

ERIC EWAZEN'S TRIO FOR CLARINET, VIOLA, AND PIANO:
A PERFORMER'S PERSPECTIVE

By

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Kai Yin Crystal Lam

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Chairperson Dr. Scott McBride Smith

Dr. Jack Winerock

Prof. Richard Reber

Dr. Alicia Levin

Dr. Bozenna Pasik-Duncan

Date defended: April 9, 2014

The Dissertation Committee for Kai Yin Crystal Lam
certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research paper is to provide an analysis of *Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano* by the important twentieth-century American composer, Eric Ewazen. This paper will include information about his biography, two stylistic periods, stylistic approach, formal design, compositional technique, and the performers' point of view from Wakarusa Trio. Since the instrumentation is relatively unusual in this *Trio*, I will also discuss the unique qualities of his instrumental writing. I interviewed Ewazen about his life and his approaches to his *Trio*. Through this research, I want to introduce the new American music with this rare combination of instruments, as well as the musical world of Eric Ewazen, in which the *Trio* speaks for his musical language.

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Chapter I - Introduction

Most composers in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have seen a great diversity of styles. Eric Ewazen, an American twenty-first century composer, represents contemporary Romanticism. Ewazen stated that he had studied all the twentieth-century techniques and styles during his college years, including atonality, impressionism, minimalism, serialism, avant-garde, jazz, and others. Ewazen had a solid college education and was greatly influenced by his music teachers, who, at that time, composed mainly atonal music. Ewazen found his own musical language after his college years. He turned his back on many of the trends of the twentieth century. Wanting to communicate with his listeners in his own musical language, Ewazen found an individual way of composing that speaks to the audience. He developed a personal approach to tonal music in a Romantic style. At the same time, he was also influenced by neo-impressionism, neo-romanticism, and neo-classicism. More information about his musical styles and influences will be discussed later.

This document will include information about the composer's life in two distinctive stylistic periods; a formal analysis; research on musical and stylistic influences and the performers' viewpoint on Ewazen's *Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*.

Chapter II - About the composer Eric Ewazen

Biography

Eric Ewazen was born in 1954 in Middleburg Heights near Cleveland, Ohio. His parents were important influences on his early development and very supportive and encouraging of his music study. Although neither one was a professional musician, they were music lovers and enjoyed listening classical music. His mother Helen was Polish and was able to play some popular tunes on the piano. His father Dimytro was Ukrainian. He played harmonica and enjoyed Ukrainian dance. Ewazen was interested in diverse musical genres when he was young. He studied music in many styles, ranging from children's pieces composed by the European masters to Ukrainian folk songs and popular rock music. All these musical styles influenced Ewazen significantly in his later compositions.¹

Ewazen started piano lessons at the age of five, studying with a neighborhood teacher, who was also teaching at Baldwin Wallace College, now Baldwin Wallace University. He has enjoyed spending time at the piano ever since. As a teenager, he was introduced to an intermediate-level piano piece by Aaron Copland, *Down a Country Lane*. The interesting harmonies in this work sparked his interest in composition. He also took theory lessons with a teacher from his home town. He was enthusiastically active in music at his school and was

¹ Philip Brown, "Eric Ewazen," *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis, and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 138.

greatly encouraged by the teachers. He played cello in the Midpark High School Orchestra and double bass in the jazz band, and he served as a piano accompanist for school choirs.²

When Ewazen was in the eleventh grade, he composed his first original work, a rock musical entitled *Apocalypse*. It contains music in the style of American popular music, such as rock and roll and jazz.³ And in fact during his high school years, Ewazen developed a great interest in theater music after seeing a few musicals. He arranged theater music for the school annual variety show. These arrangements include the *Mikado*, *The King and I*, *The Sound of Music*, *My Fair Lady* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Ewazen started composing seriously in 1970 when he was sixteen years old. He was mostly self-taught, but he appreciated the help and advice from his school teachers.⁴ During his senior year, he started taking composition lessons with Dr. Walter Winzenburger at Baldwin Wallace College. In addition, he attended events that were held by the Fortnightly Music Club, an organization of amateur musicians that met monthly in Cleveland. There he heard the Barber's *Piano Sonata* for the first time.⁵ That work inspired him and remains his favorite piano piece. Ewazen said, "it made me want to become a composer."⁶ His great passion for music and composition led him to major in music composition at the Eastman School of Music. He received a Bachelor of Music degree at Eastman in 1976. His teachers included Joseph Schwantner, Samuel Adler, Gunther Schuller, and Warren Benson. Upon graduation from Eastman, he went

² Ibid., 138.

³ Joseph Daniel McNally, III, "A Performer's Analysis of Eric Ewazen's Sonata for Trumpet and Piano" (D.M.A. diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2008), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304465269?accountid=14556> (accessed January 28, 2014), p. 3-4.

⁴ Eric Ewazen, interview by author, January 28, 2014.

⁵ Joseph Daniel McNally, III, "A Performer's Analysis of Eric Ewazen's Sonata for Trumpet and Piano" (D.M.A. diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2008), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304465269?accountid=14556> (accessed January 28, 2014), p. 4-5.

⁶ Philip Brown, "Eric Ewazen," *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis, and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 138.

to the Julliard School of Music and pursued his Master of Music degree under the tutelage of Milton Babbitt. He earned a Master of Music degree in 1978 and a Doctor of Musical Art degree in 1980. He has been a faculty member at the Julliard School since 1980. He has also served as a lecturer at other universities in the United States and abroad, including at the Boston Conservatory, Peabody, Curtis, the Santa Cruz Conservatory and the Birmingham Conservatory in England. He was a lecturer for the New York Philharmonic Musical Encounters Series, Composer-in-Residence of the Orchestra of St. Luke's in New York City, and Vice-President of the League of Composers - International Society of Contemporary Music.

A Summary of Ewazen's Accomplishments

Ewazen is a prolific composer who enjoys writing music for a variety of instruments. He has composed over a hundred works since 1973, including works for piano, solo instruments with piano, chamber music, orchestral music and music for voice. His compositions were premiered and recorded by many professional musicians, including the American Brass Quintet, Ahn Trio, Summit Brass Ensemble, New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, and Los Angeles Philharmonic. There are over 60 recordings of Ewazen's music. His music has been recorded on Albany Records, Summit Records, d' Note Records, New World Records, Clique Track Records, EMI Classics Records, Helicon records, Track Records, CRS Records, and Cala Records. His printed music is published by Theodore Presser Company, Southern Music Company, International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, Keyboard Publications, Manduca Music, Encore Music, Triplo Music, and Brass Ring Editions.⁷

⁷ Eric Ewazen, "About the Composer," The Music of Eric Ewazen, <http://www.ericewazen.com> (accessed, February 4, 2014).

Ewazen's long list of compositions for brass instruments shows his enthusiasm for expanding the brass repertoire. He explained that the repertoire for brass and wind instruments was very limited in the Classical and Romantic periods. Ewazen said, "the brass instruments, they have the Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto*; Hummel's *Trumpet Concerto*, that's it!"⁸ This list of repertoire expanded in the twentieth century. Ewazen loves the variety of tone color that brass instruments can produce. One of Ewazen's most recognized works is *Colchester Fantasy*, the first of his brass pieces to become well-known.⁹

Ewazen has composed music for small mixed chamber ensemble. Most of them are trios for different combination of instruments. One of these is *The Diamond World for Violin, Cello, Piano and optional Drum Set*, premiered by the Ahn Trio and released by EMI Classics in 2000. *Trio for Viola, Clarinet, and Piano*, and *Palisades Suite* were his more recent compositions for trio, dated in 2005 and 2007 respectively. He has received commissions to compose for many top orchestras, ensembles, and soloists. He is currently working on a commission for a symphony from the Shenzhen Orchestra that will be premiered in April 2014 in China.

⁸ Eric Ewazen, interview by author, January 28, 2014.

⁹ Jeffrey Snedeker, "The Color of Brass: An Interview with Eric Ewazen," *The Horn Call: Journal of The International Horn Society* 32, no. 1 (November 2001): 33-34, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rih&AN=2001-03420> (accessed January 30, 2014).

The Two Stylistic Periods

Ewazen's style can be divided into two main periods. The eight years of his college life is regarded as his first stylistic period. This is the time that he received his music education and compositional training under the guidance of college professors. Up to then, Ewazen had only listened to a few contemporary pieces including *String Quartets* by Béla Bartók; *The Rite of Spring* by Igor Stravinsky; music by John Cage, and some electronic music by composers whose names he cannot remember.¹⁰ He was brought to a completely new world of music in his first year of college. Ewazen was introduced to the major twentieth century composers, such as Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, Alban Berg, Igor Stravinsky, John Cage, and George Crumb. During his four years at Eastman, Ewazen's teachers provided him solid compositional training and exposed him to a wide range of styles. Ewazen said, "Eastman changed my life; those four years were a particularly important time for me. I was heavily influenced by the music making, the teachers, the tradition, and the history."¹¹ During his college years, he devoted himself to studying all aspects of contemporary musical styles such as twelve-tone technique, serial technique, atonality, and electronic music. These styles were all "new" to him. He applied many different aspects of these techniques in his own compositions. Ewazen described most of his college works as "experimental" works. Thus, he did not attempt to write tonal music except in one piece, *The Little Red Schoolhouse Suite*, which was commissioned by the community center from his home town, Middleburg Heights. It was composed in the tonal style, that he felt would be more accessible the people of that community.¹²

¹⁰ Eric Ewazen, interview by author, January 28, 2014.

¹¹ Philip Brown, "Eric Ewazen," *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis, and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 139.

¹² *Ibid.*, 140.

Ewazen was inspired by Claude Debussy, Béla Bartók, Elliott Carter, Aaron Copland, and Samuel Barber. Their music was very appealing to him. He stated “Elliott Carter was extremely influential, and so I was writing in that highly chromatic, rhythmically intriguing style... it was genuinely about learning the technique, the craft of the style.”¹³ In December 1995, a review of *Frostfire* from *Stereophile* quoted that “the idiom is contemporary with fragrant whiffs of Copland – an influence as inescapable as Beethoven was for Brahms.”¹⁴

Ewazen used these contemporary techniques combined them with his creative ideas in his early experimental works. These early compositions helped him to develop his compositional skills and led him to compose in a more mature style. His hard work during this period earned him many awards and prizes, including BMI Award for *Dagon for 5 cellos* (1973); Louis Lan Prize (1974); and Howard Hanson Prize (1976).

From 1980 onward, the year when Ewazen finished his education and started his career, there was a significant change in his approach to composition. He discontinued writing atonal music. At first, he devoted himself to writing a lot of vocal music. He said, “after I graduated, that’s when I started to go back to write tonal music. I was writing music for voice and much of the music that I was writing for voice was very lyric, very tonal and song-like, and that’s how I kind of went back to tonal music. And then, when I was writing instrumental music, that also tended to be lyrical and tonal.”¹⁵

Ewazen found his own musical language composing tonal music. Here is a review of one of his tonal pieces *Colchester Fantasy* (1987).

¹³ Ibid., 139.

¹⁴ Eric Ewazen, “Review of Works,” The Music of Eric Ewazen, <http://www.ericewazen.com/about.php> (accessed February 4, 2014).

¹⁵ Eric Ewazen, interview by author, January 28, 2014.

Eric Ewazen's *Colchester Fantasy* is doggedly tonal in its musical language, although often with a decided bite. It is basically energetic and upbeat, with slightly schizoid alternations of tempo and mood—alternations that might be more effective if they weren't so brief. Although more vivid contrasts are needed to offset each of the four movements from its neighbors, the overall surface is sparkling and highly attractive.¹⁶

Ewazen wanted to write music that fulfilled his own needs as a composer while remaining very concerned about communication between performers and listeners. He described himself as a cosmopolitan composer, who composed music using diverse styles that he learned and experienced from the past. However, his music is always original and unique.¹⁷

¹⁶ Eric Ewazen, "Review of Works," The Music of Eric Ewazen, <http://www.ericewazen.com/about.php> (accessed February 4, 2014).

¹⁷ Bruce Duffie, "Composer Eric Ewazen. A Conversation with Bruce Duffie," Interviews by Bruce Duffie, <http://www.bruceduffie.com/ewazen2.html> (accessed February 4, 2014).

Chapter III - *Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*

Overview

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano is a three-movement work. The duration of performance is approximately twenty-two minutes in length. This distinctive contemporary chamber work was composed in 2005 having been commissioned by the Texas Christian University School of Music faculty ensemble, *Trio con Brio*. Its members include clarinetist Gary Whitman, violist Misha Galaganov, and pianist John Owings. The three members are actively involved in education and public performances. *Trio con Brio* frequently performs in the United States and has given performances and master classes in Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenyang, China. They gave the world premiere of Ewazen's *Trio* in Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall in March, 2005 and recorded it on the album *A Musical Celebration* by Albany Records in November 2012. Theodore Presser Company published the music for which Ewazen wrote the preface.

Instrumentation

The inspiration of the Ewazen's *Trio* came from the *Kegelstatt* Trio, K. 498 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Ewazen said, "the beauty and playfulness of Mozart's piece, and the elegant classical structure of the work became the inspiration for my TRIO".¹⁸ Ewazen stated that he carefully planned the expressive content and psychological progression of music to provide audiences with an emotional experience. He was very thoughtful about the character and nature of different instruments, the variety of sound achieved by changing pitch range, tone color, and special effects. Ewazen stated that, to him, the clarinet has a very lyrical and sweet timbre, while

¹⁸ Eric Ewazen, *Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*, (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 2012).

the viola has rich tone color and a pleasant deep sound with sonority.¹⁹ He crafted this trio with beautiful long lyrical lines alternating between these two instruments. The expressive lyrical qualities of both instruments are emphasized.

According to the interview by Jeffrey Snedeker with Eric Ewazen,

I like, in orchestral instrumental music, to emphasize long and lyrical lines, which I think performers enjoy playing - allowing them to be both expressive and personal in their approach to the music. Of course, I have distinct ideas in how I feel my music should be interpreted, but I always enjoy it when performers give individual interpretations of my music. The result can often be so striking and, simply put, musical for the audience.²⁰

The clarinet was not used widely in classical music by composers until the mid-eighteenth century. Partly for this reason, there is not much music written for clarinet, viola and piano. According to Janet K. Page, Mozart was inspired by the use of clarinet in Carl Friedrich Abel's Symphony Op. 7 No.6. He became acquainted with clarinet as early as in 1764 in London.²¹ The *Divertimento K. 113 for strings, two clarinets and two horns* (1771) was the first composition with clarinet written by Mozart. He composed the *Kegelstatt Trio*, K. 498 in 1786. It is probably one of the earliest chamber works written for clarinet, viola and piano.

Contemporary composers love to use the whole span of the piano, with its wide range of sound. Ewazen made good use of the instrument by writing very resonant piano accompaniment patterns. He wrote many octaves and full chords for the piano to support the melodies. The rich sound from the piano gives spectacular colors to harmonic changes. In addition, the piano part

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Jeffrey Snedeker, "The Color of Brass: An Interview with Eric Ewazen," *The Horn Call: Journal of The International Horn Society* 32, no. 1 (November 2001): 33, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rih&AN=2001-03420> (accessed February 5, 2014).

²¹ Janet K. Page, et al. "Clarinet," Grove Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/52768> (accessed February 8, 2014).

carries a lot of transitional passages containing different ideas and key changes that repeat throughout the piece. There are frequent piano dialogues with the other two instruments. Ewazen wrote with particular attention to the balance and blend of these three instruments. There are some features about the instrumental writing in this trio. Ewazen wrote many challenging double-stops and big leaps in the viola part. Indeed, Ewazen composed in a wide pitch range for all three instruments. The pitch range for clarinet is from D³ to E⁶, viola from C³ to B-flat⁶ and piano from D¹ to G⁷. Ewazen believes the choice of pitch ranges helps performers with interpretation, in terms of sonority and texture.

The *Trio* is one of Ewazen's mature works. He exploited both the lyrical and the powerful, angular sound of each instrument. Ewazen said, "The creation of my own musical language came with the history, the teacher, the instruments"²²

²² Philip Brown, "Eric Ewazen," *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis, and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 139.

Formal Design

First movement

Table 1. Formal design of *Trio*, 1st movement.

Section		Measure	Major tonal center	Examples of special modalities
Exposition	1 st theme	m. 1-22	D-Dorian (m. 1-6)	E-Dorian (m. 16-20)
	Transition	m. 23-31		F-sharp Dorian (m. 23-24) C-sharp Dorian (m. 25-26) B-flat Dorian (m. 27-28) C-Dorian (m. 29-30)
	2 nd theme	m. 32-49	C Major (m. 32-41)	D-Dorian (m. 44-47)
	Closing theme	m. 50-63	A Major (m. 50-56)	
Development		m. 64-108		A-Dorian (m. 64-69) F-sharp Aeolian (m. 70-76) A-flat Dorian (m. 78-79) E-Dorian (m. 80-81) A-Aeolian (m. 98-99)
	Re-transition	m. 109-112		
Recapitulation	1 st theme	m. 113-131	D-Dorian (m. 113-123)	
	Closing theme	m. 132-139	No stable keys	B-Aeolian (m. 132-133)
	Coda	m. 140-150	D Major (m. 140)	

Ewazen said that the first movement is in the structure of classical sonata form, a clear tonal center is presented in each section. Ewazen followed the traditional structure of classical sonata form which includes the exposition, development, and recapitulation. The exposition,

which consists of sixty-three measures, is the largest section. The piano begins with an introduction, later accompanying the clarinet which plays the first theme. The viola joins the theme in measure 8. Table 1 presents a formal analysis of the first movement.

In the transition, the texture and character changes along with the irregular note groupings. It contrasts to the primary theme. The transition is like a conversation between the three instruments with much ascending and descending motion (Example 1).

Example 1. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 27-29.

The musical score for Example 1 consists of three staves. The top two staves are for woodwinds (clarinet and viola) and the bottom staff is for piano. The piano part is marked 'subito p' and features a prominent descending eighth-note pattern. The woodwinds play a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked 'mp'. The score is in 3/4 time and features three measures (27-29).

The second theme is in the key of C major, a major second below the tonic of D, rather than the expected key of A as in traditional sonata form. The character of the second theme contrasts strongly with the first theme. It has a hopeful and optimistic character. There are several contrasting ideas within the theme itself. It shows the certainty of C major from m. 32 to m. 41, and it is interrupted by dramatic D-Dorian (m. 44-47). Examples 2 and 3 illustrate the contrasting thematic materials.

Example 2. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 32-35, 2nd theme, C major.

The musical score is presented in four systems. The first system (measures 32-34) shows a string quartet with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system (measures 34-35) shows a piano accompaniment with a forte (*f*) dynamic and 'leg.' markings. The third system (measures 35-36) shows a string quartet. The fourth system (measures 36-37) shows a piano accompaniment with 'leg.' and 'simili' markings.

Example 3. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 44-47, 2nd theme materials, D-Dorian.

The image displays a musical score for measures 43 through 47 of the first movement of Eric Ewazen's *Trio*. The score is arranged in three systems. The first system (measures 43-44) features a violin part on the top staff and a piano part on the bottom staff. The violin part begins with a melodic line in D-Dorian, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic, and then transitions to a piano (*p*) dynamic. The piano part provides harmonic support with chords and arpeggiated figures, also marked with *f* and *p*. The second system (measures 45-46) continues the development, with the violin part featuring sixteenth-note patterns and triplets. The piano part includes a prominent triplet figure in the right hand. The third system (measure 47) shows the continuation of the melodic and harmonic material, with a triplet in the piano's right hand.

The closing theme starts at measure 50 with a light-hearted dancing character consisting of offbeat rhythm in A major. It connects smoothly to the development section in A minor, the parallel minor of A major.

The development section is forty-eight measures in length. The first and second themes are carefully developed, and new materials are introduced throughout the section. It contains several lively and rhythmic tunes with relatively less lyrical melodies. The opening of the development section shares similar ideas and tunes with the opening of the exposition, but it is

transposed to A minor. It then starts exploring different tonal centers, such as A-Dorian (m. 64-69), F-sharp Aeolian (m. 70-76), A-flat Dorian (m.78-79), E-Dorian (m. 80-81) and A-Aeolian (m. 98-99). This is a traditional technique in classical sonata form. The unstable feeling creates a sense of excitement throughout the section.

A strong cadential V^7 appears at measure 111 that leads back to the tonic D-Dorian, where the recapitulation occurs with the opening materials at measure 113. Ewazen stated that Beethoven's *Violin Sonata No. 5, Op. 24* influenced the composition of this work. In Beethoven's work, the piano restates the first theme in the recapitulation instead of the violin. In his trio, Ewazen reversed the roles of the clarinet and viola from the exposition. In the recapitulation, the viola plays the first theme while clarinet plays the accompaniment.²³ In the standard sonata-allegro recapitulation, the first and second themes are usually restated in the tonic key. Instead, Ewazen left out the second theme and wrote the transition that leads smoothly to the closing theme and coda. The coda recalls materials from the closing theme of the exposition in D Major. The first movement ends in D major with a triumphant and rejoicing feeling.

²³ Eric Ewazen, interview by author, January 28, 2014.

Second movement

The formal design of the second movement is in arch form, ABCBA. Although there is no tempo marking, it is written in the style of a slow movement with lyrical melodies. Ewazen treated the two solo instruments as a pair of singers in a resonant duet, in a more peaceful manner. The piano sustains the sweet harmonies underneath.²⁴ The sweet harmonies are brought out by the use of the intervals of thirds and sixths. The piano melody omits the fourth and seventh degree, creating a pentatonic flavor and making the opening simpler and sweeter also. The table below is an analysis of the formal design of the second movement (Table 2).

Table 2. Formal design of *Trio*, 2nd movement.

Section	Measure	Major tonal center
A	m. 1-24	C Major
B	m. 25-38	
C	m. 39-82	C Major
B	m. 83-88	
A	m. 89-112	C Major

In the opening of the second movement, the piano no longer acts as an accompaniment. Instead, it announces an eight-measure opening theme after two measures of introduction by the clarinet and viola. Both instruments serve as the accompaniment in the opening six measures. A duet between the clarinet and viola becomes the main component in the rest of A section, while the piano sometimes serves as the accompaniment supporting the upper voices, and other times stands out as an independent voice. The sextuplets from the first movement are an essential accompaniment figure used again in this movement. The clarinet and viola play a beautiful tune from measure 15 to 24. The piano first introduces a new chordal motive for B section at measure

²⁴ Eric Ewazen, *Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*, (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 2012).

25, while the viola takes over the tune with the same rhythm from measure 29 to 32. Ewazen's innovative writing on the viola is characterized by double-stops in sixths in a high register in this solo theme. The accompaniment is played by clarinet and piano in contrary motion with a wide range of intervals. After a short transition, the C major is established with a new theme in the C section at measure 39. The C section is the longest section of the entire movement and it serves as its center of gravity. Not surprisingly, the clarinet and viola announce the tune together as a duet. It reaches the climax when the three instruments play in tutti in measure 62-68, with the dynamics marked *forte* for all parts as shown in Example 4.

Example 4. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 2nd movement, m. 62-68.

The musical score is presented in three systems, each consisting of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The first system (measures 61-63) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The second system (measures 64-66) continues the melodic and rhythmic development. The third system (measures 67-68) concludes the passage with triplet figures in both the vocal and piano parts. Dynamics include a forte (*f*) marking in the piano part of the first system.

The viola takes the leader's role again when the B section returns at measure 83 with the same high register tune with double-stops in sixths. This B section is less developed. The transition passage of the previous B section is taken out. It leads back to the A section at measure 89. The last A section is of a retrograde design to the opening A section. The duet announces the theme first when A section returns. It gradually leads back to the opening tune by the piano and ends the movement. The order of the instrument's appearance is reversed compared to the opening A section.

Third Movement

The form of this movement is a standard sonata rondo form. The form is ABACA'BA. The movement is very rhythmic, energetic, and exciting. Its primitive sound may recall Stravinsky's ballet music and Bartók's folk dances. It is a breathtaking movement with big contrasts compared to the previous movements. The tempo is marked *Allegro Molto*. Below is an analysis of the formal design of the final movement (Table 3).

Table 3. Formal design of *Trio*, 3rd movement.

Section		Measure	Major tonal center
Exposition	A	m. 1-61	D-Dorian
	B	m. 62-126	D Major
	A	m. 127-166	C-Dorian
Development	C	m. 167-204	No stable keys
Recapitulations	A'	m. 205-239 m. 240-250 (1 st movement refrain)	A-Dorian D-Dorian
	B	m. 251-264	A Major
	A	m. 265-293	C-Dorian

The final movement is a fast dance movement, and it is written in regular and irregular meters. The opening starts with tutti in irregular 7/8 meter. The meter changes almost every measure throughout the piece. Ewazen marked accents for all instruments at the beginning of the piece. He wanted his music to sound more rhythmic by stressing on the accents with the irregular meter. It has a big contrast in dynamics, and the driving rhythmic sense is always intense.

The piano part leads the B section by introducing a new dance-like motive in a major mode in 2/4 and 6/8 meters at measure 62. The later part of the B section contains transitional material which leads to the next A section. This A section makes a strong reappearance when all instruments play *fortissimo* at measure 127. Short dialogue passages happen between the clarinet and viola against the piano from measure 149 to 166. Section C shows influences of “rock” music. It is characterized by off-beat rhythms, the use of the lower register of viola, and abrupt grace notes starting from measure 194. Section A’ returns with the latter part materials from A.

Ewazen recalled the opening theme of the first movement at measure 240. This refrain idea unifies the whole piece, although it only lasts for 11 measures. It is interrupted when the phrase ends, where it marked *Allegro Molto* (m. 251). The final A section is like a medley featuring dance-like tunes that appeared in previous A section. There are short transitions that connect to the opening 7/8 theme. The theme goes through different keys by third-related and non-functional harmonies progressions. After all these unstable feelings, the very last part of this A section settles in the key of C major and return to the simple and joyful mood (m. 284). The dance motives and harmonies are supported by a bass C pedal in every measure towards the end of the piece. It makes good preparation for the three last grand chords and ends the movement with simple and glorifying C major.

Chapter IV – Stylistic Influences

The *Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano* shows influences from several styles and composers. During my interview with Ewazen, he named two composers in particular, describing their influences and inspiration for the *Trio*. He described his music at various times as "neo-impressionistic", "neo-romantic" and "neo-classical".²⁵ The *Trio* has elements of all three styles, but is original and cosmopolitan at all times.

Neo-impressionism

An important accompaniment figure in the piano part serves as the foundation of the first movement. Ewazen described it as the waterfall-like gesture of the impressionistic style. These waterfall-like gestures also appear in Debussy's music frequently. Example 5 and 6 show the similarities between Debussy and Ewazen. They both used similar figurations in their music.

Example 5. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 2nd movement, m. 84.



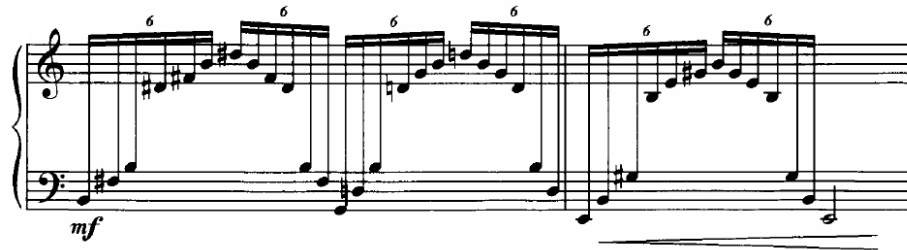
Example 6. Claude Debussy, *Prelude*, Book II, No. 12, m. 32.



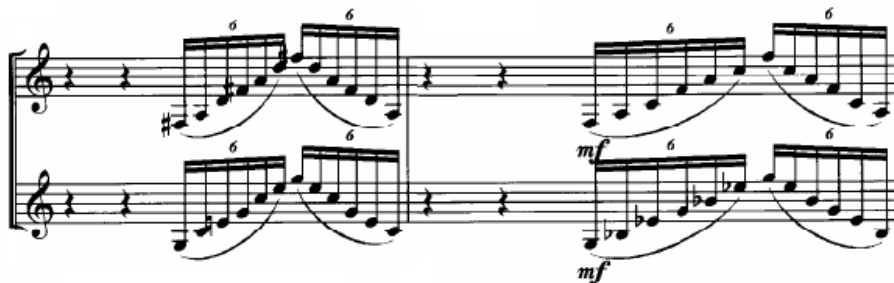
²⁵ Eric Ewazen, interview by author, January 28, 2014.

The sextuplet figure from Example 7 is another feature of impressionistic writing showing influence from Debussy. Ewazen frequently used it in the piano, but it also can be seen in the other two instruments occasionally, decorating the melody or sometime acting as accompaniment as well (Example 7 and 8).

Example 7. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 48-49.



Example 8. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 38-40, clarinet and viola.



Neo-romanticism

Neo-romanticism refers to the return of emotional expression in contemporary music, which was originally associated with nineteenth century Romanticism. Some twentieth-century composers returned and applied expressive elements and gestures from the Romantic period when creating their own styles. The term also refers to twentieth-century composers' return to tonality as a structural and expressive element.²⁶ Ewazen regards himself as a neo-romantic

²⁶ Jann Pasler, "Neo-romantic," Grove Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/subscriber/article/grove/music/40720> (accessed February 18, 2014).

composer because he often adapts Romantic styles in his compositions. In Ewazen's *Trio*, he incorporates tonal harmony, chromaticism, expressive gestures, an intimate feeling, and tuneful melodies rooted in the nineteenth century practice.

Brahms had a great influence on Ewazen. In the interview by Jeffrey Snedeker with Ewazen, he recalled how he loves the Brahms's *Horn Trio Op. 40*, a work that he has played and listened to many times. He believes that Brahms's *Horn Trio* is one of the best pieces of music ever written, and he could listen to it a million times more.²⁷ Brahms' *Horn Trio* is one of the models for Ewazen's *Trio*. For instance, both composers wrote quite a few duet passages. In the first movement of Brahms' *Horn Trio*, the horn introduces the tune in measure 37. Then, the violin interrupts the tune by imitating the horn in measure 39. They join together and play in the same rhythmic pattern at measure 43 (Example 9). Ewazen applied the same technique at the beginning of the first movement in his *Trio*. The clarinet starts the theme and the viola joins as a duet with variation on the theme at measure 8. The two instruments play homorhythmically at measure 11 (Example 10).

²⁷ Jeffrey Snedeker, "The Color of Brass: An Interview with Eric Ewazen," *The Horn Call: Journal of The International Horn Society* 32, no. 1 (November 2001): 33, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rih&AN=2001-03420> (accessed February 5, 2014).

Example 9. Johannes Brahms, *Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano*, Op. 40, 1st movement, m. 37-45, violin and horn.

Musical score for Example 9, measures 37-45, violin and horn. The score is written in two systems. The first system contains measures 37 and 38. The second system contains measures 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, and 45. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The first system includes dynamic markings *cresc.* and *p espress.*. The second system includes a *cresc.* marking. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with some notes marked with accents.

Example 10. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 7-12, clarinet and viola.

Musical score for Example 10, measures 7-12, clarinet and viola. The score is written in three systems. The first system contains measures 7 and 8. The second system contains measures 9, 10, and 11. The third system contains measures 12 and 13. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The first system includes a dynamic marking *f*. The second system includes a *f* marking and a triplet of eighth notes. The third system includes a *f* marking and a triplet of eighth notes. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with some notes marked with accents.

In addition, the Romantic harmonic language places the *Trio* as a neo-romantic composition. To name a few techniques, third-related harmonies and chromaticism are effective tools Romantic composers used to “color” their music. Descending harmonic progressions in thirds is one of the notable examples. For example, Robert Schumann starts the third movement of his *Fantasy Op. 17*, with descending major chords, C major, A major and F Major (Example 11).

Example 11. Robert Schumann, *Fantasy*, Op. 17, 3rd movement, m. 1-3.

Langsam getragen. Durchweg leise zu halten. M.M. $\text{♩} = 60$.

Pedal.
C Major A Major F Major

Ewazen used the same idea applying the third-related harmonic progression in many places of the trio. One of the examples is shown in Example 12.

Example 12. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 48-49.

mf
B Major G Major E Major

Chromaticism is a hallmark of Romantic music as well. Ewazen wrote a lot of chromatic foreign harmonies such as $\flat VII$ and $\flat VI$ in his *Trio*. Here is an example illustrating how he used the chromatic progression that conveys a neo-romantic flavor.

Example 13. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 33- 38.

The musical score consists of three systems of piano notation. The first system (measures 33-35) shows a chromatic progression in the bass line with a *simili* $\flat VII$ chord. The second system (measures 36-37) features a *subito p* dynamic and a $\flat VI$ chord. The third system (measure 38) is marked *f* and includes a $\flat V$ chord.

Neo-classicism

Neo-classicism is a title applied to certain twentieth-century music composers, first developed in the 1920s. Composers of this group looked back at historical musical influences, such as balanced form, simpler themes and periodic phrase in certain works by eighteenth century composers. They preferred this to certain types of nineteenth century Romanticism, with exaggerated musical gestures, emotion, and freer forms. Igor Stravinsky was one of the first major composers to write in the neo-classical style. One of his famous neo-classical works is *Pulcinella* (1919-20). Arnold Schoenberg was another twentieth-century composer, who mainly wrote twelve-tone music but also composed some of his pieces in a neo-classical style. He composed the first movement of *Wind Quintet Op. 26* in sonata form (1923-4), showing similar interest in looking back to the older style.

One of the earliest trios for clarinet, viola and piano is the Mozart's *Kegelstatt Trio*, K. 498. Ewazen classifies himself as a neo-classical composer, because classical forms are used in many of his compositions, including the sonata form used in his *Trio* as discussed.²⁸ Ewazen also applies conventional classical phrase structure, such as four-bar and eight-bar phrasing. The texture is mostly homophonic, making good balance between the melody and accompaniment (Example 14).

²⁸ Eric Ewazen, interview by author, January 28, 2014.

Example 14. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 2nd movement, m. 1-10, 8-bar phrase.

The image displays a musical score for an 8-bar phrase in 4/4 time. It is written for piano, with a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic marking. The score is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system shows the beginning of the phrase with a melodic line in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The second system continues the melodic line with some slurs and a more active bass line. The third system concludes the phrase with a final melodic flourish and a sustained bass line.

Influences from Eastern Europe

Ewazen mentioned that he was also greatly influenced by the Eastern European musical culture since he was a teenager. Among the twentieth-century Eastern Europe composers, he was particularly inspired by Bartók's compositions. Ewazen studied Bartók's music thoroughly. Ewazen stated that, "I think it is great for composers to show ethnic roots and add flavor to their work. I encourage my composition students to include familiar elements and idioms in the music... like Bartók."²⁹ Ewazen resembles Bartók's compositional techniques in his inspirational use of Ukrainian folk elements in his music. The final movement of the *Trio* uses a lively theme

²⁹ Philip Brown, "Eric Ewazen," *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis, and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 137.

full of energy and changing rhythms. This is a nod to his Ukrainian/Polish ethnic heritage. Eastern European dance rhythms and modal melodic gestures occupy the whole last movement.³⁰ Zinoviy Lys'ko was a Ukrainian composer who devoted his life to Ukrainian folk music and edited a corpus of Ukrainian folk songs. According to his observations, there are different distinctive folk musical elements in Ukrainian folk songs.³¹ Ewazen found all these folk elements appealing and incorporated them into his own musical vocabulary.

Melody

Lys'ko analyzed the historical development of Ukrainian folk music. Most folk melodies are based on modal scales and have a narrow range. The folk melodies developed from intervals ranging from seconds or thirds to an octave or more.³² Bartók also stated that “tunes whose compass is small may be considered as more primitive than tunes with a bigger compass.”³³ Ewazen often uses a narrow range for the melodies in order to manifest the style of folk music. The opening of the first and third movement of Ewazen's *Trio* features a primitive tune whose range fits within an octave (Example 15).

³⁰ Eric Ewazen, *Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*, (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser, 2012).

³¹ Laurel Osborn, “Lullabies of Ukraine in the Context of Ukrainian Folksong Tradition: A Textual and Musical Analysis of the Repertory from the Zinoviy Lys'ko Published Collection, ‘Ukrainian Folk Melodies’, 1967-” (PhD diss., University of Saskatchewan (Canada), 1995), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/193670171?accountid=14556> (accessed February 23, 2014), 7.

³² *Ibid.*, 87-88.

³³ *Ibid.*, 88.

Example 15. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 1-6, clarinet.

The image shows a musical score for a clarinet part. It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time, marked 'Allegro Appassionato'. The first staff contains measures 1 through 3, and the second staff contains measures 4 through 6. The melody is written in a treble clef and features a series of eighth and quarter notes, some with slurs. A dynamic marking of 'mf' is placed below the first staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Harmony and Modality

As mentioned, Ewazen's melodies incorporated folk style that utilizes different modes. These became an important element of his musical language. The most common modes he used are Dorian, Lydian, and Aeolian modes. Ewazen said, "the sound of the Ukrainian music was ... quite modal..."³⁴ Examples below show the different modes that Ewazen embraced in his *Trio*.

The first theme of the first movement is basically built up on segments of D-Dorian mode with the notes D-E-F-G-A. The D-Dorian modality is fully established in the piano part by a non-functional chord progression, C major to D minor chord in measure 5.

³⁴ Philip Brown, "Eric Ewazen," *A Composer's Insight: Thoughts, Analysis, and Commentary on Contemporary Masterpieces for Wind Band*, ed. Timothy Salzman (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2003), 138.

Example 16. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, 1st theme

The musical score is written for voice and piano. The tempo is *Allegro Appassionato*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into five systems. The first system shows the vocal line and the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment has a complex, rhythmic texture in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The second system shows the vocal line and the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment has a complex, rhythmic texture in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The third system shows the vocal line and the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment has a complex, rhythmic texture in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The fourth system shows the vocal line and the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment has a complex, rhythmic texture in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The fifth system shows the vocal line and the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment has a complex, rhythmic texture in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. A specific chord in the left hand is highlighted with a box and labeled 'C9'.

Throughout the transition between the first and second themes, Ewazen used Dorian mode extensively, including E-Dorian (m.15-18), F-sharp Dorian (m. 23-24), C-sharp Dorian (m. 25-26) and B-flat Dorian (m. 27-28). Example 17 illustrates the use of F-sharp Dorian mode in measure 23-24.

Example 17. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 23-24.

The musical score for Example 17 consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a rest in measure 23 and then plays a melodic line in measure 24, marked *mf*. The bass staff has a whole rest in measure 23 and then plays a bass line in measure 24, also marked *mf*. The second system includes a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The treble staff begins with a rest in measure 23 and then plays a melodic line in measure 24, marked *fp*. The bass staff has a whole rest in measure 23 and then plays a bass line in measure 24, also marked *fp*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Moreover, Lys'ko also explained several systems which form the basis of Ukrainian folk song. One of the systems refers to the use of the pentachords and hexachords. Ewazen composed the opening tune of the second movement based on a hexachord, C-D-E-F-G-A, as shown in Example 18. On the other hand, as mentioned above, the first movement also begins with a pentachord.

Example 18. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 2nd movement, m. 1-6.

The musical score for Example 18 is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 1 through 4. The right hand (treble clef) is mostly silent in the first two measures, then enters in measure 3 with a melodic line of eighth and sixteenth notes. The left hand (bass clef) plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes with rests. Dynamics are marked as *p* (piano) in measure 1 and *mp* (mezzo-piano) in measure 3. The second system covers measures 5 and 6, continuing the melodic and rhythmic patterns from the first system.

Rhythm

Ewazen's and Bartók's music share some common rhythmic features. Bartók divided folk music into two main categories, the *tempo giusto*, a style with clear rhythm, and the *parlando rubato*, a free recitative style. According to Lys'ko, Ukrainian folk songs also fall into these two categories.³⁵ The third movement of Ewazen's trio fits clearly into the *tempo giusto* category. It has a strict and lively tempo. He stated that the modal harmony as well as the heavy, rhythmic energy represents his inspiration from the Ukrainian folk music. There are also two distinctive rhythms that are often found in folk music, the dotted and reversed dotted rhythms. Examples 19, 20 and 21 illustrate how the two composers employed dotted rhythms in their music.

³⁵ Laurel Osborn, "Lullabies of Ukraine in the Context of Ukrainian Folksong Tradition: A Textual and Musical Analysis of the Repertory from the Zinoviy Lys'ko Published Collection, 'Ukrainian Folk Melodies', 1967-" (PhD diss., University of Saskatchewan (Canada), 1995), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/193670171?accountid=14556> (accessed March 1, 2014), 18.

Example 19. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 93-95, dotted rhythm.

Musical score for Example 19, showing a piano accompaniment with a dotted rhythm. The score is in 3/4 time and features a treble and bass clef. The melody in the treble clef consists of dotted rhythms, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf* and *cresc.* markings.

Example 20. Béla Bartók, *Bagatelles*, Op. 6 No. 1, m. 16-18, reversed dotted-rhythm.

Musical score for Example 20, showing a piano accompaniment with a reversed dotted rhythm. The score is in 3/4 time and features a treble and bass clef. The melody in the treble clef consists of reversed dotted rhythms, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *ppp* markings, along with a *ritard.* marking.

Example 21. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 2nd movement, m. 1-4, reversed dotted-rhythm.

Musical score for Example 21, showing a piano accompaniment with a reversed dotted rhythm. The score is in 4/4 time and features a treble and bass clef. The melody in the treble clef consists of reversed dotted rhythms, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp* and *p* markings.

Moreover, syncopated rhythm is also an obvious reminiscence of the folk idioms which Ewazen demonstrates in his *Trio* (Example 22). It is often found in Bartók's music as well (Example 23).

Example 22. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 3rd movement, m. 207-210, clarinet.

Musical score for Example 22, showing a clarinet part with a syncopated rhythm. The score is in 4/4 time and features a treble clef. The melody consists of syncopated rhythms. A box highlights a specific syncopated rhythm pattern.

Example 23. Béla Bartók, *Bagatelles*, Op. 6, No. 10, m. 3-5.



Meter

Frequent change of meter is a remarkable element in the final movement. There are dozens of meter changes throughout the entire third movement, including 7/8, 6/8, 9/8, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4. Ewazen's choice of 7/8 meter also reflects great impact from Bartók's Bulgarian folk style. Example 24 & 25 shows similar 7/8 pattern that are being used by both composers. They both used 7/8 meter with opening eighth notes grouping in 2+2+3. Here is a comparison between Ewazen's *Trio* (Example 24) and Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* (Example 25), where they are emphasizing the 2+2+3 rhythm.

Example 24. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 3rd movement, m. 1-6.

A musical score for a piano piece, consisting of three systems of staves. Each system has a treble clef staff on top, a middle staff (likely for a second piano part), and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The tempo is marked 'Allegro Molto' and the dynamic is 'f'. The score shows frequent meter changes: 7/8, 6/8, 7/8, 9/8, 8/8, and 2/4. The word 'simili' is written above the treble clef staff in the second and third systems. The music features eighth notes and chords, with accents and slurs.

Example 25. Béla Bartók, *Mikrokosmos*, Vol. 6, No.149, m. 1-4.



Intervals

Ewazen composed the *Trio* with many perfect fifth and major/minor sixth intervals which are often found in folk music. It has the effect of a drone bass. Bartók imitated the drone bass sound of Hungarian bagpipes. The bagpipe is a folk instrument that provides intervals of fifth or sixth at the bass continuously. Ewazen applied a similar musical idea into his *Trio*. From Example 26 and 27, they are examples of drone bass and continuous parallel fifth in Ewazen's *Trio* and Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* respectively.

Example 26. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 3rd movement, m. 130-133.



Example 27. Béla Bartók, *Mikrokosmos*, Vol. 3, No.95b, m. 1-5, piano.



Intervals of sixth are also very prominent in Bartók and Ewazen's music. Example 28 and 29 is a comparison between Bartók and Ewazen's music.

Example 28. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 2nd movement, m. 29-30, clarinet and viola.



The musical score for Example 28 consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music is in 2/4 time and features a complex, syncopated rhythmic pattern. The top staff begins with a dynamic marking of *fp* (fortissimo piano). The score is divided into six measures, with various rests and rhythmic values throughout.

Example 29. Béla Bartók, *Mikrokosmos*, Vol. 4, No. 112, m. 10- 14.



The musical score for Example 29 consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music is in 2/4 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score is divided into five measures, with various rests and rhythmic values throughout.

Rock Influence

One of the interesting influences is the “rock” rhythm that Ewazen incorporated in his music. It was greatly influenced from the rock musical *Apocalypse* which he wrote when he was in high school. He also states that he was attracted to the driving beats of rock music.³⁶ Example 22 shows one the rock rhythmic motives in the first movement. The rhythm accentuates the first down-beat and off-beats of third and fourth. The syncopated rhythm from the clarinet and viola part also helps creating the rock feeling, as shown in Example 30.

Example 30. Eric Ewazen, *Trio*, 1st movement, m. 98-99.

The image displays a musical score for measures 98 and 99 of the first movement of Eric Ewazen's Trio. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs (T1 and T2) and two bass clefs (P1 and P2). The time signature is 3/4. The music features a driving rock rhythm with a syncopated melody. The top two staves (T1 and T2) show a melody with accents on the first downbeat and off-beats of the third and fourth measures. The bottom two staves (P1 and P2) show a piano accompaniment with a similar rhythmic pattern. The score is marked with a forte (f) dynamic.

³⁶ Timothy Meyer Altman, “An Analysis for Performance of Two Chamber Works with Trumpet by Eric Ewazen: “...to Cast a Shadow Again” (a Song Cycle for Voice, Trumpet, and Piano) and Trio for Trumpet, Violin, and Piano” (D.M.A. diss., University of Kentucky, 2005), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304992546?accountid=14556> (accessed December 9, 2013), 100.

Chapter V - Performers' Point of View

When performing Ewazen's *Trio*, my trio has different ideas and opinions about our own parts and working as a trio. Below are some thoughts about ensemble, balance, unusual technique and personal points of view of the piece from my chamber members, Shokhrukh Sadikov, the violist, and Puyin Bai, the clarinetist.

The Pianist - Kai Yin Crystal Lam

In general, Ewazen composed the piano part with its mid-low register in this *Trio*. The texture of piano part is quite thick most of the time. Octaves and open chords of more than an octave often occurs in the bass. It is a challenge for pianists to reach those big chords, especially pianists with small hands. By rolling the chords, one may be able to play every note of the chords. However, playing with a fast arpeggio without altering the rhythm would be even more challenging in the fast movements.

The piano part is written in a mixed style. The high romantic expression is interpreted in the accompaniment in the first movement, the arpeggiated figuration and the sextuplets that serve as harmonic support with full and broad sound. On the other hand, the waterfall-like figuration in the second movement should be played with extreme impressionistic sound and light touch, as an imitation of Debussy's music. Since a lot of these accompaniment figures were written very densely in a lower register, balance between both hands is essential. The registers of clarinet and viola were written closely. Pianists should always be much alerted in their playing, adjusting the sound and balance and matching with the clarinet and viola.

The Violist - Shokhrukh Sadikov

This piece tests the violist for several reasons. The writing throughout the piece in viola part is very pianistic such as the arpeggio-like writing. It is technically not idiomatic for viola and more natural for piano, yet it explores the sonority of the viola very well. In the passages where the viola plays solo or sub-solo that intervening, reflecting or contrasting to the solo line, express the viola sonority well. Certain solo passages were written in high register, which requires well-articulated sound and accurate intonation. The accompaniment lines, such as at transitions and the coda of the second movement, we see a reflection of Debussy's music.

The viola is written in a relatively low and dense register. It limits the violist to project the sound especially on the tutti passages. Ewazen seems to explore the sound blending among the instruments. The passages like parallel fifth in second movement are challenging in terms of intonation and sonority. Throughout the piece and especially in the third movement, the string crossing at a high speed requires well organization and accomplished technique. Otherwise it sounds dull and uncontrolled.

The Clarinetist - Puyin Bai

The biggest challenge for clarinet is the endurance to sustain long and beautiful phrasing. Ewazen's musical language largely focuses on harmonic changes. The clarinetist should response to all key changes speedily, where technically is hard especially at a fast tempo. Passages in D major and A major are among all the toughest ones. When the texture gets thicker, it is difficult to find the right balance between the three instruments too.

In general, technical challenges are not extremely demanding for pianist, violist and clarinetist. Great freedom of interpretation is given by Ewazen, but careful planning of interpretation is needed in order to unify small units of ideas and transitions, and some irregular phrasing within the movements, though the music itself is very exciting and intense. All these unstable feelings challenge performers with creative thinking in connecting individual ideas and maintaining the big structure.

Chapter VI - Conclusion

Ewazen's *Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano* incorporates diverse styles that include neo-, impressionism, neo-romanticism, and neo-classicism, yet has a fresh and original musical language. His music is always attractive, emotionally involving, and appealing to audiences. He is especially good at writing memorable melodies, and ear-catching harmonies.

In our performances on this piece, audience members have often responded emotionally to the beauty of music that brings up images that recall their own life experiences. A joyful last movement balances the sober atmosphere of earlier movements with a cheerful ending. Audience told us they love this piece, and it is one of their favorite contemporary pieces.

This *Trio* is a very special piece that filled with love, hope and excitement. It is a charming piece that musicians may want to play more often.

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