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CHRISTOPHER ROUSE: AN EXPLORATION OF THREE PERCUSSION STANDARDS

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CHRISTOPHER ROUSE:
AN EXPLORATION OF THREE PERCUSSION STANDARDS

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the College of Fine Arts at the University of Kentucky

By
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Dickinson, North Dakota

Director: James B. Campbell, Professor of Percussion Studies
Lexington, Kentucky
2012

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

CHRISTOPHER ROUSE:
AN EXPLORATION OF THREE PERCUSSION STANDARDS

The percussion ensemble is still a relatively young ensemble, with the first works by Edgard Varèse and Amadeo Roldan composed in the first third of the 20th century. Because of this youth, it is important to examine significant works for the percussion ensemble which establish themselves as staples to the repertoire. Christopher Rouse, a Pulitzer-Prize winning composer has written three such works, Ogoun Badagris (1976), Ku-Ka-Ilimoku (1978), and Bonham (1989). This study will closely examine each of these works, providing background, detailed analysis, and performance practice for each of these works.

KEYWORDS: Christopher Rouse, Percussion Ensemble, Ogoun Badagris, Ku-Ka-Ilimoku, Bonham

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CHRISTOPHER ROUSE:
AN EXPLORATION OF THREE PERCUSSION STANDARDS

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For my parents
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The history of the percussion ensemble is a very short-lived one in comparison to that of Western art music. The first strictly percussion works, by Edgard Varèse and Amadeo Roldan, were not created until the 1930’s. Early important composers that became interested in the new forms of expression that the percussion ensemble provided include John Cage, Henry Cowell, and Lou Harrison. As the 20th century moved on, the percussion ensemble became more and more accepted as a legitimate chamber ensemble. This culminated in the establishment of the first academic program with a major in percussion performance at the University of Illinois, as well as the establishment of the university percussion ensemble as an accredited course. Today the percussion ensemble maintains an active surge of new music created for it. And while there is a constant new stream of music being created for this type of ensemble, there are also a number of standard pieces which have survived for decades as staples in the percussion ensemble repertoire.

Many important composers have written works for percussion ensemble. John Cage, arguably one of the most important composers of the past century, was a major advocate of the percussion ensemble, creating many works that are looked at as cornerstones of the percussion ensemble repertoire. Other notable composers who have contributed to this genre include Pulitzer-Prize winners such as David Lang, Mario Davidovsky, Steve Reich, Elliot Carter, and Christopher Rouse.

Christopher Rouse’s compositions have gravitated in recent years towards mostly orchestral compositions. His latest compositions include his Con certo for Orchestra, his Oboe Concerto premiered by the Minnesota Orchestra, and his work Odna Zhizn which
was premiered by the New York Philharmonic in 2010. However, early in his career, Rouse composed four works for percussion ensemble, three of which are available and regularly performed today. Two of these compositions, *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* and *Ogoun Badagri*, are based off of native Samoan and Haitian drumming respectively, while his final percussion ensemble work, *Bonham* (1988), is a tribute of sorts to one of his early musical loves, that of rock-and-roll, citing specific references to songs by the rock band Led Zeppelin (whose drummer, John Bonham, the piece is named after), as well as other staples of the rock genre.

These three compositions are all important works in the percussion ensemble repertoire, and yet very little scholarly research has been done on them. Given the youth of the percussion ensemble as a musical ensemble, the works of a composer of this magnitude should not be ignored. This project will provide an in depth look at Rouse’s compositional style, as well as the composer’s inspiration and intentions for the work, and rehearsal and performance techniques for each work.
CHAPTER 2: CHRISTOPHER ROUSE

EARLY YEARS: 1949 - 1967

Christopher Rouse was born February 15th, 1949 in Baltimore, MD.¹ His first musical experiences centered around the emergence of rock and roll music, citing specifically the music of Little Richard, Bill Haley and his Comets, and Elvis in the 1950’s. Rouse remembers this as the first music he fell in love with.

Rouse’s parents were not very musically inclined. Commenting on his parent’s musical background, Rouse says:

“[My mother] wasn’t that musically oriented herself. She learned a bit about classical music during the ‘50s culture boom. The Book of The Month Club had a music appreciation record series and so forth. But she was never somebody who was really very wrapped up in music. My father was completely not, not interested at all.”²

Rouse’s mother was his main musical enabler at a young age. “I remember my mother deciding to gently counter [the rock and roll influence] by saying, ‘That’s fine if you want to listen to that, but why don’t you try this and see if you like it’.” Her influence helped expose him to his first major musical experience: Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. Rouse recalls this experience was “a revelation that got me incredibly excited.”³

Rouse’s interest in music was constantly stimulated through recordings:

…the year after the Beethoven, I just started devouring recorded music...[my mother and I] thought maybe I would enjoy some Prokofiev, and so we went into a store. This was back in the days when they would just open up the recording and you could sample it on earphones. There was a violin concerto recording and a few other things, but then there was this piece called the Scythian Suite. And of course, I’m the only one hearing this on the earphones, but the minute I heard it I said, ‘this is the one.’ So, we brought it home and I put it on the record player, as we used to call it. The minute I put the Scythian Suite on my mother would high-tail into the kitchen and close the door; it was too noisy for her, modern music back then. But I just loved the barbarity and the color of that piece. The next year I found The Rite of Spring, so I kind of came at this backwards.⁴

³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
While there were some attempts at learning to play instruments (piano at first, and later percussion), Rouse states that he didn’t like practicing. “In my own stubborn little way, I saw no reason that I had to play an instrument to be a composer.”

By age seven, Rouse knew he wanted to be a composer. It is interesting that, while growing up, Rouse never actually composed. He admits to composing a few small pieces when he was seven or eight, as well as some rock songs through his teen years, but never any more developed pieces. This changed when he was nearing the end of high school. Deciding to go on to college for music, Rouse realized that he would need a portfolio to apply for school. “When I was 17, I figured they want me to submit two completed pieces so I guess I’d better actually write something down.”

While Rouse’s parents were not musicians, they supported his love of music regardless. “They were very good to me, in that they didn’t try to talk me out of [going into music] or discourage me. They cut me a lot of slack and let me just go ahead and do this for all those years, I think, expecting that when I applied to Oberlin that I was going to be rejected and then I would have to face reality.”

**UNIVERSITY YEARS: 1967 - 1978**

After high school, Rouse attended the Oberlin Conservatory where he studied composition with Richard Hoffmann and Randolph Coleman, graduating with his undergraduate degree in 1971. While at Oberlin Rouse occasionally performed percussion as a utility player in large ensembles. “If a good tam-tam part came along and they needed an extra, I would play.”

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6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
During his time at Oberlin, rock music was still very much an influence on him. “I followed rock pretty closely, certainly all through the ‘60s and well into the ‘70s. In the latter part of the ‘70s my interests began to flag a bit.”

Interestingly, Rouse’s rock influence was accepted at Oberlin, while another side of his writing was not:

As an undergraduate, I was all over the place. In the late ‘60s you did everything…you were encouraged to try all sorts of stuff. So I did some serial stuff, I did graph pieces, I did conceptual pieces, I did all sorts of things. I also did stuff with rock influences. The only thing that got me in trouble, interestingly, was when I wrote a tonal piece. That was not acceptable in 1968 or thereabouts still.

Rouse was willing to experiment with just about anything during his undergraduate studies. While he felt he had not come to any strong aesthetic positions yet, he was sure of one thing: “The one unifying principle for me was expressivity. Music had to have something to say on that level. It couldn’t just be an intellectual exercise.”

After graduating from Oberlin in 1971, Rouse attended the University of Pennsylvania to study with George Rochberg. He withdrew, however, from these lessons after a single semester because of philosophical differences between him and Rochberg. He then turned to studying privately with another faculty member at Penn, George Crumb, with whom he continued studying until 1973.

In 1973 Rouse entered Cornell University where he pursued both his Masters and Doctoral degrees. While there, he studied with Karel Husa and Robert Palmer. It is during this time that he composed his first two percussion ensemble works, *Falcones Luminis*, which was written in 1974 for the Blackearth Percussion Group (classmates of Rouse’s at Oberlin), and *Ogoun Badagris*, which was premiered by the neighboring...

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10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
14 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
Ithaca College Percussion Ensemble in 1976.\textsuperscript{15} While \textit{Ogoun Badagris} has become a standard in the percussion ensemble repertoire, \textit{Falcones Luminis} was later pulled by Rouse from his catalogue. This has become common of Rouse if he does not feel a piece is up to his standard over time. In an interview, he stated “I’m pretty ruthless in terms of sending Dr. Kevorkian over to take care of some of the old pieces that I just don’t feel deserve to live any longer…I don’t feel that they’re good enough. That’s the bottom line. They just don’t pass muster.”\textsuperscript{16}

Two years later, in 1978, Rouse composed his percussion quartet \textit{Ku-Ka-Ilimoku} for the Syracuse Symphony Percussion Ensemble. After finishing this work, there was an extreme drought of percussion works from Rouse. Rouse says that this was intentional:

I always warn my students to beware of typecasting. The danger early on for me was being typecast as a percussion composer. I wrote a couple of little percussion pieces when I was still a student that began to get played a lot and are still played a lot, but I then realized that everyone was thinking of me as ‘Oh, he writes great percussion music.’ And so I purposely have said no for many, many years to any percussion ensemble request because I just don’t want to be thought of as just that.\textsuperscript{17}

**PROFESSIONAL YEARS: 1978 - PRESENT**

In 1978 Rouse began teaching at the University of Michigan as a Teaching Fellow.\textsuperscript{18} Three years later, in 1981, he joined the faculty at the Eastman School of Music. While teaching here, Rouse once again drew from his love of rock-and-roll and began teaching the first accredited course in the History of Rock at a major academic institution in 1983.\textsuperscript{19}

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\textsuperscript{15} Christopher Rouse. \textit{Ogoun Badagris}. Helicon Music Corp., 1981.
\textsuperscript{16} Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
\textsuperscript{17} Frank J. Oteri, “Christopher Rouse: Going to Eleven”, NewMusicBox, http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/christopher-rouse-going-to-eleven/ (accessed September 1, 2010).
\textsuperscript{19} Phillip Huscher. Program notes to Christopher Rouse’s \textit{Rapture}. Chicago Symphony Orchestra, 2009.
Rouse began teaching at the Juilliard School in 1997 while still teaching at Eastman. In 2002 Rouse finally left Eastman, and assumed full-time teaching duties at Juilliard where he still teaches today.\(^{20}\)

As a composer, Rouse has received numerous accolades and awards. He has been commissioned by major ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and the Houston Symphony Orchestra.\(^{21}\) He has been composer-in-residence for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (1986 – 89), the Santa Cecilia and Schleswig Holstein Festivals (1989), the Aspen Music Festival (1990), the Tanglewood Music Center (1997), the Helsinki Biennale (1997), and the Pacific Music Festival (1998).\(^{22}\)

In addition, a list of some of his more notable awards includes the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award for his *Symphony No. 1* in 1988, a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1990, the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his *Trombone Concerto* in 1993, an Honorary Doctorate from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 1996, election as a member into the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2002, the 2002 Grammy for Best Contemporary Composition for his piece *Concert de Gaudi*, and being named Musical America’s 2009 Composer of the Year.\(^{23}\)

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\(^{21}\) Ibid.


CHAPTER 3: COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES

Rouse employs a number of compositional techniques in his three percussion ensemble works. In examining these techniques we can see a development of Rouse’s writing over the beginning part of his career. Some of these are very basic techniques that have been used extensively in compositions by many composers, such as *homophonic texture* or *interplay between voices*. Others, however, are more advanced. Techniques such as *implied multimeter writing*, *rhythmic displacement*, and *rhythmic addition and subtraction* create colors and textures which help to give compositional depth to these pieces, as well as identify Rouse’s developing compositional style.

**HOMOPHONIC TEXTURE**

The most used technique in Rouse’s arsenal is the juxtaposition of a primary line over an accompaniment passage. The primary line may be carried by a solo performer or multiple performers, with the accompaniment assigned to either single or multiple performers. It is important to note that Rouse’s accompaniment parts are usually highly active in comparison to traditional accompaniment parts normally seen in *homophonic texture*.

*Ogoun Badagris* employs this technique nine times throughout the composition. One example begins in measure 57 and lasts to measure 69. In this section Player 3 performs a solo on congas while the rest of the ensemble creates an accompaniment texture (Figure 3.1).
The texture created by the accompaniment consists of three main elements. The first is a six-note figure of eighth-notes from Player 1 on timpani. The lowest and highest drums are placed on the first and fourth eighth-notes of the measure, helping to outline the 6/8 meter. Contrasting this is the second element, the log drums part of Player 5. While the timpani emphasize the 6/8 meter, Player 5’s pattern takes up nine eighth-notes, conveying a meter of 9/8 in opposition of the written 6/8. This relationship between Players 1 and 5 helps to create a texture that is stable, yet at the same time not so predictable as to become stagnant.

The third element of this section is the antiphonal bass drum parts by Players 2 and 4. These bass drum notes on the downbeat and fourth eighth-note of each measure are important thematic material to the piece. This figure occurs throughout the piece, and
also helps to anchor the meter in this section against the metrically ambiguous conga solo.

The *homophonic texture* technique is used five times in *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku*, such as with the boobam solo beginning at measure 16 (Figure 3.2). In this example each player contributes a unique aspect to the texture, with dynamic levels employed to separate the primary line from the accompaniment. The accompaniment is created by Players 1, 2, and 3, who contribute repetitive parts on claves, tom-toms, and conga drum respectively. A unique aspect of these accompaniment parts is the fact that each seems to occupy their own individual sense of meter.

The tom-tom part of Player 2 creates a pattern that fits evenly into each 3/4 measure of the piece. The conga drum part of Player 3 goes one step further by playing a duple pattern of quarter-note followed by quarter-note rest. This fits evenly into two measures of 3/4, creating a feeling of 6/4. Player 1 has the most unique repetitive pattern by performing an 11-beat riff. This pattern is made even more interesting by beginning on beat 2 of the first measure of this section. This 11-beat riff creates a unique pattern that is not readily perceived by the listener, and therefore makes the accompaniment of this section seem less predictable and more static.
Rouse avoids the predictability of this accompaniment pattern by developing it as the solo progresses. This development begins in measure 22 with Player 3, who now changes from a two-measure pattern of alternating quarter-notes and quarter-note rests to a 4-beat pattern that adds a dotted eighth-note and sixteenth-note rhythm to the riff. This occurs while the other patterns are continuing, so the new material can be interpreted as a development of previous material as opposed to the accompaniment becoming something entirely new. Player 3’s part is further developed in measure 25, moving instruments to a pair of snare drums. In order to keep continuity between the previous conga drum pattern introduced in measure 22 and this next pattern on the snare drums, Rouse uses the dotted eighth-note and sixteenth-note rhythm introduced as the beginning of this next pattern. He also begins the dotted-eighth-note and sixteenth-note pattern where that rhythm would have occurred within the previous conga drum pattern. All of these factors create continuity between the accompaniment changes and allows the development to feel organic and continuous (Figure 3.3). In measure 25 where Player 3’s part changes, there
is also a change to Player 1’s part. Here the 11-beat clave pattern that began in measure 16 is exchanged for a shorter 5-beat pattern. This new pattern is rhythmically denser than the previous 11-beat pattern.

The continuity of this accompaniment centers on Player 2’s tom-tom pattern due to the consistency of the pattern as well as its construction being anchored within the meter. This part does have its own development over time however. A slight variation occurs in measures 19 – 21 where the last sixteenth-note of the riff is moved from the third tom-tom to the fourth tom-tom. This slight variation continues with this note moving down to the third tom-tom three measures later in measure 22, and back up to the fourth tom-tom three measures later in bar 25. In order to emphasize the final three measures of this section the last sixteenth-note alternates measures, first being placed on the third tom-tom in measure 28, the fourth tom-tom in measure 29, and back to the third tom-tom in the final measure (Figure 3.3).
Figure 3.3 – *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* Full Score, measures 22 - 31

Player 4 boonam solo acts as the primary line for the section over the accompaniment of Players 1 through 3. Unlike the accompaniment, there are few repeated patterns within the solo, and what segments are repeated evolve immediately to avoid the riff-like character of the accompaniment. This can be seen in measures 19 – 21 of the solo part, where one of the main themes of the boonam solo is presented (Figure 3.4), and immediately modified in the second iteration in order to convey development and separate itself from the patterns of the accompaniment (Figure 3.3). As with the
conga solo in *Ogoun Badagris*, this boobam solo is metrically ambiguous. The solid rhythmic foundation of Player 2 provides a welcome contrast to the boobam solo.

**Figure 3.4 – Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Full Score, measures 19 - 21**

In *Bonham*, Rouse uses the *homophonic texture* technique throughout most of the entire work. The drum set part in Player 8 acts as the only accompaniment to a primary line occurring in one or more of the other players, though sometimes Player 8 is joined by other players to thicken the accompaniment texture. An example where Player 8 is the sole accompaniment occurs at the beginning of the work, where after establishing the rock-and-roll feel of the piece, Player 8 moves to an accompaniment role while Players 6 and 7 provide the focus with their tom-tom primary line, occasionally joined by other players in the ensemble for emphasis (Figure 3.5).
Figure 3.5 – Bonham Full Score, measures 1 – 8
The accompaniment avoids being lost because of the textural difference between the tom-tom line and the drum set. Even with the addition of timpani and bass drums at key points of thematic interest, the drum set is still able to be heard due to the difference in timbres that complements and contrasts the primary line parts.

Measure 144 begins a segment similar to the beginning of the work. The difference here is that now the accompaniment is not a single player, but three players. Player 8 recreates the drum beat from the Butterfield Blues Band’s song “Get Yourself Together” between the snare drum and bass drum, while Player 3 doubles the snare drum part and Player 5 doubles the bass drum part, both on respective instruments. After four measures, Players 1, 6, and 7 provide a primary line on timpani, high tom-toms, and low tom-toms respectively (Figure 3.6). The reinforcement of Player 8’s part by Players 3 and 5 allows for a thicker texture in the accompaniment while still being texturally different to avoid cluttering the primary line. As with similar sections in previous works, Rouse introduces slight variations into the accompaniment in order to give it a sense of growth as the primary line develops.
POLYRHYTHMS

Polyrhythms are the simultaneous performance of two distinct subdivisions of the same pulse wherein neither subdivision is evenly divisible by the other (Figure 3.7).

![Musical notation showing examples of polyrhythms and non-polyrhythms]

**Figure 3.7 – Examples of both polyrhythms and non-polyrhythms**

While not extensively used in Western art music until the 20th century, polyrhythms have been used in certain cultures for hundreds of years, including many cultures in Africa, Cuba, and India. Although Rouse uses polyrhythms in each of his percussion ensemble works, it is in *Ogoun Badagris* where they are used to the fullest extent.

The first occurrence of polyrhythms in *Ogoun* happens in measures 13 – 15 which build up to the *Grouillère* section of the piece. In measure 13 Rouse uses a 3 against 2 polyrhythm between Players 4 and 5 while Player 2 performs a rhythm that compliments this polyrhythm. The next measure then contains a 4 against 3 polyrhythm between Players 2 and 3. As the *Grouillère* section begins, another polyrhythm then is presented between Players 2 and 3 as Player 2 plays as eighth-note on the second partial of a duplet in the second half of measure 15 while Player 3 continues the triplet based conga drum part established in the previous measure (Figure 3.8).
While the first use of polyrhythms is limited to a small three measure section, the second use is far more extensive, and is the largest use of polyrhythms by Rouse in his three percussion ensemble pieces. The second occurrence begins at measure 186, and centers on an eighth-note quintuplet motive initiated by Player 5 on snare drum that contrasts the rest of the ensemble sounding eighth-notes evenly fitting into the 6/8 meter. While the dynamic separation between the snare drum primary line and the accompanying ensemble distinguishes the snare drum as the predominant voice in this passage, it is the unique texture created by the 6 against 5 polyrhythm between the primary line and accompaniment that gives this section its true character. Rouse further develops the polyrhythmic quintuplet motive by shifting the beginnings of the quintuplets, and also later subtracting notes from the quintuplet, creating groups of four and then three. All of this makes the polyrhythm less obvious while still achieving the interesting texture first created when the passage began (Figure 3.9).
Figure 3.9 – Ogoun Badagris Full Score, measures 186 – 207
The snare drum primary line passage in *Ogoun Badagris* represents the most extensive use of polyrhythms by Rouse. While polyrhythms exist in all of his percussion ensemble works, the use of them in *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* and *Bonham* are limited, and never exposed to the point where the polyrhythmic texture is the focus as in *Ogoun*. For instance, the opening rim textures in *Ku-Ka* illustrate a 3 against 2 polyrhythm, although the figures move by so quickly that the polyrhythmic texture is not discernible (Figure 3.10). Performers of Player 2’s part should make an effort to keep the sixteenth-note triplet rhythms accurate so that they are not squared off and turned into a two thirty-second-note and sixteenth-note rhythm.

![Image of polyrhythm notation](image)

**Figure 3.10 – Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Players 1 – 3, measures 13 – 14**

Isolated polyrhythms also occur in *Bonham*, though as with *Ku-Ka*, they are limited in scope and the polyrhythmic relationship is not the focus. Such an example occurs at the very beginning of the piece, where the written deceleration and acceleration of the rhythm in the tom-tom line creates polyrhythms with the primary line and accompaniment. These occurrences are so brief and fleeting, however, that the polyrhythm is often missed (Figure 3.11).
Figure 3.11 – Bonham Full Score, measures 5 – 11
IMPLIED MULTIMETER WRITING

A technique that Rouse uses to great effect throughout his percussion ensemble works is composing patterns that seem as though written in meters other than the notated time signature. Frequently Rouse will create these patterns and then compose other layers over them. This allows him to create asymmetrical repetitive patterns that avoid becoming predictable and tiring to the listener. In other instances Rouse uses this technique over short periods simply to give the piece the feel of a different time signature without explicitly changing tempo or meter.

In *Ogoun Badagris*, the conga solo beginning at measure 57 illustrates Rouse’s use of this technique within a single accompaniment part. As Player 3 is soloing, Players 1, 2, and 4 play accompaniment parts that fit evenly within the given 6/8 meter. Player 5’s part does not fit evenly within the meter though, taking up a duration of nine eighth-notes allowing this part to line up with the downbeat every other measure (Figure 3.12).

![Figure 3.12 – Ogoun Badagris Full Score, measures 57 – 62](image)

Another example of this technique begins at measure 130 in Player 3. Here, Player 1’s *glissandos* on the timpani are the main focus of the section, while Players 2, 4, and 5 accompany with parts that fit evenly within the 6/8 meter. Player 3 not only performs a part made entirely of duple eighth-notes (creating a 2 against 3 polyrhythm),
but also a pattern that fills a 15 eighth-note duration, creating a rhythmic cycle that lines up with the downbeat every 5 measures (Figure 3.13).

![Score](image)

**Figure 3.13 – Ogoun Badagris Full Score, measures 130 – 135**

Shorter examples of this technique happen throughout *Ogoun*. A perfect example of this occurs in measure 92. Rouse temporarily blurs the meter here by shifting the groupings of eighth-notes from groupings of three (which allow for two groups of three to fit into each measure) into groupings of four (allowing the pattern to line up with the downbeat every other measure). This shift creates a hemiola: the brief illusion that the tempo and meter has shifted while in actuality all note values are still retained from the original material (Figure 3.14).
A more developed example of this occurs later in the piece during Player 4’s tom-tom solo. During the passage beginning in measure 172, Player 4 shifts the feel of the eighth-note groupings from six to five, and eventually four between measures 172 and 178. These groupings are punctuated by the other players who play an accented note on the final note of every grouping (Figure 3.15).

Rouse’s use of this technique develops in *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku*. One example of this development can be seen starting in measure 20. While Player 4 is soloing on the boobams, Players 1 and Player 3 (two measures later) play repeated patterns that do not line up symmetrically with the notated meter of 3/4. Player 1 performs an eleven-beat pattern on claves beginning on beat 2 of measure 16. Player 3 initiates a four-beat pattern.
starting in measure 22 on the bass drum. Player 2 is the only accompaniment which fits evenly into the given meter, helping to anchor the accompaniment so that it does not become too chaotic (Figure 3.16).

**Figure 3.16 – Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Full Score, measures 20 – 24**

As with *Ogoun*, shorter examples of this technique occur such as the figure by Players 2 and 4 during the woodblock duet beginning in measure 56. While in 2/4, Players 2 and 4 divide the sixteenth-notes into groups of three (in this instance, a sixteenth-note followed by an eighth-note or two sixteenth-notes and sixteenth-note rest), which creates a temporary triplet-type rhythmic illusion (Figure 3.17).
Bonham also displays extended sections of this technique as well as shorter examples. At measure 63, an extended section begins with all the players performing 9 beat patterns in a 2/2 meter. The backbeat-centric pattern of Player 8 gives the illusion of a measure of 4/4 but with an extra eighth-note added to the end of the measure. It is this extra beat that adds interest to this section and gives the piece forward momentum since the up to this point the work has been felt in a strict 4/4 (Figure 3.18).
Shorter examples of this technique occur in the drum solo by Player 8 towards the end of the piece. In measure 274, while playing a string of eighth-note triplets in 2/2 meter, Rouse has combined the triplets into groups of five eighth-notes while still maintaining a quarter-note pulse on the bass drum to create a short poly-meter effect (Figure 3.19).

This same technique is used in measure 282, where Rouse modifies the eighth-note groupings into groups of four instead of the previous five (Figure 3.20).
Figure 3.20 – Bonham Player 8, measures 280 – 282

RHYTHMIC DISPLACEMENT

Rhythmic displacement can be viewed as the systematic shifting of a musical idea to a different area within the meter. If the original idea is quite pronounced, this is often readily identifiable to the listener, especially if occurring multiple times. Other times the displaced rhythm is buried under layers of other material and therefore harder to perceive.

A clear example of this technique occurs in one of the first sections of *Ogoun Badagris*. In measure 41, the slapstick of Player 5 enters on the third and fifth eighth-note of the 6/8 measure. Following this initial statement, Rouse displaces each entrance by seven eighth-notes, creating an asymmetrical pattern (Figure 3.21). Because of the textural difference between the slapstick and the rest of the ensemble, as well as the dynamic difference of *fortissimo* in the slapstick verses *forte* in the rest of the ensemble, the rhythmic displacement used by Rouse is perceivable by the listener.
The use of this technique in Ku-Ka-Ilimoku is not as clearly apparent as in Ogoun Badagris because the displaced idea is not as texturally independent as the previous example, and the displacement is shifted between players throughout the ensemble. This technique is displayed in measure 216 of Ku-Ka. During this section, Players 1 and 3 and Players 2 and 4 are linked by pairings of instruments with similar attacks (Players 1 and 3 with the rounder attack instruments of log drums and temple blocks, and Players 2 and 4
with the more pointed attacks of the woodblocks). Players 1 and 3 are further linked by the presence of a drum which they strike as the last note of each of their three-note groupings (timpani and conga drum respectively). Both groups perform the same rhythms as well as indefinite pitch gestures. In measure 216 Players 2 and 4 play a descending group of two sixteenth-notes and an eighth-note on beat two. Players 1 and 3 then displace this rhythmic motive to the “a” of beat 2 in measure 216. Following this, Players 1 and 3 again enter with the same gesture on the “&” of beat 1 in measure 217. Players 2 and 4 then follow with the final statement of the rhythmic idea on the “e” of beat 2 in measure 217 (Figure 3.22). The group nature of this section along with the textural similarities make this example of rhythmic displacement more difficult to perceive, but structurally the technique still exists.

![Figure 3.22 – Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Full Score, measures 216 – 217](image)

*Bonham’s example of rhythmic displacement stretches over a much longer period of time than the first two examples. Beginning in measure 18, players sparsely enter over Player 8’s drum beat to create a linear texture that gradually thickens and speeds up. In this section, Player 1 enters on the final eighth-note of measure 21 with a single stroke on the guiro. It is this gesture that Rouse displaces consistently over the next 21 measures. With each new measure, Rouse takes this rhythmic idea and moves it over by one quarter-note. Unfortunately, the score for *Bonham* has a number of notational errors in it,*
and this example of *rhythmic displacement* has one such error. The pattern Rouse sets up should move this rhythmic idea from the “&” of 4 in measure 21 to the “&” of 1 in measure 23, the “&” of 2 in measure 24, and then the “&” of 3 in measure 25. However, due to what seems to be an engraving error, the gesture in measure 25 is placed on the “&” of beat 4. Every instance of this gesture after measure 25 follows the sequential pattern of moving forward by a single quarter-note, so it appears that this is a mistake in the engraving of the score, and not a conscious decision by Rouse to break the pattern. Even with this error, the technique of *rhythmic displacement* is still obvious in the score as the pattern continues on until finally ending on the “&” of beat 1 in measure 42 (Figure 3.23).

Figure 3.23 – *Bonham* Players 1 and 8, measures 21 – 32
LINEAR WRITING

One of the unique textures that Rouse creates in each of these pieces is a hocket style of writing where each player’s voice fills a space in another part, and no two sounds occur simultaneously. This technique allows for very rhythmically active parts to exist while at the same time not becoming so dense that the individual parts become indistinct. The term “linear” comes from a style of drum set playing in which no two voices sound at the same time. While this technique has been used by many artists including Mike Clark, Steve Gadd, and David Garabaldi, the actual term was coined by Gary Chaffee, former Professor of Music at the Berklee School of Music. In an e-mail to me, he writes:

In regards to your question, most players credit me with being the first guy to define the liner [sic] style of playing, and to develop a system of figures that can be used in this style of playing, (see Patterns Time Functioning). Linear has always been a part of drumming but I was the first guy to codify it, give it a name, and set up a system specifically designed for drum set performance.24

The technique that Rouse uses is not a strict linear style as there are times when one voice does overlap another, but these instances are very brief and usually occur when the release of one gesture overlaps the entrance of another. *Ogoun Badagris* has examples of this type of writing, the first occurring from measure 8 to 9 between Players 2 and 4. In *Ogoun Badagris*, the relationship between the two bass drums in these players’ parts is of great importance throughout the work. Here is one of the first places where Rouse emphasizes this by splitting a simple four eighth-note crescendo between the two players. The specific nature of the dynamic notation helps to show this as a single idea initiated by one player and completed by another (Figure 3.24).

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24 Gary Chaffee, personal e-mail message, November 27th, 2010.
Later in the piece, Rouse fragments another eighth-note line, but divides it among three different players. In measure 88, Rouse takes the six eighth-notes in the measure and gives the first two to the timpani in Player 1, the next three to Player 2 on timbales and bass drum, and the final note to Player 4 on bass drum. This gesture not only displays the linear writing style, but also further emphasizes the relationship between the two bass drums (Figure 3.25). It should be noted that this measure is not a strict linear measure because the release of Player 5’s solo overlaps with the first note from Player 1.

**Figure 3.24 – *Ogoun Badagris* Players 2 and 4, measures 8 – 9**

**Figure 3.25 – *Ogoun Badagris* Full Score, measure 88**
In *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* Rouse uses the technique of *linear writing* in both background and main focus parts. An accompaniment example of this can be seen beginning in measure 64 between Players 2 and 3. In this section, Players 2 and 3 and later Player 4 create an accompaniment pattern while Player 1 begins a solo on log drums in measure 67. This *linear writing* style complements the log drums solo by allowing the accompaniment to be rhythmically dense while not overpowering the less piercing log drums sound. While not a strict linear passage, the interplay between the players filling the spaces of the other players lines gives the accompaniment a very linear texture (Figure 3.26).

![Figure 3.26 – Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Full Score, measures 64 – 69](image)

Later in the piece Rouse creates a strict linear passage that acts as a transition from one section to the next. Starting in measure 93, Players 2, 3, and 4 create a one bar rhythmic gesture that gradually gets softer over the next six measures to the next major section at measure 103. Player 2 contributes the most to this gesture, performing a sixteenth-note triplet on each successive off-beat, moving between the highest tom-tom and various drum rims. Player 4 plays their own sixteenth-note triplet using woodblocks on the downbeat of the measure as well as a set of duple sixteenth-notes on beat 3, while Player 3 adds a single quarter note on beat 2 of every measure on the wooden plank. With the exception of the very first beat where phrases from the previous section are
resolving, this section is a very good example of a strict style of *linear writing* (Figure 3.27).

![Diagram of music notation]

**Figure 3.27 – Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Full Score, measures 93 – 98**

In *Bonham* Rouse constructs a quasi-linear texture that, unlike the previous examples, is built up slowly over time. Starting in measure 18, Player 8 continues a drum set groove from the beginning of the section, though now at a *pianissimo* dynamic level. From here, the rest of the ensemble (with the exception of Player 7) slowly adds parts usually consisting of a single eighth-note in length as the tempo begins to accelerate in measure 22. This building of texture and tempo is enhanced by increased dynamic levels as the section progresses, culminating in a climax at the beginning of the next section in measure 43.
A look at the last four measures of this section shows the ending result of this linear passage. While some voices do overlap, making it not a perfectly linear passage, the texture created is very linear in quality, with each eighth-note in the measure filled with an event (Figure 3.28).

Figure 3.28 – Bonham Full Score, measures 39 – 43

INTERPLAY BETWEEN VOICES

A favorite technique of Rouse to use in each of these percussion ensemble works is direct interplay between two or more elements. One of the striking differences of Rouse’s use is the variety of ways in which he employs this technique, such as simple punctuation at the end of a melodic statement or huge textural differences to create an entire section.
*Ogoun Badagris* provides an example where the primary line played by the snare drum is then answered by a brief statement from the slapstick. This interplay back and forth happens after each melodic statement from the snare drum, and acts as the focal point of this section from measures 23 to 41 of the piece (Figure 3.29).

*Figure 3.29 – Ogoun Badagris Full Score, measures 23 – 41*
Interplay between voices examples in Ku-Ka-Ilimoku represent the most significant illustrations of this technique as it becomes the focus of two major sections of the work. The first major interplay between voices section begins at measure 103. In this example, each A-section is made by Players 2, 3, and 4 on the rims of various drums within their set-ups. These A-sections are all a single measure in length (though the length of that measure changes as each one is in a different time signature) and at a mezzo-piano dynamic level. Each A-section is answered by the entire ensemble performing on various drums within their set up at a fortissimo dynamic level. This allows for the interplay between voices to be separated both texturally (rims verses drums) and dynamically (mezzo-piano verses fortissimo). Each of the B-sections is a measure long with the exception of the last one which is three measures long. The length of the last B-section is most likely to solidify the drum texture which continues throughout the next section. The extended length helps to provide contrast from the rim texture (Figure 3.30).

![Figure 3.30 – Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Full Score, measures 103 – 106](image)

A later example of this same technique begins at measure 195, and differs from the previous section in a few ways. First, the interplay between voices are now split between two pairs of performers, with Players 2 and 4 performing the A-sections, and Players 1 and 3 the B-sections. All material is now performed at a fortississimo dynamic,
and each part is performed on some sort of wooden instrument. There is still a small textural difference as each A-section is performed on woodblocks while each B-section sounds on log drums for Player 1 and temple blocks for Player 3. The log drums and temple blocks provide a rounder, darker sound than the woodblocks, so a color change exists, though not as stark as in the previous *interplay between voices* section. Finally, each B-section is of equal length to the preceding A-section, though the lengths of each interplay between voices pairings change throughout the section.

One interesting bit of continuity between the A-sections and B-sections involves the changing time signatures. In each *interplay between voices* set, the meter of the last measure in an A-section is the same meter for the first measure in the following B-section. This allows for some continuity between each A-section and its corresponding B-section. Also of note is that each B-section ends with an accented hit on the timpani in Player 1 and the conga drum in Player 3. This event separates each interplaying pair, making them act as individual phrases and allowing for a small textural change to provide variety to the section (Figure 3.31).
Interplay between voices technique is also present in Bonham, though not nearly to the degree of importance that they are in Ku-Ka-Ilimoku. In Bonham, it is used as a melodic focal point that separates one player from the rest of the ensemble. Beginning in measure 116, Player 5 assumes the main accompaniment role from Player 8 with separated quarter-notes on the bass drum, allowing Player 8 to focus on an *interplay between voices* dialogue with the rest of the ensemble, specifically Players 1, 6, and 7. Player 8 states a very short rhythmic gesture on the drum set tom-toms. Players 1, 6, and 7 then respond to this by playing the exact same gesture on their respective drums. This dialogue is the main focus until measure 144 where the next major section of the piece begins. Throughout this *interplay between voices* section this small rhythmic fragment is developed, each time stated as an A-section from Player 8 and a B-section of some kind from the rest of the ensemble (Figure 3.32).
Figure 3.32 – Bonham Full Score, measures 116 – 123
RHYTHMIC ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION

A final technique of Rouse’s that is used throughout his percussion ensemble writing is the systematic addition or subtraction of notes in a gesture. This technique occurs in different forms for each piece. In *Ogoun Badagris* Rouse reduces the space between accented notes that are placed throughout the ensemble. In *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* he subtracts groupings of notes from groups of three to groups of two and finally single-note gestures. In *Bonham* he uses addition instead of subtraction, adding an additional beat to a gesture during key moments within a phrase.

Subtraction in *Ogoun Badagris* is displayed towards the end of the work beginning in measure 243. Here the texture is very active with loud dynamics and active rhythmic passages occurring in each part. The focus is on small rhythmic cells which increase in volume and end with accents that are passed around the ensemble. The accented line begins on beat 2 of measure 243 in Player 4, and is passed to Player 1 on beat 1 of the next measure. This pattern of accents falling on the beat continues by flowing to Player 2 on beat 2 of measure 244, Player 3 on the downbeat of measure 245, and Player 1 on beat 2 of measure 245. Rouse then varies this pattern by placing the next accent on the “&” of beat 2 in measure 245 with Player 4. He follows up this variation by placing the next accent on beat 2 of measure 246 in Player 5’s part (Figure 3.33). This slight variation breaks up the predictability of the accents while still achieving the character of the pattern he was creating, and still setting us up for the subtractive process that he begins with the next phrase.
Figure 3.33 – Ogoun Badagris Full Score, measures 243 – 246

Rouse starts the next phrase by continuing the previous accented downbeat pattern with an accent on the downbeat of measure 247 with Player 3. Rouse then begins the next accent pattern, now separating each accent by three sixteenth-notes as opposed to the previous four sixteenth-note separation. In order to avoid predictability, Rouse initiates this three sixteenth-note spaced accent pattern on the “&” of beat 1 in Player 2 in measure 247. Rouse then places a single accented note every three sixteenth-notes apart throughout the ensemble up to the beginning of measure 251 (Figure 3.34)
The final pattern for this section shows Rouse reducing the space of the accents by a single sixteenth-note, separating the accents now on every downbeat and upbeat of the measures beginning in measure 251 (Figure 3.35). This subtraction of the duration between accents helps the piece to gain momentum and build energy as it moves into the final phrases of the work.
Figure 3.35 – *Ogoun Badagris* Full Score, measures 251 – 255

In *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku*, the subtraction process is not applied to accent patterns, but entire groups of notes all of which are accented. These groups are separated by space, with the last group separated by space and texture. The process begins in measure 220 where each player is playing a rhythm of “1-e-&” on each downbeat in the 3/4 meter. These gestures represent the groups of three. In the next measure, Rouse begins with two groups of two sixteenth-notes, the last note notated as an eighth-note in order to achieve space from the final group. These sets of two notes are then followed by two single eighth-notes and a single sixteenth-note at the end of the measure. This group of “single notes” is differentiated from the rest by the use of the Chinese cymbal which is played by Player 3 for these notes only. Rouse then repeats these two measures twice, but on the final repeat he has the single note group played six times instead of the previous three times (Figure 3.36).
Bonham uses the technique of addition instead of subtraction. In this piece Rouse systematically adds a unit of rhythm to a specific gesture with each new passing. The original gesture happens in measures 122 through 123. Here Players 1, 3, 6, and 7 play an eighth-note line starting on the “&” of beat 2 in measure 122 to the “&” of 3 in the following measure. Player 2 also adds to this gesture with offbeat hits on the vibraslap for the duration of the other player’s eighth-note figure (Figure 3.37). This gesture occurs at the end of an interplay between voices phrase between Player 8 on drum set and Players 1, 6, and 7 on timpani and tom-toms respectively.
Figure 3.37 – Bonham Full Score, measures 122 – 123

Measure 124 begins another interplay between voices iteration between Player 8 and Players 1, 6, and 7. At the end of this phrase (measures 131 – 132) Rouse inserts the same gesture as seen in Figure 3.37, only shifting the entrance of the gesture by a beat and filling in the additional space (Figure 3.38).

Figure 3.38 – Bonham Full Score, measures 131 – 132
A final interplay between voices phrase between Player 8 and Players 1, 6, and 7 begins in measure 133, and again is completed by a similar gesture as before, with an additional beat added as before (Figure 3.39).

![Score](image)

**Figure 3.39 – Bonham Full Score, measures 141 - 143**

**SUMMARY**

The list of some of the compositional techniques used by Rouse in his percussion ensemble works is diverse:

HOMOPHONIC TEXTURE
POLYRHYTMS
IMPLIED MULTIMETER WRITING
RHYTHMIC DISPLACEMENT
LINEAR WRITING
INTERPLAY BETWEEN VOICES
RHYTHMIC ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION

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By analyzing Rouse’s compositional techniques throughout his three percussion ensemble works, one can see clear examples of these compositional techniques in all three pieces, *Ogoun Badagris* (1976), *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* (1978), and *Bonham* (1988). While some techniques develop more than others, each technique shows advancement from piece to piece.

*Homophonic texture* begins with a single player primary line against the remaining ensemble accompaniment in *Ogoun Badagris*. *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* sees this technique expand to add multiple voices to the primary line in a duet fashion. Finally, in *Bonham*, Rouse uses a variety of textures and forces for both the primary line and the accompaniment.

Polyrhythms could be considered the technique with the least obvious development since its extensive use in *Ogoun Badagris* actually diminishes in *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku*. This is probably due to the widespread shifting of time signatures throughout *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* which may have influenced his decision not to exploit the unique textures of polyrhythms in this piece. His final piece *Bonham* is more anchored in terms of meter, making it more susceptible to the use of polyrhythms.

*Implied multimeter writing* is a technique that Rouse developed early and continued to use throughout the three pieces. Each work displays this technique in an accompaniment setting (Figures 2.12, 2.16, and 2.18), as well as the primary soloist line (Figures 2.15, 2.17, and 2.19). One observation is that his use of this technique becomes more ambitious over time. *Ogoun Badagris* employs this technique within a single player at a time. *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* expands the forces to two players at a time, and *Bonham* has sections where the entire ensemble is performing parts that utilize this technique.

Rouse’s use of *rhythmic displacement* stays consistent throughout his percussion ensemble works. In *Ogoun Badagris* and *Bonham* this technique is more obvious due to the stark timbre differences used, while in *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* the is embedded deeper within the full ensemble. It is interesting to note that Rouse shifts his use of this technique from the foreground to the background. The slapstick in *Ogoun Badagris*, which was acting in counterpoint to the snare drum primary line, becomes the single moving line and focal
point of the section (Figure 3.21). In Ku-Ka-Ilimoku, Figure 3.22 shows this technique embedded within the ensemble texture, and therefore perceptually shaded. Bonham uses this technique in the guiro part of Player 1. This part is a smaller component of a much larger texture that builds over time, so the displacement is difficult to observe due to its small role in the larger texture (Figure 3.22).

*Linear writing* shows a definitive development throughout these works. Beginning with *Ogoun Badagris*, Rouse uses this linear technique in very short, isolated incidents (Figures 2.24 and 2.25). *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* draws further on this compositional tool, incorporating it into accompaniment figures and transitional material (Figures 2.26 and 2.27). The culmination of this techniques development occurs in *Bonham* where entire sections of material are based around this technique (Figure 3.28).

Rouse’s use of *interplay between voices* is striking in its development. Each piece makes use this technique in a new and unique way. In *Ogoun Badagris*, Rouse simply uses *interplay between voices* to break up the primary line of the snare drum (Figure 3.29). *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* shows a far more developed use of this technique. Here, Rouse creates *interplay between voices* as the basis of two of the main sections of the piece. The first section (Figure 3.30) finds the entire ensemble performing both the A-sections and B-sections of the interplay, but separates these texturally as well as dynamically. The second section (Figure 3.31) separates the ensemble into two groups. While both groups are using wooden textures, they are different enough to separate them from one another. The use of meter during this section by using similar time signatures for the last measure of the A-sections and the first measure of the B-sections shows a sense of cohesiveness that indicates the depth of Rouse’s skill. Finally in *Bonham* Rouse employs *interplay between voices* as a means of imitation, helping to emphasize important thematic material between the drum set and other players in the ensemble (Figure 3.32).

Finally, Rouse’s use of *rhythmic addition and subtraction*, like his use of *interplay between voices* is interesting in that each iteration of this technique is unique. *Ogoun Badagris* uses subtraction in combination with a hocket technique which makes the addition effective while not being overtly perceivable (Figures 2.33, 2.34, and 2.35). *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* in a sense does the exact opposite, using rhythmic subtraction within a
*tutti* passage that can be readily distinguished by the listener (Figures 2.36). Finally, this technique in *Bonham* is used with the addition of a single beat to a phrase-ending gesture (Figures 2.37, 2.38, and 2.39). These gestures have so much available space between them that it is difficult to realize that material is being added to them with each iteration. It is this subtlety and originality that shows Rouse’s skills as a composer, and help us to observe his development over the course of these three works.
CHAPTER 4: OGOUN BADAGRIS

BACKGROUND

Ogoun Badagris is the earliest percussion ensemble work available today by Christopher Rouse. The piece was written in 1976 while Rouse was in attendance at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, and was then performed by the Ithaca College Percussion Ensemble.

The inspiration for the work came out of recordings Rouse had heard of the Folkways collection of Haitian music that was recorded by Harold Courlander. Rouse notes that while this was the inspiration for the project, he never did any more research on Haitian music itself. In an interview he states:

…In both cases [Ogoun Badagris and Ku-Ka-Ilimoku] I didn’t actually go back to those sources once I’d started the piece in order to be correct. I think I make some comment about being ‘ethnomusicologically correct.’ I was going on my impression, kind of the way Debussy was the way he was inspired by the gamelan. He never actually studied anything more about gamelan music but it informed the sound of a number of pieces just his memory of it. What he had recalled it had sounded like. So I didn’t go back and actually review those materials because I didn’t want to write a piece that was too hide-bound in terms of its allegiances to the source material.

The program notes Rouse provides for the piece reveal the inspiration behind the piece, specifically citing the Haitian drumming patterns of the Juba Dance. Because of this, Rouse states that “it seemed logical to tie in the work with various aspects of Voodoo ritual.” The title comes from the name of one of the Voodoo loas, or deities, who Rouse says “…is one of the most terrible and violent of all Voodoo loas (deities) and he can be appeased only by human blood sacrifice. This work may thus be interpreted as a dance of appeasement.” Research by Dr. Don N. Parker in his dissertation An Analysis of Borrowed and Retained West African, Cuban, and Haitian Rhythms in Selected Percussion Ensemble Literature refutes some of this information, saying that “In

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26 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
28 Ibid
my research, no information was found to justify the need for a human sacrifice to appease the loa. This is part of the bad publicity that is associated with voodoo practices. While this information in the program notes may be inaccurate, it does give the performer more detailed indication as to the character of the subject matter of the piece.

ANALYSIS

Rouse indicates in the program notes that certain instruments provide focus in the work. The first is the set of four conga drums played by Player 3. Rouse says “The four conga drums often act as the focal point in the work and can be compared with the role of the four most basic drums in the Voodoo religion – the be-be, the seconde, the maman, and the asator.” Rouse also notes that the metal plates and sleigh bells are used to represent the Haitian ogan.

The full instrumentation of the work is:

Player 1 – Cabasa 1, snare drum, Chinese cymbal, 4 timpani, suspended cymbal 1, 2 cowbells (dampened), tam-tam.

Player 2 – Bass drum 1, 2 bongos, 2 timbales.

Player 3 – String drum, 4 conga drums, 3 wood blocks.

Player 4 – Bass drum 2, 3 tom-toms, vibraslap, one pair of maracas (manufactured by the Latin Percussion Company), large ratchet.

Player 5 – Quica, tenor drum, sleigh bells, slapstick, 3 metal plates, 4 log drums, guiro, cabasa 2, suspended cymbal 2.

Certain instrument combinations in Ogoun Badagris are integral to the work and are important both with unison parts as well as antiphonal parts throughout the piece. The cabasas in the parts of Players 1 and 5 and the bass drums in the parts of Players 2

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29 Parker, 471.
31 Ibid
and 4 are important partnerships\textsuperscript{32} and should be taken into consideration when staging the piece. Rouse does not indicate any particular form for organizing the performers on stage. Because of these relationships as well as the importance of the conga drum part in Player 3, a set-up of Players 1 through 5 from either left to right or right to left would be acceptable, with a slight arc so that each players can have eye contact with the others (Figure 4.1).

![Figure 4.1 – Performer Set-up](image)

Rouse understands the various colors that percussionists can achieve, specifically through the use of different implements. Consequently, he specifically indicates which implements are used throughout the piece. The notes at the beginning of the score provide a diagram that indicates which symbols represent each of the corresponding implements (Figure 4.2).

![Figure 4.2 – Implement Chart](image)

The piece begins with a section Rouse labels as \textit{Action de Grace}. Henry Gilford, in his book \textit{Voodoo: Its Origins and Practices} describes this term as a section in the voodoo ceremony where people bearing flags parade around the celebrants while

\textsuperscript{32} Parker, 472.
glorifications are recited to the gods. This section is meant to acknowledge the gods, and call on them for their presence at the ceremony.33

In 6/8 time, the piece starts with rolled entrances from Player 1 on cabasa 1 and Player 2 on bass drum 1. These rolls cut off on beat 1 of the second measure where Player 4 enters on beat 1 with bass drum 2 and Player 5 enters with a quica note that lasts for the first half of the measure. The quica note by Player 5 is answered in the second half of the second measure by Player 3 on string drum. Already in this first gesture we can see the antiphonal play between the bass drums of Players 2 and 4. All of these gestures begin loudly, either at a fortissimo level like in Players 1, 2, and 4, or at a forte level that gets louder like in the string drum and quica parts of Players 3 and 5 respectively. Players 3 and 5 should make sure to not start their gestures too softly, taking care that their initial entrance is heard and then increases in volume from there. This opening gesture is immediately followed by three measures of grand pause, and then another identical statement of the opening gesture in measures 6 and 7 (Figure 4.3).

![Figure 4.3 – Full Score, measures 1 – 7](image)

After the second statement of the opening gesture, there are two measures that contain a passage between the bass drums of Players 2 and 4, which creates a four eighth-

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note gesture which increases in volume between the two players. This gesture starts on beat 5 of the first measure with two eighth-notes from Player 2, the first at *mezzo-forte* and the second at *forte*, and then answered by Player 4 at *fortissimo* with a *crescendo* indicated. This is one more example of the interplay between the two bass drums which is important throughout the piece (Figure 4.4) as well as an example of *linear writing* that Rouse uses in each of his percussion ensemble works.

![Figure 4.4 – Full Score, measures 8 – 9](image)

On the last eighth-note of measure 9, Players 1 and 2 enter with an accented roll entrance, which ties over into the next measure. This is a technique Rouse uses often, surprising the listener by placing entrances slightly before a new measure begins. While Player 1’s part on cabasa continues to roll through measure 10 and the first half of measure 11, Player 2 only rolls for the first 2 beats of measure 10. Player 2 then enters into a hemiola-type rhythm where he performs two beat groupings of two sixteenth-notes followed by an eighth-note (creating a “1 e &, 2 e &” type of rhythm). This gesture begins on the third eighth-note of measure 10 and continues into the next measure. All of the notes in this hemiola gesture are accented, but in order to emphasize the nature of the rhythm, performers should put more weight on the first note of each grouping. The first and second two beat groupings are emphasized by Player 4 with rolls on the bass drum (again showing the relationship between these two parts). Players 3 and 5 once again
have an interplay between voices similar to measure 2 on the string drum and quica respectively, only this time shifted towards the back half of the measure. Both of these begin at fortissimo like the previous gesture and crescendo. This is followed by a single measure of grand pause, allowing for space between gestures similar to measures 3 – 5 (Figure 4.5).

Following this final grand pause measure, Players 1, 2, 4, and 5 create a complex gesture which lasts only the second half of measure 13. In this gesture, Player 1 performs a dotted quarter-note roll on the cabasa similar to previous entrances starting in the second half of the measure. Player 2 and 4 have figures that play off of each other, both on bass drum. Player 2 has a sixteenth-note, eighth-note, sixteenth-note figure, which takes up two of the last three eighth-notes of the measure. Player 5 adds to this by playing an eighth-note figure starting on beat 4 of the measure, and increases in volume from forte up with an accent on the final eighth-note of the measure. This fills in the missing eighth-note from Player 2’s gesture, once again solidifying the relationship between these two parts. Player 5 contributes to this gesture with a single eighth-note on the second eighth-note of a duple set of eighth-notes that enters on the second half of the measure on the metal plate. This creates a 2:3 polyrhythm that is important to Rouse’s compositional style. This entire gesture is complex rhythmically, and all aspects of the gesture must
align in order to obtain the effect desired by the composer. In rehearsing this phrase, synchronizing Player 5’s single attack first with the last note in Player 4’s rhythm is a good means of breaking down this gesture. From there, adding Player 4 to the phrase will help to fill out the rhythm desired for this gesture. Player 1 should not be added until the other three players have locked in their rhythms precisely. It is also important to note Player 3’s absence from this gesture. This is most likely so that they have ample time to transition from the string drum to the conga drums for their entrance in measure 14 (Figure 4.6).

Following measure 13, the meter changes to 9/8 with all performers tacet for the first three eighth-notes. This represents a shorter version of the previous two grand pauses, which have been reduced with each occurrence, allowing this to act as a pick-up to the next section of the piece. Player 3 enters playing congas on the fourth eighth-note with a pattern that becomes the main background rhythm for the next section of the piece. The accents placed in this part emphasize the two groupings of three eighth-notes in this pattern. Player 2 enters on bass drum at the same time as Player 3. Player 2 performs a set of three duple sixteenth-notes in the time of six, showing us another example of Rouse’s use of polyrhythms. Player 4 enters on the last set of three eighth-notes with an accented roll on bass drum (Figure 4.6). Again, interplay between the bass drums of Players 2 and 4 are important throughout the work, as we will continue to see in the next section of the piece.
Figure 4.6 – Full Score, measures 13 – 14

Measure 15 begins the next major section of *Ogoun Badagris*, which Rouse labels “Grouillère”. Translated, this means “swarming, rumbling, and crawling” which would describe the texture of this next section.34 Here, the meter changes back to 6/8. The main rhythmic drive of this section emanates from Player 3 on conga drums performing the pattern first introduced in measure 14. In the first two measures of this section, Players 2 and 4 once again have a dialogue between bass drums similar to their first dialogue in measures 8 and 9 of the previous section. The difference is a duple eighth-note with a note only on the second eighth-note by Player 2 in the second half of measure 15. This single eighth-note acts as a pick-up to a constant dialogue between Players 2 and 4 for this section where both play alternating dotted quarter-notes in each measure. Balance and blend between the two bass drums is paramount to create one linear melodic line from these alternating elements. Players 1 and 5 are omitted from this beginning part of the section to transition to other instruments (Figure 4.7).

This rhythmic motive among Players 2, 3, and 4 decreases in intensity to a mezzo-forte for Player 3 and mezzo-piano for Players 2 and 4. This motive continues unimpeded until the entrance of Player 1 with the primary line on snare drum in measure 23.

Player 1's snare drum primary line at measure 23 is performed with snares off, with the first two measures providing the thematic material for the rest of the snare drum primary line in this section (Figure 4.8).

The next two entrances of the snare drum in this section are displacements of this main theme. While the first statement of this theme occurs on the very first eighth-note of the measure, the second entrance occurs on the second eighth-note, and the third entrance on the third eighth-note. Between the second and third entrances, Player 5 slapstick interjects with a pair of syncopated eighth-notes. This dialogue between Player
1 and Player 5 provides focus to this part of the piece. As the section continues to develop, Rouse displaces the slapstick part, each entrance occurring between Player 1’s snare drum gestures. Measure 33 shows variation in the snare drum primary line beyond simple displacement. While the entrance is the same as the original statement, the string of five eighth-notes from the original is broken in the middle, creating two groups of two eighth-notes. These groupings of two eighth-notes are immediately developed in the second half of measure 34 by making them sixteenth-notes, doubling the speed of the initial variation. Following another interjection by the slapstick, Player 1 gives us a final statement from the snare drum, utilizing the doubles created in the last statement as material for the final gesture (Figure 4.9).

![Figure 4.9 – Players 1 and 5, measures 23 – 41](image)

During this interplay between the snare drum and slapstick, Players 2, 3, and 4 have each minutely developed their parts over the course of the dialogue. Player 2 first adds an eighth-note on beat 3 of the measure on the low timbale, and later an accented eighth-note on the high timbale on beat 6. Player 4 contributes a vibraslap hit on beat 5 of the measure simultaneous with the variations in Player 2’s part. Player 3’s part also alters slightly, with the accent pattern changing as the drum pattern remains constant.
The change in the conga part is also marked by a Chinese cymbal hit in Player 1’s part in measure 37 (Figure 4.10).

![Figure 4.10 – Full Score, measures 32 – 38](image)

A second Chinese cymbal strike by Player 1 in measure 42 marks the end of the dialogue section between the snare drum and the slapstick. Here, the accompaniment patterns of Players 2, 3, and 4 are again developed, with Player 2 adding two accented bongo hits on beats 4 and 5 of the measure, Player 3 once again altering the accent pattern while still keeping the drum pattern the same, and Player 4 adding an unaccented
eighth-note on the bass drum on beat 3, just before the accented hit on beat 4 (Figure 4.11).

Player 1 rests for the remainder of this section after the Chinese cymbal hit in measure 42 to provide ample transition time to the timpani in measure 50. Player 5’s slapstick part adds rhythmic interest during this transitional section. Here, Rouse accesses the initial two-note slapstick part from the previous section and systematically displaces each entrance by seven beats. Performers should be extremely precise in placement of these notes in order to convey this displacement correctly. Following this displacement section, the slapstick settles into a part that fits evenly into the meter, with a quarter-note on beat 4 followed by an eighth-note on beat 6. This pattern occurs three times, getting louder each time with the rest of the ensemble and building into the next section of the piece (Figure 4.12).
Measure 50 marks the beginning of the next section of *Ogoun Badagris*, with the texture thinning to only the Chinese cymbal and timpani in Player 1 for the first two measures, but maintaining a high level of energy due to the dynamic level of *fortississimo* and *fortissimo* for the instruments respectively. In measure 52 Players 2 and 4 enter on bass drum, restating their dotted quarter-note dialogue from the previous section at an extremely loud dynamic for two measures, before suddenly dropping down to a *mezzo-forte* in measure 54. The timpani also drop dynamically to a *forte* to allow the log drums
entrance in Player 5 to be heard. Player 5’s log drums part illustrates yet another technique Rouse uses frequently. Here, he creates a pattern that is nine eighth-notes long. Because this pattern does not fit evenly into a single measure of 6/8, the phrase extends beyond the barline, causing it to sync up with the beginning of every third measure (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13 – Full Score, measures 50 – 56
The main focus of this section is found in the conga solo from Player 3 that starts in measure 57. Rouse is careful to dictate closed strokes, slap strokes, and open strokes throughout the solo. Dynamically, the solo is marked at fortississimo while the rest of the ensemble is marked anywhere ranging from mezzo-forte in the bass drums to forte in the timpani and log drums. Players 1, 2, 4, and 5 should be careful not to overbalance the conga drums and should therefore play on the quieter side of the marked dynamics during this section. The solo itself is characterized by irregular accents and highly syncopated rhythms, making the solo feel as though it is outside of the written meter. It should be noted that there is no interaction between the conga solo and the rest of the ensemble during this section (Figure 4.14). The ensemble’s purpose during this section is to act as a sonic foundation under the conga solo.

![Figure 4.14 – Player 3, measures 57 – 69](image)

At measure 69 the conga solo ends and Players 2, 4, and 5 all alter their patterns. Player 2 adds a single timbale eighth-note on beat 5 of the measure, while Player 4 adds a single bass drum eighth-note to beat 6 of the measure. Both of these players still preserve the bass drum dialogue from earlier. Player 5 changes to a different log drums pattern that still preserves the nine-beat duration of the previous phrase. Two measures after ending the conga solo, Player 3 reenters with a three measure idea on woodblocks that reoccurs through the rest of this section. The focus of this section is not only the interaction among these different patterns, but also a series of hairpin crescendo and decrescendo that pass between players from measure 72 to measure 77. These dynamic shapes start with one player at a time, but then begin to overlap more and more as the section continues (Figure 4.15).
At measure 78 the dynamic shaping decreases and the log drums of Player 5 assume the lead voice while Players 1 and 2 both modify their patterns. Player 1’s variation is substantial with a complete change to the pitch pattern of the previous section. Player 2’s pattern only modifies slightly, filling the second half of each measure with a series of eighth-notes (Figure 4.16).
The log drums solo during this section is similar to the previous conga solo as
Rouse uses irregular accents and syncopated rhythms to add rhythmic interest to the solo, displacing it from the written meter. The solo ends with a reoccurring rhythm of two eighth-notes followed by two sixteenth-notes that builds into a transitional measure at 88 leading to the next section of the work (Figure 4.17). This transitional measure is interesting in that it is a series of eighth-notes broken up among Players 1, 2, and 4. Performers must carefully balance this measure so that each attack is clearly articulated and no voice overshadows another (Figure 4.18).
The next section of the piece is a transitional area beginning at measure 89 and bridging one homophonic texture section to another. The primary focus of this transition is the interaction between the timpani in Player 1 and almost unison bass drum figures of Player 2 and 4. After a solo roll on the highest drum by Player 1 the bass drum pair answers with an eighth-note figure in measure 90. The next gesture is similar, starting with a timpani roll beginning on beat 6 of measure 90 and then a set of eighth-notes moving down the drums while the bass drums contribute to the set of eighth-notes. It is interesting to note the color that Rouse achieves with bass drums during the first part of this section. Instead of being completely unison, Rouse has Player 4 join on the second eighth-note of each gesture starting at forte and increase in volume to an accented note. Player 3 differs by playing three eighth-notes during this gesture with the same shaping as Player 2. This orchestration allows for the dynamics to not only grow with each bass drum gesture, but also for the texture to thicken with each gesture (Figure 4.19).
In measure 92 the timpani and bass drums combine to create a hemiola performing combinations of four eighth-notes with the timpani contributing the first note of each grouping with a double-stop on D-sharp and F while the two bass drums complete the last three eighth-notes with a gesture which increases in intensity from *mezzo-forte* to *fortissimo*. This four note motive occurs five times from the beginning of measure 92 into measure 95. In measure 95 the meter changes to 9/8 to allow the hemiola gesture to finish evenly. The last six notes of the 9/8 measure are completed by a series of eighth-notes from Player 1 on timpani, Players 2 and 4 on bass drum, and Player 3 on the conga drum. Player 5 also contributes to the 9/8 measure by entering with guiro scrapes on beats 5, 7, and 9 of the measure (Figure 4.20).

**Figure 4.20 – Full Score, measures 92 – 95**
At measure 96 the next section of the work begins, revolving around solos by Player 5 on guiro, Player 1 on cowbells, and a duet between both of those players. Rouse prepares the section by establishing accompaniment patterns by the non-soloing instruments. Player 2 has a part consisting of eighth-notes that move down the bongos and timbales, ending on the bass drum at the downbeat of each measure. The bass drum on the downbeat is significant because it creates a dialogue with the bass drum of Player 4 as in previous sections. Player 3 also has an accompaniment part alternating between a quarter-note and an eighth-note progressing up and down the conga drums. After a measure of rest to facilitate transition to the cowbells, Player 1 establishes a two-measure pattern very similar to the organ part in Haitian music.35 This part is repeated through the guiro solo while Player 5 plays dotted-quarter-notes during the first four measures of this section allowing time for the accompaniment figures to establish before the guiro solo begins (Figure 4.21).

![Figure 4.21 – Full Score, measures 96 – 99](image)

Player 5’s begins a short, six measure guiro solo in measure 100. Unlike previous solos, this primary is accented throughout the solo, likely due to the limited dynamic

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35 Parker, 525.
range of the guiro. Players performing the accompaniment role should be sensitive to this and allow the guiro can be heard over the other patterns (Figure 4.22).

![Guiro Staff Notation](image)

**Figure 4.22 – Player 5, measures 100 – 106**

After a two-bar transition where there is a short interjection dialogue between Player 3 on congas and Player 4 on bass drum (Figure 4.23), Player 1 establishes a lead line on dampened cowbells in measure 108 while the guiro plays quarter-note attacks on beats 1 and 4 of each measure. Like the previous guiro solo, this solo is accented throughout. One interesting aspect of this solo is Rouse’s note displacement as the solo develops. A rhythmic contribution of an eighth-note on the low cowbell and a quarter-note on the high cowbell shifts systematically throughout the solo, creating rhythmic tension that is finally released in a flurry of notes during the final gesture of the solo (Figure 4.24).

![Full Score Notation](image)

**Figure 4.23 – Full Score, measures 106 – 107**
Following a repeat of the interjection by Players 3 and 4 from measures 106 – 107, a duet begins between Players 1 and 5 on cowbells and guiro respectively in measure 119. During this section all of the accompaniment patterns remain constant except for Player 4 who adds a vibraslap strike to the beginning of each measure starting in measure 119. The duet is interesting in that there does not appear to be much interaction between the two parts. However, both parts complement each other as the holes in one part’s rhythm are usually filled by the other part. This lack of interaction allows both parts to sound equally important throughout this section (Figure 4.25).

Following the cowbell/guiro duet in measure 127, Players 2, 3, and 4 establish a powerful rhythmic figure for three measures which acts as transitional material into the next section beginning at measure 130. This figure is performed on bass drum and timbale by Player 2, the lowest conga drum by Player 3, and bass drum by Player 4.
Once again Players 2 and 4 are both performing the same part on bass drum (Figure 4.26). Rouse does not accent the timbale notes in Player 2’s part, so performers should make sure those notes are executed dynamically below the other notes.

![Figure 4.26 – Players 2, 3, and 4, measures 127 – 129](image)

In measure 130 a new section of the piece begins, focusing on the glissando capabilities of the timpani. These timpani gestures all crescendo to a peak and then decrescendo as the pitch glissandos back down to the original pitch. Rouse stated that the exact pitches are unimportant in the timpani part, but making sure the glissandos and dynamic shapes are extreme and obvious to the listeners is paramount to this section.\(^{36}\)

As before, Rouse establishes accompaniment patterns in Players 2, 3, 4, and 5 providing a solid foundation over which the soloist performs. Player 2 initiates a one-bar pattern using bass drum, bongos, and timbales. Player 4 also performs a one-bar pattern with maracas in one hand playing a rhythm of quarter-note followed by eighth-note while playing the bass drum with the other hand on beat 4 of each measures, thus creating another bass drum dialogue between Players 2 and 4.

Player 3 has the most interesting rhythmic pattern of the accompaniment parts in this section for a number of reasons. First, it is made entirely of entrances on the downbeat or on the second eighth-note of a duple eighth-note tuplet, basically creating a duple meter for the entire section against the triple meter in the rest of the group. The pattern Rouse creates lasts for two-and-a-half measures. Another item of interest is the

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\(^{36}\) Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
pattern does not begin on the downbeat, but rather on the second eighth-note of a duple eighth-note. The final accompaniment pattern is provided by Player 5 who performs sleigh bell attacks on beats 1 and 4 of each measure. Rouse notes that the sleigh bells part should be played as “single strokes” as opposed to trying to create a tremolo (Figure 4.27).
Figure 4.27 – Full Score, measures 130 – 147
In measure 148 there is a three measure transition, which focuses on the snare drum in Player 1. The first two measures are in 6/8, but the third measure changes to 9/8 for a single measure. Here the snare drum plays syncopated rhythms that foreshadow the rhythms coming up in Player 4’s tom-tom solo. While these rhythms occur in the snare drum, Player 3 performs a roll on the middle woodblock while accenting each downbeat. Because of the accents and nature of the instrument, a single-stroked roll would be best for this section. In order to accurately place the accents, measuring the roll into septuplets or duple thirty-second notes would be most effective. This section ends with bass drum hits from Players 2 and 4 on beat 7 of the 9/8 measure (Figure 4.28).

![Figure 4.28 – Full Score, measures 148 – 150](image)

The next section beginning in measure 151 features Player 4 on tom-toms and bass drum and marks a significant change to the usual homophonic texture sections previously heard. In this section, Player 4 is a solo voice with no patterned accompaniment. All of the other performers have unison attacks, which emphasize specific notes in Player 4’s solo. These accompaniment entrances occur on the lowest drums of each player and coordinate with attacks on the bass drum of Player 4. During
the final two measures of this section a hocket rhythm is created between Player 4 and the rest of the ensemble, creating a transition to the next section.

During the solo Rouse indicates some notes to be single-sticked rim shots, thus providing some notes a different color from others. Again, Rouse writes a highly syncopated solo involving uniquely placed accents and odd note groupings. These odd note groupings are usually emphasized by the accompanying hits from the rest of the ensemble (Figure 4.29).

Figure 4.29 – Player 4 and score reduction, measures 151 – 183
At the end of the tom-tom solo there is an immediate shift to the next section beginning in measure 183. This section prepares more accompaniment figures for Players 1, 2, 3, and 4. Player 1 has a single D-sharp on the timpani that sounds every four eighth-notes starting on beat 4 of the first measure after an initial Chinese cymbal hit to end the tom-tom solo. This creates another hemiola that helps to mask the written meter. Player 2 has a single bass drum strike on the downbeat of each measure and a bongo hit on beat 6 of each measure. This again creates the alternating bass drum theme with Player 4 who has a complimenting tom-tom part while also playing the bass drum on beat 4 of each measure. Player 3 has a one-measure pattern, but the placement of a single accent changes every other measure, creating more of a two-measure pattern. Player 5 is not involved in this to allow a switch of implements from wooden mallets to snare drum sticks. This is an important change since Player 5 then becomes the rhythmic focus to this section (Figure 4.30).

![Figure 4.30 – Full Score, measures 183 – 185](image)

The focus of this section is the tenor drum part played by Player 5 stemming from its polyrhythmic content as well as its systematic development. This begins in measure 186 as Rouse has Player 5 perform a tuplet of five eighth-notes evenly spaced within the space of six eighth-notes thereby creating rhythmic tension between the primary line and
accompaniment. This type of tension has been alluded to previously, but never
developed until this section of the piece. After the initial statement by Player 5, Rouse
inserts two measures of silence. This could be interpreted as time for the listener to let
the rhythmic discomfort from the first statement set in. When the second statement by
Player 5 occurs in measure 189, Rouse begins a systematic treatment of this rhythm.
After the second quintuplet, there are six eighth-note rests between the last note of the
second quintuplet and the first note of the next quintuplet, causing the third quintuplet to
begin on the second eighth-note of the next quintuplet. This pattern occurs between each
quintuplet, with the number of rests reduced by one on each iteration until there is only a
single quintuplet eighth-note rest between each. Rouse also begins to reduce the number
of notes played within the quintuplet. He begins with groups of five, but between
measures 198 and 199 the note groupings condensed to four, and then in measure 201 to
three notes per group. He continues this pattern of three quintuplet eighth-notes followed
by a quintuplet eighth-note rest for the last six measures of this section (Figure 4.31).

![Figure 4.31 – Player 5, measures 186 – 207]

The modification from five note groupings to four note groupings within the
quintuplet is also signaled by an alteration in some of the accompaniment patterns.
Player 1 changes their pattern from a single note every four eighth-notes to two eighth-
notes with two eighth-note rests between each entrance. Player 2 changes to bass drum
notes on beats 1 and 2 of the measure, followed by a roll on beat 5 of each measure.
Player 3 alters to a less accented pattern that involves syncopated sixteenth-notes, and
Player 4 continues the bass drum hit on beat 4, but precedes each with a set of four
sixteenth-notes and an eighth-note on the lowest tom-tom (Figure 4.32). These patterns then crescendo for the last five measures of this section to a fortissimo roll for one measure by Players 2, 3, and 4. Player 1 does not participate in this roll so they can quickly pick up the cabasa for a roll on the downbeat of measure 208 (Figure 4.33).

Figure 4.32 – Full Score, measure 199 - 201

Figure 4.33 – Full Score, measures 206 – 208
At measure 208 a transitional section begins, focusing on the two cabasa parts of Players 1 and 5 who perform a measure-long roll ending on the downbeat of the next. This pattern repeats, only starting on beat 4 of measure 209, thus creating a pattern that lasts for three full measures before sounding again on the downbeat. While this is occurring, Players 2 and 4 continue their alternating bass drum dialogue, placing Player 2 on the downbeat and Player 4 on beat 4. Player 3 performs a single measure pattern on the conga drums, which repeats until measure 224 (Figure 4.34).

![Figure 4.34 – Full Score, measures 208 – 211](image)

In measure 212 Player 4 adds a roll on a large ratchet in one hand while continuing the original bass drum part in the other, illustrating Rouse’s understanding of the capabilities of the percussionist. The ratchet part is a two-and-a-half measure pattern similar to the cabasa part but only separated by two dotted-quarter-note rests between each gesture. This odd-numbered phrase sustains rhythmic interest by creating a dialogue between the cabasa parts and ratchet part that does not fall into a predictable pattern (Figure 4.35).
Measure 221 marks a push towards the next section with Player 2 changing parts to an interesting rhythmic pattern that gives momentum to the phrase before the next solo three measures later. The pattern divides the measure into three groups of two with a rhythm of two sixteenth-notes followed by an eighth-note. The rhythmic interest lies in how the rhythm divides the measure into three groups of two, while the accents are placed on beats 1 and 4 of the measure, allowing the accents to divide the measure into two groups of three. Thus rhythmic tension is developed in the final three bars of the section and released when the metal plates solo comes in at measure 224. Player 4 also alters the bass drum part to a more rhythmic figure in measure 223 to give a final push to the phrase (Figure 4.36).
A short solo on metal plates starts in measure 224, marked at quadruple forte and lasting for seven measures with every note accented. This extreme dynamic marking ensures that the energy level achieved in the previous section does not dissipate during these seven measures, and continues to rise towards the next major section of the work. During this solo the accompaniment consists of short phrases in three of the four remaining players. Player 1 is tacet for the first three measures of the solo in order to transfer to the tam-tam for a roll starting at piano that increases in volume up to a fortississimo release at the beginning of the next section starting in measure 231. Players 2 and 4 continue their dialogue with Player 2 adding two bongo notes on beats 5 and 6 of each measure. Player 3 contributes an interesting pattern to the accompaniment with a group of four notes that begins on beat 2 of each measure and continues to beat 5. A highly syncopated feel is created by beginning the pattern on a note other than the downbeat, providing a needed bit of rhythmic interest to the accompaniment in this section (Figure 4.37).
The metal plates used in *Ogoun Badagris* are meant to represent the Haitian organ.\(^{37}\) Dr. Don N. Parker observes the potential reason for their use during this specific section of the piece:

The composer’s sparse use of this instrument conforms its cultural purpose in the voodoo religion and the ceremony it represents. The idea of calling for the loa, in this case Ogoun Badagris, to appear, to be appeased, and to bestow the secrets of the warrior upon the initiates is the cultural intent of the first 230 measures. The metal plates represent the appearance of Ogoun. The use of the cabasas from measures 208 to 224 is significant in signaling and calling the loas during a voodoo ceremony. This section marks the successful completion of calling for the loa and receiving a response.\(^{38}\)

![Figure 4.37 – Full Score, measures 224 – 231](image)


\(^{38}\) Parker, 512.
The next section of *Ogoun Badagris* is labeled the “Danse Vaudou,” which Rouse describes as “the point at which demonic possession occurs.”\(^{39}\) This section of the piece is highly chaotic due to an extreme rhythmic density that provides no clear focal point for the listener. The most important aspect to this section is the meter change from 6/8 to 2/4, creating a change from predominantly compound rhythms to simple rhythms. There is also a metric modulation here where the dotted-quarter-note of the 6/8 meter becomes the quarter-note of the 2/4 meter. Dr. Don N. Parker observes “The texture of these measures sounds very improvisational and spontaneous, as if someone is being tossed back and forth with jerks and pulls.”\(^{40}\)

Player 1, after the release of the tam-tam roll, moves quickly to snare drum. Here a series of quarter notes is played *fortissimo* with the snares engaged, helping to provide a sense of pulse, which is important given the number of complex rhythms occurring during this section. Players 2 and 3 convey the most rhythmic interest during this beginning part of the “Danse Vaudou” due to the polyrhythms created between the triplet-based bass drum rhythms of Player 2 and the duplet-based conga drum rhythms of Player 3. This polyrhythmic texture lasts for four measures until Player 2 changes to duple-based rhythms in measure 235. One could interpret these opening bars as a struggle between the person being possessed represented by the triplet-based rhythms and the loa acting as possessor represented by the duple-based rhythms. This struggle occurs for a brief time, but in the end, the loa takes control of the body, being represented by the change from triplet- to duplet-based rhythms by Player 2 in measure 235 (Figure 4.38).

\(^{40}\) Parker, 514.
Measure 235 introduces Player 4 performing sixteenth-notes with maracas in one hand while continuing isolated single note attacks in the other hand, with the sixteenth-notes acting as the only regularly repeating rhythm for the remainder of this section. Here all parts are marked with a fortissimo dynamic, indicating that all parts are equal in importance. The color created by all of these different parts sounding with equal volume creates a sense of chaos that is still manageable due to the fact that all of them are now duple-based rhythms. The dialogue between the accents in Player 3 and Player 5 help to help to maintain a sense of forward momentum during this section (Figure 4.39).
At measure 240 sixteenth-note triplets are introduced into the texture in a line that begins with Player 3 on beat 2 of measure 240. This string of sixteenth-note triplets then shifts to the “&” of beat 2 to Player 2 who continues with 3 sets of sixteenth-note triplets before passing the line off to Player 1 on beat 2 of measure 241. The line then is passed to Player 5 on the “&” of beat 2 of measure 241, and ends with a final sixteenth-note triplet from Player 3 on the downbeat of measure 242 (Figure 4.40).

Figure 4.39 – Full Score, measures 235 – 239

Figure 4.40 – Full Score, measures 240 – 242
This triplet-based line is a melodic element that is passed from player to player (except for Player 4 who is not able to participate due to the demands of the part already being performed by them). Shaping this line is important to this section. Rouse notates the peak of Player 5’s triplet line on the “&” of 2 in measure 241 with a hairpin crescendo that ends with the triplet completely accented. While there is no notated dynamic change in the parts as they pass the triplet along from one player to another, the rhythm differs from the rest by being triplet-based instead of duple-based and the tension brought by creating 2-against-3 polyrhythms for an extended amount of time shows its importance. This makes the need to bring the triplet line to the front of the texture even more imperative, and foreshadows the upcoming hocket accents that will be presented in measure 243.

In measure 242 all players have a hairpin decrescendo reducing each player’s dynamic to forte, allowing room at the upper end of the dynamic spectrum for the accented notes to be perceived by the listener. Also, Player 4’s bass drum part is now playing straight eighth-notes in each measure along with the sixteenth-notes in the maraca. Beginning on beat 2 of measure 243 Player 5 has the first of a series of accented notes that is passed around the entire ensemble. In this first phrase, all of the accents are placed four sixteenth-notes apart from one another, with the exception of the accented note by Player 4 which occurs on the “&” of beat 2 in measure 245. This variation is most likely to make the melodic line less predictable. Player 5 then continues the line on beat 2 of measure 246. It should be noted that during this section Player 2 has other notes, which are accented, but are only at a forte dynamic level. These notes should be played well under the dynamic of the fortissimo accented line so as not to clutter or draw attention away from the more important line (Figure 4.41).
In measure 247 the space at which the accents are separated in the hocket melodic line decreases. Starting with the accented note from Player 2, each accent is spaced three eighth-notes apart from the next, creating a hemiola effect (Figure 4.42).

Figure 4.41 – Full Score, measures 243 – 246

Figure 4.42 – Full Score, measures 247 – 250
In measure 251 the space between each accent is decreased again to only two sixteenth-notes. The primary line here lasts from measure 251 to the downbeat of measure 255. A final hairpin crescendo marked in the parts of Players 3 and 5 leads to the final two measures of this section. Players 2, 3, and 5 end these hairpins with fortissimo rolls on their lowest drums, complimented by a string of eighth-notes by Player 4 on bass drum. Player 4 discontinues the maraca sixteenth-note pattern at this point. Player 1 is tacet during these last two measures of the section in order to transition to the tam-tam (Figure 4.43).

![Figure 4.43 – Full Score, measures 251 -256](image)

The final section of the piece begins at measure 257 with Players 2 and 3 taking the lead roles, performing unison rhythms punctuated by the rest of the ensemble. Player 4 abandons the maraca from the previous section and performs on bass drum until the last seven measures. Players 1 and 5 have more demanding accompaniment parts due to the necessity to switch among multiple instruments with different implements. Player 1 is uninvolved in the roll two measures prior to the beginning of this new section in order to prepare for the new part. During this section beginning at 257 Player 1 performs downbeat hits on tam-tam every two measures, while in the second measure striking first
a suspended cymbal on the “&” of beat 1, and then “e &” on beat 2 with the snare drum. Both the suspended cymbal and snare drum are played with a medium yarn mallet. Player 5 does perform the final roll in measures 255 and 256, and then quickly switches one of the snare drum sticks from the previous section to the hammer to play the lowest metal plate. Rouse provides ample time for this transition as the metal plate hit is not until the “&” of measure 258, while a single suspended cymbal hit is on the “&” of beat 1 of that measure with the left-over snare drum stick. Performers must be aware of the logistical demands of this section and have their individual instrument arrangement organized in such a way to facilitate quick movements between implements and instruments (Figure 4.44).

![Figure 4.44 – Full Score, measures 257 – 262](image)

In measure 263 Player 5 transitions to tenor drum with snare drum sticks and joins Players 2 and 3 in the lead role for this section. Players 1 and 4 continue in an accompanying role through punctuating specific beats, with an additional dialogue between Player 4 on bass drum and Player 1 on suspended cymbal and tam-tam. The two dialogue measures (measures 265 and 268) involve Player 4 on a bass drum flam a single
eighth-note before a hit by Player 1. Between these two measures, both Players 1 and 4 fill in the melodic gaps provided by the other three players. Rhythmically, the primary line provided by Players 2, 3, and 4 consists of eighth-note and sixteenth-note rhythms with accents falling on either the downbeats or upbeats. The only variation in the rhythms is a single sixteenth-note triplet which falls on the “&” of 2 in measure 268. This triplet moves the piece forward into a subito forte-piano roll, introducing the final phrase of the piece (Figure 4.45)

![Figure 4.45 – Full Score, measures 263 – 268](image)

The roll from measure 269 through 270 is one of the only places where Rouse does not fully consider the logistics of the players. This occurs in the part of Player 4 who must roll on the bass drum from subito forte-piano to fortississimo while preparing a large ratchet for a long roll from measures 271 through 274. One possible solution for this problem is to have Player 4 provide the initial subito forte attack, but not perform the roll and instead grab the ratchet for the next part of the piece. Because an identical roll is played by Players 2, 3, and 5, the absence of Player 4 in this roll is not readily perceivable (Figure 4.46).
The final section of *Ogoun Badagris* begins in measure 271. Here, the ensemble begins chanting the word “reler”, which Rouse explains in the program notes “is the Voodoo equivalent of the Judaeo-Christian (sic) *amen.*”⁴¹ While chanting, each player plays an instrument as well. With the exception of the tenor drum in Player 5, the texture is much higher than in previous sections, due to the instruments used by Players 2, 3, and 4. Player 2 plays eighth-notes while accenting beats 1 and 4 on the highest bongo. Player 3 is indicated by Rouse to “strike side of drum with mallets” while playing a quarter-note followed by an eighth-note rhythm, accenting beats 1 and 4 of the measure the same as Player 2. This is similar to the description of the performance techniques of

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the juba drum. Player 4 performs a long sustained roll on the large ratchet, which is indicated to be performed “ff possible”. Player 1 is the only performer not playing a repeated pattern throughout this section. The part consists of a single hit on the suspended cymbal and tam-tam on the downbeat of measure 271. Both of these notes are marked to let vibrate, acting as a sustained texture through the next four measures (Figure 4.47).

Figure 4.47 – Full Score, measures 271 – 274

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The chanting ends with a hit from Player 1 on tam-tam and Player 4 on bass drum on the downbeat of measure 275. This is answered on beat 4 of the same measure by Player 1 on Chinese cymbal, Player 2 on bass drum, and Player 5 on suspended cymbal. Following this, Players 2, 3, and 4 have a similar gesture of eighth-notes up and down the drums of their respective instrument arrangements in measure 276 marked at fortississimo. Player 5 emphasizes this by playing the last five eighth-notes on tenor drum after a suspended cymbal hit on the downbeat of the measure. This gesture leads us to the final note with all players on their lowest drums except for Player 1 who performs a tam-tam hit on the downbeat. The final note is marked secco for all players (Figure 4.48).

![Figure 4.48 – Full Score, measures 275 - 277](image)

Parker notes that the return to the original 6/8 meter is significant because it “represents the successful appeasement of the loa, Ogoun Badagris through offerings associated with its spirit such as the use of metal plates and the unwritten presence of the Haitian ogan part.”

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43 Parker, 523.
SUMMARY

Ogoun Badagris represents Rouse’s first surviving contribution to the percussion ensemble repertoire. This piece shows us a number of aspects of his compositional style, not only in terms of specific techniques but also in his overall compositional persona. His interest in mythology that is present in many of his other works including Morpheus (1975 for solo cello), Aphrodite Cantos (1976 for mezzo-soprano and chamber ensemble), and Gorgon (1984 for orchestra) is represented in Ogoun Badagris. It is important to note that while many of his works involving mythology center around Greek mythology, Ogoun Badagris and later Ku-Ka-Ilimoku center on Haitian and Hawaiian mythologies respectively. Rouse even states that one could interpret Bonham as being based in mythology stating “Rock stars are gods too you know!”44 While the mythological basis in Ogoun Badagris also has cultural ties that relate directly to percussion, it is important to remember that Rouse never engaged in a study of the musical practices of Haitian voodoo rituals, and merely was composing based on his initial impressions of recordings he had heard at the time.

Ogoun Badagris also sets a precedent by Rouse on his level of compositional detail. This can be seen in many aspects of Ogoun Badagris, from the specificity of the implements used, the detail he requests in the specific instruments, and his understanding of the logistical requirements of percussionists.

One final item to note about this piece is the time frame in which it was written and how it relates to the character of the piece. Rouse comments that many of the pieces being written for percussion at this time were more textural and esoteric in nature. In commenting on the nature of his percussion writing at the time, Rouse says:

…I was hearing, particularly in the 70’s, a lot of very quiet “ping…pong…swish” percussion music. Some of them were fine, but I thought in a way they were kind of denying the essence of the instruments. Beat the hell out of them! So I was very consciously trying to write music that was going to be loud and aggressive and exciting and none of this kind of ‘wash of percussion sound’. I thought “Let’s just hit the crap out of the drums!” or whatever the instruments were.45

44 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
This desire by Rouse to write music that was different in character from his contemporaries who composed for percussion ensemble is an important trait of Rouse’s that we see carry on into his next percussion ensemble work, *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku*. 
CHAPTER 5: KU-KA-ILIMOKU

BACKGROUND

*Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* was composed in 1978 for the Syracuse Symphony Percussion Ensemble. As with Rouse’s previous work *Ogoun Badagris*, *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* takes its inspiration from cultural mythology, in this case Hawaiian mythology. As Rouse explains in the program notes for the work:

“Ku is perhaps the most fundamental and important of gods, occupying a place similar to that of Zeus in Greek mythology or Odin in Norse legend. Ku is manifested in several forms: as Ku-Ka-Ilimoku he represents the god of war. Thus, this work for percussion ensemble is best viewed as a savage, propulsive war dance.”

Rouse’s initial inspiration for writing *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* came from a television program he saw on Polynesian dancing and drumming. Again, as with *Ogoun Badagris*, *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* was an attempt at capturing the character of the Hawaiian culture and mythology as opposed to being completely true to the specific music of that culture. Rouse recalls “What I had seen was very fast and virtuosic. And so much of that is on wooden instruments that I wanted to use a lot of wooden instruments. But that was pretty much it.”

ANALYSIS

The instrumentation for *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* is comprised of non-pitched percussion instruments, with the exception of the timpani in Player 1 and the boobams in Player 4. However, Rouse stated in an interview that these instruments, while notated with specific pitches, are not used in any harmonic way, making them function more like their unpitched counterparts for the piece. He also specifically noted that the inclusion of boobams was from a specific request from the group commissioning the work, since they had a set of them. He also noted that since the instrument is so rare now, he has seen

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47 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
and supports the substitution of other instruments for this, such as log drums, tom-toms, or octobans. He, however, does not like the use of roto-toms for this part, stating in an interview that he does not care for the sound of that instrument.50 The full instrumentation for the piece as indicated in the score is:

Player 1 – 4 timpani, claves, 4 log drums, 3 suspended cymbals

Player 2 – 4 tom-toms, 4 woodblocks, (woodblocks 1 - 4), 1 piccolo woodblock (piccolo woodblock 1)

Player 3 – 2 snare drums (snares always off), conga drum, cowbell, 1 bongo (bongo 1), 4 temple blocks, Chinese cymbal, wooden plank (a slab of lumber which yields a substantial “whack” when struck with a hammer)

Player 4 – 2 timbales, 2 bongos (bongos 2 and 3), boobams, tam-tam, 2 gongs (any pitches), 4 woodblocks (woodblocks 5 – 8), slapstick, 1 piccolo woodblock (piccolo woodblock 2), 1 metal plate (with substantial ringing characteristics)

The numerical indications for the woodblocks and bongos are used solely to differentiate between the equipment used, and not to indicate any hierarchy between instruments. In an interview Rouse says that he teaches all of his composition students to make their music so clear in their directions to performers that there will be no issues that arise due to lack of clarity in directions.51

As in his previous work, Rouse uses a symbol type of notation to indicate what type of implement each player is to use (Figure 5.1).

50 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
51 Ibid.
One final similarity of note between Ku-Ka-Ilimoku and Ogoun Badagris is in the pairing of certain instruments which are important to Ku-Ka-Ilimoku, such as the woodblocks used by Players 2 and 4, and the log drums and temple blocks used by Players 1 and 3 respectively.

The piece begins with a pianissimo entrance by Player 3 on the rim of snare drum 1, followed by a grand pause measure that helps to highlight the intensity of the snare drum gesture. The initial gesture is then expanded by one beat, again followed by a measure of grand pause (Figure 5.2). All of the grand pause measures should still be performed in-time so as to maintain the pulse established by the first gesture.

At measure 5, the piece begins its forward momentum with a new gesture set up by Player 3 on the rims of the snare drums. Two measures later Player 2 adds to the texture playing the same gesture as Player 3 on the rims of the tom-toms (Figure 3.3). Player 2 and 3 should not perform too close to the bead of the stick when striking the rims of the drums in order to give more body to the rim sound. Players 2, 3, and 4 should design their setups to allow for easy access to the drum rims since they are used extensively throughout the work. Two bars after the entrance of Player 2, Player 1 enters sounding quarter notes on a clave which is held flat against the head of the bass drum.
This rather unusual technique allows the texture to remain similar to that of Players 2 and 3, while adding sound depth to the section, illustrating Rouse’s considerable knowledge of the capabilities of percussion instruments. During the entrance of Player 1, Player 2’s part changes to a slight variation, moving the note on the “&” of beat 3 over to the “e”, creating a hocket rhythm of “3 e &” between Players 1, 2, and 3 (Figure 5.3). While no accents are marked on the last notes in Player 2 or 3’s part during this section, it is important to keep the attack of these notes pointed and precise so that the hocket rhythm between the two players can be clearly perceived.

![Figure 5.3 – Full score, measures 5 - 9](image)

These variations continue every two bars, with Player 2 changing parts again from a single note on the “e” of beat 3 to filling out the rest of the beat by playing “e & a”. Two bars later, Player 2 changes again, replacing his initial first beat of four sixteenth-notes with a sixteenth-note triplet followed by an eighth-note, reflecting on the first notes of the piece by Player 3. Finally, Player 1 changes his rhythm from quarter-notes to eighth-notes in measure 15, pushing the phrase forward and ending the introduction section of the work. During our interview, I remarked about some recordings of *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* which take some liberties with this opening section, specifically extending its length. Rouse does not favor this, stating that he wishes for his works to remain intact with what he wrote.\(^{52}\)

\(^{52}\) Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
Much of Rouse’s work is ostinato-based, with one player providing an ostinato or multiple players constructing a layered ostinato under a primary line. This technique is employed in measure 16 with Players 1, 2, and 3 establishing a combined ostinato for Player 4 to solo over on boobams. Player 1’s ostinato, played on claves now using traditional technique, actually begins on beat 2 of measure 16, and continues in an 11-beat cycle. Simultaneously, Player 2 initiates a 3-beat tom-tom ostinato at the beginning of measure 16. Player 3’s ostinato is a simple alternation of quarter-note followed by quarter-note rest played on a conga drum with a snare drum stick. This pattern extends across the barline, creating a half-time hemiola feel (Figure 5.4). It is important to keep the accompaniment parts under the boobam primary line, even though the dynamic range of this section only spans from piano to mezzo-piano. The complexity of the accompaniment texture can obscure the important line of the boobams, so making sure the boobams are heard above all other lines is important. This is especially important in Player 1, as claves can easily overpower the drum texture of Players 2 and 3.

![Figure 5.4 – Players 1 – 3, measures 16 - 19](image)

Over this ostinato, Player 4 performs a highly syncopated sixteen-measure boobam solo (Figure 5.5), with note-groupings and accents implying different time signatures. This solo also introduces one of the main themes of the piece in the 4th through 6th measure. Dynamically, the primary line begins only at mezzo-piano, increasing to forte in the eighth bar. This line moves to a mezzo-forte in measure 9, finally increasing in volume until measure 15, culminating in a fortissimo release in
measure 16. This crescendo is reflected by the other players as well, and pushes the phrase into the next section of the work.

![Musical notation]

**Figure 5.5 – Player 4, measures 16 – 31**

In measure 31, after the release of Player 4’s solo on beat 1, Player 3 uses the last two beats in the measure to introduce a new pattern on the snare drums. The time signature changes in the next measure, dividing Player 4’s four-beat pattern evenly into two measures. This pattern by Player 3 is marked forte dynamic level. Player 1 enters in measure 33 playing staccato quarter-notes at forte. Two measures later Player 1 adds timpani to his ostinato. At this point, Player 3 changes his pattern to combine with the conga drum, and Players 1 and 3 decrescendo to provide sonic space for the entrance of Player’s 2 and 4, whose woodblock duet begins in measure 37. It is important for Players 1 and 3 to remain as far in the background dynamically as possible, given that the membranophone texture is considerably thicker than the woodblock duet. The pattern in Players 1 and 3 continue for 12 measures, or 6 repetitions total. On the 7th repetition, Player 3 adds a single cowbell note on the “&” of beat two in the second measure of the pattern (Figure 5.6).
The woodblock duet, like the previous boobam solo, is highly syncopated. The woodblock duet (Figure 5.7) is comprised of both odd accents and hemiola-style note groupings like the boobam solo preceding it. It is important that Players 2 and 4 perform with a clear distinction between the accented and unaccented notes to maintain a clear musical line. Also, the rolls in measures 44 through 46 should be performed as thirty-second-note single-stroked rolls in order to coordinate the rhythms accurately between the two players and maintain a full sound. Also, Player 2’s set of woodblocks should contain different pitches from Player 4’s in order to create some harmonic interest during their duet.

The first 22 bars of the duet are accompanied by an ostinato from Players 1 and 3. During bars 21 and 22 of the duet, all four players crescendo into measure 23. In
measure 23 Player 2 comes to the foreground and begins a line of sixteenth-note and sixteenth-note triplets. While Player 2’s line continues, Player 4 enters with woodblocks playing contrary-motion interjections of Player 2’s melodic line (Figure 5.8). It is important for Player 4 to blend into the sound of Player 2 during this section, leaving Player 2 as the lead voice. This lasts for five measures, moving the listener into another ostinato setup by players 2 and 3, which then leads us into the log drums solo by Player 1 beginning in measure 68.

![Figure 5.8 – Players 2 and 4, measures 59 – 64](image)

In measure 64, Players 2 and 3 begin a two-bar ostinato that is quasi-linear in style, with almost no two voices occurring on the same beat (Figure 5.9). The term “linear drumming” was coined by Gary Chaffee, a pioneer in drum set pedagogy and former professor of percussion at the Berklee School of Music, in describing a method of constructing drum set parts where no two voices occur at the same time.\(^{53}\) Once the log drums solo from Player 1 starts, Player 4 adds to the linear ostinato with a slapstick strike on beat 2 of the measure (Figure 5.9).

\(^{53}\) Gary Chaffee, personal e-mail message, November 27\(^{th}\), 2010.
The log drums solo beginning in measure 68 differs slightly from the previous solos, although it is still highly syncopated. The difference between this solo and the others is that it begins with a definitive two-measure theme that repeats itself with slight variation for the first six measures. This theme varies slightly throughout the log drums solo until the meter change at measure 88 where another section of the solo begins (Figure 5.10), presenting more challenges in differentiating the solo line from the accompaniment. While the density in texture is similar to previous sections, it is the roundness of the log drums timbre, combined with the limited dynamic range of the log drums that makes this separation difficult. Additionally, there is no change in dynamics from when the accompaniment starts and when the soloist enters. Regardless, Players 2 – 4 should decrease their dynamics slightly when Player 1 enters in measure 67.
At measure 88 the texture changes with the focus switching from Player 1’s log drums to timpani. Here, the meter moves to 5/8, and Player 1 adjusts his rhythms exclusively to sixteenth-note triplets and eighth-notes. Player 2 helps to frame the groupings of Player 1, playing double stops on the bass drum and lowest tom-tom. Player 4 enters three bars before measure 90 playing the same rhythm as Player 1, but on a single woodblock. Player 4 is indicated to perform this figure with plastic mallets. These mallets should be hard enough to cut through, but not so hard that it damages the woodblock. It should be noted that while Player 1 is the main focus of this five measure section, all players are performing at fortissimo, and every note is accented, helping to add to the strength of the section. All sounds should blend as evenly as possible, though the timpani of Player 1 will naturally have more weight than the other players. This is acceptable since the timpani have the focal part in this transition. Player 3 enters the bar before rehearsal letter “D” on the wooden plank, helping to move us into the next section (Figure 5.11).

Figure 5.11 – Full score, measures 88 - 92
In measure 93 a second linear phrase is introduced between Players 2, 3, and 4, consisting of a single bar of 3/4 that repeats and increases in volume into a time signature change to 2/4 at measure 99. Player 2’s part for this linear-style passage consists of sixteenth-note triplets on each off-beat. The first triplet is played on the head of the highest tom-tom, while the rest are played on the rims of the tom-toms. Player 3 continues on the wooden plank from the previous section, with only a single quarter-note on beat 2 of each measure, while Player 4 plays a sixteenth-note triplet on beat 1 followed by a pair of sixteenth-notes on beat 3, both on woodblocks (Figure 5.12). Players should be conscious of the ensemble blend during this phrase, making sure that all parts are balanced. This can be difficult due to both the varying textures as well as the *decrescendo*.

![Figure 5.12 – Players 2 – 4, measures 94 - 96](image)

This six-bar linear passage takes the listener into a short four bar phrase in 2/4 where Player 1 on timpani, plays straight sixteenth-notes at *piano* on the lowest drum, accenting every second beat on the B-flat drum using wooden mallets. This entire section from measure 93 through measure 102 acts as transitional material to the next main section which begins in measure 103.

Measure 103 is the start of a section of *interplay between voices* based on differing textures. Each phrase is two measures long, though there are multiple time signature changes throughout this section, which blurs the regular pulse for the section. The first measure of each phrase is played by Players 2, 3, and 4, all on the rims of the various drums within their setups. In addition to the similar texture between players, all use similar implements (snare drum sticks), and all are performing at a *mezzo-piano*.
dynamic. These A-section measures are responded to in the second bar of each phrase with a \textit{tutti} measure on drums by all four players performing at \textit{fortissimo}. There should be substantial dynamic contrast between the A-sections and B-sections in this phrase. All players during these areas of \textit{interplay between voices} perform the same rhythms and dynamics, while the “pitch material” is only slightly similar between players. Some players perform in contrary motion to others, while other players will play in similar motion, though not exactly the same pitches as one another. Another interesting item is Rouse’s use of the timpani resonance as a sonic pad. When each A-section starts with the players on the rims, Player 1 always has a release from his previous measure on the lowest drum at \textit{mezzo-piano} dynamic. This allows the timpani note and subsequent resonance to fill out the sound of the rim figures of the other players without obscuring the texture established by them (Figure 5.13). Player 1 should be extremely careful not to overplay the \textit{mezzo-piano} note, allowing it to act as background for the rim gestures.

![Figure 5.13 – Full score, measures 103 - 104](image)

There are five occurrences of these interplaying phrases, with the final B-section part being extended to three bars (Figure 5.14). This B-section moves into a six measure transition played by the first three players all performing \textit{tutti} rhythms on their lowest drums at \textit{fortississimo} (Figure 5.15). Player 4 is not involved in this transition, reflecting Rouse’s skill and knowledge of logistics in percussion performance. Rouse comments in an interview about the need for composers to understand the “logistical issues” with percussion, from changing of implements to the movement from one instrument to
another.\textsuperscript{54} In this case, Rouse leaves Player 4 out of this section to allow Player 4 to prepare the tam-tam for a quadruple \textit{forte} hit in measure 121. This impact on the downbeat of measure 121 is performed by all of the performers with the other three players finishing their transitional section on their lowest drum, signaling the beginning of a new section of the piece.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure514.png}
\caption{Full score, measures 111 - 114}
\end{figure}

\footnote{Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.}
The next section of the piece beginning in measure 121 returns to a previous texture from measure 10 with Player 1 playing staccato quarter-notes on the bass drum at *pianissimo*. This return is not accidental, as this section from measure 121 to measure 138 is characterized by short interjections of previous themes by different players. The first interjection occurs in measures 124 and 125 by Player 2, who performs a gesture based on material from the original boobam solo by Player 4 starting in measure 16 (Figure 5.16). Little to no dynamic shaping should be used during this gesture so the importance of the accented note is not lost. Immediately following this gesture, Player 2 assumes the quarter-note bass drum pulse from Player 1, but converts it to two eighth-notes, creating an eighth-note rhythm with double-stop pulses on each downbeat.

![Figure 5.16 – Player 2 interjection, measures 124 – 125, and original boobam solo material](image-url)
The second interjection of this passage occurs in measure 127 with Player 3 performing a brief passage based on the original woodblock duet between Players 2 and 4 on temple blocks (Figure 5.17). As with the woodblock duet, these rolls should be interpreted as thirty-second notes to preserve continuity between the original material and the interjection.

![Player 3 interjection, measures 127 - 129](image)

![Measures 8 - 10 of WoodblockDuet](image)

**Figure 5.17 – Player 3 interjection, measures 127 – 129, and original woodblock duet material**

A third interjection by Player 4 begins in measure 130 and differs from the previous two not only due to its length (eight measures instead of two or three measures like the previous ones), but also because it directly is quoting a passage previously performed by that player. In this case, the Player 4 boobam gesture is quoting from the fourth measure of the original boobam solo performed by Player 4 in measure 19. Additionally Rouse contributes rhythmic interest to this gesture by beginning the three beat theme on a beat other than the downbeat of a measure, in this case beat 3 of a 3/4 bar (Figure 5.18). Performers may wish to shape each individual four-beat pattern throughout this phrase with a slight *crescendo*, adding contour and interest.

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This section of interjections concludes with another change in Player 2’s part, this time maintaining the downbeat pulse, but now moving up one more subdivision, from eighth-notes to sixteenth-notes in measure 138. Player 2 should make sure to not overplay the accents so as to not clutter the texture. In measure 138 a process of layering begins in which each player contributes a pattern one at a time. Once all four voices have entered, the players begin to crescendo to a climax in measures 154 and 155, preparing for the next section of the work in measure 156. Player 1 is the first voice to enter after the initial layer entrance of Player 2, referencing the boobam solo measure from Player 4’s interjection in the previous section. Rouse obscures perceptions of meter in this layer by using a four-beat layer superimposed over the 3/4 meter. Player 3 is the next to enter with a layer, this time using a gesture that combines sixteenth-notes and sixteenth-note triplets on the two snare drums with a buzz roll on the conga drum. Unlike Player 1’s layer, Player 3’s fits perfectly into the 3/4 meter. Finally, Player 4 enters in measure 124 with a five-beat layer that helps to further mask the meter. In addition to its use of five beats, Player 4’s layer obscures the meter even further by beginning the layer with a hemiola that implies a four-against-three polyrhythm (Figure 5.19). Once all of the layers have entered, a ten measure crescendo begins, culminating in a tutti rhythmic passage similar in texture to measures 115 – 120 (Figure 5.20). As with measures 115 to 120, Player 4 is absent from this section in order to move to the tam-tam for the next section two measures later.
Following the *tutti* measures in bars 154 through 155, the meter changes to 2/4 in measure 156 and another solo passage begins, this time for Player 1 on timpani, lasting until measure 195 (Figure 5.21). Agogic accents to emphasize phrasing should be used.
sparingely here to make sure that the notated *marcato* accents starting in measure 173 can be perceived.

![Music notation](image)

**Figure 5.21 – Player 1, measures 156 - 195**

During the Player 1 timpani solo, Players 2, 3, and 4 assume an accompaniment role, all through heavy quarter-note pulse gestures. Player 2 plays *marcato* accented quarter-notes at *fortississimo*, while Player 3 plays the same on both the lower snare drum and cowbell, and Player 4 plays quarter-notes moving between the tam-tam and two gongs (Figure 5.22). The gong and tam-tam line of Player 4 should be approached carefully so their timbre does not overshadow the rest of the ensemble.
While Player 4 continues this passage for the duration of the timpani solo, Players 2 and 3 each contribute a slight variation to the passage later. The first variation occurs in measure 165 when Player 2 adds an eighth-note to beat 1 of the measure, and Player 3 adds a dotted eighth-note to the second beat of the measure on the cowbell. By measure 179, Player 3 varies their pattern one more time, adding an eighth-note to the second beat of the measure on the conga drum (Figure 5.23).

In measure 191 a meter change occurs changing from 2/4 to 3/4 to reflect the timpani solo. However, Rouse continues the accompaniment parts in 2/4, creating rhythmic interest and again obscuring the meter. This passage ends with a solo unaccompanied glissando in the timpani part which moves us along with an eighth-note woodblock pickup by Players 2 and 4 into the next section of the work in measure 195.
(Figure 5.24). While marked “glissando furioso”, performers should be aware that the **glissando** is only from an A to an F, so the player should make sure that it lasts as long as notated and not reach the ending pitch prematurely.

![Figure 5.24 – Full Score, measures 191 - 194](image)

Measure 195 progresses to another section of **interplay between voices** similar to the previous section beginning at measure 103. Unlike the previous section, the texture here remains constant in that only wood instruments are used: Woodblocks in Players 2 and 4 and log drums and temple blocks in Players 1 and 3 respectively. Like the previous **interplay between voices** section, there are a number of meter changes throughout this section. Players 2 and 4 begin an A-section in measures 195 and 196 at **fortississimo**. This is responded to by Players 1 and 3 at **fortississimo** in measures 197 and 198. Each B-section by Players 1 and 3 is ended by an accented strike on timpani or conga drum respectively (Figure 5.25). While Player 3’s part is notated to be played with hard rubber mallets, hard yarn may be better suited to blend with Player 1’s log drums part, which is noted to be played with hard yarn mallets. One item of note is that while in the previous **interplay between voices** section the pitch material was not always unison between players, here each duo is playing the exact same pitch material as the other.
Beginning in measure 209, each interplay is reduced to one measure, beginning a process in which each subsequent interplay duration is truncated until measure 213 when the passages begin to overlap each other. This process continues until each duo is trading three-note groupings, and finally two-note groupings between each other (Figure 5.26). It is important for performers to make sure to avoid accenting the beginnings of the three-note groupings since the notated accents are on the last note of each grouping.
The shortening of phrases from measures 213 through 219 move us to a *tutti* passage in measure 220 where the rhythmic groupings transition from three-note groupings in the first measure to two-note and finally single-note groupings in the second measure (the single note groupings being dictated by Player 3 with the China Cymbal). Here, accenting the beginnings of each grouping can be quite effective in displaying these differing note groupings. These two bars repeat a second, and finally a third time, with a slight extension in the single-note groupings on the third repeat (Figure 5.27).

Figure 5.26 – Full Score, measures 213 - 219
Measure 226 begins the next section of the piece with a sudden change in dynamics to piano, coupled with a thinning of the texture from all four players to just Players 1 and 3 on timpani and bongos respectively. This three bar transition gains intensity helped by the addition of Player 2 on bass drum in the third bar, into the final climax of the work beginning at measure 229. Once again, Player 4 is left out of this crescendo passage in order to transition to the tam-tam.

In measure 229 the quarter-note pulse returns, this time in Player 3 on the conga drum. Players 1 and 4 contribute metallic sounds to the section by way of three suspended cymbals in Player 1 and the tam-tam in Player 3. Player 1 should select their cymbals carefully so that they are full sounding but not overpowering. Also selecting
similar cymbal colors would be wise to best promote ensemble blend. Player 2’s part acts as the primary line through this section, providing rhythmic interest on the bass drum. All players are at a fortississimo dynamic for the remainder of the work. Measure 233 returns to a rhythmic tutti section between Players 1, 2, and 3 similar to previous sections of the piece. While all players are performing the same rhythm (or performing accented notes within the rhythm) each player contributes a unique color to the section that falls within some of the tutti areas of the passage. The final measure ends the work with a series of marcato accented eighth-notes, ending on beat 4 of the measure with players 1 and 2 playing two sixteenth notes on timpani and bass drum respectively while Player 3 ends with a single hit on the wooden plank on beat 4 and Player 4 ends with a tam-tam hit on beat 4. This final tam-tam hit is marked secco and should be muffled quickly after being struck so it does not ring too long.

SUMMARY

*Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* continues Rouse’s trend of mythologically based compositions. Like *Ogoun Badagris*, the character of the mythology and culture (in this case Hawaiian) was the focus of the piece, and not on being true to specific details of Hawaiian music.

This piece also continues Rouse’s desire for a more aggressive style of percussion writing. However, the writing style in *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* is markedly more virtuosic from an ensemble standpoint, particularly in terms of navigating the meter changes as well as the complex rhythms that form from these meters. *Ogoun Badagris* contains very few meter changes, and those heavily spaced apart, as opposed to some sections in *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* where meter changes occur every measure. As Rouse puts it “Obviously the meters are not what you would find in a Polynesian music”\(^{55}\), and when commenting on the difficulty of some of those passages states “Cursed me ever since for that! Those 15/16 bars.”\(^{56}\)

*Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* is the second piece by Rouse for percussion ensemble in two years. There is a substantial gap after this piece from when his final percussion ensemble

\(^{55}\) Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.

\(^{56}\) Ibid.
work is written. The reason for this revolves around Rouse’s issue of being typecast as a percussion composer. In an interview with Frank J. Oteri, Rouse states:

I always warn my students to beware of typecasting. The danger early on for me was being typecast as a percussion composer. I wrote a couple of little percussion pieces when I was still a student that began to get played a lot and are still played a lot, but I then realized that everyone was thinking of me as “Oh, he writes great percussion music.” And so I purposely have said no for many, many years to any percussion ensemble requests because I just don’t want to be thought of as just that.57

This avoidance of typecasting would account for the eleven-year gap between Ku-Ka-Ilimoku and Rouse’s final percussion ensemble work Bonham written in 1989.

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CHAPTER 6: BONHAM

BACKGROUND

In 1983, Christopher Rouse taught the first accredited course on the history of Rock-n-Roll at the Eastman School of Music. This is not surprising given his love of the genre since his youth. Further, it is no surprise that he would compose a work derived entirely from the genre. While the title Bonham is very specific, along with some of the musical quotes, the character of the piece is as Rouse says “…an ode to rock drumming and drummers…”

Composed in 1988, Christopher Rouse’s Bonham was commissioned by the New England Conservatory of Music, and was premiered in April of 1989. The work is dedicated to Frank Epstein, the director of the New England Conservatory Percussion Ensemble. This work ended a ten-year hiatus for Rouse from percussion ensemble writing. Rouse states in an earlier interview that he always warns his students of “typecasting” themselves. He felt that earlier in his career he himself was being typecast as a “percussion composer”, and so specifically turned down requests for percussion works. The reason for the ending of this hiatus is due to an actual commission by the New England Conservatory. He says that his three previous works for percussion were either written through his own personal desire to compose the piece, or for friends. As he says in an interview, Bonham was the only piece “…where money exchanged hands”.

As stated in the program notes provided by the composer, “Bonham is an ode to rock drumming and drummers, most particularly Led Zeppelin’s legendary drummer, the late John “Bonzo” Bonham.” In addition to references to three Led Zeppelin works (“When the Levee Breaks”, “Custard Pie”, and “Royal Orleans”), Rouse also makes reference to two other rock-and-roll sources: “Get Yourself Together” by the Butterfield

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61 Ibid.
Blues Band, and the traditional “hambone” rhythm that was used extensively by Bo Diddley.

It should be noted that while the scores to both *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* and *Ogoun Badagris* are created from a manuscript that was prepared by Rouse himself, *Bonham* was printed in a newly engraved edition in 1996, with the engraving done by Thomas Brodhead. While this makes for a cleaner and more traditional style of notation (though Rouse’s manuscript itself is impeccably clean), it unfortunately allows for some small errors in engraving in the score, which will be discussed through the analysis.

**ANALYSIS**

*Bonham* is scored for 8 percussionists. The instrument choices are similar to his previous two works, *Ogoun Badagris* and *Ku-Ka Ilimoku* in that no pitched instruments are used with the exception of the timpani in Player 1. Rouse, however, admits that his use of timpani in all of his percussion ensemble works function more like “big tom-toms” rather than as timpani themselves. The full instrumentation of the work is:

Player 1 – 5 timpani, suspended cymbal (suspended cymbal 1), guiro, 2 log drums

Player 2 – Ratchet, tambourine, snare drum (snare drum 1), vibraslap, piccolo woodblock, conga drum, hammer* (*hammer like that in Mahler’s Symphony no. 6)

Player 3 – Snare Drum (snare drum 2), bass drum (bass drum 1), tam-tam (tam-tam 1), woodblock, pair of maracas

Player 4 – 2 timbales, suspended cymbal (suspended cymbal 2), Chinese cymbal, claves

Player 5 – Bass drum (bass drum 2), tenor drum, castanets, cowbell

Player 6 – 4 tom-toms (high to medium), very large tam-tam (tam-tam 2)

Player 7 – 4 bongos, 4 tom-toms (medium to large)
Player 8 – Drum Set – hi-hat, 2 suspended cymbals, snare drum, 2 tom-toms, bass drum w/ pedal

As with his previous works, Rouse is also very specific as to what implements performers should use. The beginning of the piece provides a chart with stick indications that are used throughout the piece (Figure 6.1).

**Figure 6.1 – Implement Chart**

The piece begins with a solo line by Player 8, which sets up the rock-n-roll feel of the piece. The part played by Player 8 is a quote from the opening drum beat to the Led Zeppelin recording of “When the Levee Breaks” (Figure 6.2). In fact, Rouse indicates for the performer to use the butt end of the snare drum sticks, and notes to the performer “Use the fattest possible sticks to reproduce as closely as possible throughout the entire work the beginning of ‘When the Levee Breaks,’ recorded by Led Zeppelin.”63 The performer of this part should listen to the recording of this song (from the 1971 untitled album) in order to be able to accurately replicate the drum and cymbal sounds, as well as the feel of the part as performed by John Bonham. One should be cautious however that the original song has a tempo that is faster than what is marked in Rouse’s score (quarter-note = 140 bpm verses quarter-note = 126 bpm respectively).64

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64 Ibid.
In measure 5, Players 6 and 7 enter with a unison tom-tom line over the drum set ostinato. These players act as the lead parts in this section with this primary line, which lasts from measure 5 to the 4th beat of measure 17. While these players are the lead voices, Players 1 through 5 add their own voices at key moments in the primary line, reinforcing climaxes in the primary line as well as occasionally providing counterpoint to the main line.

The primary line goes through a substantial number of rhythmic density changes, all in carefully notated rhythm so that there is no confusion as to the placement of the figures. The notation is important so that Players 6 and 7 synchronize throughout the primary line. This detail to the rhythmic gestures also helps the rest of the ensemble join the texture with highly syncopated entrances. The gestures of the primary line are also directly tied to the dynamics used, with the volume building as the rhythms get thicker, and lessening as the rhythms get sparser. Rouse uses syncopated entrances, tuplet rhythms, and unusual note-groupings to create the feeling of a primary line that is swirling in and out of time with its dynamics (Figure 6.3).

The detail of color that Rouse desires is already evident, even at this early point in the piece. The composer is very detailed in his specifications for each player as to what implements to use throughout the work. Rouse also shows his understanding of percussion technique by indicating to Player 2 whether to use knuckles or fingers on the tambourine. This attention to detail goes beyond the implements used to the interpretation of figures, such as when he marks the \textit{forte} entrance of Players 2 and 3 in measure 8 with “\textit{non troppo}”, indicating the players to not be too aggressive with this entrance. This level of detail can be seen throughout \textit{Bonham}, and performers must pay close attention to these indications in order to most accurately produce the composer’s vision.
Figure 6.3 – Full Score, measures 5 – 17
Figure 6.3 continued
At the beginning of measure 18, a new section begins. In this section Players 1 through 6 insert short gestures to the texture one at a time, creating a quasi-linear section that is similar to sections of his previous percussion ensemble works. This section also has a continuous *accelerando* from the beginning tempo of quarter-note = 126 bpm in 4/4 time to the tempo of half-note = 126 bpm in 2/2 time. This is coupled with a gradual *crescendo* by all players, ending with a dynamic of *fortissimo* at the beginning of measure 43. It is important to make this *accelerando* last the entire length desired by the composer, as reaching the final tempo too soon will result in a lack of energy and forward momentum when moving into the next section.

The drum set player continues their original ostinato, though now at a *pianissimo* dynamic, while Players 1 through 6 gradually add in, contributing their unique color to the layering process until each player is present in measure 24. Curiously, Player 7 is left out of this process. There are a number of possible explanations for this omission. There is the possibility that Player 7’s instruments of bongos and low tom-toms did not fit well into the texture. It may have been to give the player time to change implements from hard yarn mallets to snare drum sticks (though this is unlikely since Player 6 has far less time to make the same change before their entrance in this section). The most likely reason is to give the performer ample time to prepare for their entrance as the lead voice at the beginning of the next section.

The first four players to enter all contribute a similar color, though all in different places within the measure. This color is characterized by both a wood sound of some kind (ratchet, woodblock, castanets, guiro), and a similar rhythmic gesture, in this case a small grouping of notes (no more than 5) on either a downbeat or an upbeat. Player 2 is the first voice to enter this layering section, entering with an eighth-note roll on the “&” of beat 3 on the ratchet at a *piano* dynamic. The composer is once again very specific about the color of sound desired from the ratchet, instructing the performer to “bend back slats so that they barely touch cog”. Later, in measure 32, Rouse thickens this texture by instructing Player 2 to play the ratchet with “slats full against cog”. In the following measure, Player 5 enters playing castanets with a set of 4 thirty-second-notes on beat 2 at
piano. Player 3 enters next with a woodblock gesture that increases in volume from pianissimo to piano. Rouse indicates for snare drum sticks to be used by Player 3. Because the crescendo happens slowly over the next twenty-three measures, moving from the tip of the stick for the beginning gestures and slowly moving to the shaft of the stick will allow for more dynamic contrast, as well as some variation in color which can be a welcome thing in a phrase that repeats over such a long period of time. In this gesture, the rhythm is a sixteenth-note triplet moving from the “&” of beat 1 to the downbeat of beat 2. The next layer entrance does not occur until the “&” of 4 in measure 21, a full six beats after the last entrance by Player 3. Player 1’s gesture on the guiro is similar to Player 3’s, with both having a crescendo beginning at piano and ending at mezzo-forte. Player 1’s layer is also unique in that it moves systematically in a five-beat cycle instead of with the meter in a four-beat cycle like the other layers. This causes the gesture to move over one beat every entrance, entering initially on the “&” of beat 4 in measure 21, followed by the “&” of beat 1 in measure 23, the “&” of beat 2 in measure 24, and so on (Figure 6.4).

![Figure 6.4 – Player 1, measures 21 – 26](image)

The next two layers enter at the same time, on the “&” of beat 2 in measure 24. This goes against the linear style where only one voice sounds at a time. Continuing the wood color, Player 4 enters on claves, playing a single eighth-note, while player 6 enters with a pair of sixteenth-notes on the rim of the tom-toms, both at mezzo-piano.

At measure 24, all players in this quasi-linear passage have entered. From here, some of the players add additional entrances to thicken the texture as the accelerando continues. The first additional entrance comes from player 6, playing an eighth-note roll
on the rim of the low tom-tom on the “&” of beat 4 in measure 26. The next addition is by Player 4, adding another clave hit on the downbeat of measure 31 at forte. Player 3 has the final new entrance, adding a quarter-note forte entrance on beat 4 of measure 37 on the woodblock. This quarter-note entrance changes slightly just before the next section begins, adding a crescendo to a quarter-note roll that ends at a fortississimo dynamic with an accented release on the down beat of measure 43. This roll and the crescendo written in Player 8’s part are used to push the phrase and section forward into the next section of the piece (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5 – Full Score, measures 40 – 43

The next section of the piece begins at measure 43. The drum set (Player 8) continues the “When the Levee Breaks” ostinato, though now at a double-time tempo from the beginning of the piece. While Players 2 through 6 all perform a release from
their material from the previous section, Player 7 takes over as the lead voice at the beginning of this new section, beginning an *interplay between voices* style line built up between Players 2 through 7. The new section is also marked by the replacement of the wood colors of the previous section for the skin timbres of various drums. This *interplay between voices* gesture builds consistently in two-bar phrases over the ten measures of this section. The first gesture of this section is also the first statement of “Custard Pie”, another Led Zeppelin song, which is represented rhythmically and texturally by Players 7 and 3 (Figure 6.6).

![Custard Pie - Opening Guitar Riff](image)

![Bonham - Measures 43 - 44](image)

**Figure 6.6 – Original “Custard Pie” guitar riff (transcribed by author), and Players 3 and 7, measures 43 – 44**

The first two-bar phrases between Player 7 on the toms-toms and Player 3 playing rim shots on snare drum roughly outlines the main guitar riff of “Custard Pie”. In addition, the pitch hierarchy from the low toms-toms to the higher pitched snare drum rim shots helps to represent the pitch material in the guitar riff. All of the rim shots in this section should be single-sticked rim shots. This not only allows for the highest pitched rim shot, but also helps with navigating parts where rim shots are mixed with natural playing areas such as in measure 52.
Each two-bar phrase after this is a variation upon the original two-bar phrase, adding players and material until the next section begins. The first variation adds a single eighth-note to the “&” of beat 4 in the first measure for Player 7, and adds a quarter-note bass drum entrance on beat 1 for Player 5 (Figure 6.7).

![Figure 6.7 – Players 3, 5, and 7, measures 45 – 46](image)

The next two-bar phrase (Figure 6.8) uses a more spacious figure in Player 7’s tom-tom part, then filling that space by adding two sets of triplets which crescendo and release starting on beat 3 of measure 47 on the highest tom-tom in Player 6, followed by a rim shot on the third tom-tom of Player 6 on the third beat of measure 48. Player 5 continues their bass drum part on the downbeat of the second measure of the 2 bar phrase, while Player 3 adds a single eighth-note rim shot to their original part on the “&” of beat 1. All players should be very conscious of ensemble blend during this section so that no one texture sticks out above the others.

![Figure 6.8 – Players 3, 5, 6, and 7, measures 47 – 48](image)
The fourth two-bar phrase (Figure 6.9) sees Player 7’s gestures start to overlap phrases by anticipating the entrance. Beginning on beat 4 of measure 48 (one beat before the new two-bar phrase begins), Player 7 begins a triplet gesture ending with a quarter-note on the fourth beat of measure 49. Player 7 then rests until the fourth beat of measure 50, where another one-beat pick-up occurs for the next phrase. As with the previous phrase, the space in Player 7’s gesture is filled by a tom-tom gesture from Player 6. Player 5 contributes with the bass drum to this phrase, but now has moved their quarter-note to beat 3 of the second bar of the phrase with an eighth-note pick up just before on the “&” of beat 2. Player 3 contributes the same rim shot gesture as before, only now displaced from the original position with the hits moved to the “&” of beat 2 and a hit on beat 4.

![Figure 6.9 – Players 3, 5, 6, and 7, measures 49 – 50 with pick-up](image)

The final 2 bar phrase (Figure 6.10) in this section differs from the previous phrases in a few ways. First, the space that had been developing in Player 7’s part previously filled by Player 6 still exists, but is not filled. Player 6 instead has a tom-tom gesture that is played over and lines up with that of Player 7. The second measure of this final two-bar phrase serves to set up another bit of thematic material from “Custard Pie”. All four players that have been involved in the two-bar phrases of these sections (Players 3, 5, 6, and 7) have gestures in this last phrase that help to set up the snare drum of Player 2, who enters with a three eighth-note gesture on the “&” of beat 3 in measure 52. It should be noted that there is a notation error in Player 6’s part in measure 51 of the newly engraved version. At this point in the score, beat 2 is notated as the first and third partials.
of a triplet, but the tuplet bracket has been left out of the score. This has been corrected in the example below.

Figure 6.10 – Players 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7, measures 51 – 52 with pick-up

This three-note gesture by Player 2 is reminiscent of a figure from the second 4-bar phrase of the 12-bar blues form of “Custard Pie”. In this part of the song, the guitar and bass play a chord on beat 1 which is held through the first measure, and cut off on beat 1 of the next measure, only to play a descending figure of sixteenth-notes beginning on the “e” of beat 1 (Figure 6.11). It is this three-note gesture that continues to reoccur throughout the next section of the piece.

One interesting thing to note is an instruction in the score by Rouse for Player 8 (drum set). In the measure before the next section, Rouse says that from measure 42 until the end, the pair of eighth-notes on beat 2 of the second measure in their pattern may be replaced by a single quarter-note. This could be for two reasons: to allow for less technical demand on the drum set player once establishing the double-time tempo in measure 43, or to give the conductor the option of thinning the texture slightly at the quicker tempo.

Figure 6.11 – Guitar and Bass, original chorus material from “Custard Pie”
The next main section of Bonham begins at measure 53, immediately after the introduction of the three-note gesture from “Custard Pie”. The main material of this section is a two-bar phrase repeated by seven of the eight players. Players 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 have parts, which leave space in the second measure of the phrase. This ends up being important because it leaves space for the three-note gesture from “Custard Pie”, which was introduced in the previous section, to be heard on the snare drum in Player 3. Player 3 should play this gesture with strength as it is important thematic material, and is not represented in any other part.

All of these parts remain the same throughout this section except for Players 3 and 7, who add a small variation in measure 58, and continue until the next section at 63. Player 5 does not enter until the fifth measure of this section with an eighth-note gesture on the cowbell. This gesture bridges itself between measures, and is repeated twice more in this section of the work, with the final one changing slightly. Instead of four eighth-notes followed by a quarter-note like the previous two, the final gesture is a set of eight eighth-notes. This is interesting because while the change is most likely to push the phrase forward into the next section, dynamically the gesture is lowered from the previous fortissimo to a forte (Figure 6.12).
Figure 6.12 – Full Score, measures 59 to 62

Measure 63 begins the next section of the work. Here, Rouse initiates a nine-beat pattern for each of the players. This nine-beat pattern repeats four times for each player before moving into the next section of the work. In this section, the texture is thickened by having Players 1, 4, and 7 play similar rhythmic parts. Player 6 emphasizes this motive on the high tom-toms as they reinforce most of the accents from Players 1, 4, and 7’s parts (Figure 6.13).
Figure 6.13 – Players 1, 4, 6, and 7, measures 63 – 66

At the same time, Players 2, 3, and 5 have parts that complement the previously mentioned parts. Player 8 also has a change in the core ostinato which also helps to complement the parts of Players 1, 4, 6, and 7, most notably by adding a marcato accented hit on beat 7 of the nine-beat pattern that syncs with a rim shot by Players 6 and 7, and an accented note on the low E timpani by Player 1. Player 3’s part is important to this section as it continues the previously introduced three-note gesture from “Custard Pie” in a space provided by the other patterns at beats 8 and 9. Player 3 is also the only player whose pattern changes, in this case by the addition of a five eighth-note accented bass drum part, which begins on the off-beat of count 3 of the nine-beat pattern (Figure 6.14).

One interesting thing to note about this section is an error in the newly engraved score to *Bonham*, which was released in 1996 by Hendon music. The error occurs in the nine-beat pattern of Player 2 on tambourine. In the score, the first two occurrences of the pattern for Player 2 have two accented eighth-notes which occur on the off-beats of beats 5 and 6 of the pattern, the first off-beat entering with the syncopated off-beat release by Players 1, 4, 6, and 7. In the third repetition of the nine-beat pattern the off-beat hits by Player 2 move over a beat to beats 4 and 5. In listening to recordings (specifically The Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble recording “Different Strokes” released in 1991 and the University of Kentucky Percussion Ensemble recording “Live From Lexington –
Selections from the 2006 – 2007 Season”), the tambourine part is played with the hits always on the fifth and sixth beats of the pattern. This would seem to show that this error in the new score is an engraving error, and was not meant as a variation in the pattern (Figure 6.14).

![Figure 6.14 – Full Score, measures 65 – 69](image)

A bongo pick-up of three eighth notes in Player 7’s part brings us into the next section of the work. This section expands upon the three-note motive from “Custard Pie”, playing a textural interplay between voices between two groups of players. This happens by means of a ten-beat phrase similar to the previous section. In this new section, Players 1, 6, and 7 are once again joined together playing a unison rhythmic figure. The final unison point in this pattern is a single eighth-note hit on the “&” of beat 6 of the pattern. Player 4 reinforces this hit with a rim shot on the snare drum as well as a marcato accented bass drum hit by Player 8.

The interplay between voices happens during the last four beats of the pattern. The first A-section happens between Player 1 on the highest timpani, Player 2 on piccolo

141
wood block, Player 3 on bass drum, Player 5 on cowbell, and is reinforced by Player 8 between the snare drum and bass drum. The B-section then occurs on beats 9 and 10 of the pattern by Player 3 on snare drum, Player 4 also on snare drum, and Player 7 on the highest tom-tom. This use of a variety of instruments in the initial A-section group and the more homogenous drum texture of the B-section group helps to emphasize the relationship between the two groups by way of textural context.

This entire ten-beat pattern repeats three times. Interestingly, this section stays in 2/2 time until the third repeat of the pattern. Here, the time signature changes to 3/2 for one measure, which encompasses the unison figure between Players 1, 6, and 7. The time signature immediately changes in the next measure to 2/2 for the *interplay between voices*. Why the time signature changes for this repeat of the pattern is unknown (Figure 6.15). A possible reason could be an engraving error, which is possible considering the number of errors in the score.
Figure 6.15 – Full Score, measures 74 - 78
The final three measures of this section create a unison figure for Players 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. Players 4 and 5 are left out of this unison figure so that they can transition to different instruments. However, they are added during the last measure to help drive us into the next section of the piece. The material for these last measures creates a 3-against-4 hemiola-style pattern, which is similar to the main guitar riff from “Custard Pie”. This pattern also has similarities to the opening guitar riff from “Royal Orleans”, which is heard verbatim, at the end of Bonham. This figure in measures 79 and 80 of a triplet followed by two eighth-notes will act as thematic material, which will be developed in an upcoming section of the work. During all of this, Player 8 returns to the original “When the Levee Breaks” ostinato, though varied slightly in order to fit into the three measures. This three-measure phrase is a major thematic element of the piece that will be repeated multiple times throughout the work (Figure 6.16). Very little, if any, dynamic shaping should be used in this phrase as shaping is later used as a variation on this initial statement.

Figure 6.16 – Full Score, measures 79 – 81
Beginning at measure 82, the texture of the piece thins dramatically, with Player 8 returning to the original “When the Levee Breaks” ostinato and Players 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7 ceasing to play after the release of their phrases into this section. Player 5’s eighth-notes *diminuendo* into the first three beats of measure 82 and Player 2 mimics this same gesture in measure 83. The first six measures of this section act as transitional material to the main focus of this section which is a 4-bar phrase that develops throughout the next section beginning in measure 88. This transitional material is focused on *diminuendo* eighth-note lines between Player 2 on conga drum and Player 5 on bass drum, all while Player 8 is still performing the core ostinato on drum set (Figure 6.17). It is also important to note that Player 1 is instructed to tune the F# timpani down to an F-natural during this transitional section. While the composer does not remember the specific reason for the pitch change, he does note that there was no harmonic rationale for the selected pitches. One reason for this pitch change may be because of the timpani gesture starting in measure 90 during the next section of the work.\(^{65}\)

\[\text{Figure 6.17 – Players 2, 5, and 8, measures 82 – 87}\]

\(^{65}\) Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
The next section of the work begins at measure 88. The most noticeable aspect of this section is the ostinato in Player 8 has changed to straight quarter-notes on the bass drum at *pianissimo*. The performer should focus on trying to maintain as pointed a sound as possible during this section. Using a heel-up technique and pressing the bass drum beater slightly against the head can be helpful with this. This pointed sound will help to keep the character of the drum set bass drum separate from that of the concert bass drums. Other than strategically placed *crescendi* that build us into the next section of the work at measure 116, the quarter-notes are all that Player 8 contributes to this section of the work.

The rest of the players all have small rhythmic motives, which are used sparsely and develop slightly throughout this section. All of these motives fall into a four-bar phrase that is repeated and developed throughout this section. In regards to the ensemble volume, this section begins quietly in all parts and slowly increases in volume moving us into the next section. Players should perform these entrances as pointed as possible so that they are heard and not potentially glossed over due to the lack of dynamic energy.

The first 4 bar phrase begins at *pianissimo* with a hocket-type rhythm between Players 3 and 5 on bass drum. Player 7 answers this at *pianissimo* with two quarter-notes on beats 3 and 4 of the following measure on the high bongo drum. Player 7 does this again in the 4th bar of the 4-bar phrase under a tom-tom gesture by Player 6, this time however adding the lower bongo drum to create a double stop on beats 3 and 4 of the measure.

In the third bar of this 4-bar phrase, Player 1 answers the bongo notes with a 3 eighth-note gesture beginning on the “&” of beat 1. Here is where the possible explanation for the pitch change noted earlier in the Player 1 part can be explained (Figure 6.18).
Figure 6.18 – Player 1, measure 90

Figure 6.18, shows the timpani pitches being used. The F-natural is a change from the previous sections where that particular drum was an F-sharp. It is possible that in order to keep the texture thin during this section Rouse decided to use the highest drums during this opening part of this section. But, because of the pitches used, Rouse did not wish to convey a V to I relationship, therefore emphasizing the B-natural as a temporary tonic, so he changed the F-sharp to an F-natural to instead create a tri-tone relationship. While Rouse cannot confirm that those were his intentions with the pitch change, he does say that it is entirely possible that that was his motivation at the time of composing. He also notes his love for the tri-tone interval, giving that as a possible reason for the tuning change.66

Finally, Player 6 enters with an eighth-note pickup into the fourth measure of the four-bar phrase with a descending eighth-note gesture on the high tom-toms that moves through the fourth bar of the four-bar phrase, and overlaps into the first two eighth-notes of the next four-bar phrase, beginning at pianissimo and decrease in intensity to piano (Figure 6.19). This four-bar phrase repeats seven times; each iteration developing slightly following the second repetition. One thing to note about the tom-tom gesture from Player 6 is the inclusion of a small hairpin decrescendo under the last eighth-note during the second and fourth repeats. This hairpin only occurs during these two repeats, leaving the other five instances of this gesture without an indication of a decrescendo. It is unknown if all of these gestures were meant to be shaped this way or not. Because there is nothing of special interest occurring during the times when the hairpin is included, it is most likely that these hairpins were meant to be included with all of the gestures, and should be shaped as such (Figure 6.20).

66 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
At measure 96 the third repetition of the four-bar phrase occurs. Here Player 4 adds a clave texture to the phrase beginning with a quarter-note on the fourth beat of the first bar and carrying through the second measure with isolated attacks on beat 2 and the “&” of beat 3. This addition develops in the next repetition of the phrase (beginning in measure 100) with a second set of isolated attacks starting on beat 4 of the third measure, the “&” of beats 1 and 2, and beat 3. This second gesture is accented throughout with the exception of the “&” of beat 3. This suggests that the attack on the “&” of beat 2 is meant as a lead in to the note on beat 3, so careful attention should be paid to shape those notes as such.

In addition to the clave notes in the fourth phrase, Player 5 adds a single piano bass drum flam on beat 3 of the third measure. Also added to this phrase is a log drums gesture that Player 1 plays between the first and second measures of the four-bar phrase.
The gesture starts on the “&” of the first measure, and continues in eighth-notes until beat 2. This gesture is subtly shaped from piano to mezzo-piano with accents on the first and last note of the gesture. Also of note is that this gesture is played with medium felt mallets, the same as the timpani gesture by the same player. This allows for the performer to move between instruments effectively without having to change implements, and shows Rouse’s attention to detail (Figure 6.22).

During the fifth repeated phrase Player 2 enters with a woodblock gesture that carries over the barline between measures 105 and 106. This gesture is very similar to the last gesture added by Player 4 on the claves. Given the placement of this new gesture in Player 2, it is possible that Rouse used this woodblock gesture as a means to bridge the gap between the two clave gestures in Player 4. Also added to this phrase is a single set of triplet eighth-notes from Player 3 on bass drum, which lead into their initial phrase from before. These notes begin at piano on beat 4 of the last measure of the phrase and crescendo up to the first note of their initial gesture, acting as a pickup that also helps to give the entire phrase forward momentum as the texture thickens and begins to increase dynamically.

Only Player 1 has any development during the sixth repeat of the four-bar phrase. In this, the initial timpani gesture is modified to include the low E, as well as fill out the measure more with notes on the “&” of 3 and a quarter-note on beat 4 (Figure 6.21).

![Figure 6.21 – Player 1, measures 90 and 110](image)

In the last repeat of the four-bar phrase, Player 3 adds two snare drum gestures. The first is a single eighth-note triplet on beat 2 of the second measure at mezzo-forte. The second is one measure later, where an eighth-note line begins on the “&” of beat 1 at mezzo-piano and escalates its volume to mezzo-forte on the “&” of beat 3. Both the first and last notes of this gesture are accented. Finally, the last addition comes from Player 2,
who plays a similar eighth-note gesture to the one in Player 3, only extended by a beat and on piccolo woodblock. This woodblock gesture, along with a crescendo from Players 3, 6, 7, and 8 allow us to push forward into the next section of the work, which begins in measure 116. It should also be noted that during the final measure of this 4-bar phrase, Player 1 is instructed to retune the timpani from an F-natural to an F-sharp, preparing the drums for the next section (Figure 6.22). This change is necessary because of the first gesture in the upcoming section where the timpani play a gesture between what is now F-sharp and C. Leaving the F-sharp on F-natural would have caused a possible V-to-I relationship, which would give an undesirable harmonic implication. When asked if this is the possible reasoning for the tuning change, Rouse stated that he could not remember why that was done, but that this reasoning sounded “plausible”.

[Image: Figure 6.22 – Full Score, measures 112 – 115]

This next section of Bonham focuses around the dialogue between the drum set in Player 8 and the timpani and tom-toms of Players 1, 6, and 7. All of this is anchored by straight quarter-notes in the bass drum of Player 5, who is instructed to play it coperto.

67 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
presumably to imitate the bass drum of the drum set which performed a similar part in the previous section.

The gesture which is traded between Player 8 and Players 1, 6, and 7 is taken from an earlier three-bar phrase performed in measures 79 – 81 by Players 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7. This new motive takes a small fragment of that phrase and passes it between Player 8 and Players 1, 6, and 7 (Figure 6.23). This gesture also has fragments of which are reinforced by Player 4 on the timbales as the section goes on.

![Figure 6.23 – Players 6, 7, and 8, measures 79 – 81 and 116 – 118](image)

This section of the piece is divided into three phrases, all ending with an eighth-note gesture on various drums or woodblock from Players 1, 3, 6, and an off-beat gesture on vibraslap from Player 2. Each phrase is slightly longer than the last, with the ending eighth-note gesture expanding slightly with each repetition. Also with each phrase, the motive traded between the group of Players 1, 6, and 7 and Player 8 is extended and developed. This section finally ends with an extended eighth-note line by Players 1, 3, 6,
and 7, as well as the off-beat gesture by Player 2 on vibraslap that increases intensity into the next section of the work (Figure 6.24). The vibraslap line shows Rouse’s knowledge and specificity of percussion colors. With this line, he asks the player to perform the line *secco*. A note on the page indicates “For Vibraslap secco, ‘dead stick’ ball of Vibraslap into palm of hand.”

![Figure 6.24 – Players 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7, measures 141 – 143](image)

The next section of the piece introduces another rock-and-roll reference to the work. Starting in measure 144, Player 8 begins playing the drum beat from The Butterfield Blues Band’s song “Get Yourself Together” from their 1968 album *In My Own Dream* featuring Phillip Wilson on drums. The beat consists of only bass drum and snare drum, and is reinforced throughout this section by Player 3 on snare drum, and Player 5 on bass drum. This beat introduces a double-time feel to that of the previous “When the Levee Breaks” drum beat, and is in a constant two-bar phrase throughout the section. It is important to note that this section of *Bonham* is in three phrases, and each phrase introduces a slight variation to the core “Get Yourself Together” ostinato in Player 5’s bass drum part (Figure 6.25). It is also important to note that there are some articulation inconsistencies throughout this section in this core ostinato such as missing accents in Player 5’s part, and inconsistent articulations throughout this section in Player 8’s part including missing *marcato* accents and randomly placed accents.

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Figure 6.25 – Players 3, 5, and 8, measures 144 – 145, 156 – 157, and 164 – 165

There are two more elements to this section of the work. The first is the main melodic voice for this section, which is comprised of Player 1 on timpani, and Players 6 and 7 on tom-toms. These voices begin their primary line in measure 148, and continue as the main melodic element all the way to the end of the section in measure 177 (Figure 6.26). While a very loud dynamic level is requested, it is important to not overplay the drums during this section, maintaining a good tone and blend between the three primary line players throughout.

Figure 6.26 – Players 1, 6, and 7, measures 148 – 177
The final element of this section is a gesture with Player 2 on conga drum and Player 4 on Chinese cymbal and suspended cymbal. These gestures occur at the end of each phrase of this section, and lengthen by one beat on each repetition (Figure 6.27). Also, after the second occurrence of this phrase ending gesture, Player 2 begins reinforcing Player 3 by performing the same part.
Figure 6.27 – Players 2 and 4, measures 155, 163 - 164, and 172 – 173

In measure 174, Rouse once again introduces the hemiola-style fill from measures 79 – 81 found in Figure 6.15. Here Player 8 changes the ostinato back to the “When the Levee Breaks” ostinato, which helps transition the piece back to a more half-time type of feel for the next section of the work which begins at measure 177. Again, very little dynamic shape should be used during this phrase due to its inclusion later in the work.

Measure 177 begins the next section of the piece. Here, the texture of the piece thins dramatically in both the number of players, and the material that each player performs. Even the ostinato provided by Player 8 is now a truncated version of “When the Levee Breaks”, now consisting of only the first measure, followed by a measure of quarter-notes on the hi-hat. The ostinato begins loud, but immediately reduces intensity to piano.

This section of the work is comprised of a single four-bar phrase that repeats seven times, and is developed more with each repeat, similarly to the section starting at measure 88. The main focus of these phrases is an eighth-note triplet gesture played by Player 3 on bass drum. This swell moves from pianissimo to mezzo-piano, and then back down to pianissimo. This is followed in the last measure of the phrase by an eighth-note triplet with a crescendo on castanets by Player 5. The next repeat of this phrase adds Player 2 on piccolo wood block answering the gesture by Player 5’s castanets a beat later. Also added to this phrase is an eighth-note triplet on the rim of Player 7’s highest tom-tom at piano. The third repeat continues all of these elements, but adds a single stroke from the guiro by Player 1 on beat 2 of the first measure. The fourth repeat adds a similar gesture of a single eighth-note triplet with a pickup of the last note from an eighth-note
triplet on the previous beat. The gesture starts at *mezzo-forte* and decreases its volume down to *piano*. The first occurrence of this gesture is on the tom-toms in Player 6 starting with the pickup in beat 3 of the second measure of the phrase. Player 3 then answers this with the same gesture two measures later in the last measure of the phrase on woodblock with the pickup in beat 2 of that measure (Figure 6.28).

![Figure 6.28 – Full Score, measures 191 – 194](image)

The fifth repeat of this phrase sees a large tom-tom gesture added in Player 6 involving groups of eighth-note triplets that move between the two lowest tom-toms of their setup. This gesture uses the opposite shaping of the bass drum gesture in Player 3. The gesture starts at *mezzo-forte*, decreases in volume to *piano*, and then elevates up to *forte*. In addition to this part, the woodblock gesture in Player 3’s part is extended by the first two notes of an eighth-note triplet in the fourth measure of the phrase, and the timbale gesture by Player 4 is extended by two beats (Figure 6.29).
The sixth repetition of the four-bar phrase offers a number of variations on current material, as well as one addition. The addition comes from Player 7, who now adds a tom-tom gesture of eighth-note triplets into the second and third measures of the phrase. This gesture lands on beat 3 of the third bar with a quarter-note, and the follows this with an eighth-note triplet on beat 4 on the rim of the high tom-tom. The gesture by Player 7 starts at *mezzo-piano* and intensifies to *forte* on the quarter-note on beat 3. The eighth-note triplet on the rim however moves down dynamically to *mezzo-forte*, so performers should be sure to observe this in their execution of the part.

Much of the previous material is modified in this repetition. Player 6’s tom-tom gesture is truncated at both the beginning and end of the gesture and the drums used are also modified. Similarly, Rouse alters Player 4’s gesture by extending it a single beat at the beginning and varying the drums used. Finally, Player 3’s woodblock gesture moves over by a single eighth-note triplet note, having it now occur directly on beat 3 in the
fourth measure. Finally, Player 8 adds a single snare drum hit on beat 3 in the fourth bar of the phrase and continuing in every second and fourth measure of the phrase (Figure 6.30). Close attention should be paid to the dynamic shape of each gesture. Players should maximize these shapes so that the peaks of each gesture can be perceived by the audience while the lower dynamic parts do not clutter the texture.

Figure 6.30 – Full Score, measures 199 – 202

The final statement of this four-bar phrase continues to modify the previous material. Also of note during this section is the unison ending, and a notation error. The notation error comes in the very first measure, where the beginning of Player 3’s bass drum gesture has the first beat of the gesture starting on woodblock instead of bass drum. Given that this bass drum gesture has been the foundation of this phrase from the beginning, a change here to woodblock for a single beat does not make sense, so performers should ignore the mistaken beat and perform the entire gesture on bass drum as originally notated in previous phrases.
Modifications occur as before in both Player 4 and 6’s parts. This time, both parts are extended by a single beat at the beginning, as well as having their drum patterns change. Finally, Rouse adds a crescendo to the eighth-note triplet of Players 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7 on various instruments. This gesture solidifies the final repetition of the phrase and allows for a definite ending which pushes us forward into the next section of the work. It should also be noted that Player 5’s original gesture of an eighth-note triplet on the last beat of the phrase is still there, though now Rouse has noted for it to be performed on muffled bass drum with snare drum sticks instead of castanets. Players should attempt to maximize the shape of this final triplet figure so as to give as much energy to the transition from section to section (Figure 6.31).

![Sheet Music](image-url)
Measure 207 begins the next major section of the work. Rouse again thins the texture of the work, most notably in the ostinato of Player 8, which is now held together by a constant quarter-note pulse on the hi-hat and an occasional syncopated bass drum note. This bass drum note reinforces the final note in a gesture from Player 5 on bass drum. Player 5’s bass drum gesture is a full measure of eighth-notes with a rest only on beat 3 of the measure. All of the notes are to be performed coperto (muted), and with snare drum sticks. Performing this section while playing in the center of the head may also help in getting the driest sound possible. While the first statement of this gesture is shaped with a diminuendo from forte to mezzo-piano, then at piano after the rest and a subito-forte on the final eighth-note, the phrases that follow only indicated for the subito-forte to be observed. Therefore, after the first statement of the gesture, all notes should be performed piano with the exception of the final note. The eighth-note rest on beat 3 in Player 5’s part is significant because it provides space for a single bass drum note from Player 3. This note of Player 3’s is marked staccato as well as accented, along with the indication of secco by the composer. It is important for Player 3 to match the texture of Player 5 as much as possible so that these separate parts can sound as much like one single line as possible. Also for consistency, Player 8 should again use a heel-up technique that digs the head of the bass drum beater slightly into the head so as to match up with the coperto sound of Player 5’s bass drum. During this section, after the first measure, the time signature changes to 5/4 for 3 measures. Since no additional material is added, this is probably simply to give more space to the phrase. During the last measure of 5/4, beats 3, 4, and 5 are occupied by the beginnings of rolls, first by Player 4 on the high timbale, then Player 7 on the lowest tom-tom, and finally Player 2 on snare drum. These three attacks act as pick-ups for the phrases that follow as the time signature moves back into 4/4 (Figure 6.32).
In measure 211 the time signature switches back to 4/4. Players 2, 4, and 7 continue their pointillistic roll attacks with Player 4’s shifting from beat 3 over to the “&” of beat 2. Player 4 later adds the lower timbale to the phrase. Players 3, 5, and 8 continue performing their parts from the beginning of the section. The timing of these attacks changes over the next few measures as this section develops. In measure 213 Player 1 adds timpani to the texture. Starting on beat 1 of measure 213, Player 1 begins a quarter-note hemiola gesture alternating between double stops of C / F-sharp and E / G-sharp. This pattern is constant, and does not adjust regardless of the time signature until measure 229. Also added during this section is a single tam-tam hit which is linked to the E / G-sharp hit on the timpani, not changing until the timpani pattern does in measure 229 (Figure 6.33).
During this section there are a number of time signature changes. At first these simply make use of a time signature of 5/4 for three measures (measures 208 – 201), and then back to 4/4. In measure 217 Player 5’s bass drum part adds an eighth-note triplet onto the first beat. A pattern emerges with Rouse’s use of time signatures. Each iteration of the pattern begins with a 4/4 measure followed by a second measure. This second measure is truncated by a beat as the passage progresses. There follows a series of two-measure groupings: two measures of 4/4; a combination of 4/4 and 3/4 repeated three times; finally a segment of 4/4 and 2/4 which repeats four times (Figure 6.34). This systematic reduction of time is a technique Rouse has used in previous works, such as the scaling down of note groupings in measures 216 – 225 of Ku-Ka-Ilimoku.
At measure 217, other developments start to take place. Player 8 adds a single low tom-tom hit before each of his bass drum hits. Player 3 adds a woodblock to the texture on the “&” of beat 1 in the same measure as their bass drum note. Player 4’s rolled gesture on timbales is extended, as is Player 7’s, who now adds the second lowest tom-tom into their gesture. Player 2 has a single eighth-note pick-up added to just before their quarter-note roll on the snare drum, but later in measure 221 also adds a piccolo woodblock hit to beat 2 of the 4/4 measure. It is also interesting that Rouse indicates for Player 2 to switch from the normal end of the snare drum sticks to the butt of the sticks in measure 220, adding weight to the sound of the snare drum roll, and again demonstrating Rouses knowledge of the specific textures that can be achieved with percussion implements. This knowledge can also be seen in the timpani part of Player 1 in measures 225 – 229. Here, he indicates for the performer to switch the mallet used on the higher drums to a medium-felt mallet, while leaving the lower drum mallet at a soft-felt. 2 measures later he indicates for the lower drum mallet to be changed to hard-felt while leaving the higher drum mallet at medium-felt. Finally, he asks for the higher drum mallet to change to a hard-felt mallet in measure 229. This change not only creates an interesting texture change, but also prepares the performer for the next section of the work in which more articulate mallets are needed.

The texture of this section continues to thicken and rise in dynamics up to measure 233, where Rouse inserts a slightly extended version of the phrase from measures 79 – 81. Here though, the beginning measures of the phrase are in 3/4 instead of the 4/4 at 79 – 81. The final measure is in a 4/4 time signature and is now a full measure of eighth-notes with an eighth-note pick-up. The dynamics for this transition
also mark an important change, beginning with either a fortissimo-piano or subito piano marking that increases in volume up to fortissimo at the end of the phrase (Figure 6.35).

![Figure 6.35 – Full Score, measures 233 – 237](image)

Measure 237 begins the next section of the work. Here we see another reference to rock and roll music. This section is based on the work of Bo Diddley, and his use of the traditional Hambone Rhythm, which Rouse says, “…added so much to the distinctive style of his material”\(^70\) (Figure 6.36). This rhythm is also known as the “3-2 Son Clave” in Afro-Cuban music.

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Figure 6.36 – Hambone Rhythm

This section is made of a two-bar phase which repeats while Player 7 takes the lead voice. The Hambone Rhythm can be seen most directly in Players 2, 4, 6, and 8, all of whom outline the rhythm, while adding some embellishment to the phrase. In addition to these parts, Player 1 fills out the entire texture by adding cymbal crashes on the downbeat of the first measure and the last beat of the second bar, while filling the space between with a series of eighth-notes spread around the timpani. Player 3 begins this section after releasing his gesture from the last phrase with a snare drum rim shot by playing quarter-notes on beats 1 and 3 of the first measure, and then beats 1, 3, and 4 of the second measure, with a sforzando dynamic marking under the last quarter-note. This could be looked at as a variation on the Hambone Rhythm by taking the groupings of the note and using those groupings within a strictly quarter-note setting (Figure 6.37).

Figure 6.37 – Comparison of Hambone Rhythm and Rhythm from Player 3 measures 239 – 240

In the third measure of this section Rouse continues this pattern on the bass drum while also adding straight eighth-notes on maracas in the other hand of Player 3. This is a similar technique to one used during a later section in Ogoun Badagris, and again shows Rouse’s knowledge of the capabilities of percussionists. Performers should use
the space given in measures 237 and 238 to pick up the maracas, being careful to avoid extraneous sounds, though the density and volume from the rest of the ensemble should help to mask any unwanted sound.

The final element to the accompaniment of this section is Player 5 on cowbell and tenor drum. This part does not enter until the fifth bar of this section, and is preceded by a three eighth-note pick-up on cowbell in the fourth measure. The rhythm and articulation in Player 5 emphasize some of the notes of the Hambone Rhythm while at the same time filling out some of the space in the rhythm. It is important to note that the only dynamic marking at the beginning of this section is in Player 3 at *fortissimo*. All of the *fortissimo* dynamics should be carried over from the last marking of the previous phrase (Figure 6.38).
Figure 6.38 – Full Score, measures 237 – 242
The main focus of this section is the tom-tom solo performed by Player 7. Rouse notes that the solo part “should be distinct, but not at dynamic expense of other parts”. This makes it difficult for the soloist because the rest of the ensemble is all performing their parts at a marked *fortissimo* dynamic level. The accompanying performers should achieve the fullest sound possible while still providing dynamic room for the soloist to be heard.

The solo itself is preceded by a series of descending eighth-notes starting on the “&” of beat 4 in the third measure of the section. This preceding material begins at *mezzo-piano* and increases in intensity up to the beginning of the solo at *fortississimo*. The solo, like many of Rouse’s solos from previous works, is highly syncopated, containing odd note groupings and accents throughout. While the solo begins on only the tom-toms, the bongos are added in measure 251 with an eighth-note triplet on the downbeat of the measure. This eighth-note triplet rhythm is an important motive that returns throughout the rest of the solo. To emphasize this, Rouse reinforces this rhythm by adding it to Players 2, 4, and 6 each time it is used in the solo part (Figure 6.39).

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The tom-tom solo section of Bonham ends in measure 266 with rim shots from Players 5, 6, 7, and 8 used to emphasize the end of the section. The next section, which begins in measure 267, is a solo section for the drum set in Player 8. The solo is similar to the tom-tom solo that was just performed by Player 7, but revolves more around the eighth-note triplet figure that was used during the second half of the tom-tom solo. Performers should carefully map out their stickings for this solo in order to achieve the maximum amount of rhythmic and articulation accuracy while still being able to navigate around the drum set. During the drum set solo, Player 8 also keeps a steady quarter-note pulse in the bass drum. The solo is partitioned by interjections from the rest of the ensemble. These interjections always begin with a forte-piano shake roll from Player 2 on tambourine, which leads into a unison rhythmic figure from Players 3, 5, 6, and 7. Players 1 and 4 also contribute to these interjections with suspended cymbal hits at the beginning of the unison rhythmic figures. Following the drum set solo, Player 8
immediately transitions back to the original “When the Levee Breaks” ostinato. This transition marks the beginning of a Coda section of the work (Figure 6.40).

Figure 6.40 – Player 8 and score reduction, measures 267 – 288

Measure 289 begins a unique section of Bonham. Here Rouse overlaps major themes from the entire work into two-bar phrases. Players 1, 3, and 5 play material based on the Butterfield Blues Band’s “Get Yourself Together” beat. Player 2 reinforces the backbeat played by Player 8 from the “When the Levee Breaks” ostinato. Players 4, 6, and 7 all play variations on the Hambone Rhythm, with Player 4 providing slight embellishments. This section lasts ten measures, with all performers playing at fortissimo and fortississimo dynamic levels throughout, with the exception of Player 4 who has a
China Cymbal roll and a *crescendo* from *piano* to *fortissimo* (Figure 6.41). Good musical blend is essential here to allow the multiple themes to be heard.

Figure 6.41 – Full Score, measures 289 – 292

The final section of *Bonham* begins in measure 299. This section can be looked at as another layering section of the work, combined with an *accelerando* from the current tempo of half-note = 126 bps up to half-note = 152 bps three measures before the end of the piece. Following the release by the ensemble from the previous phrase, the texture immediately thins to Player 8 alone playing the “When the Levee Breaks” ostinato. Starting in measure 300 a series of entrances begin with five of the seven remaining players. These entrances have specific patterns that repeat until the climax of the phrase. Each of these patterns begins with an accented buzz roll on the fourth beat of a measure. This roll continues through the next measure and stops before their pattern begins in the
third measure after their initial entrance. Player 5 is the first entrance on bass drum with a string of uninterrupted eighth-notes at *mezzo-piano* starting on beat 2 of the fourth measure and continuing up to beat 3 of the next measure. In measure 310 Rouse adds a *crescendo* to each occurrence of this gesture from *mezzo-piano* up to *forte*. Note that the bass drum is no longer marked *coperto* so as to get the fullest sound out of the drum.

Player 1 is the next layer to enter this section performing a six-and-a-half-beat pattern on timpani that begins on beat 3 of measure 304. The use of a half of a beat in this pattern makes for a more syncopated pattern than that of Player 5. This pattern continues with a *crescendo* up to measure 317, adjusting slightly in measure 316. Player 7 enters with their roll one measure after Player 1. This entrance is on the lowest tom-tom, and moves into a 6-beat pattern which also increases in intensity and adjusts slightly just before the *tutti* ending beginning in measure 317. Player 6 then enters one measure after Player 7 on tom-toms with a seven-and-a-half beat pattern. Because of the extra eighth-note in this pattern, it is more syncopated than Player 4 or 7’s pattern. In measure 306 both Players 3 and 4 enter together. While Player 4 enters on timbales at *mezzo-forte* and continues with a six-and-a-half-beat pattern which is syncopated similar to Players 1 and 6, Player 3 enters at *piano* with a roll on tam-tam which gradually elevates in volume up to *fortississimo* at measure 317 (Figure 6.42). Weight should be placed on the first note of each of these patterns in order to emphasize the start of each occurrence of the pattern.
Figure 6.42 – Full Score, measures 310 – 314

Player 2 is the only player to not contribute to this layering section. This is most likely because they are moving to prepare the hammer to be played during the final three measures of the piece. Rouse describes it in the instrumentation section of the work as “hammer* (*hammer like that in Mahler’s Symphony no. 6)”. The hammer is a very interesting percussion instrument, as there is no true clear indication as to what it is. Michael Rosen in his column *Terms Used in Percussion* in the Winter 1988 issue of *Percussive Notes* states that Mahler “did not describe in the score the instrument he wanted. This omission has led to the use of any number of contraptions and adaptations, depending upon the orchestra, who is conducting, and in which hall the work is performed.” Rosen goes on to indicate some of the items various orchestras have used

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for this instrument, including a large log that looks like a tree stump that is struck with a sledge hammer, a large box tilted with the open end facing the audience that is then hit with a large felt-covered oak tam-tam beater, and a large steel slab that is used to imitate church bells.\textsuperscript{73} All of these solutions work well for the instrument used when performing the Mahler symphony with a full orchestra, but these could quite possibly be too much for an eight member percussion ensemble. The solution I have personally observed to yield the best results for use in \textit{Bonham} is a “wood drum” which is a single headed drum of some kind where the drum head is replaced with a piece of plywood. This is then struck with a substantial hammer of some kind, though usually a synthetic or hard rubber hammer works best so as to not cause too much damage to the wooden drumhead.

In measure 317 the \textit{accelerando} and \textit{crescendo} from the previous section finally come to a climax with the tempo reaching half-note = 152 bps and all of the players reaching a dynamic level of \textit{fortississimo}. The final three measures find Players 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8 performing a unison rhythmic gesture, which is a direct reference to Led Zeppelin’s song “Royal Orleans”. This particular song is one of Rouse’s favorite Led Zeppelin songs\textsuperscript{74}, so it is only fitting to end the work with this. Players 2, 3, and 5 all help to reinforce key elements of the unison rhythmic gestures of the other players. The final note of the piece is marked with a \textit{marcato} notation, and players 3 and 4 are indicated to dampen their respective instruments, in this case a tam-tam for Player 3 and a suspended cymbal and crash cymbal for Player 4 (Figure 6.43).


\textsuperscript{74} Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
SUMMARY

*Bonham* represents the last percussion ensemble work of Christopher Rouse. The only contribution specifically for percussion after 1989 comes in the form of his percussion concerto *Der gerettete Alberich* written in 1997 for Evelyn Glennie through a consortium of a number of orchestras including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. There are also two little known pieces that directly tie into his relationship with Evelyn Glennie: *Mime* (1997) for solo snare drum, and *Amhran* (2001) for bagpipes and tambour provincial. *Mime* was written at the request of Glennie as an encore piece which she could perform after playing his concerto. There is a direct link between *Der gerettete Alberich* and *Mime*, which can be seen in the title *Mime* which Rouse says “…refers to Alberich's hapless brother.”  

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55 Christopher Rouse, personal e-mail message, February 4th, 2011.
Amhran was also written as an encore piece for Evelyn Glennie and pianist Emanuel Ax for a concert they were performing together. As Rouse describes it:

This was another encore request from Evelyn for a concert she was doing with Manny Ax. Manny is a percussionist-wannabe, so I thought I'd try a little role reversal - Evelyn on bagpipes and Manny on tambour. Unrelated to flute concerto and to date unperformed. (They didn't have time to put it together.)\(^76\)

While Rouse has composed these works focused on percussion, he has yet to approach the percussion ensemble genre since Bonham.

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\(^76\) Christopher Rouse, personal e-mail message, February 4\(^{th}\), 2011.
Christopher Rouse’s contributions to the percussion ensemble repertoire are substantial. Each of these pieces has become a staple of the repertoire, evident in the number of performances regularly given throughout the country. When reviewing the programming data from the Percussive Arts Society website, one can see that even in the last ten years Rouse’s percussion ensemble works are regularly performed throughout the country (Figure 7.1).

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Source: Percussive Arts Society Compositions Research Database

Table 7.1 – Program Listings from the Percussive Arts Society Program Database
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*Source:* Percussive Arts Society Compositions Research Database

**Figure 7.1 continued**
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*Source:* Percussive Arts Society Compositions Research Database

**Figure 7.1 continued**

Not only are Rouse’s percussion ensemble works still performed regularly today, they have been a staple at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC), the largest gathering of percussionists in the world. In an article by Scott Cameron on the history of percussion ensemble performances at PASIC, Cameron notes that since 1976 (when percussion ensembles began being invited to perform at PASIC), Rouse has been one of the most performed composers:

> When looking at the long list of composers whose works have been performed at PASIC over the years, it is not surprising to find that certain names appear with greater frequency than others…Christopher Rouse weighs in with 11 performances.

This is an impressive representation considering that notable composers such as Nigel Westlake, William Kraft, and Steve Reich have been performed less frequently than Rouse. Cameron goes on to note the frequency of one piece in particular:

> Although the available repertoire for percussion ensemble has grown dramatically over the past few decades, it is not surprising to find that with 30 years of percussion ensemble convention performances, a number of pieces have been performed more than once. Several ensemble pieces have been performed four or more times…Those performed five times include Helble’s ‘Diabolic Variations’, Gauger’s “Gainsborough,” Rouse’s “Ogoun Badagris,” and Westlake’s “Omphalo Centric Lecture.”

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79 Ibid.
There can be little doubt that Christopher Rouse’s contribution to the percussion ensemble repertoire is significant, regardless of his relatively small output for the genre. When asked why these pieces have survived for so long and remain popular today, he said:

Well, I think probably because they’re short, they’re loud, I hope they’re well written for the instruments, and fun to play I hope. But, you know, I wanted to write exciting pieces that wouldn’t overstay their welcomes. So maybe that combination of things accounts for it. I love heavily rhythmic music. Obviously this is no ‘ping, swish’ kind of percussion. I think particularly at the time when I wrote the first two pieces, because of the direction that a lot of percussion writing had been going was the opposite one, perhaps there was something a little refreshing about getting back to the roots of what drumming was all about. Back to the centuries and centuries and centuries, to Africa and so forth. It wasn’t about ‘ping, swish’. So in a way, kind of taking the instruments back to their roots. I thought it was an important thing to try to do.

Rouse’s music is not only performed often today, but even recently released recordings featured these percussion ensemble works. In 2000, the Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble released its CD *Far More Drums* which features both *Ogoun Badagris* and *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku*. In 2004, the Base4 Percussion Quartet released their quartet arrangement of *Ogoun Badagris*, and in 2007 the University of Kentucky released a live recording of *Bonham* on their CD *Live from Lexington*.

While Christopher Rouse’s overall output has gained critical notoriety and his works for percussion ensemble have become some of the most popular and important pieces in the repertoire, little research on them exists. This document serves as an analysis and performers guide to these works, which have become so significant to our repertoire. The examination of Rouse’s percussion ensemble works will help shed light on Rouse’s compositional style within the genre, and serve as a resource for performers in preparing them. His percussion ensemble music will continue to be a noteworthy contribution to the percussion ensemble repertoire for years to come because of their enjoyment for players to perform, scoring for common instruments, pedagogical value to performers and directors, and accessibility to audiences due to their grounding in interesting subject matter.

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80 Christopher Rouse, interview by the author, January 7, 2011.
CHAPTER 8: PROGRAM NOTES

Candidates for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Kentucky must present three recitals in partial fulfillment of their program requirements. The following are programs and program notes from the DMA Chamber Recital, DMA Lecture Recital, and DMA Solo Recital.
DMA Chamber Percussion Recital

Brian Nozny
May 1, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
Singletary Center for the Arts
Recital Hall

Program

Slopes (2005)  Paul Rennick (b. 1965)

Brian Archinal, Jon Doty, Aaron Graham, percussion


Emily Hagihara, voice


Rachel Nozny, flute

-Intermission-

Threads (2005)  Paul Lansky (1944)

Andy Bliss, Aaron Graham, Tim Wilburn, percussion
Program Notes for the DMA Chamber Recital

_Slopes_ is a work for solo snare drum and three percussionists playing a number of instruments centered around each percussionists group of three tom-toms. The descending lines heard throughout the piece are used to represent the physical qualities of avalanches. The inspiration for the work comes from a lecture the composer attended on the physics behind how avalanches work. (Brian Nozny)

_Oxygen_ was the first experiment Björk and Evelyn Glennie made in 1995. _Oxygen_ is recorded in Bjork’s infamous “gibberish” style. Often when she sings in this style her lyrics are made up of Icelandic words which, when put together, make no sense. The music divulges emotions with no real adherence to the lyrical content. (Emily Hagihara)

Commissioned by flutist Alexa Still, _Kembang Suling_ was written in 1995 by Gareth Farr. Each movement represents three snapshots of Asia.

_I_ – On the magical island of Bali, the flowing gamelan melodies intertwine with the sound of the Balinese bamboo flute (suling) forming a rich colorful tapestry. The marimba and flute start out as one, their sounds indistinguishable. Gradually the flute asserts its independence, by straying further and further from the marimba melody. An argument ensues – but all is resolved at the climax.

_II_ – The haunting sounds of the Japanese shakuhachi float out over the warm echoes of the rolling landscape…

_III_ – Complex rhythms and South Indian scales set the two instruments off in a race to see who can outplay the other. The marimba is set in a three bar cycle of 5/4, 5/8, 5/16 – but the flute plays a different cross rhythm every time, returning to the marimba’s pattern at the end of the cycle. (Gareth Farr)

_Threads_, written for So Percussion in 2005, is a half-hour long ‘cantata’ for percussion quartet in ten short movements. There are three ‘threads’ that are interwoven in the piece: _Arias_ and _Preludes_ that focus on the metallic pitched sounds of vibraphones, glockenspiel and pipes; _Choruses_ in which drumming predominates; and _Recitatives_
made largely from Cage-like noise instruments, bottles, flower pots, crotales, etc. The aims of the different threads are to highlight the wide range of qualities that percussion instruments are capable of, from lyrical and tender to forceful and aggressive, and weave them into on continuous texture. The movements are performed without interruption.

(Paul Lansky)
DMA Lecture Recital

Brian Nozny
May 11, 2009, 7:30 p.m.
Singletary Center for the Arts
Concert Hall

Program

Ogoun Badagris (1976)                             Christopher Rouse (b. 1949)

Andy Bliss, Andrew Jarvis, Joe Tornello, Jordan Williams, percussion

Ku-Ka-Ilimoku (1978)                              Christopher Rouse (b. 1949)

Tyler Cantrell, Matthew Geiger, Ben Stiers, percussion

Bonham (1989)                                     Christopher Rouse (b. 1949)

Paul Deatherage, Kyle Forsthoff, Danny Hawkins, David Hutter, Andrew Jarvis,
Ryan Nestor, Tim Wilburn, percussion
Ben Stiers, conductor
DMA Solo Percussion Recital

Brian Nozny
March 27th, 7:30 p.m.
Singletary Center for the Arts
Recital Hall

Program

Prelude #1 (1984)  Christopher Deane (b. 1957)
Thief (2010)  Brian Nozny (b. 1977)
Valse Brilliante (1936)  George Hamilton Green (1893 - 1970)

Tedrin Blair Lindsay, piano

Intermission

Restless (1990)  Rich O’Meara (b.1957)
Sharps (2010)  Brian Nozny (b. 1977)

Kyle Forsthoff, Matt Geiger, Colin Hill, Andrew Jarvis, Brad Meyer, Ben Stiers,
percussion
Program Notes for the DMA Solo Recital

Prelude #1 was composed in 1984 as a while Deane was living in North Carolina as a gift to Carol Stumpf, principal timpanist with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra. While a written tempo is suggested, the work contains no time signature and few bar lines, allowing the performer to have slightly more freedom to flow temporally from gesture to gesture. Opening with the main theme, Deane proceeds to fragment and develop individual aspects of this theme throughout the work. As with many of Deane’s other works, texture is explored through the use of different implements including both the wooden and felt ends of the timpani mallets as well as the performer’s fingers at the end of the work. (Brian Nozny)

Blues for Gilbert was composed by Mark Glentworth in 1980 and posthumously dedicated to his former teacher, Gilbert Webster at the Royal Northern College of Music. Originally an improvisation performed for Webster, Glentworth later solidified the ideas and structured them into this piece after Webster’s death. Written in an ABBA’ form, the opening and closing sections are similar in their rubato nature, while the middle section of the work moves forward in a stricter swung time with the left hand acting as an accompaniment to the right hand’s melodies. The piece then returns to the beginning A section, though now with different embellishments from the beginning of the piece. (Brian Nozny)

Walkin’ Down Coolidge by Joseph Tompkins was composed for the Massachusetts Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society. The solo is a combination of the American rudimental style of drumming and the French style. Traditional American-style rudiments such as paradiddles and flam-taps are incorporated with invertedflams, quintuplets, and embellishments more along the lines of the French style of rudimental drumming to give this solo a unique feel that bridges the two styles. (Brian Nozny)

The focus of Thief was the melding of the natural with the artificial. When this work was originally commissioned by Omar Carmenates, his request was for a piece for solo percussion where ideas of the environment and environmentalism were represented. In more talks with Omar, the subject of the natural elements we used in percussion (most
notably Rosewood used in the making of marimba bars) came up, helping to move me in the direction of writing a piece for solo marimba. By using the man-made metal pipes in tandem with the natural rosewood marimba bars, I was able to create a soundscape that combined natural elements and man-made elements into a single homogenous instrument; something that I feel is one of the core aspects of environmentalism, the co-existence of man-made with natural materials. (Brian Nozny)

*Valse Brillante* was published in 1936 as a series of eight xylophone solos with piano accompaniment composed by George Hamilton Green. This solo relies on the typical ragtime harmonic language of his other solos, but uses a straighter duple-style of rhythm as opposed to the swung triplet-style of many of his other solos. This edition was edited and the cadenza written by Bob Becker, noted ragtime xylophonist and member of the percussion ensemble NEXUS. (Brian Nozny)

*Restless* is a solo marimba work using a binary form of ABA’B’. The piece relies heavily on the use of double lateral strokes combined with strategically placed accents to establish rhythmic grooves which characterize the piece. The A sections are contrasted by a slower B section, giving tonal and textural variety to the work. *Restless* was part of the required repertoire for the 48th International Marimba Competition in Geneva, Switzerland. (Brian Nozny)

*Gymnopedie #1* for drumset and computer-generated tape was written by Patrick Long for Bill Freiberg, who premiered it at the Eastman School of Music in 1998. The piece consists of five sections, or “Levels”, each taking on a different mood of the work. Most of the performer’s part is improvised based around instructions given by the composer. These instructions can be directed towards which instruments on the drumset to play, how to build the material for a certain section, or graphic of the dynamic shape which the composer wishes for the performer to strive for. Some sections are meant to adhere strictly to the provided time, while others are meant to be freely explored. (Brian Nozny)

The idea behind *Sharps* is a very simple one…Can I musically tattoo an audience? Can I write a piece that is so accessible and unwavering, so blatant and
incessant in its point that the theme basically brands itself into the minds of the audience? That is the idea behind *Sharps*. (Brian Nozny)
APPENDIX A

Interview Transcription and E-Mail Correspondences
In talking about your compositional process, you mention that you tend to write the ending first, and then certain waypoints, and finally put those waypoints together. Was that your process with these pieces?

Umm, boy, when I go back that far, you’re talking about the second millennium! I don’t remember what I did back then! But I would say that probably. I mean when I say “writing” it’s not so much writing. I plan the pieces that way. And then when I feel I’ve got enough markers, then I’ll sit down and start actually writing. The percussion pieces I don’t have that clear a memory of writing. But of course them being short, that a kind of a different matter. Some of my short pieces I just kind of go from the start and just kind of see what happens. More the larger pieces where I have to get enough of a plan in my head to commit to following this particular blue print. With the short pieces like *The Infernal Machine* too, I just went.

You’ve said that what gets you interested in a piece is the person or group requesting it. Was that the case with these percussion ensemble works?

Well, *Ogoun Badagris* wasn’t actually written for anyone. I just wrote it. *Ku-Ka-Ilimoku* was written for the people in Syracuse. No. And in general I tend to not write so specifically for one group that it’s not going to be of interest to anybody else.

The one thing the Syracuse people asked for, boy have I regretted it ever since, was they had a set of boobams they wanted me to use, and so I did. And of course, try finding them these days, so there have been all sorts of other substitutions that have been made for that. You know, everything from synthesizers to log drums to all sorts of things. Boobams aren’t easy to find. A couple of times people have used roto-toms, but boy I hate roto-toms. I don’t like that substitution.

I know that your first percussion ensemble piece, *Falconis Luminis*, was written and dedicated to the Black Earth Percussion Ensemble. Was there a relationship there?

Good lord I forgot! Of course, that’s long ago withdrawn. I kind of have erased the existence of that piece from my memory! Yes, I had gone to school with them at Oberlin, so I knew those guys well.

And then what about Frank Epstein at New England for *Bonham*?

That was actually a commission. That was the only real commission involved where money changed hands and so forth. He wanted a piece for a larger ensemble, so that’s why it’s 8 instead of 4 or 5.

Were there any particular composers that had a direct influence on your composing of these works?

Well, in terms of a kind of general approach, I would have to say Carl Orff. Orff to me is a true master. And particularly the later works, the Greek Operas, which are full of percussion, including sometimes rather unusual instruments, and his love for 6/8. Certainly that informed *Ogoun Badagris*. And yet at the same time, I mean *Ogoun*, I was listening to recordings of Juba Dancing, so that was there too. In terms of choice of instruments and things like that, primarily I
think that’s just my own predilections. I’ve always been comfortable, I know some people are
terrified of writing for percussion instruments, but I’ve always been comfortable with them. It
helped that I had some idea of what I was doing. I always hung out with percussionists when I
was in college and so on.

I read that you had about 6 months of training on percussion. That that was the longest
instrument you studied.

Yeah, I stayed with percussion, but never really got beyond the practice pad. I found that I didn’t
really have any great desire to learn an instrument. I wanted to compose. And in my know-it-all
teenage attitude thought “I don’t need to play an instrument in order to compose!”, so I never
practiced. You know, the usual problems. And then I just kind of gave up, wasn’t interested.

Like your fascination with Rock and roll, was mythology an interest of yours early on?

Oh I loved mythology as a kid, and stayed with it for a long time. I haven’t written a
mythological piece in a long time now, but certainly during the 70s and well into the 80s I was
writing pieces that had some kind of mythological basis. Not necessarily Greek though. Rock
stars are gods too you know!

Your FIRST percussion ensemble work was a piece entitled *Falconis Luminus* from 1974
for the Black Earth Percussion Group, which is now out of print. I read in an interview
that you pulled most of your pieces written before you were 30. Was this a piece that you
decided to pull from the repertoire or was that someone else’s decision?

Oh no, I pulled it myself. Yeah, I’m pretty ruthless in terms of sending Dr. Kavorkian over to
take care of some of the old pieces that I just don’t deserve to live any longer. I’ve even been
pulling works from the 80s lately.

And this is just because, I think you said something in an interview like “I don’t want to
hear this, and I don’t want to have this piece following me around”.

“Yeah, exactly. I don’t feel that they’re good enough. That’s the bottom line. They just don’t
pass muster.”

And I suppose this takes longer to figure out for some works than others.

Right, exactly. And particularly it’s more difficult when there’s a piece that’s getting played. I
have to go this summer to England for kind of a festival of my music and when they sent me the
program I thought “God, I thought I withdrew that piece”! Well I’m withdrawing it now! I
ruined half of their program because I decided none of those pieces were going to be played. And
I called Boosey and Hawkes and said ‘Pull these, they’re dead’. But it’s easier to pull a piece
when nobody’s really playing it than it is when it is getting played.”

I’m curious though, given the fact that obviously for this festival they obviously believed in
some of these works so highly, does that make you step back for a second and think “Maybe
I shouldn’t pull this”?

I don’t think they thought that. I think they were just pulling pieces. There’s very little chamber
music of mine in existence. I think they were just pulling pieces out of a hat without having
actually looked at them. And a couple of them I’d thought I’d withdrawn already. There was
only one big one that I knew I hadn’t. I had been on the verge of doing it for about a year, and seeing it programmed was enough for the final kill chop.

Moving on to Ku-Ka-Ilimoku, I know that Ogoun Badagris was inspired by a recording you heard from the Folkways collection of Haitian music recorded by Harold Courlander. Was there a similar inspiration for Ku-Ka?

Not recordings no, it was actually, boy, and I can’t remember much about the broadcast, but seeing televised broadcasts of Polynesian dancing and drumming. And again, in both cases I didn’t actually go back to those sources once I’d started the piece in order to be correct. I think I make some comment about being ethnomusicologically correct. I was going on my impression, kind of the way Debussy was the way he was inspired by the gamelan. He never actually studied anything more about gamelan music but it informed the sound of a number of his pieces just his memory of it. What he had recalled it had sounded like. So I didn’t go back and actually review those materials because I didn’t want to write a piece that was too hide-bound in terms of its allegiances to the source material.

So no research into Hawaiian percussion music, ok. So your attempt with Ku-Ka was more to replicate the textures you heard as opposed to specific Hawaiian instruments.

Yeah. I mean I had recalled that what I had seen was very fast and virtuosic. And so much of that is on wooden instruments that I wanted to use a lot of wooden instruments. But that was pretty much it. Obviously the meters are not what you would find in a Polynesian music.

I don’t know that there’s a lot of 11/16 in there.

Cursed me ever since for that! Those 15/16 bars.

Oh but they’re so much fun to play! My lecture recital we played all three and talked about a three and Ku-Ka was definitely the most fun to play. Well, I take that back. Bonham’s drumset part is the most fun to play, but Ku-Ka is a whole lot of fun to play.

Well good! I mean, I hope people enjoy playing these pieces. And also, I was hearing, particularly in the 70’s, a lot of very quiet “ping…pong…swish” percussion music. Some of them were fine, but I thought in a way they were kind of denying the essence of the instruments. Beat the hell out of them! So I was very consciously trying to write music that was going to be loud and aggressive and exciting and none of this kind of “wash of percussion sound”. I thought “Let’s just hit the crap out of the drums!” or whatever the instruments were.

I’m curious, who is Mary Voisin, who Ku-Ka is dedicated to?

She was somebody I knew from college. She’s not in music. She was at the time, she was a pianist, but now she switched over to cardiac surgery and so forth.

Was there any sort of harmonic implications desired by the pitches in the timpani and boobams?

No. In both cases no. I don’t care if the pitches are even there. As I said log drums are sometimes used for the boobams. That’s ok with me. And the timpani in those pieces I really just treated like big tom-toms. Just choose a pitch. I figure my job is to pick some pitches but they’re not harmonically important or anything like that.
The way that you notate the woodblocks between the two players you have specific numbers. Was there a specific hierarchy that you meant there or was that specifically to avoid equipment confusion?

More of that. Yeah, I mean the lower the number the higher the instrument so I will always be the highest and then graduated down. So really it was just to be practical and helpful I hoped.

Oh yes. All of my composition students I teach to make your music “idiot proof”.

Well, it’s a hard thing to do because there will always be some idiot who comes up with something bizarre that you haven’t thought of. But for the most part it’s good. I mean, I’m always advising my students A. Assume that your performers are morons, and B. Assume that you won’t be there to fix it so put everything in the score that you possibly can to make absolutely clear what your intentions are.

Final question on Ku-Ka, there’s a Robert Horner recording of it, and the very beginning he takes some liberties with it…

Boy does he! I was not happy about that. VERY unhappy. And actually I think my publisher made him include a statement. They could have made him withdraw the recording, but I said “well, alright”, if there’s a statement in there that says “an arrangement not sanctioned by the composer” I suppose I can live with that. I’m a stickler. I write what I mean. And if you don’t like what I wrote, don’t play the piece. But if you do like what I wrote, play what’s there and don’t fart around. He is not my collaborator. He is there to form the piece and do what the score says. I was FURIOUS about that. Because I mean NOBODY else has ever dared to do that. Surely not with me. Just to say “Oh I like this measure, I think I’ll repeat it 5 more times”, “oh geeze, he has a crescendo there, but I think a diminuendo would be a lot nicer”.

Then write your own piece!

Right! Exactly. But don’t mess up mine!

I don’t have to ask much on Ogoun because there’s already a dissertation with an entire chapter written about Ogoun.

Is there?

Yes. Don Parker. He actually interviewed you in the mid 90’s.

Well, shows you how good my memory is! I remember the first 20 years of my life, and the last 5 minutes pretty well, but everything in between is kinda vague.

Moving on to Bonham, you talk in an interview about not wanting to be typecast as a “percussion composer” early in your career. Now given the fact that you wrote Falconis in 74, Ogoun in 76, and Ku-Ka in 78, your motivation to come back 10 years later and write Bonham was the fact that it was an actual commission?

Yes. And they paid good money for it, and so I thought “what the heck”. That piece caused me ENORMOUS problems because the juices just weren’t flowing. It took me 6 months to write that little piece, which is a ridiculous amount of time for a 6 minute, 7 minute percussion piece.
I believe you mention difficulties with another piece, an overture for the Houston Symphony.

Yeah, that one too took me forever because they wanted a fanfare, and I never thought of myself as a fanfare composer. And boy, once I took it on I realized, yep, I’m not a fanfare composer! And again, probably about 6 months to write that piece that’s only a couple minutes long just for brass. Needless to say since withdrawn.

You’ve said that sometimes you feel a need to write a particular piece of music. Did you have that kind of need in mind, given your love of rock-and-roll, to write this?

Absolutely not. And that I think was the problem. I was trying to think of what I would do. I didn’t think I wanted to do another mythology piece, but I couldn’t come up with the trigger that I needed. That took me a while. And then I thought, ok rock drumming, because I’m a big Led Zeppelin fan. And so on and so forth, but that piece did not come easily to me.

In Bonham there are some very specific quotes, specifically to Zeppelin tunes, and then some more general inspirations like the Hambone rhythm. Did these come about naturally as the composition evolved, or did you sit down and go “ok, I definitely want to use “When the Levee Breaks”, I definitely want to use “Royal Orleans”?

Oh, no. Well, “When the Levee Breaks” for sure. I mean, everything came from that. But the other things, as I was going along, they just kind of occurred to me, so I put them in. There’s also a Butterfield Blues Band quote in there.

Oh yes. The most obvious ones are “When The Levee Breaks”, “Royal Orleans’, and The Butterfield Blues Band. The Hambone Rhythm you can see its inspiration here and there, and “Custard Pie”, there’s KIND OF a direct quote at one point, but there’s also a section that seems inspired by a certain section of the tune.

Oh well, “Custard Pie” is one of my favorites of theirs. So that’s not the only time I’ve referred to that.

Going back to your tendency to write the ending first, is this why the ending is where we find the only reference to “Royal Orleans”?

No. When I say a tendency, I don’t ALWAYS do it that way. And that was one of those pieces, and it happens sometimes, the ones that give me the most trouble are the ones where I just go from measure 1 on without so clear an idea of what’s going to happen. So, that ending was not in my mind when I started the piece. I had no idea how I was going to end the piece.

The timpani pitches again I this have no harmonic implication in this piece.

No.

With that in mind, there is a point in the work where you change a pitch from an F# to an F-natural.

I have NO idea why I did that. Maybe to keep the guy from falling asleep or something.
I don’t want to presume, but I think I might have figured out why. Because it’s in a quieter section and the gesture that you have the timpani playing goes from the F-natural up to the B, so I wonder if it was to avoid a V to I relationship.

Well, it could be. And I do like tritons.

And all of the gestures in that specific section are tritones. You have the F up to the B and then you have a C# down to a low F. So that could be why that is then.

That sounds plausible.

Just curious, now given your love of rock and roll, do you still follow that music today? Are there artists today that you listen to?

Not a great deal. Certainly I’ve heard some Radio Head which I think is pretty good. I’m not really drawn. I’m certainly not a rap or hip-hop person. I certainly hear it, but I haven’t discovered anything that really trips my trigger. I’m more interested in what Paul Simon is doing than in some of the newer groups.

Since you pulled all of those early pieces, but these three pieces have stuck around, do you have any idea as to why these pieces have survived?

Well, I think probably because they’re short, they’re loud, I hope they’re well written for the instruments, and fun to play I hope. But, you know, I wanted to write exciting pieces that wouldn’t overstay their welcomes. So maybe that combination of things accounts for it. I love heavily rhythmic music. Obviously this is no “ping, swish” kind of percussion. I think particularly at the time when I wrote the first two pieces, because of the direction that a lot of percussion writing had been going was the opposite one, perhaps there was something a little refreshing about getting back to the roots of what drumming was all about. Back to the centuries and centuries and centuries, to Africa and so forth. It wasn’t about “ping, swish”. So in a way, kind of taking the instruments back to their roots. I thought it was an important thing to try to do.
BN (February 4, 2011)

Dr. Rouse,

As always, in working through things I’ve come up with a few more questions for you. In order to burden you as little as possible, I figured that e-mailing them to you for you to respond to at your leisure would be the best. Here they are…

Could you talk a little bit about your piece “Mime”. I know it was written at the request of Evelyn Glennie around the same time as your percussion concerto, but was there a specific reason as to why it was written? Is the title in reference to another prominent dwarf along with Alberich from Wagner’s Ring cycle?

Evelyn Glennie’s website also has a listening for a piece entitled “Amhran” for bagpipes and tambour provencal. Could you write just a little about this piece (why it was written, does it have any relation to either of the movements from your Flute Concerto? Or is it just representing the Gaelic word for “song” as those movements do?)

And finally…

Do you ever see yourself writing another work specifically for percussion ensemble again in your career? I have heard rumors (don’t ask from where because I can’t for the life of me remember) that you don’t see yourself writing one again, and your comments about avoiding it early in your career so as not to “typecast yourself” support this (though you later broke that string it seems with Bonham). However, obviously the best course of action is simply to ask you directly. Why I didn’t in our first interview is beyond me.

Thanks as always for your help with all of this. 2 chapters to send to my committee head this weekend, and then it’s on to Ogoun! Good luck finishing up that pesky 3rd Symphony, and I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience…

Brian
CR (February 4, 2011)

Gotta do this superfast, Brian -

Dr. Rouse,

As always, in working through things I’ve come up with a few more questions for you. In order to burden you as little as possible, I figured that e-mailing them to you for you to respond to at your leisure would be the best. Here they are...

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Evelyn wanted a little encore piece she could play after "Alberich," so I wrote this for her. (She loves playing marimba and snare drum the most, I believe.) Yes, the title refers to Alberich's hapless brother.

Evelyn Glennie’s website also has a listening for a piece entitled “Amhran” for bagpipes and tambour provencał. Could you write just a little about this piece (why it was written, does it have any relation to either of the movements from your Flute Concerto? Or is it just representing the Gaelic word for “song” as those movements do?)

This was another encore request from Evelyn for a concert she was doing with Manny Ax. Manny is a percussionist-wannabe, so I thought I'd try a little role reversal - Evelyn on bagpipes and Manny on tambour. Unrelated to flute concerto and to date unperformed. (They didn't have time to put it together.)

And finally...

Do you ever see yourself writing another work specifically for percussion ensemble again in your career? I have heard rumors (don’t ask from where because I can’t for the life of me remember) that you don’t see yourself writing one again, and your comments about avoiding it early in your career so as not to “typecast yourself” support this (though you later broke that string it seems with Bonham). However, obviously the best course of action is simply to ask you directly. Why I didn’t in our first interview is beyond me.

Never say never, I know, but I honestly don't feel that I have anything more to say through the medium. So I very much doubt that I'll write another such piece.

Good luck!

CR
BN (November 24, 2010)

Mr. Chaffee,

My name is Brian Nozny, and I am the Percussion Professor at Dickinson State University in Dickinson, ND. In addition to my duties at DSU, I am writing my dissertation for my Doctoral Percussion Performance degree from the University of Kentucky. I have a question about terminology, and thought you’d be the best person to answer this…

My dissertation is on the percussion ensemble music of Christopher Rouse. In a few of his pieces he creates textures that I refer to as “linear”, being in the style of your linear drumset concepts where no two voices occur at the same time. My question is were you the person to first label this type of playing as “linear”? I know there were other players who have played in this style before (Dave Garabaldi, Mike Clark, Steve Gadd, etc), but you are the first person it seems to actually have put a term to it that I can find. I simply want to make sure that I credit the right person with this term. Thank you so much for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you…

Sincerely,

Brian

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Dickinson State University
Dickinson, ND
Office: 701-483-2557
www.briannozny.com

GC (November 27, 2010)

Brian,

Thanks for the e-mail. In regards to your question, most players credit me with being the first guy to define the linear style of playing, and to develop a system of figures that can be used in this style of playing, (see Patterns Time Functioning). Linear has always been a part of drumming but I was the first guy to codify it, give it a name, and set up a system specifically designed for drum set performance.

Gary
REFERENCES


———. Personal email message, February 4, 2011.


VITA

Brian Thomas Nozny
b. 1977 – Schenectady, NY

EDUCATION

University of North Texas, Denton, TX
Masters of Music Degree in Percussion Performance, University of North Texas (2006)

University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL
Masters of Music Degree in Composition (2002)

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA
Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music with Concentrations in Percussion Performance and Composition (2000)

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Director of Bands / Assistant Professor of Percussion
Dickinson State University, Dickinson, ND, August 2009 – Present

Adjunct Professor of Percussion and Composition
Mercer University, Macon, GA, January 2003 – May 2004

Graduate Teaching Assistant
University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, August 2006 – May 2009

Owner and Operator
Sylvana Chimes (Hand Made Wind Chime Company) August 2006 – Present
Clients Include: Boston Crusaders Drum and Bugle Corps
Eastman School of Music
Florida State University
Furman University
Third Coast Percussion Ensemble
University of Kentucky
University of South Carolina

Front Ensemble Technician
The Boston Crusaders Drum and Bugle Corps, Boston, MA, 2009 – 2010
PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

Professional Soloist

*Valse Brilliante* (Xylophone Soloist) with the Dickinson State University Concert Band (2011)

*Valse Brilliante* (Xylophone Soloist) with the Bismarck-Mandan Wind Ensemble (2011)

*Catch Me If You Can* (Vibraphone Soloist) with University of Kentucky Symphony Band (2008)

*Ziek Concerto for Percussion Solo and Wind Ensemble* with Mercer University Wind Ensemble (2004)

Professional Ensembles

Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra (Bismarck, ND) (Principal Percussionist 2010 - present)

Bismarck-Mandan Wind Ensemble (Bismarck, ND) (2010 – present)

Copper Street Brass Quintet (Minneapolis, MN) (2011)

Missouri Valley Chamber Orchestra (Bismarck, ND) (2010)

Brickhouse Jazz Combo (Dickinson, ND) (2009 – present)

Kentucky Jazz Repertoire Ensemble (Lexington, KY) (2009)


Irving Symphony Orchestra (Irving, TX) (2005)

Macon Symphony Orchestra (Macon, GA) (2004 – 2008)

Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra (Hilton Head, SC) (2004)

Other Ensemble Experience

University of Kentucky Percussion Ensemble (2006 – 2009)
  - Featured performance at PASIC 2007 in Columbus, OH.
  - Featured performance at PASIC 2008 in Austin, TX

nief-norf project (2006 - 2007)
  - Performed Recitals and Master Classes at Virginia Tech, Mercer University, and the University of Tennessee at Martin, Spring 2007

University of North Texas Wind Symphony (2005 - 2006)
  - Performed on the Klavier Wind Project CD “Poetics”

Bravura Percussion Trio (2006)
  - Featured Artist, East Central University Day of Percussion 2006

Mercer University Faculty Chamber Group (2004)
  - Performance at Georgia Music Educators Conference, 2004
**PUBLICATIONS**

*Chess Pieces*
Arrangement of a solo piano work originally by John Cage premiered by NEXUS - Spring, 2009
To be published by C.F. Peters Corporation – Spring 2012

*Mind Games*
Published in the collection *Multitudes* by Innovative Percussion - Fall, 2010

*…folded…*
Premiered by the University of Kentucky at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention - Fall, 2007
Published by Innovative Percussion - Fall, 2007

*Purdy’s Maze*
Premiered by the University of North Texas 12:00 Percussion Ensemble - Fall, 2005
Published by Innovative Percussion - Spring, 2006

*“Points for Consistency”*
Premiered by Matthew Koger at the University of Miami - Spring, 2005
Published by Drop 6 Media, Inc. - Fall, 2006

**RECORDINGS**

*Omar Carmenates* – *Solo Percussion CD to be released Fall of 2012*
- Features recordings of original works *…folded…* and *Thief*
- Ensemble Performer on *…folded…*

- Features the University of Kentucky Drumline

*University of Kentucky Percussion Ensemble* – *“Live From Lexington!” 07 - 08* – University of Kentucky
- Features recording of original work *…folded…*

*University of Kentucky Percussion Ensemble* – *“Live From Lexington!” 06 - 07* – University of Kentucky
- Conductor, *Whispers* by David Skidmore
- Features recording of original work *Purdy’s Maze*

*University of North Texas Wind Symphony* - *“Poetics”* - Klavier Wind Project

*Virginia Tech* – *“Celebrate! 30 Years of the Spirit of Tech”* – The Marching Virginians of Virginia Tech
Features multiple percussion arrangements

Recordings continued…

Virgina Tech – “LIVE From Lane Stadium - 35 Years of the Spirit of Tech” – The Marching Virginians of Virginia Tech
Features multiple percussion arrangements

COMMISSIONS

Troy University Percussion Ensemble
Commission for an original work for percussion quartet for the Fall of 2012

Florida State University Percussion Ensemble
Commission for an original work for large percussion ensemble for the Fall of 2012

Caxia Trio
Commission for an original work for percussion trio for the Spring of 2012

The Denkyem Percussion Group
Commission for an original work for percussion sextet for their tour of Costa Rica in the Spring of 2010
Sharps premiered Spring, 2010
Performed by the University of Iowa Percussion Ensemble at the 2011 Percussive Arts Society International Convention

Omar Carmenates
Commission for an original work for percussion solo for the Fall of 2009
Thief premiered Fall, 2009

NEXUS Percussion Ensemble
Commission for an arrangement for mallet ensemble of John Cage’s “Chess Pieces” for the Spring of 2009.
Chess Pieces premiered Spring, 2009

University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Commission for two arrangements for the MASS Marimba band
Saturday at the Buckley’s premiered Spring 2008
Could Be Anything premiered by the University of Kentucky Percussion Ensemble Fall 2008

University of Kentucky
Commission for an original work for percussion ensemble for their 2007 PASIC Showcase Concert
…folded… premiered at the 2007 Percussive Arts Society International Convention
Commissions continued…

University of North Texas
Commission for an original work for percussion ensemble for the Fall of 2005
Purdy’s Maze premiered Fall, 2005

SELECT ARRANGING EXPERIENCE

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Blacksburg, VA)
All Marching Band Percussion Arranging (2003 – present)

Boise State University (Boise, ID)
Select Wind and Percussion Arranging (2011)

Delta State University (Cleveland, MS)
All Marching Band Percussion Arranging (2011)

University of Kentucky (Lexington, KY)
Head Arranger for the UK Steel Band (2006 – 2008)

Towson University (Towson, MD)

Cavaliers Alumni Corps
Select Wind Arranging for their performance at Drum Corps International Semi-Finals (2008)

Kennesaw Mountain High School
Select Percussion Arranging (2005)

University of Miami (Coral Gables, FL)

PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCES

Adjudicator – Percussive Arts Society Composition Contest (Summer, 2011)
Clinician – Minot State University, Minot, ND (April 19th, 2011)
Soloist Appearance – Dickinson State University Concert Band (April 10th, 2011)
Clinician – North Dakota MEA Conference (March 22nd, 2011)
Soloist Appearance – Bismarck-Mandan Wind Ensemble (March 12th, 2011)
Clinician – Bismarck State College, Bismarck, ND (December 15th, 2010)
Presenter – North Dakota University System Arts and Humanities Summit, Dickinson, ND (October 7th, 2010)
Professional Appearances continued…

Guest Artist – Furman University, Greenville, SC (April 16th, 2010)
- Participated in the US Premier of John Luther Adam’s “Inuksuit”

Adjudicator – Big Muddy Concert Band Festival, Mandan, ND (March 9th, 2010)

Adjudicator – West State “A” Saxophone and Percussion Contest, Bismarck, ND (2009, 2011)

Clinician – Northern Plains Music Festival, Dickinson, ND (Fall 2009 - 2010)
Clinician – Yamaha Sounds of Summer Camp, Williston, ND (Summer 2009 - 2010)
Clinician – University of Tennessee at Martin, Martin, TN (April 18th - 19th, 2009)
Clinician – Campbellsville University, Campbellsville, KY (April 14th, 2009)
Clinician – University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC (April 10th, 2009)
Clinician – Furman University, Greenville, SC (April 6th – 8th, 2009)

Soloist Appearance – University of Kentucky Symphonic Band (November 23rd, 2008)
Clinician – Music for All Summer Symposium, Normal, IL (Summer 2007 - 2008)
Clinician – Yamaha Sounds of Summer Camp, Lexington, KY (Summer 2006 - 2008)
Clinician – Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL (March 25th, 2008)

Featured Performance – Percussive Arts Society International Convention (November 5th, 2008)
- Performed as a part of the University of Kentucky Chamber Percussion Group

Featured Performance – Percussive Arts Society International Convention (November 1st, 2007)
- Performed as a part of the University of Kentucky Percussion Ensemble

Clinician – Jamaica Cultural Development Commission Marching Band Clinic, Kingston, Jamaica (July 12 – 14, 2007)

Residency – Lee University, Cleveland, TN (November 6-7, 2006)

Guest Artist – East Central University Day of Percussion (March 11th, 2006)
- Performed as a part of the Bravura Percussion Trio

Adjudicator – North Stafford High School, Stafford, VA (Fall, 2003 & 2005)

Soloist Appearance – Mercer University Wind Ensemble (April 16th, 2004)

Faculty Recital – Mercer University, Macon, GA (January 17th, 2004)

Adjudicator – Fiestival Atlanta (Spring, 2003 & 2004)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) (Member)
College Music Society (Member)
Evans Drumheads – Performing Artist Endorsement
Innovative Percussion, Inc. – Performing Artist Endorsement
MENC (Member)
Percussive Arts Society (Member of the Composition Committee since 2007 / Secretary 2009 - present)
Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society (Member)
SABIAN Cymbals – Performing Artist Endorsement
Tau Beta Sigma (Honorary Member)
AWARDS

Dickinson State University Innovative Teaching Grant (2011)
Outstanding Soloist – University of Louisville Jazz Festival (2009)
University of Kentucky Wildcat Marching Band Honor Bandsman Award (2007)