-4 years playing experience
4 = Medium Advanced
5 = Advanced
P = Professional¹⁵

Their scale is not as detailed but is congruent with The Sheet Music Store.

Because The Sheet Music Store is more detailed, it is listed first. Based on the
difficulty chart listed above, this writer would rate this work as a 5. With that in
mind, college ensembles and a few advanced high schools will probably be the
market for this work. It could be easily programmed on a concert of modern

¹⁴ The-Sheet-Music-Store, “What is the Grade Level of a Piece of Music?,” Music 44.com, Inc.,
http://www.music44.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?Session_ID=1D8BAE78EB6BBBD14A3ACD89
55DE53650&Screen=PROD&Store_Code=X&Product_Code=GRADING (accessed December
29, 2010).

works or a combination of classical and modern. The entire work may be found in the appendix on pages 32 and following.
REFERENCES


