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Spring 2012

Final Project Portfolio : T'filah

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Final Project Porfolio

T'filah

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Analytical Studies, Spring 2012

Melody/Form
T'filah

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Melody/Form

The melody of David Burger's "*T'filah*" is constructed around a main theme which is 16 measures long. This main theme opens the song after a short 4 measure piano introduction. The tenors and basses have the first statement of this theme which can be broken down into four 4 measure phrases or as I chose with two 8 measure phrases titled A1 and A2 (Example 1). This main theme is then immediately repeated by the altos, A1 and the sopranos, A2 with a slight variation in rhythm. (See measures 25 and 32-36 in Example 1.)

The second theme (B) begins with the sopranos in measure 38 - B1 - and continues with the tenors and basses in measures 44-49 - B2 - (Example 2.) Both B1 and B2 begin with an anacrusis leading to the downbeat of the next measure and are basically 6 measures long. B2, beginning in measure 45, is a perfect 4th higher than B1 and then moves in contrary motion to B1. (Notice the arrows in Example 2.)

The third theme (C) begins in measure 50 and is 15 measures in length (Example 3). Here again, the first four measures are basically repeated a perfect 4th higher in measures 54-57. A variation of the main theme or the A section comes back again beginning in measure 65 with a piano interlude (A'1) and then adds the sopranos and altos respectively (Example 4).

The seven measures following this return of the A section consist of harmonic movement as the song modulates to the key of D major. Beginning in measure 88, the main theme, A'1, once again returns within a fast moving piano interlude in the newly established key (Example 5). This would be a nice place to feature an instrumental solo with the main melody, perhaps a clarinet.

The third theme or C' comes back beginning in measure 103. However, this time the first and second two-measure phrases are switched as compared to when it was introduced. (See the [] in Example 6.) After a short phrase with all voices, this C' theme is shared by the tenors and the sopranos.

Once again a variation of the main theme, A', is restated beginning in measure 118 with the tenors and sopranos an octave higher than before. The altos and basses take over the second four measures of this statement in measures 122-125 (Example 7). A canon then ensues between the altos/sopranos and the basses/tenors beginning with the anacrusis to the downbeat in the A'2 section. You can see how these parts fit together in example 7 and how the section ends with all voices together in octaves.

The song ends peacefully with a simple statement of the main theme sung by the sopranos and then overlapped with the same four-measure phrase by the tenors (Example 8). The altos continue the melody with the pick-up notes to the A2 section. However, this time, a simple rocking back and forth between the F# and the A, along with elongated rhythms adds a unique form of a "choral amen" to close the song.

Example 1 Main Theme (A)

100%
JAZZ
Unison

5
8 A1

9
8

13
8 A2

17
8

21
8

Main Theme (repeated)

Alto

21
8 A'1

25
8

29
8 A'2

33
8

(rhythm more syncopated)

Soprano →

Example 2 Second Theme (B)

Prano I

38

44

44

48

Tenor + Bass

Example 3 Third Theme (C)

50

All Voices C1

Soprano

54

(p4 higher)

58

C2

62

Example 4 - Main Theme (Variation)

piano

65 *A'1*

69

Soprano

72 *A'2*

77

Example 5 - Main Theme (Variation, Key change, Instrumental)

piano

88 *A1*

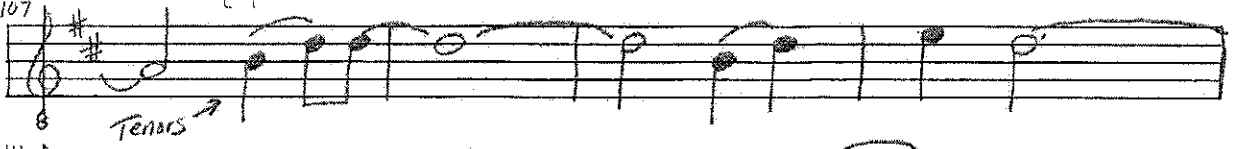
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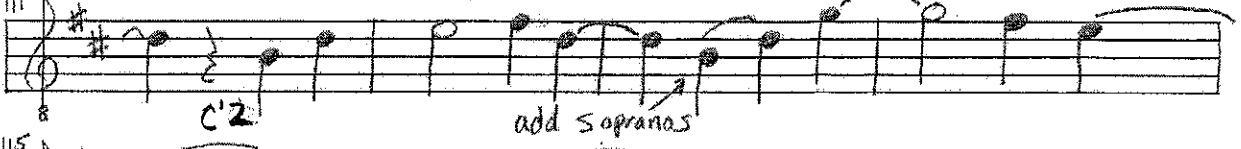
96 *A2*

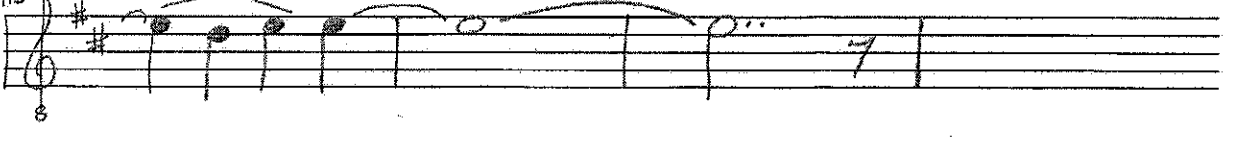
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Example 6 Third Theme (C') w/ [switched phrases]

103 
All voices C'1 Sopranos

107 
Tenors

111 
C'2 add Sopranos

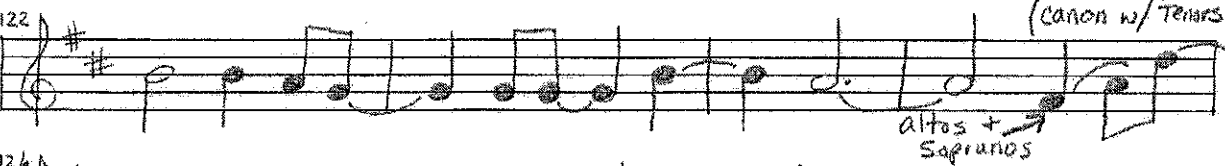
115 

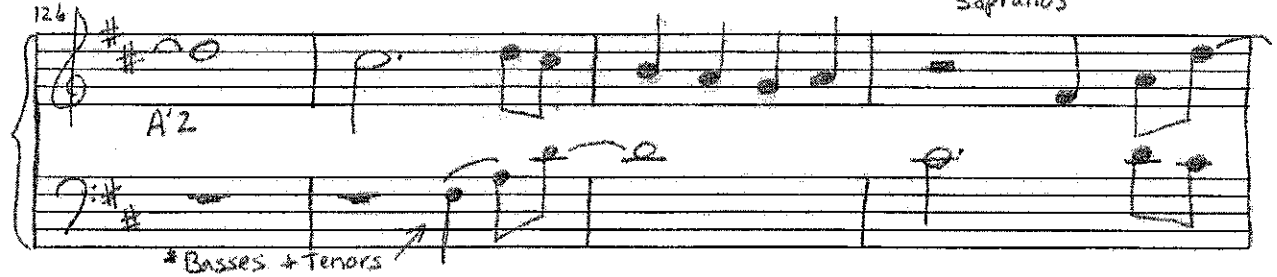
Example 7 Main Theme (A')

Sopranos
+
Tenors

118 
A'1

altos
+
Basses

122 
altos + Sopranos (canon w/ *Tenors + Basses)

126 
A'2 *Basses + Tenors

130 
altos only

All
Voices
claves

135 

(4)

(MS 138-141 - harmonic color)

Example 8 - Main Theme

146
Pianos
Al'

150
Sopranos

150
Tenors
Al (4ms)

154
Alto melody

158
(Choral Amen)

162

165

171

Rhythm, Dynamics and Stylistic Markings
T'filah

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Rhythm

The overall tempo, meter and rhythm of David Burger's "*T'filah*" are outlined in the attached rhythm and style chart. The tempo is indicated at the beginning of the song with a general metronome marking of $\text{♩} = 88$ and a description in English - "calm." This tempo is consistent throughout the piece until the song nears its climax (see chart, measure 115). At this point, we see the description written out completely in Italian - "*ritardando*." This slowing down happens three measures before the climax of the song at measure 118. Here, the tempo changes to a marking of $\text{♩} = 80$. In the following measure the description - "*poco a poco accelerando*" - instructs the performer to speed up little by little. This speeding up continues until measure 125 where the canon begins and the words "*tempo primo*" appear arriving back at the original tempo. The tempo then remains constant until the very end of the song where there is a slowing down in the accompaniment indicated by the words "*poco retard*" (see measure 172).

The time signature indicates "cut-time" with a general half-note pulse throughout the entire song. This feeling of "two" over the course of the piece, allows for a nice contrast between a more elongated half-note feel and some more complex, quicker rhythmic figures. For example, the main theme (measures 5-20) bounces back and forth between simple half-note/quarter-note/whole-note rhythms and more complex syncopated rhythms as shown in measure 6. Regardless, the cut-time feel, along with a reoccurring stress on the "and" of beat two, gives a forward moving rhythmic flow to the song. This reoccurring stress can be noted in measures 5, 7, 15, 17 and 19 of the main theme.

The second theme, beginning in measure 38, is made up primarily of half-note/quarter-note combinations. As with the rhythmic construction of the main theme, the use of this reoccurring stress on the "and" of two is again prominent here. In fact, it occurs four times in each of the two phrases of the "B" theme (see measures 38-49). The use of the tie across the bar line also allows for a kind of rhythmic push and pull throughout this theme and the entire song. The third theme (C) is once again made up of very similar rhythmic figures. It should be noted that measures 45-49 of the "B" theme and measures 59-63 of the "C" theme are almost rhythmically identical except for the dotted rhythm in measure 59 and the half-note in measure 61. In the second half of the next "A" statement we find some rhythmical variety with the use of the triplet in measure 78.

The rhythms overall are mostly homophonic in nature. However, a few measures following the climax of the song, a canon occurs between the male and female voice parts. This can be seen in measures 125-134 of the rhythm chart. Note that the rhythms come together with the anacrusis to the downbeat in measure 134.

The song ends with a simple statement of the main theme sung by the sopranos and then overlapped with the same four-measure phrase by the tenors (measures 150-154). The altos then continue with more rhythmic interest as the other vocal parts provide moving notes on staggering beats throughout (see measures 153-166). The rhythms become more and more elongated throughout this ending "choral amen" until all of the voices finally come together with tied whole notes in measure 166.

Dynamics and Style

A wide dynamic range, from *p* to *f*, is utilized in "T'filah." The song begins with a dynamic marking of *mp* in both the piano accompaniment and the vocal parts. The English word "relaxed" is used for the piano introduction and then the vocalists are given the term "calm." No dynamic or stylistic markings are found again until measure 37 where the word "diminuendo" is written in the piano accompaniment. The second theme (B) begins in measure 38 with the sopranos carrying the thematic material and text, while the other voice parts enter on "Oos" with a dynamic of *p*. The second-phrase of the "B" theme is sung by the men on a *mf* dynamic (see measure 44).

The third theme (C) begins with all voices in unison along with a written dynamic marking of *f*. The following phrase is *mf* with a crescendo to the downbeat of measure 53 followed by a quick decrescendo (see measures 52-53). The start of the next phrase begins *mp* and then the word "crescendo" is found two times within the next four measures building to *f* in the instrumental section of the next "A" theme (measures 54-64). A decrescendo for the piano in measure 71 sets up the *mf* for the vocal entrance in the following measure. Note then another written "crescendo" in measure 77.

After a relaxed, yet forward moving, instrumental section (measures 88-102) with a dynamic marking of *mp*, a crescendo in the accompaniment leads to all the voices entering *mf* with a repeat of the "C" theme. Here you will find the main build to the climax of the piece. A "crescendo" and "ritardando" (measures 113-117) set up the climax of the song with a pronounced *f* of the main theme sung with strength and authority. This section stays strong until the diminuendo at the end of the theme in measure 140.

The final section ends with the written English word “calm” beside the Italian “cantabile,” very similar to the way the song began. All parts enter at different times with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The altos carry the melody here and are given the abbreviation “*esspr.*” as they enter in measure 153. In measure 156, as the song winds down to a peaceful close, the words “*diminuendo poco a poco*” instruct the singers to get quiet little by little. This happens gradually over the next 15 measures, all the way to the last cut off in measure 172.

Rhythm and Style Chart

$\text{♩} = 88$, calm

Theme
(A)

5 *mp*

9

13

17

(A')

21

25

29

33

(*stress on "and" of two)

Sec. id Theme (B)

38

p (Ooo's enter)

44

mf

48

Third Theme (C)

50

f

mp

crescendo

crescendo

(instrumental)

f

Main Theme Variation (A'1)

65

f

(A'2)

72

mf

crescendo

3

Main
Theme

88 8 8 102

mp (instrumental only)
piano w/ added clarinet - same (A) rhythm crescendo

Third
Theme
(C')

103 *mf*

107 other voices →

111 *crescendo*

115 *ritardando*

Main
Theme
(A')
Climax

118 *f* *d=80* *poco a poco accelerando*

122 (canon*) *tempo primo*

126 (canon*)

130

135 *diminuendo*

(3)

calm, cantabile

M
Tune
(A)

146

S *mp*

Ending

150

S

T *mp*

B *mp*

153

S

A *mp espr.*

T

B

diminuendo poco a poco

157

S

A

T

B

161

Handwritten musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The score covers measures 161 to 164. The Soprano part consists of a single melodic line with four half notes, each tied to the next. The Alto part has a melodic line with a quarter note followed by a dotted quarter note, then a half note, and finally a half note tied to the next. The Tenor and Bass parts each have a single melodic line with four half notes, each tied to the next.

165

Handwritten musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The score covers measures 165 to 168. The Soprano part consists of a single melodic line with four half notes, each tied to the next. The Alto part has a melodic line with a quarter note followed by a dotted quarter note, then a half note, and finally a half note tied to the next. The Tenor and Bass parts each have a single melodic line with four half notes, each tied to the next.

170

172

Handwritten musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The score covers measures 170 to 172. The Soprano part has a melodic line with a half note tied to the next, followed by a quarter note, then a series of eighth notes (quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter, eighth, eighth, quarter), and finally a half note. The Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts each have a single melodic line with a half note tied to the next. The Soprano part includes the instruction *(piano)* with an arrow pointing to the first eighth note of the eighth-note run, and *poco ritard.* written below the eighth-note run.

Formal Analysis
T'filah

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Analytical Studies, Spring 2012

The first of the following two charts outlines the major themes or sections (A, B and C) in David Burger's *T'filah* using measure numbers, melodic phrases and corresponding text. Each of the formal sections and themes were determined by the melodic design, harmonic and rhythmic structure, stylistic markings and even the Hebrew text. Since this is a choral number, the text plays an important role in the analysis and interpretation of the score. Notice that each "A" section begins with the same text "Avinu shebashamayim..." The final "A" (ending) section begins with the familiar main theme (A1) and then continues with a calm "choral amen" of which the Altos continue with melodic material (D1), a simple rocking back and forth between two notes.

The second chart shows the breakdown of measures within each of the formal sections. Furthermore, each section is mapped out into period, phrases and texture. The key for the texture section is as follows: S – Soprano, A – Alto, T – Tenor, B – Bass, U – Unison.

A

- Measures 5-21
- Phrases A1, A2
- "Avinu shebashamayim, tsur yisraeil v'goaló (A1), bareich et m'dinat yisraeil, reisheet tsmichat g'ulateinu (A2)"

A'

- Measures 21-36
- Phrases A'1, A'2
- "Avinu shebashamayim, tsur yisraeil v'goaló (A'1), bareich et m'dinat yisraeil, reisheet tsmichat g'ulateinu (A'2)"

B

- Measures 38-49
- Phrases B1, B2
- "Hagein aleha b'evrat chasdecha, (B1) ufros aleha sukot sh'lomecha (B2)"

C

- Measures 50-64
- Phrases C1, C2
- "ush'lach or'cha vaamit cha terasheha (C1) sareha v'yo atseha (C2)"

A'

- Measures 65-80
- Phrases A'1, A'2
- Instrumental (A'1) "V'hanchileim Eloheinu y'shua va ateret nitsachon ta atrem (A'2)"

A'

- Measures 88-102
- Phrases A'1, A'2
- Instrumental - Piano (possible add clarinet)

C'

- Measures 103-117
- Phrases C'1 (switched phrases from C1), C'2
- "V'natata shalom shalom ba arets (C'1) v'simchat olam l'chol yoshveha (C'2)"

A' (climax)

- Measures 118-141
- Phrases A'1, A'2 (canon between men's and women's voices)
- "Avinu shebashamayim, tsur yisraeil v'goaló (A'1), bareich et m'dinat yisraeil, reisheet tsmichat g'ulateinu (A'2)"

A' (ending)

- Measures 146-171
- Phrases A'1 (Sopranos overlap with tenors) D1 (Choral ending with melody in alto line)
- "Avinu shebashamayim, tsur yisraeil v'goaló, (A'1) Amen shelah (ending)"

A

21

11

10

Period

4 + 7

10

Phrases

(Intro) A1

A2

Texture

Piano TB

TB

16

A'

8

8

Period

8

8

Phrases

A'1

A'2

Texture

A

S

B

Period

Phrases

Texture

14

8

6

2 + 6

6

(Intro) B1

B2

Piano S

T/B

C

Period

Phrases

Texture

15

8

7

8

7

C1

C2

U(2) + S(6)

S

A'

Period

Phrases

Texture

16

8

8

8

8

A'1

A'2

Piano (possible solo)

S(4) + S/A(4)

A'

Period

Phrases

Texture

23

15

8

7

+

8

8

(Intro)

A'1

A'2

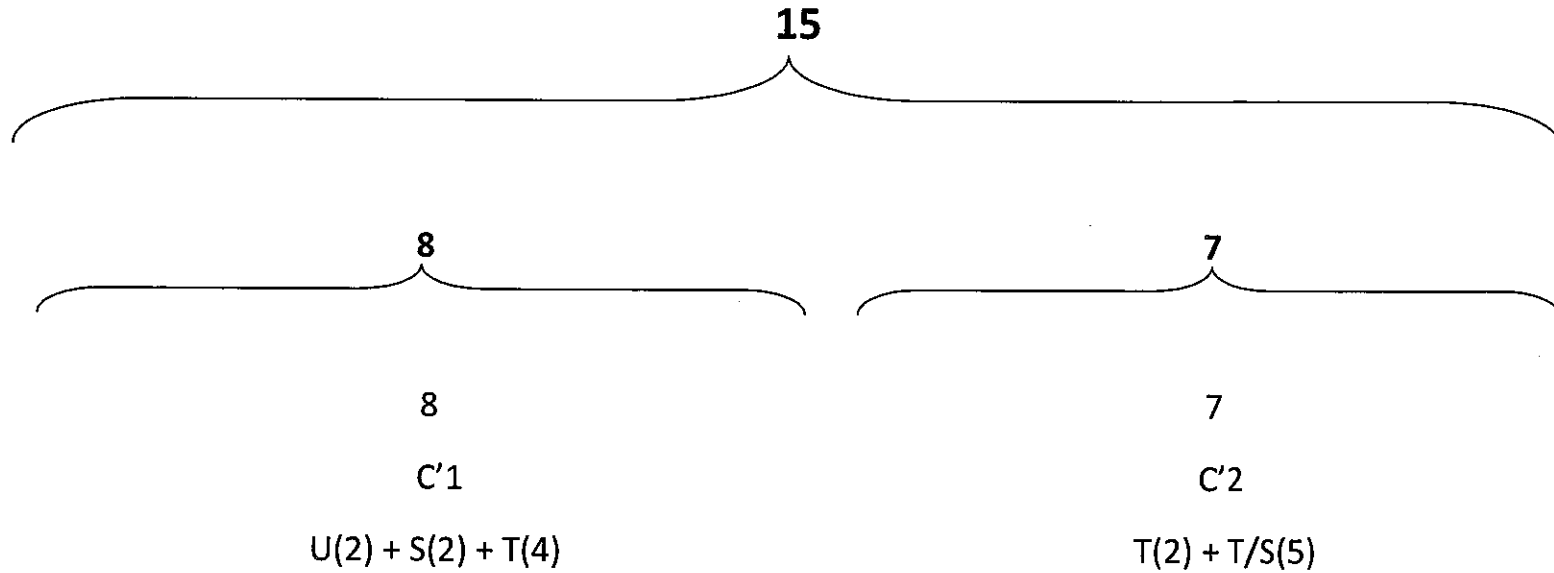
Piano

Piano (possible solo)

Piano (possible solo)

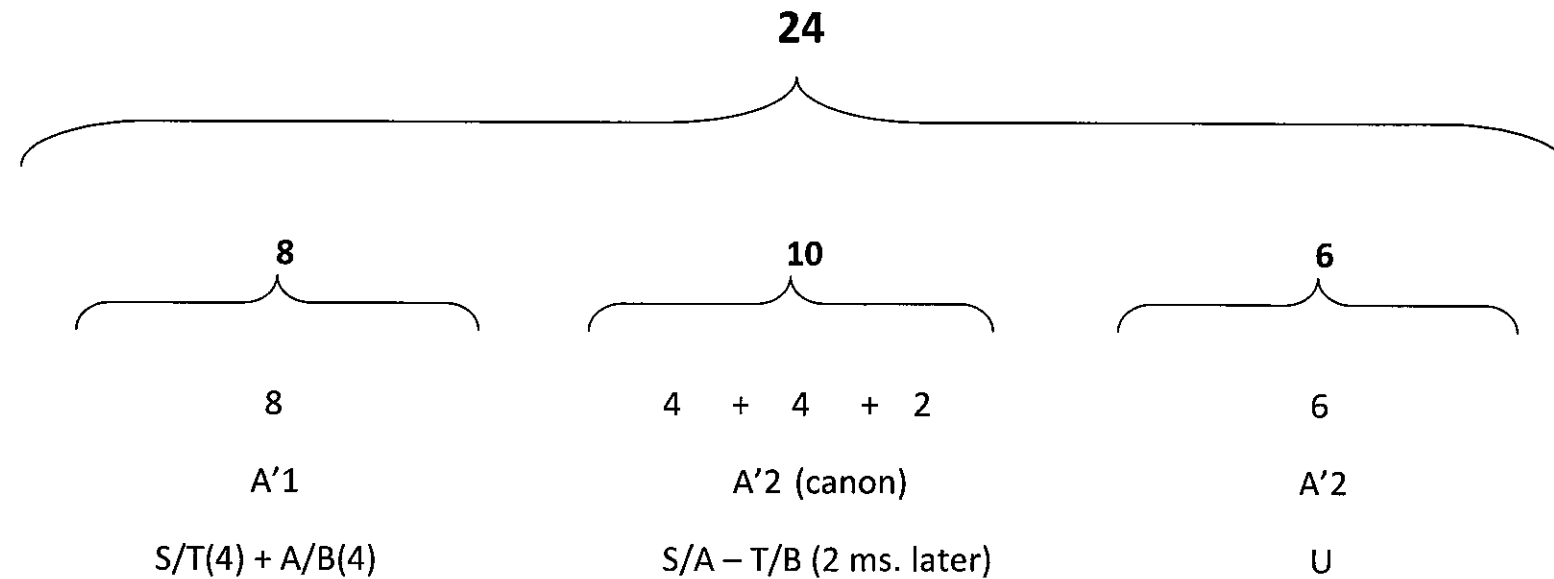
C'

Period
Phrases
Texture



A'

Period
Phrases
Texture



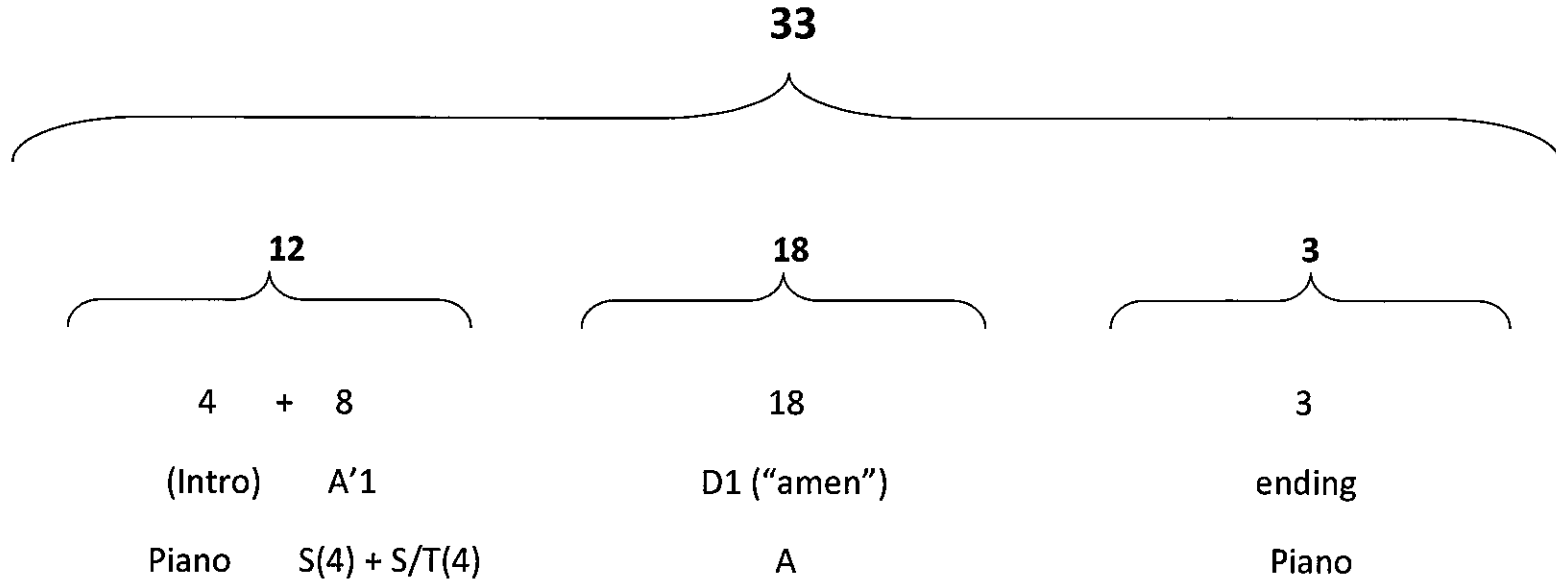
A'

ending

Period

Phrases

Texture



Textural Analysis
T'filah

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Analytical Studies, Spring 2012

Textural Analysis

The chart below details each of the formal sections of David Burger's *T'filah* and the corresponding textures that can be found within each section. The chart shows that homophony is the predominant texture throughout the piece. Notice that homophony can be found in every section with monophony and polyphony dispersed throughout the song. As the song builds towards the climax and the ending, all three textures are being used.

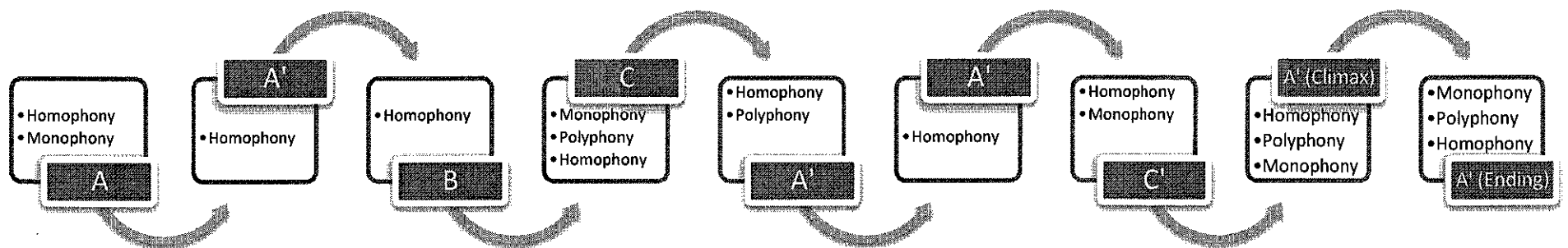
The chart on the following pages further explores these three main textures according to measures and phrases. The appropriate texture of each phase is labeled under each phrase name. The chart focuses on the texture of the choral singing. Any solo piano, as in the (Intro) or (Piano), is graphed as homophony. Unison singing, even though it is accompanied by the piano, is labeled as monophony.

Sometimes the texture changes within the confines of a specific phrase. This is broken down within the (Period) with the corresponding texture graphed below. For example: Period = 2 + 4 Here the phrase is split with two measures being monophonic and four measures homophonic.

Texture = M + H

The SATB vocal parts account for 133 measures out of the 174 total measures in the song (76.4%). Of these 133 measures, homophonic sections account for 79 measures (59.4%), monophonic sections account for 32 measures (24.1%), and polyphonic sections represent only 22 measures (16.5%). Based on this analysis, homophony is the predominant texture. Solo piano accompaniment represents 44 out of the total 174 measures (23.6%).

Use the following key: M=Monophony, H=Homophony and P=Polyphony.



A

21

11

10

Period

4 + 7

10

Phrases

(Intro) A1

A2

Texture

H + M

M

16

A'

8

8

Period

8

8

Phrases

A'1

A'2

Texture

H

H

B

Period

Phrases

Texture

14

8

6

2 + 6

2 + 4

(Intro) B1

B2

H + H

M + H

C

Period

Phrases

Texture

15

8

7

2 + 2 + 3 + 1

7

C1

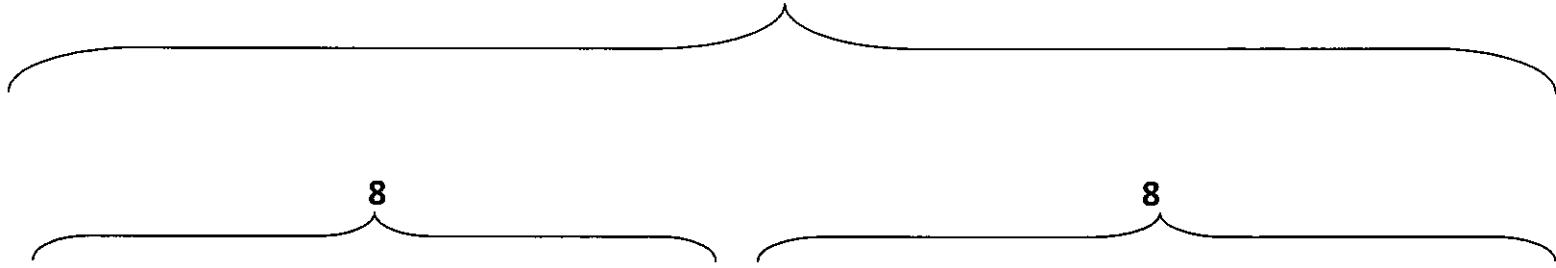
C2

M + P + M + H

H

A'

16



Period

8

8

Phrases

A'1 (Piano)

A'2

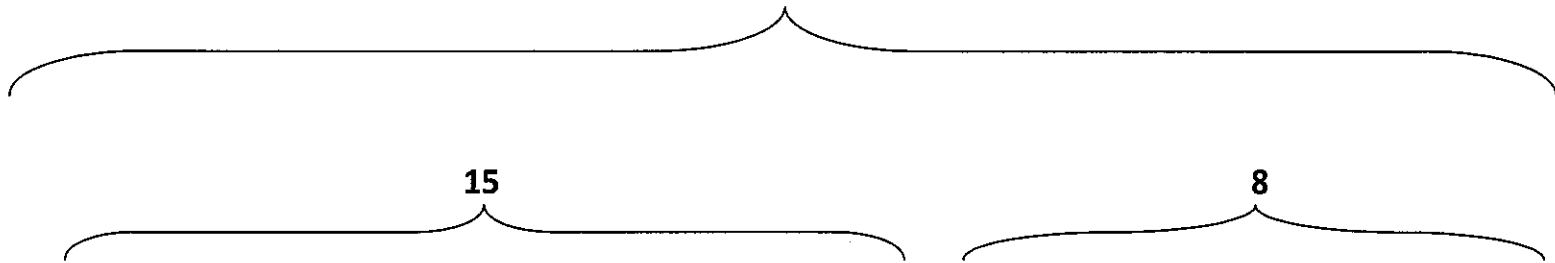
Texture

H

H

A'

23



Period

7 + 8

8

Phrases

(Intro) A'1(Piano)

A'2 (Piano)

Texture

H

H

H

C'

15

8

7

Period
Phrases
Texture

2 + 6

7

C'1

C'2

M + H

H

A'

24

8

10

6

Period
Phrases
Texture

8

4 + 4 + 2

6

A'1

A'2 (canon)

A'2

H

P + P + M

H

6

A'

(Ending)

Period

Phrases

Texture

33

12

18

3

4 + 4 + 4

8 + 10

3

(Intro) A'1

D1 ("amen")

ending

H + M + P

P + H

H

Interpretation Paper
T'filah

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Analytical Studies, Spring 2012

Looking back over the last several weeks, I am able to reflect on the different analysis that were completed and how they have impacted my time behind the podium. This process has made me a better teacher and a more informed conductor. Completing each different analysis (harmonic, melodic, rhythmic, formal and textural) has given me a better understanding of the piece and greater insight as to what the composer is trying to convey.

Creating a detailed harmonic analysis of David Burger's *T'filah*, provided me with an overall tonal basis of the work. It also gave me a greater understanding of how the vocal parts fit together, and in turn, how the piano accompaniment both compliments the vocal line and stands alone. It is with this knowledge and background that I am able to focus on specific harmonic highlights. For instance, the use of non-chord tones to create tension and dissonance, harmonic shifts or modulations and cadences are just a few key components that vie for extra attention from behind the podium. This might appear in the way of balancing a particular chord or stressing a certain non-harmonic tone. As I look at these key components in detail, I cannot help but to view the relationship of the harmonic structure to the melody, which in turn, leads to the melodic analysis.

As I completed each analysis, I also discovered a lesson plan to use with my concert choir. For instance, it was not until after completing the melodic analysis that I was truly able to help my students recognize how this piece of music fit together. During a rehearsal, I had the students work with their folder partners and determine the main theme of the song; which voices sing it and when and where it appears. Together we called this theme "A" and then proceeded to find a "B" and "C" theme. Then we went through the entire song singing only the melody, making note of how and when it jumped around from part to part. This forced the

singers to make the connections from theme to theme. Perhaps they only sing the second half of a theme after the piano plays the first half. Recognizing this melodic thread allowed for greater confidence and a chance to be more expressive in their music making.

The rhythm and stylistic analysis provided me with the tools needed to create more expressive and musical moments with my choir. The rhythmic analysis specifically showed how David Burger created somewhat simple, syncopated rhythmic figures in order to keep a forward moving flow throughout the song. However, within this continuous forward movement are opportunities for a slight “squish and stretch” throughout the phrase. As a conductor, this helps me to form my gesture in a way that will bring about the most musical response from my choir. This investigation of style, dynamics and rhythm combined with the repetition of themes and phrases allows me to create a detailed image of what I want hear before I mount the podium.

Both the formal and textural analysis helped me to be more aware of the linear and vertical movements within the different vocal and instrumental sections. I found that the Hebrew lyrics played an important role in the formal analysis of the piece. The simple realization that the same lyric, “Avinu shebahsamayim...” begins each “A” section, makes me want to treat them slightly different each time. Perhaps a subtle reshaping of the phrase or a slightly different dynamic is all that it needs. The textural analysis forced me to once again look at the melodic line; however, this time in contrast to what is going on around it. Entering into a rehearsal already knowing that a musical phrase begins monophonic and then builds with intensity as the texture also grows to a homophonic state has only made me a better conductor.

I find that the more informed I am about a piece of music, the better teacher I am. This may seem like common knowledge, but through this in-depth process of analyzing, I was able to discover that my specific knowledge and research of a piece of music directly relates to how well the students learn. It is so important for me, as a conductor, to spend ample time in the score study process. Mastery of the score will not only give me more confidence on the podium, but will provide me with an interpretive vision of the music so that I will be ready to lead, inspire and create with my students.

**AARON COPLAND'S "WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN MUSIC"
APPLICATION PAPER**

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Analytical Studies, Spring 2012**

Aaron Copland's book, "What to listen for in Music," primarily points toward the music listener, just as the title suggests. However, as a choral director, I did find some excellent information that I will be able to apply to my time behind the podium. Reading this book from a director's perspective really made me think about what I need to do in order to help the listener to better understand a particular piece of literature. Copland advises his readers to strive to be a more active listener, not to just listen for the sake of listening, but to actually listen for something.¹ As a conductor, I need to search for what that "something" is, and I need to help my choirs reveal it to the audience through the musicality, expression and precision of ~~our~~ their music-making.

Throughout the book, I enjoyed discovering a little bit more about the creative processes of a composer. I believe that questions such as: What is the composer trying to achieve? Why did he write the piece? How would the composer want this piece to be performed? ...are all questions that I should be asking myself as I rehearse and prepare any song for performance. The stylistic format of this long statement is awkward.

Copland basically divides his book into five main sections as he discusses the central elements of music. ~~These elements include~~ including rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color and form. Each of these is essential for the listener to find that "something" ~~of~~ to which Mr. Copland was referring ~~and also~~ but equally essential to the conductor. ~~For myself, in front of~~ As one who works with ~~my~~ school and church groups, I feel that these elements lend themselves to the creating of excellent lesson plans for every rehearsal situation.

¹ Aaron Copland, What to listen for in Music, A Mentor Book (New York, New York: The McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957), 23.

As far as rhythm is concerned, Copland says that when we only stress the downbeat, such as, ONE-two, three; ONE-two, three; and so forth, we only get meter. Again, awkward stylistic formatting. He goes on to reveal that we get real rhythm when we stress the notes according to what makes the most sense within the musical phrase.² I had never heard it put that way before. ~~;~~ however, As a choral conductor, I have the benefit ~~and joy~~ of ~~also~~ having lyrics to accompany(WC?) the musical phrase. I will certainly think more about rhythms and stressing the notes that make the most sense according to both the lyrics and the phrase. Later, he explains poly-rhythms~~;~~, that is, combining ~~the combination of~~ two or more independent rhythms at the same time. This technique was very common among madrigal composers.³ All of this makes me more aware of what is going on in the score and perhaps how ~~and what~~ to inform my singers ~~in regards~~ with regard to articulating(WC?) different rhythms.

Next, Copland describes several things to look for(prepare) when listening for a beautiful melody. I would find this particularly useful when trying to select "good" music. He says that a melody should be of satisfying proportions, give a sense of completion (Completion of what?) and be long and flowing. He points out that, above all ~~most importantly~~, it a melody should be able to bring about an emotional response in the listener through its expressive quality.⁴ The melody is such an important element ~~to~~ in all types of musical styles and it must be followed (What do you mean?) throughout from the beginning to the end. It may disappear, but as

² Copland, 34.

³ Copland, 37.

⁴ Copland, 41.

conductors, we need to know when and where it reappears, so that we can help in allowing it to make a lasting impression in the listener's ears.⁵

Copland's chapter on harmony refocused my attention on the importance of looking at the harmonic structure of each piece of music that I conduct. I was particularly drawn to his discussion on consonance and dissonance.⁶ This is an excellent topic that allows for some great teaching moments from behind the podium and also lends itself to the discussion of balance and tone color. Chapter four, Tone Color, is geared more towards the timbre of different instruments from the string bass to the French horn to the oboe. However, this helped me, as a choir director, to think of my S, A, T, B, (Spell these out!) sections each as a different section of "instruments," each with its own specific tone color.

Copland's chapters on form and musical structure make me more aware of what I do as a conductor. Topics such as repeating sections, similar rhythms, augmentation, diminution and vocal fugal forms all remind me of ways to better prepare my scores. I must strive to teach and interpret what it is that the composer is trying to achieve.

The last chapter of the book, "From Composer to Interpreter to Listener," really sums up the responsibilities of the conductor in this incredible process of making music. Copland says that "music begins with a composer; passes through the medium of an interpreter; and ends up with you, the listener."⁷ I truly believe that I have been given the great responsibility and gift to act as an interpreter to a composer's work. It is in this moment that I get the privilege to bring of bringing a composer's work to life. It is here that I am asked to decide what exactly it is that

⁵ Copland, 46.

⁶ Copland, 54.

⁷ Copland, 158.

the composer is trying to achieve and do my best to recreate that “something” for the listener to experience.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Copland, Aaron, *What to listen for in Music, A Mentor Book*. New York, New York: The McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957.

STYLE: Please see the STYLE comments on your rationale paper, Erik. Please work for objective commentary and a more academic style. Both Turabian and Chicago style manuals are now available free on-line.

CONTENT: Your approach is a “play-by-play” with commentary. A more synthesized presentation of both the book’s content and your thoughts is preferable. Better yet, avoid the book report format (reiterating what the author has stated) altogether and focus much more on the application aspect of the assignment: “What will I do with this information? How does/will what I have learned impact me as a conductor? listener? Musician?” I don’t mean to say that you did not do this; rather, this could be a far larger component of the paper’s content. In general, I appreciate what you have learned, Erik. A great exercise will be to re-read the book at the end of the semester and determine if you then have an even deeper understanding of Copland’s assertions.

**PROJECT PIECE
RATIONALE PAPER**

**Erik C. Welchans
#00992195
Analytical Studies, Spring 2012**

The song that I have selected for my Project Piece is entitled "*T'filah*," by David Burger, a song which I have never before performed or conducted. I first heard this song performed at a choral festival a few years ago and knew that I wanted to do it with my school choir at some point. ~~It was~~ The beautiful melody, catchy rhythms and flowing accompaniment ~~that~~ caught my attention some years back. ~~and now~~ Today, those are the same musical elements that are appealing. ~~via for my attention as I select this song for my Project Piece.~~

There is something about the melodic line that just grabs(informal) you. In light of the Copland reading, I hope to discover what it is that makes me whistle this tune or find myself singing the melody as it just "pops" into my head, ~~out of the blue~~. Perhaps, it is because it gives a sense of completion(in what way?) and is long and flowing, or maybe it is something as simple as stirring an emotional response through its expressive quality.¹ ~~It is~~ Through this project, ~~that~~ I hope to learn more about what makes a great melody great and what I can do as a conductor to convey these creative lines to the listener in a manner that would be most pleasing to the composer himself.

The rhythmic qualities of this piece, in both the voices and the accompaniment, ~~really~~ seem to drive the song forward from beginning to end. Why does this happen? How is it achieved? These are two questions ~~that~~ I hope to answer through the analytical process ~~of this assignment~~.

Another thing I hope to accomplish is to discover how the harmonic structure of the song ~~also aids in this~~ the feeling of forward movement throughout the piece. I would also like to learn more about how my knowledge of the harmonic structure of this piece, or any other song that I conduct, will make me ~~better~~ more effective behind the podium. I am truly excited to ~~engulf~~ immerse myself ~~into~~ a new piece of literature and to see the results of my hard work through both the performers and the listeners alike. (How would this happen?)

¹Aaron Copland, *What to listen for in Music, A Mentor Book* (New York, New York: The McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957), 41.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Copland, Aaron, *What to listen for in Music, A Mentor Book*. New York, New York: The McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957.

STYLE: Typically in academic writing, one would not use first person. The nature of this assignment makes the choice understandable, however. For future written assignments, use the more objective third person. Additionally, please avoid informal, familiar, or colloquial writing; the easiest reading is formal but clear and concise. Effusive and redundant writing has fallen out of favor in the academic realm, too – as Sgt. Friday would say on *Dragnet*, “Just the facts, mister, just the facts.” This is a graduate level course. One final point: assertions require citation or clarification or substantiation or justification. The last sentence, for example, really verges on requiring additional information. Your “work through...the listeners” – meaning what?

CONTENT: Generally your content is good. You express your rationale for this choice as an appreciation of the piece and the desire to understand why it is attractive. While simple, this is certainly appropriate, especially in light of the Copland book. Thank you for the thought and for the connection to the reading assignment.