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New Leaves on Old Trees: A Synthesis of Early American Music through Contemporary Composition

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NEW LEAVES ON OLD TREES: A SYNTHESIS OF EARLY AMERICAN CHURCH
MUSIC THROUGH CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITION

by

Leslie Ann Robinson

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NEW LEAVES ON OLD TREES: A SYNTHESIS OF EARLY AMERICAN CHURCH
MUSIC THROUGH CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITION

Leslie Ann Robinson

Southeastern University, 2014

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the hymnody and choral music of 17th, 18th, and early 19th century Protestant communities in America with the goal of creating a historically informed composition that articulates musical and theological ideas of the past with a fresh voice. It will emphasize unique characteristics of the musical communities and connections between the communities. It will also focus on two relationships within individual communities: the association between the community's music and its texts, and the connection between its theology and musical identity. The thesis and composition should reveal an understanding of early American musical styles and offer an opportunity to appreciate long-standing forms while contributing a new expression of these ideas. As nature expresses variations of beauty from season to season, this project attempts to rearticulate the beauty of early American music.

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INTRODUCTION

The soundscape of early American music is the fertile soil in which the musical seedlings of the past sprouted and have grown until the present day. One of the most distinctive qualities of early American music is its rootedness in the diverse traditions of colonial communities resulting in varieties from refined style to crude harmony, boisterous instrumental playing to a cappella psalmody, and passionate melody to suppressed rhythm.

Ralph Vaughan Williams, musical editor of the 1906 *English Hymnal*, writes that the music of a people is “like an old tree, continually putting out new leaves” (45). Vaughan Williams’s metaphor describes an important aspect of folk music that is also true of church music: it has the distinction of representing and expressing a community rather than a single composer.

Ethnomusicologist Kay Kaufman Shelemay offers a definition of a musical community as “. . . a collectivity constructed through and sustained by musical processes and/or performances [and] . . . a social entity, an outcome of a combination of social and musical processes, rendering those who participate in making or listening to music aware of a connection among themselves” (364-365). This definition does not limit a community to a single location, nor does it presuppose that the connection of its participants cannot be symbolic or virtual.

In a 2011 interview, American music historian Richard Crawford mentions that today's music researchers will have the most success by focusing on making connections between ideas that have not been connected. He says, "I think taking this vast interconnected world and trying to put some rigor behind the kinds of connections that you make is maybe the challenge of this decade and maybe the next one as well" (Riis, 50). While researchers have extensively studied many aspects of the rich heritage of early American music, making connections between musical ideas remains an open field for exploration. Through the process of connecting the old and the new, traditions of an American music continue to develop.

The texts and musical materials of hymnody express and document this dynamic. The evolution of theological themes in American communities can be traced through the composition of hymns and the compilation of hymnals. Hymnal editors repurposed hymns from other communities by matching texts with different tunes, by employing entirely new tunes for received texts, and by altering texts. These changes reveal the theological viewpoints and musical preferences of their communities. Texts and tunes acquire new meanings. "New leaves" appeared on "old trees."

The purpose of this thesis is to process Protestant hymnody and choral music of 17th, 18th and early 19th century America as well as its influence on more recent composers with the goal of creating a historically informed composition articulating musical and theological ideas of the past with a fresh voice. Unique characteristics of the communities will be emphasized and connections between the communities will be made. Attention will be given to relationships between the music and texts of communities and to the bearing of theology on the formation of musical identity.

In Chapter One, various American Protestant communities will be discussed in terms of their history, context, and music. These communities include Puritans, New England singing-schools, Moravians, Shakers, Ephrata Cloister, Methodists, shape-note singers of the South, and slaves of African descent. Richard Crawford and H. Wiley Hitchcock cite these particular groups in their discussions of early American music demonstrating their relevance to this survey. In Chapter Two, styles and techniques used by 20th century composers in works influenced by early American music will be analyzed. This will include a consideration of works by Alice Parker, Henry Cowell, William Schuman, Charles Ives, Aaron Copland, John Adams, and William Duckworth. Finally, an original choral composition will be presented as an outgrowth of the research along with an explanation of its historically informed elements. This composition will demonstrate a synthesis of the historical overview of Chapter One with compositional techniques identified in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER ONE

This chapter contains descriptions of the historical and theological contexts of eight early American communities. One or more musical examples from each community will be discussed with an emphasis on distinctive traits and a focus on relationships of texts and tunes.

Colonial Puritans: The First Seeds

For the purpose of this paper, the term “Puritan” will reference the general musical outlook of early Calvinistic communities in Boston, Massachusetts and settlements in Connecticut until the birth of William Billings in 1746 whose influence inaugurated a new era of vitality in sacred music (Crawford, *Musical Life* 38). Although these Puritan communities included Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Baptist denominations, they can be combined into a single musical community because they share certain musical and theological views. This overarching “Puritan” community is distinguished by its “intense experience of the living God, nourished exclusively by the Bible and expressed in every thought and act” (Billenberger and Welch 91).

Of the values embodied in the Puritan tradition, faithfulness to Scripture, fighting the power of sin, and relying on the strength of God are prominent themes expressed in the texts of the core repertory of early American psalmody. The popularity of these topics in the hymnody indicates that they were not only essential to the Puritan systems of thought documented in formal theological writing, but were also essential to the belief systems of individual Puritans in the meetinghouse pews.

The Puritans' view of Scripture was strongly influenced by the writings of Calvin, and as a result, they adhered to the Regulative Principle which forbade all worship practices unless expressly commanded in Scripture (Seimer 22). Not only did this belief generate a practice of singing only psalms, it also created a rift around 1720 known as the Note-Rote Controversy. Puritan congregations were split in opinion about the "Old" and "New" ways of singing. The debate concerned whether written notation should be used to counteract some of the difficulties caused by the extremely slow tempos, weak sense of rhythm, and extraneous or dissonant pitches which had become habitual for most Puritan congregations. Because both groups used Scripture to support their views, its authority was at the core of this debate.

As referenced earlier, psalms provided the sole subject matter of Puritan music. The treatise *Singing of Psalms a Gospel Ordinance* by the 17th century Puritan minister John Cotton is the clearest and most thorough work on Puritan church music (Music, *An Holy Duty* 7). The treatise's purpose is to give a logical defense of the Puritan metrical psalm-singing tradition through a Scripture-based argument. It discusses what is to be sung and who is to sing it, and it answers questions regarding performance practice. Cotton's treatise demonstrates that congregational singing from psalters was central to Puritan worship.

Two of the most important Puritan psalters for American congregations were the *Ainsworth Psalter* and the *Bay Psalm Book*. With the creation of a psalter of their own, Puritans faced the difficult challenge of coalescing musical and poetic integrity with biblical accuracy (Packer 74). Amy Morris, in a study of the specific impact of the *Bay Psalm Book* in the early colonial context of Puritanism, found that the *Bay Psalm Book*

accurately captured the heart and motive of the early American Puritans because of its focus on simple purity created through a “textual proximity” to the King James Bible (119).

Purity of text was characteristic of Puritan psalters in general, a trait passed down from the *Genevan Psalter* produced by Jean Calvin, the theological father of the Puritans. Emily Brink has demonstrated that the most basic motive for the creation of the *Genevan Psalter* was to faithfully reflect the character of each psalm through the music (17). The *Genevan Psalter* was the direct predecessor of the *Ainsworth Psalter*, which the Puritans brought with them to the New England colonies, influencing congregational song in the new land.

Aspects of the relationship of text and music in Puritan psalmody can be seen in the following musical examples from Richard Crawford’s publication *The Core Repertory of Early American Psalmody*. Crawford’s selection for this core repertory is based on frequency of publication from 1689 to 1810. Through these examples, a system of categorization by rhythmic movement becomes evident. In the preface to *The Core Repertory*, Crawford has proffered a way of categorizing the music by rhythmic motion (xi). He suggests that a historical understanding of the progression of early American psalmody reveals a gradual development toward new ways of moving sacred texts through time (xii).

The tune SOUTHWELL (Figure 1) and its corresponding text by Isaac Watts are both found in the ninth edition (1689) of the *Bay Psalm Book*. The earliest editions of the *Bay Psalm Book* contained only texts. The ninth edition was the first also to include tunes. Each of the texts could have been matched with a number of tunes, but Crawford

has placed this tune and text together in *The Core Repertory*. This tune is a good example of the earliest form of American psalmody.

[85.] Southwell

English, 1579

When man grows bold in sin, My heart with - in me cries,

When man grows bold in sin, My heart with - in me cries,

When man grows bold in sin, My heart with - in me cries,

When man grows bold in sin, My heart with - in me cries,

10 "He hath no faith of God with - in, Nor fear be - fore his eyes."

15 "He hath no faith of God with - in, Nor fear be - fore his eyes."

"He hath no faith of God with - in, Nor fear be - fore his eyes."

"He hath no faith of God with - in, Nor fear be - fore his eyes."

Figure 1: SOUTHWELL, from *The Core Repertory of Early American Psalmody* by Richard Crawford, p. 143

Of the various rhythmic categories Crawford describes, this tune falls into the common-tune style because the basic rhythmic motion moves the text in notes of equal value. Other attributes of the common-tune style are duple meter, through-composed form, and lack of embellishment. The solemnity of the text, which focuses primarily on

human depravity and judgment, fits well with the slow steady motion of this tune and the common-tune style at large. Crawford describes the type of motion seen in SOUTHWELL as the “touchstone from which other kinds of motion proceeded” (*Core Repertory* xii).

The next type of motion to develop from the common-tune style is represented in the opening phrase of the tune FUNERAL THOUGHT. This motion is built from the basic unit of the dactyl, a pattern of one long note followed by two short notes. The accompanying text by Isaac Watts was usually circulated with this tune, and was commonly sung at military funerals during the Revolution as well as the funeral of the wife of Johnathan Edwards (Crawford, *Core Repertory* xxxv). The dactyl added energy to the text through a rhythmic thrust, and was influential on later Yankee composers such as William Billings (Crawford, *Core Repertory* xii).

The image shows a musical score for the tune 'FUNERAL THOUGHT' in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four staves. The first three staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor) and the fourth is the bass line. The lyrics are: 'Hark! from the tombs, a dole-full sound;'. The music features a dactylic rhythm in the vocal parts, with a long note followed by two short notes. The bass line provides a steady accompaniment.

Figure 2: FUNERAL THOUGHT measures 1-3, from *The Core Repertory of Early American Psalmody* by Richard Crawford, p. 56

A third rhythmic development, identified by Crawford as a triple-time tune, receives its motion from the iamb: a pattern of a short note followed by a long note. This rhythm was naturally suited to so many texts that the style grew into many creative variations, so that by the mid-eighteenth century, triple time and iambic motion had been mastered in congregational song (Crawford, *Core Repertory* xiii). MORNING TUNE (1761), from the Presbyterian tunebook *Urania* compiled by James Lyon in the Philadelphia region, provides an example of a triple-time tune propelled by iambic motion. According to Nicholas Temperley, this tune has a “refreshing quality” and demonstrates a budding of originality in the context of earlier Puritan psalm tunes (*First Forty*, 14).

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Morning Tune' in 3/8 time. It consists of four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: 'A - wake, my soul! a - wake mine eyes, A -'. The melody is characterized by iambic motion, with a short note followed by a long note. The Soprano and Alto parts are in treble clef, while the Tenor and Bass parts are in bass clef. The Tenor part has an '8' below it, indicating an octave shift. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

Figure 3: MORNING TUNE measures 1-4, from *The Core Repertory of Early American Psalmody* by Richard Crawford, p. 98

In summary, the texts and tunes of early Puritan psalmody analyzed in this section reveal a few connections between Puritan theology and their music. Theological views such as an adherence to the Regulative Principle and historical events such as the Note-Rote controversy correspond to the resistance to musical development identified by Crawford in the slow, gradual expansion in rhythmic variety over a span of 112 years (*Core Repertory*, ix). At the same time, because these theological principles produced a resistance to change, the Puritan worshipping community was an environment of safe familiarity. Crawford points out that, when sung by a group, the combination of the metrical psalm texts with tunes that delineate a clear tempo and establish a mood, “creates a strong, if temporary, community of shared purpose” and “as words flow in measured pace from many lips, they release meanings for all to feel and to ponder” (ix).

New England Singing Schools: The Sprouting of a New Style

In transitioning from a focus on the musical atmosphere of New England Puritan communities to the later 18th century Congregationalist scene in Boston, Crawford provides a helpful overview in *America's Musical Life: A History*. He ties together many Puritan themes such as the Note-Rote controversy and the *Bay Psalm Book* to the music of William Billings, a singing school master who travelled the Boston area composing choral music and teaching. Billings (1746-1800) is often seen as the first great American composer, and Crawford sees the music of Billings as an important transition in American musical history from a ritual-based view of music to an independent art form. Although Billings has roots in the Puritan tradition, he branches out so much musically

that, for the purposes of this paper, he and the other singing-school-master tunesmiths will be described as a separate musical community.

Billings was a proponent of the view that psalm-singing was a duty ordained by God, and some of the introductions and title pages of his tunebooks refer to scriptural rationales from James 5:13 and 1 Chronicles 15:22 (Jong 106-107). At the same time, these introductions and title pages indicate a passion for music for its own sake that was unprecedented in its context. The introduction to *Continental Harmony* contains a “paean to music” in the form of a dialogue between a pupil and a singing master (Jong 111).

A comparison of Puritan musical ideals with the compositions of William Billings shows some major differences (Dill 1). Over the course of his dissertation, “From Ritual to Art in the Puritan Music of Colonial New England: The Anthems of William Billings,” Patrick Dill identifies five general characteristics of Puritan music. First, it was always sung in the vernacular, and second, music-making was an action of the entire congregation, not of soloists or ensembles. Third, the texts were strictly psalms and additionally, the music was always unaccompanied. Finally, Puritan music had a particular style in a 4-lined strophic form and was characterized by symmetry, syllabic melodies, step-wise motion, and limited ranges. Of these five musical characteristics, Billings retains only the use of vernacular language. Dill concludes by stating that the artistic ambition of Billings motivated him to ignore previous restrictions on music. According to Dill, this is what made him such a great figure in American music (31-32).

Many of the compositions of Billings are in the form known as the fusing tune. Nicholas Temperley defines the fusing tune as “a tune designed for strophic repetition with a sacred metrical text, in at least one phrase of which voices enter successively

giving rise to overlap of text” (*Origins* 1). Irving Lowens makes it clear that the American fugal tune had no connection to the classical form of a fugue; rather, it evolved from the 18th century English musical form of the fugal psalm tune (43). The form was first seen in American tunebooks in the 1760s and its popularity peaked in the 1790s.

In addition to fugal tunes, Yankee tunesmiths like Billings wrote plain tunes and anthems. The typical tune-smith was self-taught, and composed on the side while working as a craftsman. According to Sterling Murray, tunesmiths often treated their compositional process in the same way they would build furniture or a house. They offset any lack of technical knowledge with great enthusiasm, ingenuity, and confidence (433). As a result, their music took on a “crude craftsman” association and sound.

Murray’s article “Timothy Swan and Yankee Psalmody” describes the career and musical contributions of Yankee tunesmith Timothy Swan (1758-1842). Swan began composing when he was thirteen, and his earliest composition book, which is full of secular poetry and tunes, reveals that not all Yankee musicians wrote solely psalm settings. In Swan’s compositions, and in Yankee psalmody at large, the most prevalent musical features include modal qualities, irregular phrase structure, use of imitation, crude harmonies, untreated dissonance, missing thirds and tonal instability, and progressions based on root movement of thirds and seconds.

Timothy Swan wrote the tune BRISTOL, which illustrates the early fugal tune style. It was published in Connecticut and spread southward, gaining popularity. A text on the glories of God evidenced in the act of creation by the English writer Joseph Addison was most often paired with this tune. According to Crawford, the tune is best

known for its expressive text-setting, the sudden texture changes, and the verbal conflict in the fuge section (*Core Repertory* xxviii).

Text-painting, a form of text-setting in which the meaning of a word is depicted by the melodic shape of the tune, was a distinctive feature of fugging tunes by composers such as Billings and Swan. Examples of text-painting occur in BRISTOL through the setting of the words “pillars,” “shining frame,” and throughout the fugging section at the end of the hymn. As the words suggest, “pillars” is sung to a stocky triadic descent in the melody in the tenor line and “shining frame” receives a melismatic treatment (*Core Repertory*, xxviii). The steady quarter-note rhythm in the fuge section matches the text of all three verses, since each verse contains an enduring, persevering image at the fugging entrance.

The Moravians: Roots of a Rich Tradition

The Moravian Church, referred to as the *Unitas Fratrum*, was first founded in Kunvald, Bohemia in 1457 by a group of followers of the martyr Jan Hus. The Moravians suffered persecution through the Thirty Years’ War and the Counter-Reformation and nearly disappeared except for a small group that eventually found a haven on the land of Count Zinzendorf in the kingdom of Saxony. Theological dissent broke out among the Moravians on Zinzendorf’s land and the count became personally involved by holding conferences to end the dispute. In 1727, Zinzendorf brought the Moravians to a service that ended the years of strife, and it was at this service that those present experienced an “outpouring of the Spirit” which melted all bitterness and brought peace to the community.

Zinzendorf, who did not support the creation of new Protestant denominations or the idea of individual “free” churches, encouraged the Moravians not to separate from the church at large but to create “little churches within the church” (Allen 25). As a result, societies of Moravians quickly formed and spread throughout many European countries, never breaking ties with the existing churches but creating sub-communities of brethren who were committed to one another. In 1733, a group of Moravians under the leadership of Caspar Schwenckfeld were sent away from Zinzendorf’s land due to their more extreme beliefs and ended up in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and Salem, North Carolina, initiating the Moravian presence in America.

Moravian belief is characterized by their motto: “In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity” (Allen 89). Their eight “essentials” foreshadow Reformed Protestant thinking regarding sin, election, the Trinity, salvation, the witness of the Spirit, the doctrine of good works, the fellowship of believers, and Christ’s second coming (Allen, 90). The unity and charity of the Moravian faith made a strong impact on John Wesley, whose encounters with the Moravians always left him in awe of their unshakeable faith. On a tumultuous voyage across the Atlantic, Wesley found himself with a company of Moravians who, despite a life-threatening storm, continued on with their services of worship and sang praises to God without showing any observable fear of death (Wesley 25).

Moravian theology found its focus in customs and traditions, many of which are distinctly musical. As Harry Hall has pointed out in his study of Moravian music, the most motivating factor that prompted the inclusion of music in nearly every aspect of

their society was religious (226). Moravians believed they were to give their entire life to the praise and glory of God, and this inspired a standard of excellence in worship.

Additionally, they, unlike other communities throughout early America, remained engaged with European developments in music and modeled their compositions on the works of Hasse, Stamitz, and Haydn (McCorkle 593). Not only is the Moravian community musically significant because of the quality of their output, they also achieved many “American firsts” by being the earliest community to make and play European instruments, write chamber music, and perform major oratorios and symphonies (McCorkle 606).

The music-making of the Moravians was catalyzed by their remarkable commitment to a strong musical education which created the foundation of excellence for their service music. The most distinctive Moravian service is the Lovefeast, which is characterized by a communal meal of a bun and coffee served to the congregation during the singing of hymns (Allen 75). Another Moravian service is the Singstunde, a service led by a music minister who develops a particular topic by choosing individual stanzas from hymns that relate to the theme and combining them into one long progression of singing. Moravian congregations were so musically knowledgeable that such approaches created no problem and congregants could easily participate (*Moravian Music Foundation*, 3).

“O World See Thy Creator” by American-born Moravian John Antes is an example of Moravian hymnody with a text by Paul Gerhardt translated into English from German. In the text of this hymn, the theological progression from being moved by Christ’s death to individual obedience in life is prominent and a thematic thread connects

the “obligations” mentioned in verse four to the fact that the Moravians saw Jesus as the same Creator referenced in the opening line. Within the text are lines of biblical imagery such as a dramatic depiction of the crucifixion, a reference to sins as numerous as the “seashore sands,” and a contrast between Jesus as “Creator” and his underserved treatment as a “traitor.”

Certain characteristics make this somber tune suited to the text. Stepwise melodic ascents followed by descending sixths in both the first two full measures and the last two measures in this hymn create a stretched-out quality which suggests the position of the crucified Savior’s body. Measure seven contains an ungainly upward leap of a diminished seventh on two non-diatonic tones creating an exposed moment in the melody. The texts in each verse which correspond with this moment are equally poignant and create an emotional alignment of text and tune.

O World See Thy Creator

Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676)
Tr. anonymous Moravian (c.1789)

John Antes (1740-1811)
ed. and arr. by Karl Kroeger

1. O world see thy crea- a- tor Ex- tend- ed like a trai- tor, Up-
 2. Who hath thee thus a- bus- ed, Dear Lord, and so much bruis- ed Thy
 3. I, I, and my trans- gres- sions, which by my own con- fes- sions, Ex-
 on the cross- 's tree: Be- hold him whilst ex- pir- ing, And
 most ma- jes- tic Face? Thou art no sin's trans- act- or, Thou
 ceed the sea- shore sands; These, these have been the rea- son Of
 for man- kind ac- quir- ing There- by life, grace and li- ber - ty.
 art no mal- e - fact- or, Like oth- ers of the hu- man race.
 thy whole bit- ter sea- son, Of all thy bruise- es, stripes and bands.

4. The highest obligations
 Bind me through all life's stations,
 T'express my thanks to thee;
 Weak as I am and feeble,
 As far as I am able,
 I'll yield thee service willingly.

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Figure 4: "O World See Thy Creator", from *A Moravian Music Sampler*, ed. and arr. by

Karl Kroeger p. 16

Charles and John Wesley: A Great Forest of Hymnody

Charles and John Wesley were both born within the first decade of the 1700s and died in 1788 and 1791, respectively. Their early years were characterized by a solid education and Anglican traditions. As mentioned earlier, John Wesley experienced a storm in the company of a group of Moravians as he crossed the Atlantic to Georgia for missionary work. This experience continued to percolate in his mind until he returned to England and had a life-changing experience at a service on Aldersgate Street.

The importance of the Moravian influence on John Wesley, as well as Wesley's conscious recognition of his own theological differences with the Moravian beliefs, is well summarized by Billenberger and Welch in *Protestant Christianity Interpreted Through its Development*:

The pietistic Moravians had attracted him ever since his trip to Georgia. Shortly after his conversion, he visited the Herrnhut community. It left an ineradicable impression upon him. Nevertheless, he found the members of the community... too subjective in their faith and therefore not sufficiently based on Christ.

Moreover, they appeared too complacent, assuming that piety would automatically produce fruit in personal and social life. For Wesley, faith must express itself in a definite pattern and direction (118).

Wesley's view of the Moravians demonstrates differences between these two protestant groups. The Moravians are connected to the heritage of Lutheran pietism, and as a result, Lutheran theology can be seen in Moravian thought, specifically in a view of sanctification as eradication of sin (Tackett). The Wesleys, on the other hand, would have

likely found “eradicating sin” an insufficient definition for sanctification. “Closeness to God” would seem more appropriate given the quote by Billenberger and Welch.

The significance of Wesley’s intensely personal conversion experience has been described as “the point for understanding Wesley’s subsequent thinking and behavior” (Billenberger and Welch 118). Accordingly, the “Wesleyan Quadrilateral,” a well-known system for Methodist theological reflection coined by Albert Outler, incorporates this intense mark of experience along with reason, tradition, and Scripture.

In a series of three articles, Clark Kimberling has analyzed twelve hymns written and published by Charles and John Wesley that “typify the ‘Methodist tune.’ (21). He discusses the tendencies of tunes by Charles Wesley to have a wide range, even up to an octave and a fourth, and an active melody that includes both large leaps and occasionally up to a 2:1 ratio of total number of notes to syllables. This bold writing created bold singing in the Methodist tradition. Kimberling asserts that all of Wesley’s tunes “are strong ‘emotional’ melodies, and their emotional potential springs in part from their soaring and sweeping” (27).

Two other characteristics of Methodist tunes include certain metrical organizations and repetition (24). Many hymns by Charles Wesley are written with eight lines per stanza and seven syllables per line, or six lines per stanza with an alteration of eight and seven syllables per line with the exception of four syllables in the penultimate line. Not only is it possible for the penultimate phrase to be repeated three times in these hymn meters, it is a common practice. A threefold repetition at the end of a verse serves both musical and textual purposes; it can allow for a sequence or musical repetition to occur and it can also serve to emphasize the text as if it were underscored. Threefold repetition

of words in Scripture often serves as an emphatic stress and a signal of something being true or important to the highest degree. Wesley translates this concept into hymnody (24).

It is evident from the tunes that Kimberling highlights that Charles Wesley drew upon a wealth of traditions and sources to create a rich web of meaning. The tune LOVE-FEAST, shown in Figure 5, demonstrates the remarkable connection that the Wesleys had with the Moravians. John Wesley's high regard for this service is shown in his statement, "It was begun and ended with thanksgiving and prayer, and celebrated in so decent and solemn a manner as a Christian of the apostolic age would have allowed to be worthy of Christ" (qtd. in Kimberling 9). The Moravian tradition of the Love Feast service was soon adopted and incorporated into the Methodist service (9).

John Wesley's ability to unite rich poetry, sincere and faithful texts, and strong tunes fit for carrying and furthering the meaning is seen in the LOVE-FEAST hymn. In his 1780 preface to *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists*, Wesley writes that a careful combination of the "spirit of poetry" with the "spirit of piety" is the focus and intent of the hymns he and his brother published (qtd. in Whaling 177). This acknowledged difficulty of balancing high poetic standards with the expression of faithful truths is similar to the challenge the Puritans faced in merging musical and poetic integrity with biblical accuracy.

LOVE-FEAST

Charles Wesley

arr. Clark Kimberling

1 Come, and let us sweet - ly join,
2 Je - su, dear ex - pect - ed guest,

This system contains the first two staves of music. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The accompaniment consists of a steady bass line of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

5 Christ to praise in hymns di - vine;
Thou art bid - den to the feast.

This system contains the third and fourth staves of music. The melody continues with quarter notes D5, E5, F5, and G5, followed by a half note A5. The accompaniment continues with quarter notes: F1, E1, D1, C1, B0, A0, G0, F0.

9 Give we all with one ac - cord
For thy - self our hearts pre - pare,

This system contains the fifth and sixth staves of music. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The accompaniment continues with quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

13 Glo - ry to our com - mon Lord;
10 Come, and rest, and ban - quet there.

This system contains the seventh and eighth staves of music. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The accompaniment continues with quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

17
 Hands, and hearts, and voi - ces and raise,
 Sanc - ti - fy, us, Lord, and bless,

31
 Sing as in the an - cient days;
 Breathe thy Spi - rit, give thy peace;

21

25
 An - te - date the joys a - bove,
 Thou thy - self with in us move,

29
 Ce - le - brate the feast of love.
 Make our feast a feast of love.

28

Hymn 505 in John Wesley's *Collection* (1780)

Based on LOVE-FEAST in John Wesley's
Foundery Collection, 1742
 Harmonization © 2000 Clark Kimberling

Figure 5: LOVE-FEAST, from *Lost and Found: TRUMPET, LOVE-FEAST, ATHLONE, DERBY* by Clark Kimberling p. 12

In addition to the Moravian-influenced hymn, the Wesleys' output demonstrates a wide range of influences. Kimberling points out the Irish qualities in the tune ATHLONE from Wesley's experience of preaching there (11). According to Kimberling, the tune TRUMPET has been mistakenly attributed to Handel, but the only evidence for this lies in its similarity of style which merely indicates that Charles Wesley could write in a Handelian fashion (9).

In summary, the traits of the Wesleyan tunes discussed here help to characterize some of the most prevalent features of the hymns of Charles Wesley, but the wealth of traditions and influences that shape the over five thousand hymns he penned create such variety that these characterizations must be recognized as mere generalizations.

The Ephrata Cloister: Roses in a Garden

The Ephrata Cloister was a separatist community that resided in a handful of buildings covering a little over 250 acres in southeast Pennsylvania and was composed primarily of German immigrants under the leadership of Conrad Beissel. Despite this community's small size and brief existence, Richard Crawford highlights its musical importance in his description of four early American Protestant traditions, including it alongside Puritan psalmody, Anglican church music, and the practices of the Moravians (*Musical Life* 55).

Beissel established the community in 1732 and it grew to roughly 300 members before its demise in 1813. Monastic, celibate life characterized the sisterhood and brotherhood branches of this community. The daily routine included one meal and six

hours of sleep with work and worship occurring the rest of the time. As a result, much time was dedicated to rehearsing and singing.

In *Voices of the Turtledove*, Jeff Bach writes that Beissel's theology was centered in the biblical books of Revelation and Song of Solomon (29). As a result, the community developed a theology based on a mystical understanding of God's presence (66). "Experiential inspiration," or taking in God's inspiration through the senses, was the term for Beissel's view of inspiration, and it influenced the charisma with which he preached (27). Salvation was seen in terms of a journey of the soul seeking mystical union with either Christ or the female goddess of wisdom, Sophia. From this viewpoint, each human gender was understood to be incomplete. Earthly celibacy was necessary in order for one to be united with Christ or Sophia balancing out the soul with maleness and femaleness to reflect God's divine nature (113). The Ephrata Cloister's religious perspective infuses its texts with themes of mystical union, self-denial, earthly sacrifice, and joy in God.

Common analogies of the Ephrata community include flower symbolism, references to imagery in Revelation and Song of Solomon, and the turtledove. According to Bach, roses symbolize Christ or the soul betrothed to Christ while lilies are a mark of purity, rebirth, or sanctification (146 -147). Lucy Carroll states that, "each member of the community was a flower in a garden, with others who have chosen to live the ascetic and celibate life" (*Cloister Song* 4). The turtledove was an important emblem of the church as seen in the title of the Ephrata Cloister book translated *The Songs of the Lonely and Forsaken Turtle Dove* (Music of Ephrata 19).

The image of the turtledove is also conveyed by the unique sound of the cloister community's singing. Beissel instructed his choir to sing with a mystical technique

characterized by a breathy, hollow tone described as a “colorless, blending tone quality, devoid of personality and individual tone color” and similar to the sound of a turtledove’s coo (Carroll, *Music of Ephrata* 19). After a visit to the cloister in 1771, Reverend Jacob Duché wrote of the sounds he heard: “The music had little or no air or melody, but consisted of simple, long notes, combined in the richest harmony. I almost began to think myself in the world of spirits, and that the objects before me were ethereal” (Ephrata Cloister Visitor Center).

Beissel, acting as the music director for the cloister, introduced a set of rules for composition in his *Chronicon Ephratense* of 1786 with the following tribute: “The angels themselves, when they sang at the birth of Christ, had to make use of our rules” (Ephrata Cloister Visitor Center). One of these rules is that the melodic contour, not the bass line, dictates the harmonic progression. The result is that atypical harmonic progressions are common throughout the music. Additional characteristics include a free non-metrical rhythm, block chords, frequent passing tones, parallelism, and long restful pauses between phrases (Carroll, *Music of Ephrata* 11).

“I am a Flower in the Rose Valley” is a five-part, through-composed choral piece by Beissel, originally written and sung in German. Jeffrey Bach’s English translation, found in *Music of the Ephrata Cloister: Cloister Song in Modern Transcription*, reveals much about the character and beliefs of the members of the Ephrata Cloister community:

I am a flower in the rose valley,
Scattered among thorns,
Numbered among the number of chaste virgins,
Who have pledged themselves in love to the pure Lamb.

We enter in,
And carry our cross on earth,
Until there [in Paradise] we shall be glorified
With the entire host of virgins.

Given the performance practice of the Cloister singers and the long pauses for silence between the phrases of the music, the overall sound would have been one of ethereal restfulness. In addition to melodically driven harmony, declamation of text with strangely split words and changes in texture through the imaginative use of different voice parts are distinguishing features of Ephrata Cloister song demonstrated here.

The piece opens with the soprano and tenor singing the first line, joined by the other three parts for the second line which is punctuated by an unanticipated rest in the middle of the word “thorn.” There are fermatas at the end of each line, often followed by three beats of notated rests. These rests indicate a large pause after each phrase, regardless of whether the phrase is a complete thought or sentence. The rest-filled nature of the music adds a layer of contemplative meaning to the text that appears only when the text and tune are joined together.

Often, different combinations of voice parts are used on a single phrase with the changes occurring at times that correspond to the meaning of the text. For instance, as the text depicts the entire host of virgins entering Paradise, all five voice parts move in unified eighth and sixteenth note rhythms. At another point in the piece, the altos sing the line about the chaste virgins alone, offering a simple and pure texture. Yet another declamation of text hints at the concept of community: a line is passed from one voice

part to another voice part as if they are sharing in each other's burden of carrying the cross. At the same time, the tenors sing a repeated note on the words "and carry our" to create a stable sense of "carrying."

The Shakers: Limber Vines and Swaying Branches

Ann Lee, the mother of the Shaker faith, was born in England in 1736 and journeyed to New York in 1774. Her powerful influence gave life to "The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing" which grew to as many as 6,000 members spread throughout various communities on early American soil. These Shaker communities ranged from Maine to Kentucky although the main collection of communities was in New York and western Massachusetts. With some persisting as late as 1895, these communities operated as self-sustaining, communal theocratic societies whose members maintained celibacy.

Based on remarks in the many Shaker conversion accounts in Daniel Patterson's *The Shaker Spiritual*, the vibrant personality, experiences, and teaching of Mother Ann were the most compelling elements of Shaker life and thought (63). Initially, converts to the faith were inspired directly by Mother Ann or from her testimony, but later, the society grew in number because of those who desired the lifestyle of working toward the reward of an afterlife. Patterson writes that the many diverse motives recorded by those who joined a Shaker society can generally be summed up as troubled souls "craving order" (17).

Shaker theology emphasized maternal attributes of God identified as beauty, order, harmony, and perfection. These qualities influenced the social arrangement of the

Shaker communities and the actions of the Believers (Patterson 19). Central to Shaker belief was the inward feeling of divine love brought by the Christ Spirit, which came to those who had sufficiently prepared their hearts to receive it (Patterson 19). As a result, their lives were characterized by an active shedding of sinful behaviors and renouncing worldly passions, so that “the life of God” in the soul could be felt through worship and manifested in dance, song, and movement.

Unlike the surrounding Calvinist communities, the Shakers did not sing of atonement, the sovereignty of the Father, or redemption provided by the Son. Instead, they emphasized the religious experiences of Mother Ann and focused on the maternal characteristics of God in addition to the paternal characteristics. (Patterson 39).

Words which highlight the senses and bodily movement are frequently used in Shaker hymnody. Their texts criticize feeling “starched” or “stiff” and show, instead, the longing to feel “quickenened” and “limber” and to be filled with “holy fire” or “heavenly love.” According to Patterson, the metaphors in the text of Shaker songs shouldn’t be assumed to have the most traditional meanings because the Shakers often emphasized secondary biblical meanings or developed entirely new meanings based on common Shaker experiences. For instance, in Shaker hymnody, the image of the vine frequently depicts the Shaker faith while in many Christian communities the vine traditionally refers to Christ based on John 15 (38). Patterson’s studies also reveal that the dove in Shaker hymns does not typically refer to the Spirit but to a gentle and peaceful soul, and the lamb, rather than symbolizing Christ as the Lamb of God, symbolizes the humble Shaker follower (39). The text of the first and last verses of Eunice Wyeth’s hymn “The Humble Heart” demonstrates some of these references.

Whence comes this bright celestial light/What cause produces this
A heaven opens to my sight/Bright scenes of joy and bliss
O Lord Jehovah art thou here/This light proclaims thou art
I am indeed I'm always near/Unto the humble heart

Of all the sects that fill the land/One little band I've chose
And led them forth by my right hand/And placed my love on those
The lovely objects of my love/Around my heart shall twine
My flock my vineyard and my dove/The humble heart is mine
(Patterson 180-181).

According to Patterson, Mother Ann thought highly of Watts, and Shaker hymn writers often turned to the texts of Watts and Charles Wesley as a pattern for their hymns (150). One prominent influence seen in Wyeth's hymn is its opening question: "Whence comes this bright celestial light?" which is reminiscent of the tendencies of both Wesley and Watts to begin their hymns with questions.

Shaker hymnody contrasts with folk hymnody, a body of music discussed in the following section. Patterson indicates that the authors of folk hymn texts usually wrote with a tune in mind and shaped their texts according to the character of the tune. In Shaker hymnody, text development preceded tune composition, and as a result, texts were governed by literary rather than musical emphases (151). Wyeth, for example, was known for receiving her hymn texts in visions. Because of this unconventional approach, the tunes placed with the texts sometimes contained irregular meter or frequent meter

change to accommodate the poetry. For example, the tune for “The Humble Heart” changes meter three times in a single verse.

In the congregational singing of Shaker hymns, individuals often ornamented the tunes freely, so the overall texture of Shaker music was usually melismatic heterophony (Patterson 8). Shakes, trills, and appoggiaturas filled the music so that a single hymn tune would have many interpretive variations — a musical expression that seems to connect well with Shaker views of free and uninhibited movement in the Spirit. According to Patterson, the majority of Shaker tunes were built on pentatonic or hexatonic scales created by leaving out the leading tone or the subdominant, or both (21). The Shakers continued the Anglo-American tradition of singing with a full and strong voice, and avoided expressive devices such as dynamic range and vibrato so that the overall musical sound of a Shaker tune was hearty and robust (27).

A survey of the music of the Shaker community cannot be limited to hymns only since dance was such a strong part of the Shaker life. Dancing, or “laboring,” was seen as both a method of channeling spiritual blessings in worship and a faithful act that was rewarded by salvation (Patterson 100). Patterson identifies twenty different laboring song styles developed over the course of Shaker history.

The quick dance was a laboring song that originated in 1811 during the Shakers’ middle period, the decades just before and after 1800. Quick dances were sometimes danced with a period of unstructured movement but at other times they were danced by skipping in a circle. Either way, the tunes were lively and energized, and they were seen as a means of calling for power before receiving spiritual gifts (Patterson 250). An example of a quick dance is shown in Figure 6.

(2) [♩ = 106 (♯³)] MS L-228, p. [32].

Come life Shak- er life Come life e- ter- nal Shake Shake
 out of me All that is car- nal I'll take nim- ble steps
 I'll be a Da- vid I'll show Mi- chael twice How he be- hav- ed

Figure 6: “Come Life Shaker Life” from *The Shaker Spiritual* by Daniel Patterson, p. 254

The text for this dance references David dancing before the Lord as described in II Samuel 6:14-16. This is the passage most often used by Shakers to justify their worship practice (Patterson 254). The frequent use of the word “life” in reference to dance indicates that laboring was a life-giving practice for the Shakers and a service to God through worship. This unified act of dancing brings into focus the Shakers’ view of communal living. In setting up a self-sufficient Shaker community, there had to be a consideration of the division of labor. Whether in the work of their hands or the laboring steps of their feet, the Shakers demonstrated a remarkable ability to unite as a “Society of Believers” to make sure all the work was accomplished in life and worship.

Southern Folk Hymnody and Shape-Note Singing: A Fertile Tradition

Folk hymnody and shape-note singing in the Upland South (parts of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, and Georgia) connects back to the 1700s in New England (Crawford, *Musical Life* 158). The traditions of singing schools with music crafted by tunesmiths like William Billings filtered through country churches and rural lifestyles giving rise to the now long-standing heritage of folk hymnody and the practice of shape-note singing (Crawford 159).

Shape-note symbols have their origins in the solmization of the Middle Ages, but the shape-note system that initiated the transformation of tunebooks throughout the South was first patented in Philadelphia by William Little and William Smith in *The Easy Instructor*. The shape-note system, or fasola notation, is shown in Figure 7.

Full-Shape Notation, Sequence used by Little and Smith:

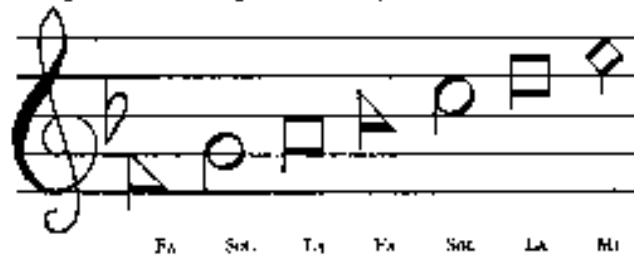


Figure 7: Shape-Note System from “A Short Shaped-Note Singing History” by Keith Willard on *fasola.org*.

The tradition of the singing meeting in the South can be described as a gathering for sometimes as much as an all-day event during which singers sat in a hollow square shape and sang three or four-part folk hymns, first using fasola syllables and then using the hymn texts. Crawford writes of these meetings that “singers in...[the] Southern tradition sought a state of mind in which vocal sound poured out of the performer toward the ear of God” (157). Others have described the hardy vocal sound produced by these groups as loud and coarse. As George Pullen Jackson put it, “A minimum attention is paid to individual voice quality... The song is the thing— the mass effect” (qtd. in Crawford, 156).

Two influential shape-note tunebooks were *Southern Harmony*, compiled by William Walker in 1835, and *Sacred Harp*, compiled by B.F. White and E. J. King in 1844. In an introductory article on William Walker’s tunebook *Southern Harmony*, Harry Eskew explains that the shape-note tunebook served several purposes: to teach music, to be used for congregational use, and to provide challenging pieces to more advanced singers (par. 3-5). Eskew remarks that Walker’s greatest contribution through his *Southern Harmony* tunebook was in compiling a collection of music in the rich genre of the folk hymn (par. 6).

These folk hymns were hymn texts set to tunes from the Anglo-American folk song tradition or tunes composed in that style. The usually pentatonic melodies were placed in the tenor and were often characterized by angularity (Eskew, par. 7). Harmonically, the hymns were much like the earlier music of Billings and Swan, frequently containing parallel fifths and octaves, unresolved dissonances, atypical voice leading, and open chords.

One of the best-known examples of folk hymnody is the well-known tune NEW BRITAIN paired with John Newton’s text “Amazing Grace.” These first appeared together in *Southern Harmony*. Unlike most modern renditions of this hymn, the early shape-note publication contains many of the features common to folk hymns referenced above. As seen in Figure 8, the melody is placed in the middle line and begins with an open fifth on C. Many of the chords that follow are missing either the 5th or, more commonly, the 3rd. These open sounds are especially accentuated when they move in parallel motion. Measures 3-4 and 6-7 in Figure 8 contain examples of this parallel open fifth movement, as well as measure 10 during the words “now am found.”

8 NEW BRITAIN. C. M. Baptist Harmony, p. 123.

1 Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound) That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see

2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved: How precious did that grace ap - pear, The hour I first believed!

3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
 And grace will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me,
 His word my hope secures;
 He will my shield and portion be,
 As long as life endures.

5 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
 And mortal life shall cease,
 I shall possess, within the veil,
 A life of joy and peace.

6 The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
 The sun forbear to shine;
 But God, who call'd me here below,
 Will be for ever mine.

Figure 8: NEW BRITAIN, as seen in *Southern Harmony*.

Spirituals: Songs from the Hush Harbor

The “hush harbor” was the dense thicket on a plantation where slaves gathered secretly and held unauthorized religious services. It is likely that many spirituals came into being in these hush harbors as groups of slaves processed their losses and their need for a way forward. As Moses Hogan writes in the introduction to *The Oxford Book of*

Spirituals, “It was these intertwined strands of sorrow and hope that became the substance of their song, undoubtedly first sung in their native African tongues and in terms of their own tribal religious beliefs” (par. 1)

The creation of a spiritual was a process unlike those seen in the other communities studied in this paper. Miles Mark Fisher theorizes that this musical process began with a member of the community sharing a thought about a situation. Due to African traditions of singing and dancing, the musicality of the slaves resulted in a musical expression of that thought. Thus, the core of the spiritual is usually a brief, repetitive motive.

As the store of information of that original singer developed, so did the spiritual. The original theme expanded as words or ideas were changed and musical variations were created. New verses grew from that initial seed. Fisher writes that the slaves would combine spirituals with each other to create medleys or add new material to existing spirituals to create a fully developed genre of music that could be passed around to others and passed on to future generations (177).

Regarding the multilayered text, Moses Hogan writes that slave songs often took on many meanings as a form of communication about escape plans. Seemingly biblical language such as “heaven” or the “river Jordan” could take on meanings such as freedom and the Ohio River. Hogan summarizes: “Just as Christianity itself refers both to liberation of the spirit here and to eternal joy hereafter, the spirituals came to be vehicles for sustaining the spirits of those in bondage and for aiding the escape of some to a life of freedom in the North or in Canada” (par. 5).

In an Advent devotional book based on spirituals, Cheryl Kirk-Duggan lists four characteristics involved in the profound message of a spiritual: the historical context, the multilayered nature of the story, the creative spirit behind the music, and the “divine relations and faithful thought” inspiring the text (*Leader Book 4*). These four factors summarize the aspects that combine to create this poignant genre.

The text and tune of the spiritual “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow” offers a characteristic example of the elements of a spiritual. The text is a conflation of events from the biblical narratives found in Luke 2:8-20 and Matthew 2:1-12. The fact that Scripture associates the wise men, not the shepherds, with following a star is a sign that these spirituals were not a direct record of biblical events but a reshaping and retelling of biblical ideas with additional layers of meaning.

Chorus:

Follow, follow
Rise up shepherd and follow,
Follow the Star of Bethlehem,
Rise up shepherd and follow.

Verses:

There’s a star in the East on Christmas morn,
Rise up shepherd and follow,
It will lead to the place where Christ was born,
Rise up shepherd and follow.

If you take good heed to the angel’s words,
Rise up shepherd and follow,
You’ll forget your flocks
You’ll forget your herds,
Rise up shepherd and follow.

Leave your sheep, leave your lambs,
Rise up shepherd and follow,
Leave your ewes, leave your rams,
Rise up shepherd and follow.

Many spirituals like “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow” came in the form of a call-and-response. In this form, a single person would sing the opening phrase “There’s a star in the East on Christmas morn” and all would join in for a response of “Rise up shepherd and follow” (Kirk-Duggan, *Student Book* 16). These call-and-response songs might have been sung by slaves while working in the fields as a way of unifying the group in labor. Additionally, the text includes repetition of the phrase “Rise up shepherd and follow,” a possible indication that the song developed out of that single motive.

The verbs in the text — rise up, follow, leave, forget, take heed —hint at multiple layers of meaning. This song could have signaled an escape plan, urging those to prepare for rising up and following the perilous paths to freedom. In cases where slaves had to leave their families behind or send them ahead, the idea of leaving one’s herd might have had a strong metaphorical significance. The phrases referring to using a star as a guide and taking heed of an angel’s words could have been references to landmarks to follow or people along the path that could be trusted (Kirk-Duggan, *Student Book* 18).

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter consists of a survey of styles and techniques in 20th century works of seven composers influenced by early American music. Each section will focus on a different composer's intentions regarding the original music. The composers' distinctive approaches to achieving a synthesis of new and old material will serve as models for the composition that concludes this thesis.

Recreating with Authenticity: Alice Parker's "Wondrous Love" and "John Saw Duh Numbah"

The approach of choral composer Alice Parker (b. 1925) toward early American music contains an overarching theme of authenticity. In a personal statement on her website *Melodious Accord* she says, "I am a devotee of folk songs from many cultures, as well as the rediscovery of Christian hymns from many centuries. Melodies which last teach me about the nature of melody itself, and I never tire of composing, arranging, conducting and teaching from these ever-flowing sources".

As a result of her personal love for early American music, many of Parker's choral arrangements preserve a folk hymn tune. Her style suggests the heterophonic sounds of an early American congregation because she writes with improvisatory elements in mind. Her compositional process is outlined in a description of her music theory book, *The Answering Voice: The Beginnings of Counterpoint*, which says, "Alice Parker envisions a theory or composition class where everyone sings and arrangements grow out of evoked responses to the sung melody" (*Melodious Accord Online Store*). Parker's musical genius

turns those early American sounds — often described as crude, dissonant, and untrained — into refined choral works which reflect a distinctly American style that is organic and evocative.

An examination of Parker's arrangement of the tune WONDROUS LOVE from William Walker's second edition of *Southern Harmony* (1840) reveals some of Parker's compositional techniques. The texture of this choral arrangement begins simply as the tenor and bass lines alternate between a constant drone and the pentatonic melody. The piece develops into a different texture as the alto and soprano lines move in parallel 4ths and the bass line mirrors the melody resulting in a sound that seems as though the lines were conceived in layers as in the tradition of the early American tunesmiths. All four voices enter in succession over the span of eight measures. This slow addition of voices reminds the listener of the fusing form of Billings.

Parker occasionally incorporates more modern-sounding harmonies such as major 7ths and chords with added 6ths. This adds a level of sophistication to her choral piece not present in her early American models. In the fusing section, Parker places the tune in different voices at three different rhythmic rates with the slowest in the bass line and the fastest in the female voices. Like many of the early American hymns, the arrangement tapers at the end as the voices return to a thin, homophonic texture concluding in an open cadence.

Returning to the topic of Parker's quasi-improvisatory compositional style, the piece "John Saw Duh Numbuh" demonstrates a way that Parker re-envisioned spirituals as choral arrangements. The piece develops in such a way that one could imagine what might happen if a room full of musicians were given a melodic phrase and asked to

improvise. The melody is sung through once by the tenors at the beginning and the other voices begin to add layers of ostinato-like phrases derived from the melody in an accumulating crescendo towards the end.

Imagining Development: Henry Cowell's "Hymn and Fuging Tune No. 9"

American composer Henry Cowell (1897 – 1965) wrote a series of eighteen hymns and fuging tunes based on the musical styles of William Billings and William Walker for a variety of instrumental timbres including strings, piano, and winds. Cowell succinctly described these pieces as “something slow followed by something fast” (qtd. in Stanley vol. 6, 623).

In the introduction to his first hymn and fuging tune, Cowell explains his process further by saying: “the early style is not exactly imitated, nor are any of the tunes and melodies taken from these early masters. Rather I asked myself the question, what would happen in America if this fine, serious early style had developed? [This work] which uses old modes [and] open chords...is a modern revision of this old style” (qtd. in Robin, par. 23).

The ninth “Hymn and Fuging Tune,” written for piano and cello, demonstrates some of the techniques that Cowell used to capture and develop the early American sound. These techniques include frequent imitation between lines and a wideness of range to evoke a particular atmosphere of the rustic New England countryside.

The hymn is an unpretentious, melody-driven piece in simple ABA form. At the outset, the cello clearly sings the melody while the piano provides an accompaniment with slight imitative gestures suggesting the fuging to come. The music is predominately

tonal aside from a few sections that tastefully reflect the dissonant harmony in some of the music of Billings and Walker. Cowell subtly interpolates 7th, 9th, and 11th chords with unusual resolutions in the piano part until the end of the B section when a series of four minor 2nds lead to a repeat of the more tonally simple A section.

The fusing tune is more energetic and folk-like than the hymn. The cello opens this section with a lively theme and the piano echoes in fusing tune style. Like many of the fusing tunes of Billings, the initial voice shifts from the theme to a new path. As the piece progresses, the piano and cello seem to spiral out of line with each other while maintaining a semblance of imitation through rhythm. When the piano and cello return to a more traditional fusing pattern, the original tune returns as well. The piece moves back and forth between these states of alignment and misalignment.

Fusing Styles: William Schuman's "Chester Overture"

William Schuman (1910-1992) has a compositional style described as "thoroughly American" in its "vitality . . . freshness and bounce" (Machlis 144). Two of Schuman's works include pieces based on tunes by William Billings: the *New England Triptych* and an overture-like elaboration on the tune CHESTER. Of these two works, this section will focus on techniques found in Schuman's "Chester Overture for Band," written in 1957, a little less than two hundred years after the original tune was penned by Billings. In the preface to *New England Triptych*, Schuman pronounces that his work is a "fusion of styles and musical language" and the same can be said of "Chester Overture". The techniques Schuman employs demonstrate yet another way of refashioning early

American musical material to invite listeners to contemplate the contrasts between the old and new times.

“Chester Overture” is arranged as a set of five variations that follow a natural arch that rises in rhythmic, harmonic, and textural complexity from the original hymn material and then returns to a more simple setting (Dochnahl 2). The variations are based on fragments of the tune over an increasingly complex harmonic framework in which bitonality is prominently featured. In addition to incorporating traditional variation procedures such as change in tempo, meter, and pace of melody, Schuman uses musical foreshadowing to transition from one variation to the next.

“Chester Overture” opens with two simple iterations of the tune to be played “religioso.” The first is in a manner of “quiet faith” and the second is with a sense of “majestic fortissimo” (Machlis, 147). The first variation on the tune begins bitonally with a drum-like bass line in C and a fife-like melody in G. It continues with call-and-response figures and phrasing of irregular lengths. The second variation is characterized by staccato articulations, with the melodic notes repeated as eighth notes in each measure. Schuman then transitions into a legato variation in which the theme is elongated. The fourth and fifth variations contain altered rhythms and fragments of the tune played by a variety of instruments, and the piece ends with a coda that maintains the clarity of the original tune and returns the listener to a familiar place after traveling through some more modern territory.

In summary, Schuman creates a fusion of contemporary styles with musical techniques that evoke early American sounds. In particular, the bitonality in “Chester Overture” bears a relationship to the dissonance created by the tunesmiths composing in a layered, linear fashion.

Expressing Nostalgia: Charles Ives’s *Symphony No. 4* and *Sonata No. 2*

Known for his use of existing materials in composing, the groundbreaking modernist Charles Ives (1874-1954) offers an example of incorporating early American hymn material through techniques of quoting, paraphrasing, and transforming to create a synthesis of old material with new processes.

For Ives, the incorporation of existing music into compositions brought explicit extra-musical meaning to his work (Lapsley 311). By quoting hymnody, he added specifically theological and spiritual meaning in such a way as to “momentarily transport the listener to the borrowed scriptures’ meaning, conveyance, or personal association” with those hymns (Luff 35). James Lapsley theorizes that the texts of many of the tunes Ives quotes, such as William Cowper’s text “There Is a Fountain,” (represented by the tune CLEANSING FOUNTAIN in *Symphony No. 3*) suggest that Ives was expressing nostalgia for the fading era of revivalism (312). The following discussion will be limited to a brief note on Ives’s own personal religious influences and examples of his compositional process as demonstrated in his use of the tunes MARTYN and NETTLETON.

By the time Ives was fourteen, he was organist of the Second Congregational Church in Danbury. Through family roots and his many positions as organist, he was

linked to New England Congregationalism and was provided a strong upbringing in the spiritual milieu of the Puritan revivalist tradition. His strong emotional attachment to hymnody is seen in his description of gospel hymns in *Essays before a Sonata* as possessing “a vigor, a depth of feeling, a natural-soil rhythm, a sincerity, emphatic but inartistic, which, in spite of a vociferous sentimentality, carries [one] nearer the ‘Christ of the people’ than does the Te Deum of the greatest cathedral” (165). Lapsley’s research indicates that many Ives works in which hymns are paraphrased express a deeper layer of Ives’s mature religious faith (308).

MARTYN is a tune by Simeon Butler Marsh (1798-1875) most associated with the Charles Wesley’s text, “Jesus, Lover of my Soul.” Ives quotes this tune in the second and third movements of his *Sonata No. 2, Concord, Massachusetts (1840-1860)* in which the four movements correspond to literary figures associated with Transcendentalism.

In the second movement, titled “Hawthorne,” MARTYN serves as the “nucleus” of a new theme (Henderson 24). The peaceful, tonal tune is placed in the midst of a tumultuous, polytonal environment. By quoting it in such contrasting surroundings, Ives seems to be highlighting the respite it provides. He refers to this moment as “the old-hymn-tune that haunts the church and sings only to those in the churchyard to protect them from secular noises” (*Essays* 147). In the opening of the third movement, “The Alcotts,” Ives paraphrases short phrases from MARTYN to recollect the Alcott family’s values (Luff 51). He also uses MARTYN in *Symphony No. 4* where he always notates it a quarter-tone higher than the harmonization in his characteristic polytonal style (Henderson 26).

The tune NETTLETON was originally written by Connecticut evangelist Asahel Nettleton and is used by Ives in the finale of *Symphony No. 4* in which he transforms the tune in a new rhythmic way. The opening notes in NETTLETON become the basis of a quintuplet punctuated by rests creating an effect of musical pointillism (Henderson 24).

Setting a Story: Aaron Copland's "Simple Gifts" from *Appalachian Spring*

In his ballet *Appalachian Spring* (1944), Aaron Copland (1900-1990) turned the relatively unknown Shaker hymn "Simple Gifts" into a hymn tune commonly referenced by the general public (Cohen). While *Appalachian Spring* is a story set in rural 19th century Pennsylvania and contains no Shaker characters, Copland found the Shaker sound to be appropriate for expressing the setting. Through writing variations on a Shaker hymn, Copland offers an example of early American music used for the purpose of providing a sense of place as the dancers on stage depict various scenes of a bride and her new husband in moments of daily life.

J. Peter Burkholder and Claude V. Palisca summarize Copland's technique in these variations as follows:

Copland's approach to varying this monophonic hymn tune is to change the melody relatively little but to place it in a series of contrasting settings. The one alteration he consistently makes is in the phrasing, treating the first two notes of the hymn's final phrase as if they were the last two notes of the third phrase and thereby emphasizing the long note on "turn" in measure 31 of the tune (vol. 3, 471).

Originally scored for thirteen instruments, *Appalachian Spring* was soon turned into a suite for full orchestra by Copland. In this version, Copland demonstrates an application of rhythmic alterations and melodic augmentation while repositioning the Shaker tune in different environments created by changes in instrumentation.

The first variation evokes a pastoral quality with solo clarinet accompanied by flute and harp. The mood continues in the second variation in which the tune is given to the oboe and bassoon with brass and other winds joining as accompaniment. Trombones and violas take the melody in the third variation as the Shaker hymn is presented at a slower tempo and other instruments consistently play on the offbeats. The variation ends in a canon with horns and violins. Copland transitions from one variation to the next with little motives consisting of quick embellishments played by the woodwinds that suggest fluttering sounds from nature. The brass section presents the melody in a triumphant fourth variation with scalar passages in the flutes and violins above it. As the last variation begins, the tune is heard over a descending bass line. The order of the sections of the hymn is reversed so that the piece ends with the opening lines of the famous melody.

Referencing Memories: John Adams's *Shaker Loops*

In contrast to Copland's treatment of Shaker music, John Adams (b. 1947) uses the same source of inspiration in a very different way. According to the composer's website, the title of his piece *Shaker Loops* is a two-fold pun; it is a reference to the string technique of tremolo as well as a reference to his childhood memories of living in New Hampshire near a non-operative Shaker colony. The title was generated from his informal

understanding of Shaker beliefs and the Shaker practice of dancing in an “ecstatic frenzy . . . that culminated in an epiphany of physical and spiritual transcendence” (Adams par. 5). He writes that his musical reference to this Shaker practice was “so out of place in the orderly mechanistic universe of Minimalism, [it] gave the music its raison d’être and ultimately led to the full realization of the piece” (Adams par. 5).

Shaker Loops is built on a framework of repetitive patterns. As the word “loop” suggests, Adams employs a technique that mimics the sound of a tape loop. Additionally, the other idea that inspired the early developments of this work was that of wave-like forms, or as Adams describes on his website, “sequences of oscillating melodic cells that created a rippling, shimmering complex of patterns like the surface of a slightly agitated pond or lake”(Adams par. 3).

Shaker Loops is a work in four movements with the following titles:

- I. Shaking and Trembling
- II. Hymning Slews
- III. Loops and Verses
- IV. A Final Shaking

As evidenced in these titles, John Adams is relating terms used by the worshipping Shakers to the sounds of 1970s minimalistic music. In particular, the title of the third movement seems to suggest this comparison most directly as “loop” is a minimalistic term for a repetitive phrase or rhythm and “verse” can be a church music term for part of song with repeating stanzas.

Relating the terminology of Shaker thought to minimalism evokes several parallels. Both the musical movement of minimalism and the physical movement of the

Shakers share a sense of rhythmic energy; the rhythmic drive of the minimalist style might contain some similarities to the dancing and Spirit-driven movements of Shaker worship. Additionally, minimalism and the Shaker way share an emphasis on elegant yet simple structures. Simplicity of design appears in Shaker life in the form of well-crafted furniture and clearly structured working days. In minimalism, the ideal musical form is one that conveys a similar sort of simplicity.

Updating to Modern Styles: William Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*

William Duckworth (1943-2012), the composer at the forefront of the post-minimalist movement of the 1980s and 1990s, offers another approach to early American music through the composition of a choral work entitled *Southern Harmony*. In this extensive series of anthems, Duckworth applies minimalist and post-minimalist practices to existing material in what has been described as “a parody in the word’s ancient sense, not a humorous imitation, but a rewriting of borrowed material, hovering between paraphrase, commentary and new creation” (Gann).

Each of the twenty pieces in *Southern Harmony* is named after a text or tune from the 19th century shape-note collection of the same name and maintains a melodic or textual connection to the original material. Duckworth’s guiding idea in writing *Southern Harmony* was “to maintain the integrity of the hymns” (Duckworth, qtd. in Gann).

Before composing, Duckworth would sing through the different voices of the original tunes in order to fully digest the music from which he was deriving his composition. This allowed him both to notice and preserve the contrapuntal tendencies of shape-note hymnody such as voice crossings, unresolved dissonances, odd phrase

lengths, and perfect intervals in parallel. He employs many compositional techniques in *Southern Harmony* that contain strong connections to historical traditions and performance practices (Gann). For example, a number of the pieces contain no text but instead use the solfege syllables of sol, la, mi, and fa, expressing repetitive minimalist processes and imitating the sound of Southern fasola singers on shape-note syllables. “The Turtle Dove” and “Nashville,” discussed briefly below, focus on the textual connections to the original material.

In “The Turtle Dove,” Duckworth writes a new tune to accompany the apocalyptic lines from a folk hymn by the same name.

“When worlds on worlds together blaze,
We’ll shout, and loud hosannas raise.”

By setting turbulent words to peaceful, slow-moving, chordal music, Duckworth creatively blends the strong faith of the people who joined together in shape-note singing rituals with the theological focus that these same early communities had on eschatological matters.

“Nashville” offers an example of the way Duckworth gives new meaning to texts through imaginative settings.

In the setting of the line, “Thy precepts guide my doubtful way,” the word “doubtful” is emphasized by extending the length of the note. While other voice parts resolve to the word “way,” the word “doubtful” is still being held. As a result, Duckworth adds a connotation of uncertainty to a line intended to create a feeling of security.

CHAPTER THREE

This chapter comprises interpretation of historical influences and discussion of compositional techniques in *New Leaves: An American Choral Suite*. The suite reflects a synthesis of musical and theological characteristics from the congregational song of early American groups, as outlined in Chapter 1, with compositional techniques of composers who have written musical works inspired by early American music, as described in Chapter 2.

General Characteristics

New Leaves is composed in the form of a suite in order to juxtapose the different systems of theology and music studied in this thesis. During the Baroque era, a suite was a set of instrumental pieces with each movement based on a dance from a particular region. While the definition of the suite has since evolved and expanded, one major characteristic continues to distinguish the suite and that is its “quality of an aggregate – the character of a pastiche” (Stanley vol. 24, p. 667). In the case of *New Leaves*, varying theologies and ways of making music are made part of a greater whole through an organization based on the geography and chronology of the communities studied.

The progression of movements in *New Leaves* is arranged from the earliest Puritan settlers in New England to the later groups of fiddle singers in southern regions. Each movement contains influences from two communities, and these pairs were chosen based on a particular musical or theological connection between the two communities. These associations are explained further in the description of each movement.

In keeping with the congregational themes of this study, *New Leaves* involves the audience, or congregation, in each movement. The congregational parts are purposefully simple and are doubled by the choral ensemble for support so that audiences with a variety of musical abilities can participate. In the debut performance of *New Leaves*, the music was provided in notation to each audience member (Appendix C) with written instructions regarding when to sing. Additionally, the choral ensemble demonstrated each excerpt for the audience before performing the suite.

Movement 1: Sola Scriptura

This movement focuses on the music of early Puritan congregations and the style of William Billings. This association depicts a chronological journey through the history of Puritan music culminating in the fusing tune style of Billings. Through variations on a strophic hymn, the form reflects Crawford's comments regarding rhythmic development in Puritan song which progressed over 112 years from evenly declaimed text, to iambic and dactylic meters, to a final expansion in the imitative fusing tunes of Billings.

The first strophe of this movement starts with a syllabic setting. This is followed by a traditional four-part hymn rendition of the tune sung by the choir and audience (m. 8-16). This hymn reappears between each of the strophes sung by the choir. The second choral strophe, beginning at measure 17, includes dactylic rhythms consisting of single quarter notes followed by pairs of eighth notes. The third strophe is iambic with lilting patterns of eighth notes and quarter notes in 6/8 meter. It also includes the rhythmic variety (m. 41) characteristic of later Puritan hymns. The final strophe emulates the style of a fusing tune with lines entering individually in imitation of each other. In this last

section, the text setting of certain words such as “fountain,” “waters,” and “constant” reflects the meanings of the words through text-painting, a practice that Billings employed.

Other historical elements influenced the harmony and metrical organization of this movement. To imitate the unconventional harmony of Billings, this movement contains harmonic elements such as parallel 4ths and 5ths between the soprano and alto lines and open 5ths at cadences. Measures 1-8 open with the men singing a simplified text with a slightly different pace than the women, imitating the disparate sounds of early Puritan congregations singing according to the “Old Way.” In early American singing schools, it was not uncommon for women to the double parts of tenor and bass, creating parallel octaves. The instructions for measures 34 through 45 call for the doubling of lines in octaves to imitate this practice.

The text of this movement is focused on the Puritan value of the primacy of Scripture. It is a paraphrase of the anonymous Puritan prayer titled “A Minister’s Bible” from the collection of intimate Puritan devotions, prayers, and writings, *The Valley of Vision* (346-347). The text of the congregational verse is as follows:

Then write thine own words on my heart,
Inscribe them on my lips and tongue,
So shall all glory be to Thee!
To Christ who is the Living Word.

Because the congregation sings this verse after each strophic variation sung by the choir, the effect is suggestive of a continual application of the Word to the hearts of the people.

Movement 2: If You Seek Me

This movement is inspired by elements of the Moravian community as well as the hymns of John and Charles Wesley since the Wesleys had many interactions with Moravians. While diverging in some areas, the theology of the Wesleys and the theology of Moravians share some primary emphases such as a focus on God's abundant love, forgiveness of sins, holy Christian living, unity of the saints, and the strength of prayer.

The tune of this piece comes from the trio section of the third movement of Schubert's Sonata in A Minor Op. 42. The vocal nature of this Schubert melody creates a very natural gesture not unlike the sweeping, tuneful lines of Charles Wesley. The movement follows nearly the same form as the Schubert trio, with the exception of some additional material from m. 53 to the end to accommodate the Wesleyan hymn text. It concludes with a threefold repetition of the text "I sought him not." As Clark Kimberling mentioned in his study of the traits of Wesleyan melodies, threefold repetitions of a line at the end of a hymn offer a musical opportunity to create a sequence, and represent "a hallmark of the Methodist tune" (*Tunes Lost and Found*, 27).

The text for this movement is based on Jeremiah 29:11-14, a passage set famously by Mendelssohn in his oratorio *Elijah*. This passage came to the forefront during a search for Moravian writings that could serve as a basis for the text of this movement. According to an editorial essay by Frederick J. Gaiser titled "'I Will Let You Find Me': A Word for the New Year," the Moravians have a practice of sending out a *Losung*, or "watchword," to the entire congregation (3). A tradition dating back to Count von Zinzendorf's time, these watchwords are verses chosen from the Old Testament to edify and encourage Moravian believers. Additionally, a *Jahreslosung*, or "watchword for the

year,” offers an overarching thought for the calendar year (Gaiser 3). The Moravian *Jahreslosung* for 2000 was Jeremiah 29:13-14 and this turn-of-the-century thought is the central theme for this movement. The audience joins the performers for the closing Wesley-based verse which also focuses on the dual concept of our free-willed seeking for God and God’s divine act of choosing.

Finally, the addition of the brass quartet is inspired by the instrumental traditions of the Moravian community and the strong emphasis on music education and instrumental training for Moravian youth. The movement calls for two trombones and two horns which enact a musical call and response imitating the theological “calling and responding” found in the text. These four brass instruments play an introduction, lead the chorus through transitional periods in the music, and reinforce the singing in the final measures.

Movement 3: Community

The third movement forges an unusual union between the distinctly different communities of the Shakers and the Ephrata Cloister. The intention of this movement is to compare and contrast the metaphors, themes, and theological positions of these two communities. Some of the similarities include separatist living, celibacy, religious mysticism, charismatic leaders, prominent dove and flower imagery, and value of music. Significant differences include their worship styles, traditions, and geographical locations.

This movement employs an aleatoric form over a steady ostinato to convey the intended concepts. Before the aleatoric composite, however, is an introductory Shaker

melody on the text “Alleluia,” a word that has strong communal implications. This Alleluia introduction is sung by both the performers and the audience at full volume while the musicians also stomp their feet on every downbeat to evoke the sounds of the Shakers’ laboring steps on the wooden meetinghouse floor. The aleatoric verses follow, each beginning with a solo voice asking a question answered by choral voices on texts according to both Shaker and Ephrata Cloister viewpoints in an unmetered accumulation of melodic motives.

The text of each verse consists of a series of phrases organized thematically by analogies introduced by the soloist: a dove, a flower, the act of “laboring”, and a mystery. The ostinato words (docile, fragrance, dancing, unknown) reflect the themes of each verse and many of these phrases were taken from the original text, included as Appendix B, which reflects an early stage in the compositional process. As the phrases in this movement include different parts of a sentence, meanings beyond those of the individual phrases can emerge from the texture depending upon the juxtaposition of the phrases in performance.

The music for each phrase is conceived to support the emotion of the text. For example, the phrase “Beauty, truth, and rarity” from the first verse (a Shakespearean reference from the poem “The Phoenix and the Turtle”) is treated melismatically, according to the elegance of the line. The second phrase, “Taking wing together” captures the image of a flock of doves taking flight which translates into a musical gesture in which the notes hover between B-flat and C before gaining height and soaring on the long, high D. The third line, with the text “Limber and free,” incorporates a dotted note and a quick vocal glissando to represent the unrestrained litheness of the dove, and

ultimately, the soul of the Shaker in the midst of a mystical moment of intimacy with God. The final line in verse one, a musically solemn declamation of the phrase “symbol of peace” references the pacifism of these two religious communities.

Movement 4: Future Blessing

The suite ends with a modern-day spiritual that combines the traditions of shape-note communities with aspects of slave songs. It expresses the strong eschatological emphasis shared by these communities as they faced many hardships.

Echoing the characteristics of folk hymns and spirituals, simplicity and repetition characterize this movement. The text grows from a murmur of fasola syllables into repetitive lyrics that express a longing for glory and an absence of pain and tears. The addition of the fasola syllables at the beginning of the piece is a technique used by William Duckworth in his post-minimal choral pieces based on tunes from *Southern Harmony*. Depending on the performance situation, these fasola measures can be repeated indefinitely as an introduction that grows from a low murmur into a more sharply defined melody.

The entire movement is built on only three lines of text: Oh there will be future blessing in glory/Then there will be no more crying for me/Jesus, my Jesus, he is coming for me. Voice parts enter on these lines separately, causing the volume and intensity to increase naturally. As the layers accumulate, the pronouns change from “me” to “you” to “all,” becoming more inclusive as if the singers are beckoning all to participate in this propulsion toward “future blessing”. The concurrent momentum of both the text and the

layered phrases create a subtle call to action that climaxes on the word “today.” This provides a sense of hidden or multiple meanings, an element found in many spirituals.

Harmonically, the movement is built on a two-measure pattern of the basic jazz progression I7-ii7-V7-I7 translated into all minor chords. In order to maximize the open fifth sound of the early shape-note hymns, the initial downbeat of each measure consists of the root and fifth of the chord with the third and seventh only occurring later.

In measures 34-36, the music cadences and restarts, this time with a phrase of the well-known folk hymn tune WONDROUS LOVE sung by the alto section. This line also serves as the audience’s part and is repeated while the performers rebuild the piece in layers around it. Since this folk hymn phrase moves at a quarter note rate against the eighth notes of the other voices, the second half of the piece combines the forward energy of the eschatological tone with the stilling comfort and encouragement that such wondrous love can have on believers in the here and now.

Conclusions and Summary

The first performance of *New Leaves: An Early American Choral Suite* was presented by a group of sixteen singers from Covenant Presbyterian Church (PCA) and Southeastern University, a school affiliated with the Assemblies of God. The audience included people from a variety of mostly Protestant denominations. The performance was held at First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) in Lakeland, Florida where the acoustic environment of the sanctuary enhanced the robustness of the sound.

There was limited rehearsal time leading up to the performance. Parts were distributed to singers so they could prepare individually. The entire group met only once

before the day of the performance for the purpose of determining balance and blend.

Smaller gatherings were arranged to assist with preparation. To provide security for the singers, some parts were played lightly on piano during the performance even though the score would ideally be sung a cappella.

The performance cultivated new communities, a seemingly natural outgrowth of a thesis process focused on communities and the role of music within them. The choral musicians who dedicated time and energy to learning and rehearsing the music engaged with aspects of historical religious communities while those gathered to hear the composition joined in the unified action of lifting voices in congregational song. Ultimately, experiences of works like *New Leaves: An Early American Choral Suite* promote an on-going dialogue with centuries-old traditions. As the beauty of early American music is articulated in fresh ways, the spiritual experiences of the present become intertwined with those of the past.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

New Leaves: An American Choral Suite



Leslie A. Robinson

Movement 1: Sola Scriptura

Text adapted from "A Minister's Bible" from Valley of Vision
Tune by Leslie Robinson

Movement 2: If You Seek Me

Text based on Jer. 29:11-14 with final verse by Charles Wesley paraphrased by Charles Hulin
Tune by Franz Schubert in Sonata in A Minor Op. 42 adapted by Leslie Robinson

Movement 3: Community

Text and tune by Leslie Robinson

Movement 4: Future Blessing

Text and tune by Leslie Robinson

Score

Movement 1: Sola Scriptura

Puritan- Billings Influences

Leslie A. Robinson

Slow; chant-like ♩ = 60

Soprano

I thank thee for thy Ho-ly Word, Its pre-cepts, pro-mis-es and light. In

Alto

I thank thee for thy Ho-ly Word, Its pre-cepts, pro-mis-es and light. In

Baritone

I thank thee, Lord, Pre - cepts and light,

5 (Congregation Joins)

S

them may I learn more of Christ, and give me grace to fol - low Him. Then

A

them may I learn more of Christ, and give me grace to fol - low Him. Then

B

Learn more of Christ, and fol - low Him. Then

9

S

write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and tongue. So

A

write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and tongue. So

B

write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and tongue. So

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13

S shall all glo - ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv ing Word.

A shall all glo - ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv ing Word.

B shall all glo - ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv ing Word.

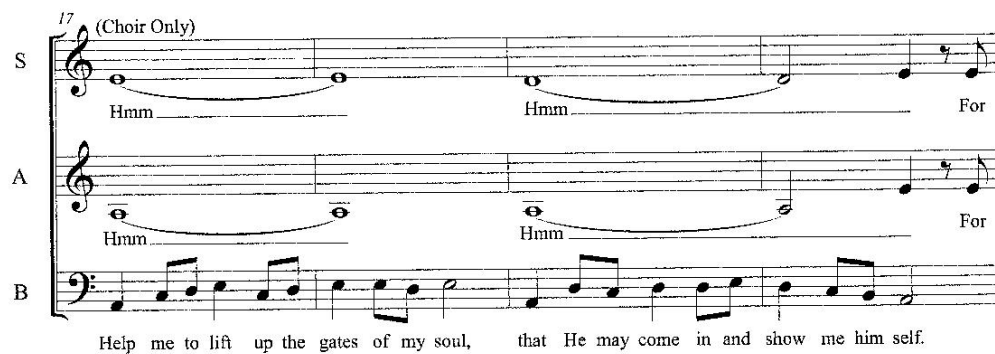


17 (Choir Only)

S Hmm For

A Hmm For

B Help me to lift up the gates of my soul, that He may come in and show me him self.



21

S I have no lines to — fa - thom its depths, Nor wings to

A I have no lines to — fa - thom its depths, Nor wings to soar to the heights of tity

B Hmm Nor wings to



25 (Congregation Joins)

S
soar. Then write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and

A
Truth. Then write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and

B
soar. Then write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and

29

S
tongue. So shall all glo-ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv-ing Word.

A
tongue. So shall all glo-ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv-ing Word.

B
tongue. So shall all glo-ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv-ing Word.

34 (Choir Only; Men and women may sing either line through m. 45)

S
Bless to my soul all grains of truth, gar - nered from thy Ho - ly Word.

A
[Musical staff with rests]

B
Bless to my soul all grains of truth, gar - nered from thy Ho - ly Word.

39

S
May they take deep root and grow, Be re - freshed by heav'n - ly dew, Be sus - stained by

A

B
May they take deep root and grow, Be re - freshed by heav'n - ly dew,

44 (Congregation Joins)

S
heav'n - ly rays, Be har - vest-ed to my joy and praise. Then

A
Be har - vest-ed to my joy and praise. Then

B
Be sus - stained by heav'n - ly rays, Be har - vest-ed to my joy and praise. Then

48

S
write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and tongue. So

A
write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and tongue. So

B
write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and tongue. So

52

S shall all glo - ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv - ing Word.

A shall all glo - ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv - ing Word.

B shall all glo - ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv - ing Word.

56 (Choir Only)

S Help me to gain by what I read

A Help me to gain by what I read a foun - tain

B Help me to gain by what I read a foun - tain to re - fresh my

61

S a foun - tain to re - fresh my heart Its

A to re - fresh my heart Its wa - ters as a

B heart. Its wa - ters as a con - stant stream,

66

S
wa - ters as a con - stant stream, Guid - ed by thy Ho - ly Hand.

A
con - stant stream, con - stant stream, Guid - ed by thy Ho - ly Hand.

B
wa - ters as a con - stant stream, Guid - ed by thy Ho - ly Hand.

Movement 2: If You Seek Me

Wesleyan-Moravian Influences

Leslie A. Robinson
melody by Franz Schubert

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes Horn in F and Trombone. The second system includes Horn (Hn.), Trombone (Tbn.), Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp* and *pp*, and performance instructions like "Oo" and "Hum".

Horn in F
1 6

Trombone

Hn. 11 16

Tbn.

S
11 16
If you seek me with all your heart, then I you find

A
pp Oo will let find

T
mp If you seek me with all your heart, Hum

B
pp Oo

Movement 2: If Ye Seek Me

Hn. ²¹ ²⁶

Tbn.

S ²¹ ²⁶
 For I know the plans I've pur-posed for you, for peace and good Then

A
 mc. Oo and hope for you. Then

T
 For I know the plans I've pur-posed for you, Hmm

B

Hn. ³¹ ³⁶

Tbn.

S ³¹ ³⁶
 you will come and pray... And I will hear, and ga-ther you back, from all the

A
 you will come and pray... And I will hear and ga-ther you back, from all the

T
 And I will hear and ga-ther you back, from all the

B
 And I will hear and ga-ther you back, from all the

Movement 2: If Ye Seek Me

3

41

S na - tions, pla - ces you've been. My pro - mise I will keep. And you will seek me with

A na - tions, pla - ces you've been. My pro - mise I will keep. *pp* ^{Go} -

T na - tions, pla - ces you've been. My pro - mise I will keep. And you will seek me with *mp*

B na - tions, pla - ces you've been. My pro - mise I will keep. *pp* ^{Go} -

46 51

Hn.

Tbn.

S all your heart, and I you find If gra - ce doth

A will let find me. If gra - ce doth

T all your heart, Hmm - - - - - If gra - ce doth

B If gra - ce doth

(Congregation Joins)

56 61

S more than sin a - bound, if we are wil - ling to be found, Why am I from my

A more than sin a - bound, if we are wil - ling to be found, Why am I from my

T more than sin a - bound, if we are wil - ling to be found, Why am I from my

B more than sin a - bound, if we are wil - ling to be found, Why am I from my

Hn. 66 71

Tbn. 66 71

S Sa - vior a - part? I sought Him not, I sought Him not with all my heart.

A Sa - vior a - part? I sought Him not, I sought Him not with all my heart.

T Sa - vior a - part? I sought Him not with all my heart

B Sa vior a - part? I sought Him not with all my heart.

Movement 3: Community

Shaker/Ephrata Cloister Influences

Leslie A. Robinson

Instructions

Following the solo phrase for each verse, a select group of ostinato singers (preferably one singer from each voice part) should begin and continue for the entirety of the verse. Each section is assigned a phrase number:

Soprano - phrase 1
 Alto - phrase 2
 Tenor - phrase 3
 Bass - phrase 4

The conductor will cue each section according to their number. Following the sectional cue, individual singers may sing their phrase at any time until the conductor cues for the singers in the whole section to stop. The conductor may cue sections back in multiple times. The conductor should aim to introduce the sections in a way that accumulates in tempo, volume and textural density to a single climax per verse and then slowly cut off the sections to taper to silence before the next verse.


For advanced ensembles: Following the solo phrase for each verse, a select group of ostinato singers should begin and continue for the entirety of the verse. Each of the phrases may be sung by any singer in the group. Performers may sing the phrases in a variety of tempos based on individual preference regarding expression of text. The phrases should accumulate in tempo, volume and textural density to a single climax per verse and then slowly taper to silence before the next verse.

Shaker Alleluia


Repeat twice; stomp foot on downbeat:



Verse 1

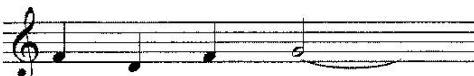
Solo Voice 
What is this do - ve?

Ostinato: 
Do-cile


#1 
Beau - ty, truth, and ra - ri - ty

#2 
Lim - ber and free - !

#3 
Ta - king wing to ge - ther

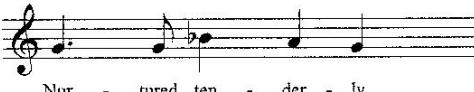
#4 
Sym - bol of peace


Verse 2

Solo Voice 
What is this flo - wer, this flo - wer?

Ostinato: 
Fra-grance

#1 
Ro - ses and lil - lies

#2 
Nur - tured ten - der - ly

#3 
Sim - ply a gift


#4 
On a small patch of land


Verse 3

Solo Voice 
What is this la - bor - ing, la - bor - ing, la - bor - ing?

Ostinato: 
Dan-cing

#1 
Work and pain

#2 
Pur - ging ur - ges

#3 
Wor - ship - ful throes

#4 
On an un - e - ven beat

Verse 4

Solo Voice
What is this my - ste - ry?

Ostinato:
Un-known

#1
Vir - gins in a gar - ment of white

#2
In - spi ra - tion

#3
Feel - ing re - ve - la - tion

#4
A bo - dy of sing - ers

Movement 4: Future Blessing

Fasola Singing and African-American Spiritual Influence

Leslie A. Robinson

With energy

Repeat indefinitely

Repeat indefinitely

oprano Descant

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

p la sol fi mi la sol la *mp* la sol fi mi la sol la

p la la sol la sol la *mp* la la sol la sol la

p la fa la mi sol la *mp* la fa la mi sol la

p la mi la la *mp* la mi la la

Fu-ture Fu-ture Bles-sing

5

Descant

S

A

T

B

p Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo-ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing for me.

p Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo-ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing for me.

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9

Descant

S

A

T

B

mp Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, my Je - sus he is com - ing_ for me.

mp Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, my Je - sus he is com - ing_ for me.

mp Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, my Je - sus he is com - ing_ for me.

13

Descant

S

A

T

B

mf Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing_ for me,

mf Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing_ for me,

mf Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing_ for me,

mf Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing_ for me,

Movement 4: Future Blessing

3

17

Descant

S

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, my Je - sus he is com - ing _ for me,

A

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, my Je - sus he is com - ing _ for me,

T

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, my Je - sus he is com - ing _ for me,

B

Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, my Je - sus he is com - ing _ for me,

21

Descant

Fu - ture _ Fu - ture Bles - sing Fu - ture _ Fu - ture Bles - sing

S

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing _ for you,

A

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing _ for you,

T

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing _ for you,

B

Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry - ing _ for you,

f

25

Descant

Fu - ture — Fu - ture Bles - sing Fu - ture — Fu - ture Bles - sing

S

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, your Je - sus he is com - ing — for you.

A

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, your Je - sus he is com - ing — for you.

T

8 Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, your Je - sus he is com - ing — for you.

B

Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, your Je - sus he is com - ing — for you.

29

Descant

S

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is com - ing back to -

A

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is com - ing back to -

T

8 Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is com - ing back to -

B

Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is com - ing back to -

34

Descant

S

day.

A

day. *p* What won-drous love is this? What won-drous love is this? What

T

8

day.

B

day.

39

Descant

S

A

won - drous love is this? What won - drous love is this? What

T

8

p Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo-ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing _ for me.

B

p Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo-ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing _ for me.

43

Descant

S

A
won - drous love is this? What won - drous love is this? What

T
8 Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je-sus, my Je-sus he is com-ing_ for me.

B
Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Je-sus, my Je-sus he is com-ing_ for me.

47

Descant

S
mp Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing_ for me,

A
mp won - drous love is this? What won - drous love is this? What

T
mp Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing_ for me,

B
mp Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing_ for me,

Movement 4: Future Blessing

51

Descant

S

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je-sus, my Je-sus he is com-ing_ for me,

mf

A

won - drous love is this? What won - drous love is this? What

mf

T

Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Je-sus, my Je-sus he is com-ing_ for me,

mf

B

Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Je-sus, my Je-sus he is com-ing_ for me,

mf

55

Descant

f Fu - ture _ Fu - ture Bles-sing Fu - ture _ Fu - ture Bles-sing

S

f Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing_ at all

A

f won - drous love is this? What won - drous love is this? What

T

f Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing_ at all,

B

f Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, Then there will be no more cry-ing_ at all,

59

Descant

Fu - ture — Fu - ture Bles - sing

S Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, *ff* Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is

A won - drous love is this? *ff* Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is

T Oh there will be fu-ture bles-sing in glo - ry, *ff* Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is

B Oh there will be fu-ture bles sing in glo - ry, *ff* Je - sus, our Je - sus, — he is

63

Descant

S com - ing back to - day.

A com - ing back to - day.

T com - ing back to - day.

B com - ing back to - day.

APPENDIX B: What Is This Dove?

The following text demonstrates an early step in the creative process of forming the choral suite. It was penned after a personal visit to the Ephrata Cloister site in Pennsylvania. The text illustrates differences in meaning behind imagery and language used by both the Shakers and members of the Ephrata Cloister.

What is this dove?

Unspotted, unspoiled, holy and pure,
Gentle and humbled and asking no more,
Or quickened and limber, lively and free,
Living together in harmony?

Alleluia!

(Ostinato words: Docile/Fluttering)

What is this flower?

A rose garden on a small patch of land,
Nurtured and tended by a Holy Hand,
Or simply a gift, both spiritual and earthly,
Sent as a blessing in Mother Ann's mercy?

Alleluia!

(Ostinato words: Fragrance, Blessing)

What is this laboring?

Of service to God through earthly trials,
God-given grace during constant denial,
Or dancing in rhythm with movement so sturdy,
Ecstatic convulsion and steps in a hurry?

Alleluia!

(Ostinato words: Burdening, Dancing)

Who is this virgin?

Pledged to the Lamb in a garment of white,
Waiting for heaven to bring them the light,
Or sisters and brothers in meetinghouse rows,
Purging urges of sin through worshipful throes?

Alleluia!

(Ostinato words: Waiting, Sinful)

What is this music?

The servants and masters that each has their role,
Wafting lightly from voices and treating the soul,
Or rhythmic emotion that starts with the feet,
Forcefully pulsing to uneven beat?

Alleluia!

(Ostinato words: Softly, Strongly)

What is this mystery?

An inspiration of God that comes through the senses,
A mystical union that leaves souls defenseless,
A prophetic word and a language unknown,
A life of good deeds that with time could atone?

Alleluia!

(Ostinato words: Divine, Unknown)

Congregational Response:

Who is this body of singers united?
Dedicated to Word and Prayer,
When they gather 'round in Spirit,
In their midst is love and care.

Alleluia!

New Leaves: An American Choral Suite



Program Notes

by Leslie A. Robinson

Our folk-song, like our language, is neither new nor old. They are both of communal, not individual origin – they are both of immemorial antiquity and both are means of expression today just as they were 500 years ago . . . Our language and our song are like an old tree, continually putting out new leaves.

The title of my choral composition project developed from the previous quote by composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. Vaughan Williams’s quote stems from his own research in British folk music, and he is highlighting the constant change in the very essence of folk music. Through this past year and a half of my own small study of early American Protestant congregational song, I desired to create some new “leaves” of music, as Vaughan Williams suggests, by synthesizing the compositional styles and musical material of these early groups of people with more recent techniques that emphasize the ongoing life-cycle within the nature of music.

About the suite: This suite contains four movements with musical and theological influences from various religious groups in America before 1800. The work is organized both geographically and chronologically from the earliest Puritan settlers in New England to the later groups of fasola singers in southern regions. As part of my thesis project, I identified key musical traits and theological emphases that were characteristic of these groups. Through carefully chosen or written texts and tunes, I have attempted to highlight these qualities in each movement of the suite.

Movement 1: Sola Scriptura

This movement focuses on the music of early Puritan congregations as well as the influence of William Billings. American music scholar Richard Crawford has noted that the rhythmic patterns of Puritan music changed over time. The earliest Puritan hymns were mostly syllabic and the text was evenly declaimed, while later hymns branched out to include iambic and dactylic meters. I have taken Crawford’s comments about the rhythmic variation and applied them to this movement so that it reflects this historical change in Puritan music.

Notice that the first verse contains strong beats on every syllable, while later verses move the text in dotted or eighth note patterns. Additionally, a review of Puritan writings revealed a strong conviction regarding the primacy of Scripture. The text for this movement is a paraphrase of the anonymous Puritan prayer titled “A Minister’s Bible” from the collection of intimate Puritan devotions, prayers, and writings, *The Valley of Vision*.

Congregational Instructions: Please join the choir in singing this hymn tune between the choral verses.

Then write thine own words on my heart, in - scribe them on my lips and

5
tongue. So shall all glo - ry be to Thee! To Christ who is the liv ing Word.

Movement 2: If You Seek Me

This movement was inspired by my readings on the Moravian community as well as the hymns of John and Charles Wesley. The Wesleys had many interactions with Moravians as they traveled from England to America, so a combination of these two influences for this movement seemed appropriate. The tune of this piece comes from the trio section of the third movement of Schubert’s Sonata in A Minor Op. 42. The choral-like nature of this Schubert tune creates a very natural gesture that is not unlike the sweeping, tuneful melodies by Charles Wesley. The addition of the brass quartet is inspired by traditions of the Moravian community. The Moravians were known as one of the most skilled group of musicians in colonial America; they preserved the European styles of Handel and Bach as they immigrated to America and were the first to compose music in this tradition in the New World. With their emphasis on a strong music education and instrumental training for their youth, particularly in playing brass instruments, their music was often mentioned in the journals of Charles Wesley, as well as others such as Benjamin Franklin.

The text for this movement is based on Jeremiah 29:11-14, a passage set famously by Mendelssohn in his oratorio *Elijah*. The final verse concludes with a paraphrase of a hymn verse written by Charles Wesley that is based on this same text. This text, with its focus on both our free-willed seeking of God and God’s divine act of choosing, emphasizes an important point of distinction within Protestant theology.

Congregational Instructions: Please join the choir in singing this verse at the end of the movement.

If gra - ce doth more than sin a - bound, if we are wil - ling

8 (Women)
to be found, Why am I from my Sa - vior a - part? I sought Him

15 (Men) (Women) (All)
not, I sought Him not, I sought Him not with all my heart.

Movement 3: Community

Movement 3 forges an unusual union between the distinctly different communities of the Shakers and the Ephrata Cloister. Both of these separatist communities maintained a celibate lifestyle and a mystical approach to religion. Each group started with a single charismatic leader: Mother Ann Lee for the Shakers and Conrad Beissel for the Ephrata Cloister. However, Shaker communities were spread across areas from Maine to Kentucky while the Ephrata Cloister was limited to a small acreage in Pennsylvania. The Shakers were known for their tongue-speech, their emphasis on mystical union with God and ongoing revelation, and their characteristic “shaking” in a spiritual presence during their worship. The Ephrata Cloister, on the other hand, emphasized a strict, austere lifestyle that contained many traditions reminiscent of monastic life. In this movement, the diversity of these communities is represented by an aleatoric texture over a steady ostinato. There are four verses that begin with a solo voice asking a question followed by choral voices answering according to both Shaker and Ephrata Cloister viewpoints. This composite is bracketed by two hearty repeats of a Shaker melody on the text “Alleluia,” a word that has strong communal implications.

Congregational Instructions: Please join the choir in singing this Shaker melody at the beginning and end of this movement.

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia Al-le-lu. Al - le - lu - ia Al - le -

lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, A - le - lu - ia.

Movement 4: Future Blessing

The last movement combines fasola singing traditions with aspects of African-American spirituals. The communities that developed these styles shared a strong eschatological emphasis in their thinking due to the hardship of life they experienced. As a result, the text for this movement grows from a murmur of fasola syllables into lyrics that express a longing for glory and an absence of pain and tears. As the layers accumulate, the text changes pronouns from “me” to “you” to “all” becoming more inclusive as if the singers are beckoning all to participate in this propulsion towards “future blessing”. Mid-way through the movement, the music cadences and restarts, this time with a well-known folk hymn tune serving as its linchpin.

Congregational Instructions: Mid-way through this movement, the alto section alone will begin singing a phrase from “What wondrous love is this.” Please join with them at that time and continue repeating this phrase until the piece ends.

What wondrous love is this? What

APPENDIX D:

[Attached Audio Recording of Debut Performance]