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## David Maslanka's *Desert Roads, Four Songs for Clarinet and Wind Ensemble*: An Analysis and Performer's Guide

Joshua R. Mietz

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, jrushm@gmail.com

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DAVID MASLANKA'S *DESERT ROADS, FOUR SONGS FOR CLARINET AND  
WIND ENSEMBLE:*

AN ANALYSIS AND PERFORMER'S GUIDE

by

Joshua R. Mietz

A DOCTORAL DOCUMENT

Presented to the Faculty of  
the Graduate College at the University of Nebraska  
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
For the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Major: Music

Under the Supervision of Professor Diane C. Barger

Lincoln, Nebraska

May 2011

DAVID MASLANKA'S *DESERT ROADS FOR CLARINET AND WIND ENSEMBLE*:  
AN ANALYSIS AND PERFORMER'S GUIDE

Joshua R. Mietz, D.M.A

University of Nebraska, 2011

Advisor: Diane C. Barger

Known primarily as a composer for the wind band, few American composers have received the notoriety and widespread acclaim that David Maslanka has since 1970. His works for wind ensemble are now considered standard repertoire and are played frequently by high school, college-level, and professional ensembles alike. Additionally, his works for chamber groups and soloists have continued to gain in popularity. As of the writing of this document, Maslanka has composed concertos for saxophone, euphonium, flute, marimba, trombone, and piano. Early in 2005, he completed his first large-scale work for solo clarinet with wind ensemble accompaniment: *Desert Roads*. *Desert Roads* is comprised of four movements—each with a unique perspective and stylistic approach to the concerto medium.

This document begins with a detailed biography of the composer's life and works. There is an emphasis on the people, places, and events that contributed to Dr. Maslanka's compositional style. Chapter 2 offers a history of *Desert Roads* and pays special attention to Dr. Margaret Dees and her leadership in the commissioning of the work. Chapters 3-6 provide analysis and discussion of the structural elements *Desert Roads*.

Additionally, there is discussion of the chorales of J.S. Bach where appropriate. Chapters 3-6 also include graphic illustrations of each movement at the end of the chapter. Chapter 7 offers some concluding remarks and performance considerations for clarinetists, conductors, and scholars. In addition to the customary and required copyright and bibliographic documentation, the appendix of this doctoral document contains a reproduction of the Bach chorales employed within *Desert Roads* as well as the text from Richard Beale's *On the Subway Platform*. Furthermore, the appendix contains the transcription of interviews conducted by the author, and an annotated list of Maslanka's works for clarinet, giving scholars a context for which to better appreciate *Desert Roads*.

This document is intended to provide readers with a clear, thorough understanding of *Desert Roads* and contribute to a greater understanding of the music of David Maslanka.

## Acknowledgements

I want to express a most sincere and heart-felt thanks and appreciation to the following people who helped make this endeavor a reality: To Diane Barger without whose mentoring and inspiration I would not be the clarinetist, author, teacher, and, more importantly, person I am today; To Pamela Starr whose love of scholarship and excitement for clarinet music has encouraged and excited me throughout this degree; To Jeff McCray whose knowledge of theory, love of musical lines, and multifaceted life has inspired me from the day I auditioned at UNL; And finally to David Fowler who, through his enthusiasm and support of my work, has been a wonderful addition to this committee.

Thanks are extended to David Maslanka, whose music has moved me from the day I sight-read *Rollo Takes a Walk* at Lutheran Summer Music Camp in June of 1996. On March 9, 2009, I contacted him about this project and he said he would be pleased if someone would write it. On December 30, 2009, he generously shared an hour and a half with me and consented to an interview at the Good Foods Store in Missoula, Montana. I will always be thankful for the insights he shared with me. Since then he and I have discussed various aspects of *Desert Roads* via e-mail. There is no substitute for a composer's view of his own music; deepest thanks.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank my family. Veronica Turner, my fiancée, has listened to my musings on wind band music, proofread many drafts, and lent her expert musical experience where necessary. Thanks are expressed to my parents and siblings who have all been happy to live this experience vicariously through weekly phone calls and expressed fascination to the topic of this document.

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## Chapter 1: Biography of David Maslanka

Born in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1943, David Maslanka was drawn to the clarinet at an early age. His grandfather was a competent violinist but also played the clarinet. His father worked for Revere Copper and Brass, which was formerly located in Canton, Massachusetts. His mother, a classical music enthusiast, maintained a small collection of recordings, but had no formal training.

Maslanka began his musical career as a clarinetist in the fourth grade, at age nine, and continued throughout high school. Though the public school program was not particularly rigorous, he qualified for the All State Band and participated in the Greater Boston Youth Symphony. During his senior year, he commuted sixty-five miles for weekly lessons with Robert Stuart, the applied clarinet instructor at the New England Conservatory of Music. He graduated from high school in 1961 and began studies at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music where he pursued a Bachelor of Music Education with an emphasis in clarinet. Between 1963 and 1964, he studied at the *Mozarteum* in Salzburg, Austria. His first serious composition, *Music for Clarinet and Piano*, was written while abroad.

He completed his undergraduate degree in 1964 but was not enthusiastic about beginning a career as a band director in the public schools. Instead, he opted to enroll in a combined master's and doctoral degree program at Michigan State University. His primary teachers were: H. Owen Reed, composition; Paul Harder, theory; and Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr, clarinet. To Maslanka, Reed was relatable and served as a strong mentor to him. Reed's courses presented current trends and experimental techniques but



were paradoxically grounded in historical perspective. This training stoked Maslanka's appreciation for the music of J.S. Bach.<sup>1</sup>

At Michigan State, he saw a glimmer of his true musical gift. Graduate school served to hone his craft and illuminate the possibilities of his talent. His final doctoral project was *Symphony No. 1*, a work he describes as a "scrap pile of musical ideas."<sup>2</sup> Notable to this work was the use of two antiphonal ensembles, each with its own conductor. This technique limited the efficacy of this symphony and rendered it unplayable as such. The work was finished in 1970 and has yet to be performed, though pieces of it have been revised and used in other works.<sup>3</sup>

After graduation, Maslanka attained a position at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo. He taught theory, composition, analytical techniques, and applied clarinet.<sup>4</sup> He stayed at that position through 1974 when he moved to New York City. His time at Geneseo yielded the following notable contributions to his oeuvre: *Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness for Harp and Piano* (1974), *Duo for Flute and Piano* (1972), *Trio No. 1 for violin, clarinet, and piano* (1971), and *No. 2 for viola, clarinet and piano* (1973). Geneseo is very close to Rochester in proximity and Maslanka made contact with conductor Sidney Hodkinson, who was able to provide

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Bolstad. *David Maslanka's Symphony No. 4: A Conductor's Analysis with Performance Considerations*. Austin, Texas: 2002. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Brenton Alston, "David Maslanka's *Symphony No. 3: A Relational Treatise on Commissioning, Composition, and Performance*," University of Miami: 2004. 12.

<sup>3</sup> David Maslanka personal website. [www.davidmakslana.com](http://www.davidmakslana.com). Accessed 10 March 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Alston 3.

access to the Eastman School of Music ensemble *Musica Nova*. This association resulted in the premiere of the *Duo for Flute and Piano*.<sup>5</sup> SUNY-Geneseo also yielded a close working relationship with Richard Beale, a professor of art and a poet.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, all was not well in idyllic upstate New York for David Maslanka. In August 1973, Maslanka wrote a letter to the composer Michael Colgrass, an advocate of creativity in music and asked: “Why is it that you go on writing music? The answer, obviously, is that you love it, but as a composer among composers I feel myself to be a shrub in a forest of trees. My voice is lost and will stay lost except for an accident of fate.”<sup>7</sup> Colgrass replied that a composer should decide: If he is indeed a composer, regardless of what quality; how to arrange his life so that he may best serve his music as a composer during the better part of his daily hours of productivity; and which people best support him as a composer.<sup>8</sup> Clearly, Maslanka felt an inner need to work and support himself financially as a composer.

Maslanka moved to New York City in 1974 and stayed until 1990. While residing there, Maslanka taught at both Sarah Lawrence College and New York University. In 1974, Maslanka wrote his first large-scale work for band: *Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion*.<sup>9</sup> He wrote this piece out of sheer inspiration and

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<sup>5</sup> Bolstad. 4.

<sup>6</sup> David Maslanka. E-mail correspondence with the author. 11 March, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> *Catch-22 for Composers: You need another job to support yourself*. New York Times, August 18, 1974, sec AL, pg. 105.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> This collaboration is discussed further in Chapter 2, pg. 7 and Appendix 1, pg. 111-112.

approached Donald Hunsberger of the Eastman School of Music to request a performance. Hunsberger agreed and it was placed on the program of a February 1979 concert. As events unfolded, Hunsberger was granted a sabbatical leave that semester and Frederick Fennell was deemed his replacement. Maslanka and Fennell discussed the work thoroughly and the initial performance was a great success.<sup>10</sup> Shortly thereafter, John Paynter and the Northwestern University Wind Ensemble performed it with equal triumph. Paynter and his wife, Marietta, subsequently commissioned Maslanka to write another work: *A Child's Garden of Dreams*, in 1981.<sup>11</sup> In the course of thirty years since its composition, *A Child's Garden of Dreams* has not fallen out of favor with college-level wind ensembles. Maslanka says, "My composing process changed with this piece."<sup>12</sup> He began exploring dreams, the writings of Carl Jung, and a technique called "active imagining."<sup>13</sup>

Following a divorce from his first wife Suzanne and several years of being in what he calls "a dark place," Maslanka met and married his second wife, Allison.<sup>14</sup> In 1990, the two felt a strong need to leave the densely populated metropolis of New York City for a more open environment. He and Allison discussed possible locations. She, with her love of horses, and he, with a need for the spacious majesty of the Rocky

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<sup>10</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See pg 111.

<sup>11</sup> Bolstad. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Bolstad 17.

<sup>13</sup> Jung, Carl. Joan Chodorow. *Jung on Active Imagination*. University Press: Princeton, NJ, 1997.

<sup>14</sup> Lauren Denny Wright. *A Conductor's Insight Into Performance and Interpretive Issues in Give Us This Day* by David Maslanka. Coral Gables, Florida: 2010. 10.

Mountains, agreed on Missoula, Montana.<sup>15</sup> This became home, in the fullest sense of the word, and where he composed many of his most beloved and large-scale works. Of his *Symphony No. 3* (1991), he writes: “The impetus for this piece was in part my leaving university life and moving from New York City to the Rocky Mountains of western Montana... Animal and Indian spirits still echo strongly in this land, and these elements have found their way into my music.”<sup>16</sup>

Maslanka and his family moved to an acre of land on the outskirts of Missoula where she trains horses and he composes in relative solitude. He lives in a modest home and composes in a barn that Gary Green, Director of Bands at the University of Miami, Florida describes as something “the rest of us would tear down because we could build something that would be nicer.”<sup>17</sup> This space proves him the freedom to write and explore his musical ideas. He also partakes in walks with his dogs in Missoula’s abundant open spaces, including at the Blue Mountain Recreation Area.<sup>18</sup> For Maslanka, these walks are meditative and ideas generated during this time often permeate his music.

With the exception of a few private composition students, Maslanka does little teaching. He does, however, work with students at clinics and the premieres of his music. He acknowledges this an important part of the compositional process. Since 1980, he has been a guest composer at over 100 universities, music festivals, and

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 11.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.miami.edu/index.php/news/releases/naxos\\_wind\\_band\\_classics\\_series\\_spotlights\\_reflections\\_featuring\\_the\\_frost\\_wind\\_ensemble/](http://www.miami.edu/index.php/news/releases/naxos_wind_band_classics_series_spotlights_reflections_featuring_the_frost_wind_ensemble/). Accessed 11 March 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Wright. 15.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.davidmaslanka.com/about/>. Accessed 11 March, 2011.

conferences.<sup>19</sup> He composes at his home almost daily and has won many awards, including annual ASCAP awards, the MacDowell Colony Residence award on five separate occasions, the National Endowment for the Arts Composer Fellowship in 1974, 1975, and 1989, and he has been honored on *Meet the Composer* programs numerous times. He first appeared in *The Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* in 1985.<sup>20</sup>

To date, Maslanka has composed thirteen works featuring clarinet. Program notes reproduced from Maslanka's personal website are listed in Appendix 2. These are included to provide readers with an overview of Maslanka's output for clarinet and contribute to a deeper understanding of his writing for clarinet.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Bolstad. 6.

## Chapter 2: History and Overview of *Desert Roads*

As discussed in Chapter 1, Frederick Fennell and the Eastman Wind Ensemble premiered Maslanka's first concerto in 1979 (*Concerto for Piano and Winds*).<sup>21</sup> With Fennell's death, late in 2004, this happy collaboration weighed on Maslanka's mind. He said, "When I was composing this piece (*Desert Roads*), I had a small vision of Frederick Fennell... he said in essence, 'remember me.'"<sup>22</sup> This remembrance manifested into the inspiration for the third movement of *Desert Roads*, which Maslanka titled *Coming Home*.

While the idea of a concerto for clarinet was certainly ever-present in David Maslanka's mind, the driving force behind this work was Margaret Dees. Dees was first introduced to the music of David Maslanka during the spring of 1987 when she was visiting Northwestern University and auditioned for graduate study with Robert Marcellus. Coincidentally, the College Band Directors National Association was also holding their annual conference there and Dees was astounded when she heard the premiere of Maslanka's *Symphony No. 2*. Two other major proponents of Maslanka's music were also present at that concert: Stephen Steele, who is currently the Director of Bands at Illinois State University, and Jerry Junkin, who is the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Dallas Wind Symphony as well as the Director of Bands at the

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<sup>21</sup> See Chapter 1, pg. 3-4

<sup>22</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See pg. 112.

University of Texas at Austin. Both conductors have worked in close conjunction with Maslanka and recorded the majority of his larger works for wind ensemble.

In conjunction with the completion of a Doctor of Music degree from Florida State University, Dees obtained a one-year position at Illinois State University (2002-03). During this time, Steele and the University Wind Symphony recorded Maslanka's *Song Book for Flute and Wind Ensemble*. Maslanka was present during this process and after one of the rehearsals Dees asked: "Have you ever thought about writing a concerto for clarinet?" He replied, "Well, no one has asked." To which she answered, "I'm asking." After discussing this with Steele, a consortium was formed.<sup>23</sup> The consortium included: Steele, Junkin, Patrick Dunnigan (Florida State University), John Whitwell (Michigan State University), Gregg Hanson and Jerry Kirkbride (University of Arizona), Timothy Mahr (St. Olaf College), Mark Scatterday (Eastman School of Music), Ray E. Cramer (Indiana University), Allan McMurray (University of Colorado), John Carmichael (Western Kentucky University), John Patrick Rooney (James Madison University), Lynn Musco and Bobby Adams (Stetson University), Frank Wickes (Louisiana State University), Frank Tracz (Kansas State University), John Culvahouse (University of Georgia), John Weigand (West Virginia University), Cody Birdwell and Scott Wright (University of Kentucky), John Lynch (University of Kansas), David Waybright (University of Florida), and Maxine Ramey (University of Montana).

Dees also maintains strong a connection with Junkin. She first met him in 1985 at the University of South Florida's *Festival of Winds*, an event for outstanding high school students. After graduation, Dees attended the University of Texas at Austin for two years

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<sup>23</sup> Dees, Margaret. Personal Interview, March 2011. See pg. 118.

and fostered this connection by being a member of the Wind Ensemble. As *Desert Roads* was about a year from completion (February 18, 2004), she discussed a premiere with Junkin. According to Dees, she “knocked on his door and said ‘do you have a minute’ and he laughed, replying ‘actually I don’t.’” In return, she replied, “Ok, a few seconds?” As he was making final preparations before leaving for a conducting engagement, he consented to “a few seconds.” She asked if he would like to conduct the premiere of *Desert Roads* with the Dallas Wind Symphony and he “turned to his computer, pulled something up and said ‘When do you want to do it.’” The two called Maslanka and set the date.<sup>24</sup>

*Desert Roads* premiered on April 12, 2005 at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, TX with Dees as the soloist. Junkin programmed the concert and titled it “Fabulous Firsts.” The program was: *Star Spangled Banner*, Gustav Holst’s *First Suite in E-flat*, *Desert Roads*, *California Suite* by John Gibson, *Symphony No. 1*, and *Commando March* by Samuel Barber. Maslanka describes the rehearsal process prior to this concert as being somewhat rushed. They were permitted four rehearsals and after hearing the second rehearsal, Maslanka was not happy with the situation. In the rehearsals, “(Junkin) didn’t want to hear any of the niceties, any details; just get the damn thing done. Get it on its feet so it worked,” said Maslanka. The day of the concert, the ensemble played through most of the piece as a warm-up before the concert. Fortunately, the concert came together very well. Maslanka said, “The performance came forward and was really very, very sweet, very nice. It had knowledge in it. But that’s the kind of

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<sup>24</sup> Maslanka, David. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See pg. 94



hairy edge you have to deal with in those situations.”<sup>25</sup> Upon listening to an archival recording of the performance, one can hear the thoughtfulness and a great deal of nuance in Dees’ performance. This was a remarkable performance of *Desert Roads*.

Since the premiere, performances include those at Florida State University with Dees playing solo clarinet in December 2005, and another in April 2007 at the University of Montana with Maxine Ramey playing solo clarinet, conducted by Stephen Bolstad. In February of 2008, the Arkansas State University Wind Ensemble under the direction of Timothy W. Oliver performed it with Ken Hatch playing solo clarinet.<sup>26</sup> David Gresham recorded the work later in 2008 with Stephen Steele and the Illinois State University Wind Ensemble as well as performed it at the 2009 International Clarinet Association’s *ClarinetFest®* in Porto, Portugal.<sup>27</sup> Other performances include the Kansas State University Wind Ensemble with Franc Tracz conducting and Tod Kersetter playing solo clarinet and the University of Georgia with John Culvahouse conducting and D. Ray McClellan playing solo clarinet.

### **Synopsis of *Desert Roads***

*Desert Roads* exists as a concerto for clarinet and wind ensemble in four movements. The instrumentation is somewhat light in wind band terms and includes: 2 flutes (the second of which doubles on piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, contra

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. See pg. 108.

<sup>26</sup> College Band Directors National Association Spring 2008 Report, pg. 7.

<http://www.cbdna.org/pdf/Report2008sp.pdf#page=7>

<sup>27</sup> Ellsworth, Jane and Mary Kantor. “Highlights of ClarinetFest® 2009.” *The Clarinet*. December 2009. Vol. 37, No. 1. 63.

alto clarinet, 2 bassoons, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, 2 horns, 2 trumpets (the first of which doubles on piccolo trumpet), 2 trombones, euphonium, tuba, double bass, harp, piano, timpani, and five percussion parts. Maslanka's writing for percussion in *Desert Roads* is extensive and includes the following instruments: vibraphone, wooden wind chimes, xylophone, marimba, wood blocks, temple blocks, orchestra bells, cabasa, egg shaker, crotales, large and small suspended cymbal, tam tam, sleigh bells, high and medium tom toms, field drum, bass drum, and metal wind chimes.

When contemplating writing this work, through a process Carl Jung describes as Active Imagining, Maslanka says he asked his unconscious to be shown something important about this concerto. After requesting this guidance, he "received... transportation... to a desert and (he) proceeded to be Middle Eastern and proceeded to be old." That is not to say that *Desert Roads* should be viewed as programmatic. Maslanka remarks, "If you strip off the titles, you have the music... there is no conscious attempt on my part to make an illustration."<sup>28</sup> Maslanka views each movement and episode within the movements as individual dreams, each of which has a specific reason for being with the others.<sup>29</sup> "I think of all of this as episodes (and) not as developmental... My need as a composer is to find how a line runs through the whole composition," he says.<sup>30</sup>

Maslanka remarks that titles are difficult to discuss. The title *Desert Roads*, and the idea of roads in dreams parallels a work for saxophone quartet he composed in 1997.

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<sup>28</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See pg. 99.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. See pg. 100.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. See pg. 102.

“*Mountain Roads* came about because of a dream, and in that dream, I was in a high mountain country with a road crew building roads,” he says.<sup>31</sup> He goes on to say that the dream was of a beautiful mountain space. This idea moved him very deeply and he had another, similar vision leading to the composition of his *Symphony No. 5*. “A high mountain,” he continues, “and especially snow, in dreams, are asterisks of the divine. And to have that come forward was a strong suggestion that this was an important title and association, no matter what the music does.”<sup>32</sup>

In the program note, Maslanka labels each movement as a song to connect them with the Romantic notion of songs without words, similar to songs by Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms.<sup>33</sup> The first movement is titled *Desert Roads* and he relates ideas presented within to Moses’ forty years in the desert and, subsequently, Christ’s forty days in the desert. The books of *Exodus* and *Mark* in the Bible tells of this being a time of inner searching for these two men and Maslanka illustrates this well in the first movement.<sup>34</sup> The second movement is titled *Soliloquy—Not Knowing* and portrays a search for guidance. In this movement, the solo clarinet begins alone and dramatically contrasts the wind ensemble for some time before an eventual unison section. The third movement is titled *Coming Home* and is in memoriam of Frederick Fennell, as mentioned previously. Maslanka describes this movement as the journey over the course of a lifetime and portrays excitement, jubilation and, in the later sections, “a quiet coming

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid. See pg. 95.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Maslanka, *Desert Roads*, pg. 3, reprinted in Appendix 3, pgs. 139-140.

<sup>34</sup> *Exodus* 15-17; *Mark* 1:12-13. *Matthew* 4: 1-11.

home to rest.”<sup>35</sup> The final movement is titled *Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness* and is “a sober contemplation of death” as well as a benediction.<sup>36</sup> This movement ends the concerto dramatically with a very simple and effective plagal cadence.

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<sup>35</sup> Maslanka, *Desert Roads*, pg. iii, See Appendix 3, pgs. 139-140.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

## **Preface to Analysis**

Note: All musical references and examples in this document are written in concert pitch. This being how they appear in the score, it seemed most logical to discuss them as they are printed and not confuse the reader with transposition. Additionally, each movement, being episodic and highly sectionalized, is divided into and labeled as sections. Sections are then divided into parts. I have chosen to analyze the work this way and use these labels to provide consistency between this and other analysis of Maslanka's music completed by other authors. Charts illustrating the movements appear at the end of each analysis chapter (Chapters 3-6).

### Chapter 3: Movement 1—*Desert Roads*

The first movement of David Maslanka's *Desert Roads* is divided into three large sections that are defined by their characteristic melodies. The first two of these are from the J.S. Bach chorales contained in *371 Bach Chorales and 69 Melodies*, (#30 *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland* and #32 *Nun danket alle Gott*);<sup>37</sup> please see Appendix 2, on pages 122-126 for Bach's harmonizations and the complete text of each chorale. The melody of the third section is original material. *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland* is a chorale typically incorporated with the sacrament of the Christian Holy Communion while *Nun danket alle Gott* is typically a hymn of thanksgiving. From a liturgical standpoint, the two Bach chorales are in a reversed order and are followed by Maslanka's commentary. Despite this arrangement, Maslanka says that he cannot cite a conscious reason for the melodies appearing when they do.<sup>38</sup> It is this author's interpretation, however, that the inner search and reception of communion is followed by a simple expression of thanks. On the most basic level, this is just good manners. *Nun danket alle Gott* is followed by a heartfelt commentary and conclusion of the movement. Melodically, each section is quite contrasting to the other two. Additionally, Maslanka contrasts pitch centers, modal solo clarinet passages, and accompanimental material, including "desert sounds."

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<sup>37</sup> Bach, Johann Sebastian. Albert Riemenschneider, ed. *371 Chorales Harmonized Chorales and 69 Melodies*. New York: Schirmer, 1941. 8.

<sup>38</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See pg. 104.

### Large Section 1

The image shows three staves of musical notation for a soprano line. The first staff starts at measure 30 and contains four measures. The second staff starts at measure 5 and contains four measures. The third staff starts at measure 9 and contains four measures, ending with a double bar line. The music is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with several notes marked with a fermata.

Ex. 3.1: Soprano line from *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*

The first section, measures 1 to 34, features two full iterations of *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland* (see Table 1, pg. 27). The piano and vibraphone provide the first statement over a pedal point by the marimba, harp, and left hand of the piano. The tempo is indicated for the quarter note to equal 112 beats per minute. Despite a neutral key signature, this chorale is centered on the pitch E. Listeners and performers should keep a firm hold on the pitches E and B in their minds as these pitches begin and conclude this concerto (see Chapter 6, pg. 86). Throughout this movement, it is important to recognize that any sense of tonality is based more strongly upon central pitches rather than any particular key. This principle governs the melodic and accompanimental structure throughout this movement.

Moderate (♩ = c. 112)

Piano

Perc. 1  
Marimba player 1

Perc. 3,4  
Crotales  
Marimba player 2

Ex. 3.2: Opening melodic material (mm. 1-3)

Piano

Perc. 1

Perc. 3,4

Ex. 3.3: Conclusion of opening melodic material immediately preceding solo clarinet entry (mm. 10-16)

At measure 17, the solo clarinet enters and creates a challenge to the established tonality. In contrast to the ensemble's opening material, the solo clarinet plays in the Phrygian mode and focuses on B as its tonal center. The initial statement of the solo clarinet slithers between the pitches B and E, moving mostly in quarter notes but with a few eighth notes. Most of this motion is stepwise. The addition of a grace note in measure 22 helps the solo clarinet convey an image of a Middle Eastern reed instrument. When asked about this tonality and seeming ethnic reference, Maslanka said that in a



meditation, he received “transportation” to a desert and he “proceeded to be Middle Eastern and proceeded to be old... it was a very old past... Middle Eastern, the time of Christ... and this desert image came up there.”<sup>39</sup>



Ex. 3.4: Solo clarinet displaying a characteristic grace note figure (mm. 20-23)

The two pitch centers (E and B), being of fifth relation, fit together nicely but leave the listener with a hollow ambiguity about the exact tonality of the movement. In this second part of the first large section, (measures 18-34, see Table 1 at the end of this chapter), Maslanka rescues the Bach chorale to flute 1 and harp. He also provides a stream of somewhat scalar eighth notes as a countermelody in the bass clarinet and clarinet 1 to compliment the chorale and solo clarinet. There is a brief fermata in the middle of the second phrase of the chorale (measure 26) that provides a brief moment of repose before the final measures of the chorale are heard. Maslanka concludes this section with a fermata after the final melodic material of the chorale. Both these fermatas coincide with Bach’s markings.

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<sup>39</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. December 2009. See pg. 99.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Solo Clarinet, Clarinet 1 & 2, and Bass Clarinet. The Solo Clarinet part (top staff) begins at measure 23 with a melodic line. It includes dynamics such as *hes...*, *h.b...brief*, *a tempo*, *cresc.*, *f*, and *dim.*. The Clarinet 1 & 2 part (middle staff) has a steady eighth-note accompaniment starting at measure 26, marked *pp*. The Bass Clarinet part (bottom staff) has a low, sustained accompaniment starting at measure 26, also marked *pp*.

Ex. 3.5: Solo clarinet above eighth-note figure (mm. 23-28)

The pedal point that begins the movement on an E and B, played by the two marimbas, continues until the end of the first section (measure 34). Initially, these notes sound as though they are the root and fifth of an E minor chord. As the marimbas, piano, and harp play the root and fifth, the chorale melody completes the chord by playing the G. It is not until the solo clarinet enters, and sustains on measures of repose, such as measure 26 (Ex. 3.5 above), that the listener realizes the solo clarinet does not resolve to E. The solo clarinet plays in the Phrygian mode based on B whereas the accompaniment is more solidly heard in E minor.

At measure 34, Maslanka cleverly uses the contralto clarinet, bass clarinet, and clarinet 1 to conceal the true tonality of the solo clarinet. The contralto clarinet and clarinet 1 play E's whereas the bass clarinet and solo clarinet play B's. Because their timbres and ranges are so similar, it is difficult for a listener to discern the soloist from the ensemble at the fermata in measure 34 (see Ex. 3.6 below). As such, it is also difficult for the listener to discern whether E or B is the resolution to the first large section.

Musical score for four clarinet parts (Solo, Section, Bass, and Contralto) showing open fifths at measures 33-34. The Solo Clarinet part is in treble clef, while the other three are in bass clef. All parts feature a half-note chord with a fermata, marked *pp*.

Ex. 3.6: Open fifths created by solo, section, bass, and contralto clarinets (mm. 33-34)

### Large Section 2A

After a brief pause, Maslanka introduces the second of the two Bach chorales, #32 *Nun danket alle Gott*, at measure 35 (see Ex. 3.7 below and Table 2, pg. 28). This moment marks the beginning of the second large section of the first movement.

**Nun danket alle Gott** J.S. Bach

Musical score for the soprano line of J.S. Bach's chorale *Nun danket alle Gott*, measures 32-34. The score is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. Measure 32 starts with a fermata on a half note. Measure 33 has a fingering '5' above the first note. Measure 34 ends with a fermata on a half note.

Ex. 3.7: Soprano line from J.S. Bach's *Nun danket alle Gott*

Maslanka writes that this second large section should suddenly be of a new tempo (quarter note equals 68). He also indicates a key signature of three sharps. Despite being marked *ppp*, Maslanka indicated in a coaching that the trumpet should be heard more than the bassoon, which, in turn, is to be heard more than the vibraphone. This writing creates a unique sonority.<sup>40</sup> All members of the ensemble except bassoon 1, trumpet 1 and 2, and vibraphone are tacet until measure 39. Between measures 34 and 39, the ensemble plays the first four measures of the tune with Maslanka's re-harmonization. At measure 39, the piano and solo clarinet enter. The solo clarinet plays a line that retains its independence by adding counterpoint to the texture. When the ensemble rests at the ends of phrases, the solo clarinet sustains to cover this break (see Ex. 3.8).

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<sup>40</sup> Maslanka. Ensemble Coaching. April 2007.

34 Harmon mutes on

Tpt 1, 2

Bassoon *ppp*

Perc. 1 Vibes *pp*

37

Solo Clarinet

Tpt 1, 2

Bassoon

37

Piano

Perc. 1

Ex. 3.8: Wind ensemble introduction of *Nun danket alle Gott* (mm. 34-41)

Prior to the solo clarinet entrance at 39, all indications direct the listener towards A major. At the point of entry, however, the tonality is less certain. As in the first large section, the solo clarinet has a different pitch center from the ensemble. The solo clarinet is now centered on E. Measure 43, as played by the ensemble, provides a resemblance to

A major as it holds A's and E's while the solo clarinet holds a C#. As the section concludes, the solo clarinet reveals its modal basis as being E Mixolydian.



piano, and timpani sustain an E and B that serve as the pedal points for both the chorale ensemble and the solo clarinet. To assist the pedal in this section, Maslanka introduces the idea of “desert sounds.” For this effect, he writes a lengthy pedal chord and, as a thematic accent, adds sounds one might hear in a desert. The symbolism of the “desert sounds” is somewhat personal and correlations drawn here are those of this author alone. These sounds include egg shaker rattles that may represent rattlesnakes; wood and temple block hits as well as cabasa sounds that may represent grasshoppers or cicadas; and wind chime and harp rolls that are frequently heard at the sighting of an oasis in films. This is similar to the “nature music” section found in the first part of section II of Maslanka’s *Symphony No. 4* where he writes instrumental lines that resemble nature sounds and birdcalls. In *Symphony No. 4*, these sounds are heard over a C major chord with an added thirteenth. Maslanka remarks that the continuous sonority is an: “aural representation of an unvarying condition in nature—a quality of ‘hummmmm’ that you hear if you listen very closely to a natural scene.”<sup>41</sup> In *Desert Roads*, the nature sounds are mostly found in the percussion and harp. The “quality of hum” pedal consists of the pitches A, E, and B, and is heard as stacks of open fifths thus providing *Desert Roads*’ drier, more hollow, and desolate timbre.

The solo clarinet enters at measure 59 after an extended harp *glissando* and it is marked that the part be played “forcefully.”<sup>42</sup> As before, the solo clarinet is based around E. This entrance portrays a very different perception of the solo clarinet than was heard previously in this movement. With a combination of accents and smartly placed grace

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<sup>41</sup> Bolstad. 52.

<sup>42</sup> Maslanka. *Desert Roads*. 11.

notes, the solo clarinet illustrates qualities more analogous to the fierce rattlesnake than to that of the relatively docile grasshopper mentioned earlier (see Ex. 3.11 below).

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff, labeled '59', begins with the instruction 'Forcefully' and a dynamic marking 'f'. It contains a series of eighth notes, some beamed together. The second staff, labeled '61', shows a '2 beats' bracket over a group of notes, followed by a '3' bracket over a triplet. The dynamics change from 'f' to 'mf' and then 'p'.

Ex. 3.11: First entrance of solo clarinet in Section 2B (mm. 59-63)

As the chorale is heard again, starting in measure 53 and played by the flute, piccolo, piano, and vibraphone with various events occurring between phrases. Those interjections include harp *glissandi* (m. 58), vibraphone bowings (mm. 68-69), and a reference to *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland* (vibraphone m. 70). The primary goal of this material is to provide expansion between phrases of the chorale. The solo clarinet line increases in activity during these breaks, most notably between measures 76 and 88 where it displays intense grace notes prior to the main beats (see Ex. 3.12 below). Following the pattern of oscillating chorale phrases and interjections, a listener would expect to hear the seventh through ninth measure of the chorale at some point between measures 76 and 88. Instead, Maslanka heightens the tension by increasing the activity in the solo clarinet and doubling it with flute 1. At measure 79, the pedal, as played primarily by the timpani, makes a very noticeable change to C. The first trumpet is



instructed to “challenge the solo clarinet” and reinforces this line by contributing an additional G-natural.<sup>43</sup> Maslanka creates a short rivalry between these two voices.

The image shows a musical score for measures 77-80. The staves are arranged vertically from top to bottom: Solo Clarinet, Flute, Tpt 1, 2, Trombone, Timpani, Contrabass, and B. Cl. The Solo Clarinet and Flute parts are highly active with sixteenth-note patterns. The Tpt 1, 2 part has a 'Harmon Mute' instruction and a dynamic change from *p* to *ff* with the annotation 'Challenge the solo clarinet'. The Trombone part has a 'cresc.' marking. The Timpani part has a 'cresc.' marking. The Contrabass part has a 'cresc.' marking and a 'G♭' marking. The B. Cl. part has a 'mf' marking.

Ex. 3.12: Solo clarinet doubled by flute, trumpet challenging the solo clarinet above changing pedal (mm. 77-80)

From this point until measure 86, the piccolo doubles the solo clarinet as the trumpet 1 continues with a countermelody. The piano begins a new sequential figure of sixteenth notes that the vibraphone and the harp will eventually double (see Ex. 3.13).

<sup>43</sup> Maslanka. *Desert Roads*. 80.

Ex. 3.13: Secondary sequential figure in piano (mm. 84-86)

After the piano fades in measure 89, the harp continues the line as the solo clarinet decreases in activity. Meanwhile, the vibraphone and crotales carry the final three measures of the chorale and are heard above the fading activity. It should be noted that while all participating instruments are instructed to *diminuendo*, the vibraphone and crotales are marked *forte* at measure 89 and are in opposition to the solo clarinet's *mezzo piano* and the harp's *piano*. The tempo is indicated, "slowing a lot" at measure 93, but there is no indication of a pause before starting the third and final section.

### Large Section 3

The third large section of movement 1 has elements that are featured in the previous two sections but also new elements of its own (see Table 5, pg. 31). The first and most noteworthy change is the appearance of saxophones. At measure 94, the soprano saxophone introduces a new, original melody that is continued by the solo clarinet at measure 100. It is written in the style of a Bach chorale but is original Maslanka material. When asked about the source of this material, Maslanka commented,

“Although this melody is new in the movement it has a very definite feel of rounding off and concluding the musical statement.”<sup>44</sup>

The pedal point on A, started by the piano and timpani in measure 86, continues until the end of the movement. This section clearly portrays a more tender voice than the previous two and decrescendos from its high point at measure 103 in the solo clarinet line (see Ex. 3.14 below).

Ex. 3.14: Beginning of Large Section 3. Melody from saxophone section to solo clarinet (mm. 94-105)

Starting in measure 96, Maslanka employs a subtle, darker color to the otherwise joyful ending of the movement. The piano and harp play A minor chords with added ninths in measures 96, 102, 106, 110, 115, and 119. These chords are reinforced by the tam tam and bass drum and are a foreshadowing of the darkness to come in subsequent movements. Immediately preceding these chords in measures 110, 115, and 119, Maslanka writes a gentle A-B-E-F#-C# arpeggio that is reminiscent of the “nature music” figures discussed earlier from *Symphony No. 4* (see Ex. 3.15 below).

<sup>44</sup> Maslanka, David. E-mail correspondence. 15 January 2011.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Solo Clarinet, Harp, Piano, and Timpani, covering measures 108 to 110. The Solo Clarinet part is in the treble clef and features a descending line of notes: G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The Harp part is in the grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and plays arpeggiated chords in the right hand, with a final note in the right hand marked 'p'. The Piano part is also in the grand staff and plays dark-sounding chords, marked 'p'. The Timpani part is in the bass clef and plays a steady pedal point, marked '8vb'.

Ex. 3.15: Solo clarinet descending line over harp arpeggio/dark-sounding chords over timpani pedal (mm. 108-110)

To accompany this, the muted trumpet, soprano saxophone, and flute 1 play *pianissimo* E's. With the exception of the dark chords, the listener realizes that this movement will end with an A and E but is uncertain of what quality the third will be in this chord. The harp plays the last note of the movement: C# (see Ex. 3.16 below). This is the only time in the movement when the listener has concrete evidence of a true sense of resolution, based on chords created by the ensemble and the solo clarinet. There is a fermata on the last measure but the conductor is instructed to observe “only a brief pause before starting the next movement.”<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Maslanka. *Desert Roads*. 23.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Flute, Solo Clarinet, and Harp, covering measures 137 to 143. The Flute part (top staff) begins with a rest in measure 137, followed by a melodic line in measure 138 that includes a *p sus* (piano, sustained) marking. The Solo Clarinet part (middle staff) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in measure 137, which continues into measure 138. The Harp part (bottom staff) features arpeggiated chords in measure 137, with a marking "(sounds 8va)" indicating an octave transposition. The Harp part continues with similar arpeggiated figures in measures 138 and 139. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 143.

Ex. 3.16: Harp arpeggios and conclusion of movement (mm 137-43)





TABLE 3: Movement I—Desert Roads  
Large Section 2B

	Faster $\text{♩} = 84$																						
Measure	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
<b>Key Signature</b>	Open																						
<b>Pitch Center(s)</b>	A and E																						
<b>Bach Chorale</b>	#32 ( <i>Nun danket alle Gott</i> ) Expanded																						
<b>Bach Measures</b>	Interjection																						
<b>Bach Melody Instrumentation</b>	1-2	Interjection (Bach Melody Not Present) Harp glissando, solo clarinet entry										2-4	Interjection Crotales, Vibraphone (Bach #30)										5-6
<b>Melody or Desert Sounds</b>	Harp, Wind Chimes, Wood Block, Cymbal, Cabasa	Harp, Small Temple Block, Large Suspended Cymbal										Solo Clarinet, Temple and Wood Block	Solo Clarinet, Flute 1, Egg Shaker, Tambourine										Solo Clarinet, Flute 1
<b>Counter Melody</b>											Oboe	Harp, Percussion 1 and 4 (see above)/(Bach #30)											
<b>Pedal Pitch Instrumentation</b>	Clarinet 1 and 2, Double Bass, Piano, Timpani																						



TABLE 4: Movement I—*Desert Roads*  
Large Section 2B (cont.)

Measure	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93			
<b>Key Signature</b>	Neutral																				
<b>Pitch Center(s)</b>	A and E																				
<b>Bach Chorale</b>	#32 ( <i>Nun danket alle Gott</i> ) Expanded																				
<b>Bach Measures</b>	8-11																				
<b>Bach Melody Instrumentation</b>	(Bach Melody Not Present)																				
<b>Melody or Desert Sounds</b>	Solo Clarinet, Flute			Solo Clarinet, Piccolo			Solo Clarinet, Piccolo, Large Suspended Cymbal			Solo Clarinet, Temple Block, Crotales						Vibraphone, Crotales					
<b>Counter Melody</b>	Piano, Vibraphone, Harp(Piano and Vibraphone fade out)																				
<b>Pedal Pitch Instrumentation</b>	Trombone 1 and 2, Double Bass, Timpani																				

challenge the solo clarinet

hold back... a bit slower

slowing gradually

slowing a lot...

TABLE 5: Movement I—*Desert Roads*  
Large Section 3

	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	124
Key Signature	Open																													
Pitch Center(s)	A and E																													
Melody or Desert Sounds	Solo Clarinet, Soprano Sax					Solo Clarinet												Trumpet 1					Flute 1 (from Symphony No. 4)			Soprano Sax		A Major Solo Clarinet		
Counter Melody	Dark-sounding chords, Harp, Piano, Bass Drum, Tam Tam																													
Pedal Pitch Instrumentation	Alto, Tenor, and Bass Saxes, Double Bass, Timpani					1st and 2nd Clarinet, Double Bass, Timpani												Marimba and Timpani												
	New Tempo ↓ -80			holding back...														Somewhat slower ↓ -66												
	3/4		2/4		4/4		2/4		4/4		2/4		4/4		3/4		2/4		3/4		4/4		4/4							

## Chapter 4: Movement 2—*Soliloquy, Not Knowing*

The second movement of *Desert Roads, Soliloquy—Not Knowing*, is the shortest movement of the work (48 measures) and, at the largest level, is organized in an ABA form (see Table 6, p. 52). Maslanka describes this movement as “a brief movement, looking fervently for guidance.”<sup>46</sup> This movement is comprised of several notable features incorporated in many other works of David Maslanka’s music including: transformational ideas, motor devices, heroic themes, as well as an underlying melodic and harmonic structure.

### Section A<sup>1a</sup>

While brief in terms of measures, the opening A<sup>1a</sup> section operates as both a cadenza and an expository section that links the first and second movements. The solo clarinet begins the movement with a *pianissimo* B-natural and crescendos to a series of *mezzo forte* arpeggios. As the solo clarinet accelerates and crescendos, the quintuplets transform into a sextuplet. Because the A<sup>1</sup> section transforms directly into the motor device, the clarinetist must take great care to see that the end of measure 3 is performed at exactly 96 beats per minute as it sets the tempo for the ensuing B section. This is extremely important to allow for the preservation of the character of the piece.<sup>47</sup> The last beat of measure 3 becomes the motor device in the following section (see Exs. 4.1 and 4.5). During this section, the melody transforms from a held B-natural, to a series of

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<sup>46</sup> From Program Notes in score, pg. iii. See pgs. 139-140.

<sup>47</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December, 2009.

accelerating arpeggios, and finally into the motor device that begins the next section (see Ex. 4.1).

♩ = ca. 60

accel. grad.

cresc. grad.

♩ = ♩ (accel. still)

♩ = ca. 96

Motor Device

Ex. 4.1: Opening cadenza/A<sup>1a</sup> section of mvmt. II, including motor device (mm. 1-4)

Ex. 4.2: Opening cadenza condensed to a series of block chords (mm. 1-3)

Harmonically, the first three measures of the second movement may be condensed into a series of chords that are organized by their note groupings in the score (see Ex. 4.2

above). A listener will quickly hear the presence on a melodic line within these chords and notice a style of writing that is similar to J.S. Bach in that he writes one voice that plays multiple melodic lines simultaneously. Two works that best illustrate this writing are the *Prelude* from *First Suite for Unaccompanied Cello*, BWV 1007 and the C Major *Prelude* from *Well-Tempered Clavier*, BWV 846. Clarinetists performing this work should stress the moving notes to best illustrate the melodic line. By doing this, they reveal that the line contains both a simple melody and an allusion to harmonic material that is heard during this movement. The first, and most apparent, musical line heard is that of the first note of each group of five eighth notes (see Ex. 4.2).



Ex. 4.3: Simplified arpeggio root motion (mm. 1-3)

By reducing the solo clarinet line to the first note of each group, one can see the line moving from C-natural downward to D-natural. D-natural, being the root of the V/V in C minor, draws the ear toward the G that is the starting pitch of the subsequent A<sup>1b</sup> section.

With the root motion exposed, the next reduction heard is that of the more fluid interior line. By extracting the second and fourth eighth notes from each group of five, one can see a melodic line contained within the series of arpeggios. Notable to this extraction is the G-natural, A-flat, G-natural, F-natural, and G-natural sequence heard early in measure 2 (see Ex. 4.3). The arpeggios played by the solo clarinet in measure 2 contain a series of pitches that are heard as the underlying melodic structure and link the

A<sup>1</sup> and B sections. In the A<sup>1b</sup> section, the saxophones and percussion play the pitches over measures 4 and 8 (see Ex. 4.4).



Ex. 4.4: Second and fourth notes from each group of five extracted to show melodic motion (mm. 1-3)

### Section A<sup>1b</sup>

Beginning in measure 4, Maslanka writes a motor device that alternates between flute 1/clarinet 1 and flute 2 /clarinet 2. This device highlights the Phrygian mode based on G-natural and reinforces the desert-like, modal quality heard during the first movement. The piano doubles both the section clarinet and flute parts throughout the motor device. This device is maintained through measure 8 when the solo clarinet, accompanied by the bass clarinet, contralto clarinet, bassoon, baritone saxophone, and piano, lead into the B section, labeled B<sup>a</sup> on Table 6. As the solo clarinet does not enter until measure 8, the motor device is the defining characteristic of the second part of the A section.

Ex. 4.5: Initial use of motor device in mvmt. II (mm. 4-5)

The use of G-natural at this point provides a strong pull toward the start of the following section and its beginning C minor tonality. Under the motor device, Maslanka writes a series of pedal pitches to which there is an underlying structure of I-bVI-bVII-I beneath the A<sup>1b</sup> section. This writing gives a strong sense of cadence to the G-natural to C-natural progression heard during this section (see Ex. 4.6 below).

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: S/A Sax., T/B Sax., Vibraphone, and Orch. Bells. The score is in 4/4 time and features a motor device with a 'ca. 96' tempo marking and an 'accel' marking. The music consists of a series of pedal points with rhythmic patterns of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Ex. 4.6: Saxophones and percussion playing pedal under motor device (mm. 4-7)

## Section B<sup>a</sup>

Structurally, the B section of this movement is divided into three parts: measures 9-23, 24-28, and 29-30 (See Table 6, p. 52). The first two parts are more significant than the third and contain characteristic melodic material as well as an underlying progression of pitches. Both of these qualities provide a sense of structure to the movement.

The solo clarinet re-enters in measure 8 and is scored in the upper *clarion* and *altissimo* registers after a sextuplet/thirty-second note figure (see Ex. 4.6). During this time, measures 9-15, *fortissimo* chords provide accompaniment. They are: C minor, A-flat Maj, A<sup>o</sup>, C Min7 (no 5th), and A-flat major with an added ninth (see Ex. 4.6). While the chords do not fit into any conventional arrangement, it is important that a listener hear

the C-natural pedal beneath each of them and also hear the top voices moving upward.

The image shows a musical score for Solo Clarinet and Piano. The Solo Clarinet part (top staff) begins in measure 7 with a melodic line featuring triplets and slurs. The Piano part (bottom staff) features a complex texture with triplets in the right hand (RH) and a bass line (LH) with slurs and a 'ff' dynamic marking. The piano part includes a 'p' dynamic marking and a 'ff' dynamic marking.

Ex. 4.7: Second statement of solo clarinet in mvmt. II against *fortissimo* chords in piano (mm. 7-12)

Beginning in measure 14, Maslanka employs a rhythmic/articulation motive. He writes a series of seven eighth notes, of which the last two are slurred and descend in pitch (see Ex. 4.7). In the example below, it should also be noted that oboe and soprano saxophone have grace notes written into their parts. This gives them a distinctive sound and helps link this movement to the solo clarinet's aggressive grace notes in the preceding movement.

The image shows a musical score for Solo Clarinet, Oboe 1, 2, S/A Sax., and T/B Sax. The Solo Clarinet part (top staff) begins in measure 14 with a melodic line featuring grace notes. The Oboe 1, 2 part (second staff) features a rhythmic pattern with grace notes and a 'no. dim.' dynamic marking. The S/A Sax. part (third staff) features a rhythmic pattern with grace notes and a 'sim.' dynamic marking. The T/B Sax. part (bottom staff) features a rhythmic pattern with grace notes and a 'sim.' dynamic marking.

Ex. 4.8: Secondary use of motor device in mvmt II (mm. 14-17)



Beneath this figure, the bass and contralto clarinets, baritone saxophone, double bass, and piano play whole notes on the pitches C-natural, B-flat, and D-natural. This progression provides an underlying structure for to the B<sup>a</sup> section and will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter. Meanwhile, the solo clarinet plays *fortissimo* on a lengthy G-natural over the progression. By measure 22, all instruments playing are participating in the eighth-note rhythmic/articulation figure except the tuba, euphonium, and timpani. These instruments sustain the D that leads to measure 24.

From a dramatic perspective, the second part of the B section displays a great deal of conflict between the solo clarinet and the ensemble. Conflicts require resolutions, and after beginning this part of the section with a downward triplet sixteenth-note line in the bass clarinets, bassoon, and piano (m. 8) and an upward triplet sixteenth-note line played by the solo clarinet, Maslanka explores these conflicts during the second part of the B section. The solo clarinet vacillates between the upper *clarion* and *altissimo* registers and thus conflicts with the accompaniment, each of which plays in its respective middle to lowest ranges. In measure 19 and measures 21-23, the solo clarinet and accompaniment begin to reconcile by playing eighth notes in rhythmic unison (see Ex. 4.8).

The image displays a musical score for six instruments: Solo Clarinet, Flute 1, Oboe 1 & 2, Clarinet 1 & 2, Saxophone/Alto Saxophone, and Horn in F. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 21-24) shows the Solo Clarinet playing a melodic line with repeated eighth notes, marked with a forte (ff) dynamic and 'hold back...' instructions. The other instruments provide accompaniment with repeated eighth notes. The second system (measures 25-26) shows the Solo Clarinet and other instruments continuing their parts, with the Solo Clarinet marked 'a tempo' and 'a2'.

Ex. 4.9: Solo clarinet and accompaniment reconciliation through repeated eighth notes (mm 21-26)

## Section B<sup>b</sup>

The heroic melody is heard at measure 24 and is the onset of the second part of the B section. In the context of this document, the term “heroic” is used to describe lines that rise dramatically from the texture, contain powerful crescendos and accents, and are doubled by members of the ensemble. This is also the climax of the movement and is labeled as such on Table 6. Because flute 1, soprano saxophone, and trumpet 1 double the solo clarinet and are paralleled closely by the oboes, horns, double bass, and timpani, the solo clarinet no longer plays a conflicting role with the ensemble. Maslanka illustrates his great understanding of orchestration at this point, by doubling the solo clarinet with

three of the most penetrating instruments of the wind band: flute 1, soprano saxophone, and trumpet 1. These voices contribute both color and power to the heroic line of the solo clarinet and allow all musicians to play at full volume without overextending themselves. The clarinet melody at measure 24 is defined as heroic because, prior to this point, it was met with conflict and did not equal the strength illustrated by the ensemble. Through melodic development, notably the use of the slurred eighth-note figure, the solo clarinet progresses through the conflict to eventually match, if not overtake, the wind band. Maslanka's doubling of the clarinet melody shows a dramatic collaboration with those members of the ensemble. At this point, the group dynamic is marked *fortissimo* and, as such, most clarinetists will not be able to penetrate this thick sound without careful balancing of all parties (see Ex. 4.9).

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Solo Clarinet, Flute 1, Soprano Saxophone, and Trumpet in Bb. The score is in 4/4 time and covers measures 23 to 25. The Solo Clarinet part starts with a 'hold back...' instruction and then returns to 'a tempo'. The other instruments also have 'hold back...' instructions. The Solo Clarinet part features a slurred eighth-note figure.

Ex. 4.10: Solo clarinet doubled by flute 1, soprano saxophone, and trumpet 1 (mm. 23-25)

In contrast to the heroic melody presented in the second part of the B section are the eighth-note figures that continue the use of the articulated/slurred pattern from the B<sup>a</sup> section. Rather than slurring only on beat 4, however, Maslanka increases the slurring to both beats 2 and 4. It should be noted that every beat of the bar is slurred just prior to important moments, such as the climax of the movement (m. 24) and the transition to the following A<sup>1</sup> section (see Ex. 4.10).

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Solo Cl., Flute 1, Clar. 1, 2, S/A Sax., and T/B Sax. The score covers measures 29 and 30. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 29 is in 3/4 time, and measure 30 is in 4/4 time. The Solo Cl. and Flute 1 parts feature slurs over eighth-note figures, with a '3' indicating a triplet. The Clar. 1, 2 part has a similar eighth-note figure with a triplet. The S/A Sax. part has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The T/B Sax. part has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The Flute 1 part has a 'hold back...' instruction above the final note of measure 30.

Ex. 4.11: Slurs illustrating conclusion of section against the conclusion of heroic melody (mm. 29-30)

Starting in measure 24, the underlying melodic progression emphasizes F-natural during the B<sup>b</sup> section. With special attention paid to the double bass and timpani lines, a listener hears a progression of F, C, D, E, and F, between measures 24 and 28. To add to the richness and color of the sound, Maslanka writes that oboe 1 and 2 are to parallel the underlying progression at both the octave and the eleventh. Furthermore, measures 24,

25, 26, and 28 all contain examples of the C-natural against D-natural conflict. As mentioned earlier, this feature helps link the first two movements of *Desert Roads*. The most notable of these occur when they are in the same family of instruments. This occurs first in measure 25 between the oboes and in measure 28 between the horns (see Ex. 4.11). As a whole and in relation to F-natural, this section functions as a progression of I-V-VI-VII-I. While VII-I is less commonly used in Western Music, it is more common in the music of David Maslanka. Within his *Collected Chorale Settings* he regularly writes VII-I and bVII-I.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Oboe 1, 2; Contrabass; and Timpani, covering measures 24 through 28. The Oboe part is in treble clef and shows a conflict of C and D. The Contrabass part is in bass clef and shows an F C D E F progression. The Timpani part is in bass clef and shows an F C D E F progression, with a 'sim.' marking above the notes in measure 28. The tempo is marked 'a tempo'.

Ex. 4.12: Conflict of C against D in oboes accompanied by an F C D E F progression in bass and timpani (mm. 24-28)

### Section B<sup>c</sup>

The third part of the B section, labeled B<sup>c</sup> on Table 6, contains considerably less material than the previous parts of this section and functions more like an extension of the previous section than as its own free standing section. It elides with the previous section through the repetition of the eighth notes heard in the preceding measure. This two-measure extension contains a pedal G-natural in the timpani, piano, double bass, tuba, trombone, bassoon, and bass clarinets. When combined with the remainder of the ensemble, the G-natural is the root of a G7 chord and the dominant of the following

section thus allowing this small division of the B section to function as a structural up beat to the ensuing C minor (see Ex. 4.12).

Ex. 4.13: Conclusion of B section (mm. 29-30)

Notable to the B section is the draw towards F-natural as a tonal center. By beginning the section with a pedal pitch of C-natural Maslanka has, by repetition, deceived the listener into expecting a similar I-V action as was demonstrated during the A<sup>1</sup> section. This is, however, not the case in the B section. The B<sup>a</sup> section contains the pedal pitches C-natural, B-flat, and D-natural. The listener's initial reaction is to expect

that the D-natural is the V/V relative to a following G-natural, as was the case previously. Instead of writing G-natural, Maslanka writes F-natural as the basis of the B<sup>b</sup> section. Upon hearing the F-natural, the listener realizes that Maslanka writes these pedals to outline a B-flat major chord and a IV-VI-I progression spanning the B<sup>a</sup> to B<sup>b</sup> sections. F-natural is the IV of C minor but is heard at this moment as a tonic chord. This difference is significant in that Maslanka bases the entire B section on the IV of the original key (C minor). When the A section material returns in measure 31, in C minor, the movement takes the shape of I-IV-I. This is a significant departure from the customary shape of an ABA movement, which is traditionally I-V-I (see Table 6, pg. 52).

### Section A<sup>2</sup>

The A<sup>2</sup> section of this movement begins at measure 31 and returns to the opening tempo of quarter note equals 60. This section incorporates melodic materials similar to those played by the solo clarinet at the start of the movement. Present in this section, but not in the initial A<sup>1</sup> section, is the doubling of the solo clarinet by the right hand of the piano. The contralto clarinet and timpani correspondingly double the piano's left hand at this moment. This provides a C-natural pedal beneath the melody. The solo clarinet is marked "as forcefully as possible" while the right hand of the piano is marked *pianissimo* (see Ex 4.13).<sup>48</sup> These dynamic markings and collaborations give the solo clarinet a sense of dominance over the ensemble and, while not as powerful as in measure 24, the melody presents itself as heroic despite being similar in terms of pitch, tempo, and rhythm to that of the timid opening of the movement.

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<sup>48</sup> Maslanka. *Desert Roads*. 29.

33 As forcefully as possible

Solo Cl.

Piano

33 (8<sup>th</sup>)

Timpani

*ff* *sempre ff* *ff*

*p*

Ex. 4.14: Beginning of Section A<sup>2</sup>, solo clarinet doubled by piano right hand and accompanied by piano left hand and timpani (mm. 33-36)

As before, the solo clarinet plays a series of arpeggios containing the pitches C, A-flat, F, and G within its line. The entire ensemble decrescendos from *fortissimo* to *pianissimo* in measure 40, observes a *ritardando*, and eventually resumes at the slower tempo of 52 beats per minute at the onset of measure 41.

### Section A<sup>3</sup>

The final section of this movement is labeled A<sup>3</sup>, is in 9/8, and is metrically elongated in relation to the A<sup>1</sup> and A<sup>2</sup> sections. The previous section featured an eighth rest on the downbeat of each measure that created a slight pause at the beginning of the arpeggio as played by the solo clarinet and the right hand of piano. The A<sup>3</sup> section moves the perceived delay to the end of the measure and is written in a 9/8 meter (See Ex. 4.14 below). The impact of this 2+2+2+3 grouping is significant as it creates a lingering



effect at the end of each measure. New to this section are chords played by the orchestral bells and vibraphone that occur on the seventh eighth note of each measure.

Ex. 4.15: Concluding section of mvmt. II (mm. 41-48)

Between measures 41 and 46, each measure in the solo clarinet and piano lines contains the pitches C-natural and D-natural, further reinforcing the pitch conflict featured earlier in this movement. In measures 41 and 42, the solo clarinet and piano play a C minor arpeggio such that the listener hears the D-natural at the top as the added ninth of that chord before returning to the sustained C-natural. The orchestral bells line also features a D-natural in measure 42. In measures 43-45, the piano/solo clarinet duo sustains the D-natural until the downbeat of the following measure. The listener wants to hear the downward part of the arpeggio return to C-natural but is not given such pleasure. Instead, at measure 47, the solo clarinet moves alone to an E-flat and resolves the major second (C-natural against D-natural) with a slightly less dissonant minor third (C-natural against E-flat). Despite being very subtle, the orchestral bells melody illuminates the concluding tonality of the movement by playing the first five notes of a C minor scale between measures 41 and 45.

The movement ends on a C minor chord that is played entirely by the vibraphone and orchestral bells. After a fermata, the ensemble is instructed to “go right on.”<sup>49</sup> It is important this be observed as the next movement also begins with a C minor chord played by the marimba and vibraphone that provides continuity between the movements.

With all these pieces in place, the underlying harmonic structure of this movement is: I, V, I (also V/IV), IV, (brief V), I, and I. The progression simplifies to: I-IV-I. This compositional technique gives the movement a sense of forward progress that draws the listener through the music and to the next movement, but, as mentioned previously, not in the traditional and expected manner. Additionally, this underlying structure helps to establish the form of the movement as A, B, A, A.

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<sup>49</sup> Maslanka, *Desert Roads*, pg. 31.



### Chapter 5: Movement 3—*Coming Home*

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the third movement of Maslanka's *Desert Roads* is titled *Coming Home* and is written in memory of the legendary wind band conductor Frederick Fennell, who died in December of 2004. Maslanka candidly remarks about when he was a budding composer and how Fennell was the first person to conduct a piece of his (*Piano Concerto No. 1*). Maslanka and Fennell discussed the piece thoroughly and Fennell listened very carefully to all of Maslanka's instructions and ideas. Maslanka said, "if it had been any less of an ensemble or less of a soloist (William Dobbins) or less of a conductor, it would have been an absolute disaster and I'd be doing something else for a living. But it was one of those moments where the universe said, 'this is where you belong.'"<sup>50</sup>

Maslanka and Fennell were friends from that day on, though they would never again collaborate. The two often met at conventions and reminisced fondly about their time and achievements on the *Concerto for Piano, Winds, and Percussion*. While composing *Desert Roads*, Maslanka "had a small vision of Frederick Fennell... he said (to Maslanka) in essence 'Remember me.'"<sup>51</sup>

The third movement is the longest and most complex of any movement contained within this concerto. It contains 268 measures and is eleven and a half minutes in length.

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<sup>50</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See pg. 112.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

With that said, it should come as no surprise that some of Maslanka's most passionate, heroic, and heart-warming melodies are contained within it.

The movement is organized into what can very loosely be called a rondo though, like much of Maslanka's music, it was not conceived in that manner. From a large-scale structural perspective, the episodes in the movement are organized as ABACBABCBA Coda (see Table 7, pg. 74). As discussed in Chapter 4, Movement III opens in the key that ended Movement II: C minor.

### **Section A<sup>1</sup>**

The opening material consists of a motor device whereby C minor chords are passed between the marimba and vibraphone parts as the solo clarinet makes its entrance in measure 3 (see Ex. 5.1 below and Table 7, pg. 74). The solo clarinet's melodic material beginning at measure 3 is the basis of the A-section theme throughout this movement (see Ex 5.2 below).

The score for Ex. 5.1 consists of five staves in 4/4 time. The Solo Clarinet staff (top) begins with a rest, followed by a half note G4 (marked *pp*) and a half note A4 (marked *cresc. a bit*). The Harp staff (second) plays a series of chords, starting with a half note chord (marked *mf*) and then a series of chords with a *dim. grad.* marking. Percussion 1 (Vibe) and Percussion 2 (Marimba) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and chords, marked *mf* and *dim. grad.*. Percussion 4 and 5 (Sleigh bells) are silent until measure 4, where they play a rhythmic pattern.

Ex. 5.1: Opening measures of mvmt. III. Motor device of percussion and harp before solo clarinet entrance in m. 3 (mm. 1-4)

The score for Ex. 5.2 is a single staff for the Solo Clarinet in 4/4 time. It begins with a rest, followed by a half note G4 (marked *pp*) and a half note A4 (marked *cresc. a bit*). The melody continues with a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter note E5, all marked *cresc. a bit*. A triplet of eighth notes (F5, G5, A5) is marked with a '3' and a bracket. The piece concludes with a half note G4, marked *fade*.

Ex. 5.2: A-section theme, played by solo clarinet (mm 3-7)

The oboes, clarinets, alto saxophone, trumpets, and trombones continue the motor device in measure 5 until the piano makes its first entrance of the movement in measure 9 (see Exs. 5.3 and 5.4). When performed properly, these exchanges of timbre provide a glistening effect to the accompaniment. Trumpet and trombone players must make certain that despite their differences in mutes, each instrument should speak equally in

volume.

4

Solo Clar. *cresc. a bit* 3 *fade*

Oboe *p*

Clar. 1,2 *p*

S/A Sax.

Tpt. Harmon mutes

Tbn. 1. mute 2. cup mute

Ex. 5.3: Solo clarinet accompanied by motor device in oboes, clarinets, alto saxophone, trumpet, and trombone (mm 4-8)

The piano part contains a brief, but notable inclusion of D amidst the C minor chord in measures 9 and 10. This added ninth fosters a deeper connection to the previous movement where the contrast of C against D was well employed (see Ex. 5.4 below as well as Ex. 4.12 in the previous chapter, pg. 46).

The image shows a musical score for Piano and Percussion 3. The Piano part (top) consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature. It contains a sequence of chords, each with a 9th added, starting at measure 9. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains rests. The Percussion 3 part (bottom) is on a single staff with a percussion clef. It shows an egg shaker playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, starting at measure 9. The dynamic markings are *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the piano and *pp* (pianissimo) for the egg shaker.

Ex. 5.4: C minor chords with added 9th played by piano and accompanied by egg shaker (mm. 9-11)

### Use of Percussion Instruments

Maslanka's use of percussion in this movement is notable as he employs this family of instruments to accentuate elements of the music that would not otherwise be immediately noticed by the listener. In measure 4, he shows the transition of the motor device from percussion to winds by adding sleigh bells in the final measure before the winds take the device (see Ex. 5.1, p. 55). In measure 7, he uses crotales and vibraphone to accentuate the harp. In measures 9-10, he uses the egg shaker to accentuate the piano part. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this instrument was also heard in the first movement to represent a rattle occurring in nature, to further illustrate the piano line (see Ex. 5.4, above). The use of egg shaker and sleigh bells in the A-sections of this movement is significant as each utterance marks the conclusion of an idea.

Measure 11 begins an expansion of the solo clarinet melody. At this moment, Maslanka creates further depth in the accompaniment by adding a sustained C minor chord that is played by a combination of soprano saxophone, horns, bass clarinet, and double bass voices. Occasionally the winds contribute to the motor device but never for



more than a beat until measure 20. Trumpet 1 and trombone 1 provide a very brief interjection between measures 18 and 20 (see Ex. 5.5).

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Trumpet 1 (Tpt.), Trombone 1 (Tbn.), Soprano/Alto Saxophone (S/A Sax.), and Horns 1 & 2 (Hrn. 1, 2). The score covers measures 18, 19, and 20. In measure 18, the Tpt. and Tbn. parts play a melodic line, while the S/A Sax. and Hrn. 1, 2 parts play a sustained C minor chord. In measure 19, the Tpt. and Tbn. parts continue their melodic line, while the S/A Sax. and Hrn. 1, 2 parts continue to play the C minor chord. In measure 20, the Tpt. and Tbn. parts have a brief interjection, while the S/A Sax. and Hrn. 1, 2 parts continue to play the C minor chord.

Ex. 5.5: Trumpet and trombone interjection accompanied by C minor chord in horn 1, 2, and soprano saxophone (mm. 18-20)

Measure 20 is also significant as it is the first occurrence of the motor device that does not alternate voices on each beat. Instead, the clarinets, alto saxophone, and flutes play the same pitches until measure 24 when the solo clarinet ascends in pitch and makes the first of three heroic statements. Again in measure 27, Maslanka's use of egg shaker and subsequent use of sleigh bells, helps escalate the tension in the solo clarinet line and conclude each statement. The horn and vibraphone parts double the solo clarinet line at this moment, each playing another instance of a heroic theme (see Ex 5.6). Measures 34-35 make use of a G major chord to transition into the next section, which is in C major and begins in measure 37.

Musical score for Ex. 5.6, measures 27-33. The score is for Solo Clarinet, Trumpet 1, and Horn 1, 2. The Solo Clarinet part starts at measure 27 with a dynamic of *mp*, followed by *mf*, *p*, and *f*. The Trumpet 1 part starts at measure 27 with a dynamic of *mp*, followed by *mf*, and *mf*. The Horn 1, 2 part starts at measure 27 with a dynamic of *mf*.

Ex. 5.6: Heroic solo clarinet passage double by trumpet 1 and horn 1 (mm. 27-33)

### Section B<sup>1</sup>

The B-section theme contains a characteristic run of sixteenth notes. This passage is heard several times in the solo clarinet line and is often answered by clarinet 1 and 2 (See Ex. 5.7). This pattern continues through measure 43.

Musical score for Ex. 5.7, measures 37-41. The Solo Clarinet part starts at measure 37 with a characteristic run of sixteenth notes. The Clarinet 1, 2 part imitates the Solo Clarinet in measure 38 and measure 41, with first and second endings marked '1.' and 'a2' respectively.

Ex. 5.7: Solo clarinet playing the B-section theme and imitated by clarinet 1 in measure 38 and clarinets 1 and 2 in measure 41 (mm. 37-41)

The entire ensemble doubles the solo clarinet in measure 45 by playing a series of four dotted-quarter and eighth-note combinations (see Ex. 5.8 below).

The image shows a musical score for measures 45-46. It features five staves: Solo Clarinet, Flute, Clarinet 1 and 2, Bassoon, and Harp. The Solo Clarinet part is marked with a fermata over measures 45 and 46. The Flute part is marked with 'mf dim.' and begins at measure 45. The Clarinet 1 and 2 part is marked with 'dim.' and begins at measure 45. The Bassoon part is marked with 'mf dim.' and begins at measure 45. The Harp part is marked with 'dim.' and begins at measure 45.

Ex. 5.8: Ensemble doubling solo clarinet before conclusion of B<sup>1</sup> (mm. 45-46)

At this point, the solo clarinet concludes its final statement of the first B section. To provide contrast and give the solo clarinetist a bit of rest, the flutes are handed the B-section theme at measure 50. The bassoons substitute for the section clarinets with the consequent sixteenth-note phrase. The B theme is heard once again in the flutes and is likewise doubled by the soprano saxophone with the alto saxophone interjecting on beats 2 and 4 of measure 54. The splitting of a melody between instruments and beats is similar to the splitting of the opening motor device of this movement and provides connective material before entering the first C section (see Ex. 5.9).

Ex. 5.9: B-section theme in flute 1 and upper saxophones (mm. 54-55)

### Section C<sup>1</sup>

After a flourish of sixteenth-note triplet arpeggios passed from the soprano saxophone to the alto saxophone, to the clarinet section, and to the bass clarinet in measure 58, the double bass leads the ensemble into the first C section. The C section is identified by its motivic accompaniment material in which the bass voices play a whole note at the beginning of each measure, followed by the remainder of the measure being played as eighth notes in an arpeggiated configuration in a soprano voice. This is first played by the combination of double bass, harp, vibraphone, and marimba at measure 60 (see Ex. 5.10).

Ex. 5.10: Section C accompaniment motive as played by double bass, harp, vibraphone, and marimba (mm. 60-63)

The solo clarinet enters in measure 62 with a line that contrasts the writing heard thus far for this instrument. Starting at measure 62, the solo clarinet plays a *chalmereau*

register D for four measures before focusing on the pitches E-flat, B-flat, C-natural, and finally ending the section on a D-natural. While measures 61-71 lack significant variety in rhythm or pitch, Maslanka incorporates color changes throughout the line (see example 5.11). The first C section is very brief and quickly transitions into a minor variation of the B theme at measure 73.



Ex. 5.11: Solo clarinet, Section C<sup>1</sup> (mm. 62-71)

### Section B<sup>2</sup>

At measure 73, instead of writing long-held pitches in the accompanimental parts, Maslanka writes repeated staccato eighth notes in the bassoons and alto saxophone. This helps give variation to the minor B<sup>2</sup> section theme as well as an impetus for the movement to keep progressing. The piano and harp play in octaves and create a call/answer with the solo clarinet. The solo clarinet plays a series of ascending arpeggios of sixteenth notes and sextuplets between measures 71 and 80.

Musical score for Solo Clarinet and Piano, measures 71-77. The Solo Clarinet part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Piano part provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

Ex. 5.12: Imitation between piano/harp and solo clarinet (mm. 71-77)

The conductor must be keenly aware of the soloist's line as the ensemble doubles the solo clarinet on the fourth beat of measures 82, 84 and the fifth beat of 85 (See Ex. 5.13, m. 82, beat 4).

Musical score for Solo Clarinet and Ensemble, measures 81-83. The Solo Clarinet part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Ensemble part provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

Ex. 5.13: Soloist punctuated by ensemble (mm. 81-83)

The soloist must, likewise, be very clean with the sextuplets to make this alignment possible with the ensemble. There is no room for *rubato* in this part of the movement if the figure in measure 82 is to align.

At measure 87, the piccolo and vibraphone double the solo clarinet as the oboe plays a very small contrapuntal role in measures 88 and 89 (see Ex. 5.14).

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Solo Clarinet, Flute (Piccolo), and Oboe. The score is in 4/4 time and starts at measure 87. The Solo Clarinet and Flute (Piccolo) parts play a melodic line with a sextuplet in measure 89. The Oboe part plays a counterpoint in measures 88 and 89. The Flute (Piccolo) part is labeled 'Picc.' and 'Flt. 1'.

Ex. 5.14: Piccolo doubling solo clarinet with oboe counterpoint (mm. 87-91)

Measures 90-99 serve as a transition back to the material based on the A-section theme. In these measures, as before, Maslanka takes a rhythmic motive and passes it between instruments in the following sequence: section clarinets, piccolo, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, and bass clarinet. This section, when properly performed, will appear as a single line of notes with a natural rise and fall to that line (see Ex. 5.15, below).

The image displays a musical score for measures 95-98. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 95-96) features Clarinet 1,2 and Saxophone (S/A Sax). The Clarinet part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with stems pointing up, while the Saxophone part has a similar pattern with stems pointing down. The second system (measures 97-98) features Flute (fl. 1), Clarinet 1,2, Saxophone (S/A Sax), and Bass Clarinet/Alto Clarinet (B/CAC Cl.). The Flute part has a rhythmic pattern with stems pointing up, while the Clarinet, Saxophone, and Bass Clarinet parts have a similar pattern with stems pointing down. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, sixteenth notes, and dynamic markings like 'f'.

Ex. 5.15: Rhythmic device passed between ensemble members. Opposing stems represent divided parts (mm. 95-98)

## Section A<sup>2</sup>

Measure 99 begins the second A section and contains the motor device from the opening of the movement. A careful listener will note, however, that in measure 104, Maslanka employs a D-flat major chord in the motor device in place of the original F major chord heard previously. The F used in both chords helps disguise the variance of sonority. One will also hear the use of a  $Fr^{+6}$  in measure 108 in the right hand of the piano, which, as expected, resolves to G major in the following measure.



### Section B<sup>3</sup>

In measure 111, the ensemble begins a series of four entrances of a minor variation on the B theme. This pattern begins with the soprano saxophone, followed by the alto saxophone in measure 113, the oboe in 114, and ends with flute 1, oboe 1, and soprano saxophone in measure 115. The section concludes with a sixteenth-note triplet flourish similar to that heard in measure 58, preceding the first C section (see Ex. 5.16).

The image shows three staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'Sop. Sax.' and the middle staff is labeled 'Alto Sax.'. The bottom staff is labeled 'B/CAC C.'. The notation includes several triplet markings (the number '3' above groups of notes) and a final flourish consisting of a sixteenth-note triplet. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature.

Ex. 5.16: Transitional sixteenth-note triplet flourishes (mm. 118-119)

### Section C<sup>2</sup>

The second C section begins at measure 120 and adds contralto clarinet and double bass as counterparts to the whole notes played by the left hand of the piano. The contralto clarinet adds a rich, warm texture to the accompaniment. In this instance, the accompaniment plays the right hand of the piano in place of the harp. Before transitioning back to the B material, Maslanka writes a series of ascending A major arpeggios shared between the marimba and alto saxophone (m. 136). Measure 137 functions as a V/V relative to C minor with the D<sup>7</sup> arpeggio in the marimba leading to the next entrance of the solo clarinet that outlines G major arpeggios and eventually returns the piece to C minor in 139 (see Ex. 5.17).

Ex. 5.17:  $D^7$  in marimba to solo C minor in solo clarinet (mm. 137-140)

The ascending sixteenth-note arpeggios are again used in this section to provide sequential material at 148 with an eventual arrival point in measure 152. Between measures 148 and 151, Maslanka cleverly uses the section clarinets as well as the bass clarinet, bassoons, and baritone saxophone to play the rising arpeggios in unison while the solo clarinet plays with the rest of the ensemble. The effect of this writing is that the listener hears both the solo clarinet playing very high in its register and the triadic arpeggios but cannot discern the solo clarinet from the section clarinets or the solo clarinet from the rest of the ensemble (see Ex. 5.18, below). Maslanka wrote a similar effect in the first movement where he disguised the solo clarinet and bass clarinet amidst the section clarinets and contralto clarinet (see Ex. 3.6, p. 20).

Musical score for Ex. 5.18, measures 148-149. The score is in 4/4 time and features three staves: Solo Clarinet, Clarinets 1 and 2, and Bass Clarinet/Contrabass Clarinet. The Solo Clarinet part begins at measure 148 with a melodic phrase. The Clarinets 1 and 2 and Bass Clarinet/Contrabass Clarinet parts provide a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

Ex. 5.18: Solo clarinet against section and bass clarinets (mm. 148-149)

### Section A/C

After a brief utterance of the heroic solo clarinet theme between measures 148 and 153 and a series of trills/arpeggios, the marimba and double bass restate the C-section accompaniment beginning in measure 165 (see Ex. 5.19).

Musical score for Ex. 5.19, measures 166-171. The score is in 4/4 time and features three staves: Solo Clarinet, Percussion 2 (Marimba), and Double Bass. The Solo Clarinet part begins at measure 166 with a melodic phrase. The Percussion 2 and Double Bass parts provide a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

Ex. 5.19: A-section solo clarinet melody against C-section accompaniment, played by marimba and double bass (mm. 166-171)

At this moment in the movement, Maslanka combines both the A-section melody with the C-section accompaniment to provide a new sound to ideas that have been heard before. The solo clarinet enters in measure 168 with the A-section theme being played over the marimba's C-section accompaniment. Unlike the original C-section theme, the

accompaniment is in C minor and not G minor. Also new to this area is the addition of an eighth note on beat one in the upper accompanimental voice, whereas previous sections incorporated a rest. Additionally, unlike the first hearing of this material, the arpeggiated eighth-note figure does not change between measures 165 and 178. The solo clarinet remains in its original key of C minor.

At measure 185, the solo clarinet makes a noticeable variance and begins playing tied whole notes up to the highest pitch of the original A-section, which is B-flat (see Ex. 5.20).

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Solo Clarinet, Clarinets 1 & 2, Bass Clarinet, Double Bass, and Piano. The score begins at measure 185. The Solo Clarinet part is written in treble clef and features a melodic line with tied whole notes, including a B-flat. The Clarinets 1 & 2 part is also in treble clef and features a similar melodic line with tied whole notes. The Bass Clarinet part is in bass clef and features a melodic line with tied whole notes. The Double Bass part is in bass clef and features a melodic line with tied whole notes. The Piano part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and features an arpeggiated eighth-note figure in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand.

Ex. 5.20: Solo clarinet ascending to B-flat over C-section accompaniment (mm. 185-90)

This provides a powerful sense of gentleness and leads to the soprano saxophone's restatement of the B-section theme. The egg shaker again plays an eighth-note figure in measure 195 to emphasize the end of all the soprano saxophone's statements. In much of this movement, the soprano saxophone serves as a proxy for the solo clarinet and allows the soloist some much-needed rest before entering the last sections of the movement. A

great orchestration technique used by Maslanka in measures 205-208 combines the soprano saxophone with the piccolo, section clarinets, and muted trumpets. The combination of soprano saxophone and piccolo is particularly desirable as it creates a moment of light joyfulness—a quality common to Maslanka’s music. At measure 213, the harp and remainder of the ensemble give way to four measures of a C major rolled piano chord that serves as a transition to the final section of the movement.

### **Coda: Section D<sup>1</sup>**

It is notated in the score that the tempo at this transition should be approximately 60 beats per minute. Not notated in the score, Maslanka requests that there be no seam between the sections.<sup>52</sup> This section, labeled D<sup>1</sup> (see Table 7, p. 74), reflects some of his most intimate and tender writing. The accompaniment is very plain with their repeated quarter notes and C major tonality. Clarinets 1 and 2 sustain a C and E, respectively, while the solo clarinet reenters in the upper part of the *chalumeau* register.

One of the most touching moments of the entire work occurs at measure 232, at which point flute 1 relieves the solo clarinet of the melody as the bass and contralto clarinets, double bass, and piano move stepwise down from a C-natural to an A-natural (see Ex. 5.21, below). The solo clarinet reenters at the end of the flute line and plays until the oboe reenters at measure 241. The oboe doubles the solo clarinet for three measures before the solo clarinet carries on with only the quarter note and pedal accompaniment at measure 246.

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<sup>52</sup> Maslanka. Ensemble Coaching. April 2007.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system (measures 228-232) features a Solo Clarinet with a melodic line, a Piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line, and a Bass Clarinet/Alto Saxophone (B/CAC C.) with a bass line. The second system (measures 233-235) features a Flute 1 with a melodic line, a Piano accompaniment, a Bass Clarinet/Alto Saxophone (B/CAC C.), Horn 1,2, and Trombone (Tbn.). The Flute 1 part is marked *p* and includes triplets. The Horn 1,2 and Tbn. parts are marked *pp* and include the instruction "Clearly articulated".

Ex. 5.21: Flute 1 relieving solo clarinet of melody. Note the quarter note figure shifting from piano to horn and trombone (mm. 228-235)

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Flute, Piano, Horn 1,2, and Tbn. The Flute staff is the top staff, starting at measure 236 with a melodic line. The Piano staff is the second staff, showing a simple accompaniment. The Horn 1,2 staff is the third staff, showing a rhythmic pattern. The Tbn. staff is the bottom staff, showing a rhythmic pattern. The score is for measures 236-238.

Ex. 5.22: Continuation of flute taking the melody from the solo clarinet  
(mm. 236-238)

### Section D<sup>2</sup>

The final section of this movement begins after slowing to 52 beats per minute at the start of measure 251, and is labeled D<sup>2</sup> on Table 7. Only the solo clarinet and piano play from this point to the end of the movement. The solo clarinet plays in the richest part of its *chalumeau* register and while *pianissimo*, Maslanka indicates that it should be “very warm.”<sup>53</sup> As the two play, the slowness of the rhythms in the solo clarinet and the eventual ties over the bar lines in the piano help the movement to “fade to silence,” as is indicated in the score (see Ex 5.23 below).<sup>54</sup> This movement is the only one in *Desert Roads* that is not indicated for the performers to move directly on to the next movement.

<sup>53</sup> Maslanka. *Desert Roads*. 76.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

It is fitting to let the chord resonate for a very long time and remain in active silence before entering the darkness of the final movement.

The image shows a musical score for Solo Clarinet and Piano, measures 251-258. The Solo Clarinet part is in the upper staff, starting with a tempo marking of *a bit slower* and a metronome marking of  $\text{♩} = 52$ . The piano part is in the lower staff, starting with a *pp* dynamic marking. The Solo Clarinet part features a melodic line with a *very warm* instruction. The piano part consists of a series of chords, with the first chord being a D<sup>2</sup> chord. The score is written in a key signature of one flat and a time signature of 4/4.

Ex. 5.23: Final D<sup>2</sup> section of third movement; solo clarinet against piano (mm. 251-258)



TABLE 7: Movement III—Coming Home

$\text{♩} = 120$   
**A<sup>1</sup>**  
 M: 1 3 7 9 10 11 14 15 18 19 20 23 24 27 28 30 31 32 34 36 37 39 40 42 46 49 50

4 Solo Clar.  
 4 Vibes, harp, pno.  
 C min C Min/D C Min C Maj

**B<sup>1</sup>**  
 80 81 85 86 87 90 94  
 Transition  
 Clar. 1, 2  
 C min C min C min/ C min C min

**A<sup>2</sup>**  
 99 100

108 110 111 114 118 120 122 130 136 137 138 139 140 144 147 148 150

**B<sup>3</sup>** **C<sup>2</sup>** **B<sup>4</sup>**  
 Sax. and Ob.  
 C min G maj C min C min C min/ C min D

**A/C** **B<sup>5</sup>**  
 152 154 155 156 160 164 165 168 170 174 175 180 184 185 190 193 196 200  
 Flt, ob, clar. 1,2 5 4 4 Solo w/ C-section accomp. G C min G maj C Min: V/V V i sop. sax. C maj

201 202 209 210 213 217 220 222 223 226 227 230 233 237 240 241 243 245 246 250

**D<sup>2</sup>** **D<sup>1</sup>**  $\text{♩} = 60$   
 C maj, Coda: Duets w/soloist  
 251 253 255 258 259 260 262 266 268 268  
 Holding Back Fade to silence  
 C maj C maj

8vb in solo clarinet

## Chapter 6: Movement 4—*Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness*

*Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness* is a distinctive and dark conclusion to *Desert Roads*. While not mentioned in the score, this movement is based directly on the sixth movement of Maslanka's song cycle for male voice and piano, called *Black Dog Songs*. This work was written in 1996 and is a setting of six poems of by Richard Beale. Beale's poem featured in *Black Dog Songs* is titled *On the Subway Platform....*<sup>55</sup> This movement illustrates some of Maslanka's darkest writing but concludes with an unexpected glimmer of hope in the final three measures.

Beale was born in Detroit, Michigan, attended college at the University of New Mexico, and also received a Master of Fine Arts degree from Ohio University. He is best known for his landscape paintings of the Genesee Valley but receives recognition for his poetry, most notably *Waiting with Irene*. Maslanka set poetry of Beale's prior to *Black Dog Songs*, and wrote *A Litany for Courage and the Seasons for Clarinet, Vibraphone, and Choir* in 1988. The second movement of his newest work for clarinet, *Eternal Garden*, is based on *On Chestnut Hill* from this work.

*On the Subway Platform...* is a monologue about depression and suicide. The narrator contemplates jumping in front of the oncoming subway's tracks before seeing a light and deciding instead to board the train. He then discusses the ineffectuality of pharmaceuticals before discussing his love of God. Even that, he states, has not ended

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<sup>55</sup> See Appendix 2, pg. 126 for the complete text of *On the Subway Platform....*

his desire for “wild dives into the dark.” *On the Subway Platform...* is “deeply about evaluating life.”<sup>56</sup>

Furthermore, Maslanka says that music in general, and this movement in particular, is “distressingly powerful” but “visually sparse.”<sup>57</sup> Musicians do not need large masses of sound or ink, he says, to produce something very powerful and moving.” *Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness* is just as evocative as *On the Subway Platform...*, if not more so due to its transcendence of words and collaboration with a greater number of musicians, each contributing their individual energies to a collective power. Maslanka explains how great power can arise from a few notes on an otherwise blank page. He insists that every instance should be full value. Players should employ both graceful *fortissimos* and “well-formed *pianissimos*.” Each person must consciously contribute to the overall energy of the piece. A quick glance at the score will show that the saxophones are *tacet* during this movement, but Maslanka insists that they should remain focused and present during both rehearsals and performances so that they may continue to contribute, if only energetically.

*On the Subway Platform...* is organized in a blank verse form, and the final movement of *Black Dog Songs* is in ABA form. *Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness* follows a pattern very similar to the vocal line and accompaniment of *On the Subway Platform*. Both *On the Subway Platform* and *Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness* are divided into five main sections and are reflected on Table 8 (p. 88) and are likewise

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<sup>56</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See Appendix 1, pg. 116.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.



movement, Maslanka writes accented grace notes and legato sixteenth notes to emphasize the angst-ridden melody of the solo clarinet (see Ex. 6.2).

Ex. 6.2: Solo clarinet against Darkness theme (mm. 1-5)

As the movement progresses, the solo clarinet begins increasing the frequency of its notes, despite making no register changes. Horn 1 enters at measure 9 and supports the solo clarinet by doubling its melody and playing *piano* under the soloist's *mezzo forte*. The soloist will continue to crescendo until reaching *fortissimo* at measure 14 (see Ex 6.3). The ensemble should not be coerced by the solo clarinet's increasing dynamic, as Maslanka writes that they should not crescendo but should reenter at measure 14 at a *mezzo forte* dynamic.

The image displays a musical score for measures 9 and 10. The score is arranged in a system with six staves. The top staff is for the Solo Clarinet, marked with a dynamic of *mf* and the instruction "some urgency" above it. The second staff is for the Horn, marked with a dynamic of *p*. The third staff is for the Bass Clarinet (B., CAC Cl), marked with a dynamic of *p*. The fourth staff is for the Contrabass, marked with a dynamic of *p*. The fifth staff is for the Euphonium and Tuba (Euph., Tuba), marked with a dynamic of *p*. The sixth staff is for the Piano, marked with a dynamic of *p*. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 6.3: Solo clarinet doubled by horn and accompanied by bass clarinet, contrabass, tuba, and piano (mm. 9-10)

As was presented in each of the previous movements, Maslanka uses percussion instruments to add dramatic effect. In this movement, the field drum enters at measure 16 and helps the ensemble and soloist advance to a greater level of intensity. One can hear and feel the strength of the solo clarinet rising as it elevates to *fff* in the *clarion* range of the instrument. The field drum should be played with a crisp, martial quality and create a sense of looming distress (see Ex. 6.4).

Musical score for Ex. 6.4, measures 16-18. The score features three staves: Solo Clarinet, Percussion 4, and Piano. The Solo Clarinet part begins at measure 16 with a dynamic marking of *ff* and includes the instruction "slowing...". The Percussion 4 part features a "4. Field Drum -muted, snares off" and a dynamic marking of *p* with "cresc. grad.". The Piano part includes a "5. Sn. Dr." and a dynamic marking of *p*. The score is in 4/4 time and includes a key signature change from one sharp to one flat between measures 17 and 18.

Ex. 6.4: Solo clarinet against field drum, accompanied by Darkness theme in piano (mm. 16-18)

Meanwhile, the accompaniment should “(become) more detached” from measure 19 until 26.<sup>58</sup> This is an unusual but very effective marking in the score. Despite being written as eighth notes with an eighth rest, each should be slightly more separate from the one preceding (see Ex. 6.5).

Musical score for Ex. 6.5, measures 21-24. The score features three staves: Solo Clarinet, Piano, and Percussion 4. The Solo Clarinet part begins at measure 21 with a dynamic marking of *dim. grad.*. The Piano part features a descending line of eighth notes with a dynamic marking of *mf* and the instruction "becoming more detached". The Percussion 4 part features "sm. tom" and "med. tom" with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a crescendo to *p*. The score is in 4/4 time and includes a key signature change from one sharp to one flat between measures 23 and 24.

Ex. 6.5: Solo clarinet accompanied by descending line of eighth notes that gradually become more detached (mm. 21-24)

<sup>58</sup> Maslanka. *Desert Roads*. 82.

## Section B

At measure 26, Maslanka writes a fermata and marks it “fairly long.”<sup>59</sup> In a coaching, he asked that the ensemble “let it have a nice breath—so one wonders ‘What’s happening here?’”<sup>60</sup> When the ensemble resumes, they are again playing the Darkness theme but now have transposed it up an octave. This is the section labeled B on Table 8. Beginning in measure 27, the Darkness theme is now voiced by flute 1, trumpet 1, and harp. The piano participates by playing some rolled punctuating chords (see Ex. 6.6, below). This section is analogous to the section following measure 25 in *On the Subway Platform....* In it, the piano part is transposed up an octave higher and the male voice sings the same pitches that are being played by the solo clarinet. The rhythms are also very similar.

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<sup>59</sup> Maslanka. *Desert Roads*. 83.

<sup>60</sup> Maslanka. Ensemble Coaching. April 2007.



The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Solo Clarinet, Fl. 1, 2, Picc., and Piano. The Solo Clarinet part (top staff) begins at measure 28 with a melodic line that ascends and then descends, marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The Fl. 1, 2, Picc. part (middle staff) plays a series of notes, marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and the instruction "no vib.". The Piano part (bottom staff) plays rolled chords, indicated by a wavy line and a wedge-shaped dynamic marking.

Ex. 6.6: Solo clarinet entrance over piano rolled chords (mm. 28-30)

As the solo clarinet ascends to the *altissimo* register, the vibraphone plays the Darkness theme and the section clarinets double the low points of the solo clarinet line. This scoring is very effective in that, amidst the *fortissimo* ensemble, the solo clarinet is less likely to be heard without this doubling of the section clarinets. Also highly effective is the use of piccolo trumpet in measures 36-40 to further articulate line of the solo clarinet. Maslanka describes this moment as the most powerful of the entire piece (see Ex. 6.7).<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See also Appendix 1, pg. 116.

Musical score for Ex. 6.7, measures 34-35. The score features four staves: Solo Clarinet, Clar. 1, 2, Tpt. 1, 2, and Harp. The Solo Clarinet part is highly rhythmic with sixteenth-note patterns and slurs. The Clarinet 1 and 2 part has a few notes in measure 35. The Trumpet 1 and 2 part is mostly silent. The Harp part features glissando markings in both staves.

Ex. 6.7: Solo clarinet doubled at low points by section clarinets; harp glissando (mm. 34-35)

Musical score for Ex. 6.8, measures 36-38. The score features four staves: Solo Clarinet, Clar. 1, 2, Tpt. 1, 2, and Harp. The Solo Clarinet part continues with rhythmic patterns. The Clarinet 1 and 2 part is silent. The Trumpet 1 and 2 part has a few notes in measure 36. The Harp part features a glissando in the bass staff.

Ex. 6.8: Solo clarinet doubled by piccolo trumpet (mm. 36-38)

Between measures 34 and 39, the listener hears large *glissandi* and chords played by the piano and doubled by the harp (see Exs. 6.7 and 6.8). The Darkness theme accompanies this figure and is played by the vibraphone. At measure 43, the harp resumes the Darkness theme. Despite the ensemble *diminuendo*, the Darkness theme continues in the percussion and harp. The solo clarinet continues but fades out before the harp and piano.

### **“Dreamy Section”**

A grand pause at measure 49 sets the following section apart from that which preceded and that which follows it. On Table 7, it is this author’s opinion that this section be labeled “Dreamy” to best reflect the surreal and ethereal nature of the music heard at this point. A D-major harp chord and *ad. lib.* solo clarinet line open the musical space and further illustrate the idea of desert surroundings. In measure 50, Maslanka writes articulated sixteenth notes and well-placed grace notes in a compositional style similar to that employed in Movement I. The flute and harp play scalar passages and are accompanied by a wind chime *glissando*. Collectively, these devices give the listener a sense of surrealism that fits well with the desert sounds heard previously. The text of the poem at this moment is: “I think of God and his silence, and how my love for him has not ended wild dives into the dark.” After another fermata, the movement progresses and the Darkness theme is heard in a quick tempo, played by the contralto clarinet, euphonium, and harp.

Ex. 6.9: “Dreamy.” Solo clarinet ad lib to flute/harp *ad lib.* (mm. 50-51)

Measure 57 brings a tutti half rest that clears the space before a D-major chord sets the tone for the next mood of this movement. Here the listener is treated to a fleeting moment of hope. Beale writes: “A carpet of frost and a clear cerulean sky, and fingers of morning caressing the road. The smell of leaves musky and grapey in (the) frozen air.” The poet is describing moments of sunrise and the promise of the simple pleasures of the Earth. This moment illustrates a rare instance of hope not heard previously in *Desert Roads*. Again, the solo clarinet very closely follows the pitches and rhythms of the vocalist (see Ex. 6.10).

Ex. 6.10: Solo clarinet accompanied by ensemble (mm. 58-63)

## Section A

Just as the listener relaxes into this new atmosphere, the Darkness theme resumes in the harp and double bass. There is a distinct difference in this iteration, however. Rather than opposing each other, the solo clarinet/singer have, in some way, agreed to now work with the Darkness theme. At this moment, it is as though the narrator has accepted Darkness and depression as an inevitable part of his life. Maslanka demonstrates this through the separated eighth notes in the double bass and harp lines and their relative lightness to the earlier instrumentation of this theme. Beale illustrated this with the words: “I want this nowness to endure with the sun on my back and release in my heart.” Just as in *On the Subway Platform...*, Maslanka writes a series of “hold back... In tempo” marks to delay the end of the movement.

## “Amen”

In this author’s opinion, the most glorious moment of the entire opus occurs in the final three measures, which is labeled “Amen” to reflect the conclusion of the benediction. Maslanka describes it as such in the program note of *Desert Roads* and additionally, while coaching the University of Montana Wind Ensemble, referred to this section as such. After all the extremes of range, pitch, instrumentation, and emotion, the listener is treated to a very simple but highly effective plagal cadence that concludes the piece after a measure of silence. Surely, this is the release Beale had in mind. While first-time listeners cannot foresee its arrival, we are able to see that the solo clarinet has been alluding to this since measure 68 by centering on the pitches B-natural and E-natural, though the work appears to conclude in E minor just prior to the final cadence. Despite the solo clarinet’s allusions to the final pitches throughout the movement, there is

little corroboration by the ensemble to strengthen this idea or give a hint that this moment is yet to come. The transition to this final section can only be appreciated in retrospect. The solo clarinet's final pitch is a B-natural and is sustained into measure 73. Hearing this pitch as tonic, Maslanka writes three major chords based on B-natural in measures 75, 76, and 77. The chords are B-major, E-major, and B-major as such they create a simple plagal cadence to conclude the movement. The roots of these last chords are significant in that they conclude the concerto with the same B-natural and E-natural pitch center that began it. By ending the movement with a plagal cadence, it is this author's belief that Maslanka is tipping the proverbial hat to Bach who is well-known for his use of such cadences. This movement ends in exactly the same fashion as *On the Subway Platform...*, and leaves the listener with a powerful moment of peace, characteristic of Maslanka's writing. As the work concludes, the ensemble and audience are permitted a long moment to savor the lingering resonance of the final chord, as is traditionally done in performances and recordings of this piece (see. Ex. 6.11).

The image shows a musical score for Piano, measures 74-77. The score is written for the right and left hands. Measure 74 is marked with a fermata. Measures 75, 76, and 77 are marked with the instruction "slowly ad lib." and the dynamic marking "pp". The chords are B major (B, D#, F#), E major (E, G#, B), and B major (B, D#, F#). The bass line is marked with a fermata and the instruction "sub" with a dashed line, indicating a sustained low B note.

Ex. 6.11: Conclusion of movement; piano playing I-IV-I chords; doubled by harp and contrabass (mm. 74-77)

TABLE 8: Movement IV—Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness

**A**

Darkness Theme  $J=52$

Low, opposing solo clarinet

More agitated

Ascends to clarion register, grows in agitation

Darkness theme more detached

M: 1

3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	23	26	
4 Bass Clar., 4 Tba, DB, Pno,	Solo Clar. 4	4	4	4	5	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Field Drum- muted, snare off	4	4	4	4 Sm. tom, high brass	Fairly long	
						Some urgency	add Horns					In tempo, heavy	Don't let up	Slowing...						

**B**

Solo Clarinet growing in activity

Very intense

Ascends to altissimo

Descends to chalumeau

Decreases in activity

Darkness theme higher and ornamented by piano chords and harp glissandi

G.P.

No Darkness Theme

In tempo, but ad lib

G.P.

Chords and sweeping gestures in accomp.

"Dreamy"

M: 1

27	30	31	32	33	34	35	37	39	40	43	44	46	47	49	50	51	52
Fl 1, Tpt 1 (st. mute), Hp.	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
					Vibes take Darkness theme				dim. grad.					G.P.			

**A**

Solo Clarinet asserts and makes peace

Return of Darkness Theme

Darkness Theme in harp and euphonium

slowly ad lib

Silent Measure

I IV I

M: 1

54	55	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	62	62	66	67	68	70	74	75	76	77
3	4	4	3	5	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
			off together															

DB and Hp pizz. separated

## Chapter 7: Conclusions

*Desert Roads*, as a representative example of Maslanka's music, illustrates many characteristic qualities present in his work. Each work manifests itself in Maslanka's mind as scattered fragments and presents a new "universe" with every composition.<sup>62</sup> He encourages performers to pay close attention to the details of his musical writing. Through his compositions, Maslanka looks for and explores the lines that run through his music. More importantly, he encourages performers to investigate the blank spaces on the page. These topics will be addressed in the remainder of this chapter.

Maslanka's music presents an interesting paradox. While each can primarily be called "new," it is well rooted in what can be called "old." He says, "Invention is (the) recreating (of) the universe with each piece."<sup>63</sup> He does not employ compositional techniques or frivolities for novelty's sake alone. Instead, he believes in "allowing the thing that wants to speak, (the freedom) to speak" and believes this is an inversion to the customary to composing.<sup>64</sup> The conscious mind, to Maslanka, is merely the facilitator of musical ideas, and not the source. Composing, for Maslanka, is not an intellectual endeavor. He speaks about "ah-ha" moments being the initiator of his compositional process. He emphasizes composing is a struggle but not of an intellectual nature. "Creative thought," he says, "is releasing that intellectual boundary to something about

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<sup>62</sup> Maslanka. Personal Interview. 30 December 2009. See pgs. 113-114.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.



which you don't know."<sup>65</sup> He emphasizes that once the boundary is released, music is given the space to manifest.

As it pertains to *Desert Roads*, Maslanka received the "transportation" to an ancient time. Through the active imagining process, he perceived himself "to be Middle Eastern and proceeded to be old."<sup>66</sup> A desert image came to him and prompted the title of the work. This title also correlates with an earlier work of his, *Mountain Roads for saxophone quartet*, which began as a vision of building roads on a high mountain pass in the bright spring sunshine. Maslanka did distinguish, however, that neither of these pieces should be considered programmatic. He insists that the titles are not an illustration or image of the music but rather devices to help listeners better understand the music. "It is a dream but in musical form," he says.<sup>67</sup>

Maslanka is very specific in his music about the details of performance. Articulations are clearly marked and phrases are almost always delineated with slurs. Tempo markings include metronome marks as well as phrases such as "hesitate... a tempo." While they may seem like mundane details, Maslanka insists that these tools are the foundation for understanding his work. Markings help Maslanka convey, most closely, his personal understanding of his music. He admonishes that performers take what is printed in the score and work to "understand yourself relative to that (marking)." It should not be approached casually but paradoxically; it is not an inflexible absolute, either. Music, he says, must be allowed to breathe relative to what is on the page. This

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. See pg. 99

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

flexibility becomes difficult when one considers ensembles and their limited rehearsal schedules. When all players understand themselves relative to what is on the page, only then can the ensemble speak the piece as it came to Maslanka. A prime example of this occurs with the motor device in the second movement. Section flute and clarinet players must understand that they have opposing parts that need to fit together and must relate these parts to the ensemble surrounding them.<sup>68</sup>

Maslanka also sees his composing as the investigation of a musical line through a piece of music. He acknowledges, however, that it is often fragmentary. As he collects musical statements through active imagining, the statements show him how they fit together and how they collaborate on an emotional level. He likens this process to Debussy's *Afternoon of the Faun* where a line develops from a single note. This note progresses into a theme and develops throughout the work. By the end of the piece, the line transforms and effortlessly moves through time and space.

To correlate with the effortless movement, Maslanka raises an interesting point about the nature of musical notation. He states that he is fascinated by the fact that on any given page of music, there is more blank space than there is ink on the page. Stephen Bolstad writes, "No matter how many details a score contains, the inanimate black and white markings on the paper are merely suggestions and can only serve as a guide to the music."<sup>69</sup> Despite being "visually sparse," Maslanka remarks that music is capable of being "distressingly powerful." Maslanka encourages performers to appreciate the idea

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid. See pg. 114.

<sup>69</sup> Bolstad, Stephen. *David Maslanka's Symphony No. 4: A Conductor's Analysis with Performance Considerations*. Austin, TX: University Press, 2002.

that great energy can arise from a few well-placed and well-played notes or instruments and not merely from a large mass of sound. This point is made clear in the last movement of *Desert Roads*. The movement begins and ends with sparse instrumentation, but it is these moments that carry the most power and are capable of reaching an audience on the deepest level. Maslanka encourages musicians to take every marking to its extreme in order to achieve the deepest value of each.

*Desert Roads* shares many compositional features with other works by Maslanka. His melodies tend to include broad, heroic lines and tender, affectionate passages. As in his symphonies, particularly *Symphony No. 7*, the piano plays a strong and important role. Pedal pitches permeate both *Desert Roads* and other works including *Quintet No. 2* and *Symphony No. 6*. An additional feature shared between *Symphony No. 6* and *Desert Roads* is the use of egg shaker as a punctuating device at the end of a phrase. Motor devices, such as the one featured in Movement II of *Desert Roads*, are a feature common to Maslanka's music and are heard in works such as each of the first three quintets, and his symphonies. This point resonates strongly with his comments about Debussy and *Afternoon of a Faun*. In Movement II of *Desert Roads* and *Quintet No. 2*, the motor device creates an atmospheric shimmering effect. However, in Movement III: *Coming Home* and *Quintet No. 3*, Maslanka uses the motor device to make an extended stream of notes. In the first movement of *Little Symphony on the Name of Barney Childs* for solo clarinet, as in the beginning of Movement II: *Soliloquy*, Maslanka illustrates the clarinet's great ability to lean on a note, give it shape, and develop a melody from it. These two movements share a distinct similarity.

These are the topics that form the bedrock of *Desert Roads* and Maslanka's music. Other authors have included some of these ideas in their documents but it is important to recognize that the essential essence of Maslanka's music thrives in *Desert Roads*. He encourages musicians to religiously seek out the basics of music and to experiment until the "full value of the sound has arrived."<sup>70</sup> *Desert Roads* is an important contribution to the medium of original concertos for clarinet with wind band accompaniment. With careful study of the score, patient consideration of the markings on the page, and calculated experimentation it is this author's hope that the readers of this document will feel their inner passions rekindled and discover their own truths through the music discussed here.

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<sup>70</sup> Maslanka, David. E-mail correspondence. 28 February 2011.

## Appendix 1: Interview Transcriptions

### Dr. David Maslanka

December 30, 2009

**Joshua Mietz:** A consortium of musicians commissioned the work, but did you have anyone in particular in mind when you wrote it?

**David Maslanka:** Well yes, Peggy Dees formed the consortium. She was the one who initially asked me to do the piece. She had been on the faculty at Illinois State and at that point was hoping to stay there, and in that context we had begun to conceive the piece. The conductor there, Steve Steele, and I have done any number of commission projects on my pieces and that was to be one of them, but she was not given the full-time position there so she moved on and went to Seattle and from that point candidly began to work on getting people to support the piece. She then went about collecting all the people to make it a reality. She had a direct contact with Jerry Junkin. I've known him for many years. He's performed my music a lot. Peggy had been at UT Austin for some part of her degree work, and she tells the story of actually being there when this project was underway and asking Jerry if he had a few minutes that she could talk with him about this project. He said, "Well, I don't really." She said, "Just a minute?" and he agreed. She outlined the copies and he immediately said, "All right, we'll do it with the Dallas Wind Symphony."

**JM:** So the Dallas Wind Symphony was the first intended ensemble?

**DM:** It turned out that way. They were the ones to pick it up and be able to make it a possibility. So prior to that she did not have anything lined up. She was also granted her doctorate from Florida State and so would probably have gone to that

school and ensemble to try and get it done. Since then, it's been done by a number of people and it keeps coming up.

**JM:** In some of the writings you have on your website, you talk about having a big dream or vision... was that the case with this piece? Was there a vision before you wrote it?

**DM:** These things are always hard to talk about. The title *Desert Roads* is parallel to a saxophone quartet I wrote that I wrote about ten years ago called *Mountain Roads*. I'll describe that one and then I'll tell you a bit more about the Desert Roads idea. *Mountain Roads* came about because of a dream, and in that dream, I was in a high mountain country with a road crew building roads... a beautiful day... a pretty early spring day still snow on the side of the mountain. Being in a beautiful space, building roads... still moves me a lot to think about it. The road building aspect of the dreams is very important. I had one important one for my 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony, which was now 10 years ago, and this. So just simply having these moved me to have the title for this piece. An interesting relationship... a high mountain, and especially snow, in dreams, are an asterisk of the divine. And to have that come forward was a strong suggestion that this was an important title and association, no matter what the music does; and the music, if you look at it, does it mean mountain roads? I have no idea. But it is a title that people have taken and accepted and seem to be somehow appropriate for the music. One of the dreams that came into place for this (was) not a dream but a meditation image. When I start a piece of music, I do a meditation, or several, to look into the situation surrounding the request for a piece of music. What I found out is that people don't really know why they commission

me to write music; they just think it's a good idea. That's good enough for me. They will be enthusiastic about it but there's no real understanding about their own inter-workings and the inter-workings of a situation that require a piece of music to be formed. I never think of music in any casual sense. There's all kinds of casual music in our environment. Imagery is not casual and it is not accidental; it is purposeful, and the people who are moved to ask me to write are part of a purpose that needs to come forward somewhat. In the same way that you have gotten onto this music and thought it was purposeful for you to do some study on it. You will discover what that purpose is and it won't be immediate because it will be the immediacy of producing a document and then there will be the larger purpose of your life, relative to this. That will unfold itself. We can't talk about that now, but there it is.

**JM:** That's fascinating.

**DM:** Yes. It is. It is really the fundamental of my composing is about that. To find the music that is required and then to see how it ends in the world with people. The older I get, the much more interesting it becomes to see how people unfold, relative to the music. I'm quite secure in myself relative to the music and now it's possible to say, "All right fine, what's happening with you? And how's it working?" And see what I can do or music can do that will allow you to take a step and see that step unfolding. And so that idea of the mountain road is about pathways; things that unfold that are not known immediately, but the experience of the music becomes the point of contact that allows the unfolding and allows the motion along the pathway that is yet to be spoken.

So *Desert Roads*... the strongest image that came to me in a meditation... and I'll describe the meditation process a little bit. It is a way of moving internally in the mind it is in effect dreaming but while awake, it is the thing I worked out first a long time ago, 25 years ago, (and) began to explore the idea of entering the unconscious mind, looking through it. And it's not such a big deal. It's not mystical at all. It's about the image mind... something we can do. Do you have dreams?

**JM:** Yes.

**DM:** Do you remember them?

**JM:** Yes.

**DM:** So you have that immediate contact with your unconscious when these dreams come forward and you remember them consciously. Some of them are quite bizarre, with no immediate explanation. Now it would be possible for you to go back into your conscious mind and explore your given dream and enter it again but consciously. This is a form of contemplation and a form of meditation. I like to make parallels that are very direct for people. Your clarinet playing is deep contemplation. Maybe meditation. Over the years you've arrived a great deal of proficiency at it. Your clarinet playing is a dream. (Laughs) And you have entered into that dream with your conscious mind. But with your conscious mind you are now participating in a deep element of your unconscious through the clarinet. It is your way of keeping that character in the conscious. That's why you do this, because it's so interesting... and why you want to bring it to other people... and when you perform something special can happen. That specialness is because you



and your conscious mind are focused in such a way that you are allowing yourself to contact the energy of the unconscious mind through your clarinet. You manifest the dream through your clarinet. If you know that, then it's also possible to know that you can... through your conscious mind... and explore... to see. So, what happens to me, through what I call meditation, is very deliberately to enter a pathway that I imagine in my mind through what I imagine is often a cave, and I'll go into that and I'll see myself going downward. And I simply follow the downward path. Sometimes it is precipitous, sometimes it is smooth, most often it is not smooth and is rocky or, in some way dangerous, and I'll arrive at what I call "someplace else." You might try it, just for fun, and see what happens to you. If you sit quietly, without disturbance, and simply focus on the idea that you are entering into the cave of the Earth. And that cave does not have an ending; it simply goes on and on and on. And if you allow yourself to go, you will arrive at someplace else. Trust me, you will arrive at someplace else. And it will be interesting. One of the nice parallels I often give is the idea of Mr. *Rogers'* *Neighborhood*, if you remember that program. You come into his entryway there, sit down, change his shoes, and then say: "now it's time to go to the Land of make believe." And the train would distinguish it. The train would come out of the Land of Make Believe. This is the precise model of what I am talking about. So, he did it. He understood it in "childhood terms," childhood imagination. In childhood, imagination (is) without the barriers we have developed as so-called civilized man. So, in this process of going down and asking the question, the question that I ask is "show me something that I need to know about the piece of music I'm about to

venture on to.” And what I received was this transportation... I’ll put it that way... to a desert and I proceeded to be Middle Eastern and proceeded to be old. The motion into the unconscious does not come with sight. It can be present, it can be distant, it can be (a) very old past... that you can actually, immediately... in this case, it was (a) very old past, Middle Eastern, time of Christ... and this desert image that came up there. (It) prompted the title for this particular piece, and since I already had the title Mountain Roads, this other was very important. Now, I don’t want to get too awfully specific about these images, and to try and say, “well, this image is this in the music, and this image is that,” because it isn’t. The image that comes forth in the music is a parallel imaging to what was there in the dreams. It is not an explanation of the music; it is not an illustration. It is a dream but in musical form.

**JM:** So it’s probably safe to say it’s not necessarily programmatic?

**DM:** If you strip off the titles, you have the music. The titles offer suggestions.

**JM:** There is no underlying drama?

**DM:** There is no attempt... there’s no conscious attempt on my part to make an illustration.

**JM:** How would you say the movements interact together?

**DM:** Very well! (Laughs)

**JM:** Are they specifically dependent upon each other? Did they come to you at the same time?

**DM:** Composing is not a straight-line event for me. I don’t start with the beginning of the first movement and say “now I’ll write the first note and then try to write the

piece.” It is done by allowing anything that wants to come to mind to come up. It usually takes a fair length of time. From weeks of just allowing this process of any bit of music, any thematic element, any rhythm, any color, thoughts; simply take notes of it, sketch it out, without asking it to be any particular thing in the piece. Over a certain length of time, my unconscious is at work forming what wants to happen. I will typically sketch twice to three times as much material as will actually be heard in the piece. Out of that mass of stuff will come a shape that says “all right, this shape,” so it spreads itself out and will become the entire shape. So, in that regard, I would say yes, the movements are strongly interconnected and strongly dependent on one another. Yet, if you were to do an analysis... I have not analyzed the piece, and I don’t intend to... although I can offer a couple of thoughts to help you with yours. So, with all these dependents it is possible for certain things to stand alone in this piece. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> movements seem to have the capacity for (individual) presentation, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, as brief as it is, seems connected to the 1<sup>st</sup> although it has its own statement to make. I would think of the music in terms of episodes. It is as if you have Dream 1, Dream 2, Dream 3, Dream 4 and these... together (they) have a reason for being together. I have to say that in the intuition’s sense, pieces come together and exist largely because they feel intuitively correct together and that they feel intuitively correct even if there (are) largely different qualities in material... even within a single movement, a large amount of material. This makes analysts extremely antsy. Having said all that, what is your need for analysis, and how do you think you’re going to go about it?

**JM:** I think as far as preparing a doctoral document, they rely heavily on a certain degree of analysis, and they want to see that you have a thorough understanding of the parts and the pieces of what makes *Desert Roads Desert Roads*. In going over the score and looking over the pieces or movements, I feel like the first three come from the same place but the fourth is serious and quite a bit darker than the to my ear than the other ones. And that is where the question comes from: how the fourth (movement) relates with the other three?

**DM:** (Laughs) What do you think?

**JM:** I've heard you talk a little about it when you worked with the Wind Ensemble at UM (University of Montana) but it's sort of... to me, it's... just at the very end there are those three chords that are the resolution of the piece but the rest of the movement is really dark and sort of explores this other place that hasn't been addressed in the rest of the work.

**DM:** ...that's very fierce! Well, I don't mean to brush it aside; it's just that (long pause)... one of the problems of analysis is that is it possible to make a rational statement about music? To a degree, you can, citing relationships, citing thematic elements and how they evolve, reference to standard form; for example the third movement is something of a rondo... and so that's something the brain can hang on to... a traditional shape. You've got ABA qualities that show up in this music a lot. So you can reference standard form, and yet, once you've said that, how useful is that, what does it mean? I think it is useful to do all the intellectual analysis you can because it helps you to trace out what is actually there in terms of pitch and rhythm and it forms the foundation for your intuition. So, the function of analysis

to this point basically is legitimate in that regard. And yet, an analysis for its own sake, simply to fill up a document is less comfortable.

(Both Laugh)

**JM:** When you're composing, do you sit down and think: "I'm going to write a rondo?"

**DM:** Until the piece tells me what it wants to be, in that case, it told me as I was going "this looks like it will work as that shape;" a possibility, and so I will work at it and write and such. I see, in terms of tonal music, is that the continual reference, particularly the sonata form, the ABA form, the rondo form, these things happen to me a lot, and yet they are quite individual in my usage... they're variations of one sort of another happening a lot. I think of all of this as episodes (and) not developmental. There is very little that I would call developmental in my music. It is all statements... and another statement... and another statement—the way in which these statements work together on the whole emotional line with the piece. My need as a composer is to find how a line runs through the whole composition. And yet, my way of going about it is with these relatively self-contained and sometimes fragmentary statements. So you have a collection of statements in which I perceive to draw a line in. And, you could maybe start there as a beginning thought for analysis and lead you to understand that you are not looking at thematic development in the traditional sense. It is much more related than, I think, that and useful to see than it is that secondary data or with elements of tonal music. Take a piece like Debussy *Afternoon of the Faun*, I think it's, probably closest to the most perfect piece I know of. And there's an evolution in that music. The opening thematic element simply transforms itself in your ears in so many

different ways without ever being a development or such. It's simply a continuous restatement of the material and it moves through a space which is absolutely beautiful... the piece just keeps going and if I had an ideal in my music, it would be that... the capacity to move effortlessly through a space and rather than to illustrate this is "this is our principal theme" and so on. There are differences in thought.

**JM:** What about the significance of the chorales, specifically in the 1<sup>st</sup> movement.

**DM:** Yes.

**JM:** One of the things I really enjoy about your music is that I find myself playing or listening to it and I come across a familiar hymn and I say "Oh! I know that song!" and it's usually... it is very moving. With regard to this work, the first movement employs *We Thank We All Our God*?

**DM:** Yes.

**JM:** How does that relate to the rest of the work, for you?

**DM:** (Laughs) It's a simple question...

**JM:** Maybe I can ask it better: when you're composing and you're in your meditative state, do you feel like maybe the hymn is there and it makes itself known to come out of the piece like that.

**DM:** I'm continually working with the Bach Chorales and for me it's been almost forty years. Before I compose daily, playing some six (of the) pieces. I never intended for it to be a foundation point for the work but it's like having being drawn to something without conscious understanding and it becomes a doorway... in very, very interesting and elaborate way(s). And so, having gone through that book again

and again and again, it really is a holy book for me. Having learned it. I think I'm now on the 15<sup>th</sup> or so time through the book. I just finish it and start again. And in the process, I think, of composing work settings of the chorale melodies... I've written probably over 200 of them... that process has really changed my composing... it was a thing that changed me, just by simple application everyday of singing, and then of composing in this style... has changed my writing dramatically. I love these melodies and they keep showing up. If you're looking for a conscious reason why this melody shows up here, I cannot tell you.

**JM:** That's a perfectly valid reason.

**DM:** You mentioned the 4<sup>th</sup> symphony, your parents, and the *Old Hundredth*, which became foundational for the piece (*Symphony No. 4*). Well it didn't start like that. I had no idea when I started. One of my longtime interests is in the life of Abe Lincoln. And I have read Sandburg's (book about) the life of Lincoln.<sup>71</sup> For no reason that I can tell you, my hands are often told to do certain things without my brain knowing why. I simply accept that it happens. I open the Sandburg book to the passage of Lincoln's death and the funeral train going through the country and read the description of his arrival in Columbus, Ohio, the state capital. The coffin being on display being brought up to the train in the distance... a brass band playing *Old Hundredth*. That's the description. I, not being a church person, I went and looked up the tune and said "Oh, it's that tune. Do I dare to use that in this piece?" The answer was: "Yes." ...and I just began to move, to fool around with it, and it began to show me. So something in my conscious mind was holding to a sense of

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<sup>71</sup> Sandburg, Carl. *Abraham Lincoln*.

an unconscious (idea). And I think of these things as something that moves from the other side. There is a conscious thing in there, which we don't know about, which moves you to do what you do. And I feel that I moved that every step along the way... the thing that I needed that needed to go into a certain piece of music. And so these things arise. This tune, that I've used three or four times in pieces of music... it's a favorite piece... and it felt just as right to use it here. And you can make whatever you want of it. You can make a connection with the title of the tune. And it's interesting that it is related to the time of Christ. It is possible to make certain assertions along those lines, and yet the thing remains itself and doesn't allow things to stick to it too well. "Is it this?" It can be difficult just trying to get into it.

**JM:** I find it fascinating.

**DM:** What I would suggest is that whatever associations you have are valid, and (you) should at least begin to lay them out so you can see them but not to list them that "this is what the piece is about." Simply say: "these are (some of the) images and relationships that come to mind when we study this piece. You can have it from me that every relationship that you can form can have its validity but you cannot say, "this is what the piece is about." There is a difference. It is evocative. You can bring forward a number of associations. What I would say is that you that start your analysis there as opposed to saying "what's my form, what are my chords?" but start by your imagination and then that leads you to core elements and some kind of rational statement about the music.



**JM:** There are some ethnic figures and Middle Eastern tonalities present throughout, suggesting (a) Middle Eastern theme. Are there any other major unifying pieces? We sort of touched on this a little bit but maybe that link that unifies the movements a little...

**DM:** That's a question I would have a hard time answering directly because my composing is not about consciously creating connections. What happens when people do analysis (is that) they come up with all kinds of connections that I did not know existed consciously? I say "Oh, that's interesting." There'll come a time when I work through the piece again and say, "Oh THAT is that chord!" and so my response to unconscious impulses is to get them down on paper as opposed to necessarily have a conscious idea what's going on. And so I can't answer that question well: I'll have to leave that to you to go hunting. You might show me stuff that is quite interesting.

**JM:** What special advice or considerations would you give to a clarinetist or conductor preparing this work in terms of interpretation?

**DM:** The first thing is to be absolutely careful with what is on the page. Tempo... dynamics... articulations... the basic stuff has to be paid attention to in a very conscious way. That's the foundation. I don't know how many people approach a piece of music by sort of playing through it and say, "I sort of understand what this is about" and then go off on their merry way without (regard for the) tempo considerations. I don't know how many conductors will look at it and say "it sort of goes like this..."

**JM:** So tempo is inflexible?

**DM:** No, not inflexible but it is your starting point for understanding. So that if you look at quarter equals 112, actually go and do that and work your part at that tempo until you understand yourself relative to that tempo. It is not a causal thing and yet it is not an unshakable absolute; because what will happen is that once you understand the music, once you internalize the music, then you will have flexibility. It will breathe like it needs to, through you because you are able to do that as opposed to some kind of improvisation around the notes. This is one of the difficulties in the performance of these, especially ensemble music, is that you are not likely to get too many rehearsals. When I worked at Illinois State with my friend Steve Steele, he would spend a lot of time in preparation with the soloist. He just did my saxophone concerto in November. He spent, maybe, six weeks in rehearsal, prior to my getting there, with the soloist at every rehearsal. Working out every single detail of music: ensemble, balances, soloist with the ensemble. When I come, the music begins to move in a deeper way but they are fully capable now, having prepared everything that is on the page, and done it meticulously. So that's your task as a soloist: to know the piece thoroughly (and) to know the ensemble parts so you can enter consciously into the rehearsals that you have. Hopefully, you'll get a situation where there's enough actual time. The premiere performance of this was a grand accident. The Dallas Wind Symphony is a professional group... they have three and a half rehearsals to prepare everything that is on a concert. (Looks at program)... a fanfare done in the lobby, Holst *First Suite*, my piece, *Desert Roads*, intermission, a long piece by a Dallas composer, John Gibson, called *California*

*Suite* and then to follow that the *Symphony No. 1* of Samuel Barber transcribed for winds. That's your program to be prepared in four rehearsals.

**JM:** That's a pretty tall order!

**DM:** Yeah! And so the first rehearsal is just to run through everything to get the shape of it all. The second rehearsal, which was the first one I came to... the first one that Peggy was at... we spent, I think, something like an hour and fifteen minutes with Jerry really in kind of a rush mode. He didn't want to hear any niceties, any details; just get the damn thing done. Get it on its feet so it worked. There's a kind of a tension there. It's not very happy. We were just trying to get something ready so that we could have a concert on Tuesday. All right! We left it there, (I was) not happy with that rehearsal situation. We (came) back for the next session, in which we (had) a half an hour... again in a rush. We finish(ed) that and I (was) really not quite happy with what (was) going on. Jerry is a fine musician and a fine conductor; he has the capacity to pull the magic out. All right, with all that, that was it. That was rehearsal. We got to Tuesday night, concert night, in the hall, an hour ahead of the concert, Jerry has warm-up on stage with the ensemble. For his warm-up he immediately went through *Desert Roads* and began playing and didn't stop. We went through almost all the entire piece in that warm-up. And it was there, but the ensemble and the soloist went "oh, yeah, this is what it is!" Then the performance came forward and was really very, very sweet, very nice. It had knowledge in it. But that's the kind of hairy edge you have to deal with in those situations. But in a school situation you have more time. You will probably have not as consistently talented players and (will have) people who take more time to

get things into their heads and minds and fingers, more or less, and so that's the difference.

**JM:** What are your thoughts on the Illinois State recording of it? Was that the same procedure as the Dallas Wind Symphony?

**DM:** No. We had much more time to prepare that. There are any number of good performance that are going to come out of this piece. What Steve does will be different than what Jerry does. What David Gresham did in Illinois will be different than (others will do) and it is all personal. It is who you are as a person... who you allow out of yourself. David is a very formal player; he needed to get everything right. And so we had to work through that idea of moving music through him. The thing that interests me so much, he's a great player who worked in New York for years, (and) decided to try the academic route and yet his playing is more given to technical than (to) the "expression"... and to see him come forward over the time since we made this recording is very interesting. As I think I may have told you before, I am interested in how people work. He performed the piece again in Portugal at the clarinet conference, and I have not heard that recording, so I don't know it. He just, last month, performed my newest piece; I don't know if you know about this, I've written a piece for clarinet and piano, called *Eternal Garden*, he's one of the people who commissioned it. He did a great performance of that piece and I got a chance to work with him in rehearsals through a video, of himself and to see him expand in that way was fabulous. He had a nervous tension about it... and to see him open. So there's no perfect performance of a piece of music. There is who you are at the moment.

**JM:** Are there any specific requests or guidelines that you may have wanted to put in the score but didn't or thought about later?

**DM:** No, not really. What is in the score is as much as I need. Having said that you need to look very closely and specifically at every technical element of the score; what that does when you add subtlety to it is allow you to add your own movement to the piece of music. And I'm willing to accept that. I'm not going to dictate to you every single aspect of your playing. It's stupid, but people try to do it. You have to find that creative element in yourself, which parallels what I did as a composer. You have to touch it and let it speak to you. And that can only happen if you are technically prepared absolutely. It's best if someone is prepared technically; you can tell you where to go. I had a wonderful experience with David Collier, who is a percussionist at Illinois State, I wrote a concerto for him. Solo percussionist and wind ensemble. It's a big piece, much bigger than this. Five movements it runs about forty-some minutes. David is another fanatical preparer. Everything has to be right. He makes conscious decisions in advance about how he will perform this or that or the other. As we got into the rehearsals of the piece, I understood this about him and saw the struggle that he was approaching to do this, suggested to him the idea that with all this preparation, "you WILL let go, you WILL let the music tell you what it wants to speak as opposed to you telling the music what you think it ought to speak." There's a big difference between that. And, it was not an idea he understood UNTIL he began the performance of the piece. He said the first thing he stuck in the performance of that piece that suddenly

said “(no), my plan is not going to work here.” And he gave a brilliant performance.

(Laughs)

**JM:** ...so just playing it the way it is, just let it go.

**DM:** You’d be surprised how hard that is and how many people don’t. Everything you do is a conscious choice about interpretation. Yeah, you can fool around with that and it can make you sleep easier about it, I guess, but if you say “that’s how that must go,” then you are denying the piece its opportunity to speak. You think you know... how can you not? You can make your best guess... there’s a desire for safety, there’s a desire for capability, there’s a desire for perfection... but when you relax, and let that come true... your already-prepared technique... very typically music suddenly becomes calm as opposed to correct.

**JM:** That’s fascinating!

**DM:** It is. That’s why I do this.

(Regarding the third movement)

**JM:** ...it’s dedicated to Fred Fennell, why?

**DM:** Frederick Fennell was the first person to conduct a piece of mine. This was at Eastman; I composed a concerto for piano, winds, and percussion. This was my very first work for winds. It was not commissioned: I just wrote it because I wanted to. I was living in that area; I thought it would be good to see New York. I suggested the piece to Donald Hunsberger, who was the director of the Eastman Wind Ensemble at the time and asked if he would perform it. He agreed... (he is a) very nice man. My soloist that I had written the piece for was so overloaded

with the piece that he (cancelled) about two months before the performance (consequently) lost the premier there. The following year, we had a similar situation and he did not perform. I found another soloist. He was then on faculty at Eastman, Bill Dobbins, who is an absolutely phenomenal piano player to play the piece. Very well. But Hunsberger was on sabbatical and Fred Fennell had been brought back that semester as his replacement to conduct the Wind Ensemble. He was hired to conduct this concert with this piece. “Here’s your program.” He very graciously accepted that and so we had the first performance. Fennell is a wonderfully gracious man, I was a young composer for the first piece, and he asked me to sit down with him and talk through the piece. We spent an hour with him listening very carefully to what I had to say about rehearsal of the piece... he was going to accept that from me. He gave a wonderful performance of the piece. I often think that if it had been any less of an ensemble or less of a soloist or less of a conductor, it would have been an absolute disaster and I’d be doing something else for a living. But it was one of those moments where the universe said, “this is where you belong.”

So, Fennell and I were friends from that day forward... he would never perform my music again and I seldom saw him except at conventions and such... he always remembered our time and achievement. When I was composing this piece, I had a small vision of Frederick Fennell... he just passed away... he said in essence, “Remember me.”

**JM:** It starts in C minor and ends in C major, do these keys have any symbolism, (sees gleam in Maslanka’s eyes and laughs)... these are questions one has to ask... Mozart

talked about G minor and different keys had different feelings, is that the case with your work?

**DM:** Yes, they do and I can show you very specifically that certain keys say certain things to me but I cannot necessarily tell you why and what they are. Just know that they (are present in) certain music. It's a very large story and I don't think I can explain it now. There is a draw to certain areas just like there is a draw to certain musical elements found at a certain pitch area. If you change that significantly without having an inspiration to do so... to make it a "band friendly piece" then the music misses what it is supposed to do. It will still sound like itself but it is not. So, simply, there is but I can't tell you much more about it. The relationship of C minor and C major... in that old sense of the something on the sad side, something deeper, something on the brighter side. It is surprising how much this happens in music over the last couple hundred years, especially in the last century. Surprising how many things have happened, and yet we come back to the tiny fundamentals like the relationship of a minor chord to a major chord and how they are still powerfully moving, in spite of all or maybe even because of all that has come. I think that the thing to be said about your (work) is that gesture(s) are typically very melodic elements, rhythm, colors are, on the surface quite simple and colors often climax directly. What I've discovered is the absolute simplicity of something and the return to again and again and again to certain specific elements, such as the major chord, or the minor chord or a particular tonality that you can identify with is that each looking at that element produces a featured power, somehow. A lot of what has been called "new" in our time has been about



discarding the old, saying “we’ve done that,” because it’s been done, and we have to invent something new. My answer to that is that invention is recreating the universe with each piece, if you will; it is about allowing the thing to speak how it wants to speak. There is a difference between consciously attempting to employ a technique and allowing the thing, which wants to speak to speak freely. There’s a huge difference. It’s an inversion of our normal way of thinking. We tend to think that we are in control, and in composing the conscious mind is the facilitator.

Through all the separation, all the complexity, it is the facilitator of, as opposed to the dictator to the thing which I have spoken again and again in our conversation.

**JM:** So the piece comes to the composer rather than the composer making the piece?

**DM:** Yes. Exactly right. It’s not necessarily the right process. For me, I’ve always said “ah-ha” and started writing. It is often a struggle. And it is not a struggle we solve intellectually. Intellectual means can allow you to get something down on paper but the solution to problems is not an intellectual thing, which arises out of the necessity of what needs to speak. To live in that space, to open the conscious mind enough to receive the possibility something that is unknown, which has no given shape or form is a special capacity. We tend to live with these restrictions in all aspects of our lives. We need to know where the boundaries and the rules are. Our social lives depend on it, and yet creative thought is releasing that intellectual boundary to something about which you don’t know. And the result is being moved to... however haltingly at times... be moved to encompass the ending that comes forward. And to give it some shape and form as notes on a page.

**JM:** Does that same idea go for the instruments that you choose to write for... obviously the clarinet is the ....

**DM:** In this case, being commissioned to write for clarinet and wind ensemble, my choice of instruments will tend to be for a standard ensemble. With whatever piece you write... and it is just that but within the given instruments... the sound qualities simply show up. I don't have a theory of orchestration. It's very interesting to hear an instrumental color in mind and have it show up... it just simply presents itself... and then to say, "who is doing that?" and maybe give that to an alto and what does that suggest in the part? And then to say, "these are the primary values, these are the related values, and this is how the combination occurs." These things come up like that. Very dreamlike.

**JM:** In the third movement, there are these interjections of the flute and oboes and saxophones and they are there to balance the clarinet. Thinking back to playing the Kim Archer symphony (with the University of Nebraska Wind Ensemble in the Spring of 2009) that the clarinetist is supposed to be you?

**DM:** The saxophone is, I think, assigned to be me, clarinet to her, and euphonium to her conductor friend.

**JM:** Is there any of that occurring here?

**DM:** Not consciously. Kim Archer is an interesting and gifted composer but she tends to make intellectual decisions of that sort. She will say, "I will make that assignment, this is my personal interpretation" and she will work out of that. I'm not one to tell anybody what they are supposed to do.

(Regarding *Black Dog Songs*)

... Richard Beale from Geneseo, NY, who is now on the faculty at the State University, wrote a piece with this title for harp and piano, it's a dance piece. I've always loved the title; it came back to me as I was working on this music. The 4<sup>th</sup> movement... it doesn't say in the notes... but the 4<sup>th</sup> movement is a re-composition of a song that I wrote for voice and piano; part of a set I wrote of poems of Richard Beale called the *Black Dog Songs*. The title of the poem is *On the Subway Platform* and it's a person contemplating jumping in front of the train.

**JM:** I remember you mentioning that (at UM in 2007).

**DM:** It is deeply about evaluating life... life and the value of life. One of the things that I am interested in that you may consider in your analysis is that (on) any given page there's almost nothing on it. There is more blank space than there (are) notes on it. Just simply look at it, it is visually sparse and that is the idea of open space. Look at measure 27; here, you've got the flute is (with trumpet) in octaves, harp an octave higher than the flute, and that simple wavering line back and forth, and there are a couple of piano chords and a couple of percussion sounds and that's it. And the clarinet plays its independent voice. It is just beautiful... and even in the most powerful passage of the piece, measure 36-39, it is really distressingly powerful, and yet there's almost nothing on the page. And so that's something to look at... to understand how power arises out of few notes and the few instrumental powers rather than large masses of sound. One of the processes that happens as a composer that has gone on is that every single instant can be asked to be played and played at full value; powerful sound, a beautiful *fortissimo*, or to play at this other extreme... a well-shaped, well-formed *pianissimo*... and if each

instrument can do that then that, (one) can start forward in its composing. So you have individual things happening powerfully by individuals, and eventually you'll have the full ensemble power. This is also one more statement about what a performer should do, what a clarinetist should do, and what a conductor should do, and that's to take every dynamic to its extreme. People need permission to do that. On your own, you will not take a *fortissimo* to its absolute shape. And so in band playing... even in the very best bands, (they) generally will play between a *forte* and *mezzo forte*, if it's marked *piano* they'll play *mezzo forte*. They have to be empowered to go to that extreme. And so, the dare is there... to go to that extreme. And so, if you take a passage, such as measure 33-40 for the solo clarinet of this last movement, it is an extreme and it has to be played that way. It cannot be played nicely. You WILL do it well but it cannot be played with anything less than your absolute soul commitment. It's possible, but then it doesn't do what it's supposed to do. Conductors will back away from extremes and so will soloists.

**JM:** Thank you for your time and discussing this with me. This has been extremely valuable.

**Dr. Margaret Dees**

(Compiled from a series of e-mails)

**March 2011**

**Joshua Mietz:** As I understand it, you were the driving force behind the commissioning of *Desert Roads* and *Eternal Garden*, How did this come about?

**Margaret Dees:** I was finishing up my DM and had a one-year teaching position at Illinois State University. Steve Steele, the director of bands at ISU, is very fond of David Maslanka's music and has commissioned and recorded many of his pieces. The year I was there (2002-3) Steve was recording Maslanka's *Song Book for Flute and Wind Ensemble*. After one of the rehearsals I walked on stage to talk with David Maslanka; I had never met him before. One of the first things I asked him was, "Have you ever thought about writing a concerto for clarinet?" David replied, "Well, no one has asked." I looked at him and said, "I'm asking". He said to talk to Steve (Steele), and that was the beginning of the commission.

**JM:** What was your background with David Maslanka's music prior to *Desert Roads*? What events or inspiration caused you to choose Maslanka to write a concerto for clarinet?

**MD:** In the spring of 1987 I visited Northwestern University to audition for Mr. Marcellus. By coincidence the weekend I was there was also the CBDNA convention. I went to a concert of the NU Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band. Like it was yesterday, I remember hearing a piece of music I had never heard before, (and was) completely blown away by it; I grabbed my program thinking WHO wrote THIS? It was the premiere performance of David Maslanka's *Second*

*Symphony*. I vividly remember this experience to this day. Jerry Junkin and Steve Steele (as well as David Maslanka) were also in the audience on that occasion.

**JM:** Where did you meet Jerry Junkin?

**MD:** I grew up in Lakeland, Florida and Jerry Junkin was at University of South Florida and had a Festival of Winds for HS students – I met him first there. I think this must have been around 1985 or (the) spring of 1986? Then I also went to (the) University of Texas (at) Austin for 2 years of undergrad (1989-91), Northwestern University for one year (1988-89) and FSU for one year (1991-92). I didn't actually finish my Bachelor's degree until 1998 – right before I went to (graduate) school after six years (in) the U.S. Navy Band.

It's a good story how the Dallas Wind Symphony ended up with the premiere. I had e-mailed Jerry Junkin a few times and heard nothing back. I'm sure he gets literally hundreds of emails every day. Then later that spring I was in Austin interviewing Richard (MacDowell) for my Doctoral Treatise and caught Jerry in his office. I knocked on his door and said, "Do you have a minute" and he laughed, replying, "actually, I don't." I think I said something like, "OK, a few seconds?" He was on his way out of town, but invited me to come back later that day. When I went in his office I asked if he would be interested in doing the premiere of *Desert Roads* with the Dallas Wind Symphony (DWS) and he turned to his computer, pulled something up and said – "When do you want to do it?" We called David Maslanka, set the date and that was that. Needless to say I was very excited to be performing with the DWS and it was really a privilege and a wonderful experience all around.

**JM:** Prior to the premiere with the Dallas Wind Symphony, did Dr. Maslanka coach you on the part, if so are there any experiences you would care to share from that process?

**MD:** That was an incredible experience. It is quite a difficult task to learn a new work by yourself, (alone) in the practice room, with only a score, and no previous experience with the work. For the premiere we had one rehearsal, a dress rehearsal and then the performance. I had only received the entire part by around the first of March. David and I did have time to sit and talk through the piece after the first rehearsal. Later that year I went to his house and we listened to the recording of the premiere and talked through the piece again.

**JM:** What background can you offer for *Eternal Garden*?

**MD:** *Eternal Garden* came to be because I loved *Desert Roads*, but didn't have a Wind Ensemble at my disposal, and was not able to play it whenever I wanted. I kept thinking a piece for clarinet and piano was what was needed and so I talked with David about writing a new piece.

**JM:** When/where was the premiere of *Eternal Garden*?

**MD:** My premiere wasn't until the International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest® in Austin, TX in July 2010. But many commissioners had performed it prior to that date. Each co-commissioner had the privilege of listing their first performance as the premiere; his/her respective first performance was one in a series of world-premiere performances, commissioned by the consortium.

**JM:** Are there any suggestions you would make to performers of this music (in either work), either about the music generally or specific parts?

**MD:** These are not light, fluffy pieces; they require deep work, thought and detailed rehearsal time for them to really come to life. They are physically and mentally challenging. My playing was transformed by both works, but in different ways.

To prepare for Desert Roads I played long tones religiously: very long-long tones, from the extreme *ppp* of my range to extreme *f*, the extreme length of my breath. I played standing and I walked around while playing, all the time.

Learn the parts and rehearse with the ensemble/piano as much as possible. I also practiced “in my head” quite a bit; I’m a big proponent of practicing away from the instrument.



**Appendix 2: Source Material***Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*<sup>72</sup>

J.S. Bach

The image displays a musical score for the chorale 'Jesus Christus, unser Heiland' by J.S. Bach, specifically measures 30 through 34. The score is written for a grand piano, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The music is in a homophonic style, with the right hand playing a melody of quarter and eighth notes, and the left hand providing a harmonic accompaniment of chords and moving lines. Measure 30 begins with a treble clef and a bass clef. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of measure 34.

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<sup>72</sup> From Bach, Johann Sebastian. *371 Harmonized Chorales and 69 Chorale Melodies by Johann Sebastian Bach*, pg. 8.

**Text<sup>73</sup>:**

1. Jesus Christ, our Blessed Savior,  
Turned away God's wrath forever;  
Suffering pains no tongue can tell,  
He Saved us from the pains of hell.
2. To remind us that to save us  
He hath died, His flesh He gave us  
With this bread, a quickening food,  
And with this wine, His precious blood.
3. Whoso to this board repairth,  
Take good heed how He prepareth;  
And for misdeeds thou has done  
Receive who comes unworthily.
4. Praise the Father, God in heaven,  
Who such dainty food hath given,  
And for misdeeds thou hast done  
Gave to die His beloved Son.
5. Though shalt hold with faith unshaken,  
That this food is to be taken  
By the sick who are distressed,  
By Those whose heart is sin oppressed.

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<sup>73</sup> From the *Open Hymnal Project*. [www.openhymnal.org](http://www.openhymnal.org). Original text by John Hus (1369-1415)  
expanded by Martin Luther in 1524. Translation by Richard Massie (1800-1887).

6. To such grace and mercy turneth  
Every soul that truly mourneth;  
Art thou well? Avoid this board,  
Else thou reapest an ill reward.
3. Christ says: "Come ye heavy-laden,  
I your weary hearts will gladden;  
They that are yet strong and well.  
Despise the best physician's skill.
4. Couldst thou earn thine own salvation,  
Useless were my death and passion;  
This feast is not spread for thee,  
If thine own helper thou wilt be.
5. If thou believest truly,  
And confession makest duly,  
Thou a welcome guest art here,  
This heavenly food thy soul shall cheer.
6. But the fruits must not be missing,  
Love they neighbor without ceasing,  
That true love let him receive,  
Which here to thee God doth give."

*Eph 5:6-14, Rom 5:9-10, Cor 11:23-29, Jn 6:50-57, 1Jn 1:9*

*Nun danket alle Gott*<sup>74</sup>

J.S. Bach

The image displays a musical score for the chorale 'Nun danket alle Gott' by J.S. Bach, specifically measures 32 through 36. The score is written for a grand staff, consisting of a treble clef and a bass clef. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a steady, rhythmic accompaniment in the bass line, often with eighth-note patterns, and a more melodic line in the treble. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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<sup>74</sup> From Bach, Johann Sebastian. *371 Harmonized Chorales and 69 Chorale Melodies by Johann Sebastian Bach*, pg. 8.

**Text**<sup>75</sup>

1. Now thank we all our God, with heart and hand and voices,  
Who wondrous things has done, in Whom this world rejoices;  
Who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.
2. O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed;  
And free us from all ills, in this world and the next!
3. All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given;  
The Son and Him Who reigns with Them in highest Heaven;  
The one eternal God, Whom earth and heaven adore;  
For thus it was is now, and shall be for evermore.

*2 Cor 2:14, Rom 6:7*

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<sup>75</sup> From the *Open Hymnal Project*. [www.openhymnal.org](http://www.openhymnal.org). Original text by Martin Rinkar, c. 1636.

Translation by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878) in 1865.

*On the Subway Platform...*

by Richard Beale

On the subway platform, I wanted to throw myself on the third rail and then I saw a light  
and got on the train and the suicide was averted.

The antidepressant is not working and I am thinking about death again.

In this world I am not what is wanted.

It is a lack of definition, the right words.

Tics and seizures and migraines feel like hell, sneezes and orgasms like little apertures of  
heaven who would I be without images of hell-fire and heavenly crescendos in  
my body?

I try to vault the abyss and fall into it.

Pharmaceuticals never reach that far into the dark.

Goddamn the suicides!, they say.

If you've never stood on the subway platform contemplating release,

If you've never knelt in the dark praying for communion with nothingness,

You don't know the meaning

I think of God and his silence,

And how my love for him has not ended wild dives into the dark.

A carpet of frost and a clear cerulean sky, and fingers of morning caressing the road.

The smell of leaves musky and grapey in frozen air.

I want this nowness to endure with the sun on my back and release in my heart.

### Appendix 3: Works Featuring Clarinet<sup>76</sup>

**1. *Trio No. 1 for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano (1971)* (15 minutes)**

Premiered March 1972 at the State University of New York – Geneseo; *Sunday Afternoon Recital Series*.

**2. *Trio No. 2 for Viola, Clarinet, and Piano (1973)* (15 minutes)**

Premiered December 1973 at the Composers Forum, Donnell Library, New York City.

**3. *Three Pieces for Clarinet and Piano (1975)* (17 minutes)**

Premiered February 1976 at the University of Redlands (CA) Clarinet and Friend series. Philip Rehfeldt, clarinet, Barney Childs, piano. Commissioned by Barney Childs.

**4. *Fourth Piece for Clarinet and Piano (1979)* (7 minutes)**

Premiered April 1980 at the Carnegie Recital Hall, Meyer Kupferman, clarinet. (This work is a follow-up) in name only of *Three Pieces* for Clarinet and Piano, characterized by forceful sustained tones. Commissioned by Meyer Kupferman.

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<sup>76</sup> From [www.davidmaslanka.com](http://www.davidmaslanka.com). Accessed 15 March, 2011. Each of these entries is reproduced to better help the reader understand the historical context of the music being discussed.

**5. *Quintet No. 1* (1984) (20 minutes)**

Premiered 11/84 Symphony Space, New York City (“Music of David Maslanka”) by the Aspen Wind Quintet.

Each of the three (now four) wind quintets is in three movements – an unintentional idiosyncrasy. *No. 1* is very much a New York City piece; the second movement was inspired by subway air compressor noises, and the last movement derives from the musical letters in “Brooklyn Bridge.”

**Program Notes:**

*Quintet No. 1 for Winds* was composed in New York City in 1984. It was first performed by the Aspen Wind Quintet in a concert of my works at Symphony Space.

Although *Quintet No. 1 for Winds* has its fierce and demanding aspects, it is overall a work of contemplation. City nature and country nature come together here. The first movement opens with a simple whole-step motif in Horn. This is an extended reflection of the call of the Black-Capped Chickadee. The Chickadee’s plaintive two-note call has followed me seemingly everywhere and has entered my composing in a profusion of variants. It is in some ways a “soul signature.”

The second movement comes directly from the New York City subway system. The “A” train station at 200th St. is a holding area for subway cars not in use. Each morning as I stood on the platform I would listen to a symphony of air compressors with pitches and resultant chords going through a slow kaleidoscope of changes. I have captured some of this as closely as possible, making it the point of departure for this portion of the *Quintet*.

The third movement is a “Brooklyn Bridge” piece. For me, as for many others,



the Brooklyn Bridge has a strong mystical character. For years I travelled to and from Brooklyn on the “D” train and watched the entire spectacle of the Brooklyn Bridge as the “D” train rose out of the ground and crossed the East River by way of the Manhattan Bridge. Once by sheer coincidence I was reading Walt Whitman’s Crossing Brooklyn Ferry just at the moment the “D” train began its climb out into the air. In the poem Whitman speculates that 100 years from his time another person will cross to Brooklyn at this point and remember him. The incident made a profound impression on me.

The opening statement of the third movement is derived entirely from variants of the “musical” letters in the name “Brooklyn Bridge” -B,D,G,E. The last two chords of the movement, two B-minor chords are a final, “mystical signature” for the bridge and for the piece.

#### **6. *Quintet No. 2* (1986) (20 minutes)**

Premiered January 1987 in the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Manhattan Wind Quintet. Commissioned by the Manhattan Wind Quintet. The first movement is fierce and somewhat daunting in its technical demands; the second is moody and elusive; the third is sweet and resigned.

#### **Program Notes:**

*Quintet for Winds (No. 2)* was written in 1986 for the Manhattan Wind Quintet, which gave the premiere performance in January 1987 at the Weill Recital Hall in New York City. Like *Quintet No.1 for Winds*, it is in three movements, yet the progression of attitudes is quite different. The movement through the entire piece shifts by degrees from an assertive, technically demanding character to music that is quite placid and ethereal.

The first movement is, for the most part, aggressive and driving. Its exposition

consists of a number of relatively brief ideas sharply intercut. The center of the movement is a complete fugue employing a number of traditional devices including retrograde, inversion, and retrograde-inversion of the subject, rhythmic augmentation and diminution, and stretto. The recapitulation consists of a quiet and thoughtful reworking of the introduction to the movement and an evolution of one of the short ideas from the exposition.

The second movement has an underlying attitude of mystery and elusiveness. The pleasant and lulling quality of the opening gives way to a much more emotional and demanding music. The recapitulation further evolves the soothing character of the beginning, and the coda effects a mysterious disappearance.

The third movement is a chaconne, a continuous set of variations over a brief repeated harmonic pattern. This radically simple harmonic scheme, laid out in whole notes, persists undisturbed until the coda. Above it unfold, a solo, a duet, a trio, then a drive to the movement's climactic point. The music then subsides to a restatement of the opening oboe solo; followed by a chorale-like coda that summarizes the entire piece.

**7. *A Litany for Courage and the Seasons: six songs for clarinet and vibraphone on poems of Richard Beale (1988)***

Premiered 4/88 by the University of Connecticut Concert Choir, Peter Bagley, conductor. Commissioned by Robert Isgro and the Geneseo Chamber Singers.

**Program Notes:**

Joseph Campbell, author of *The Power of Myth* and *The Masks of God*, wrote: "We have come forth from the one ground of being as manifestations in the field of time. The field of time is a kind of shadow play over a timeless ground."

In music we normally think of sound as the focus of attention, the positive value. Musical sound occurs against a field of silence. If the perception is reversed, musical sound can be seen as a way of framing and of shaping the perception of silence.

Richard Beale's poetry grows out of the silence of the earth and the universe. Each poem rests on this silence and draws its power from it. Each of my six songs is finally a meditation on silence, a way of shaping the perception of the timeless ground.

### **The Sleep of Poets**

The sleep of poets is but a travelogue of dream,  
 Mars tonight and the crab nebulae tomorrow.  
 Hear dit-dit-dit— The voice of God.  
 The colorless silences are his paragraphs,  
 Dark holes the dimples of his mind.  
 O come, morning, with your vivid dawn  
 And your rain and winds  
 To see if you can rival  
 The augury and majesty of dream!

### **Servis Road: A Hymn to St. Francis**

After a hard winter of work spring comes at last,  
 With warming winds which find even the deepest culverts.

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In my heart St. Francis is stirring.

His blindness

And the remedy of hot irons disrupts me as I walk along this country road.

I wonder what God could have done to prepare a man for that,

Both the pain and the disfiguration. I ask St. Francis to pray for me

Because I need the recommendation of a good man

The sky is blue with no clouds.

The freshets gurgle pleasantly beneath the sounds of countless peepers and new  
birds.

I walk along briskly, remembering my body,

Trying to awaken it from a long chill,

As though it had been asleep under the snow.

The sun surrounds me with a flowing light

And shows me the configurations and colors

Of things I have come to know and love.

I wonder why my own blindness was not healed by this transfiguration.

Blessed Francis, guide me through my awakening

While my spirit is still heavy with sleep

And while I have trouble focusing my eyes.

Speaking is a way of knowing Psalms from a lover's soul,

On the heart's hearth newly glowing

Like ignited coal.

The fire's brand along the temples

And the smell of burning hair– The love of God impeached the troubles  
Brother Ass imprisoned there.

Scarred and blistered and blinded still

With ulcers on both feet and hands– Blessed Francis, share your loving  
With another blinded man.

### **The Soundless Sound**

The soft crackling of the rain

On dry leaves

And the echo of the birdsong

Against the woods– Are these all one hears

Between breathing in

And breathing out?

One hears nothing if not

The soundless sound.

### **On Chestnut Hill**

On Chestnut Hill I lean against the wind.

I walk among the grass and the Solomon's Seal

And watch the yellow moon begin its rise.

I lie where the deer have lain, and ask the skies

Impossible questions: is this phantom real

Who made both night and day?

Is it wise to wish the night away?

**Little Dance: For Barbara Mason**

Pushing back the walls,

Stretching for freedom,

Time and Space were the fringes

Of my limitation.

With only my skin

For a costume, and no script

At all, I offer.

A careful bow

To the beings beyond the dark.

Perhaps this little dance

Will please the dead and the unseen,

And then the boundaries will cave in,

And then my spirit will fly. In this moment and no other,

In this way and no other,

I am.

**A Litany For Courage and the Seasons**

May the apple blossoms flower on my birthday

May my heart be calmed if it snows on the jonquils.

May the hot days of summer be made tolerable by a little rain.

May I get wisdom if the flowers die.

May the maples splash enough color to seem warm, not cold.

May I be thankful on Thanksgiving, even though I might not remember what for,

And joyful at Christmas, for the same reason.

I am not sure that by myself I would pray for all these things.

But if I did not pray, not even knowing what I pray to, I would lose my reason.

May God come and stay in my heart through the round of seasons.

May God make me love each season more, though none are new.

And if I should die before the birds come back from the South

May my spirit be waiting for them in the trees.

**8. *Little Symphony on the Name of Barney Childs for Solo Clarinet (1989)***

(5 minutes).

Published in *Etudes for the Twenty-first Century Clarinetist*, Phillip Rehfeldt, ed.

A four-movement work for solo clarinet, written on a single page; widely varying moods, and extreme technical/musical demands.

**9. *Blue Mountain Meadow—Missoula for Wind Quintet and Piano (1998)***

(8 minutes).

Blue Mountain is a place I go to frequently to walk, sometimes with my dogs, sometimes alone, sometimes just to walk briskly, sometimes to meditate while walking.

Blue Mountain meadow offers views of the Mission, Sapphire and Rattlesnake mountain ranges as well as the town of Missoula laid out in the valley below. It is a place where clouds and the sky feel really close. In summer, meadow grasses are a sea of subtle

greens and browns dotted with subalpine flowers and shrubs. Ponderosa pine, white pine and larch climb the mountainside. In winter, the meadow is covered in deep drifts of snow. There are deer, foxes, coyotes, other small animals, and a variety of songbirds. Bears and cougars live in the mountain wilderness beyond the meadow.

“Blue Mountain Meadow, Missoula, Montana is a music that reflects the complex and humming life force of this nature place that I love. The music is brisk, vibrant and insistent. It is not a description of the meadow, but a meditative reaching into the power of all the things that live there, and the power of the place itself. I have chosen wind quintet and piano because of their sharp-edged qualities and their distinctive and beautiful colors.

This work was commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington D.C., Leonard Slatkin, Music Director, in honor of the 1996 American Residency Program in Montana/Wyoming.

**10. *Quintet for Winds No. 3 (1999)* (27 minutes)**

Premiered March 2000 at the University of Missouri at Columbia by the Missouri Quintet This piece is based on chorale melodies – as it seems, are most of my works written since 1990. It’s fast and furious. Parts commissioned by the Missouri Quintet.

**Program Notes:**

In recent years I have developed an abiding interest in the Bach Chorales, singing and playing them daily as a warm-up for my composing time, and making my own four-part settings in the old style. The chorales now regularly find their way into my music, and have become a significant “leaping off” point for me.



The first movement of *Quintet No. 3* (1999) opens with the chorale *Ihr Gestirn, irh hohlen Luft* (“Your stars, your cavernous sky”). The movement is a “continuous play” kind of piece. After the chorale there is a sharply contrasting first theme, which works its way over time into a second theme, and this becomes the subject of a short and very pushy set of variations. There is a restatement of the first theme, and the movement ends with the blunt presentation of a new chorale: *Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht* (“Christ, you are day and light”.)

In the second movement, the chorale *Ermuntre dich, mein schwacher Geist* (“Take courage, my weak spirit”) serves as a backdrop for an impassioned flute soliloquy. This is an intimate and personal music. The movement closes with a simple and uninterrupted statement of the chorale.

The third movement is exceptionally demanding for the performers because of its speed and length. It is something of a sonata form. However, the second theme, which sounds like a chorale melody, becomes the subject of a set of variations. The movement finishes with a partial recapitulation and a coda.

*Quintet for Winds No.3* was commissioned by the Missouri Quintet with a grant from the University of Missouri Research Board. The premiere performance was given on March 14, 2000, in Columbia, Missouri.

### **11. *Desert Roads for Clarinet and Wind Ensemble—Four Songs for Clarinet and Wind***

***Ensemble (2004)*** (27 minutes.)

A Concerto for Clarinet and an ensemble of 22 winds and brass, plus double bass, harp, piano, timpani and 5 percussionists.

#### **Program Notes:**

The concerto has become a particularly intimate vehicle of expression for me. The title “Desert Roads” suggests an interior journey, a time of searching, of not knowing, of creative incubation.

I have chosen to call these four movements “songs” for clarinet and wind ensemble. This connects them directly to the Romantic idea of “songs without words.” They are intimate rather than symphonic expressions. Songs by Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms are some of my favorite music.

- I. *Desert Roads: Christ’s 40 days in the desert – Moses and Israel: 40 years in the desert – a time of inner searching.*
- II. *Soliloquy – Not Knowing: A brief movement, looking deeply and fervently for guidance*
- III. *Coming Home: A “life journey” movement, both delicate and forceful, thoughtful and exuberant – a quiet coming home to rest – dedicated to the memory of Frederick Fennell, father of the modern wind ensemble movement, whose mentoring and friendship set me firmly on my path of writing for winds.*
- IV. *Pray for Tender Voices in the Darkness: A sober contemplation of death – a benediction.*

**12. *Quintet No. 4 (2008)* (20 minutes)**

**Program Notes:**

*Quintet for Winds No.4* was commissioned by the Florida West Coast Symphony for its resident Florida Wind Quintet. The premiere performance was given in Sarasota, Florida in March of 2008.

After all the innovations of the past century – the explosion of forms, methods, and media – *Quintet No. 4* will seem to be radically conservative. It is a compact 20-minute work in three movements, and its main historical reference is French wind music of the 1930's, '40's, and '50's, especially that of Francis Poulenc. I love melody, and music that speaks plainly.

The first movement of *Quintet No. 4* begins and ends with a very quiet and plaintive music, but the body of the movement is a hard trek through a challenging emotional space. The second movement is a brief lullaby, with solo oboe taking the lead, and with an utterly simple supporting web of colors and gentle rhythms in the other instruments. The fast and furious third movement is filled with good humor and enthusiasm.

The movements can be indicated in the program as follows:

- I. Slow, Progressively Faster
- II. A Lullaby – Inward and Hesitant
- III. Very Fast

### **13. *Eternal Garden for Clarinet and Piano* (2009) (30 minutes)**

Commissioned by and dedicated to a consortium organized by Peggy Dees.

#### **Program Notes:**

It is my task as a composer not to presume from the start that I know what the music is supposed to be; my job is to listen, and to follow the impulse that comes through me as faithfully as I can. What came out in this case are four deeply meditative “songs.” After some reflection I can say that this music is about the need to stop and simply be; to stop thinking, stop planning, stop worrying, stop presuming to know how we are

supposed to act in the world. Life as we are doing it on this planet has begun to look suicidal. There has to be a different path.

I was given images of widespread suffering and destruction. This music is about the transformation of suffering. I have no illusion that a single piece of mine will end world suffering, but it opens the possibility of real peace in me as an individual. There is not a path to world peace; peace is the path, and it begins inside each person.

## Appendix 4: Copyright Documentation

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Movement 1

mm. 1-3, 10-16, 20-23, 23-28, 33-34, 34-41, 45-46, 59-63, 77-80, 84-86, 94-105, 108-110

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mm. 1-4, 4-5, 8-14, 14-17, 23-25, 29-30, 33-36, 41-48

Movement 3

mm. 1-4, 3-7, 4-8, 9-11, 18-20, 27-33, 37-41, 60-71, 71-77, 81-83, 87-91, 95-98, 118-119, 137-140, 148-149, 166-171, 229-238, 251-258

Movement 4

mm. 1-5, 9-10, 21-24, 28-30, 34-35, 50-51, 58-63, 74-77

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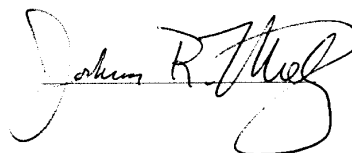
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## **Appendix 6: Personal Biography**

Joshua R. Mietz was born in 1979 in Syracuse, New York. His father (James Mietz) was an outstanding amateur clarinetist in his pre-college years and his paternal grandmother (Esther Mietz) was a music teacher in the Syracuse area. Growing up, it was not unusual to hear informal recitals given at the home of his grandparents, as all of his relatives were musicians of better than average quality. Though unrelated by blood, his uncle (Anthony Voytovich), a retired physician and college professor, was a former student of Robert Marcellus. “Uncle Tony” frequently told Joshua about being asked to leave the studio for moonlighting as a saxophonist in jazz clubs around Cleveland. “Uncle Tony” continues to play in a jazz combo since retiring from his position as Dean of the Medical School at the University of Connecticut.

Mietz’s parents relocated the family to Alamosa, Colorado in 1990 due to an interdepartmental transfer of his father’s position with the United States Department of Agriculture. In high school, he studied with Sandy Wehe and George Zambrano, both well-respected clarinetists and educators. He also was invited to play in the Adams State College Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band by the director, Dr. Reed Thomas.

Mietz attended the University of Colorado at Boulder and studied with Dr. Phillip Aaholm, Bil Jackson, and Daniel Silver. Additionally, he pursued additional conducting studies with Allan McMurray.

Between the completion of a Bachelor of Music in 2001 and the start of a Master’s of Music in 2006, Mietz taught band and orchestra at two public schools in Colorado and earned a certification as a massage therapist. He also taught college-level



cadaver-based anatomy at the Laboratories of Anatomical Enlightenment in Westminster, CO.

In 2006, Mietz began a Master of Music degree at the University of Montana, Missoula and studied with Dr. Maxine Ramey. He also studied conducting with Dr. Stephen Bolstad, Dr. Luis Millán, and Dr. Kevin Griggs. He was fortunate to be able to observe rehearsal coachings of David Maslanka during this time. Early in his career at the University of Montana, his undergraduate roommate, Dr. Timothy Phillips, telephoned him and mentioned that Maslanka had recently finished a concerto for clarinet and band and that he should look into acquiring a score. Mietz contacted Maslanka to inquire about the music and within a few days the score, solo clarinet part, and recording were waiting outside his office door.

In 2008, Mietz started a Doctor of Musical Arts degree under the tutelage of Dr. Diane Barger. In addition to his work as a clarinetist, he studied conducting with Dr. Carolyn Barber.

When not involved with clarinet, Mietz enjoys training and competing in running races, especially ultramarathons. During the long summer days, he enjoys running the trails near his summer home in Creede, CO. He also enjoys fly-fishing and backpacking. At the time of this writing, he has run to the summit of 6 of the 54 Colorado 14-ers, a goal he aims to complete “someday.” He would also like to give a short recital on the top of a 14-er and is looking for collaborators up to the challenge.