

Balancing Idealism and Pragmatism
in Composition for Wind Bands
and Wind Ensembles

M R Brown

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in Composition for Wind Bands and Wind Ensembles

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Abstract

This thesis is a critical reflection of how balancing idealism and pragmatism can be achieved in composition for wind bands and wind ensembles, including within my creative output. My unique contribution to knowledge is the provision of new repertoire and understanding to add to the growing body of wind band literature and research. My thesis and its accompanying portfolio of compositions illustrate that there are potential obstacles and opportunities for composers in this field.

These obstacles are usually practical ones, such as limits on group size. Opportunities are illustrated in the form of creative challenges, such as the need to address personal definitions of limitations and to find ways to preserve the feeling of creative control. This is especially important for those who are intent on exploring their own compositional identity or 'voice'. After introducing the concept of a compositional 'voice', this is explored in the context of composition for wind bands and wind ensembles. The discussion is around overcoming obstacles and making optimum use of opportunities.

The thesis has implications for composers who may feel constrained when writing for wind bands and wind ensembles of different sizes. This is also a document of my creative response to my key influences. These features are aligned with my own interests and motivations as a composer.

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Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1 introduces the concepts of my research and my music in the broader context of musical composition for wind bands and wind ensembles. A succinct review of the literature and relatively recent practice helps to justify a series of research questions around the compositional 'voice' and practical limitations.

I define idealism and pragmatism in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. Chapter 2 address the questions around the compositional 'voice', and it discusses the journey towards the holiday inspired ***Scenes from Bagni di Lucca*** (2020) project in detail. Chapter 3 address practical solutions for unexpected situations, including Covid-19.

Chapter 4 examines the meaning of balancing idealism and pragmatism in composition for wind bands and wind ensembles, supported by examples from my own work and that of other composers. The approaches of flexibility and of dealing with practical limitations are discussed in detail.

Chapter 5 presents the conclusions from my project and provides suggestions for further research.

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Correspondences: Philip Sparke, Ken Hesketh, Chris Marshall

Bands and Ensembles: BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, Band of the RAF College, HM Band of the Royal Marines, RNCM Wind Orchestra, RNCM Symphony Orchestra, RNCM Sinfonietta, RNCM Wind Ensemble, Wyatt Sinfonia, Slaithwaite Philharmonic Orchestra, Kent Coastal Concert Band, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge Training Band, Whittlesey Concert Band, London Consorts of Winds, Leeds University Union Music Society Symphonic Wind Orchestra, Bristol University Music Society Wind Orchestra, Manchester Wind Orchestra, Invicta Wind Orchestra, Winterbourne Wind Band, Maghull Wind Orchestra, Huntingdonshire Concert Band, Kent Youth Wind Orchestra, White Cliffs Symphonic Winds

Guest live performers: Kezia Lovick-Jones, Sarah Austen, Martha Cullen, Freya Chambers, Simeon Evans, Nick Rushworth, Fred Donlon-Mansbridge, Matthew Haworth, Sam Nuttall, Callum Anderson, Amy Paterson, Joshua Fleming, Daniel Hohm, Daria Papyшева

RNCM student conductors: Rita Castro Blanco, Alex Robinson, Jack Sheen, Joe Judge, Mark Edwards, Kaapo Ijas, Anna Hartmann, Robin Wallington, Cj Wu, Dan Button, Leon Frantzen, Andreas Ashikkis, Xinjie Yang, Josephine Korda

Performers during Covid-19: Grace Callaghan, Rachael Watson, Matthew Jones, Sarah Canzonetta, Emily Revill, Hannah Peverell, Mark Carey, Isabeau Hansem, Antonio Prieto Palomo, Adam Bowman, Emma Chan, Bingchao Li, Hannah Alford, Hannah Seymour, Johanna Leung, Laurel Saunders, Robyn Saunders, Matthew Walker, Chloe Tang, Owen Hewson, Ben Jackson, Kirsty Porter, Philip Le Bas, Curtis Man, Lily Wang, Alice Wriglesworth, Aurora Saeterhaug Bye, Jack Sindall, Joe Clarkson, Emily Douglas, Ellie Guénault, Max Boothny, Zoë Kundu, Sam Lewis, Joseph Bradford, Robbie Richardson, Adam Hofland-Ward, Tom Smith, Tom Watts, Charlotte Horsfield, Oliver Bartlett, Archi Young-Lee, Miri Wallich, Jodie Mitson, Paddy Cooke, Ed Hyde, Josh Cargill, Micah Scott, Josh Allen, Dom Hurley, Andrew Birse, Emily Olson, Jerome McGuinness, Julie Peat, Filipe Dandalo, Fei Shao, Jason Wong, Abigail Flood, Jess Hughes, Fruzi Szücs, Brian Low, Winnie Su

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Preface

I write from the point of view of a composer and violist. My compositional output is often informed by my understanding of the viola as a composer and performer. This includes my writing for viola ensemble for multichannel recordings – an interest that was only heightened during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The discussions in this thesis are supported by a portfolio of compositions. Some are mentioned only briefly while others are discussed in more depth. When relevant, occasional reference is also made to a few additional works for wind band, wind ensemble and other forces.

Although there are many different terms for a group of wind players and percussionists, 'wind band' and 'wind ensemble' are simplifications chosen mainly for coherence.

In my compositional output there are many influences from outside the field of wind bands and wind ensembles, including chamber, orchestral, brass band and big band. Since there are too many to discuss at length in this thesis, I shall focus mostly on influences within the domains of wind bands and wind ensembles.

At the heart of this project is essentially a self-study. However, it is for the reader to decide the extent to which they identify with my own views.

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1 Background

In this practice-based project I have explored the concept of the compositional ‘voice’ in composition for wind bands and wind ensembles. Across the overall thesis, I will provide open-minded definitions of idealism and pragmatism, and how a balance between them can be reached.

“Academic research – involves conducting a research inquiry to...afford substantial new insights...”¹

I have engaged in a form of academic research known as ‘Practice as research’, which “...involves a research project in which practice is a key method of inquiry...”²

Through this process, I intend to offer at least, if not new knowledge, new insights.

I recognise a curious link between my academic research and my musical composition process: both involve a ‘funnel approach’ whereby possibilities are explored as open-mindedly as possible before narrowing down. The significance is that each has gradually informed the other.

This chapter includes a brief history and discusses my influences within the wind band and wind ensemble domains.

¹ Nelson, 2013, p. 25

² Nelson, 2013, p. 8

1.1 Project aims

- To provide a unique contribution to wind band and wind ensemble repertoire.
- To inspire an open-mindedness in composers, conductors, performers and audiences of music for wind bands and wind ensembles.
- To write music that brings performers and audiences together.

1.2 Research objectives

- To build on my existing skills in composing for wind bands and wind ensembles.
- To create a portfolio of compositions that helps me to explore my compositional 'voice' by employing a wide range of methods, sizes of ensemble and difficulty levels.

1.3 Methodology

In 2017, I was fortunate to become a PhD student at RNCM. Since then, I was able to make optimal use of composer-performer collaboration opportunities inside and outside the College. I have explored a range of wind band literature and practices and I have written for ensembles inside and outside RNCM.³ Generally, I have written my wind band and wind ensemble music with the performers in mind as much as the audiences, since I would have expected that the performers experience the music for much more time due to their rehearsals.

According to Tom Wilson: “Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while method is a specific technique for data collection under those philosophical assumptions.”⁴ In short, my methodology explains why I have employed my methods.

My research into wind band literature and my creative practice serves to explore the concept of the compositional ‘voice’. That is, the open question of when and even whether to linger over the ‘voice’ concept.

By providing critical reflection of my own work in the context of similar practices, I can demonstrate my contribution to knowledge and repertoire for wind bands and wind ensembles.

³ See appendix B

⁴ Nelson, 2013, p. 98

1.4 Research Questions

- 1. What does the compositional 'voice' mean to me and why does it matter?**
- 2. To what extent can I explore my compositional 'voice' when writing for wind bands and wind ensembles?**
- 3. How can I avoid feeling restricted by limitations and allow parameters to become a source of inspiration and motivation?**

1.5 Nomenclature

Richard Hansen challenges the definition of a 'band' in general:

“Oddly enough, there is no clear definition of a band [...] In many countries the terms “band” and “orchestra” are still used interchangeably. In contemporary America “band” is understood to mean a mixed group of musicians playing woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments.”⁵

Bryan Proksch credits the term 'band' as a historically universal one:

“The term “band” initially denoted virtually any type of ensemble, but by the eighteenth century small ‘Hautboy Bands’ (military-based outdoor ensembles that used oboes) were common.”⁶

Daniel Ragar offers many different terms for wind bands that have been used in different countries around the world:

“Common Wind-band names include: Concert Band, Symphonic Winds, Wind Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, Harmonie Band, Janissaries (Turkish) Band, Military Band, Marching Band, Taptoe/Tatoo, Community Band, County Fair Band, Blåserphilharmonic, Hårmonicorkest, Wind Symphony, Fanfarre Orkest.”⁷

Frank Battisti developed a term to address the 'implied threat' to the traditional wind band by the wind ensemble:

“To me, “contemporary wind band/ensemble” is the proper term to describe the amalgamation taking place in wind groups today.”⁸

⁵ Hansen, 2005, p. 150

⁶ Proksch, 2022, p. 1

⁷ Ragar, 2017, p. 6

⁸ Battisti, 1995, p. 79

Community bands and 'school' bands from Universities in the United States of America and the United Kingdom have often chosen their names based on their formation, history or repertoire aspirations.

[Nomenclature] "...is derived from its function in musical society and the way in which that function is served through its repertoire [...] Nowadays a variety of terms are used – *symphonic band*, *wind symphony*, *wind ensemble*, *symphonic wind ensemble* – which reflect the variety of uses of the ensemble. Each has specific connotations, real or imagined, with regard to purpose and repertoire."⁹

The importance of these classifications has varied through history and according to country or region. Even the terms 'wind band' and 'wind ensemble' are used interchangeably. However, the term 'wind ensemble' has a powerful association with the Eastman Concept introduced by Frederick Fennell with the Eastman Wind Ensemble.

Universities in the U.S.A., such as Central Washington University (CWU)¹⁰ and Michigan State University (MSU)¹¹ offer their students bands of vastly different sizes. CWU includes a Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band and a Concert Band, while MSU also includes a Wind Symphony. In the U.K., Maidstone Wind Symphony (MWS)¹² is unusual example of a 'Wind Symphony'. Rather like North Cheshire Wind Orchestra (NCWO),¹³ MWS invests heavily in performances of new music.

"Each ensemble name and instrumentation comes with certain connotative meanings among the wind community. Wind Ensembles are often perceived as elite and above the level of a Symphonic Band. A Concert Band is viewed as a more amateur incarnation of a Symphonic Band, and a Wind Orchestra [...] is viewed as an orchestral offshoot that has little heritage to a Wind Ensemble or a Band of any sort."¹⁴

⁹ Hinton, 2008, pp. 27-28

¹⁰ <https://www.cwu.edu/music/cwu-bands>

¹¹ <https://www.music.msu.edu/performance/student-ensembles/bands>

¹² https://www.maidstonewindsymphony.org/page-about_us.html

¹³ <http://www.northcheshire.org.uk/commissioning/>

¹⁴ Caines, 2012, p. 80

Hansen proposes an interesting concept for naming a mixed ensemble:

“Another wind ensemble type that emerged in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century is one that utilizes winds and mixed media of voices, strings, and musical sounds. Though it has yet to be commonly used, an accurate term for this ensemble may be “wind collective,” or a collection of musicians to form a total from different sources or groups.”¹⁵

¹⁵ Hansen, 2005, p. 152

1.6 Instrumentation

Attempts at standardisation of instrumentation for wind bands across the globe have been complicated by practical constraints as well as cultural and artistic differences. The World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE)¹⁶ points out that these differences are to be embraced. Conductor Brian Albert Coffill¹⁷ compares Albert Austin Harding's University of Illinois Concert Band with William Revelli's University of Michigan Symphony Band as two contrasting examples of large instrumentations.¹⁸

[During the mid-twentieth century] "...no two major ensembles in any collegiate or professional setting featured the same group of instruments..."¹⁹

One well known example of an attempt to standardise wind band instrumentation, or at least to provide an aspirational one, was by the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) in 1960. The CBDNA expressed the following opinion:

"The serious composer does not write for band for the simple reason that he can never be sure what the band is, much less what combination will actually play the work."²⁰

In 1960, the CBDNA did in fact reach an 'ideal band balance', with a total of seventy-two players, that also took into account the ratio of different instruments. According to Bernard Fitzgerald "...it is imperative that the instrumentation of the band be stabilized with respect to the basic ratios, weights, and balances of the various sections as related to the total instrumentation sonority. Composers are handicapped by the absence of a standard instrumentation and balance and must continue to compromise until these factors are definitely established."²¹

¹⁶ <https://wasbe.org/history>

¹⁷ <https://www.briancoffill.com/about>

¹⁸ Coffill, 2021, pp. 4-5

¹⁹ Coffill, 2021, p. 4

²⁰ Lasko, 1972, p. 47

²¹ Battisti, 2018 p. 86

Alfred Reed distinguishes the band from the orchestra: "...there has never been any over-all agreement, on a purely musical basis, as to its instrumentation; aside, of course, from having no violins, violas or celli..."²² Even this distinction is partially diluted: "Unlike most countries, most wind-bands in Spain have cello and double bass sections. [The cello] plays a central role when orchestral transcriptions are performed."²³

George Rogers, Director of Music Education at Westfield State College – before going on to propose a 'reasonable instrumentation' for a wind band of fifty-four players – admits:

"Defining perfect instrumentation for a concert band or wind ensemble is impossible because it depends on the conductor's concept and the type of literature being played..."²⁴

There is divided opinion among directors as to whether there should be a standardisation of instrumentation in wind bands. According to Band Director Keith Wilson: "Instrumentation is the composer's prerogative..."²⁵ With this in mind, Frederick Fennell's Eastman Concept – of offering the composer the choice of instrumentation, and one player per part – can seem like an attractive model.

On the other hand, I sometimes enjoy leaving the choice of instrumentation to others. However, the treatment of instruments is of even more importance to me than the instrumentation itself. Fennell's Eastman Wind Ensemble instrumentation²⁶ began generally with small numbers of most instruments. However, the clarinet section allowed for "...8 B-flat clarinets or A clarinets divided in any manner desired or fewer in number if so desired."²⁷ This helps to illustrate the diversity of treatment by different composers that Fennell had in mind.

²² Reed, 1961, p. 51

²³ Ragar, 2017, p. 161

²⁴ Rogers, 1991, p. 34

²⁵ Battisti, 2018 p. 86

²⁶ See appendix D

²⁷ Fennell, 2009, p. 57

1.7 Literature Review

To provide a succinct review of the literature and practice in the enormous field of composition for wind bands and wind ensembles requires extreme selectivity.

“...the field of the conceptual framework of [practice as research] ...is more typically wide and interdisciplinary rather than narrow and specific.”²⁸

I situate my research within the context of wind band and wind ensemble evolution following the Eastman Concept and many preceding wind band traditions.

Gardner Read’s book, *Orchestral Combinations: The Science and Art of Instrumental Tone-Color*, provides many interesting insights and examples of unison and octave doublings involving wind and percussion instruments, as well as strings, that can be found in orchestral literature.

Morton Gould presents interesting comparisons between character of the wind band and the symphony orchestra.²⁹ Mark Radice³⁰ and Jon Piersol³¹ both discuss the development of chamber music including eighteenth century court wind ensemble music.

[Frank Battisti’s book, *The New Winds of Change: The Evolution of the Contemporary American Wind Band/Ensemble and Its Music*] “...is an update of the two earlier publications – *The Winds of Change* and *Winds of Change II...* [including] ...composers, compositions, events, initiatives, and happenings, that, in my opinion, best illustrate the overall development of the American wind band/ensemble.”³²

²⁸ Nelson, 2013, p. 102

²⁹ Gould, 1962, p. 67

³⁰ Radice, 2012

³¹ Piersol, 1983

³² Battisti, 2018, pp. xiii-xiv

Jacob Caines³³ compares the ideologies of the University of Michigan Bands under the direction of William Revelli, the Eastman Wind Ensemble (EWE) directed by Fennell, and the American Wind Symphony Orchestra (AWSO) directed by Robert Austin Boudreau. Caines cites the Michigan Bands as being opposed to variable instrumentation, the EWE as combining traditionalism with modernism, and the AWSO as favouring a fluid instrumentation and more experimental music.³⁴

Jeremy S. Brown's book, *The Wind Band Music of Henry Cowell* provides an extraordinary account of the Henry Cowell's compositional activity during his time as a prisoner and the composer's pragmatism in adversity. It also includes a chapter on the history of the American Wind Band:

"From its beginnings in the eighteenth century until the first decades of the twentieth century, the proper characterization of the American wind band phenomenon should be understood as one of growth: in the number of bands, in the size of individual organizations (the number of band members), in the number of different instruments employed, in the repertory (both the quantity and quality of original compositions and transcriptions), in venues and functions, and in performance standards."³⁵

Timothy Pardue³⁶ explores the use of the long-established technique of 'flex scoring' to address the challenges for bands with limited or uncertain instrumentation, particularly during the Covid-19 Pandemic.³⁷ Adaptable and 'Flex' scores were adopted by the Creative Repertoire Initiative³⁸ in June 2020 in response to "...uncertainty of how pandemic safety protocols would affect ensemble personnel and rehearsal procedures."³⁹

³³ <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/school-of-performing-arts/faculty-staff/our-faculty/Jacob-Caines.html>

³⁴ Caines, 2012, pp. 68-86

³⁵ Brown, 2018, p. 5

³⁶ <https://www.mcneese.edu/performingarts/directory/timothy-pardue/>

³⁷ Pardue, 2021

³⁸ Robert Ambrose, Brian Balmages, Steven Bryant, Michael Daugherty, Julie Giroux, Jennifer Jolley, John Mackey, Peter Meechan, Alex Shaprio, Omar Thomas, Frank Ticheli, Eric Whitacre

³⁹ Pardue, 2021, p. 28

1.7.1 Wind Band and Wind Ensemble Evolution

The conductor and author David Whitwell tracks wind band evolution in the Church, courts and civic winds bands, dating back as far as records began.⁴⁰ Whitwell likens the sound of the wind band to that of an organ.⁴¹

“...one must mention the new pipes being included in sixteenth-century organ construction, for they are clearly an imitation of the contemporary wind band sounds.”⁴²

Wind bands were the preferred ensemble for church services due to wind instruments’ apparent effectiveness at imitating the voice, as opposed to string instruments, according to Marcello Castellini.⁴³

“The development of the band was more profoundly influenced by the French Revolution than by any event before or since.”⁴⁴ Bernard Sarrette formed the National Guard Band of 45 musicians in 1789. It is still considered to be the first modern wind-band because of its size, repertoire and functions, both military and civilian. This increased to 78 musicians in 1790, making it the largest military wind band up to this time.⁴⁵

“For all of his effort and development of The National Guard Band, Sarrette should be recognised as the first person to have created a modern day wind-band in the 18th century [...] By the turn of the 19th century, the wind-band had reached the size of the modern military wind-band.”⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Whitwell, 2010

⁴¹ Whitwell, 2010, p. 34

⁴² Whitwell, 2010, p. 128

⁴³ Whitwell, 2010, pp. 76-77

⁴⁴ Fennel, 2009, p. 24

⁴⁵ Ragar, 2017, p. 11

⁴⁶ Ragar, 2017, p. 13

One of the most significant contributions to the sound of almost all wind bands is from Adolphe Sax. [Adolphe Sax] "...inventor of the saxophone and saxhorns, increased the expressive and technical potential of wind instruments and the wind band."⁴⁷

"Among his many contributions to the development of wind instruments, two are great indeed. The first was an invention, the Saxophone. The second was not so much an invention as it was a perfection of earlier valve brass instruments. This instrument he called a Saxhorn."⁴⁸

The instrumentation of Patrick Gilmore's band in 1878 included members of the saxophone and saxhorn families.⁴⁹ Gilmore transformed the Boston Brigade Band into 'Gilmore's Band', which "...developed into America's first great concert wind band."⁵⁰

[Gilmore] "...bought innovation to the band's instrumentation, shifting the emphasis from the brasses to the woodwinds, especially the clarinets."⁵¹

The 'wind band', similarly to the 'wind ensemble', is a tradition with complex historical routes. "John Philip Sousa spanned the period from Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore through the beginnings of the school band movement."⁵²

"There was a strong demand during World War I (1917-18) for performers and leaders for government military bands, and both amateurs and professionals enlisted. The return of these personnel to civilian life after the war was perhaps the most immediate impetus for the rise of school bands."⁵³

⁴⁷ Battisti, 2018, p. 4

⁴⁸ Fennel, 2005, p. 25

⁴⁹ Battisti, 2018, p. 10

⁵⁰ Battisti, 2018, p. 8

⁵¹ Battisti, 2018, p. 9

⁵² Mayer, 1960, p. 51

⁵³ Martin, 1999, pp. 43-44

The American School Band Movement grew due to a shift from professional bands in America, particularly in the 1930s. This involved band contests and the addition of bands and instrumental instruction to school music education programs.⁵⁴ Albert Austin Harding, director at the University of Illinois 1905-1948,⁵⁵ formed concepts around increasing woodwind numbers, especially in the bass register, to balance the otherwise high ratio of brass to woodwind.

“In the further development of his symphonic-type band and the increased importance of the clarinet and woodwind section, Harding established a dominating bass woodwind section. Most collegiate bands of this period were notoriously lacking in the instruments of bass clarinet, bassoon, and baritone saxophone.”⁵⁶

The role and significance of an audience of music for wind band has not always been constant. The purposes of a wind band have varied between those of ceremonial, educational and entertainment. According to Timothy Wiggins:⁵⁷

“During the mid-twentieth century [...] The purpose of the collegiate wind band shifted from entertainment and ceremony toward education and developing an artistic performing ensemble...”⁵⁸

Frank Battisti takes a view in support of the trend towards artistic integrity:

“Concerts should inspire and uplift, tax and stimulate, as well as entertain audiences.”⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Battisti, 2018, pp. 387-389

⁵⁵ Manfredo, 1995, p. 60

⁵⁶ Manfredo, 1995, p. 70

⁵⁷ <https://music.eku.edu/people/wiggins>

⁵⁸ Wiggins, 2013, p. 4

⁵⁹ Battisti, 1995, p. 92

British Renaissance

In 1981, the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE)⁶⁰ and the British Association of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles (BASBWE)⁶¹ were formed by Tim Reynish, Bill Johnson and Frank Battisti in a conference at the Royal Northern College of Music.⁶²

“WASBE is a key force in developing standards and promoting innovative new musical works...founded at the RNCM in 1981, largely thanks to the influence of one individual, Tim Reynish, who remains one of the international movement’s leading directors, educators and commissioner of new work.”⁶³

WASBE has generally held conferences every two years in different countries, including concerts that host wind bands and wind ensembles from around the world.

“WASBE has provided an exciting new international forum for interested parties to join together to listen to bands and share information, to learn from each other and to support each other, thus contributing to the success and progress of bands everywhere.”⁶⁴

As part of the conference series, WASBE often holds composition contests with categories for different instrumentations and levels of difficulty.⁶⁵ BASBWE has used the commissioning scheme to help bridge the distance between composers, performers and their audiences.⁶⁶ In memory of his third son, Tim Reynish commissioned a series of new works for wind band, which was named the William Reynish Commissioning Project.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ <https://wasbe.org/history>

⁶¹ <https://www.basbwe.net/history.php>

⁶² http://www.musicweb-international.com/classrev/2008/feb08/Reynish_wind_music.htm

⁶³ <https://ref2014impact.azurewebsites.net/casestudies2/refservice.svc/GetCaseStudyPDF/20913>

⁶⁴ Foster, 2013, p. 209

⁶⁵ <https://wasbe.org/category/composition-contest#:~:text=The%20winning%20composition%20will%20receive,in%20order%20to%20be%20eligible>

⁶⁶ <https://www.basbwe.net/commissions.php>

⁶⁷

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62f3980b7b877970ef1d1692/t/63c1af15afb8d379c92c611b/1673637653198/WILLIAM+REYNISH+COMMISSIONING+PROJECT+2001+-+2021+%283%29+-+Timothy+Reynish.pdf>

1.7.2 The Concept of a Compositional ‘Voice’

The book series, *A Composer’s Insight*, includes chapters by different authors. The series provides specific references to compositions for wind bands, wind ensembles and different composers’ concepts of a compositional personality, identity or ‘voice’.

Musicologist Claire Taylor-Jay discusses the link identified by some critics and teachers between an artist’s ‘voice’, unique style, maturity, and originality among other terms. Taylor-Jay challenges the concept of a compositional ‘voice’, suggesting that it is outdated, and discusses the overarching singularity of voice in Stravinsky’s oeuvre despite his well-known three phases, where he arguable presents three ‘voices’.⁶⁸

Conductor Erin Bodnar identifies two ‘voices’ or personalities based around the character and energy in the works of the composer Steven Bryant (b. 1972):

[These include] “...1) slowly evolving, lyrical pieces or 2) high-energy, rhythmically convulsive pieces. Even his two pieces for young band, *Bloom* and *Interruption Overture*, typify the two distinct compositional personalities of Bryant.”⁶⁹

My concept of the compositional ‘voice’ is awkward and complex. As a relatively late developer, I think that my journey towards my ‘mature’ years is in composition ongoing. I find myself going through compositional phases, though perhaps more fleeting phases compared to the example of Stravinsky. I would also consider my compositional ‘voice’ is both optional as well as changeable.⁷⁰

In theory, all composition projects provide an opportunity to explore the compositional ‘voice’. Therefore, it is interesting to consider the possible relationships between the ‘voice’ and the ‘ideas’.

⁶⁸ Taylor-Jay, 2009, pp. 85-111

⁶⁹ Bodnar, 2012, p. 47

⁷⁰ See Chapter 2

It seems to me that composers may provide hints of their compositional 'voice' through their musical 'ideas', whether these 'ideas' take the form of short cells or motifs or broader structural formations. It can be difficult to know where to draw the line between 'ideas' that are original or 'ideas' that are borrowed.

Frank Ticheli highlights a link between originality and borrowing:

"Since everything I do has been done before (polymeter, polytonality, modal mixture, added note chords, old forms, etc.) it would make no sense to ignore the past masters, because their music holds the keys to all our problems. Of course the real challenge is to make a borrowed technique work in a new context, with new musical ideas."⁷¹ [sic]

Evan Feldman distinguishes imitation from originality in the works of Adam Gorb (b. 1958), using the concept of a 'filter':

"...just as Britten's music always sounded "like Britten," Gorb filters styles through his own voice rather than simply mimicking others."⁷²

This resonates with me and my portfolio compositions. Most of them clearly stem from one or more influences. However, as I have gradually developed certain traits and preferences, I feel I have developed a distinctive compositional 'personality'.

⁷¹ Moorhouse, 2006, p. 208

⁷² Feldman, 2012, p. 90

1.8 Practice Review

To complement the review of literature and to support my creative practice of musical composition, I have carried out a 'practice review' or 'survey of similar practices'.⁷³

I have divided the practice review into original music for wind band and for wind ensemble, with a further subdivision of 'wind ensemble' into large and small.

In the interests of coherence, I shall focus primarily on influences of original music for wind band and wind ensemble since the introduction of Frederick Fennell's Eastman concept. This is not to diminish the significance of prior influences, or that of arrangements, transcriptions and influences outside wind band and wind ensemble media.

⁷³ Nelson, 2013, pp. 102-103

1.8.1 Small Wind Ensemble

The 'chamber' wind ensemble has clear routes in *Harmoniemusik* and from the *Hautboisten*, or 'oboe' bands, before that.

"*Les Grands Hautbois* using the new modern oboes was imported, together with the French oboe players, to Germany where a new half-French, half-German term was coined, the *Hautboisten*. The musical forms, the *Overture da camera* and the *Ouverture*, also travelled to Germany and by 1750 these forms became the *Sinfonia/Partita* and *Divertimento* of the Classical Period performed by a wind band whose name changed from *Hautboisten* to *Harmoniemusik*."⁷⁴

Crucial to the evolution was the addition of clarinets during the 18th century to French ensembles including wind ensembles.⁷⁵

"The clarinet replaced the oboe in French bands, and by 1775 clarinets were the prominent melody voice."⁷⁶

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) contributed to *Harmoniemusik*, perhaps most famously with the 'Gran Partita' (1781-1782) for thirteen instruments.

"Mozart's skill in handling concerted numbers of wind instruments in a continuous alternation between tutti and soli results in a constant revelation of sound which is sheer magic."⁷⁷

Giuseppe Cambini (1746-c.1810) helped to develop chamber music for winds by reducing the entire *Harmoniemusik* ensemble to one of each instrument in *Trois quintetti, Livre I* (1802) for wind quintet. This did not become standard immediately, but it was established more firmly by the composers Anton Reicha and Franz Danzi.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Whitwell, 2010, p. 149

⁷⁵ Whitwell, 2010, p. 220

⁷⁶ Foster, 2013, p. 30

⁷⁷ Fennel, 2009, p. 15

⁷⁸ Radice, 2012, pp. 84-85

My Key Influences

There are several pieces, some written relatively recently, that are of particular interest to me and have shaped much of my own writing for wind ensemble.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) called for pairs of oboes, clarinets and bassoons with contrabassoon, three horns, cello and double bass in the *Serenade for Winds* (1878). The addition of cello to the ensemble is one of many inspiring aspects of the work. The role of the cello gradually becomes more soloistic towards the end of the third movement.

Théodore Gouvy (1819-1898) skilfully balances one clarinet and one oboe in his Octet No. 1 Op. 71 (1879).⁷⁹ In the 1st movement, Gouvy judges the most suitable instrument to play each part of the melody. The ensemble covers a wide enough register so that the listener can clearly hear as one instrument at a time plays the moving parts.

The instrumentation used by George Enescu (1881-1955) in *Dixtour Op. 14* (1906)⁸⁰ consists of two of each instrument from the standard wind quintet. The ensemble is large enough to benefit from textural freedom such as shared passages and dovetailed phrases, but small enough to feel like ‘chamber’ music. The 1st movement includes many different doubling choices, often changing in the middle of a phrase. In the 2nd movement, after introducing two contrasting ideas at different tempi, these ideas are layered yet distinct – starting with the two bassoons generally using quick *staccato* articulation against a background of slow *legato* phrasing from the upper woodwinds.

One of the most interesting examples of ensemble balance is from Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) in *Octet for Winds Instruments* (1923)⁸¹ where half of the ensemble are brass instruments. Stravinsky scored sections of the work for smaller groups of players within the octet. Only sometimes do all eight players play together at the same time.

⁷⁹ Gouvy, 1882

⁸⁰ Enescu, 1907

⁸¹ Stravinsky, 1924

Hans Gál (1890-1987) was economical with an unusual instrumentation in the score for *Divertimento, Op. 22* (1924).⁸² It is worth noting that the trumpet is the last instrument to join in the first movement – *Intrada* – yet the entry is a deliberately strong interruption to a relatively soft background that itself pre-empts the first *fortissimo* dynamics in the flute and bassoon.⁸³

Howard Blake (b. 1938) wrote *Serenade for Wind Octet* (1990)⁸⁴ for two each of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons, as in much of the repertoire from *Harmoniemusik*. I find the direction of the harmony often unexpected yet fairly easy to follow since it is carefully paced. The complex or embellished harmonies in the second movement is held together by the regular rhythms which provide a clear sense of pulse.

Michael Gilbertson (b. 1987) wrote *Kinds of Light* (2018)⁸⁵ for a ‘reed quintet’ of oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, saxophone and bassoon. In this short work Gilbertson carefully avoids consigning any one instrument to a fixed part of the texture. Instead, he skilfully switches the instruments across different registers, often from one chord to the next. This is most notably in the second movement, *Twilight*. None of this disrupts the general flow of the music. Due to their timbral similarities, the pitch organisation of the instruments is generally quite subtle. This particular work helped me to become more open minded about instrumental combinations such as this.

Franco Cesarini (b. 1961) arranged his own wind orchestra work *Le cortège du roi Renaud* for wind dectet (2021).⁸⁶ There are two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons. However, the orchestration cleverly distracts the listener from the instrumentation that is built on pairs through the carefully judged order of instruments in different registers in the triadic chords. Of the five movements, the second movement often involves only three players. The third movement clearly divides the ensemble into two layers with distinctive rhythms and tonalities.

⁸² Gál, 1927

⁸³ <https://www.maecenasmusic.co.uk/uploads/scores/Score%20MW0007C.pdf>

⁸⁴ Blake, 1990

⁸⁵ Gilbertson, 2018

⁸⁶ Cesarini, 2021

1.8.2 Large Wind Ensemble

[In 1952, Frederick Fennell] "... was to found the Eastman Wind Ensemble and to champion a new concept of a small wind group with solo players to each part. Fennell's intention was to play the traditional repertory with 'chamber winds', achieving a lightness of texture and clarity of execution which was to revolutionize the wind band and split the movement in the USA."⁸⁷

The Eastman concept was loosely adopted by West Point Band, University of Louisville Band, American Wind Symphony Orchestra and Netherlands Wind Ensemble.⁸⁸

According to Frederick Fennell's intention was to create a "sound resource" for composers.⁸⁹

"In establishing the Wind Ensemble as an adjunct to the Symphony Band, it has been our desire to strike out in new directions which would begin from the premise that we could make music with the minimum rather than with the maximum number of players..."⁹⁰

During the composition process – for any ensemble – I often seek to score for the smallest possible number of instruments that I think will be needed for each musical idea. I like to look out for opportunities for *solo* episodes. Therefore, the Eastman Model has been a powerful influence on much of my own practice.

⁸⁷ Reynish, 1984, pp. 377

⁸⁸ Battisti, 2018 pp. 77-78

⁸⁹ Battisti, 2018 p. 69

⁹⁰ Battisti, 2018, pp. 69-71

My Key Influences

There are many examples of music for 'wind ensemble' in which the players can collectively produce an impressive *tutti* sound together. I tend to enjoy studying scores with mostly *solo* textures or imitations of 'chamber' groupings. An example of significant influence comes from Igor Stravinsky in *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920, revised 1947).⁹¹ This proved influential for me for its 'freely coherent form' as described by Arnold Whittall.

[*Symphonies of Wind Instruments*] "...is, perhaps, the most significant piece of music to be written for wind instruments in the 20th century...There are no exotic instruments in its instrumentation [...] But in the area of repertory it is a contribution of greatest magnitude."⁹²

Walter Hartley (1927-2016) used a wind ensemble the size of an orchestral wind section⁹³ in *Concerto for 23 Winds* (1957).⁹⁴ These relatively familiar instrument ratios are usually heard as part of an orchestra with strings and percussion. As an isolated force, the expressive potential is striking.

"The genesis of this work is integrally connected to the inception of the wind ensemble [...] Fennell's philosophy of a flexible instrumentation gave full creative reign to composers, and it would pave the way for the establishment of an original repertoire for the wind band."⁹⁵

⁹¹ Stravinsky, 1952

⁹² Whittall, 1999, p. 120

⁹³ 3 Fl. (2nd = picc., 3rd = picc.), 3 Ob. (3rd = C.A.), 3 Cl. (3rd = B. Cl.), 3 Bsn. (3rd = C. Bsn.), 4 Hn., 3 Tpt., 3 Tbn., Tba.

⁹⁴ Hartley, 1957

⁹⁵ Busuito, 2018, p. 50

Elizabeth Maconchy (1907-1994) wrote *Music for Woodwind and Brass* (1965)⁹⁶ using the typical wind section of an orchestra. The listener is given a significant amount of time to become used to the sound of the trumpets, trombones, tuba and eventually timpani as they slowly build up towards a climax. It is therefore quite striking when they suddenly switch to soft horns and woodwind, shown at figure 4 in the perusal score. Equally striking to me when I first discovered this work was that Maconchy achieved this with only an orchestral wind section and timpani. Towards the end, the opening ideas return in a strangely beautiful variety of fashions, joined by the backdrop of the off-beat timpani from figure 21 onwards.⁹⁷

Adam Gorb kept to a thin and transparent texture for much of *Ascent* (1996).⁹⁸ Themes are often developed within one small instrumental group at a time. Sometimes as many as three piccolos play *staccato* – integrated with tuned percussion – which continues during the low brass phrases and during their rests. The thicker textures provided by the low brass eventually build towards a climax.

[*Ascent*] “...employs plenty of genuinely chamber writing within the context of a large ensemble.”⁹⁹

Stanisław Skrowaczewski (1923-1917) made use of unlikely instrumental combinations and treatments in *Music for Winds* (2001).¹⁰⁰ For example, the oboes and saxophones share the same sustained the discord,¹⁰¹ resulting in a rather unique timbre.¹⁰² The baritone saxophone emerges and becomes quite assertive and soloistic after an opening that generally layers many instruments together.

[Skrowaczewski] “...added three saxophones, of which two are less common and less often played, soprano and baritone saxophone. They enrich the wind section by extending the possibilities of sound quality...”¹⁰³

⁹⁶ Maconchy, 2002

⁹⁷ <https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/8344/Music-for-Woodwind-and-Brass--Elizabeth-Maconchy/>

⁹⁸ Gorb, 1996

⁹⁹ <https://www.maecenasmusic.co.uk/listit2productgroups/ascent/82.html>

¹⁰⁰ Skrowaczewski, 2001

¹⁰¹ Bars 7-9 – sounding pitches of E flat, E and A

¹⁰² <https://www.schott-music.com/en/preview/viewer/index/?idx=MzAyOTA4&idy=302908&dl=0>

¹⁰³ <https://wasbe.org/music-for-winds-by-stanislaw-skrowaczewski-poland>

1.8.3 Wind Band

It is worth emphasising that the lack of standardisation of instrumentation is noticeable in wind bands both within and across different cultures. Composers of music for wind may be rewarded with a wealth many different instruments, but they may face limitations. For the purposes of this discussion, I would define 'limitations' as parameters that may be set by publishers, directors or players. This may include but is not limited to difficulty level or instrumentation.

Economy

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958) emphasises the benefits of being economical with limited thematic material in Symphony No. 2 (2003)¹⁰⁴ with the quote from Stravinsky:

"I am paralysed by too much freedom, and I am liberated by restrictions."¹⁰⁵

Ticheli's score has a vast instrumentation, but it includes many examples of thin scoring. Instruments contribute to the texture only when necessary, and that clarity and transparency is provided in the absence of those instruments.¹⁰⁶ Ticheli's Symphony No. 2 is not only rich with solo and tutti contrasts, but also frequent layering or alternations between vastly different registers – sometimes isolating high register instruments and at other times low ones – providing structural clarity.

¹⁰⁴ Ticheli, 2003

¹⁰⁵ Moorhouse, 2006, p. 220

¹⁰⁶ https://issuu.com/manhattanbeachmusic/docs/symphony_no_2_conductor_score

Solo and Tutti Contrast

From the many examples of music for ‘wind band’, I find myself most interested in those where the composer has taken advantage of the potential for sharp contrast – or a gradual difference between – *solo* and *tutti*. With a view to combining the wind band and wind ensemble traditions, Samuel Adler writes:

“Today, the composer or arranger can have it both ways. If a composer wishes to write a work for band and accepts the doubling pervasive in this medium, yet would like to have certain sections of the work sound cleaner and more orchestra-like, he or she can specify that a single player perform a part by placing the word *solo* at the required place in the score and the word *tutti* when all players in the section resume playing. This frequently used technique makes it easy to combine the traditional band concept with that of the wind ensemble.”¹⁰⁷

Philip Sparke (b. 1951) wrote *Dance Movements* (1995)¹⁰⁸ in which he contrasted the vastness of the band with sparse textures formed from individual instruments on each line or from smaller groups of instruments. The second movement focuses on the woodwind and the third movements focus on the brass.¹⁰⁹

Solo and *tutti* contrast has invariably been useful to me in my own practice. This is especially true in my wind band scores – ***Spectacular*** (2020-2021), ***Els Encantats*** (2022) and ***Feeling Free*** (2023) – see Chapters 2-4.

¹⁰⁷ Adler, 2002, p. 773

¹⁰⁸ Sparke, 1995

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.philipsparke.com/dance-movements>

The 'Band' Sound

For my purposes, only context decides whether the 'band' sound is favourable. The band sound could be defined by doubling. This might risk clouding the purity of a single instrument with multiple players. On the other hand, I find that the symphonies of Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) serve as a reminder of the potential benefits of unison doubling. In specific reference to multiple of the same instrument in unison, often found in Mahler's symphonies, Adler writes:

"The out-of-tuneness of an instrumental section within a band adds character and even charm to the sound."¹¹⁰

Joseph Schwantner (b.1943) wrote an extremely atypical score – *and the mountains rising nowhere* (1977)¹¹¹ – which avoids the 'band' sound as the wind scoring is sparing in favour of the piano, percussion, vocal parts and glass crystals:

"You'll notice in *and the mountains rising nowhere* that I go a long way to avoid typical band sounds."¹¹²

David Maslanka (1943-1917) opened Symphony No. 4 (1994)¹¹³ with a solo for horn, before presenting harmonized versions of the same theme. The orchestration throughout the symphony is constantly imaginative, yet easily appreciated due to Maslanka's recycling of previously used themes.

Roshanne Etezady (b. 1973) wrote *Storm Warning* (2019)¹¹⁴ – a concerto for 'reed quintet' and wind band which, I think, juxtaposes the 'chamber sound' and the 'band sound'. The score shows that reed quintet group and the rest of the band are kept distinct much of the time through orchestration and contrast in phrasing.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Adler, 2002, p. 772

¹¹¹ Schwantner, 1977

¹¹² Higbee, 2003, p. 134

¹¹³ Maslanka, 1994

¹¹⁴ Etezady, 2019

¹¹⁵ <https://murphymusicpress.com/products/cb6-961a>

Specificity

I would not always assume that access to a large wind band necessarily means more freedom or more choice. However, there are some striking examples:

Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962) wrote *Kelly's Field* (2006),¹¹⁶ referring to the work in the programme note as “a tapestry of playful gestures and bold statements.”¹¹⁷

“Throughout the work, Higdon combines the tenor saxophone with the bassoons to create an unusual reed timbre that accentuates the playing of one of the work’s themes.”¹¹⁸

Gerard Schwarz (b. 1947) was quite prescriptive in the score for *Above and Beyond* (2012).¹¹⁹ He showed unusual precision and exercised considerable control in the different choices of distribution of material across the six flute parts, twelve clarinet parts and six trumpet parts.¹²⁰

Dai Fujikura (b. 1977) scored *My Butterflies* (2012)¹²¹ in extreme detail, opening with intricate rhythms and flutter-tonguing for each player.¹²² The textures are often selectively thin, which allow for instantly noticeable changes. The thin textures and the contrasts in timbre – including trumpets rapid hand covering and uncovering – help to strongly define a structure for the listener. The program note highlights an intriguing reversal of roles for brass and woodwind:

“The brass – usually much louder instruments than the woodwinds – come in very softly with various mutes on, as if they are protecting the fluttertongued woodwinds.”¹²³ [sic]

¹¹⁶ Higdon, 2006

¹¹⁷ <http://www.jenniferhigdon.com/pdf/program-notes/Kellys-Field.pdf>

¹¹⁸ Johnson, 2019, p. 36

¹¹⁹ Schwartz, 2012

¹²⁰ <https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/47470/Above-and-Beyond--Gerard-Schwarz/>

¹²¹ Fujikura, 2012

¹²² https://issuu.com/daifujikura/docs/my_butterflies_fujikura_score

¹²³ <https://wasbe.org/my-butterflies-for-wind-orchestra-by-dai-fujikura-japan-1977>

The British Army Band as the Prototype for American Bands

The British Military Wind Band significantly impacted on the development of wind band repertoire. The British music publishing houses with their attractive catalogues of music for brass band and military band were strong forces for the inert “adoption” of the British Army Band instrumentation as the basis of the American concert and military band.¹²⁴

Gustav Holst (1874-1934) wrote his First Suite in E flat for Military Band (1909).¹²⁵

“Unlike so many of his colleagues, he achieved a new concept of band scoring without being hampered by his consummate knowledge of orchestral principles.”¹²⁶

The transitions between *solo* and *tutti* textures are often impressively seamless:

“The Holst *Suite* is important and influential for several reasons. The one-to-a-part instrumentation of the work is primarily the interesting factor [...] Each instrument maintains its own sound identity, as a soloist would. The instruments retain their unique timbres and sounds even when combined into thick instrumentation. This style of composition that has each instrument acting as both wind soloist and ensemble member simultaneously exemplifies Fennell’s views on instrumentation. Indeed, it was this sentiment of soloistic playing that he argued formed the basis for his ideas on the EWE.”¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Fennell, 2009, p. 41

¹²⁵ Holst, 1984

¹²⁶ Fennell, 2009, p. 35

¹²⁷ Caines, 2012, p. 58

My Key Influences

The significance of both of Holst's Suites as an influence on my own work cannot be overstated. The most important connection is the counterpoint of fast and light material against slow and lyrical themes.

The handling of textures by Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) in *Theme and Variations*, Op. 43a (1943) results in fluid transitions between those based on *solo* and *tutti*. Schoenberg creatively when adapted the band version for orchestra, with deliberate differences of orchestral colour.¹²⁸ The work is also a rare example in which specific parts are written for cornets, trumpets and flugelhorn. The flugelhorn play their first exposed *legato* theme¹²⁹ in alternation with rhythms from muted *staccato* trumpets and cornets.¹³⁰

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963) skilfully presented many different transitions between *solo* and *tutti* in *Symphony in B flat* (1951).¹³¹ The second movement includes a skilful layering of slow *legato* and fast *staccato* themes. The score shows that rhythmic placement of these themes and that the manner of layering is quite different to that found in the Holst Suites.¹³²

“Hindemith's *Symphony* has become a composers' “bible” of wind band orchestration and is probably the most studied composition for wind band by conductors and composers even today.”¹³³

John Barnes Chance (1932-1972) gave the percussion section a primary role almost throughout *Incantation and Dance* (1960)¹³⁴ with a highly unpredictable sequence of initial entries.¹³⁵

¹²⁸ Adler, 2002, p 726

¹²⁹ Starting at bar 61

¹³⁰ Schoenberg, 1949 (<http://en.instr.scorser.com/D/518673.html>)

¹³¹ Hindemith, 1951

¹³² <http://en.instr.scorser.com/D/319394.html>

¹³³ Hansen, 2005, p. 95

¹³⁴ Chance, 1963

¹³⁵ Claves, followed by guiro, tambourine, temple blocks, timbales, and occasional whip gestures

Karel Husa (1921-2016) expanded the role of the percussion section in *Music for Prague 1968* (1968)¹³⁶ so that it had equal status to the woodwind and brass.¹³⁷ The 3rd movement – *Interlude* – is scored for percussion only. I have found myself constantly engaged by the handling of themes and ideas, making each listening more rewarding than the last:

“Different techniques of composing as well as orchestrating have been used in *Music for Prague 1968* and some new sounds explored, such as the percussion section in the *Interlude*...”¹³⁸

Jennifer Jolley (b. 1981) wrote a particularly poignant score – *The Eyes of the World are Upon You* (2017)¹³⁹ – written in response to a shocking mass shooting event – in which *solo* instruments are gradually introduced and build towards a subtle climax, prior to a more dramatic *tutti*.¹⁴⁰ The work is technically brilliant and emotional. Significant among many other influences on my understanding of orchestration is the treatment of cup muted trumpets.¹⁴¹ I find the interweaving of siren and gentle pulsations from cup muted trumpets and woodwinds striking. The volume level of the *pianissimo* pulsations by the trumpets is at least as soft if not softer than that of the woodwinds.

The standards set particularly by these wind band works have inspired me to write music that further inspires audiences.

¹³⁶ Husa, 1969

¹³⁷ Fullmer, 2003, p. 73

¹³⁸ <https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/24803/Music-for-Prague-1968-for-Concert-Band--Karel-Husa/>

¹³⁹ Jolley, 2017

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/63245235/the-eyes-of-the-world-are-upon-you-score-new/3>

¹⁴¹ Figure 67 onwards

1.8.4 Why write for both Wind Band and Wind Ensemble?

The choice to write for wind band or wind ensemble generally involves the avoidance of string writing. However, this may not always be an especially deliberate choice. Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987) reflected on his *Divertimento for Band* (1950):¹⁴² “I simply started writing music and the strings never entered.”¹⁴³ This seems to me to be a more positive approach than deliberate elimination. It is implied that Persichetti had stayed open minded to the possibility of including strings during the composition process, but ultimately focused on the other instruments.

A source of motivation to write for *both* wind band *and* wind ensemble is the knowledge that: “Wind ensembles may program smaller chamber works with larger full-scale works...”¹⁴⁴

The American Wind Symphony Orchestra has programmed music for a wide variety of sizes of wind ensemble.¹⁴⁵ The West Point Band, though comprising a large concert band, also has within it a range of chamber groups.¹⁴⁶

A programme by the New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble conducted by Frank Battisti on 18th November 1971 included works for large instrumentations such as Karel Husa’s *Music for Prague, 1968* (1968) and works for smaller instrumentations such as Igor Stravinsky’s *Octet for Wind Instruments* (1923)

A programme by Eastman Wind Ensemble conducted by Donald Hunsberger and Frank Battisti on 7th October 1977 included Stravinsky’s *Octet* and works for large instrumentations such as Paul Hindemith’s *Symphony in B flat* (1951) and works for smaller instrumentations such as Igor Stravinsky’s *Octet for Wind Instruments*.

[The Illinois Wind Symphony programs include] “...traditional wind band literature, one-per-part chamber works...”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Persichetti, 1950

¹⁴³ Hansen, 2005, p. 93

¹⁴⁴ Wood, 2007, pp. 19-20

¹⁴⁵ <https://americanwindsymphonyorchestra.org/wp-content/uploads/musicscores.pdf>

¹⁴⁶ <https://westpointband.com/concert-band/chamber-groups.html>

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.bands.illinois.edu/wind-symphony>

1.9 Portfolio of Compositions

The works listed below are mentioned frequently across multiple chapters. They are intended to serve as illustrations of idealism and pragmatism in composition for wind bands and wind ensembles.

Much of my portfolio can be easily divided into the two main categories. These are works for wind ensemble following the Eastman Model, and works for wind band allowing for an uncertain number of players per part unless specified with the instruction *one player only*.

1.9.1 Wind Ensemble

- *Sylvans* (2019) – see chapters 2, 3 & 4
- *The Degenerate Era* (2020) – see chapter 3
- *Scenes of Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – see chapter 2
- *Coast* (2021) – see chapters 2, 3 & 4
- *1 January, 2011* (2021) – see chapters 2 & 3
- *Masquerade* (2021) – see chapters 2 & 3

1.9.2 Wind Band

- *Prelude* (2021) – see chapter 3
- *Spectacular* (2020-2021) – see chapters 2, 3 & 4
- *Els Encantats* (2022)¹⁴⁸ – see chapters 2 & 4
- *Feeling Free* (2023) – see chapters 2 & 4

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.hafabramusic.com/product-score/1164/en>

1.10 Additional Compositions

1.10.1 Wind Ensemble

- *Encomium* (2008, revised 2016-2017) – see chapter 2
- *Peganum Harmala – 1st movement* (2018) – see chapter 2
- *27 April, 2011* (2021) – see chapter 3
- *6 May, 2011* (2020-2021) – see chapter 4
- *3 January, 2011* (2020) – see chapter 4
- *Pyrenees Overture* (2022) – see chapter 4
- *Spacetime* (2022) – see chapters 3 & 4

1.10.2 Wind Band

- *Serenade in E flat* (2018) – see chapter 2
- *Longing* (2020) – see chapter 2
- *Eduardo* (2022) – see chapter 3

1.10.3 Other

- *Scenes of Bagni di Lucca* (2019) – for sinfonietta¹⁴⁹ – see chapter 2
- *Sylvans* (2019) – for sinfonietta¹⁵⁰
- *Scenes of Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – for orchestra – see chapter 2
- *31st May, No. 2, 2011* (in progress) – see chapter 2
- *The Arrival of Spring* (2022) – see chapter 2
- *Planet Earth* (2022) – see chapter 4
- *Feeling Free* (2023) – for brass band – see chapters 2 & 4

¹⁴⁹ Fl. (dbl. Picc.), Ob. (dbl. C. A.), Cl. (dbl. B. Cl.), 2 Alto Sax., Ten. Sax., Bsn., Hn., Tpt., Tbn., Perc., Hp., Pno., 2 Vln., Vla., Vc., Db.

¹⁵⁰ Fl. (dbl. Picc.), Ob. (dbl. C. A.), Cl., B. Cl., Alto Sax. (dbl. Ten. Sax.), Bsn., Hn., Tpt., Tbn., Perc., Hp., Pno., 2 Vln., Vla., Vc., Db.

1.10.4 The Arrival of Spring in Woldgate, East Yorkshire in 2011 (twenty eleven)

- 1) *1 January, 2011* (2020) for viola ensemble, string orchestra, RNCM
ArkEnsemble instrumentation¹⁵¹ (main portfolio) – see chapters 2 & 3
2 Fl. (2nd dbl. Picc. & A. Fl.), Ob., C. A., 2 Cl., Alto Sax., Ten. Sax., 2 Bsn., 2 Hn., 2 Tpt., 2 Tbn.

- 2) *27 April, 2011* (2020-2021) for viola ensemble, string orchestra, RNCM
ArkEnsemble instrumentation – see chapter 3
2 Fl. (2nd dbl. Picc.), Ob., C. A., 2 Cl. (1st dbl. Eb Cl., 2nd dbl. B. Cl.), Alto Sax., Ten. Sax., 2 Bsn., 2 Hn., 2 Tpt., 2 Tbn., 2 Perc., Db.

- 3) *3 January, 2011* (2020) for viola ensemble, London Clarinet Choir*, wind band
– see chapter 4
*Eb Cl., 6 Cl., Alto Cl., 2 B. Cl., CA Cl., Cb. Cl.

- 4) *6 May, 2011* (2020-2021) for viola ensemble, wind ensemble – see chapter 4
*2 Fl. (2nd dbl. Picc.), Ob., 2 Cl., Bsn., 2 Hn., 2 Tpt., 2 Tbn., Tba., 2 Perc.

- 5) *31st May, No. 2, 2011* (work in progress) for viola ensemble with other instruments (to be confirmed) – see chapter 2

- 6) *The Arrival of Spring* (2022) for Workshop Jazz Collective¹⁵² – see chapter 2
Alto Sax., Ten. Sax., Bari. Sax., Tpt., Tbn., Pno., Db., Dr.

¹⁵¹ <https://www.rncm.ac.uk/arkensemble/>

¹⁵² <http://www.workshopjazz.co.uk/>

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2 Idealism

The composition process behind one individual work can be lengthy. From initial conception of ideas to the finished product, it has sometimes taken me months or even years. When frequently surrounded by parameters and restrictions, it feels more important than ever for me to cling to my original musical vision as far as possible. The composer Chris Marshall (b. 1956) inadvertently reminded me just how much I like to put my musical vision first, before becoming too concerned with practical constraints.

“A musical vision is always indispensable for me. I cannot write a note without it.”¹

Without realism, there is always a risk that constant obsession with idealism can become denial. When I use the term ‘idealism’ as a composer, I have in mind the best imaginable outcome based on my musical vision. Whether or not this is close to achievable, it seems to be an effective motivator.

In this chapter, I will explore the significance of the term ‘idealism’:

- 1) I will introduce my first two research questions on the concept of a compositional ‘voice’ and my manner of exploring it.
- 2) I will discuss my composition processes that have helped me to explore my compositional ‘voice’.

¹ See Correspondence

My own 'ideals' or values may not necessarily differ much from those of others composers. According to Donald Hunsberger:

“The symphonic wind ensemble is a concert organisation, devoted to granting the composer and his audience the most faithful performances of his music. It is an ensemble which calls upon the strictest disciplines possible, for the composer – in establishing his wants and needs; for the conductor – in placing the composer and his music above personal promotion and peripheral activity interference; for the performer – to assume his rightful position as a legitimate symphonic musician dedicated to the furtherance of wind performance; and, for the audience - to discard past prejudices regarding wind music and wind performance as second class musical citizens.”²

These values are relatable in that I also like to challenge performers and audiences while, if possible, bringing them together rather than alienating them. I should stress that to 'challenge' is meant to terms of inspiring – rather than imposing stress and strain – on audiences.

² Battisti, 2018, p. 89

2.1 The 'Band' Sound

The composer Morton Gould (1913-1996) presents an intriguing discussion around defining the 'band' sound. The significance is the idea that a composer can further define their 'band' sound by avoiding instruments as well as including them.

"The sound of a band is many things to many people. It is often identifiable by what it lacks as what it includes, by what it doesn't contain as what it does"³

Gould expresses preference of the word 'weight' over 'doubling', advocating the wind band medium as a concept to match that of the orchestra.

"...I propose the word "weight" instead of doubling, because again we must start with a concept. And this concept stems from the creative source, partly realized through the composer's instrumentation and completely realized when played...Under certain conditions a solo instrument will sound *louder* than a group of similar instruments...in the band a solo clarinet against clarinets – or more obviously a single oboe."⁴

Gould articulates his views regarding fast and precise rhythms in parts involving one player or multiple players.

"...fast precise tonguing is practically impossible by more than one player to a part, and the result is not flattering to the composer's intentions nor, for that matter, to the players themselves...reinforcing tends to dilute rather than strengthen, to diffuse rather than concentrate."⁵

³ Gould, 1962, p. 36

⁴ Gould, 1962, p. 37

⁵ Gould, 1962, p. 46

2.1.1 Els Encantats (2022)

Els Encantats (2022), a single movement work for wind orchestra written during 2021 and early 2022, is named after the Serra del Encantats meaning Mountains of the Enchanted. These are two mountain peaks called Gran Encantat and Petit Encantat and they are located next to the Sant Maurici lake in the Pyrenees in Catalonia, Spain. According to legend, these particular mountains were formed when two hunters escaped mass in order to hunt the chamois – a goat-antelope – but were cursed and petrified, turning them into vertical peaks.

My focus was often on the emotions of a hypothetical mountain climber, including tension and fear, contrasted with the pleasant beauty of Gran Encantat, Petit Encantat and Sant Maurici lake. When writing the score, I was keen to adopt a strongly Spanish stylistic influence, as exemplified by the prevalent Phrygian mode. *Els Encantats* opens with a tentative introduction before embarking on an unsettling journey towards a dramatic conclusion.

In *Els Encantats*, all three clarinet parts share a unison line, arguably adding a little more ‘weight’⁶ to the top part of the ‘accompaniment’. This suited my needs perfectly, considering the absence of intricate rhythmic detail in these particular clarinet and saxophone chords.

47 Tpt. 1.2
p
Cl. 1.2.3 & Ten. Sax.
pp p
B. Cl. & Bari. Sax.
pp p
Tba. & Db.

Ex. 1 – *Els Encantats* (2022) – b. 47-48 (score in C)

⁶ Not to be confused with volume

2.2 Specific Approximate Character

Gould compares his ideology and the 'band' sound to that of the orchestra.

“The orchestra historically has altered in degree but not in essence. This is what we must try to give the band – a specific approximate character – on which the composer can presume.”⁷

I would tend to link 'specific approximate character' with soundscape. The concept seems open-minded to the finer details, yet not at all vague in terms of the musical vision. For me, this often triggers the start of the composition process. The clearest examples of this in my portfolio are ***Spectacular*** (2020-2021) and ***Masquerade*** (2021).

In many ways, ***Sylvans*** (2019) and ***Scenes from Bagni di Lucca*** (2020) are also important examples of an intricate process triggered by a clear musical vision. These are discussed in detail in this chapter. However, the journey for each was complicated by discovery as well as idealistic and pragmatic decisions. In both cases, these lead to end results that were faithful to the original visions associated with them, but elongated and embellished with many further developments.

By contrast, the visions for both *Spectacular* and *Masquerade* were more elaborate in length and variety from the point of initial conception. This meant that further additions during the composition process were far fewer than those in *Sylvans* and *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca*.

⁷ Gould, 1962, p. 36

2.2.1 Spectacular (2020-2021)

During 2020, the soundscape for much of *Spectacular* (2020-2021) was triggered by my fondness for brass arrangements of works by Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612).⁸ Large ensemble activity was quite out of the question due to Covid-19 safety measures.

Spectacular opens exclusively with brass, on a passacaglia-like bass. The brass section carries much of the primary material almost throughout the work. During the opening, a couple of sweet and soft secondary themes emerge, which become more important later. After a brief episode of contemplation, there is a sudden transition into a tango which builds and offers some surprising mood changes. When the pace of the opening returns, it is a while before a strong resolution is reached, after which the conclusion is soft and peaceful.

A reasonably clear musical vision for much of the work was already formed before writing began officially. This provided me with as much material as I needed, whenever I needed it. No compromises were made in order to achieve my desired soundscape.

The image shows a musical score for a brass ensemble, specifically measures 4 through 10 of a transposed score for the piece 'Spectacular' (2021). The score is arranged for eight parts: Ob. 1, Hn. 1, Tpt. 1, Cor., Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, Euph., and Tba. The music is in 4/4 time and features a passacaglia-like bass line. Dynamics include pp, p, and mp.

Ex. 2 – *Spectacular* (2021) – b. 4-10 (transposed score)

⁸ such as Canzon 28 (1608) arranged for four trumpets and four trombones

2.2.2 Masquerade (2021)

When I was asked to write *Masquerade* (2021) for ‘orchestral winds’⁹ – with percussion, cello and double bass – from Manchester Camerata, I decided to treat the ensemble as I would treat the instruments of an orchestra. I was keen to draw on influences such as Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) in *Rapsodie Espagnole* (1907-1908), Claude Debussy (1862-1918) in *Jeux* (1912) and Manuel de Falla (1876-1946) in *Noches en los jardines de España* (1915).

I regarded each instrumental combination as having its own ‘specific approximate character’. The recurring texture of the opening – instrumental groups interweaving to create a continuous harmony built on the whole-tone scale – is one example:

Adagio (♩ = 84)

Fl. 1.2

Ob. 1.2

Cl. 1.2 (A)

Bsn. 1.2

Hn. 1.2

Tpt. 1.2 (C)

Timp.

Vc.

D. B.

Ex. 3 – *Masquerade* – b. 1-3 (transposed score)

⁹ Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons, Horns and Trumpets

I wrote *Longing* (2020) for a small orchestra before adapting for a large wind band. I open-mindedly considered my options when writing the adaptation. Sometimes, changes in orchestration were necessary, especially where I had previously given extended passages to the string section. However, where possible, I did not change the number or combination of instruments at all.

In Excerpt 4, the sonority that I had in mind was quite specific:

- 1) I only intended on including a small number of instruments in the texture.
- 2) All of the instruments needed to be individual, without doubling.

182 (♩ = 84)
ONE PLAYER ONLY

Cl. 1

Alto Sax. 1

Bsn. 1

Hn. 1

ONE PLAYER ONLY cup mute

ONE PLAYER ONLY cup mute

ONE PLAYER ONLY cup mute

ONE PLAYER ONLY con sord.

ONE PLAYER ONLY cup mute

ONE PLAYER ONLY cup mute

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

S. Bass

pizz.

p

mf

Ex. 4 – *Longing* (2020) – b. 182-184 (transposed score)

2.3 Freedom

I am often tempted to link my concept of ‘ideal’ with freedom. Lack of restrictions can feel liberating. Personally, I relish the opportunity to specify my own ‘ideal’ choice of instrumentation. My definition of ‘ideal instrumentation’ varies from one composition to another and is also determined by my concepts and ideas. Crucial to my sense of freedom included is the choice *not* to use instruments as well as to use them.

[The sound of a band] “...is often identifiable by what it lacks as what it includes, by what it doesn’t contain as what it does”¹⁰

During the opening of **Spectacular** (2021), my priority was to feel free to gradually introduce a particular combination of instruments, but only when it felt right to do so for each part. Many instruments in the band are *tacet* during the opening. I was careful to ensure that any instruments that were present in the texture operated as single instruments without any doubling.

The image displays a musical score for the opening of 'Spectacular' (2021), measures 4-10. The score is transposed and includes parts for eight instruments: Ob. 1, Hn. 1, Tpt. 1, Cor., Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, Euph., and Tba. The music is in 4/4 time. The Ob. 1 part begins with a rest and then plays a short phrase starting at measure 5. The Hn. 1 part plays a melodic line starting at measure 4. The Tpt. 1 part plays a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 4. The Cor. part plays a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 4. The Tbn. 1 part plays a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 4. The Tbn. 2 part plays a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 4. The Euph. part plays a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 4. The Tba. part plays a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 4. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *p*, and *mp*.

Ex. 5 – *Spectacular* (2021) – b. 4-10 (transposed score)

¹⁰ Gould, 1962, p. 36

2.3.1 Prelude (2021)

As a composer and violist, I initially wrote a sketch for viola ensemble. I then decided to adapt it for concert band. The inspiration came to me during the Covid-19 pandemic as I looked forward to spring in 2021. The imagery is simple - that of the sun coming out, after a wintery opening similar to that employed by Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) in the opening of *Winter* from *The Four Seasons* (1718-1720). **Prelude** (2021) is scored for a large instrumentation to increase the textural possibilities.

Although 'ideal instrumentation' should not be confused with large instrumentation, I recognise that a larger instrumentation can increase textural and timbral possibilities. Excerpt 6 illustrates some of the benefits of exploring different combinations in a large instrumentation.

17

Cl. 1. 2. 3. *mf* *pp*

Alto Sax. 1. 2. *mp*

Ten. Sax. *mp*

Bari. Sax. *mp*

Bsn. *mf* *p* *pp*

Hn. 1. 2. *mp* *pp* a 2

Hn. 3. 4. *mp*

Tbn. 1. 2. 3. *pp*

W.B. *mp*

Mar. *mp* *pp*

Ex. 6 – Prelude (2021) – b. 17-24 (transposed score)

Crucial to my sense of freedom included was the choice *not* to use instruments as well as to use them. [The sound of a band] "...is often identifiable by what it lacks as what it includes, by what it doesn't contain as what it does"¹¹

During the opening of ***Spectacular*** (2021), my priority was to feel free to gradually introduce a particular combination of instruments, but only when it felt right to do so for each part. Many instruments in the band are *tacet* during the opening. I was careful to ensure that any instruments that were present in the texture operated as single instruments without any doubling.

I had become particularly drawn to British Brass Band influences such as those of George Lloyd (1913-1998) in *Diversion on a Bass Theme* (1986). For this reason, and rather unusually for me, I assigned the brass section the primary role, including a cornet as well as three trumpets in the instrumentation.

Ex. 7 – *Spectacular* (2021) – b. 4-10 (transposed score)

¹¹ Gould, 1962, p. 36

2.4 What does the compositional ‘voice’ mean to me and why does it matter?

It is important to emphasise that as far as I am concerned, the compositional ‘voice’ is both optional and changeable.¹² Rather like the human voice, for example of an actor, I regard the compositional ‘voice’ as diverse and find that it may take on different forms.¹³

My preoccupation over the concept of the compositional ‘voice’ is not constant. In other words, it does not always matter as much on some days as others. Therefore, I do not always allow it to become the main factor in my decisions.

I do not think that there is a requirement to present audiences with a compositional ‘voice’ in order to demonstrate sophistication. However, I feel that I can choose to do so if it suits my purposes. Therefore, I would regard the ‘voice’ as optional.

There are multiple conundrums for me if I should feel the need to present my ‘voice’:

- 1) The most important assessors of the ‘voice’ are most likely to be the audience.
- 2) The conductor and the performers may confuse or dilute the presentation of my ‘voice’ before it reaches the audience.

There is often a direct link between my compositional ‘voice’ and my ideas. However, as a composer I am at least partly responsible for the precise sound of my ideas, whereas I believe that the audience have the final say on the sound of my ‘voice’. This makes the ‘voice’ rather difficult to define.

¹² This open-minded interpretation of a compositional ‘voice’ contrasts with the likely expectation of consistency of a ‘brand’.

¹³ This may raise questions, for others, around sincerity. (see Chapter 5 – Suggestions for Further Research)

2.4.1 Filtering

I regard my compositional ‘voice’ as the sum-total effect of my ideas, usually after I have applied a ‘filter’ to them.

[Adam Gorb] “...filters styles through his own voice rather than simply mimicking others.”¹⁴

Although ‘style’ and ‘idea’ are not the same terms, I recognise an intriguing link between this and my own manner of ‘filtering’ of ideas: the two ‘filtering’ processes are carried out with the compositional ‘voice’ in mind.

Frank Ticheli expresses his aim of allowing more of his own ‘voice’ into the score for *Blue Shades* (1995).

“I experienced tremendous joy during the creation of *Playing With Fire*, and my love for early jazz is expressed in every bar of the concerto. However, after completing it I knew that the traditional jazz influences dominated the work, leaving little room for my own musical voice to come through. I felt a strong need to compose another work, one that would combine my love of early jazz with my own musical style.”¹⁵

It is particularly interesting to learn from the 25th Anniversary Edition of the score for *Blue Shades* that since the original score, Frank Ticheli was enlightened about the work by the conductors:

“...I have learned from countless conductors who have shared their insights and unique interpretations, many of which managed to reveal things I didn’t know had even existed in the piece; and all the while their ideas have enriched my thinking about the piece and enhanced my own interpretation.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Feldman, 2012, p. 90

¹⁵ https://manhattanbeachmusic.com/html/blue_shades.html

¹⁶ https://www.manhattanbeachmusiconline.com/frank_ticheli/blue-shades-25th-anniversary-edition-virtual-score.html

2.4.2 Motivation

Claire Taylor-Jay challenges the “uncritical employment” of the concept by “musicologists, critics and the wider world” of a ‘voice’ as something that the composer must aim to ‘find’ on a fundamental level. The “uncritical employment” of the ‘voice’ concept is challenged as masking “...a host of ideological assumptions about what makes a good composer...”¹⁷

Different composers may not be equally concerned with exploring their compositional ‘voice’ or ‘voices’ if, for example, one composer’s interests are primarily commercial and another is self-serving.

[Ken Hesketh (b. 1968) stated] “...I wanted to write under a pseudonym to maintain a distance between what I considered juvenilia/commercial work – for instance Danceries – and what I considered my actual, modernist ‘concert’, compositional voice...”¹⁸

Personally, I would not always consider the ‘voice’ to be my top priority.¹⁹ However, for as long as the preoccupation with a ‘voice’ does not lead to excessive limitations on my creativity, the concept of a ‘voice’ can provide a powerful motivation for me; the emotional excitement of pursuing my ‘voice’, which is illusive.

With experience, I have gradually become less concerned with discovering a ‘voice’ of my own, but if ever I sense one or several emerging, I do not complain when it happens. Furthermore, if I intentionally explore my compositional ‘voice’, I am more inclined to develop musical ideas that may prevail a work or works with greater confidence and facility.²⁰ I have found that my individual compositional ideas may contribute towards my emerging compositional ‘voice’ through some compositions more than others. Therefore, my motivation is to at least try to explore a possible ‘voice’, or to discover effective ideas in the act of trying.

¹⁷ Taylor-Jay, 2009, p. 85

¹⁸ See Correspondence

¹⁹ There are plenty of other criteria when considering how my music might be perceived by the audience.

²⁰ This may sometimes lead to the development of a system rather than an actual ‘voice’.

2.5 To what extent can I explore my compositional ‘voice’ when writing for wind bands and wind ensembles?

Compared to some verbs commonly associated with the artistic ‘voice’, such as to ‘discover’, ‘develop’ or ‘preserve’, I prefer ‘explore’ as it seems more open-minded. ‘Voice’ exploration has taken different forms during my compositional processes.

Having worked with the wind band at the University of Leeds – with multiple percussionists – I appreciate the potential to explore different treatments of the percussion section. *Serenade in E flat* (2018) often needed light percussion – both ‘dry’ and resonant – to help emphasise the transition to woodwinds and muted trumpet when they take over.

The image shows a musical score for measures 74-80 of 'Serenade in E flat' (2018), transposed. The score is for a wind band and includes the following parts and dynamics:

- Fl. 1. 2: *pp*
- Ob. 1. 2: *pp*
- Cl. 1. 2: *pp*
- 1. Tpt. 2.: *p* (senza sord.), *mf* (con sord.)
- 3. 4. Tpt. 2.: *p* (senza sord.), *mp*
- Tbn. 1: *p*, *mp*
- Tri.: *p* (S. D. stick), *p* (l. v.)
- Susp. Cym.: *p* (l. v.)
- T. Bl.: *pp*
- Tamb.: *p*, *f*, *pp*
- W.B.: *p*

Ex. 8 – *Serenade in E flat* (2018) – b. 74-80 (transposed score)

There are two uses of percussion in *Els Encantats* (2022):

- 1) The 'treble' and 'bass' groups are enhanced by different percussion 'groups'.

(♩ = 120)

Fl., Ob. & Cl.
Tpt. (con sord.)
Pno. red.
Hn. & Euph.
Saxes.
Tbn. & Tba.
Susp. Cym.
Dr.
Bongos
Congas

Ex. 9 – *Els Encantats* (2022) – b. 235-239 (score in C)

- 2) The percussion is given a core role to the percussion section, with violent gestures from the winds that I positioned intending them to sound random.

(♩ = 120)

Fl., Ob. & Cl.
Cl. & Saxes.
Fl., Cl. & Saxes.
Pno. red.
Hn.
Tbn.
Hn.
Tbn.
Euph. & Tba.
Susp. Cym.
Dr.
Bongos
Congas
Agogos

Ex. 10 – *Els Encantats* (2022) – b. 240-243 (score in C)

2.6 “Owning” (staying in control)

For each work, I try to make conscious decisions relating to the finished product and to the whole composition process. This level of control often seems central to exploring my compositional ‘voice’ is maintaining a sense of ownership. The criteria for control are personal to each composer.

Gunther Schuller (1925-2015) provides an example of control in *Symphony No. 3 In Praise of Winds* (1981),²¹ which employs a complex harmonic language throughout. It also calls for an elaborate instrumentation, with suggested numbers of musicians on each part,²² and parts for two contrabass clarinets.²³

Adam Gorb set quite particular terms in *Farewell* (2008)²⁴ by dividing the ensemble into two antiphonal groups. The first group²⁵ is characterised as desperate and anguished. The second group²⁶ is characterised as calming and introspective.²⁷

For me, control often seems to revolve around instrumentation and the treatment of instruments. This is most likely because many of the considerations around balance stem from the instrumentation.

²¹ Schuller, 1981

²² <https://wasbe.org/symphony-no-3-in-praise-of-winds-for-large-wind-orchestra-by-gunther-schuller-usa-1925-2015>

²³ <https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/32677/In-Praise-of-Winds-Symphony-for-Large-Wind-Orchestra-Gunther-Schuller/>

²⁴ Gorb, 2008

²⁵ Eb Cl., 4 Bb Cl., 4 Saxes, Eb Tpt., 2 Bb Tpt., 3 Tbn, 2 Euph., 2 Tba. and ‘harsh’ percussion (such as Xyl., Clash Cym., S. D.)

²⁶ Picc., 2 Fl., 2 Ob., C. A., B. Cl., 2 Bsn., 4 Hn., Timp. and ‘gentle’ percussion (such as W. Ch., Tub. B., Glock.)

²⁷ <https://adamgorb.co.uk/programme-notes-farewell/>

2.6.1 Sylvans (2019)

As a highly challenging in orchestral balance, I decided to write **Sylvans** (2019) – a single movement work for solo viola and wind ensemble. My musical vision in *Sylvans* was largely defined by an ‘ideal’ scenario involving a spectrum from *solo* intimacy to a larger ensemble sound. This vision was further cemented after I attended concerts by several different bands, each with large brass sections but a relatively small section of flutes and clarinets in a small semi-circle at the front. Visually, these instrumentations appeared to me rather like pyramid structures on the stage. I then started to imagine a single violist at the front, partly enclosed by the small semi-circle of flautists and clarinetists.

As per the Eastman Model, I specified the exact number of instruments and players for each. As a violist, I knew that the viola is easily lost in a texture. Therefore, the aim was to pursue an approach of transparent orchestration so that the viola would be heard. To ensure this, I often provided only light accompaniment and occasionally no accompaniment.

For the opening of *Sylvans*, I was able to pass the melody between the several *solo* instruments without accompaniment. There were considerations around balance against the viola and the sonorities I had in mind were extremely specific. Therefore, it was important to be able to instruct one player per part for the opening texture:

Adagietto
(♩ = 84)

Hn. 1
Pno. red. *p espr.* *p espr.* *poco*

8 Cl. 1
Pno. *pp dolce* *p espr.* *mf espr.*

Ex. 11 – *Sylvans* (2019) – b. 1-13 (score in C)

The exploration of a ‘voice’ was aided by marrying together my experience as a composer and violist. Just as playing the viola myself affords me control over interpretation, it also provides opportunities for improvisation that can turn into compositional sketches. Through separate sessions of improvisation and composition in alternation, I was able to explore many of my ideas of *Sylvans*²⁸ in a practical way.

Adagietto
(♩ = 84)

The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-6) features Horn 1 and Solo Viola. The second system (measures 7-12) features Clarinet 1 and Solo Viola. The third system (measures 13-18) features Alto Flute, Clarinet 1, Bass Clarinet, Horn 2, Solo Viola, Harp, and Double Bass. The Solo Viola part is particularly detailed with dynamics like *pp*, *mf espr.*, and *p*, and includes a triplet in measure 16. The Harp part includes a chord sequence: $D \flat C \flat B \flat / E \flat F \flat G \flat A \flat$.

Ex. 12 – *Sylvans* (2019) – b. 1-18 (transposed score)

²⁸ This included ideas that were subsequently assigned to other instruments as well as those for the viola.

2.6.2 Coast (2021)

After writing *Sylvans*, I made a mental note to try to use some of the ideas again in a new context, particularly those that I had only used once or twice in the form of partly hidden counter-melodies or bass lines. During one of my first visits to a coastal beach since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, I found myself able to imagine different uses for these ideas.

Many of the ideas that I had in mind before starting **Coast** (2021) were not really ‘chamber’ ideas. However, I was asked to write for an exact list of fifteen instruments.²⁹ I had to fight my own prejudice surrounding this instrumentation – that only fifteen instruments might feel limiting.

My challenge, as I saw it, was to make the prescribed instrumentation feel like my own choice. I planned to ‘own’ the instrumentation and, more importantly, the choices and the manner of orchestration. The instruments available to me at the time happened to fit ‘ideally’ with my ideas and at no point did I feel like I had to compromise. For the first performance of **Coast**, the BBC Philharmonic wind section players were spread around the RNCM Concert Hall, ideally for the acoustic.

Since there were no expectations that all players should be kept playing all of the time, I took advantage of the freedom to write an extended transition for the flute. In performance, I knew that any individual player could treat it personally and exercise freedom within the general tempo. This freedom was aided by the *rubato* instruction and by the lack of accompaniment during these bars:

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Flute (Fl.) and Suspended Cymbal (Susp. Cym.). The Flute part is written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It begins at measure 44 with a *pp* dynamic. The melody is characterized by slurs and grace notes, and is marked *rubato*. The dynamic changes to *pp dolce* in the final measure. The Suspended Cymbal part is written on a single line with a *ppp* dynamic and a *p* dynamic, with a *(l. v.)* instruction indicating a change in articulation or dynamics.

Ex. 13 – *Coast* (2021) – b. 44-46

²⁹ Fl., Ob., 2 Cl., B. Cl., Alto Sax., Bsn., Hn., 2 Tpt., Tbn., Tba., 2 Perc.

Coast (2021) and **1 January, 2011** (2020) both open with a single line. In both cases, by focusing on the mid-register, this helps to manage any expectation of more extreme registers. The effect of a wide register, when it happens, is more dramatic.

Andante (♩ = 72)
Pno. red. *pp*

14 Fl., Ob., A. Sax. Tutti
Pno. red. *p cresc.* *mf*
Hn. & Bsn.

Ex. 14 – *Coast* (2021) – b. 1-16 (score in C)

Larghetto (♩ = 84)
Pno. red. *pp*
Tpt. 1 Tpt. 1 & Hn.
Tpt. 2

18 Tpt. Tutti
Pno. red. *mf*
Hn. & Tbn. Cl. & Bsn.

Ex. 15 – *1 January, 2011* (2021) – b. 1-21 (score in C)

These textural choices helped to me to avoid accidentally defining ‘rules’ regarding the formal structures of each individual work: I did not feel bound to a specific formal structure. They also helped me to feel in control of the uniqueness of the end result.

To write *Masquerade* (2021) for Manchester Camerata, I based the composition around the presence of a cello in the ensemble. I assigned the cello different roles:

1) The cello provided a bridge between the double bass and the winds.

Vivace
48 a 2

Fl. 1.2
Ob. 1
Cl. (A) 1, 2
Bsn. 1.2
Hn. 1, 2
Vc. (pizz.)
Db. (pizz.)

Ex. 16 – *Masquerade* (2021) – b. 48-53 (transposed score)

3) The cello also assumed more melodic roles.

Moderato
65

Fl. 1.2
Ob. 1
Hn. 1.2
Tpt. (C) 1.2
Vc. arco
Db. pizz.

Ex. 17 – *Masquerade* (2021) – b. 65-67 (transposed score)

2.6.3 Feeling Free (2023)

I wrote *Feeling Free* (2023) with a rock band in mind,³⁰ based on sketches that, initially, did not feel particularly individual. Later, I was strongly influenced by music from the Historically Black College University Band at Jackson State University.³¹ With the aim of subtly pushing harmonic complexity, I was motivated to adapt the song for brass band and then for concert band, keeping to the same broad harmonic structure. The limit to harmonic material of the original song was crucial to establishing and developing a pattern across all versions, gradually adding elements of subtle originality.

Critical to exploring my compositional ‘voice’ was the attempt at writing a version for a rock band, then for brass band followed by wind band. Although the main ideas did not change fundamentally, the new perspectives differences in timbre and ensemble formations encouraged me to review my ideas each time.

All versions of *Feeling Free* open with a particularly sparse and delicate texture. In the version for wind band, the sparseness of the opening enabled me to present woodwind including flutes in a particularly soft and delicate register:

(♩ = c. 92 - 112)

2 Fl.
Cl.
B. Cl.

Ex. 18 – *Feeling Free* (2023) – b. 1-2 (score in C)

³⁰ Two singers, two electric guitars, bass guitar, drum-kit

³¹ Including their arrangement of Alexander ‘Skip’ Scarborough’s *Love Ballad*

The main repeated bass line pattern that prevails Feeling Free is best represented in Excerpt 18.

(♩ = c. 92 - 112)

13 E. Bass

Pno. red. *pp*

Ex. 19 – Feeling Free (2023) – b. 13-14 (score in C)

The advantage of a simple harmonic structure as a starting point was that I felt inspired to add unexpected ‘twists’ in rhythm, texture, or orchestration. I was able to do so without too much difficulty, knowing that even small ‘twists’ would have an impact.

(♩ = c. 92 - 112)

Picc. *pp*

Fl. 1.2 *p* *pp*

Ob. 1.2 *p* *pp*

C. A. *p*

Cl. 1.2 *p* *pp*

B. Cl. *mp* *p*

Ten. Sax. *mp* *p*

Bari. Sax. *mp* *p*

Hn. 1-4 *pp* *p* *fp* *pp* *p* *fp*

1 Tpt. *p* *fp* *pp*

2.3 *p*

Tbn. 1.2.3 *p* *pp* *p* *pp*

Euph. *mf* *p*

Tba. *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *f*

Timp. *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

Dr. *p*

Glock. *pp*

Ex. 20 – Feeling Free (2023) – b. 100-104 (transposed score)

Excerpts 20 and 21 show a short interlude within the brass and wind band versions of **Feeling Free** during bass instruments – unusually – play the main theme. The homogeneity of the brass band instruments made it easier to distribute the accompaniment chords, also helped by the plentiful supply of cornet parts:

(♩ = c. 92 - 112)

68
Sep. Cor. & Solo Cor.
p
2nd & 3rd Cor.
p
Pno. red.
Hn.
p
Bar.
p
Tbn.
mf *p*
Eb Bass
f
Bb Bass
f
Euph.
Eb Bass
mf *p*
Rep. Cor.
p
Flug.
Timp.
mf

Ex. 21 – *Feeling Free* (2023) version for brass band – b. 68-73 (score in C)

Deciding on an effective way to achieve homogeneity in the wind band chords was more difficult, but it was the constraint of the soft *piano* dynamic that helped me to narrow down my options, indirectly aided by similar orchestral examples.³²

(♩ = c. 92 - 112)

68
Fl. 1, Ob. & Cl. 1
p
Fl. 2 & Cl. 2
p
Tpt.
p
Saxes
p
Pno. red.
Hn.
p
Tbn.
mf *p*
Eb Bass
f
Bb Bass
f
Euph.
mf *p*
Fl. 1 & Ob.
Fl. 2 & Cl. 1
Cl. 2 & C.A.
Timp.
mf

Ex. 22 – *Feeling Free* (2023) version for wind band – b. 68-73 (score in C)

³² Vaughan Williams' *Symphony No. 6* (1947) 1st movement and Alban Berg's *Violin Concerto* (1935)

2.6.4 Derivative Composition Practice – 1 January, 2011 (2021)

David Hockney created a series of fifty-one iPad drawings between January and June in 2011, *The Arrival of Spring in Woldgate, East Yorkshire in Twenty Eleven (2011)*. Starting in 2018, I began writing a cycle of short works, or ‘movements’, based on my impressions of each drawing. So far, the existing ‘movements’ have all been written at different times – and sometimes for different forces – but they are linked to each other in some way:

- 7) **1 January, 2011 (2021)** – written for viola ensemble, adapted for string orchestra, then for part of the RNCM ArkEnsemble instrumentation³³
- 8) *27 April, 2011 (2021)* – written for viola ensemble, adapted for string orchestra, then for the full RNCM ArkEnsemble instrumentation³⁴
- 9) *3 January, 2011 (2020)* – written for viola ensemble, adapted for the London Clarinet Choir, then for wind orchestra
- 10) *6 May, 2011 (2021)* – written for viola ensemble and for wind ensemble simultaneously

By writing these four ‘movements’ for viola ensemble first, before adapting for other forces, I felt more inclined than usual to provide unifying features across the cycle. Equally significant was the initial need to avoid the ‘bass’ register below the viola C string. When writing the adaptations, I did occasionally break this particular mould. However, there were longer term benefits of having focused on the ‘mid-register’, including – most importantly – that I had a wide choice of instruments suited to it.

³³ 2 Fl. (2nd dbl. Picc. & A. Fl.), Ob., C. A., 2 Cl., Alto Sax., Ten. Sax., 2 Bsn., 2 Hn., 2 Tpt., 2 Tbn.

³⁴ 2 Fl. (2nd doubling Picc.), Ob., C. A., 2 Cl. (1st dbl. Eb Cl., 2nd dbl. B. Cl.), Alto Sax., Ten. Sax., 2 Bsn., 2 Hn., 2 Tpt., 2 Tbn., 2 Perc., Db.

To me, the opening few bars of **1 January, 2011** also summarise the entire cycle, starting with soft, bleak, cold wintery dissonances that open out into warm, luscious minor 7th chords.

Larghetto (♩ = 84)

Piano reduction

pp

Tpt., Hn., Tbn.

12 Bsn., Tpt., Hn. Hn. Tutti

Pno. red. *pp* *mp* *p* *pppp*

Tbn.

20 Tpt., Hn., Tbn.

Pno. red. *mf* *f* *p* *mf* *pp*

Ex. 23 – 1 January, 2011 (2021) – b. 1-26 (score in C)

I regard my certain aspects of my practice as ‘derivative composition practice’. This already well-established approach is described in detail by the composer Nathaniel Chivers (b. 1992) as he reflects on his own practice.³⁵

[This involved] “...taking fragments from earlier compositions and transferring them to form a new piece for a different instrument or ensemble.” [This in turn] “...causes deviations to occur.” [The deviations] “...are then used to purposely generate new works...”, [a process which repeats] “...deriving new pieces from the previous compositions and forming a series of pieces resembling a family tree.”³⁶

However, my specific derivative process is motivated only by generation of material rather than by aesthetic considerations.

“By recycling materials, a composer can explore ideas more fully through multiple perspectives. I think employing such techniques can create multiple pieces effectively sharing themes, gestures, and an overall sound world. For composer/performers, this could serve as a catalyst for employing their own instrument for composing for other instrumental forces.”³⁷

In my case, I believe that I was able to explore my own compositional ‘voice’ thoroughly. This is largely due to my becoming immersed in a process that was structured around specific harmonic rules over a period of several years. In the process, I found it easier to gradually gather wisdom and fresh insights overtime.

³⁵ <https://www.nchiverscomposer.com/about>

³⁶ Chivers, 2022, abstract

³⁷ Chivers, 2022, p. 79

2.7 Journey towards *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca*

I feel it is worth my telling the full story of another ‘derivative process’ that began in 2011 and eventually led to the completion of *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* in 2020.

This is the timeline:

- 1) *Three Illusions of Peganum Harmala* (2011) for viola³⁸ and electronics³⁹
- 2) *Three Illusions of Peganum Harmala* (2013) for viola and orchestra
- 3) Holiday in Bagni di Lucca in 2015
- 4) *Peganum Harmala* (2018) for RNCM sinfonietta workshop based on Witold Lutoslawski’s *Chain I* (1983) and *Symphony No. 3* (1973-1983)
- 5) *Transformations* (2018)⁴⁰ for RNCM octet after George Benjamin’s *Octet* (1978)
- 6) *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2019) for RNCM sinfonietta workshop
- 7) *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2019-2020) in versions for large wind ensemble and for RNCM Symphony Orchestra

³⁸ live

³⁹ Fixed media

⁴⁰ Fl. (dbl. Picc.), Cl., Cel., Perc., Vln., Vla., Vc., Db.

Three Illusions of Peganum Harmala (2011) is an acousmatic work for live viola and electronics, which I wrote for violist, Martin Outram, to perform with an electronic background. The electronic element consists of rapid and random gestures resembling wind chimes in two distinct timbres, generally heard at different times. The viola responds to the electronic gestures with only a few occasional notes or cells.

Using software such as Reaper and Logic, I transposed some recorded samples of definite pitch to notes belonging to pitch sets that I later termed ‘harsh’ (Ex. 24) and ‘mellow’ (Ex. 25).



Ex. 24 – ‘harsh’ pitch set



Ex. 25 – ‘mellow’ pitch set

For ***Three Illusions of Peganum Harmala*** (2013) for orchestra, I significantly increased the length and detail. In this orchestral adaptation, I reimagined both the viola part for the violist, Paul Beckett, and the accompaniment for the RNCM Symphony Orchestra. The enhanced viola part often acts as a mediator between the two timbral groups heard in the orchestral accompaniment, rich with pitched percussion to imitate the original electronic element.

2.7.1 Bagni di Lucca

The musical inspiration for *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020), quite independent from any of the material derived from the ‘harsh’ and ‘mellow’ pitch sets, began on holiday as I took in the site of the Chiesa di San Pietro Apostolo from a distance on a hill, during a holiday in Bagni di Lucca.

Most of my inspiration was based on extremely soft, tranquil ambient sounds, though this included the distant Church bells, covering only two notes. From that day, my musical vision developed slowly, but I was keen to write a piece that captured my impressions of the atmosphere and included an exact quote of the bells. This broad structure slowly developed in my mind over several more years.

The image shows a musical score for 'Scenes from Bagni di Lucca'. It features a grand staff with a piano reduction (Pno. red.) and orchestral parts for Saxophones (Saxes.), Trumpets (Tpt.), and Trombones (Tbn.). The score includes dynamic markings: *f*, *p*, *ppp*, and *ff*. A 'Tutti' marking is placed above the Saxophones. A 'Bells (background)' part is indicated with a wavy line. The piano reduction part shows a sequence of chords and dynamics: *f*, *p*, *ppp*, and *ff*. The orchestral parts for Saxophones, Trumpets, and Trombones are shown with various chordal textures and dynamics.

Ex. 26 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* – musical vision of 2015 holiday (score in C)

2.7.2 Peganum Harmala (2018) for RNCM sinfonietta workshop

Rather like the Eastman Model, a sinfonietta workshop at RNCM generally allows the composition student some choice within the available instrumentation.⁴¹

By using limited aleatoric textures I gained new perspectives. I later decided on conventional notation when it came to developing *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) from the initial sketch to the finished work.

Peganum Harmala (2018) began as one movement for a wind ensemble and percussion only, within the available sinfonietta instrumentation. I subsequently added some other movements to make use of the neglected instruments.

Excerpt 27 illustrates the balance between specificity and limited aleatoricism:

⁴¹ Fl./Picc., Oboe/C. A., Cl./B. Cl., Bsn., Hn., Tpt., Tbn., Pno., Hp., Perc., 2 Vln., Vla., Vc., Db.

A

♩ = c. 60-90

Flute *pp* c. 1" repeat ad lib.

Oboe

Clarinet in B \flat *pp* repeat ad lib.

Bassoon

Horn in F

Trumpet in C

Tubular Bells

Harp D: C \flat B \flat / E \flat F \flat G \flat A \flat

B c. 10-12"

Fl. *p* A3 c. 2" A4 c. 6-8" c. 2-3" repeat in any order ad lib.

Cl. *p* c. 2" repeat in any order ad lib. *f* c. 2-3" repeat in any order ad lib.

Hp. *f* p. d. l. t. (l. v.) B \flat G \flat B \flat / G \flat C \flat B \flat

Ex. 27 – Pegalum Harmala (2018) – 1st movement – opening (transposed score)

2.7.3 Scenes from Bagni di Lucca (2019) for RNCM sinfonietta workshop

The sinfonietta workshops provided by RNCM in 2018 and 2019 both required a certain degree of pragmatism on my part, but not to a point where I felt limited. Forcing an open-mindedness was crucial to heightening my own intrigue and enthusiasm in the longer-term process.

By 2019, I had developed enough confidence with my musical material and the ‘rules’ that I felt able to write a substantial sketch for sinfonietta that was radically different from my previous experiment in limited aleatoricism.

My sketches and ideas for the final versions of *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) were mostly thin textures and had a high frequency of *sol*i and chamber groupings. This meant that the limits of a sinfonietta were often convenient. I sometimes needed to experiment with combinations of instruments that may not otherwise have occurred to me, such as oboe and trumpet in thirds:

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), and Trumpet (C). The score is for measures 88-93, starting at measure 88. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 84. The Flute part has a dynamic of *p* and a *poco* marking. The Oboe part has a dynamic of *p* and a *poco* marking. The Clarinet part has dynamics of *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, and *p*, with a *poco* marking. The Trumpet (C) part has a dynamic of *p* and a *poco* marking. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.

Ex. 28 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2019) for sinfonietta – b. 88-93 (transposed score)

I found this combination in that particular context appealing, and I found that the sinfonietta instrumentation was far from a mere compromise. It was also significant in informing scoring choices in future works.

2.7.4 Scenes from Bagni di Lucca (2020) ‘final’ versions

I simultaneously wrote versions of *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) for large wind ensemble⁴² and for orchestra. I had previously practised adapting my own scores when writing *Encomium*⁴³ and *Longing*.⁴⁴

The orchestral version of *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* is similar and often identical to the wind ensemble version. The strings play rarely, in favour of allowing the winds and percussion a primary role.

Having already composed several works using the ‘harsh’ and ‘mellow’ pitch sets and their transpositions, I felt confident enough to sometimes break my own ‘rules’. My previous treatment of the ‘harsh’ and ‘mellow’ pitch sets had been to define each one with clear timbral distinctions. In *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca*, in contradiction to my usual system, I assigned the ‘harsh’ set to soft saxophones and assigned the ‘mellow’ set to much higher *staccato* woodwinds and tuned percussion.

The experiments with the sinfonietta and the inclusion of an orchestral version both suited my ultimate objective of transparent and light scoring based on my ‘harsh’ and ‘mellow’ pitch set ideas and on the three sections of my holiday inspired starting point:

The image shows a musical score for a piano reduction. It features five staves: a grand staff for piano (treble and bass clefs) and three individual staves for saxophones, bells, and tubas. The saxophones part is marked 'Tutti' and has a dynamic marking of '(f) p'. The bells part is marked '(background)' and has a dynamic marking of 'ppp'. The tubas part has a dynamic marking of 'ff'. There are also some musical notations like slurs and accents.

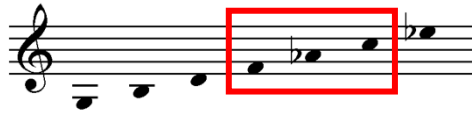
Ex. 29 – musical vision of 2015 holiday in Bagni di Lucca (score in C)

⁴² See Appendix A

⁴³ I wrote the wind ensemble version first, then adapted for orchestra, with saxophones and euphonium.

⁴⁴ I wrote the orchestral version first, then adapted for wind band.

The F minor triad from the 'harsh' pitch served as my starting point for the whole work.



Ex. 30 – 'harsh' pitch set

The aim was to open with a phrase for three saxophones that would float softly between two chords.



Ex. 31 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 1-3 (score in C)

The tonality is intended to remain largely ambiguous, particularly as the pitch set is used in a more elaborate form.



Ex. 32 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 1 (score in C)

My priority was to gradually build from the intimate saxophone-based opening towards a more choral sound but to preserve the ‘chamber’ sonority for as long as possible. I also made a conscious effort to echo the block-like textures and phrasing of Igor Stravinsky’s *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920):

39 (♩ = 84)

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

A. Fl.

Ob. 1

C. A.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Alto Sax. 1

Alto Sax. 2

Ten. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Vib.

Hp.

[D1 C1 B♭ / E♭ F1 G1 A1]

Ex. 33 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 39-48 (transposed score)

A significant influence behind *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) is the rather striking inclusion of saxophones used by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) in Symphony No. 9 (1957). This influence encouraged me to treat the saxophones as primary instruments in the texture, rather than as accompanists.

Adam Gorb contrasts high register staccato woodwind and pitched percussion with soft brass and low woodwind chords towards the end of *Ascent* (1996). As much of *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* is based around the mid-register and the high-register, I felt that I needed a similar bridge to be able to expand the texture and register.

Musical score for *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020), measures 155-161 (transposed score). The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Piccolo 1 & 2, Oboe 1 & 2, Clarinet 1 & 2, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon 1 & 2, Horns 1-4, Trumpets 1-3 (straight mutes), Trombones 1 & 2, Tubas, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, and Harp. A tempo marking of quarter note = 84 is shown at the beginning. Two red boxes highlight specific passages in the Clarinet 1 & 2 and Trombone 1 & 2 parts.

Ex. 34 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 155-161 (transposed score)

The principle of quicker high woodwind and percussion rhythms against slower brass rhythms is a distant echo of the counterpoint between low, slow, lyrical and high, fast layers found in both of Holst's Suites.

Musical score for *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca (2020)*, measures 222-228 (transposed score). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 84. The score includes parts for Picc. 1, Fl. 1, Eb Cl., Hn. 1.3 and 2.4, Tbn. 1 and 2, B. Tbn., Tba., Glock., and Xyl. The score shows a contrast between fast, rhythmic woodwind and percussion parts and slower, sustained brass parts.

Ex. 35 – Scenes from *Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 222-228 (transposed score)

Of the key events in *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* that were inspired by the holiday, the first was the transition from the soft saxophone opening to the wide register *tutti*.

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 36. It features five staves: Pno. red. (piano reduction), Saxes. (saxophones), Bells (background), Tpt. (trumpets), and Tbn. (trombones). The saxophone part starts with a soft opening and transitions to a wide register *tutti* section. The piano reduction part shows dynamics of *f*, *p*, *ppp*, and *ff*. The saxophone part is highlighted with a red box.

Ex. 36 – first event of musical vision from 2015 holiday in Bagni di Lucca (score in C)

The journey from the opening with three saxophones through to the first *tutti* climax occupies several minutes of development, via ‘chamber’ and ‘orchestral’ textures.

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 37. It features two staves: Pno. red. (piano reduction) and A. Sax. 1.2 & Ten. Sax. (Alto Saxophone 1.2 and Tenor Saxophone). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 84. The piano reduction part starts with a chamber texture and transitions to an orchestral texture. The saxophone part starts with a soft opening and transitions to a *tutti* climax. Dynamics range from *pp* to *f*.

Ex. 37 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 1-189 (score in C)

The second event in *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* was intended to be extremely soft.

The image shows a musical score snippet for the second event of 'Scenes from Bagni di Lucca'. The staves are labeled: Pno. red., Saxes., Tutti, Bells (background), Tpt., and Tbn. The Bells part is highlighted with a red box and contains dynamic markings *p*, *ppp*, and *ff*. The Tbn. part has a dynamic marking *ff*. There are also markings for *f* and *pp* in the Saxes. and Tutti parts.

Ex. 38 – second event of musical vision from 2015 holiday in Bagni di Lucca (score in C)

The tubular bells mark the beginning of this section, but the motif⁴⁵ is surprisingly simple. In contrast to the 'chamber' dominated setting of the first section, this section prioritises the sonority of the 'white noise' in the background, which is sustained by soft tuned percussion rolls and rapid hand movements on the bell of the trumpets. I was inspired by my previous experiments in limited aleatoricism, although in this case my main objective was to remove any sense of pulse.

The image shows a musical score snippet for 'Scenes from Bagni di Lucca' (2020), measures 190-196. The staves are labeled: A. Fl., Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Tpt. 3, Tub. B., Mar. 1, Mar. 2, Vib., and Hp. The score includes dynamic markings like *ppp*, *p*, and *f*, and performance instructions such as 'Harmon mute - hand only rapid - ad lib.' and 'very soft mallets'. The tempo is marked $\text{♩} = 84$.

Ex. 39 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 190-196 – (transposed score)

⁴⁵ An exact quote of the bells of Chiesa di San Pietro Apostolo in Bagni di Lucca

The third event in *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* is a climactic heavy brass swell.

The image shows a musical score for a climactic heavy brass swell. The score is for the third event in *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca*. It features a piano reduction (Pno. red.) and a full brass section. The brass parts, including Trumpets (Tpt.) and Trombones (Tbn.), are highlighted with a red box. The dynamics range from *ppp* (pianissimo) to *ff* (fortissimo). The score also includes parts for Saxophones (Saxes.), Bells (background), and Tutti.

Ex. 40 – third event of musical vision from 2015 holiday in Bagni di Lucca (score in C)

Of particular significance is my dilemma during the composition process. I needed to choose between leaving the brass swell unaccompanied, or adding pitched and percussive decoration – best exemplified by the timpani part.

The image shows a musical score for a heavy brass swell with pitched and percussive decoration. The score is for *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020), measures 278-283. It features a piano reduction (Pno. red.) and a full orchestral ensemble. The timpani part (Timp.) is highlighted with a red box. The score includes parts for Flute 1 & Oboe 1 (Fl. 1 & Ob. 1), Oboe & Clarinet (Ob. & Cl.), Oboe 1.2 & Cor Anglais (Ob. 1.2 & C. A.), Oboe, Clarinet, and Alto Saxophone 1 (Ob., Cl., Alto Sax. 1), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Trumpet (Tpt.), Trombone (Tbn.), Alto Saxophone 1.2 & Tenor Saxophone (Alto Sax. 1.2 & Ten. Sax.), Trombone (Tba.), Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, and Piano (Cl., Bsn., Hn. & Pno.), Bassoon & Contrabassoon (Bsn. & C. Bsn.), and Timpani (Timp.). The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *ppp* (pianissimo).

Ex. 41 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 278-283 – heavy brass swell (score in C)

I decided on the majority of the decoration – including that shown in Excerpt 40 – long after my holiday in 2015. It was difficult to know for certain how much of this was based on faithful recollection and how much was fresh invention. However, my aim was to explore continuity of ‘voice’ as much as a changeable ‘voice’. This meant that sincerity was my priority.

The most interesting point regarding the prevalence of my compositional ‘voice’ is best made by my decision to quote the bells of Chiesa di San Pietro Apostolo in Bagni di Lucca a second time but – as shown in excerpt xx with a more prominent accompaniment. Apart from my own interpretation of the background ‘white noise’, The first bell quotation⁴⁶ is faithful to the sound of the bells that I heard at the time. The choice of instrumentation to play the bell motif⁴⁷ and the dissonant layers of accompaniment⁴⁸ shown in Excerpt 41 are both subjective.

(♩ = 84)

287

Picc. 1
Fl. 1.2
Ob. 1.2
C. A.
Cl. 1
Hn. 1.2
Tpt. 1.2
3
Tbn. 1.2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
Timp.
B. D.
T.-t.
Tub. B.
Db.

Ex. 42 – *Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* (2020) – b. 287-289 (transposed score)

⁴⁶ See Excerpts 37 and 38

⁴⁷ Oboe, Cor Anglais, and Tubular Bells

⁴⁸ Flutes, Trumpets and Horns

In my own context, I identify with the practice of Nathaniel Chivers – which he refers to as ‘derivative composition’ – in that it is another form of exploration and development of my technique, ideas and compositional systems. The approach also forces me to pass through a significant phase of open-mindedness before I impose inevitable limits or find them imposed on me.

The final outcome, ***Scenes from Bagni di Lucca***, was reached via many sketches. These included two separate scores for sinfonietta, and also after writing several chamber scores written intermittently over several years, and one for viola and electronics. Again, all of these involved an obsessive exploration of a limited number of pitches over several years.

Since harmony was limited, I enjoyed exploring different ways of organising these pitches into different rhythms and assigning them to instruments according to pitch range.

Despite my mixed feelings on the concept of a compositional ‘voice’, I was motivated by the possibility that this might allow a compositional ‘voice’ to accidentally shine through.

3 Pragmatism

In my composition practice, whereas idealism carries a risk denial, pragmatism takes into account practical constraints and accepts the need for change. Many aspects of conventional wind band composition pose a challenge of uncertainty.

In this chapter, I will explore the meaning of 'pragmatism':

- 1) I will discuss the significance of the American College Band Grading System and 'flex' scores.
- 2) I will discuss the impact of pragmatic considerations on my compositional 'voice'.
- 3) I will introduce methods of sketching, including for sinfonietta.

Jon Piersol's perspective on *Harmoniemusik* suggests a historical precedence of pragmatism over idealism:

“Just as in instrumentation, the determination of size of the group depended more on what performers were available at court, rather than on any aesthetic ideal.”¹

Morton Gould accepts the practical constraints facing school band directors:

“Despite all talk about ideal instrumentation and balance, I know the school band director is faced with many problems and complications.”²

Kevin Thompson articulates a vital philosophy that propels me towards my aim of bringing performers and audiences together:

“...in many ways it is easier to write for advanced players, but as Kodaly pointed out, ‘Nobody should be above writing for children: on the contrary, we should strive to become good enough to do so.’”³

I would tend to regard any opportunities that carry potential limitations as ones that require pragmatism. They tend to test my willingness to relinquish control and embrace uncertainty.

¹ Piersol, 1983, p. 23

² Gould, 1962, p. 46

³ Thompson, 1985, p. 69 – ‘Children’ are not necessarily the only group for whom composers should become good enough to write, since performer age and ability are not always directly related as the statement presumes.

3.1.1 American College Band Grading System

The American College Band Grading System⁴ (ACBGS) serves as an aid to band directors and is used by many wind band publishers including Excelcia Music Publishing,⁵ Studio Music,⁶ Hafabra Music,⁷ G & M Brand,⁸ Murphy Music Press,⁹ C. Alan Publications,¹⁰ Maecenas,¹¹ and Ariel Music.¹²

The trend at the lower end of the grading system is to offer more flexibility around instrumentation in cases where some instruments may not be available.

“...most [Grade 1 or 2] scores have been designed to allow for performance by reduced size ensembles.”¹³

The ACBGS criteria for composers may sometimes feel constraining. Of course, It is a considerable advantage to know the performers of a band before writing for them. More generally, I write wind band scores for performers are not known to me personally. The parameters are usually set by others, often due to practical constraints. These are reasons for caution, but also reasons to embrace uncertainty.

⁴ <https://www.bandworld.org/pdfs/gradingchart.pdf>

⁵ USA ACBGS 0.5-4+

⁶ USA ACBGS Grades 0.5-5

⁷ USA ACBGS Grades 1-5

⁸ USA ACBGS Grades 1.5-5

⁹ USA ACBGS Grades 1-6

¹⁰ USA ACBGS Grades 1-6

¹¹ USA ACBGS Grades 1-6 and UK ABRSM Grades 1-8

¹² USA ACBGS Grades 1-6 and UK ABRSM Grades 1-8

¹³ <https://ncbf.info/flexible-ensembles-are-go/>

3.1.2 Coherence

Edoardo (2022) is generally a texturally simple score, but even at its most complex it remains coherent. This is due to the simplicity of rhythm for each individual player. Each 'layer' consists of substantial groups of players with the same rhythm, sometimes in unison or octaves. All of this is supported by a basic drum-kit rhythm.

Ex. 43 – *Edoardo* (2022) – b. 50-57 (score in C)

27 April, 2011 (2021) reaches a complex sounding climax that is formed from only a small number of 'layers' in reality, inspired by the textural layering of Holst's Suites.

Ex. 44 – *27 April, 2011* (2021) – b. 468-474 (score in C)

3.2 Covid-19

It is still difficult to comprehend the physical and psychological effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on different people around the world. However, I was immediately inspired by the courage and pragmatism that so many people showed, including those engaged in creative practices.

[Martin Ellerby] "...made the decision early in the [Covid-19] crisis to remain positive in attitude and spirit..."¹⁴

As a composer, I was relatively fortunate at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Perhaps ironically, I was at my most creative during much of this time. I was already in the habit of writing wind band music without being too distracted by the question of guaranteed public performances.

In 2020, the previously high probability of public performances was officially replaced with uncertainty around when this could resume. I continued to write with a focus on wherever my imagination took me. Thankfully, much of my output during the height of the pandemic has been performed subsequently.

During the pandemic, I frequently engaged in remote recording projects. This usually involved separate recordings made by each performer at home to be subsequently edited together to simulate an ensemble recording.

¹⁴ <https://www.basbwe.net/docs/2021-Spring/mobile/index.html#p=26> (from Winds Magazine Spring 2021)

3.2.1 Remote Recording Process – The Degenerate Era (2020)

In 2020, I completed *The Degenerate Era* (2020) – a single movement work for flute, clarinet, two bassoons, two trumpets and two trombones. This is the instrumentation used by Stravinsky in the Octet (1923).¹⁵ I sought to achieve continuity between Stravinsky's Octet and my own by observing Stravinsky's neo-classical style. I also included a brief quote from the *Sinfonia* movement and a homage to the Finale movement in texture alone.

To record *The Degenerate Era*, I asked seven individual performers to record from their homes with the aid of a guide track.¹⁶ For the brass parts, which were often written as a chorus in a consistent register order, I chose not to ask the brass players to record using a blank guide track. Instead, I gradually assembled the separately recorded parts into one file, which I then saved as my new guide track each time. One by one, starting from the lowest instrument, each player recorded their part before I passed their recordings to the next player, so that the finished recording would be more stylistically sensitive.¹⁷

- 1) Trombone 2
- 2) Trombone 2 + Trombone 1
- 3) Trombone 2 + Trombone 1 + Trumpet 2
- 4) Trombone 2 + Trombone 1 + Trumpet 2 + Trumpet 1

¹⁵ Stravinsky, 1924

¹⁶ A click track including strong beats, weak beats, rehearsal letters and an optional midi file

¹⁷ Same method used for works from the cycle: *The Arrival of Spring in Woldgate, East Yorkshire in 2011* (twenty eleven)

3.2.2 UnHeard and Festivo Winds

Spacetime (2022) is based on ideas that I had kept from the lockdown period. I was helped by influences from ensembles including reed quintets such as Akropolis Quintet¹⁸ – specifically their performance of Gilbertson’s *Kinds of Light* – and more conventional wind quintets.

I quickly responded to a prescribed instrumentation¹⁹ to prepare a new work for a collaborative concert²⁰ between UnHeard²¹ and Festivo Winds.²² This took place in 2022 after the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns were no longer a factor. I was given a brief for which I had to draw upon my own unperformed scores, or sketches, written during the lockdown period during 2020-2021.

This required a pragmatic response: I referred back to some recordings of household objects²³ that I had made during 2020 specifically for the purposes of subsequent computer editing. I then added some samples of synthesised percussion that would be triggered by one of the performers²⁴ when instructed in the score. The finished score is discussed further in Chapter 4.

¹⁸ <https://akropolisquintet.org/the-ensemble/>

¹⁹ Fl., Ob., Cl., B. Cl., Alto Sax., Bsn., Hn., E. Gtr., Db., Electronics

²⁰ <https://www.liverpoolphil.com/whats-on/contemporary-music/unheard-unlocked/4456>

²¹ <https://www.unheardlive.com/about>

²² <https://www.festivowinds.com/>

²³ Including a casserole lid and wine glasses

²⁴ For the first performance, an additional performer was devoted to triggering electronic samples.

3.2.3 Writing it down

During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, I had a specific idea for a new piece without planning on it. **Spectacular** (2020-2021) is based on that idea. The creativity was largely unintentional and mostly in my mind rather than at a desk. The essence of the idea relied on specificity. This was inconvenient at the time, considering the anticipated uncertainty over band sizes and instrument ratios, even after restrictions would be eased. However, I felt that I should write down, just in case it proved useful in the future.

The image shows a musical score for measures 4-10 of the piece 'Spectacular' (2021), presented as a transposed score. The score is for a full band and includes parts for Oboe 1, Horn 1, Trumpet 1, Cor Anglais, Trombone 1, Trombone 2, Euphonium, and Tuba. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 52. Dynamics include pp, mp, and p.

Ex. 45 – *Spectacular* (2021) – b. 4-10 (transposed score)

I believe that the eventual decision to write it down officially was largely due to my own pragmatic choices under difficult and constantly changing circumstances. The rate at which restrictions would be eased and what the practical band rehearsal and performance situation would look like at any point in the future was so uncertain anyway.

3.2.4 Optional ‘voice’

Towards the end of the viola version of *1 January, 2011* (2020), I sought to hide any potentially nasal qualities of the viola by writing for the two upper-most parts to play in harmonics and high on the D string respectively:

Ex. 46 – *1 January, 2011* (2020) for viola ensemble – b. 75-79

However, this was difficult to emulate precisely when adapting for wind ensemble. The choice of wind instruments to play softly at a high register was limited. However, the choices of piccolo and clarinet were the most suitable to imitate the soft, ghostly sound of the viola harmonics. This seemed crucial to my emerging ‘voice’ at the time.

Ex. 47 – *1 January, 2011* (2020) for wind ensemble – b. 75-80 (transposed score)

Space from Self-consciousness

Still in lockdown, I wrote **Prelude** (2021), my shortest and simplest work for wind band, based on some older sketches for viola ensemble. This followed many years of writing works that were lengthy and often complex in rhythm and texture. I doubted if the work would be performed soon afterwards. This was significant, as I did not feel obliged to follow with a fugue or another 'movement', nor did I feel self-conscious of my 'voice' nor of the simplicity of the harmonic rhythm during the build up towards the climax.

32 (♩ = 66)

Vla. 1
mf cresc.

Vla. 2
mf cresc.

Vla. 3
p cresc.

Vla. 4
p cresc.

Vla. 5
6
p cresc.

Vla. 7
8
p cresc.

p cresc.

The score shows six staves for violas (Vla. 1-6) and two for a double bass/viola (Vla. 7-8). The music is in 2/4 time with a tempo of 66 beats per minute. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. The first two staves (Vla. 1 and 2) have rests until measure 34, where they enter with a *mf cresc.* dynamic. The remaining staves (Vla. 3-8) enter in measure 33 with a *p cresc.* dynamic. The texture is simple, with each staff playing a single note or a pair of notes, creating a harmonic rhythm that builds towards a climax.

Ex. 48 – *Prelude* (2012) for viola ensemble – b. 32-36

The simple addition of a pulse provided by the timpani and bass drum to the wind band adaptation transformed the mood and the musical meaning.

32 (♩ = 66)

Pno. red.
pp
Hn.
Tba.
B.Tbn.

Fl. & Bsn.

+ Cl. & Ten. Sax.

+ Picc., Ob. & Bari. Sax.

Timp.
pp

B. D.
pp

The score shows a full wind band arrangement. The top staff is for Piano/Reduction (Pno. red.) with a *pp* dynamic. Below it are staves for Horns (Hn.), Trombones (Tba.), and Bass Trombone (B.Tbn.). The woodwinds are divided into three groups: Flute and Bassoon (Fl. & Bsn.), Clarinet and Tenor Saxophone (+ Cl. & Ten. Sax.), and Piccolo, Oboe, and Bari. Saxophone (+ Picc., Ob. & Bari. Sax.). The Percussion (Timp.) and Bass Drum (B. D.) parts are at the bottom, both marked *pp*. The music is in 2/4 time with a tempo of 66 beats per minute. The percussion provides a steady pulse of quarter notes, while the woodwinds and strings play sustained chords that build in intensity towards the end of the piece.

Ex. 49 – *Prelude* (2021) for wind band – b. 32-36 (score in C)

3.2.5 Changeable ‘voice’

As a composer and violist, I sometimes write with the viola in mind on some level, even if the ideas are not intended for viola. However, this is only for specific works. Even in the wind ensemble version of **Coast** (2021), no instruments play below the pitch of the viola C string for the first fifteen bars. This is due to the derivation of ideas that were originally conceived for violas:

The image displays a musical score for a six-part viola ensemble. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-6) features a single staff for 'Violas 4.5.6' with dynamics *pp* and *p*. The second system (measures 7-12) features a single staff for 'Vla. 4.5.6' with dynamics *pp*, *mf*, and *pp*. The third system (measures 13-17) features six individual staves for 'Vla. 1' through 'Vla. 6'. Measures 13-15 show a *p cresc.* dynamic for all parts, while measures 16-17 show a *mf* dynamic. The notation includes various articulations such as slurs and accents.

Ex. 50 – *Coast* (2021) for viola ensemble – b. 1-17

It was a conscious choice to submit to the registral limitations of the viola. It was only from the sixteenth bar onwards that I decided to write outside the register of the viola once I felt sure that this would not dilute my original ideas. My assumption was that it might define a small aspect of my ‘voice’ in a certain way.

The Arrival of Spring in Woldgate, East Yorkshire in 2011 (twenty eleven)

Across all of my compositions, my compositional ‘voice’ appears to be changeable. To date, the cycle — already includes many different ‘movements’ written sporadically. The subtle and more drastic changes to my ‘voice’ are more readily apparent.

The more subtle changes are best exemplified by the opening of the first ‘movement’ – **1 January, 2011** (2020), and the opening of the last ‘movement’ – **31st May, No. 2, 2011** (in progress).

In **1 January, 2011**, the minor 7th chords are treated expressively and as a sign of life:

Ex. 51 – 1 January, 2011 (2020) – b. 20-26 (score in C)

The score is for piano and strings. It begins with a tempo marking of **Larghetto** (♩ = 84) and a **Tutti** dynamic. The piano part features chords with dynamics *mf*, *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *pp*. The strings (Tpt., Hn., Tbn.) play a melodic line with dynamics *p*, *mf*, and *pp*. The score is in 3/8 time and the key signature has one sharp (F#).

Ex. 51 – 1 January, 2011 (2020) – b. 20-26 (score in C)

31st May, No. 2, 2011 opens with comparatively static minor 7th chords that give way to contrasting harmonies:

Ex. 52 – 31st May, No. 2, 2011 (in progress) – b. 1-5

The score is for viola. It begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 60. The score is in 12/8 time and the key signature has one sharp (F#). The dynamics are *ppp*, *pp poco espr.*, and *ppp*. The score includes markings for *con sord.* and *unis.* The score is in 12/8 time and the key signature has one sharp (F#).

Ex. 52 – 31st May, No. 2, 2011 (in progress) – b. 1-5

The stylistic contrast between **31st May, No. 2, 2011** (work in progress) and **The Arrival of Spring** (2022) for Workshop Jazz Collective²⁵ represents a significant change to the cycle in the sense that the latter is written as if for a reduced Big Band.

Ex. 53 – *The Arrival of Spring* (2022) for jazz collective – b. 20-25 (transposed score)

The change is even more significant; the tempo is increased and the rhythm is swung.

Ex. 54 – *The Arrival of Spring* (2022) for jazz collective – b. 131-138 (transposed score)

²⁵ <http://www.workshopjazz.co.uk/>

Coast (2021) includes an example of self-quotation of a bass-line that only had occasional use in **Sylvans** (2019). The harmonies surrounding each melody are similar and are organised in the same harmonic rhythm – generally one chord lasting a bar with occasional changes for one beat.

Andante
(♩ = 96)

Cl. 1. *pp*

Cl. 2. *pp*

B. Cl. *pp* *p*

Hp. *pp* *p* G ♯ G ♭

Vla. *pp* pizz.

Db. *pp* *cresc.* *p*

Ex. 55 – *Sylvans* (2019) – b. 265-269 (transposed score)

However, they occupy different registers and the tempo is slower in **Coast**.

70 (♩ = 80)

Fl. *(pp)*

Ob. *(pp)*

Cl. 1. *(pp)*

Alto Sax. *p espr.* *pp*

Glock.

Vib.

Ex. 56 – *Coast* (2021) – b. 70-72 (transposed score)

3.3 Creative Decisions

I should emphasise that my own creative output is not limited to compositions for wind band and wind ensemble, and that I tend to alternate between genres regularly. This helps me to gain different perspectives and to remain open-minded.

According to Michael Short:

“There is a danger in specialising too much in band music. Although a composer may develop technical expertise, it’s possible to become rather narrow in our outlook and fall into routine procedures.”²⁶

Philip Sparke was asked to score *A Colour Symphony* (2015)²⁷ for specific forces including two celli and one double bass.²⁸ These string instruments impact powerfully when they are suddenly exposed and soloistic in the third movement - entitled *Blue*. It is interesting to note how much this influences the orchestration; the scoring at this point is especially thin.²⁹

For my score for *Masquerade* (2021), I was asked to include one cello and one double bass. In my response, my priority was to ensure that this did not appear an afterthought to a potential listener. To protect against this possible perception, I decided to base most of my creative decisions around the needs and technical capabilities of the cello and double bass.

²⁶ https://www.basbwe.net/images/2011/06/98autumn_short.pdf
(from <https://www.basbwe.net/composers.php>)

²⁷ Sparke, 2015

²⁸ <https://www.philipsparke.com/colour-symphony-a-symphony-no-3>

²⁹ Harp, piano and percussion

Antonín Dvořák (1858-1904) included cello in the *Serenade Op. 44* (1878),³⁰ the cello is often used for *pizzicato* chords. For *Masquerade*, I often used chords that seemed harmonically relevant yet easily manageable on the cello as my stimulus for the harmony among the rest of the ensemble playing at the same time. Decisions about harmony were partly informed by the inclusion of the cello and its capability in playing *pizzicato* spread chords.

The image shows a transposed musical score for measures 39-42 of Dvořák's *Masquerade*. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute 1 & 2, Oboe 1 & 2, Clarinet 1 & 2, Bassoon 1 & 2, Horn 1 & 2, Trumpet 1 & 2, Wood Bass, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 66. The score shows various dynamics such as *pp*, *(mp)*, *p*, and *f*, and includes performance instructions like *pizz.* and *arco*.

Ex. 57 – *Masquerade* (2021) – b. 39-42 (transposed score)

³⁰ Dvořák, 1879

The original score for *Feeling Free* (2023) relied heavily on a continuous bass line. Excerpt 57 shows the initial handling of the bass line in the version for wind band.

Ex. 58 - *Feeling Free* (2023) – bass line only – b. 1-10 (transposed score)

As I proceeded to make adaptations for brass band and for wind band, it became more important to keep the bass line soft, with the exceptions of intentionally louder passages. For the softer sections, this presented challenges:

- 1) My preferred choice of instrument for the bass line option in *Feeling Free* was the electric bass, but only if available.
- 2) The bass clarinet and tuba were likely available, but were limited by stamina.
- 3) The bassoon and baritone saxophone were less suited to playing softly in the lower register.

My pragmatic response was to be creative and include an interlude with no bass

3.3.1 Combinations

As many of my ideas for *The Degenerate Era* (2020) were based on four-part harmony, I was determined to explore different ‘orchestration’ options.

“Using two or more woodwind instruments of two clearly differentiated timbres in unison doubling produces a curiously mixed color, not wholly the one or the other.”³¹

In Excerpt 59, the two ‘imaginary instruments’³² act as upper voices to the trombones:

Ex. 60 – *The Degenerate Era* (2020) – b. 27-28 (transposed score)

In Excerpt 60, the two ‘imaginary instruments’ act as lower voices to the trumpets, before encasing them as upper and lower voices:³³

Ex. 61 – *The Degenerate Era* (2020) – b. 52-54 (transposed score)

³¹ Read, 2004, p. 25

³² Combinations of flute with 1st bassoon and clarinet with 2nd bassoon

³³ Combinations of flute with clarinet as the upper voice and 1st bassoon and the lower voice

4 Balancing Idealism and Pragmatism

I always doubted that the desire or need to balance idealism with pragmatism was one held by me alone. Indeed, it has proven to be a common challenge.

[Chris Marshall writes] "...my compositions have always been about finding a balance between my musical vision and the 'facts on the ground'"¹

In this chapter, I will discuss my challenges:

- 1) I will examine my methods of maintaining artistic integrity when faced with practical constraints.
- 2) I will examine my flexibility in pursuit of a musical vision.
- 3) I will attempt to answer my third research question – How can I avoid feeling restricted by 'limitations' and allow parameters to become sources of inspiration and motivation? – by defining 'limitations' and through illustrating instances of problem solving.

¹ See Correspondence

4.1 Solo and *Tutti* Contrast

Many of my wind band scores include *solo* and *tutti* instructions in case there are multiple players on any parts. There are two main purposes:

- 1) *Solo* and *tutti* episodes are presented one after the other.
- 2) *Solo* instruments are sometimes accompanied by *tutti* groups.

An obvious example that combines both techniques, is in ***Els Encantats*** (2022), where the *solo* clarinet introduces a *solo* episode after a *tutti* section. The rhythm and pitch detail makes the ascending scale far more suitable for one instrument than several.

207 (♩ = 120)

Cl. 1 ONE PLAYER ONLY *f* *pp*

Cl. 2 ONE PLAYER ONLY *f*

Cl. 3 ONE PLAYER ONLY *f*

B. Cl. *ff* *pp* *f* *pp*

Bsn. *ff* *pp* *f* *p*

Hn. 1.2 *ff* *pp* *f* *pp*

Tpt. 1.2.3 *p* *pp*

Tbn. 1.2 *p*

B. Tbn. *ff* *pp*

Euph. *p*

Tba. *ff* *pp* *p*

Ex. 62 – *Els Encantats* (2022) – b. 207-210 (transposed score)

A more subtle example occurs in **3 January, 2011** (2020). A relatively busy texture abruptly switches to four solo clarinets:

The image displays a musical score for the piece "3 January, 2011" (2020), specifically measures 23 through 29. The score is transposed and includes parts for Fl. 1.2, Ob., Cl. 1, Cl. 2, Cl. 3, B. Cl., Alto Sax. 1, Bsn. 1, Hn. 1, Hn. 3, Tpt. 1, Tbn. 1, and Tba. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 66$ and the rehearsal mark "a 2" is at measure 23. The score shows a transition from a busy tutti texture to a tutti texture with intentional doubling of four solo clarinets. A red box highlights the four clarinet parts (Cl. 1, 2, 3, and B. Cl.) in measures 27-29, each marked "ONE PLAYER ONLY" and "ppp". The score includes various dynamics such as *p espr.*, *cresc.*, *mf*, and *mp*.

Ex. 63 – 3 January, 2011 (2020) – b. 23-29 (transposed score)

The effect of abruptly switching to a *tutti* texture with intentional doubling to that of small group of soloists is a relatively simple one. However, in bands with a total of more than four clarinets, failure to instruct *solo* or 'one player only' would dilute this effect.

4.2 Flexibility in Pursuit of my Musical Vision

I often find myself concerned with striking a critical balance between pursuit of a specific musical vision and an open-mindedness that embraces uncertainty.

4.2.1 Substitution Cues

In both wind band and orchestral scores, the use of substitution cues² may cover less common auxiliary instruments in case of temporary absence from rehearsals or permanent unavailability.

“In both score and parts, solo material written for more unusual instruments that might not be available to a standard band (such as cor anglais or contrabassoon) should be cued into other parts where possible...”³

Philip Sparke wrote *The Year of the Dragon* (1984) for brass band before adapting for concert band. The 2nd movement, *Interlude*, includes a prominent solo for trombone in the brass band version. In the concert band version this is written for cor anglais, with a substitution cue in the alto saxophone. The saxophone was used in a later edition published by Studio Music.⁴

In correspondence with Philip Sparke, I was particularly interested to know the extent to which the composer had a preference of instrument to play the solo in the concert band version, and indeed across both versions. Philip Sparke clarified that there was a preference of possibilities within the concert band version:

“I would prefer English horn to alto sax in the concert band version, but only marginally.”⁵

² Sometimes known as ‘cross-cues’

³ Gould, 2011, pp. 544-545

⁴ <https://www.hebu-music.com/en/article/philip-sparke/studio-music-company/the-year-of-the-dragon-2017-edition.187833/>

⁵ See Correspondence

Similarly, I adapted the score of **Feeling Free** (2023) from brass band to wind band. Whereas the version for brass band involves a substantial theme in 1st trombone only, a switch is made in the version for wind band whereby the flutes and cor anglais take over, with a substitution cue in the 1st alto saxophone:

Fl. 1, 2, 3 (♩ = c. 92 - 112)

C. A.

Cl. 1, 2

B. Cl.

Alto Sax. 1, 2

Ten. Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Tbn. 1, 2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tba.

E. Bass

Ex. 64 – *Feeling Free* (2023) – b. 17-22 (transposed score)

Convenient Registers

Philip Sparke compared the trombone solo in second movement of *The Year of the Dragon* for brass band versus cor anglais in the version for concert band:

“I chose not to keep it on trombone in the concert band version as I would not count trombone high up in the list of concert band soloists and chose English horn, which, in a way, changes the nature of the solo (less ‘bluesy’ but more ‘nostalgic’).”⁶

Philip Sparke took into account a potential limitation of the concert band at some performance levels. However, it was not a question of preference of one over the other, as advantages and opportunities were identified in both.

The score for *Spectacular* (2020-2021) represents two examples of substitution cues in registers common to many other instruments.

- 1) The cornet part is covered by substitution cues in one of the trumpet players.
- 2) Substitution cues cover the first trombone part in case they prove too high.

The image shows a musical score for *Spectacular* (2021), measures 149-152. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 52$. The score includes parts for Hn. 1, Hn. 2, Hn. 3, Hn. 4, Tpt. 1, Cor., and Tbn. 1. Substitution cues are indicated by arrows and text: 'Tbn. 1 (if too high for Tbn. 1)' for Hn. 1 and Tbn. 1, and 'Cor. (if unavailable)' for Tpt. 1. Dynamics include *pp*, *poco*, *p*, and *pp*.

Ex. 65 – *Spectacular* (2021) – b. 149-152 (transposed score)

⁶ See Correspondence

Gardner Read writes about the doubling of flute and cor anglais:

“Flute and English horn paired together create a spicy amalgam of contrasting tone-colors, the latter instrument imparting a sharp overlay to the flute’s more suave contribution.”⁷

Feeling Free (2023) calls for cor anglais in a melodic role, slightly veiled by flutes.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Flute 1, 2, 3 (Fl. 1.2.3), Cor Anglais (C. A.), and Alto Saxophone 1 (Alto Sax. 1). The score is in 4/4 time and begins at measure 21. The tempo is marked as c. 92 - 112. The key signature has two flats. The flute part starts with a triplet of eighth notes marked *mf*. The Cor Anglais part also starts with a triplet of eighth notes marked *mf*. The Alto Saxophone part is marked *mf* and includes the instruction "C. A. (if unavailable)".

Ex. 66 – *Feeling Free* (2023) – selection of instruments – b. 21-26 (transposed score)

For sections of **Feeling Free**, four horns are desirable, but substitution cues allow for as few as two players in case the 3rd and 4th players are not available. The strategy used in examples such as Excerpt 66 was to provide substitution cues in the trombone parts to cover the lower, rather than the upper horn parts. This choice was determined according to the register of the chord. The aim was to achieve a convincing blend between the two instrumental groups:

The image shows a musical score for Horns 1-4 (Hn. 1-4) and Trombones 1-2 (Tbn. 1.2). The score is in 4/4 time and begins at measure 27. The tempo is marked as c. 92 - 112. The key signature has two flats. The Horns part consists of chords marked *mf > p*. The Trombone part also consists of chords marked *mf > p* and includes the instruction "Hn. 3 & 4 (if unavailable)".

Ex. 67 – *Feeling Free* (2023) – selection of instruments – b. 27-30 (transposed score)

⁷ Read, 2004, p. 27

Inconvenient Registers

In *Els Encantats* (2022), substitution cues cover the absence of instruments whose alternatives in the same register are limited:

- 1) The clarinet in E flat is covered by one player from the first clarinet section.

(♩ = 120)

170

Picc. *ff*

Fl. 1.2 *ff* *p*

Ob. *ff*

E♭ Cl. *p*

Cl. 1 *ff* *p*

E♭ Cl. (if unavailable)

Ex. 68 – *Els Encantats* (2022) – selection of instruments – b. 170-172 (transposed score)

- 2) The double bass is covered by the euphonium and tuba. Although a little more difficult, this substitution is supported by the timpani and tom-tom.

(♩ = 120)

182

Euph. *p*

Tba. *pp*

Db. *p*

Timp. *p*

Dr. *p*

Low tom-tom

Db. (if unavailable) (play)

Ex. 69 – *Els Encantats* (2022) – selection of instruments – b. 182-184

4.2.2 Optional Parts

By leaving certain instrumental parts optional, a composer can balance their choice of desirable parts with the possibility that the desired player may not be available.

Two examples of scores with many optional parts come from Gustav Holst in *First Suite in E flat for Military Band* (1909) and, more recently, from Satoshi Yagisawa (b. 1975) in *Four Seasons of Japan* (2019).⁸ The number of optional parts in both Holst's *First Suite*⁹ and Yagisawa's *Four Seasons of Japan*¹⁰ amount to a substantial proportion of the total instrumentation.

Nigel Hess (b. 1953) represents his ideal musical vision in the score for *East Coast Pictures* (1985)¹¹ by writing two piccolo parts. However, he states that if only one player is available then they should play the first part and ignore the second part. He made this possible by assigning the less vital material to the second part.

My experiments with optional parts are less extreme in terms of the number of optional part written into one score. The cornet part in *Spectacular* (2021) is an example that is completely optional, since it is covered by one player or another of the trumpet section. The difference between the sound of the cornet and that of the modern trumpet is arguably less than it was at the time of Holst's *First Suite*. However, the cornet is still an appealing addition to the wind band in a score such as *Spectacular*, where the brass section has a primary role.

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Spectacular' (2021), specifically a selection of instruments from measures 105 to 108. The score is transposed. It features three staves: 1.2 Tpt. (Trumpet), 3 Cor. (Cornet), and Cor. (Cornet). The tempo is marked as 105 (♩ = 120). The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The 1.2 Tpt. staff has a rest in the first two measures, then plays a series of chords in the third measure, marked with a piano (p) dynamic and a forte (f) dynamic. The 3 Cor. staff plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the first two measures, then has a rest in the third measure. The Cor. staff plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the first two measures, then has a rest in the third measure. Dynamics are marked as p and f.

Ex. 70 – *Spectacular* (2021) – selection of instruments – b. 105-108 (transposed score)

⁸ Yagisawa, 2019

⁹ 2 Ob., 2nd Eb Cl., B. Cl., 2 Bsn., 2 Alto Sax., Ten. Sax., 2 Tpt., 2 Eb Hn., Bar. Hn., 2nd Tbn., Timp., Db.

¹⁰ Picc., Ob., Bsn., 3rd Cl., 2nd Alto Sax., Bari. Sax., 3rd Tpt., 2nd Hn. (of 3), 3rd Tbn., Db., 2 Perc. (of 5)

¹¹ Hess, 1985

4.3 How can I avoid feeling restricted by ‘limitations’ and allow parameters to become sources of inspiration and motivation?

I have found that there are creative ways to overcome potential compromises to my artistic integrity. Rather than simply feeling restricted by ‘limitations’ I have found that I can treat such ‘limitations’ as if they were my idea. This draws on my concept of psychologically ‘owning’ a situation rather than falling victim to it.

“Of course, the technical limitations will often impose certain scoring restrictions but, by the same token, they may well prompt us to formulate more imaginative parts.”¹²

Although **Coast** (2021) begins in the mid-register, it eventually splits into clear layers of treble and bass. The main challenge was to first develop the ‘treble’ layer in an evocative way, while using minimal instrumentation.¹³ I hoped that it would become a backdrop against which I could introduce *legato* themes in solo instruments.

Ex. 71 – *Coast* (2021) – b. 55-60 (transposed score)

¹² Thompson, 1985, p. 69

¹³ Fl., Ob., 2 Cl., Alto Sax., Bsn., Hn., Tpt., 2 Perc.

The lightness of the ‘treble’ layer in **Coast** (2021) affords the ‘bass’ layer more power, even though the ‘bass’ layer is formed from a minimal number of players:

- 1) Among activity from all other instruments, the ‘bass’ layer is formed from three instruments during the approach to the climax.¹⁴

Ex. 72 – *Coast* (2021) – selection of instruments shown – b. 108-113 (transposed score)

- 2) The ‘bass layer’ at the ending is also formed from three instruments.¹⁵ In this case, the bass clarinet is disguised by its registral position between the higher positioned trombone and lower positioned tuba.

Ex. 73 – *Coast* (2021) – b. 155-159 (transposed score)

¹⁴ Hn., Tbn., Tba.

¹⁵ B. Cl., Tbn., Tba.

4.3.1 Limitations

Defining limitations is personal. Francis Mayer discusses how John Philip Sousa (1854-1932) kept to the original key and his refusal to be limited to flat keys in his arrangements for the University of Illinois Band.

“Practice in the nineteenth century was to use only flat keys; the shift to the sharp side added new colors and relieved band programs of the monotony engendered by the loose and continual tonal relationships of B flat, E flat and A flat – at the same time placing new responsibility on the performers.”¹⁶

My view of both the ‘wind band’ and the ‘wind ensemble’ as my ‘ideal’ or ‘limiting’ medium changes between projects. I would emphasise that while a lack of restrictions can sometimes feel liberating, restrictions can sometimes act as stimuli.

To reiterate, I would define ‘limitations’ as parameters that may be set by publishers, directors or players, often to limit difficulty level. The main considerations are those stipulated in systems such as the American College Band Grading System (ACBGS).¹⁷

If taken literally, the ACBGS stipulates that until Grade 5 level, extremes of range¹⁸ and cross dynamics¹⁹ should be avoided. *Soli* are not permitted until Grade 3.²⁰ There is also a substantial difference between the allowance of rhythmic complexity at Grade 3²¹ and Grade 4.²² Philip Sparke, on writing for grade 1 level bands, writes: “From a psychological level, a composer has to let go of his ego a bit, I think.”²³

In my more recent experience, there are other potential limitations to consider as a composer concerned with maximising the possibility of further performances.

¹⁶ Mayer, 1960, p. 52

¹⁷ <https://www.bandworld.org/pdfs/gradingchart.pdf>

¹⁸ “Things to avoid...extremes of range”

¹⁹ “Dynamics...cross dynamics” first mentioned at [Grade 5]

²⁰ “Scoring...solos” [Grade 3 or above]

²¹ “Rhythm...Basic duple and triple syncopation, dotted rhythms.” [Grade 3]

²² “Rhythms...All rhythms except complex compound or complex 16th note syncopation.” [Grade 4]

²³ Montemayor, 2006, p. 176

Pulse

I have found that a performer's sense of pulse can affect the success of a performance. When writing *Spacetime* (2022), I included moments of ambiguity where the pulse was not too obvious. It was uncertain whether a conductor would be available for the first performance. With all of this in mind, I decided to write it as a multi-movement work with two contrasting approaches to tempo:

- 1) I allowed a *rubato, solo* for movements including for the whole first movement.

Flute $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 96$
p *poco* *pp* *mf*

Fl. *pp* *p* *ppp*

Ex. 74 – *Spacetime* (2022) – 1st movement

- 2) For movements involving the whole ensemble, I maintained a clear sense of pulse to avoid rhythm ambiguity, focusing on harmonic complexity.

89 $\text{♩} = 180$

Fl. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Oboe. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Cl. (A) *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

B. Cl. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Alto Sax. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Bsn. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Hn. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Db. (pizz.) *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Ex. 75 – *Spacetime* (2022) – 6th movement – b. 89-94 (transposed score)

Rhythm

Avoiding complex or irregular rhythms, and entry on weak beats tends to reduce the risk of miscoordination during rehearsals and performance. I took several risks in ***Els Encantats*** (2022), since the weak-beat entries were not supported by a clear pulse; the indicators of a strong beat are gentle and infrequent.

77 (♩ = 120)

Fl. 1.2 *p* *pp* a 2

Cl. 1.2 *p* a 2

B. Cl. *p*

Alto Sax. *p espr.*

Ten. Sax. *p espr.*

Bsn. *p* *pp*

Hn. 1.2 *mf* *pp* a 2

Tbn. 1.2 *mf* *pp*

B. Tbn. *mf* *pp*

Euph. *p* *pp*

Tub. B. *p* *pp*

Vib. *p* *pp*

Ex. 76 – *Els Encantats* (2022) – b. 77-85 (transposed score)

Texture

My most demanding work for wind ensemble, *Encomium* (2008, revised 2017), challenges the players due to the prevalence of thin textures based on exposed *solis*. Particularly demanding to coordinate precisely at the tempo of 54 beats per minute is the overlap of rhythmic patterns in the clarinets, flute and alto flute:

The image displays a musical score for a wind ensemble, specifically measures 206-209 of the piece *Encomium*. The score is transposed and includes parts for Piccolo (Picc.), Flute 1 (Fl. 1), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), Flute 3 (Fl. 3), Alto Flute (A. Fl.), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), and Horn 1 (Hn. 1). The tempo is marked as 206 (♩ = 54). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is 4/4. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, particularly in the flute and clarinet parts, which are highlighted with red boxes. The texture is thin, with many notes exposed. Dynamics include *pp*, *ppp*, *p*, *p espr.*, and *pp < p >*. The horn part is marked with *(con sord.)* and *(pp)*.

Ex. 77 – *Encomium* (2008, revised 2017) – b. 206-209 (transposed score)

In a different context, I could have set the tempo to 108 beats per minute, in order to give the players a more frequent beat by the conductor. However, I was not keen to do so for this purpose. I have since been careful to not to rely too much on textures such as this in most other works.

Instrumentation

Limits on instrument numbers were a particularly common factor during the later stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, before large scale gatherings and performances were permitted. I wrote **6 May, 2011** (2021) for a workshop at RNCM. The number of instruments in the concert hall was limited to fifteen.²⁴

After my experience in writing orchestral music, I had been tempted to write ideas for harp and celeste, based on a specific musical vision inspired by David Hockney's iPad drawing. The workshop itself surprised me, as I had settled for marimba²⁵ and glockenspiel²⁶ without expecting the same warmth. I realised that I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of problem solving when dealing with limited instrumentation.

Moderato ma soave
(♩ = 120)

The score shows the following parts and markings:

- Fl. 1:** *pp*
- Cl. 1:** *pp*
- Cl. 2:** *pp*
- Hn. 1.2:** *pp*, *con sord.*
- Tpt. 1.2:** *pp*, *Harmon mutes*
- Tbn. 1.2:** *pp*, *Harmon mutes*
- Glock.:** *pp*
- Mar.:** *pp*

Ex. 78 – 6 May, 2011 (2021) – b. 115-120 (transposed score)

²⁴ 2 Fl., Ob., 2 Cl., Bsn., 2 Hn., 2 Tpt., 2 Tbn., Tba., 2 Perc.

²⁵ Instead of harp

²⁶ Instead of celeste

4.3.2 Problem Solving

When writing *Sylvans* (2019) for solo viola and wind ensemble, I decided that it should rely on the natural indoor acoustic, without amplification. I considered balance at all stages throughout the composition process, not least because I knew the viola to have a far more limited dynamic range compared to most of the wind instruments.²⁷

I wanted to keep a certain closeness or intimacy between the soloist and the audience. This contrasts from Chris Marshall's use of amplification to create a sense of 'otherness' in *The Lost* (2022) for solo cello and wind band.²⁸

I felt that amplification would not be suitable in *Sylvans* unless I changed the ideas beyond recognition. Overall, the challenge of writing this caused me to give considerable thought to balance and to problem solve accordingly. There were two important exceptions to this principal challenge:

- 1) The viola is sometimes unaccompanied.

Musical score for Solo Viola, measures 73-78. The score is in 2/4 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 84. It starts with a dynamic of *pp cantabile*, followed by a section marked *p dolce*, and ends with a section marked *ppp sul tasto*.

Ex. 79 – *Sylvans* (2019) – b. 73-78

- 2) On occasion, I intended for the viola to begin completely buried in the texture, before emerging. The viola would be slowly revealed by the gradual decrease; until when accompanied only by clarinets it was expected to be more distinctly audible. The passage shown in Excerpt 79 is modelled quite closely on the way Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) opened the fourth movement from Symphony No. 8 (1943):

²⁷ See Appendix A

²⁸ See Correspondence

143 (♩ = 84)

C. A.
Cl. 1.2
B. Cl.
Ten. Sax.
Bsn. 1.2
Hn. 1.2
Tpt. 1.2.3
Tbn. 1.2
B. Tbn.
Tba.
B. D.
T.-t.
Solo Vla.
Timp.

149

C. A.
Cl. 1.2
B. Cl.
Ten. Sax.
Bsn. 1.2
Hn. 1.2
Tpt. 1.2.3
Tbn. 1.2
Solo Vla.
Timp.

Ex. 80 – Sylvans (2019) – b. 143-154 (transposed score)

4.3.3 Power within/despite limitations

Franco Cesarini arranged his own work *Le cortège du roi Renaud* (1999) for wind dectet (2021). I was inspired by Cesarini's economical approach within each movement of the work. The limit of ten players never feels too limiting to the composer's original intentions. A substantial portion of the second movement involves only three players.²⁹ This means that when the remaining instruments gently enter and exit the texture, the 'orchestration' of the dectet sounds relatively large.

In the third movement, the ensemble is neatly divided into two halves,³⁰ clearly defined by distinctive rhythms. Each half adopts its own tonality, resulting in an impressive bitonality. There is only two of each instrument, but this does not prevent extensive use of triads. This influence encouraged me to make optimum use of the wind octet instrumentation, also based on pairs of instruments, in *Pyrenees Overture* (2022).

The image shows a musical score for measures 25 and 26 of *Pyrenees Overture* (2022), transposed score. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 112. The score includes parts for Oboe 1, Oboe 2, Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Horn 1, Horn 2, Bassoon 1, and Bassoon 2. Measures 25 and 26 are highlighted with red boxes. Dynamics include *f*, *p*, and *mf*.

Ex. 81 – *Pyrenees Overture* (2022) – b. 25-26 (transposed score)

²⁹ 2 Ob. & Hn.

³⁰ 1st half: 2 Fl., 2 Ob., 1st Cl.

2nd half: 2nd Cl., 2 Hn., 2 Bsn.

4.3.4 Inspiration from Parameters

Sylvans (2019) for viola and wind ensemble forced many decisions around balance. These decisions proved to be beneficial artistically as well as practically. A more extreme example of inspiration from parameters is in *Planet Earth* (2022) for brass quartet. To help me write the transition from the slow 2nd movement into the fast 3rd movement, I referred to an old sketch of mine that was originally intended for orchestra. This involved thick 7th chords in the key of A flat over a soft E natural pedal and chords. The sketch in Excerpt 81 covers a wide register, but the texture is relatively simple:

The image shows a piano reduction of an orchestral sketch. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the right hand and a bass clef staff for the left hand. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 60. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The right hand plays thick 7th chords, with dynamics marked as forte (f) and piano (p). The left hand plays a soft E natural pedal, with dynamics marked as piano (p). The sketch covers measures 132 and 133.

Ex. 82 – orchestral sketch – b. 132-133 (score in C)

Still covering a wide register, I decided to try to reimagine the same basic idea but for a brass quartet inspired by the A4 Brass Quartet instrumentation of cornet, tenor horn, baritone and euphonium.³¹ The limit of four instruments made this reimagining of my initial sketch a challenge. However, as I was forced to build in much more detail into all parts to try to complete the harmony, I felt inspired – and almost forced – to add far more imaginative textural and harmonic detail than I had originally planned:

The image shows a brass quartet score for measures 41 and 42. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 60. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is for four instruments: Cornet (Cor.), Tenor Horn (T. Hn.), Baritone (Bar.), and Euphonium (Euph.). The dynamics range from forte (f) to pianissimo (pp). The score is transposed.

Ex. 83 – *Planet Earth* (2022) 2nd movement – b. 41-42 (transposed score)

³¹ <https://www.a4brassquartet.co.uk/about>

5 Legacy

5.1 Conclusions

I have examined my own perceptions of idealism and pragmatism in composition for wind bands and wind ensembles, with a view to providing motivation for me during the composition process and pleasing results for performers and audiences.

One divisive obstacle – and at the same time a fantastic opportunity for wind band composers – must surely be one of uncertainty, including that of instrumentation. I would consider myself a composer who is often concerned with precise timbres and textures. Therefore, I have sometimes battled with the risk of demotivation when faced with the kind of uncertainty around instrumentation that so often occurs in wind bands.

I have illustrated that this uncertainty can be overcome in a manner that suits the composer – with details on *solo* and *tutti* contrast and substitution cues. The use of substitution cues has helped me to balance my need for prescriptive writing with a degree of flexibility, especially where player numbers are variable or uncertain.

As I have continued to work with performers, I have developed an understanding of the difference between individuals. The process of making optimal use of a performer's abilities and writing with specific individuals in mind can be advantageous. This has been particularly true where the strengths of brass players vary across different parts of the register often seems personal.

The need to explore the dynamic range of the band and the instruments within has become more important for me over time. However, I have learned some things that surprised me. It was a revelation for me to learn that the brass family was capable of extraordinary softness – even without mutes. I doubt if I would have been forced to exploit this nearly as much if I were a composer only of music for symphony orchestra and not for wind bands or wind ensembles.

The main ingredient for the project has in fact been one of persistence: the more experience gained, the more effective my problem solving. In particular, I have found that by regularly practising the act of composition – as a performer does with an instrument – I have become more efficient in exploring my illusive compositional ‘voice’ when I have felt the need or the desire to do so.

I should emphasise that ‘voice’ exploration is not always my aim within every individual composition. I have gradually come to regard my ‘voice’ as optional and changeable.

My long journey towards the final outcome of ***Scenes from Bagni di Lucca*** (2020) supports my conclusion that I can explore the compositional ‘voice’ – across multiple compositions – and produce an original wind ensemble work in the end.

I have demonstrated that the act of open-mindedly exploring my compositional ‘voice’ can be a source of motivation and that it can inspire confidence during a long-term process. The important principle to which I have adjusted is that I should not expect to fully explore my ‘voice’ within every individual composition, but rather to have faith that it will happen eventually, for example across multiple compositions.

Using examples of my own practice and that of others, I have demonstrated that one does not necessarily need to feel restricted by the practical limitations found in wind bands and wind ensembles. First, I have attempted to define those limitations, with an emphasis on rhythm and pulse: I have often found that I can afford to increase the harmonic complexity for an ensemble while moderating the rhythmic complexity for the ensemble and for the individual players.

I have then identified ways of feeling inspired by parameters. This could be exemplified by the challenge I deliberately set for myself in ***Sylvans*** (2019). The inclusion of a viola as the main soloist was intended to trigger balance problems to be solved in the scoring for the wind ensemble.

5.2 Suggestions for Further Research

5.2.1 Literature

I have gradually discovered and come to appreciate the extreme diversity of music and literature around the general themes of wind bands and wind ensembles. David Whitwell and Frank Battisti have covered an enormous volume and depth of history between them. It would be interesting to be able to read more on balancing idealism and pragmatism in composition for wind bands and wind ensembles specifically.

5.2.2 Practice

I believe that I have written a range of scores for wind band and wind ensemble that are influenced by many past or current practices. However, there is so much more that I would be keen to explore, both in my own work, and that of others.

The body of 'flex' scores for wind band is substantial. However, it would be interesting to discover the extent to which composers of 'flex' scores might include recommendations or provisional parts for less common instruments, and for instruments that are indeed common but not regular members of the wind band.

I have investigated ways of maintaining a sense of ownership in composition for wind bands and wind ensembles. I have also articulated that I prefer to think of my compositional 'voice' as changeable – rather like that of an actor. For some readers, this may raise questions around sincerity, and whether it is favourable to try to 'act' in composition. Therefore, further research may include other perspectives on the compositional 'voice', and the extent to which it can 'belong' to an individual.

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Correspondences

Christopher Marshall

MB

I've just discovered a brilliant recording of *U Trau*. If you don't mind, I wondered whether there was a link between the handling of a double band and the programmatic depiction of an ideal future world? Also, may I ask what triggered the initial ideas and how you decided on the two bands plus choir as the medium?

CM

I'm assuming the recording you found is of Tim Reynish directing an ensemble in Singapore? Do you have a score of the piece? I can easily send you a PDF.

Your question made me think. Perhaps telling you the background to the piece and hearing your response will clarify my own ideas about the music.

In Sweden in 2003 I was approached by Richard and Georgia Bassett from AMIS (The Association for Music in International Schools). They wanted to commission a piece for choir and wind band to be premiered by high school age students in the Dutch city of Leiden the following year. They specified the text should have an international flavour. The Bassetts sent me a list of the students who had been accepted for the band and choir. It was immediately clear that the band players greatly outnumbered the singers. I decided that there were sufficient players for two complete bands. The venue for the premiere was the so-called Pilgrims Church (Pieterskirk).

Looking at the cross-shaped layout of the building it was clear it lent itself to an antiphonal set-up. I decided to place one band in each of the wings with the choir in the middle. In order to make the text truly international I decided I had to use a language that favoured no-one's cultural heritage.

Rather than doing the sensible thing and going with Esperanto I decided to construct the language as I wrote the text. This language, Niuspi, is an extremely isolating one, like Chinese, also in that it is largely monosyllabic, however the origin of the vocabulary is exclusively Indo-European. When it came to preparations for the premiere I was disappointed to see that both of the wings of the church were closed off owing to renovations, so my vision of the sound oscillating from one side to the other was not realised. Instead, both bands and the choir were crammed together in the central space. Nevertheless the piece came off very well, students and audience identifying with the themes of the text and enjoying the music. The six performances that followed - in Blue Lake MI, Minneapolis and Singapore all had their own strengths and were all well received, but none allowed for any really antiphonal effect.

*I have had quite a few performance enquiries in subsequent years, but in each case the large numbers of musicians on one stage has been a deterrent. So I am thinking of making an alternative version for just one band and choir. One of the most rewarding memories from the **U Trau** project was not exactly a musical one. I was present for about a week before the premiere, spending time with the students. One day, between rehearsals a group of them spontaneously started to create words and then simple sentences according to their understanding of the word formation and grammar rules of Niuspi.*

*I guess when I think of it, my compositions have always been about finding a balance between my musical vision and the 'facts on the ground' to use a cliché. Often, as with **U Trau**, the latter has clipped the wings of the former. Another very recent example is **The Lost** for solo cello and wind band. I knew from the start that I wanted the cello to be amplified, not only because of the obvious balance issues, but also to heighten the sense of 'otherness' that is part of the piece. It was going brilliantly in rehearsal - the amplification was fine tuned and ready to go. In the performance the technician forgot to switch it on. The conductor, John Lynch, a really fine musician (do you know him?), assured me that the piece was still an audience favourite, but nevertheless this news came as a great disappointment. Perhaps I should have been pragmatic and modified my vision by eliminating the amplification, scoring for a smaller ensemble, moving all their dynamic down several notches. But as with **U Trau** I cling on to the hope of one day hearing my music in its ideal form.*

MB

Thank you very much. That is very interesting about the vision for *U Trau* and for *The Lost*, including seeking that sense of 'otherness'. It is also interesting to note that in both cases, the technical issues didn't seem to influence you against your original visions through using antiphony and amplification respectively. Perhaps there is an interesting question here, for me at least:

If, as you say, you are often faced with the issue where the wings of musical vision are clipped by the 'facts on the ground', does a musical vision help at some point during the creative process nonetheless? If so, how and to what extent?

(In other words, without wanting to ask a leading question, if prior experiences cause you to suspect that your wishes may not be granted, does the clear/precise/idealistic musical vision - which you must surely still possess - still somehow help to propel the writing up and/or realising? By 'realising' I'm inclusively thinking about performance directions, correspondence with the conductor/director/performers)

CM

If I had been specifically commissioned to write a work for un-amplified cello and band it would have been an entirely different piece from beginning to end. I have been asked on a few occasions to arrange or re-score some of my works for different groups. I find that incredibly difficult and in fact often a major depressive trigger. On

*the few occasions this has succeeded the 'arrangement' bears only a passing resemblance to the original. A musical vision is always indispensable for me. I cannot write a note without it. Another thing: sadly, I cannot write for a certain level. My first wind ensemble piece **Aue!** (2002) was supposed to be for grade 3 bands. I tried to force my vision into those parameters - actually believed that I had succeeded. In fact it turned out to be around grade 5+ level like all my other music for all genres. I'm not sure if this answers your question, but hopefully it helps.*

CM – (Statement of Permission – 23rd January 2024)

I confirm my permission for any part of our correspondence to be quoted directly in your PhD thesis.

Kenneth Hesketh

MB

I read in one of your interviews that you initially wrote for band under a pseudonym, before becoming more open about it. I found this really interesting, and potentially quite relevant to my research topic. I wondered if you wouldn't mind letting me know to what extent (if any) this had to do with compositional identity or 'voice', and what lead to the switch?

KH

*I *wanted* to write under a pseudonym to maintain a distance between what I considered juvenilia/commercial work - for instance Danceries - and what I considered my actual, modernist 'concert', compositional voice - typified at that time by a piece called The Circling Canopy of Night written for Oliver Knussen and Simon Rattle. Both works were to be published by Faber Music in 1999. Faber was initiating its Windband series at the time and was keen to publish new works, or newly arranged works for the medium. I was asked if I had anything that might work for wind band, and I felt that my (fairly extensive) early output would work well for the medium when restored. It was suggested by Faber, and other people (in particular Timothy Reynish) that I use my real name to avoid confusion and to aid the promotion of my wind band work.*

My wind music, namely, Danceries (both sets), Masque, Whirlegigg, Diaghilev Dances, Vranjanka all came from works written when I was a teenager and early 20s, composition pastiche exercises with the late Joseph Horowitz, or homages to music I loved as a young composer (including my early exposure to Light Music as a youth orchestra member). The development of my actual compositional voice during the time the above works was made available in wind band form - as almost all of them were originally orchestral - was supported by performances by the BBC Phil, The London Sinfonietta, BCMG et al. The inner cognitive dissonance I experienced, and occasionally still experience, when this subject comes to light (for example when a student wishes to study wind band music with me) in many ways arises from that moment when I agreed to have only one name for all my work (including my work for Brass Band, seasonal music, and educational music). One exception to this - my work The Cloud of unknowing (commissioned by Tim Reynish on the death of his son William) was a new work without early antecedent, and it's interesting to note that this work has had only two or three performances due, in my opinion, to its compositional style.

Most recently, my work in the wind orchestra and wind ensemble medium has been in my modernist voice and I've tried to 'square the circle' by no longer having stylistic distance between genres. I won the BASCA award for wind orchestra composition in 2017 with a work (In Ictu

Oculi) that I later adapted for orchestra with no change in aesthetic emphasis. My most recent piece for large wind orchestra and six concertante celli will be performed at Kerkrade this July and I feel is an honest artistic statement in a way that Danceries and Masque unfortunately are not, at least to me, however popular they seem to be with performers.

KH – (Statement of Permission – 12th July 2023)

I think there's no problem in quoting me in your PhD

Philip Sparke

MB

I noticed that in the 2nd movement, the brass band version calls for trombone to play the opening solo, whereas the wind band version calls for cor anglais (or saxophone if unavailable). Of those three instruments, do you have a preference, or even an order of preference? If so, why? Perhaps I should also ask whether you prefer the brass or wind band version as a whole?

PS

Thanks for the question. The brass band version was written first, so the solo was written with trombone in mind and (obviously!) that would be my preference in the brass band context. I chose not to keep it on trombone in the concert band version as I would not count trombone high up in the list of concert band soloists and chose English horn, which, in a way, changes the nature of the solo (less 'bluesy' but more 'nostalgic'). I would prefer English horn to Alto sax in the concert band version, but only marginally. It doesn't really worry me which would be used.

MB

Thanks, Philip. So just to be clear, did you mean also that there was no personal preference between the bluesy result of Tbn. and the nostalgic C. A.?

PS

Indeed. I was actually intrigued by the different mood of the melody being dependent on the choice of soloist.

MS

What fascinated me was that I knew the wind band version first and always found the saxophone quite beautiful, then I discovered that cor anglais was the first choice and found that even better... Then I discovered the brass version and wondered whether the trombone's ability to *gliss.* made it the 'ideal' instrument (in your eyes)...

Very interesting point about the trombone not being the most suitable choice for high solo in the wind band... But that's purely due to technique isn't it? Does balance against the harmony come into it? Or was there also a musical reason to avoid also (eg: instrument character/meaning etc.)?

PS

Not only individual technique but also what 'role' most trombone players are comfortable with in the concert band. The vast majority of such exposed 'solos' are in the woodwind, I feel.

PS – (Statement of Permission – 23rd January 2024)

I write to confirm that I am happy for Matthew Brown to freely use any of our correspondence in his PhD submission.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Portfolio Instrumentations

Prelude

Duration: 2'30"

Recorded in a workshop at RNCM – 24th October 2022

First public performance:

Sevenoaks and Tonbridge Concert Band conducted by Patrick Browne

9th December 2022

Piccolo
2 Flutes
Oboe
3 Clarinets in B flat
Bass Clarinet in B flat
2 Alto Saxophones in E flat
Tenor Saxophone in B flat
Baritone Saxophone in E flat
Bassoon

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in B flat
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Euphonium
2 Tubas

Timpani

3 Percussionists
(Glockenspiel, Marimba, Triangle, Wood Block, Clash Cymbals, Bass Drum)

The Degenerate Era

Duration: 9'

Remote recording completed in 2020, constructed from recordings from individual performers during the first Covid-19 lockdown.

Flute (doubling Piccolo)

Clarinet in B flat

2 Bassoons

2 Trumpets in C

2 Trombones

Masquerade

Duration: 5'30"

First public performance:

Manchester Camerata conducted by Kaapo Ijas

RNCM 6th July 2021

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in A
2 Bassoons

2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C

Percussion
(Timpani, Triangle, Tambourine, Clash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal)

Scenes from Bagni di Lucca

Duration: 12'

Version for orchestra performed by the RNCM Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josephine Korda at RNCM

20th October 2022

Piccolo

3 Flutes (2nd doubling Piccolo, 3rd doubling Alto Flute)

2 Oboes

Cor Anglais

Clarinet in E flat

3 Clarinets in B flat

Bass Clarinet in B flat

2 Alto Saxophones in E flat

Tenor Saxophone in B flat

Baritone Saxophone in E flat

2 Bassoons

Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F

3 Trumpets in C

2 Trombones

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Timpani

3 Percussionists

(Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Marimba, Vibraphone, Tubular Bells, Triangle, Temple Blocks, Clash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal, Bass Drum, Tam-tam)

Harp

Piano

Double Bass

1 January, 2011

Duration: 3'30"

Remote recording completed in 2021, constructed from recordings from individual performers during the first Covid-19 lockdown.

2 Flutes (2nd doubling Piccolo and Alto Flute)

Oboe

Cor Anglais

2 Clarinets in A

Alto Saxophone in E flat

Tenor Saxophone in B flat

2 Bassoons

2 Horns in F

2 Trumpets in C

2 Trombones

Coast

Duration: 9'30"

Recorded in a workshop by RNCM students and conducted by Dan Button at RNCM

11th May 2021

Performed by sections of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted by Dan Button at RNCM

21st June 2021

Flute
Oboe
2 Clarinets in B flat
Bass Clarinet in B flat
Alto Saxophone in E flat
Bassoon

Horn in F
2 Trumpets in B flat
Trombone
Tuba

2 Percussionists
(Glockenspiel, Tubular Bells, Vibraphone, Suspended Cymbal)

Spectacular

Duration: 12'30"

Performed in a workshop by the Royal Marines Band and conducted by Andreas Asiikkis at HM Naval Base in Portsmouth

28th October 2022

First public performance:

Invicta Wind Orchestra conducted by Jeremy Cooper at Lympne Village Hall, Kent

7th January 2023

Piccolo
2 Flutes
2 Oboes
Clarinet in E flat
3 Clarinets in B flat
Bass Clarinet in B flat
2 Alto Saxophones in E flat
Tenor Saxophone in B flat
Baritone Saxophone in E flat
2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in B flat
Cornet in B flat
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Euphonium
2 Tubas

String Bass

3 Percussionists
(Timpani, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Tubular Bells, Temple Blocks, Tambourine, Snare Drum, Clash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal,)

Els Encantats

Duration: 10'30"

First public performance: Leeds University Union Music Society Symphonic Wind Orchestra conducted by Tom Sangster – 29th May 2022

Recorded by the Ad Hoc Wind Orchestra and conducted by Jean-Pierre Haeck for Hafabra's CD: *The Falcon of Egypt* in 2022

Published by Hafabra in 2022

Piccolo
2 Flutes
Oboe
Clarinet in E flat
3 Clarinets in B flat
Bass Clarinet in B flat
2 Alto Saxophones in E flat
Tenor Saxophone in B flat
Baritone Saxophone in E flat
Bassoon

2 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in B flat
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Euphonium
Tuba

String Bass

5 Percussionists
(Timpani, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Vibraphone, Tubular Bells, Triangle, Tambourine, Wood Block, Agogos, Bongos, Congas, Clash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal, Bass Drum, Tam-tam, Drum Set)

Sylvans

Duration: 18'

Remote recording of version for sinfonietta completed in 2020, constructed from a live recording made in January 2020 and recordings from individual performers during the first Covid-19 lockdown.

3 Flutes (2nd doubling Piccolo, 3rd doubling Alto Flute)
Oboe
Cor Anglais
2 Clarinets in B flat
Bass Clarinet in B flat
Alto Saxophone in E flat doubling Tenor Saxophone in B flat
2 Bassoons (2nd doubling Contrabassoon)

2 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in B flat
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Tuba

Solo Viola

Timpani

2 Percussionists
(Glockenspiel, Tubular Bells, Triangle, Clash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal,
Bass Drum, Tam-tam)

Harp

Double Bass

Feeling Free

Duration: 5'30"

First public performance: The Band of the RAF College conducted by Richard Murray at RNCM – 15th April 2023

Published by Universal Edition in 2023

3 Flutes (3rd doubling Piccolo)
2 Oboes
Cor Anglais
3 Clarinets in B flat
Bass Clarinet in B flat
2 Alto Saxophones in E flat
Tenor Saxophone in B flat
Baritone Saxophone in E flat
2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F
4 Trumpets in B flat
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Euphonium
Tuba

Electric Bass

Timpani

2 Percussionists
(Glockenspiel, Triangle, Wind Chimes, Bass Drum, Tam-tam, Drum Set)

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Appendix B – Wind Bands and Wind Ensembles

- RNCM Wind Orchestra (*Prelude*)
- RNCM Symphony Orchestra (*Scenes from Bagni di Lucca* for orchestra)
- RNCM Sinfonietta (*Sylvans, Scenes from Bagni di Lucca, Paganum Harmala*)
- RNCM Wind Ensemble (*6 May, 2011*)
- Virtual ensemble based on the RNCM ArkEnsemble³² (*1 January & 27 April*)
- Kent Coastal Concert Band³³ (*Edoardo*)
- Sevenoaks and Tonbridge Training Band³⁴ (*Prelude and Eduardo*)
- Whittlesey Concert Band³⁵ (*Serenade in E flat*)
- London Consorts of Winds³⁶ (*Serenade in E flat*)
- Leeds University Union Music Society Symphonic Wind Orchestra³⁷ (*Serenade in E flat & Els Encantats*)
- Bristol University Music Society Wind Orchestra (*Serenade in E flat*)
- Manchester Wind Orchestra (*Serenade in E flat*)
- Royal Marines Band (*Spectacular*)
- Invicta Wind Orchestra (*Spectacular*)
- Winterbourne Wind Band³⁸ (*Edoardo*)
- Maghull Wind Orchestra³⁹ (*Longing and Prelude*)
- Huntingdonshire Concert Band⁴⁰ (*Prelude and Els Encantats*)
- Kent Youth Wind Orchestra⁴¹ (*Feeling Free*)
- White Cliffs Symphonic Winds⁴² (*Feeling Free*)
- Band of the Royal Air Force College (*Feeling Free*)

³² <https://www.rncm.ac.uk/arkensemble/>

³³ <https://www.kentcoastalconcertband.co.uk/about-us>

³⁴ <https://www.stband.co.uk/training-band>

³⁵ <https://www.whittleseyconcertband.com/about-us>

³⁶ <http://www.londonconsortsofwinds.org.uk/>

³⁷ <https://www.luums.org/symphonic-wind-orchestra>

³⁸ <https://www.winterbournwindband.co.uk/>

³⁹ <http://www.maghullwindorchestra.co.uk/aboutus.html>

⁴⁰ <https://www.hcband.co.uk/about/>

⁴¹ <https://www.kent-music.com/county-groups/kent-youth-wind-orchestra/>

⁴² <http://www.wcsw.org.uk/about.htm>

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Appendix C – Wind Band Instrumentations

Players	WCB ⁴³	LUUMS SWO ⁴⁴	MWO ⁴⁵	Man ⁴⁶	KYWO ⁴⁷	IWO ⁴⁸
Piccolo	0	1	2	0	1	1
Flute	4	4	20	6	2	4
Oboe	0	2	1	2	2	2
Cor Anglais	0	0	0	0	1	0
E flat Clarinet	0	1	1	0	0	0
B flat Clarinet	4	8	26	6	3	9
Bass Clarinet	1	1	4	1	1	2
Alto Saxophone	2	3	14	2	2	2
Tenor Saxophone	2	2	4	1	1	1
Baritone Saxophone	1	1	2	1	1	1
Bassoon	1	1	2	2	2	3
Horn	1	4	4	2	4	4
Trumpet	2	5	12	4	4	3
Cornet	0	0	0	0	0	1
Trombone	2	3	7	3	3	3
Euphonium	1	2	4	1	1	3
Tuba	0	1	4	1	1	3
Double Bass	0	1	0	1	0	0
Percussion	1	5	3	5	3	4

Instrumentation of U. K. Wind Bands (accessed 2018-2022)

⁴³ Whittlesey Concert Band (accessed 2018)

⁴⁴ Leeds University Union Music Society Symphonic Wind Orchestra (accessed 2018)

⁴⁵ Maghull Wind Orchestra (accessed 2019)

⁴⁶ Manchester Wind Orchestra (accessed 2019)

⁴⁷ Kent Youth Wind Orchestra (accessed 2022)

⁴⁸ Invicta Wind Orchestra (accessed 2022)

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Appendix D – Frederick Fennell’s Original Eastman Wind Ensemble Instrumentation

Reeds

2 flutes and piccolo and/or alto flute
2 oboes and English horn
2 bassoons and contrabassoon
1 E-flat clarinet
8 B-flat clarinets or A clarinets (divided as demanded by composers)
1 E-flat alto clarinet
1 B-flat bass clarinet
2 alto saxophones
1 tenor saxophone
1 baritone saxophone

Brass

3 cornets in B-flat or 5 trumpets in B-flat
2 trumpets in B-flat
4 horns
3 trombones
2 euphoniums
1 E-flat tuba
1 BB-flat and 2 BB-flat tubas if desired
Other instruments – percussion, harp, celesta, piano, organ, harpsichord, solo string instruments and choral forces if desired
1 string bass