SYMMETRY AND NARRATIVE IN CHRISTOPHER ROUSE'S *TROMBONE CONCERTO* WITH *WHITE SPACE WAITING* (AN ORIGINAL COMPOSITION FOR CHAMBER ORCHESTRA)

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The analytic component of my dissertation, "Symmetry and Narrative in Christopher Rouse's Trombone Concerto," illuminates the ways in which the concerto creates a musical metaphor of tragedy. To help frame my discussion of the Trombone Concerto's narrative elements (which include Rouse's self-referential quotation to his own *Symphony No.1* and a quotation of Leonard Bernstein's *"Kaddish" Symphony No.3*) I draw on Northrop Frye's classification of tragedy as a narrative archetype. In order to illuminate the narrative functions of the two quotations and other motivic elements, I examine (with voice-leading and structural analysis) how the work's prevailing formal and harmonic symmetry provides the narrative context for its musical expectations. The tragedy of the concerto is realized when the harmonic expectation created by the Bernstein quotation is disrupted by the return of the composition's opening harmony and motivic gesture.

Fulfilling the compositional requirements, I submit my 2002 work *white space waiting*. It is a slow, at times lyric, elegy for chamber orchestra. The harmonic and motivic focus of the piece revolves around five distinct pitches: C, C#, E, F#, and B. These pitches do not occur as a specific leit-motif, but they do recur at important moments (in various guises and orderings) as the composition unfolds. Because *white space waiting* has large structural repetitions, a key compositional element to the piece is the way in which the order of repetition among different sections becomes varied. By analogy, a three-part form (which this composition is not) might have the following structural rules: once ABC is presented as a particular order of events, A does not always lead to B and C can sometimes precede A in subsequent repetitions. Likewise, for *white space waiting*, a particular material that serves as the beginning of one section may appear as the ending of another section or as a section unto itself.

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PREFACE

Permission to reprint excerpts from Christopher Rouse's *Trombone Concerto* granted by the publisher, © Copyright 1992 by Hendon Music, Inc. a Boosey & Hawkes company. Permission to reprint the excerpt from Leonard Bernstein's *"Kaddish" Symphony No.3* approved by the publisher, © Copyright 1963, 1977 by Amberson Holdings LLC. Copyright renewed. Leonard Bernstein Music Publishing Company LLC, Publisher Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., Sole Agent.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of my committee for their time and thoughtful insights. Especially to Eric Moe and Mathew Rosenblum – I have learned much from them and their music. I also must acknowledge the truly invaluable mentoring and advising that Roger Zahab provided me during my time at the University of Pittsburgh. Finally, I lovingly thank my wife, Leah Givelber, for her support, love, and good humor throughout the writing and completion of this document.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Christopher Rouse's Trombone Concerto (1991) is the first piece belonging to the composer's "death cycle;" a series of five compositions Rouse composed as his musical response to the deaths of particular people between 1991 and 1996. In addition to the Trombone Concerto, dedicated to Leonard Bernstein, the cycle's other four compositions (and their dedicatees) are his Violoncello Concerto (1992; William Schuman), Flute Concerto (1993; James Bulger), Symphony No.2 (1994; Stephen Albert), and Envoi (1995; Margery Rouse, the composer's mother). Three of this cycle's five compositions have a symmetrical framework: the *Trombone* Concerto (five-part), the Flute Concerto (five-part), and Symphony No.2 (three-part). These three compositions' symmetry entails that they must inescapably end the same way that they began, establishing a musical-narrative arc that brings them full-circle. Their inherent compositional tension lies in how (and when) the ultimate realization of their symmetry occurs.¹ Rouse's handling of symmetry in the Trombone Concerto is much more complex than his use of the form in the two successive symmetrical compositions from the "death cycle;" only the Trombone Concerto incorporates material that is "foreign" to its harmonic and motivic symmetrical arcs.

Rouse acknowledges that many of the compositional devices utilized and musical materials these works contain have specific symbolic meanings for him; as this paper progresses

¹ The *Flute Concerto* makes a clear dramatic arc from its opening material through the middle tutti section. It employs a symmetrical harmonic structure of major thirds: G, Eb, B, Eb, and G.

The *Second Symphony* is the most repetitive of the three symmetrical compositions: the last movement (of three) is a near verbatim repetition of the first. The intervening middle movement provides the musical and dramatic contrast to the outer two movements. Rouse interprets the middle movement as "a prism, through which the first and third movements are refracted."

I will acknowledge some of his personal associations with the *Trombone Concerto*'s material.² However, the purpose of this study is not to provide its program through Rouse's symbolic keys (or even to suggest that there *is* a program), but rather to illustrate how the concerto – based solely on its musical materials – functions as a musical representation of tragedy. To arrive at this interpretive conclusion, I fashion my analytic technique after Edward Cone's concept of a "dramatistic analysis."³ His analytic method approaches music as a "form of utterance,"

conveying meaning beyond the notes on the page. For Cone, the specific meaning of a particular work is much less important than the fact that a composition is *able* to communicate. He makes no claim (or desire) to specifically define a particular composition's extra-musical meaning. My analysis diverges from Cone's analytic impartiality and attempts to arrive at an affective musical meaning of the *Trombone Concerto*. To accomplish this, I do not simply rely on the work's dedication as a memorial to Leonard Bernstein (though that is a signifying clue), but rather endeavor to show that the composition attains its emotive weight through Rouse's manipulation of his musical materials within a symmetrical formal structure. My analysis focuses on the way that the governing symmetrical structure provides a narrative context for the composition's harmonic and dramatic elements. A progression of minor thirds (which outline a fully diminished seventh chord) provides the concerto's harmonic symmetry. This harmonic skeleton supports the dramatic elements, which include the framing motivic gesture and quotations from Rouse's *Symphony No.1* and Leonard Bernstein's *"Kaddish" Symphony No.3*. The symmetrical

² I interviewed Christopher Rouse in Pittsburgh, Penna., on December 3, 2004 at Heinz Hall. Rouse was the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's 2004-05 "Composer of the Year." On the weekend of our discussion, his *Symphony No.2* and *The Nevill Feast* were being performed by the symphony.

³ Edward Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley, Ca: University of California Press, 1974). See also Gregory Karl, "Structuralism and Musical Plot," *Music Theory Spectrum*, Vol.19/1 (1997), 13-34. Karl's essay provides a structurally tragic plot for the first movement of Beethoven's F minor Piano Sonata, op.57.

structure imparts dramatic meaning to these musical materials through their placement within the structure itself.

This study posits that even though the *Trombone Concerto*'s symmetrical structure predetermines its musical conclusion, Rouse creates compositional drama by alluding to a possible conclusion that could thwart the concerto's ultimate symmetrical ending. The *Trombone Concerto* is a tragic composition because the material that lies outside of the symmetrical structure – the quotation of Bernstein's *"Kaddish"*⁴ – presents a dramatic moment of hopeful possibility that the ominous foreshadowing of the first and second movements will remain unfulfilled. The foreshadowing is realized when Rouse transforms the concerto's beginning gesture into its ending material, allowing symmetry to prevail against the harmonic and melodic "otherness" of Bernstein's melody. With symmetry, Rouse places the quotation in a tragic context, portraying it as an unattainable dream of major mode harmonic stability within the harmonic framework of the composition.



Figure 1: Quote from Bernstein, "Kaddish" Symphony

In order to approach the *Trombone Concerto* as a musical representation of tragedy, I draw a parallel with the first phase of tragic narrative identified by Northrop Frye.⁵ Frye describes this archetypal phase (one of six) as "the one in which the central character is given the greatest

⁴ Leonard Bernstein, *Kaddish: Symphony No.3*, vocal score by Abraham Kaplan and Ruth Mense (New York: G. Schirmer, 1980). Rouse refers to the quoted melody, from the 1965 memorial composition, as Bernstein's "Credo."

⁵ Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton University Press, 1957). See also Eero Tarasti, *Myth and Music* (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1979); Byron Almen, "Narrative Archetypes in Music: A Semiotic Approach," (Ph.D. diss., University of Indiana, 1998).

possible dignity in contrast to the other characters, so that we get the perspective of a stag pulled down by wolves."⁶ The "central character" of the *Trombone Concerto* (by virtue of its harmonic identity and rhythmic repose) is the third movement's Bernstein quotation (Figure 1). The "wolves" are the second movement's raucous chromatic material and the prevailing symmetrical structure of the concerto. Because Rouse places the Bernstein quotation in a structural position that interrupts the larger symmetrical plan (immediately before the return of the concerto's opening material), he places the concerto's harmonic conclusion in doubt. The fulfillment of the composition's motivic trajectory attains greater affective impact because the major mode diatonicism of the quotation (in stark contrast to the rest of the concerto's chromaticism) creates the possibility that the inevitableness of the symmetrical structure will be thwarted. When it is not – when the symmetry prevails over the Bernstein quotation and the chromaticism of the beginning returns – Frye's narrative wolves pull down the stag.⁷

The following chapter (SYMMETRY AND NARRATIVE) illustrates the role that the symmetrical form plays in producing the *Trombone Concerto's* tragically dramatic narrative. Chapter 3 (BEGINNING AS ENDING) discusses the dramatic implications of the beginning material's transformation into the concerto's ending. The APPENDIX provides more specific commentary and reductive analyses of each of the concerto's five sections.

⁶ Frye goes on to say that this first phase is particularly associated with female characters. In applying these concepts to abstract, non-dramatic music, I do not believe that the application of specific gender roles to musical material is necessary or appropriate. Therefore, I make no claims that the Bernstein quotation has a male or female persona within the context of the piece.

⁷ Again, I must point out that I am speaking metaphorically. I am not interested in presenting a narrative program for the *Trombone Concerto*, but rather in uncovering and illuminating its *musical narrative* that the piece as a whole contains. My term 'musical narrative' is essentially what Cone speaks of when illuminating a composition's "context," which is "the necessary vehicle of [a particular composition's] content." Qualifying the content-context duality further in *The Composer's Voice* (171), Cone writes: "the content of instrumental music is revealed to each listener by the relation between the music and the personal context he brings to it." The listener makes the "story," the analyst's duty is to show how the music contextualizes the musical materials, making the listener's private story audible. See also Peter Kivey, *The Corded Shell: Reflections on Musical Expression* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980) and Leo Treitler, "'To Worship That Celestial Sound' Motives for Analysis," *The Journal of Musicology* (1982): 153-70.

2.0 SYMMETRY AND NARRATIVE

Movement: Motivic Material:	I a	b		Cadenza 1	II		III chorale	b	chorale	"Bernstein"	а
Harmonic/ Pitch emphasis:	g	e	e	e/c#	c#	c#/bb	V/bb	b♭	V/G	G	g

Figure 2: Trombone Concerto formal outline

Figure 2 outlines the general form of the concerto, highlighting its three major features: (1) the five-part structure (three movements connected by two cadenzas), (2) the appearance order of similar motivic material in the first and third movement (cementing the symmetrical motivic arcs), and (3) the underlying harmonic progression (revealing a symmetrical "descent" of four minor thirds). The significant motivic aspect is that the two diatonic chorales and the Bernstein quotation interrupt (yet do not break) the formal structure. *Without* these diatonic elements, the last movement would likely be a repetition of the first movement's *aba* material. *With* the chorales and the quotation, the possibility of upsetting the ultimate return of *a* is introduced. When *a* does re-emerge after the quotation, it has greater dramatic impact because its minor mode, chromatically inflected harmony not only negates the quotation's major mode diatonicism, but it also concludes the musical gesture initiated in the first movement (Figure 3).⁸

⁸ It really is impossible to know how the *Trombone Concerto* would have been composed without the impact of the Bernstein quotation. Rouse composed the first movement before Bernstein died. After the conductor's death, Rouse returned to the concerto with the aim of making it a memorial composition. Had Bernstein not died before Rouse finished the concerto the harmonic symmetricality would remain, but the quotation probably would not have been used. Nonetheless, Rouse knew from the outset that the piece could only end when the trombone arrived on its pedal G.



Figure 3: Solo trombone's pedal note motive

Rouse does not suggest that the concerto's form is symmetrical until the first movement's *b* material reappears in the third movement. When this material recurs (I, mm.39-74; III, mm.41-87), it suggests that the composition might end the way it began. Rouse transitions to the third movement's *b* material out of a "funeral march" (III, mm.17-41) by gradually introducing verbatim repetitions of each instrument's motivic *b* material from the first movement. The transitional measures (III, mm.54-57) gradually become faithful reiterations of this material: (1) the basses and 'celli repeat exactly in all four transitional bars, (2) the solo trombone and violas begin their repetition of material at m.56, and (3) the violins only begin their verbatim repetition at m.57. The next eight bars (III, mm.58-65) are exact repetitions of their counterparts in the first movement (I, mm.65-73).⁹ Figures 4 and 5 show the relevant measures from the first and third movements respectively.

⁹ Mm.41-56 shows a canon for the strings. The 'cellos and contrabasses establish the imitated line (mm.41) and are followed eight beats later (at T6) by the violas, twelve beats later (at T2) by the seconds, and fourteen beats later (at T10) by the first violins. (The solo trombone's line [starting at m.45] shows a rhythmically augmented portrayal of the first four notes [at T9] of the canonic line.) The section trombones and bassoons reinforce the harmony in these measures, which is leading to the pivotal, dominant harmony at m.58.



Figure 4: First appearance of the *b* material (II, mm.63-75)



Figure 5: Second appearance of the *b* material (III, mm.54-63)

In addition to the way Rouse gradually makes a transition to the repetition of the *b* material, these figures illustrate the material's particular harmonic goals in each movement: in the first movement, the target harmony is the E minor chord at m.74; in the third movement, the achieved harmony is the Bb minor chord at m.65. F is the root note of the harmony established in each of the material's appearances. The harmonic identity of the material in the first movement is as e minor's Neapolitan (with a major seventh); the third movement reinterprets this same harmonic material as the functional dominant of Bb.

Without the restatement of b in the third movement, the dramatic affect of the Bernstein quotation would be diminished. Only by setting up the ultimate symmetrical outcome of the concerto's motivic material (achieved through the reintroduction of b) does the Bernstein quotation seem to lie outside of the overall symmetrical narrative arc. If the Bernstein quotation appeared *before* b's reappearance, the quotation would not be placed in a position to upset the ultimate return of a. By appearing as it does immediately *after* the restatement of b, at the position that would most likely hold the return of the composition's opening material, the quotation has extra dramatic power because it can possibly become a final, transcendent substitution for a. With this conclusion, the piece would most likely become a symbol of triumph and heroism.

Figure 6 diagrams the composition's motivic arcs. The solid lines denote the motivic similarities that connect the first and third movement – those between b in each movement and the first and last appearance of a. The dashed lines denote the way in which the diatonic chorales and Bernstein quotation are structurally placed as (possible) substitutions for a. Though the diatonic elements interrupt the symmetrical pattern, the motivic pattern they create with b allow them to possibly serve as transformed (or transfigured) representations of a. Because the

first chorale is structurally located before the second appearance of b, that particular chorale does thwart the first repetition of a. This structural relationship gives the Bernstein quotation even more license to become the final substitution for the last a, completely silencing the motive's return in the last movement. If the composition ended here, then the composition's motivic pattern would be aba (first movement) and cbc (third movement). However, with the final return of a, the diatonic chorales and Bernstein quotation become asymmetrical anomalies within the larger, prevailing symmetrical structure that the motivic arcs between b and the first and last a of the composition create.



Figure 6: Symmetrical motivic arcs between I and III

To prepare the appearance of Bernstein's melody, Rouse foreshadows the quotation at various moments in the concerto. The most obvious of these premonitions is in the second movement (mm.249-56) where the melodic reference contrasts with the virtuosic (at times stuttering) activity of the scherzo's preceding material (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Primary Bernstein allusion (II, mm.249-56)

More obscure references to Bernstein's theme are made in the middle section of the second movement (mm.175-86, illustrated in Figure 17), in the repetition of the movement's A material (mm.320-41), and in the third movement's funeral march. In each instance, Rouse employs the first two intervals of Bernstein's melody as the initiating intervals for his own motivic materials. In the second movement, Rouse attaches Bernstein's intervallic gesture to the second theme of this movement. The first two intervals appear again in the third movement as the initiating gesture for the Bb minor funeral march. Figure 1 shows the original Bernstein quotation, Figures 8 and 9 illustrate how Rouse manipulates Bernstein's material for his own purposes.



Figure 8: Secondary Bernstein allusion A (II, mm.320-23)



Figure 9: Secondary Bernstein allusion B III, mm.22-26

Figure 10 offers a voice-leading reduction of the third movement's second chorale plus the Bernstein quotation (III, mm.90-111). The chorale (mm.90-99), essentially a dominant pedal point (each of its three phrases concludes on V of G), sets up the G major key area for the Bernstein quotation.¹⁰ The melody and harmonic progression of the Bernstein quotation establishes G major (complete with an ascending G major scale) through tonicizations of I

¹⁰ Rouse transposes Bernstein's melody to fit within the harmonic framework of the *Trombone Concerto*.

(mm.100-2) and V (mm.103-8), with the concluding phrase ending on a half cadence (mm.109-11). The reduction reveals that the chorale contains a scale degree 5-4-3-2 descent; the Bernstein quotation however, makes a long-range ascent to scale degree 2, the same scale degree the chorale ended with. The final 3-2-1 descent (with octave displacement) occurs in mm.109-12.



Figure 10: Voice-leading reduction: Second chorale and "Kaddish" (III, mm.90-111)

This moment is crucial to the composition's narrative because, as stated before, it creates the harmonic expectation (or at least the possibility) of a transcendental conclusion to the concerto. By siphoning away the non-diatonic harmonic elements that preceded it (the last orchestral chord before the second chorale is dodecaphonic), its diatonicism paradoxically generates the greatest amount of harmonic and dramatic stress. The harmonic variance of the quotation, with respect to the rest of the concerto, is only resolved when the quotation's major mode diatonicism is crushed by the solo trombone's natural minor decent to its pedal G, which brings about the weighty return of the composition's opening gesture and fundamental chromaticism.

Just as important to the establishment of G major in these measures is the way in which Rouse gradually filters out the F# of G major, replacing that note with the F natural of G minor in mm.108-112, harmonically morphing from the major mode to the minor mode of G. Rouse negates F#'s diatonic role as an ascending leading tone by leaving it registrally unresolved (m.108-9, `cellos') until the trombone's arrival on G (m.112) via its descent from the highest note of the Bernstein quotation.¹¹ Silencing F# further, the ending cadence of the Bernstein quotation arrives on the open dominant chord. The F natural of the trombone's descending minor scale signifies the negation of the major mode of the Bernstein quotation and establishes the harmonic return to the concerto's opening. Additionally, not only does the soloist's final scalar descent provide the harmonic transition from the major mode to the minor mode, but also a transition from the diatonicism of this section to a return of the chromaticism found in the opening. The scale's first octave is a natural minor scale; the next octave introduces a chromatic inflection of the fourth scale degree (C#) (Figure 11).¹² Taken with the final statement of a, the trombone's last five notes form an [01346] pentad. This structure reappears at m.132 as the fourth chord (of five) that the horns and tuba sound above the soloist's pedal G. (I discuss these chords and their importance in Chapter 3.)



Figure 11: Solo trombone's final scalar descent

¹¹ Emphasizing this particular registral substitution of the 'cellos, the 2^{nd} violins (in octaves with the 'cellos) *do* resolve the F# in their octave as a leading tone *up* to G at mm.108-9.

¹² Rouse associates this descent with a similar gesture (in the solo cello) at the end of his Cello Concerto.

Figure 2 illustrates that the two diatonic chorales frame the third movement's repetition of the first movement's *b* material. The first occurrence of the chorale is in the bassoons (III, mm.4-17) and the second in the muted horns (mm.90-99, discussed above). Each chorale prepares the key of the ensuing music: the bassoon chorale prepares Bb as a key area (Bb proper is not arrived at until m.17) while the horns prepare the Bernstein quotation in G major. Figure 12 is a reduction of the first chorale and its final cadence on Bb minor. Comparing the two chorales, the strongest harmonic difference is that the bassoon chorale rests on IV for an extended period. (This middle phrase is omitted in the second chorale.) The shift from F to Eb is telling because when this particular whole step makes its next appearance, it is within the trombone's final scalar descent. In the scale, these two notes (and their intervallic relationship) play a pivotal role in establishing the harmonic shift from G major to g minor. Their appearance in the first chorale, as the root members of diatonic chords, makes for a subtle foreshadowing of their significant role in creating the final harmonic shift of the concerto.

Once Rouse establishes Bb with its dominant relation, he continually reinforces Bb as the movement progresses. The cadences at mm.38, 65, and 87 rely on Bb as the foundation note for each chord, even as the melodic material becomes increasingly chromatic. Though the final cadential moment (m.87) concludes with a dodecaphonic chord, Rouse orchestrates this chord such that its primary sonority is Bb minor (shown by the strings' emphasis of Bb and Db). On the work's global level, this chord in particular reaffirms the chromaticism of the second movement, leading one to expect that chromatic language will continue to dominate. Locally, in the third movement, this chord's chromatic structure ensures that the second diatonic chorale and Bernstein quotation are placed in as high harmonic relief as possible.



Figure 12: Voice-leading reduction: First chorale (III, mm.1-17)

The preceding discussion and figures demonstrate how the first movement moves from G to E, and how the third movement moves harmonically from Bb to G. The concerto establishes G as a harmonic, dramatic, and narrative focal point through the waxing and waning of the work's harmonic complexity. Rouse creates the following harmonic trajectory: a single pitch (G; I, mm.1-38), increasing chromatic complexity (E; mm.39-90), fully chromatic material (C#; II, mm.1-399), minor mode diatonic (Bb; III, mm.1-87, with intervening *b* material that reintroduces chromatic complexity), pure major diatonic (G; mm.90-124), and a return to the single pitch (G; mm.124-35). This trajectory reveals the harmonic symmetry of the concerto and establishes one of the concerto's harmonic rules: chromaticism leads the music *away from* G; diatonicism *returns* the music *to* G.

Vital to the above pitch narrative is how Rouse constructs the second movement around C#. Locally, in the second movement, C# is found as a member of almost every chord in the movement's first large section (mm.1-166), and in this section's repetition (mm.267-373). In the middle section (mm.167-266), Rouse does begin to play with the movement's harmonic focus,

but only within the context of the concerto's symmetrical harmonic framework.¹³ For the purposes of the current discussion (how symmetry provides the composition's narrative context), it is fruitful to focus specifically on the section of the middle movement that holds the greatest dramatic feature: the movement's coda (mm.374-99).

In the coda, Rouse makes a self-referential allusion to his *Symphony No.1* (1986). Rouse composed this piece in part as an anti-*Death and Transfiguration*. He has said that Strauss' youthful composition is a "naïve" description of the death experience. Rouse calls his symphony a "death without transfiguration" and points to the climactic bars (rehearsal number 24) as representing "the annihilation of the human spirit."¹⁴ By imbedding these particular measures from his first symphony within the *Trombone Concerto*, Rouse creates a dynamic juxtaposition of two musical materials: the quotation from his symphony and the quotation of Bernstein's "*Kaddish*" symphony.¹⁵

The chromatic four-note quotation from Rouse's first symphony appears in mm.393-96, after two "false beginnings" (mm.384-5 and mm.388-9).¹⁶ (Figure 13) Interrupting each aborted attempt are blaring C#s in the orchestral trombones and third trumpet (mm.386-87, 390-92). The quotation can complete its chromatic descent only when it has begun on the correct pitch, i.e. C#. Realizing this, the brass interruptions serve a two-fold purpose. Globally, the interruptions serve to solidify C# as the focal note for the second movement, creating a midpoint tritone relation

¹³ In the movement's middle section, Rouse reiterates the harmonic focal points of E and G, recreating in microcosm the harmonic progressions utilized to this point in the piece.

¹⁴ Christopher Rouse, *Symphony No.1* (Helicon Music Corporation, 1986)

¹⁵ The Bernstein material that Rouse quotes signifies (for Rouse) "hope." Placed next to his own "annihilating" material, the diatonically major mode of the Bernstein does harmonically stand out as the direct opposite of the chromatic features in the *Symphony No.1* material.

¹⁶ The only pitch difference between the two pieces is found in the timpani roll. The *Trombone Concerto*'s timpani rolls a perfect fourth between F and Bb, the timpani of the first symphony rolls a perfect fifth between D and A. This pitch difference is significant because the F-Bb timpani roll of the *Trombone Concerto* foreshadows the third movement's descent from C# to Bb and the tonic-dominant relations that Rouse fully exploits in the third movement.

with the concerto's framing Gs. Locally, in the coda of II, the interruptions also create a dialogue with the quoted material from Rouse's first symphony. The blaring brasses appear to be telling the first violin and trumpet what the proper note to begin their motive should be. In each aborted attempt at forming the quoted motive, the treble instruments begin their gesture on C natural, a half step below the source material; only when they do begin the four-note motive on C#, can they fully realize the chromatic descent to A.



Figure 13: Two "false" beginnings and full realization of Rouse's self-referential quotation

As soon as the first trumpet and first violins complete their chromatic descent to the pitch-class A (m.396), the solo and section trombones cacophonously erupt into boxed, non-coordinated gestures that take advantage of the instruments' glissando techniques. (Figure 14) This raucous outbreak is the culmination of the concerto's chromaticism (the aggregate pitch content of the four instruments is the chromatic scale [and then some with the glissandi]), providing an additional referential context for the harmonic and dramatic tension the Bernstein quotation generates in the third movement. Each instrument is given a specific chromatic pitch collection

(only the solo trombone's figure utilizes a distinct whole step, between G and F); semitone, whole-tone, and minor and major third glissandos are incorporated within the gestures.



Figure 14: Pitch content of trombones' boxed, controlled aleatoric gestures

The second movement's chromaticism completes the concerto's harmonic movement away from its opening G to the note's diatonically farthest intervallic relation, C#. With this chromatic sound world, Rouse creates violence, angst, and sheer volume in the second movement's coda; with the repose, calmness, and harmonic stability of the Bernstein moment, Rouse crafts the opposite musical context. As already observed, though the Bernstein quotation presents a harmonic language of diatonic simplicity, the composition's *dramatic* tension increases because the quotation lies outside of the harmonic focus of the piece. To employ a harmonic metaphor, the Bernstein quotation becomes a *functional dramatic dominant* of hope to the concerto's *dramatic tonic* of tragedy, a dramatic tonic that Rouse solidifies via the composition's harmonic, motivic, and structural symmetry.

Carrying this analogy further, a *dramatic Urline* of the concerto's narrative elements presents itself. Figure 15 graphically portrays the interplay among the concerto's three main actors: the beginning (and conclusion) of the movement's *a* material, Rouse's self-referential

quotation, and the Bernstein quotation. The dramatic tension held by Bernstein's quotation serves as the dominant of our metaphorical dramatic harmony. Completing this dramatic Urline, the metaphorical tragic tonic is arrived on with the return (and completion) of the first movement's *a* material. Just as we cannot really define a particular tonic without observing its relationship to other chord members of that tonic's key, this analogy of dramatic harmonic structure illuminates the role the Bernstein quotation plays in providing the necessary dramatic context to appreciate the concerto as a musical narrative of tragedy.



Figure 15: Dramatic Urline

In approaching a composition for its emotive content and communicative ability (a composition's "inherent expression"), Cone warns that the consequences of such an investigation will warrant (nay, necessitate) that the psychical (emotive) elements of the piece be shown to be inexorably linked to the composition's musical structure. From his 1961 essay "Music: A View from Delft," Cone writes of absolute music's "inherent expression:"

To say of a composition that it conveys sorrow or embodies agility or induces contemplation is to make a statement of only preliminary aesthetic importance. The artistic value arises from the coalescence of the abstract form and the expressive design in such a way that each can be interpreted as a consequence of the other. Every event demanded by the purely musical pattern must correspond to an event demanded at that point by the psychical pattern. If the composition is completely successful, the two streams, musical and psychical, of the mingled flow are felt as analogically fused – in effect as one.¹⁷

This is no small task (for the composer or the analyst). I hope however, that my dramatic Urline does further reveal how Rouse's *Trombone Concerto* succeeds in linking its emotional content with its musical structure, thereby creating an emotionally dramatic composition that can be interpreted and analyzed as a musical allegory of tragedy.

The preceding analysis primarily focused on the interplay between the concerto's surface level harmonic and formal structures creating the composition's overall dramatic narrative structure. Buttressing these harmonic and structural elements, two specific pitches (F and A) – operating at a deeper level of the piece – provide a subtle, yet significant role in establishing the work's dramatic focus on G and the linking of its seemingly disparate motivic elements. The two pitches appear throughout the work at the significant moments I have discussed, aiding in the definition of the concerto's symmetrical harmonic structure and dramatic harmony.

I have already briefly discussed F natural in the context of the first movement's *b* material and the solo trombone's descending natural minor scale. As a motivic member of both the work's generating gesture and its two quotations, pitch-class A provides the long-range thread that ties these narrative elements to the rest of the concerto. By tracing the two notes' appearances through the concerto, their respective roles in shaping the harmonic trajectory of the composition are revealed.

The first important instance of F is in the *b* material of the first movement. Here, within the harmonic context of the Neapolitan to E, the note repeatedly appears as an upper neighbor, falling back to the fundamental note of the section (mm.67-74). As a member of the second

¹⁷ Edward Cone, "Music: A View from Delft," in *Music: A View from Delft*, Robert Morgan ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989) p.17.

movement's opening chord (a chord that is repeated throughout the movement), F is chromatically pitted against F#. In this movement's allusion to the Bernstein quotation, F appears in the melodic foreshadowing and always returns to E (mm.249-63). In the 14 bars leading to the second movement's coda, F is attached to the diminished triad of Bb, C#, E. This structure holds many possibilities for the harmonic identification of the note: F maintains its relation to E as an upper neighbor; creates a perfect fourth with Bb (which alludes to the dominant-tonic relation that is fully exploited in the third movement); and the C#-F relation maintains a harmonic relationship between the notes that were established in the movement's middle section dotted quarter chords (mm.171-87). In the second movement's coda, the timpani further alludes to the tonic-dominant relationship between Bb and F during Rouse's quotation of his own Symphony No.1. In the third movement, F appears with the greatest clarity as the dominant of Bb, yet returns to its role as E's upper neighbor with that movement's repetition of b. In this second appearance of b, despite the fact that F is exploited for its neighbor relation to E, the harmonic identity of b is changed from its first occurrence. In the first movement, this material was the Neapolitan of e minor; in the third movement, the same chord structure now functions as the dominant (with a major seventh) of Bb. Finally, F serves as the defining note for the trombone's G minor scalar descent following the Bernstein quotation. At this important moment, F does not lead to E (as has been set up throughout the concerto) but instead to Eb.¹⁸ The conflict between the semitone (F-E) and whole-tone (F-Eb) is most clearly played out in

¹⁸ This whole step descent operates on another level (beyond establishing G minor) too. In the first and third movement's, the primary motivic elements are fashioned out of the [01] and [012] chromatic pitch collections. With the trombone's final descent, Rouse omits the middle chromatic from the [012] collection. Musically then, this moment shows that the motivic goal has been the formation of the whole step, without using an intervening half step as an intervallic stair landing. This process (expanding the chromatic to the whole step) is replicated at the very end of the concerto when the trombone reaches its pedal G from the whole step above. Without this gradual process of intervallic expansion, arriving on the G might have had to come via its Ab neighbor. The filtering of the F# at the concluding phrase of the Bernstein quote now becomes more telling: Rouse silences the chromatic below G, subsequently expanding it to become a whole step.

mm.175-86 of the second movement. The conflict is not resolved (that is, F ultimately falls to E), but the interplay between the two intervals (the semitone and whole-step, shown in Figure 17) is striking.



Figure 16: Summary of F-natural's harmonic role



Figure 17: Secondary Bernstein allusion C (II, mm.175-86)

Complementing F, the pitch-class A-natural is significant for establishing the final pedal G as the composition's goal note. As the concerto unfolds, the note is revealed as the thread that ties all of the main motivic elements together. We first encounter A in the soloist's initial chromatic descent (I, mm.7-10), and find it again in the first movement at the *b* material's culminating moment (mm.71-73). (A-natural is the symmetrical axis of the second movement's opening [01478] pentad.) The pitch is the concluding note of Rouse's self-referential quotation in the second movement (mm.393-96). (A-natural begins the third movement as the melodic leading tone to Bb minor, and reappears within the funeral march and repetition of the first movement's

b material.) Finally, as the last quoted note from Bernstein's *"Kaddish,"* the pitch resolves the open dominant chord to the first G of the trombone's descending scale. The same whole step descent (A-G) is replicated with the final gesture in the trombone, arriving on its pedal G.

Although the overall structural concern is clearly the arpeggiation of the diminished seventh, the roles of F and A reveal how Rouse reinforces the psychical quality of the concerto. As F recurs throughout the concerto at significant moments, the pitch is like a barometer for measuring (and determining) the harmonic pressure of the concerto. In the chromatic material, Rouse exploits F for its chromatic relation to both E and F#. In the diatonic material, F plays the role of dominant for Bb's tonic. Finally, when the concerto returns to its opening materials and gestures, F falls not to E but rather Eb, further demarcating the harmonic shift from Bernstein's major mode to Rouse's minor mode.¹⁹ Pitch-class A represents the thread of continuity among the three major motivic events: the opening (and closing) gesture (*a*), Rouse's self-referential quotation, and his use of the Bernstein "*Kaddish*."

¹⁹ A similar and suggestive whole step descent from F to Eb occurs in the first diatonic chorale (III, mm.9-10), perhaps foreshadowing the ultimate shift from G major to minor. The whole step descent is also mirrored in the final gesture of the trombone when it completes the motive initiated in the first movement (*a*) by finally achieving the descent to the pedal G from the preceding A. Motivically this is important because the first and second movements relied on the chromatic filling in of the major second with the [012] trichord. At the concerto's end, the chromatic inflection is no longer necessary and the final notes are allowed to descend a single major second.

3.0 BEGINNING AS ENDING

With his discussion of Western classical (eighteenth century) music, Kofi Agawu reminds us about the respective qualities and importance of beginnings and endings for creating the style's "dramatic character." The composer's individual "rhetorical strategy" towards the manipulation of these rhetorical devices creates in the listener "specific attitudes to a work's beginning, its middle, and its ending."²⁰ These attitudes provide a received reception for the listener; when a composer clearly illuminates the progression of the composition along the syntagmatic chain of beginning-middle-end (i.e. when the listener is able to know where on the chain a particular musical element resides) the dramatic effect of that music becomes most clearly realized. Agawu further states that there is a functional paradox of this tripartite chain's links because "although they share certain features, they are, on the whole, not interchangeability, the possibility of playing with them, of reinterpreting them or working against their normative prescriptions – in short, of using them creatively."²¹

²⁰ Kofi Agawu, *Playing With Signs* (Princeton University Press, 1991) p.51.

²¹ Ibid., p.72.



Figure 18: Retrograded order of a's gestures between I and III

Within the *Trombone Concerto*'s symmetrical form, Rouse exploits the paradoxical interchangeability of beginnings and endings. The composition's ending *is* its beginning. By framing the concerto with its generative *a* material, Rouse transforms the material's rhetorical role from an opening gesture to a closing sign. (Figure 18 shows how, tactically, Rouse achieves this: he restates, in retrograde, the appearance order of *a*'s four main gestural elements [the arpeggiated chord, rumbling percussion, solo trombone pedal line, and the single – plucked – G] at the end of the work.)²² The transformation of the work's opening into its ending provides the final contextualization of the Bernstein quotation, and this last contextualization of the quotation is established with a reverse (or backward looking) trajectory. It is the final appearance of *a*, more so than its initial emergence, that proves to be the most influential character for defining the narrative role of Bernstein's quotation. By virtue of its temporal placement (*a* immediately follows the quotation), *a* has the last word. The memory of the Bernstein quotation is affected; was it just a dream? an illusory ideal state?²³ Up to this point, the composition's process of contextualizing the composition's narrative elements (the play or dialogue between the key

²² See Robert Morgan, "Symmetrical Form and Common-Practice Tonality" *Music Theory Spectrum*, Vol.20, No.1 (1998), 1-47. Of particular interest to my study is Morgan's identification and analysis of the third movement of Haydn's Piano Sonata Hob.XVI. (p.27)

²³ Like Caliban's dream of riches in *The Tempest*: "...the isle is full of noises, Sounds and sweet airs...when I wak'd, I cried to dream again."

narrative events) has traveled in a straight, temporally linear fashion: Rouse's self-referential quotation from his first symphony contextualizes the Bernstein quotation, providing it with a redemptive, transcendental possibility of hope; movement two affects movement three. The restatement of *a* brings about a directional change of the temporal flow; the ending material reflexively re-contextualizes the affective nature of the Bernstein quotation. Movement *one* affects movement three. When the opening music returns to close the concerto, Bernstein's quotation now appears as an ill-fated harmonic moment of transcendental possibility. Bernstein's quotation, set up by Rouse's own quotation as an outside harmonic element, is affectively changed by the symmetrical appearance of the opening material as ending material.

"Taking a journey and returning home, having been changed by the journey," is the aspect of a symmetrical form's "symbolic meaning" that Rouse finds intriguing.²⁴ To summarize, harmonically, the *Trombone Concerto* voyages as far away from home as possible. The composition's initial return to G as the harmonic focal point (established with the Bernstein quotation) presents the pitch in a major mode tonic context. However, Rouse does not end the composition here. A further harmonic step is necessary to get the composition back to the G minor tonic established in the beginning. The final harmonic shift (provided by the solo trombone's last scalar descent) returns G to its fundamental role as the minor mode tonic. With the symbiotic relationship between the composition's harmonic and motivic gestures, the composition's true goal – the solo trombone's pedal G – arrives.²⁵

²⁴ Rouse, interview with the author.

 $^{^{25}}$ Rouse says as much when discussing the concerto's compositional process. He had completed the first movement before Bernstein passed away. He knew then (when the movement was completed) that the piece could end only when the solo trombone reached its pedal G, completing the three-note gesture initiated in the first movement.



Figure 19: Five last chords (III, mm.130-32)

Mapped onto the last note of the solo trombone (the goal note), Rouse places five chords in the horns and tuba. The signification of these chords is multifaceted. They do not form part of the fabric of the material's appearance in the first movement, yet their chromatic set-class structures have precursors in both the second movement and the last two funeral marches of the third movement. In these last seven bars, we find music clearly from the first movement (in the solo trombone and percussion), inflected by chord structures of the second (in the horns and tuba). In fashioning these chords, Rouse has the tuba arpeggiate g minor's dominant seventh and the first horn delineate a nearly inverted form of his self-referential quotation. (Figure 19) The chords are thus a kind of synthesis of the third movement's diatonic arrival on G with the second movement's emphasis on chromatic material. Harmonically, the five chords reinforce the absence (loss) of the major mode diatonic world of the Bernstein quotation. Rhetorically, these last five chords (primarily because they *do not* appear in *a*'s first statement) signify that the end of the concerto has been reached. The chords themselves are a link, which completes Agawu's syntagmatic tripartite chain.

As I have said, the five final chords reinforce the absence of the major mode diatonic world the Bernstein quotation reveals. Does this mean that they are the chromatic victors in a conflict with the diatonicism of the Bernstein quotation? Such an interpretation, acknowledging a clear cut winner, implies that the concerto has one narrative stream, and that stream is the life and death of a harmonically tonal moment. However, Rouse feels that the emotive impact of this concerto is more "enigmatic" than this interpretation allows; that it does not have a clear-cut psychical position. On the one hand, the Bernstein quotation shows a transcendental counterpoise to the second movement's outbursts. On the other hand, this transcendental moment is short-lived because the composition returns to G minor and its opening gestures from the orchestra's depths. Is the harmonic world referenced by the Bernstein quotation at all attainable? By the rules of this piece, the final chords answer this question in the negative. With these chords, Rouse further reveals (in my opinion) the importance provided by his self-referential, anti-Straussian quotation: The Bernstein quotation points to the (hypothetical) possibility of a postmortem transfiguration, but the final chords ground the concerto to a more realistic (less idyllic) state. The five last chords are the final twists of Rouse's harmonic knife, pushing the opening's harmonic return deeper; they are the sound of Frye's wolves, howling over the fallen stag.
APPENDIX

REDUCTIVE ANALYSES AND COMMENTARY

The following five analyses with commentary provide analytic material that supports the essay's focus on the dramatic narrative of the *Trombone Concerto*. The sixth analysis identifies the similarities among the concerto's five sections, drawing conclusions (specific to the *Trombone Concerto*) about Rouse's compositional technique.

A.1 FIRST MOVEMENT

The first movement is an ABA ternary form, moving harmonically from g minor to e minor. Sparse motivic gestures, orchestration that emphasizes rumbling percussion, and the trombone playing in its pedal register characterize the material of A (mm.1-26).. B's motivic material (mm.27-80) emphasizes long, chromatic lines, presented in a contrapuntal texture. When the A material returns (m.81), it is transposed to continue the harmonic focus (e minor) of the B material.

Two chord structures (a pure minor triad and the [0158] tetrachord) demarcate the movement's larger structural beats; occurring at mm.24, 39, 67, 74, and 89. The [0158] tetrachord occurs at three transposition levels: #1 at T0 (D=0), #2 at T2, and #3 at T9. The patterning of these chords results in the [0158] appearing as the ending of larger phrases, and the

minor triad appearing as the beginning of structural phrases. Rouse plays with the functional role of these structures: the first appearance is the [0158] in g minor (g minor with added 6th); the second appearance is a Neapolitan inflection of F to E (as an 8-7 suspension); the third appearance places the chromatic member of [0158] in the trombone, as a 6-5 suspension above e minor; the final appearance (at the same transposition level of its predecessor) is a stable [0158] harmonic structure.



Figure 20: Reduction Ia (I, mm.1-74)



Figure 21: Reduction Ib (I, mm.74-93)

The motivic material for the concerto as a whole is constructed from the trombone's initial descending chromatic (m.7). Rouse builds upon this basic shape as the movement (and concerto) progresses. Other important intervals established in this movement are the perfect fourth and the tritone. Symmetrical pitch formations are also utilized: most notably in the numerous [012] tri-chords appearing throughout the movement, and the trombone's descending line at m.79 (composed of interlocked [026] tri-chords). A subtle reordering of Bernstein's motivic gesture is found in the bassoons (mm.86-88). The bassoons' pitches (Bb, B natural, and C#) are also found as the first notes of the three main narrative events (shown in Figure 15, the dramatic Urline): Bb in the initial a material; B natural is the first note of the Bernstein quotation; and C# in Rouse's quotation of his first symphony.

A.2 FIRST CADENZA



Figure 22: Pitch reduction (Cadenza 1)

The first cadenza continues the motivic material established in the first movement and provides the rhythmic transition to the second movement.²⁶ A premonition of the cadenza occurs in mm.78-80 of the first movement, which the cadenza alludes to via the whole-tone pitch collection (third line of figure 22). Specifically, the G-C# tritone alludes to the climactic

²⁶ Guide to reading figures 22 and 26: phrases are denoted with the dashed barlines; larger pitch collections with solid slurs (dashed slurs show meaningful aggregate collections that the solid slurs cannot reveal).

moment in the second movement. The C# here is in the same octave the unison trombones and third trumpet will blare at mm.386-92. Locally to this cadenza and the first movement, this specific tritone establishes the overall harmonic move from the first movement's opening G to the second movement's C# emphasis.

A.3 SECOND MOVEMENT



Figure 23: Reduction IIa (II, mm.1-152)



Figure 24: Reduction IIb (II, mm.152-267)



Figure 25: Reduction IIc (II, mm.267-400)

The second movement is the densest of the concerto. It is a ternary (ABA) form with coda. Whereas the first movement relied on the [0158] tetrachord for structural demarcations, the second movement utilizes descending octatonic scales (for the framing A sections) and harmonically symmetrical dotted quarter chords (in the B section). Mm.47, 102, and 151 show the first three octatonic scales, each reaching their harmonic goal: C#. The descending scale at m.165 announces the arrival of the middle section and brings the harmonic emphasis to E (this middle section has more harmonic play than its framing sections). The last of the descending scale gestures (m.373) leads directly into the coda's boxed figures and hammer blows.

The A section's (mm.1-166) main motivic element is the [012] trichord. (Specifically, B#-C#-D.) Rouse references this collection throughout the movement, and juxtaposes its character as a staccato, somewhat stuttering, motivic figure (x) and as a legato figure (y). Further delineating the difference between x and y is the orchestral accompaniment. Rhythmic punctuations denote x, ostinato (both repeated chords and scalar figures) characterizes y's presentation. The phrase analysis shows how Rouse plays with the order and duration of its two motivic elements as the section unfolds. The larger B section (mm.166-267) is in compound meter (arrived at through metric modulations) and contains the first (and strongest) allusion to the third movement's Bernstein quotation (mm.249-63). Harmonically, this section restates the concerto's movement from G to C# through E. A varied and truncated repetition of the A section (m.268-373) is ultimately interrupted by the Coda (mm.374-99).²⁷ The material in the coda contains a self-referential quotation of Rouse's *Symphony No.1* (mm.393-6), and further establishes – most clearly and succinctly – the movement's emphasis of C#.

The B section holds the greatest amount of harmonic variation to this point in the concerto. By creating conflict between G and E (see especially mm.230-249: the percussive punctuations fight the ostinato G of the horns and chimes), Rouse recreates in microcosm the harmonic pull from the first movement's G to this movement's C#. Like the descending octatonic scales of A, dotted quarter chords (mm.171, 179, 186, 193, 201, 208, 216, 226) distinguish B's phrase groupings. These dotted quarter chords (each a symmetrical progression) have great harmonic implications for the movement. The first three sets of chords, within the 21-bar phrase (mm.166-87), are mediantly related (C# and F). The next two chord sets pair together by a dominant relationship (G and D). The last three chord progressions serve a two-fold

²⁷ It is an interruption because the four previous "laughing gestures," each initiated by the trombone, were imitated immediately by an orchestral section. At this instance, an orchestral section does not (imitatively) follow the trombone's gesture; the coda begins where the orchestral answer is expected.

purpose: taken as a complete unit, they mimic the concerto's larger diminished seventh triadic descent (E-Bb, G-C#, C#-G); individually, because they each descend a tritone, the whole-tone scale is referenced (creating a local contrast to the movement's ensuing arrival on the chromatic scales in the coda).

A.4 SECOND CADENZA



Figure 26: Pitch reduction (Cadenza 2)

The second cadenza emerges directly out of the boxed figures concluding the second movement. Whereas the first cadenza served to reinforce the pitch material of the concerto and rhythmically lead to the second movement, this cadenza unwinds the second movement's chromatic milieu by gradually shortening the chromatic collections (notice also the strong allusion to g minor at the end of the figure's second line) and provides a temporal ritard into the third movement.



A.5 THIRD MOVEMENT

Figure 27: Reduction IIIa (III, mm.1-58)



Figure 28: Reduction IIIb (III, mm.58-135)

The third movement contains four elements: two diatonic chorales, three presentations of a funeral march (rhythmically reminiscent of Chopin's B-minor funeral march), restatements of both *b* and *a* from the first movement, and the quotation from Bernstein's *Symphony No.3* (*"Kaddish"*). Unlike the two preceding movements and cadenzas, the third movement establishes specific diatonic key areas of Bb minor and G major through their respective tonic-dominant relationships. Denoting this movement's larger phrases, Rouse utilizes cadence points that establish and reinforce the two diatonic key areas: Bb minor (mm.17, 22, 65, 87), G major (mm.100), and G minor (m.112).

The first chorale (mm.1-17) establishes Bb minor. The three appearances of the funeral march (mm.17-36, 41-58 and 72-87) prolong the minor key. After the first funeral march, the two succeeding marches increase the chromatic intensity. The last funeral march climaxes on a twelve-note, fully chromatic chord (m.87). The return of the first movement's b material (mm.58-65) provides the necessary structural link for establishing the concerto's symmetrical form. The second chorale (mm.90-99) prepares the G major key area of the ensuing Bernstein quotation (mm.100-112). Concurrent with the solo trombone's descending scale, the a material of the first movement returns (in retrograde), sealing the narrative fate of the composition as a whole.

It is interesting to notice that the half cadence of the first funeral march (mm.34-36) finishes on an open V of Bb (the third of V is missing). Rouse uses the same open structure for the half cadence that concludes the Bernstein quotation (V of G, mm109-11). The second appearance of the open dominant, with its harmonic implications for the transition from G major to minor, owes some of its affect to its sibling chord in the first Bb minor funeral march.

Premonitions of *a*'s return occur in two places. The first hint of the *a* material is at mm.65-71. The motivic line of the trombone, accompanied by the bass drum, recreates the primary orchestration element of the composition's opening bars. The second allusion occurs in the three bars separating the second chorale from the last funeral march buildup (mm.87-90). Here Rouse writes only for the bass drum, alluding to the rumbling percussion of the first movement.

Finally, at the very end of the movement, five chords are sounded in the horns and tuba above the solo trombone's pedal Gs. These chords reference chromatic structures that appeared earlier in this movement (especially mm.41-54 and 84-87) and in the second movement's coda.

Isolating the tuba line, we find that it is arpeggiating the dominant seventh chord of G. Recognizing this vital element, the chords can be analyzed as a synthesis of the chromatic and diatonic harmonic structures of the concerto. The fact that they are a combination of chromaticism and diatonicism, appearing at a moment when diatonic harmony seems to have prevailed over chromaticism, they create a harmonically enigmatic conclusion to the concerto; enigmatic because their pitch content creates both harmonic conflict and resolution. As a remembrance of the second movement's chromaticism, the chords conflict with the final movement's return to diatonic g minor. Yet, because the progression of their "root" structure shows a functional relationship to g minor, they also provide a resolution (via harmonic synthesis) of the harmonic conflict between chromatic and diatonic writing.

A.6 ANALYTIC CONCLUSIONS

The previous analyses identify Rouse's compositional techniques for the *Trombone Concerto*. The main component of Rouse's technique is his constant variation of material. From the first occurrence of a particular motivic or harmonic element, any subsequent occurrences will have subtle (and not so subtle) variations. The ramification of this process of constant variation for the concerto's narrative is that the initial appearances of musical ideas become *premonitions* of their eventual realization. Each movement has instances of this process of premonition. The first movement alludes to the trombone's first cadenza (mm.79-80) and (very subtly) to the Bernstein quotation (mm.86-88). The first cadenza's fortissimo statement of the G-C# tritone alludes to the harmonic trajectory outlined from the opening of the first movement through the

second movement's coda. The second movement makes the strongest allusions to the Bernstein quotation, all played by the solo trombone in mm.175-86, 188-201, 249-263, and 320-41. The middle movement's "laughing gestures" (descending octatonic scales) continue to build in intensity, making their final and most affective showing in the boxed figures of the trombones, transformed into the complete chromatic scale. The trombones' boxed figures were also prepared by the trumpet's boxed figures (m.375), which were in turn prepared (harmonically and gesturally) earlier in the movement at mm.51, 348, and 357.

The motivic use of the concerto's initial descending chromatic dyad is expanded throughout the concerto from a two-note motive to the culminating chromatic [01234] pentad in Rouse's quotation of his own *Symphony No.1*. The bars leading up to Rouse's own quotation succinctly summarize the motivic expansion of the two-note dyad into the five-note pentad. The two aborted attempts at making the quotation, each beginning on C-natural, are two and three note gestures respectively.

The appearance of the chromatic dyad within certain vertical chord structures points to an integral component of Rouse's harmonic language: his use of mediant relationships for both building single chords and for creating progressions between chords. Mediant relationships are paramount to the concerto's long-range harmonic plan because the outlined diminished seventh is achieved by a progression of minor thirds. Internal chord structures that show the major third as either a mediant relationship between two chords or as a fundamental member of a chord structure (i.e. the augmented triad) provide locally harmonic variation to the structurally invariant progression of minor thirds.

Looking at the first [0158] tetrachord (I, m.24), we see that – in the abstract – it can be identified either as a first inversion Eb-maj.7, or as a g-minor triad with an added 6^{th} (in the

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context of the first movement, it is the latter structure that is heard). The chromatic dyad (in this case between Eb and D) appears as the link between the two mediantly related triads (Eb and g), presented as a single vertical unit. Pertinent to Rouse's technique of constant variation, it is important to point to an instance where the mediant relationship between two chords is presented linearly. In the second movement's B section, the first dotted quarter progression (mm.172-87) exploits the mediant relationship between C# and F (enharmonically, E#). The variation between vertical harmonies and linear progressions is also played out in the two moments that I identify as the concerto's most chromatic: the coda of the second movement and the third movement's dodecaphonic chord (III, m.87). Rouse uses the same chord structure in each instance to create the harmonic and dramatic relief that the Bernstein quotation requires. In the coda, the strings play four augmented triads – stacked on top of each other (see figure 6.1, (m.374) – establishing the coda's chromatic focus. Preparing the arrival of the dodecaphonic chord at III, m.87, the trombones and bassoons play chromatically ascending, quarter note chords in the penultimate measure to the dodecaphonic chord's arrival. Each of these four rising chords (from Bb to C#), are augmented triads. The four augmented triads available in the 12-note chromatic scale first appear as a single vertical unit in the coda and then as four individual, linear triads in the third movement.

In addition to the role of the chromatic dyad as a harmonic chord member, as the concerto progresses, the semitone also appears within a scalar context. In its scalar and melodic context, the intervallic role of the chromatic dyad shows the transformation of this interval into a whole-step throughout the concerto. In the first movement, as the beginning of a, the falling dyad is a scale unto itself. In the second movement, the dyad is found in the descending octatonic scales and the chromatic collection of the trombones' boxes. Rouse also utilizes

whole-tone scales in this movement, which foreshadow the final whole-step ultimately needed to complete *a*'s motivic gesture and return the concerto to g minor in the final movement. The chromatic member of the first arpeggiated [0158] tetrachord in the first movement (mm.24-25) does not appear in the matching arpeggio of the last movement (mm.112-14). The absence of the chromatic note in the last arpeggio solidifies this chord as a "simple" g minor triad. The disentanglement of Eb from this chord's sibling in the first movement reinforces the final motivic expansion of the semitone into a whole-step that the trombone completes with its pedal note motive. Bb moves to A as a chromatic dyad. As the concerto unfolds, and its harmonic rules played out, the chromatic expands into a whole-step. Only then can the trombone's pedal A realize its fall to G.

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WHITE SPACE WAITING

(an original composition for chamber orchestra)

instrumentation

flute

oboe

clarinet in Bb

bassoon

horn in F

trumpet in C

trombone

percussion (glockenspiel, vibraphone)

piano

strings (6,6,4,4,2)

Score in C*

white space waiting

Burkhardt Reiter (2002; rev.2004)



* cb. sounds 8vb. & glock. sounds 15ma.

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