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PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE RECITAL

by

Abigail Simoneau

B.A., University of New Hampshire, 2011

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Music Degree.

School of Music

in the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE RECITAL

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Abigail Simoneau

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Music

in the field of Music Performance

Approved by:

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Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

Abigail Simoneau, for the Masters of Music degree in MUSIC PERFORMANCE, presented on April 12, 2013, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE RECITAL

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Douglas Worthen

The objective of this research paper is to provide scholarly program notes to accompany the Graduate Recital of Abigail Simoneau, which took place on April 19, 2013. Program notes for Jean-Daniel Braun's *Suite in e minor* (1740), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Sonata in C major, K. 14* (1764), Frank Martin's *Ballade for Flute and Piano* (1939), Sergei Prokofiev's *Sonata in D major, Op. 94* (1943), Luciano Berio's *Sequenza* (1958), and Steve Reich's *Vermont Counterpoint* (1982) are provided.

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CHAPTER 1

SUITE IN E-MINOR BY JEAN DANIEL BRAUN

Suite in e minor was written in 1740. It is unknown whether Jean Daniel Braun or the flutist J.M. Blockwitz composed the work. The three-movement suite includes a *rondeau*, *giga* and *minuetto*.

The *rondeau* follows traditional concepts seen in works of this time. A theme is presented in the first eight bars of the movement, which are repeated strategically four times with “episodes” in between the refrain. The form flows as follows:

A: measures 1-8
 B: m. 8-16
 A¹: m. 16-24
 C: m. 24-34
 A: m. 34-42
 C¹: m. 42-52
 A²: m. 52-end

Each time the ‘A’ theme returns, it is nearly the same but a few minor embellishments are added in the A¹ and A² versions.

Braun created a sense of polyphony in the *giga* due to his use of large intervals. The rhythmic division that he uses in this movement is mostly triplets. The first note of the triplet figure is usually low in register, and the last two notes leap up an octave or higher. Braun also voiced some of these triplets to imply certain chords. Due to his arranging, if a flutist successfully emphasizes the first note of each triplet, there becomes a sense of two separate voices throughout the movement.

The last movement of *Suite in e minor* is a minuetto. The previous two movements are appropriately articulate and the minuetto is suddenly more lyrical. It opens with an eight-bar phrase that can be split into two smaller sub phrases. The opening eight bars can be considered

an antecedent-consequent phrase. The next eight bars are a contrasting 'B' section that ultimately returns to an 'A'.¹

Suite in e minor is a short, but surprisingly technical work from this era. Its variety in style and feel make it a well-rounded suite.

¹ Jean Daniel Braun, *Suite in e* (London, England: Edition Peters, 1991), 23-24.

CHAPTER 2

SONATA IN C MAJOR, K.14 BY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Regarded as one of the most universal composers in the history of Western music, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart excelled in nearly every musical medium of his time. Though only living thirty-five years, his output of compositions was extensive; over six hundred works. Mozart composed his charming three-movement *Sonata in C major* in 1764, as part of his violin sonatas K. 10-15.

Austrian composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria. Mozart was taught by his father, Leopold Mozart, and showed signs of musical gifts from an early age.² Leopold Mozart was a violinist and composer, and sought fortune by moving to Salzburg. He became a court composer and assistant orchestra conductor in 1747. When Mozart was three, he would not stay away from the piano. His father began to teach him lessons, just for fun, when he was four.³ When Mozart was five, he composed some of his first works, including a short Andante and Allegro. He composed more substantial minuets in binary form the following year. Mozart's sonatas for keyboard and violin (K. 6-9) were published in 1764. This was his first music to appear in print, and he composed another set of keyboard and violin sonatas this same year (K. 10-15).⁴

² *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Mozart," (by Cliff Eisen), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40258pg3> (accessed March 11, 2013).

³ Marcia Davenport, *Mozart* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), 4-7.

⁴ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Mozart," (by Cliff Eisen), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40258pg3> (accessed March 11, 2013).

Sonata in C major is a three-movement work; *allegro, allegro, menuetto primo* and *secundo*. The first movement *allegro*, is a strict binary form, with distinct ‘A’ and ‘B’ sections. Harmonically, both sections are driven by a triplet ostinato in the piano. The melody tends to play back and forth in a playful way between the flute and piano voices.

The second movement, another *allegro*, is broken up into ternary form (ABA). The outer ‘A’ sections are exactly identical. These sections also play back and forth between the flute and piano similarly to the first movement. The ‘B’ section has a more primitive melodic feel than its surrounding sections. It is more basic, and due to the ornaments used, it feels like some form of Baroque dance. This section is not very long, only 32 bars, and quickly transitions back into ‘A’.

The final movement, a *menuetto*, plays out like any traditional minuet and trio. Basic themes are presented in the *menuetto primo*, written in three. The *menuetto secundo* could be considered a “trio” section, because it does change key to subdominant F major, and we have a slight change in tempo. The *menuetto primo* returns to conclude the work.⁵

This sonata is an extraordinary feat for a child who was eight. From such a young age, Mozart showed his natural talents for composition.

⁵ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *6 Sonaten für Flöte und Klavier* (Basel, Switzerland: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag AG, 1959), 5-9.

CHAPTER 3

BALLADE FOR FLUTE AND PIANO BY FRANK MARTIN

Swiss composer Frank Martin is a hard composer to categorize. He cannot be placed into one particular school or style because his works continued to develop throughout his career.⁶ *Ballade for flute and piano* (or string orchestra) was written as an examination piece for the 1939 International Concourse for executants at Geneva. *Ballade* is a short, technical work for flute that shows the superior mind of Martin.⁷

Frank Martin was born on September 15, 1890 in Geneva, Switzerland. Martin began composing when he was eight years old and had only one music teacher throughout his childhood. His teacher, Joseph Lauber, taught him piano, harmony and composition. Following his parents' request, he studied mathematics and physics, but decided he had something better to offer as a musician. Martin never formally studied at a conservatory. He resided in Zürich, Paris and Rome after World War I, and returned to Geneva in 1926. Not long after his return, he began to teach rhythmic theory at the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze and lectured on chamber music at the Geneva Conservatory.

Growing up, German music was played in the household, which was true in most of Geneva until around 1918. This was when conductor Ernest Ansermet's orchestra had become prominent, bringing new music to Switzerland. Martin had been deeply influenced by Johann Sebastian Bach, especially after having heard his oratorio *St. Matthew Passion*. He considered harmony to be the most important musical element, and latched on to the way Bach composed.

⁶ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Martin, Frank," (by Bernhard Billeter), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/17895> (accessed February 28, 2013).

⁷ Alan Frank, "New Music," *The Musical Times* vol. 94, no. 1328 (October, 1953), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/933468> (accessed March 2, 2013).

Martin was also influenced by Robert Schumann, Frédéric Chopin, and later, César Franck. His compositional style was more radical due to his kaleidoscope of influences; French in outlook but embedded in German antecedents. This struggle can be seen in a few of his earliest compositions; *Trois poèmes païens* (1911) and *Les dithyrambes* (1918). Ansermet and his orchestra premiered *Les dithyrambes* for chorus and orchestra. Ansermet ended up premiering a majority of Martin's works following *Les dithyrambes*. Due to the interaction with Ansermet and his orchestra, Martin became to accept the works of French composers Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy.⁸

Martin composed several other solo *Ballades* for saxophone (1938), piano (1939), trombone (1940), cello (1949) and viola (1972). Poetically, the term *Ballade* implies a work that is clear and simple. Martin follows this idea with tonal freedom, rather than utilizing serial techniques. He created a more expansive melodic expression and intensity in his *Ballades* than he achieved in his prior vocal works.⁹ Unlike the traditional examination works, *Ballade* is strongly lyrical and required advanced technique by the flutist and pianist.¹⁰

Ballade encompasses several sections, requiring a variety of techniques from the performer. The introduction begins with a quiet intensity that slowly gets louder and dies back again. A vivace section comes next, which is precise in articulation and technique. This settles into a more dolce section, where the piano continues to think in a triple meter and the flutist

⁸ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Martin, Frank," (by Bernhard Billeter), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/17895> (accessed February 28, 2013).

⁹ Cooke, Mervyn, "Late Starter: Frank Martin Found Himself Late in Life," *The Musical Times* vol. 134, no. 1801 (March, 1993), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1193856> (accessed March 2, 2013).

¹⁰ Alan Frank, "New Music," *The Musical Times* vol. 94, no. 1328 (October, 1953), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/933468> (accessed March 2, 2013).

plays in duple above that. This slower section intensifies at the end, leading into a cadenza. The cadenza flows beautifully into the next portion, where over the course of about one hundred measures or so, the tempo gradually gets faster and faster. Once the tempo reaches its climax, the vivace section from the beginning makes its return and strengthens through the end of the work.¹¹

For a work that is under eight minutes in length, *Ballade* encompasses a variety of styles and techniques that show off both players in a short amount of time.

¹¹ Frank Martin, *Ballade pour Flute et Piano* (Austria, Universal Edition, 1944), 1-7.

CHAPTER 4

SONATA IN D-MAJOR, OP. 94 BY SERGEI PROKOFIEV

Throughout his life, Sergei Prokofiev dealt with the ongoing pressure of Soviet politics. Written during the war in 1943, his *Sonata in D major, Op. 94* was also arranged into his Second Violin Sonata. The four-movement work is playful yet elegant, and quickly became a popular repertory piece.

Sergei Prokofiev, born in 1891, grew up as a pampered and privileged only child. His mother provided him with his arts education, beginning with piano lessons at the age of four. Prokofiev began composing his first works around this same time. He began studying with a formal teacher in 1902, Reinhold Glière. Glière was a pianist and composer, and taught the young Prokofiev theory, composition, instrumentation and piano during the summers of 1902 and 1903. They continued their lessons through correspondence during the winter months. Prokofiev passed the entrance exam to the St. Petersburg Conservatory in the fall of 1904. Because the conservatory provided general education along with music, Prokofiev's parents agreed to his studies there. He graduated with a diploma as "free artist" in the spring of 1909.

Like many other composers of his time, Prokofiev left Russia after the October Revolution in 1917. He traveled throughout the United States and Europe and returned to the Soviet Union in 1936. Unlike many of the composers who left, Prokofiev was one of the only ones who returned. Because of his return, he played a role in Soviet culture through his compositional energy. He was traditionalist in his works and combined that with the neo-classicism he helped invent. Eventually, his musical voice faded due to accusations and prosecution by the government.

Prokofiev composed his *Sonata in D major* during the “Great War of the Fatherland” (Great Patriotic War) in 1943. Prokofiev was evacuated during the war like many other artists, and he was awarded the title “Honoured Artist of the RSFSR” (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic). Prokofiev focused on chamber works, and reacted with propaganda music during the war years.¹²

Sonata in D major is a four-movement work; moderato, scherzo, andante, allegro con brio. Of all four movements, the first movement is the lengthiest. It is in traditional sonata form, as follows:

Exposition: beginning – rehearsal 4
 Development: rehearsal 4 – 8
 Recapitulation: rehearsal 8- end

The final recapitulation can be considered a prime of the original exposition due to changes with register of the main theme.

The second movement, a fast *scherzo*, is more lively and energetic than the first movement. Implying a minuet, the movement is mostly in 3/4 time. In between the segments of the main theme (A) is a slower melodic section in duple meter. This slower section breaks up the continuous intensity of the ‘A’ theme.

Portions of the third movement are popular excerpts amongst the flute repertoire. It is an *andante*, and there is an intricate middle section. Though the overall tempo is slow, the middle section gives the impression of a faster tempo due to the constant sextuplet rhythm.

¹² *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Prokofiev, Sergey,” (by Dorothea Redepenning), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/22402> (accessed February 28, 2013).

The last movement, *allegro con brio*, is more energetic and livelier than any of the other themes of the work. A large piano cadenza occurs halfway through the movement. Overall, this movement gives a sense of optimism through its articulate and playful themes.¹³

Prokofiev's *Sonata in D* is a monumental work in the world of flute repertoire. It accurately depicts the political pressure and feelings that Prokofiev had to deal with before and after the war.

¹³ Sergei Prokofiev, *Sonata in D major, Op. 94* (New York, New York: International Music Company, 1958), 2-15.

CHAPTER 5

SEQUENZA BY LUCIANO BERIO

Each of Luciano Berio's Norton Lectures began and concluded with a performance of one of his *Sequenze*. Berio composed fourteen *Sequenze* over the course of his lifetime.¹⁴ The creative energy and gestural idiom that Berio created in his music made him one of the most prolific composers of the 20th century.

Italian composer Luciano Berio was born in 1925 to a family of musicians. He received his musical training throughout his childhood from his father and grandfather who were both organists and composers. Berio sustained an injury to his right hand while training for the army of Mussolini's Republic of Salò, which forced him to re-focus his studies from piano to composition. Because of the war and the province in which Berio lived, he had little exposure to 20th century music. During his first year of study at the Milan Conservatory in 1945, Berio was able to attend concerts and hear the music of Bartók, Milhaud, Schoenberg and Stravinsky. One of the works that struck him in particular was Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. Berio attended Giorgio Ghendini's composition class in 1948. Ghendini was knowledgeable on the works of Stravinsky, and had a solid grasp on instrumentation; both traits that shaped the work of Berio.

Berio's reputation in Europe and the United States began to grow during the late 1950's due to smaller works like *Tempi concertati* (1958-9), *Circles* (1960), and the original *Sequenza* (1958). Berio had written seven *Sequenze* by 1969, and did not resume the project until 1976. He

¹⁴ Luciano Berio, *Remembering the Future* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006), V.

composed about two *Sequenze* per decade until he reached fourteen total works.¹⁵ These series of virtuosic solos embody the continuities that underline much of Berio's work.

The original *Sequenza* for solo flute was written for Italian flutist Severino Gazzeloni in 1958.¹⁶ The title *Sequenza* literally means 'sequence', and each work explores that idea in different ways. Many of the compositional characteristics that are seen in the original *Sequenza* are sustained through the rest of the series. Though Berio uses all twelve tones throughout the work, it is not considered to be serial. Berio describes the rereadings of the pitch sequences he uses as "modifying octave placement and rhythmic proportion to the point where melodic identity dissolves into transformation."¹⁷ An example of this modification can be seen in the first three notes of the piece. The piece opens with the pitches A-G#-G (9-8-7).¹⁸ A and G# are written on the staff, but Berio displaces the G up one octave. When played, this chromatic progression is no longer heard in the traditional sense. Berio uses octave displacement throughout most of the piece, especially between notes that are only a half step apart; creating leaps of a seventh.

Berio wrote *Sequenza* in proportional notation, though his original composition intended on fixed, metered notation. The proportional notation only came as a solution to a problem; Gazzeloni expressed having difficulties with the precise system. Berio spoke about why he chose this spatial notation:

¹⁵ Janet K. Halfyard, *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 1.

¹⁶ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Luciano Berio," (by David Osmond-Smith), www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/02815 (accessed Feb. 23, 2013).

¹⁷ Janet K. Halfyard, *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 2.

¹⁸ Luciano Berio, *Sequenza per flauto solo* (Milan, Italy: Edizioni Suvini Zerboni, 1958), 1.

“Usually, I’m not concerned with notation itself. When I’m concerned, that means there’s a problem. The issue of notation comes out, at least in my own musical perspective, when there is a dilemma, when there is a problem to be solved. And that pushes me to find solutions that maybe I was never pushed to find before.”¹⁹

Many musicians and literary theorists became interested in Berio’s work due to the proportional notation and the idea of *opera aperta*; “the open work”.²⁰ Famous flautist Sophie Cherrier stated that the notation allows the performer a certain type of freedom and elasticity, though it may be disorienting at first. Even Berio himself admitted that *Sequenza I* was difficult with regards to notation in a 1981 interview:

“[I] adopted a notation that was very precise, but allowed a margin of flexibility in order that the player might have the freedom – psychological rather than physical – to adapt the piece here and there to his technical stature. But instead, this notation has allowed many players – none of them by any means shining examples of professional integrity – to perpetuate adaptations that were little short of piratical. In fact, I hope to rewrite *Sequenza I* in rhythmic notation: maybe it will be less “open” and more authoritarian, but at least it will be reliable.”²¹

Though this interview took place in 1981, Berio openly expressed dissatisfaction with the way flutists had been performing the piece in 1966. Rather than keeping to the marked tempo, he was more concerned about performers adequately showing the rhythmic proportions he intended. Berio wrote a letter to the flutist Aurèle Nicolet just before he was set to record the piece. He included a snippet of the first phrase in standard notation, just to show Nicolet exactly how he wanted it.

¹⁹ Janet K. Halfyard, *Berio’s Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 12.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

²¹ Nina Perlove and Sophie Cherrier, “Transmission, Interpretation, Collaboration – A Performer’s Perspective on the Language of Contemporary Music: An Interview with Sophie Cherrier,” *Perspectives of New Music* vol. 36, no. 1 (Winter 1998), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/833575> (accessed February 23, 2013).

Berio put out a second edition of *Sequenza I* in 1992. He translated the original edition into standard rhythmic notation. There are several reasons why Berio decided to make a second edition. First, he wanted to enlarge the association of various musical figures and gestures. A large part of Berio's music deals with gesture. It is important for the performer to be consistent in showing these figures, that way the musical ideas come across to the listener. An example of this type of figure can be seen in the first three notes of the piece (A-G#-G). This gesture is seen throughout the work, and is notated as a sixteenth note followed by two thirty-second notes in the second edition. Spatially, this can also be understood in the first edition. Second, Berio wanted to be able to articulate the works design. Formally, pivotal points that break up *Sequenza* are where the opening gesture appears. Lastly, Berio wanted to maintain a high degree of rhythmic accuracy.

Each of these three motivators relate to each other with the overarching theme of "gesture".²² Whether a flutist uses the original or second edition, the musical concepts that Berio puts on the page should be translated through the flute.

²² Janet K. Halfyard, *Berio's Sequenzas: Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 11-18.

CHAPTER 6

VERMONT COUNTERPOINT BY STEVE REICH

Steve Reich's *Vermont Counterpoint*, composed in 1982, is written for solo amplified flute, doubling piccolo and alto flute, in addition to tape. The prerecorded tape is scored for three alto flutes, three flutes, and three piccolos.²³ Looking at Reich's compositional history, one can see how many of his earliest works resemble the techniques he uses in *Vermont Counterpoint*. Not only does Reich reestablish the use of technology in this work since his early compositions, the tape allows him to create elaborate counterpoint lines in a solo instrumental context.²⁴

American composer Steve Reich was born October 3, 1936, and became one of the first masters of minimalistic music. Though Reich studied piano throughout his childhood, his musical vivacity arose when he began studying percussion with Roland Kohloff at the age of 14. He obtained a degree in philosophy at Cornell University in 1957, and dedicated himself to studying composition after his return to New York City. He first studied with Hall Overton for a year (1957-8), then four years with William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti at the Juilliard School. From 1961-63, Reich studied at Mills College in California with Luciano Berio and obtained a master's degree in composition. He remained in California after graduation, and composed his first recognized piece, *It's Gonna Rain*, in 1965. The concepts he used in his composition of *It's Gonna Rain* foreshadow a direction his music would take. *It's Gonna Rain* is comprised of two machines playing the same loops of speech that gradually move out of unison with each other. Reich utilizes this technique, phasing, in another tape piece, *Come Out* (1966),

²³ Steve Reich, *Writings on Music: 1965-2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 119.

²⁴ D.J. Hoek, *Steve Reich: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002), 16.

that he wrote upon his return to New York. Reich continued to explore this concept of phasing in instrumental works, rather than just the spoken word, in *Piano Phase* and *Violin Phase*, written in 1967. The concept of “phasing” in *Violin Phase* is created through the layering of four violin parts on top of one another, and the voices end up being one or two beats behind or in front of the first part. Reich continued to utilize phasing and pattern enhancement in his *Four Organs* and *Phase Patterns* for four electric organs, both written in the few years after his first phase works. The way Reich used layering in these works becomes important to the flow of *Vermont Counterpoint*.

Reich studied drumming for five weeks at the University of Ghana in Accra in 1970. He returned to New York following this experience, and began composing *Drumming*. *Drumming* became one of Reich’s first large public statements as a composer. The work itself was ninety minutes, and it was scored for nine percussionists, two female voices, and piccolo. While he was composing *Drumming*, the Boston Symphony Orchestra performed *Four Organs*; this was the premiere of Reich’s music in a large concert venue. He composed *Clapping Music* for two pairs of hands in 1972. Reich composed this piece purposefully so that he and his ensemble, “Steve Reich and Musicians”, could rehearse the work with ease in hotel rooms while on tour. The year after writing *Clapping Music*, he composed *Six Pianos (Six Marimbas)*, and *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ*. In these works, Reich focuses on using a repeated figure and then building a duplicate on top of that, out of phase with the original. This music, especially *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ*, relate to the sounds of gamelan music. Reich studied this gamelan music with masters in Seattle and Berkeley in 1973-4.

Reich’s next large scale work was *Music for 18 Musicians*, for percussion, female voices, strings and clarinets. Though this work is similar to *Drumming*, it is more harmonically active

than that earlier work. An ostinato of “pulsations” is what drives the piece, and different instrumental colors and textures emerge and recede out of the pulse. The harmonic progression that Reich uses in *Music for 18* is a sequence of 11 slowly changing chords. Boosey & Hawkes became Reich’s sole publisher after *Music for 18*. He has since received many commissions from the Holland Festival and San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

Vermont Counterpoint, written in 1982 for flutist Ransom Wilson and dedicated to Betty Freeman, a longtime patron, was Reich’s first smaller-scale piece since *Clapping Music* in 1972.²⁵ Wilson originally had intended to commission a flute concerto from Reich, but he refused, responding that he had no interest in composing something for soloist and accompaniment in the traditional sense.²⁶

Vermont Counterpoint is just one in a set of three pieces written for solo instruments; *New York Counterpoint* (written for Richard Stoltzman), *Electric Counterpoint* (for Pat Metheny). These “counterpoint” pieces reference the concepts Reich uses in *Violin Phase*, though these pieces do not involve alterations through phase shifting. Instead, melodies are stretched and elaborated in the solo voice and pass to the accompaniment. Substituting notes for rests through short, repeated melodic fragments are what construct the melodies throughout the work. Reich creates this layering of melodies by using eleven separate parts – one solo “live” flute, solo flute, three piccolos, three flutes, and three alto flutes.

²⁵ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Reich, Steve,” (by Paul Griffiths), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23091> (accessed March 17, 2013).

²⁶ Steve Reich, *Writings on Music: 1965-2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 140.

The taped accompaniment in these works creates elaborate counterpoint lines in a solo instrumental context. Reich explains the connection between the soloist and the taped accompaniment;

“What happens is that the live player plays something, and then when he has built up a pattern, another voice is introduced that continues the pattern, freeing the live player to do the next thing. The voice that had been in the foreground now goes to the background.”²⁷

Reich utilizes this concept in each of these counterpoint works, but each is unique in its own way due to general characteristics of each instrument – including register, phrasing, articulation, and dynamics.

As far as overall form, *Vermont Counterpoint* can be broken up into four different sections defined in the score (rehearsal numbers):

- I. 1-30
- II. 31-53
- III. 54-70
- IV. 71-92

Even though Reich did identify these sections in the score, they could be easily seen through shifts in key and tempo. Section I stays in the key of F-major, section II modulates to G-major which later switches back to F-major at section III, and section IV is in D-major. The major tempo changes occur via metric modulation at III and IV, section III being in a slower tempo than the other three sections.

Vermont Counterpoint deals with ‘place’, seen in the title itself. Reich wrote four works that directly relate to places in America - *Vermont Counterpoint*, *The Desert Music* (1984), *New York Counterpoint* (1985), and *City Life* (1995). Reich’s interest in American culture can be attributed to the poet William Carlos Williams (1883-1963). The way in which Williams uses

²⁷ D.J. Hoek, *Steve Reich: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002), 16.

speech creates a very clear, but percussive tone to his poems, and many characterize his sound as “American idiom”.²⁸ Though Reich is connected mostly with New York City, he has a direct connection to the other locations. A longtime summer home in Vermont gave Reich a retreat from the city, and several works were composed there, including parts of *New York Counterpoint* and *The Desert Music*. Reich was unsure that the environment of Vermont would be a productive place for him to work at first; the speed at which people live in rural New England is much slower than the life he was used to in New York. Today, Reich claims to be comfortable in both the rural and urban settings, and considers the slower environment to be “a kind of equilibrium to his high-energy self”.²⁹

One might imagine that *Vermont Counterpoint* in some way reflects the soundscape of that location, but in reality, Vermont was not the motivating idea behind the work. Though ‘born’ in a bucolic setting, the piece itself is very demanding. According to Reich:

“In that comparatively short time four sections in four different keys...are presented...the relatively fast rate of change..., metric modulation into and out of a slower tempo, and relatively rapid changes of key may well create a more concentrated and concise impression.”³⁰

The flute can be associated with the bucolic ideas that Vermont represents, though *Vermont Counterpoint* is not the relaxing work one would expect. The “Vermont” of *Vermont Counterpoint* only came along through the suggestion of Ransom Wilson, only to honor where Reich had written it.³¹

²⁸ Denise Von Glahn, *The Sounds of Place: Music and the American Cultural Landscape* (Boston, Massachusetts: Northeastern University Press, 2003), 251-52.

²⁹ Ibid., 253.

³⁰ Ibid., 254.

³¹ Ibid., 254.

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