

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**In Response to Civil Unrest: An Analysis of Compositional Techniques as Used by
Contemporary Composers for Flute**

A Master's Lecture Recital Project submitted to
The Faculty of the School of Music
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Music Education

by
Stephanie M. Strait

Lynchburg, Virginia

April 2023

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this applied research study was to identify a selection of works for flute that were composed in response to circumstances of civil unrest to discover how the composers utilized the flute as a medium for expression, and to study the compositional techniques used to communicate with the performer. These techniques were explored and demonstrated in a lecture recital. Gaining insight and understanding of the compositional process as it relates to the composers' experiences aids the performer in offering a convincing and informed rendering of these pieces. It also contributes to the body of literature regarding composition methodology, particularly for flute, and provides recognition for any atypical methods of sound creation and communication utilized in these pieces. Repertoire for this project included six selections from five living composers who were interviewed regarding their compositions. This study identified a correlation between the use of improvisation and emotional expression in composition. It also identified trends of using or creating extended techniques to provide a more literal or emotionally expressive interpretation of their topics and tendency to incorporate technology, mixed media, and fixed audio. All composers in this study demonstrated a history of being active politically, establishing a link between music and social and historical events. This study demonstrated a lacking in formal musical training to address the use of technology and electronics in applied music adequately for the modern performer. Further research of similar dynamics in compositions across musical disciplines or over a variety of compositional eras could determine what trends exist across instrumental barriers, and how those results have changed over time.

Keywords: flute, civil unrest, oppression, composer, composition methods, extended technique, critical pedagogy, composer experience, electronics, mixed media, fixed audio, politics, protest

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

Problem Statement

Throughout history, many beautiful works of art, literature, and music have been the product of civil unrest, oppression or injustice. Hardships like these can be an effective motivator for the creation of beautiful, unique, and expressive works. In works such as these, artists have often drawn on their own experiences, or from particularly extraordinary experiences they have observed, as the inspiration for their creations. Commonly, works such as these tend to break the established conventions of sound creation that are accepted by their contemporaries. This necessitates the creation of nontraditional performance techniques for composition and new methods of notation that allow the composer to effectively communicate the desired sounds, and how to achieve them, to the performer.

There are a variety of studies that have documented circumstances surrounding notable events of civil unrest that inspired works for the flute, as Mary J. Procopio discusses in her exploration of compositions for flute by Haitian composers, and in the writings about Hungarian compositions for flute and piano that were overlooked as a result of Communist oppression.¹ More general studies on the connection between culture and society as it is reflected in compositions have also been made, including one study that focuses on the compositions of

¹ Mary J. Procopio, "Haitian Classical Music, Vodou and Cultural Identity: An Examination of the Classical Flute Compositions by Haitian Composer Werner A. Jaegerhuber" PhD diss., Michigan State University, 2005, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/ee795a5cd4965092aa0fbba391082f94/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=yFF>; Szabolcs Szilágyi and Veronika Kusz, "Parallel Lives: A Flute-Piano Program of Two Hungarian Composers' Works," *Pan: The Flute Magazine*, 35, no. 4, (2016), 41-43, <http://real.mtak.hu/62384/1/2.pdf>.

French composers from 1850 to 1950.² One interesting study even documents the lack of coverage of music as a factor in sociological research that analyzes the product of cultural and societal influence.³ Finally, an intriguing study on compositional methods explores how methods used in flute literature express the ideals and experiences of the composers; however, it discusses composers who are highly nationalistic and whose methods were not a product of civil unrest.⁴ No research presently exists that discusses the effects of notable events of civil unrest experienced or observed by composers on their compositional techniques and their methods for utilizing the flute to create uniquely expressive sounds. This study aims to explore the relationship between composers who create works for the flute in response to civil unrest, either experienced or observed, and identify the way these experiences affect compositional practices and expand the variety of accepted techniques for sound creation on the flute.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this applied research study is to identify a selection of works for flute that were composed as a result of experiences or observations of civil unrest, to discover the methods for sound creation utilized in their compositions, and to document the compositional techniques used to communicate the desired sounds to the performer. Additionally, these techniques will be explored and demonstrated in a lecture recital.

² Susan Nanette Hayes, "Chamber Music in France Featuring Flute and Soprano, 1850-1950, and a Study of the Interactions Among the Leading Flutists, Sopranos, Composers, Artists, and Literary Figures of the Time" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2006), <https://www.proquest.com/openview/cedabe2c6792235bc48480976f29920a/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>.

³ Richard Leppert and Susan McClary, *Music and Society: The politics of composition, performance and reception*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁴ Wei-li Kang, "The journey to identity: the range of nationalistic expression in seven selected flute pieces" (PhD diss., California State University, Northridge, Department of Music, 2013), <https://scholarworks.csun.edu/handle/10211.2/3360>.

To explore this topic, a survey of flute literature will be conducted to identify compositions that emerged as a reaction to civil unrest, and these works will be individually investigated as a part of this research study to learn more about the compositional process and the composers' experiences. It will also help to illuminate a composer's methods for working against the limitations of the flute and how to overcome them, or in contrast, how to best leverage the unique characteristics of the flute in order to accurately express themselves. Further, this study will help to publicize and disseminate effective methods for communication between the composer and performer. While this study will focus on methods for the flute, many elements may be applicable to other instruments or voice as well.

Significance of the Study

This study will demonstrate the relationship between personal or observed experiences on the creative process of composers, especially relating to their poignant experiences concerning civil unrest like oppression and injustice. Gaining insight and understanding into this process, as well as gaining knowledge of the circumstances inspiring these compositions, will give the performer a richer understanding of the composers' perspectives, and allow him or her the capability to communicate those reactions and responses during performance. Additionally, this study will generate awareness of atypical methods for sound production on the flute, and compositional techniques now available for communicating these sounds, by contributing to the body of literature available on the subject. Many innovative compositional techniques and applications of harmony have been documented and are commonly discussed and studied regarding the works of composers like John Cage, Claude Debussy, and Charles Ives, as is

evident in the content of common music textbooks,⁵ but works for flute are not commonly recognized for similar innovations.

Furthermore, this study will bring awareness to circumstances that led to civil unrest throughout history, discuss how the flute has been implemented in response to these circumstances, and bring recognition to the progressive methods of these composers. While many avant-garde composers have become highly praised in modern musical culture, they were often regarded as bizarre and offensive for their groundbreaking techniques for expression and composition. These circumstances and resulting performance and compositional techniques have been documented regarding many well-known compositions for symphonic orchestra like Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, and *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*, by Krzysztof Penderecki,⁶ but little documentation exists regarding compositions for flute that follow this pattern. This study and corresponding lecture recital will provide new insight to the effects of experiences of notable events of civil unrest on compositions for flute and the body of flute literature.

Research Question and Sub Questions

How have composers utilized the flute as a medium for communicating their responses to social or political conflict?

⁵ J. Peter Burkholder, *A Concise History of Western Music*, 5th ed. (New York; W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2019), 658; J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010), 162-164; Richard D. Crawford and Larry Hamberlin, *An Introduction to America's Music*, 3rd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2018), 60-62; 66.

⁶ Marconi Transatlantic Wireless Telegraph, "Parisians Hiss New Ballet: Russian Dancer's Latest Offering, 'The Consecration of Spring,' a Failure.," *The New York Times*, June 8, 1913, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, accessed July 17, 2022, <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/09/17/arts/dance/rite-of-spring-1913.html?ref=dance>; Mary E. Rörich, "Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* : A Case Study in the Dangers of Expressive Aesthetics and the Limits of Formal Analysis," *South African music studies : SAMUS*, 6, no. 1, (December 1, 1986), 65, ProQuest Ebrary, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/db271f71d536cc4f46f00749d22aeed/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=2029870>.

Additional Research Questions

1. What works for flute have been composed in response to social or political conflict within the last twenty years?
2. What compositional or performance techniques were used in each work that may have been unusual or progressive for the time?
3. What is the nature and extent of the composer's involvement in the conflict?
4. How do the compositional or performance techniques of each work portray the experience or point of view of the composer as it relates to the conflict?
5. Do the composers feel that their compositional techniques accurately represent or portray their perspective?
6. How has the flute been advantageous or disadvantageous as a medium in their works?

Summary

A number of works by contemporary flute composers have been created in recent years as a response to events or circumstances surrounding civil unrest. This project aims to explore how the flute has been utilized to in the composers' works to represent their reactions and perspectives, and to discover any commonalities or trends that exist in this body of literature. This will include an analysis of the variety of techniques employed for the flute, and will catalog those methods of sound creation, along with any new methods of notation required to communicate clearly with the performer. The composers of each work selected for this study will be interviewed in order to learn more about their world views, experiences, perspectives, compositional techniques, and intended purpose or outcome of their respective pieces.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

As a product of modern twenty-first century society, values of personal identity, equity, social justice, and advocacy are commonplace and intuitive to most. Additionally, the variety of accessible popular music allows a person to align themselves with music and artists that represent and advocate for their unique perspective or social causes. While it is intuitive to modern Americans that music is capable of expressing personal convictions and reactions, and is commonly used to target topics of political conflict or injustice, this is not as readily acknowledged in music of the Western-classical tradition. Though this phenomenon is abundant in Western-classical music, appreciation for this perspective in composition is relatively new, and research on it is limited, especially in regards to understanding compositional methods and techniques for generating sounds that accurately portray a composer's perspective. The focus of this study is to better understand compositional methods of composers used in works for flute that respond to civil unrest, and to examine methods utilized to generate sound on the flute that accurately represent the composer's perspective. This chapter will lay out the theoretical framework on which this study is based and will provide an in-depth exploration of available literature related to the subject of this research in order to situate it within the context of related studies. This qualitative case study will explore examples of flute literature that meet these criteria in order to contribute to an area of study that is lacking in exploration.

Critical Pedagogy Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in critical pedagogy theory, as expressed by Paulo Freire in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.⁷ This theory highlights class divides and aids in the efforts of oppressed peoples in gaining back their humanity. In Freire's theory, though he recognizes that there is no single cause of oppression and acknowledges the presence of many other factors, class is the static element that is present in all types of oppression, and that is an element that emerges in many of the cases analyzed in this study.⁸ Critical pedagogy theory will provide a framework for understanding the motives and goals of composers in the composition process, and will provide a more thorough understanding of the social climate and cultural elements that led to each case as they are investigated.

In his presentation of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1970, Freire introduced a new theory, now known as critical pedagogy.⁹ Since 1970, this theory has already been widely acknowledged as relevant to the arts including music, and several studies have been conducted related to music education that are based on critical pedagogy. Application of critical pedagogy to music education reveals flaws within the common methods of pedagogy in music that contribute to oppression and curricular hegemony.¹⁰ However, this study will focus on dissecting specific cases related to composition rather than pedagogy. Some studies utilizing critical pedagogy theory have been conducted with a focus on composers, such as Muller's article, "That

⁷ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* 30th Anniversary Edition, (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, 2005).

⁸ Ibid., 15; 46.

⁹ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 17; S. Rebeqa Rivers, "Expression of the Oppressed: Using Critical Pedagogy in Arts Education to Disrupt Systems of Oppression," *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 36, no. 9 (2020): Abstract. <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/vrme/vol35/iss1/9/>.

¹⁰ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 17.

Entertainment Called a Discussion: The Critical Arts Pedagogy of John Cage.”¹¹ This study focuses on Cage’s own pedagogy in music teaching though, rather than on its influence in his compositions. Very little research has been conducted on the application of critical pedagogy on composers and their works, which is the foundation on which this study rests.

As it is called critical *pedagogy*, one essential aspect of Freire’s view is education. He believes education to be one of the first steps in breaking free from oppression.¹² In an analysis of Freire’s book, *The Pedagogy of Oppression*, Mark Garavan notes Freire’s lack of consideration of commonly recognized forms of oppression in modern society such as gender issues or environmental issues, instead focusing on poverty in Latin America.¹³ One might conclude that, as more severe instances of oppression are addressed in the world, greater strides are made towards gaining humanity amongst those populations, and an increase in education and access to knowledge results, then a population is able to begin addressing somewhat less significant types of oppression for consideration and change. According to Garavan, “[...] the poor are oppressed by virtue of their poverty and are unable to be themselves as free, human subjects.”¹⁴ As people are liberated from issues such as starvation and poverty, they are able to begin pursuing their own humanity. For example, gender issues are less of a topic of concern in countries like Brazil where favelas - Brazilian slums - are the standard housing option and

¹¹ Otto Muller, “Entertainment Called Discussion: The Critical Pedagogy of John Cage,” *Action, Criticism, & Theory for Music Education*, 14 no. 2 (August, 2015): Abstract.

¹² Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 33-34.

¹³ Mark Garavan, “Paulo Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed,” *ResearchGate*, April, 2010, Introduction, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260297860_Paulo_Freire's_Pedagogy_of_the_Oppressed.

¹⁴ Ibid.

extreme poverty is still prevalent.¹⁵ Conversely in first-world countries like the United States, people already have more basic needs met and are cultivating experiences that explore and express their humanity. In these situations, subjects like gender equality, access to higher education or health care, and other slightly less basic needs become areas of concern regarding their role in oppression of some people. As this study explores music that emerges as a result of experienced or witnessed civil unrest, oppression is commonly a factor in these situations. While some of the cases examined here do center around scenarios common to economically advanced countries, some examples from less economically advanced countries edge towards more fundamental areas of oppression like classism or racial prejudice, as those Freire addresses in his work. Additionally, part of Freire's critical pedagogy theory, and part of his methods for addressing oppression, includes engaging in meaningful dialogue for the purpose of gaining knowledge, which in turn allows one to be able to discover new knowledge – a method of engaging in education.¹⁶ This study will explore the ways these compositions operate as a dialogue, through the composer's preferred method of conversation: music.

Stanley Aronowitz points out that "Freire's pedagogy is grounded in a fully developed philosophical anthropology, that is, a theory of human nature....,"¹⁷ and it is that human nature that is explored in these compositions as each one works to communicate the struggle in each scenario they represent, and works to cope with their witnessed or experienced injustices, and to draw attention to them order to rally others to their causes and one day overcome these

¹⁵ Victor Medeiros, Rafael Saulo Marques Ribeiro, and Pedro Vasconcelos Maia do Amaral, "Infrastructure and household poverty in Brazil: A regional approach using multilevel models," *World Development*, 137 (January, 2021): ScienceDirect, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105118>.

¹⁶ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 19.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.

challenges. According to Richard Shaull who wrote the foreword to Freire's book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "Paulo Freire's thought represents the response of a creative mind and sensitive conscience to the extraordinary misery and suffering of the oppressed around him."¹⁸ This effort is paralleled by the composers of the works and circumstances investigated in this study. Here, an attempt will be made to identify elements of compositional creativity as they reflect the experiences of these composers.

Critical Pedagogy in Music

Since the emergence of critical pedagogy in the 1970s, its application to the field of music has been widely recognized, especially in music education. Critical pedagogy combines "philosophy and pedagogy, theory and practice."¹⁹ The goal of this approach to music education is to transform educational experiences, for both teacher and student, into liberating experiences through teaching methods rather than specified curriculum.²⁰ By choosing not to omit any information from the instruction, and adequately representing all perspectives and experiences, it serves to dismantle traditional power structures and prevent any one group from becoming the dominant voice in a given subject. This method is designed to bring "equity, recognition, and inclusion," and when applied to music, it can accomplish this in a traditionally hegemonic artform.²¹ This theory has been more frequently integrated into music education practices as it

¹⁸ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 7.

¹⁹ Frank Abrahams, "The Application of Critical Pedagogy to Music Teaching and Learning: A Literature Review," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 23, no. 2 (2005): 12-22, SAGE journals, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F87551233050230020103>.

²⁰ Dirk Jonathan Rodrick, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed, the Musical? Using Theatrical ScholARTistry to Transform Teaching and Learning," *The Vermont Connection*, 34 no. 1 (2013), <https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/tvc/vol34/iss1/11/>; Abrahams, "The Application of Critical Pedagogy to Music Teaching and Learning,"

²¹ S. Rebeqa Rivers, "Expression of the Oppressed: Using Critical Pedagogy in Arts Education to Disrupt Systems of Oppression," *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 35, no. 9 (2020), <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/vrme/vol35/iss1/9/>.

has gained recognition, and it has been utilized long enough to be examined and critiqued by some researchers for its effectiveness and possible negative effects.²² In the last fifty years, this theory's acceptance and utilization in music education is well documented. For the purposes of this study, critical pedagogy's application to music serves as a foundation for evaluating music's role in educating oppressed populations and understanding how music can serve as a tool for social change through its ability to relate to people and draw attention to unjust circumstances.

Arts Responding to Experience

One of the factors that makes Freire's theory so effective is its ability to relate to an oppressed population through accessibility and clarity of language. When these populations find the content approachable and digestible, it creates a path for growth in knowledge and understanding that can be leveraged for change. Music has the ability to convey a great deal about experience and emotions without the use of language, which can often be a barrier to marginalized populations due to access to education. In this way, composers can utilize music to draw attention to their own experiences. For those composers who witness injustice, it can bring together both oppressed populations and people of a different class or background who might become allies to their cause and are often better equipped to aid in their fight.

While it is commonly understood that composers have the ability to be expressive in their works, understanding that process is less obvious; however, progress has been made in understanding this phenomenon in recent decades. Many efforts over centuries have been made to understand the creative expression of artistic works. While this is widely recognized in fine

²² Juliet Hess, "Critiquing the Critical: The Casualties and Paradoxes of Critical Pedagogy in Music Education," *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 25, no. 2 (Fall, 2017): 171-191, JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2979/philmusieducrevi.25.2.05>.

arts, it is a common practice in performing arts like music as well. A study on narrative inquiry and its use in literary works published in 2015 showed a connection between life experiences of the artist and their literary works of art.²³ This study analyzed a poem by Ernest Hemingway and applied the learned information to several other written works to show the pattern of personal experience influencing the creations of the authors.

A case study of participatory theater in Australia highlighted the role of personal experiences of youths in theatrical performances, showing that, though this art form has some limitations, it provides an excellent opportunity for addressing and overcoming social issues, allowing participants to engage each other meaningfully related to their identity and sense of belonging.²⁴ In this example, the role of personal experience is shown to be a necessary ingredient in the transformational power of the art form practiced. Another study, focused on children who have witnessed or been victim of atrocities related to war or genocide, explores how arts and literature can provide a highly effective outlet for them to express and cope with their traumatic experiences due to the complex and dynamic nature of the arts.²⁵ These studies show that it is possible to convey experiential meaning in artistic works of music, and that this is a common, instinctual practice amongst composers of all ages.

²³ Martha Barry McKenna, "Narrative Inquiry as an Approach for Aesthetic Experience: Life Stories in Perceiving and Responding to Works of Art," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 49, no. 4 (November 2015): 87–104, Scholarly Publishing Collective, <https://doi.org/10.5406/jaesteduc.49.4.0087>.

²⁴ Christopher C. Sonn, et al., "Responding to Racialization Through Arts Practice: The Case of Participatory Theater," *Journal of Community Psychology*, 43, no 2 (2015): 78*84, Wiley Online Library, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21676>.

²⁵ Jane M. Gangi and Ellis Barowsky, "Listening to Children's Voices: Literature and the Arts as Means of Responding to the Effects of War, Terrorism, and Disaster," *Childhood Education*, 85, no 6 (2009): 357-363, Taylor & Francis Online, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2009.10521401>.

Influence of Experience on Composers and Their Works

While it is clear that composers readily utilize their own personal experience in compositions, and that it is possible to identify ties between their music and their experience, it is important to understand the extent to which it is possible for experience, emotion, and reactions to be captured tangibly in music, as well as the influence this phenomenon can have on composers, performers, and listeners. A study published in 1992 confirmed that composers have the ability to “convey distinct and definable emotional qualities to listeners through the medium of music.”²⁶ To reach this conclusion, composers were asked to compose melodies targeting specific terms for emotions, and a panel of listeners provided feedback of their judgments of the emotional qualities of the music, demonstrating that their perception was the intended outcome of the compositions.

One study that focused on film score compositions worked to detect the instinctive and unconscious contributions of personal experience from the composers on their music composed for film.²⁷ The conclusions noted that the personal experiences of the composers is inseparable from their compositions, despite the limitations of film score music to themes and narratives. It seems that composers have the ability to create based on a multitude of themes and still portray their work through a personal perspective or character.

Psychological perspectives on music related to trauma like acute stress disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder are explored in another study of both composers and performers who

²⁶ William Forde Thompson and Brent Robitaille, “Can Composers Express Emotions through Music?,” *Empirical Studies of the Arts*, 10 no. 1 (1992): 79-89, SAGE journals, <https://doi.org/10.2190%2FNBNY-AKDK-GW58-MTEL>.

²⁷ Joel Douek, “Music and emotion—a composer's perspective,” *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience*, 7 (November, 2013), Frontiers, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnsys.2013.00082>.

have experienced traumatic events.²⁸ It is noted that the traumatic experiences of composers are often audible in their compositions, and the experiences of performers exhibit evidence of their experiences in performance ability and interpretation of music. This study further explores strategies to cope with performance concerns related to trauma and the obstacles composers face in composition as they work through their experiences.

Even in the sixth grade, the influence of personal experience in composition is evident according to a study published in 2002.²⁹ Compositions of sixth graders were studied to determine the level of personal influence in their work. Analysis of their compositions show influence of media like movies and television, as well as social and cultural influences specific to their experiences. According to the study, these students use their experience to “create music that is relevant and meaningful to them.”³⁰ It is that relevance and meaning in works of art that makes them so compelling. While we see that the influence of personal, lived experience is instinctively present in the works of composers, in the case of the pieces selected for this study, this relationship is pursued intentionally, enhancing their ability to reach the intended audiences more deeply.

As it becomes evident how deeply and effectively music can reach a person, it is important to gain a nuanced understanding of how compositional techniques can achieve these goals. A more detailed study of the structural elements of compositions exists that explored the impact of factors like tonality, rhythm, harmony, and melodic structure on the emotional reaction

²⁸ Inette Swart, “Overcoming adversity: Trauma in the lives of music performers and composers,” *Psychology of Music*, 42 no. 3 (2014): 386-402, SAGE journals, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0305735613475371>.

²⁹ Sandra L. Stauffer, “Connections between the Musical and Life Experiences of Young Composers and Their Compositions,” *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 50, no. 4 (2002): 301-322, SAGE journals, <https://doi.org/10.2307%2F3345357>.

³⁰ Ibid.

to the composition.³¹ Works of major composers were explored and modified in a systematic fashion to determine the impact of a variety of changes on the emotional influence of the pieces. In this study, tonality was acknowledged as having a greater emotional impact on the audience than other elements. It was determined that interpretation of these musical changes was relatively uniform amongst populations with a normal range of variety in cultural and experiential backgrounds. This particular study attempted to quantify results with mathematical formulas to depict the level of influential change of each modification to the work.³²

Further, in “The Genesis Project,” the goal was to gain understanding of the creative process of composers by exploring their experience, composition methods, training, and their personal traits.³³ An analysis of their compositions was conducted along with a question survey of both composers and educators. Rather than analyzing specific works, this study focuses on gaining understanding through analysis of compositional methods and strategies, which have been clearly defined and labeled by a variety of researchers and composers throughout the twentieth century.³⁴ One similar study focused on the notion that a composer’s perception of the world is primarily through auditory senses, and their perception is evident in their compositions.³⁵ This study explored the way composers categorized their experiences based on auditory input and attempts to use a verbal description to interpret this auditory phenomenon.

³¹ Sören Nietzén and Zvonimir Cesarec, “Emotional Experience of Music as a Function of Musical Structure,” *Psychology of Music*, 10 no. 2 (October, 1982): 7-17, SAGE journals, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2F0305735682102002>.

³² Ibid.

³³ Bernard W. Andrews, “How Composers Compose: In Search of the Questions,” *Research and Issues in Music Education*, 2 no. 1 (September 2004), ERIC, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ852404>.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Martin L. Nass, “On Hearing and Inspiration in the Composition of Music,” *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (1975): 431-449, Taylor & Francis Online, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21674086.1975.11926721>.

The limitations of this are addressed, but the study includes direct feedback from a variety of classical and modern composers that is biographic in nature in order to more accurately capture their perspective and its role in composition.³⁶ These studies serve to highlight the impact of personal experience on compositional works, and to provide evidence that this relationship is discernible and tangible, and that specific compositional techniques and strategies can be harnessed to achieve these goals.

Analysis of Works with Ties to Civil Unrest

The focus of this study is on compositions for flute that are tied to civil unrest in contemporary society. To date, much research already exists on compositions that emerged from civil unrest, including major conflicts across the world related to religion, genocide, and war. There may be no plight of oppressed people so highly recognized as that of the Jews, and the writings of Alexander Tentser underscore the importance of Jewish people in the Russian revolution in the early twentieth century.³⁷ During this time, the well-known composer, Dmitri Shostakovich, utilized Jewish folk songs and music traditions in his compositions that were clearly outspoken in favor of the oppressed Jewish population. One example includes his *Symphony No. 13*, colloquially subtitled “Babi Yar,” which negatively depicts an antisemitic Russian group known as the “Black Hundred.”³⁸ The social and political context of his

³⁶ Martin L. Nass, “On Hearing and Inspiration in the Composition of Music.”

³⁷ Alexander Tentser, *Jewish experience in classical music : Shostakovich and Asia*, (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), Accessed July 24, 2022, https://liberty.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/openurl?institution=01LIBU_INST&rft_id=info:sid%2Fsummon&rft_dat=ie%3D51169053230004916,language%3DEN&svc_dat=CTO&u.ignore_date_coverage=true&vid=01LIBU_INST:Services.

³⁸ Ibid.

compositions is thoroughly noted and analyzed in Tenster's writings, and is just one example of many compositions that address such topics effectively through composition.

Another widely recognized source of worldwide oppression exists with Communism. The work of Lois Paula Văduva highlights the use of Romanian sacred music during Communist oppression in Romania in the mid-twentieth century.³⁹ Her studies center around the censorship, use, and misuse of sacred Romanian works due to the influence of Communism, and how composers worked around these limitations during that time. Even within American popular music, there is clear evidence of compositions that were created to provide during times of civil unrest. Surrounding the Vietnam war are the works of artists like Johnny Cash, who is quoted as saying, "the only thing good that ever came out of war was a song."⁴⁰ The book *Songs of the Vietnam Conflict* explores a number of impactful and widely recognized songs that emerged as a result of the "police action" in Vietnam, including songs from Johnny Cash and other popular artist. Some song categories mentioned in this study are titled, 'Anti-War Songs,' and 'Pro-Government and Plight-of-the-Soldier Songs.'⁴¹

In another study, the well-known Jewish composer Hanns Eisler is investigated for his pro-Communist compositions. In his case, he was charged with composing music that "aided the Communist infiltration of the motion-picture industry."⁴² This composer claimed to have no

³⁹ Lois Paula Văduva, "Aspects of the Romanian Sacred Music during the Communist Oppression," *Dialogo*, 1 (2019), 23-31, Central and Eastern European Online Library, <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=831571>.

⁴⁰ James Perone, *Songs of the Vietnam Conflict*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001)l, Accessed July 20, 2022, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=99193&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Lydia Goehr, "Political Music and the Politics of Music," *The Philosophy of Music*, 52 no. 1 (Winter, 1994): 99-112, JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/431589>.

responsibility for political influence since he was “only a musician.” Despite his claim of ineffectiveness, the charging committee recognized his ability to influence politics through his music and pursued every angle possible until they were able to deport him.⁴³ These examples highlight a composer’s ability to influence public opinion through their music. This is an interesting point when juxtaposed with another study that documents how the arts respond to continual political and social change in Taiwan, and shows a clear tie to the symbiotic relationship between the arts and personal experience.⁴⁴ The cultural and political changes in Taiwan are used to explain “what is cultural about politics and what is political about culture” through the exploration of a variety of political and musical influences in Taiwan including Taiwanese traditions and Chinese and Western-European influence. This study also explores the resulting mix of influence that became associated with Taiwan’s identity.⁴⁵

Providing an interesting contrast, a text compiled by Richard Leppert and Susan McClary notes a lack of consideration for music as being a medium for communicating cultural and societal context, claiming that it “transcends” social and cultural issues, and has the ability to remain abstract and autonomous as opposed to other art forms.⁴⁶ The authors encourage the notion that musical works can and should be utilized for social and cultural purposes, and that the notion that it is autonomous is a relic of nineteenth-century ideology.⁴⁷ This demonstrates a

⁴³ Goehr, “Political Music and the Politics of Music.”

⁴⁴ Wai-Chung Ho, “Music and cultural politics in Taiwan,” *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 10, no. 4 (2007): 463-483, SAGE journals, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1367877907083080>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Wei-li Kang, “The journey to identity: the range of nationalistic expression in seven selected flute pieces” (PhD diss., California State University, Northridge, Department of Music, 2013), <https://scholarworks.csun.edu/handle/10211.2/3360>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

shift in the understanding of music's role in society, especially regarding social or cultural influence.

By considering the variety of examples where music plays an integral role in influencing society or politics, and in representing the perspectives of those affected by such influences, it is clear that the composer's role cannot be undervalued. There is great interest in this dynamic between composers and their influence on public opinion as noted in many specific cases across the world. Several cases are discussed in the study of graduate students and doctoral candidates. In addition to the many available peer-reviewed texts and documented research, there are numerous theses and dissertations that research and discuss similar relationships as applied to specific scenarios, including Negro spirituals and Russian serfs in one doctoral dissertation,⁴⁸ the choral works tied to religious oppression under Czech Socialism in another dissertation,⁴⁹ and Korean music written in response to the Japanese occupation of Korea in the first half of the twentieth century, which is explored in a thesis.⁵⁰ These are just a sampling of a plethora of similar analyses on this topic. The abundance of research targeted at this compositional phenomenon further highlights its ability to impact a wide audience, and of music's ability to be a powerful and preferable tool for addressing these injustices.

⁴⁸ Mareda A. Gaither-Graves, "A musical saga of human suffering and oppression" PhD diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 1999, ProQuest, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/ef822ea4ee93d2c911cb0dca0a32e350/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>.

⁴⁹ Christopher D. Haygood, "Surmounting oppression in the choral music of Petr Eben: An analysis of the "Missa Adventus et Quadragesimae"" PhD diss., University of Southern California, 2013, ProQuest, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/72debf41c88cbf661a6711841bb76f52/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>.

⁵⁰ Eun-Jung Byun, "Music and Oppression: Korean art song based on poetry from the Japanese Occupation Period (1910-1945)" Master thesis, The University of Sydney, 2022, <https://hdl.handle.net/2123/27991>.

Analysis of Works for Flute with Ties to Civil Unrest

While there is much research and analysis of music tied to civil unrest in general, only a few studies target works for flute specifically. Additionally, most of these studies focus on understanding the nature of the experience of the composer as it relates to the compositions rather than targeting the compositional techniques utilized by the composers to accurately represent their perspective and reactions. Several of the research documents focusing on works for flute exist in the work of doctoral candidates and graduate students but are worth noting as to their context. Melanie Walters addresses compositions by Australian composers and how they represent the conflicting aesthetic values of modernism and postmodernism in works for flute.⁵¹ Another study highlights the work of four Mexican composers and analyzes the way these pieces for flute depict different aspects of Mexican culture.⁵² While this study does provide some analysis of the compositions, it is only a small factor in the overall focus of the study. A similar study documents the influence of Haitian culture and identity on the works of a well-known classically oriented Haitian composer.⁵³ Focusing on French composers between 1850 and 1950, Susan Nanette Hayes explores the shared perspectives of several composers for flute chamber music as expressed in their compositions.⁵⁴ This study highlights similarities in style that can be attributed to shared experiences and cultural influence. Finally, the work of one flutist in his master's thesis does focus on expressive techniques of composers, but it focuses on European

⁵¹ Melanie Walters, "Crossing the Modernist-Postmodernist Divide: Performance Challenges in Late Twentieth Century Australian Flute Music: A portfolio of recorded performances and exegesis" master's thesis, The University of Adelaide, 2011, <https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/69336/8/02whole.pdf>.

⁵² Lopez Rodriguez and Ammi Yared, "Narratives in Contemporary Flute Music by Mexican Composers" PhD diss., University of Alabama, 2022, <https://ir.ua.edu/handle/123456789/8550>.

⁵³ Procopio, "Haitian classical music, vodou and cultural identity."

⁵⁴ Hayes, "Chamber music in France featuring flute and soprano."

nationalist composers who took great pride in their countries as opposed to composers whose work addresses criticisms and complaints about their country.⁵⁵ While a few of these writings provide a limited analysis of compositional methods or characteristics of their work, that perspective represents only a fraction of the intent of these studies.

One unique example of musical study exists in a book focused on brass bands.⁵⁶ One chapter of this text focuses on a modern Scottish flute band and briefly addresses the implications of their music on politics. Once again, this work does not emphasize compositional methods or performance techniques. One of the few peer-reviewed writings about flute compositions explores a specific work for flute by Francis Poulenc and investigates it for possible socio-critical origins. This focus, though highlighting a tie to socio-critical origins, explores specific performances of the work rather than compositional nuance, though it does provide some analysis of the character of the piece through the use of silence and echoes. There is a palpable lack of research about works for flute that address civil unrest, particularly as it relates to compositional techniques and methods of sound creation on flute that are utilized by the composers. This study will contribute to filling in that gap in the literature and inspire further research into other analysis of compositional techniques utilized in works for flute.

Summary

Utilizing critical pedagogy as a theoretical framework for this study, selected contemporary works for flute will be explored in order to understand how composers use their

⁵⁵ Kang, "The journey to identity."

⁵⁶ Gordon Ramsey, "Playing Away: Liminality, Flow and Communitas in an Ulster Flute Band's Visit to a Scottish Orange Parade," *Brass Bands of the World: Militarism, Colonial Legacies, and Local Music Making*, (London: Rutledge, 2016), Accessed July 24, 2022, https://liberty.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/openurl?institution=01LIBU_INST&rft_id=info:sid%2Fsummon&rft_dat=ie%3D51178117330004916,language%3DEN&svc_dat=CTO&u.ignore_date_coverage=true&vid=01LIBU_INST:Services.

craft to respond to civil unrest in order to foster awareness of, and rally support for, instances of injustice or oppression that they have either experienced or witnessed. Applications of critical pedagogy to music have become common to music since its emergence in 1970, and it is clear that composers are able to utilize compositional methods and strategies to respond to these experiences or witnessed events through their music. Most composers instinctually incorporate their own perspectives and cultural experience in their works, but many are able to leverage compositional techniques to intentionally accomplish this goal regarding specific causes. This is true of many scenarios involving civil unrest throughout the world and is demonstrated in a variety of societal and cultural paradigms. While there exists some research regarding compositions written in response to civil unrest, most of it is focused on the social, cultural, or political climate surrounding these compositions, rather than the methods utilized to represent the composer's reactions or perspectives. This is particularly true of literature for flute, as there is a notable lack of analysis of flute literature on this topic. This research will serve to fill in this gap, taking into consideration factors relative to critical pedagogy and examining how these works serve to reclaim humanity for people who suffer injustice in the examined scenarios. Additionally, this study will provide insight into each composer's need to address these concerns as it relates to critical pedagogy and will highlight methods utilized in their efforts when possible.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE RECITAL

Research Design

This study will follow an applied research study design. An applied research study was chosen because this research will focus on the compositional practices of selected composers as it relates to works they created in response to civil unrest.⁵⁷ This analysis will involve non-numerical data, and will focus on the personal experiences, observations, and worldviews of the composers that influenced the selected compositions for flute. This study will focus on qualitative methods for gathering information in the format of interviews with composers based on open-ended questions, researching biographical or narrative information about composers and the circumstances that serve as the subject for their works, and analysis of musical elements and sound production techniques for the flute in the selected compositions.

This research will be presented in a lecture recital which will best demonstrate the intended effects of the composers. Since this study will identify compositional techniques and methods meant to express the composers' personal perspectives and emotional responses to events, a performance of their creations is the most appropriate, as experiencing the composers' works performed live is the most effective way to illustrate and communicate the effectiveness of their methods.

Questions and Hypotheses

In response to conflict involving social or political conflict, composers have utilized or created a variety of new harmonic structures, rhythmic figures, and notation techniques, along

⁵⁷ Nathan Street, "Non-Parametric, Applied, and Mixed Methods Research" (handout in MUSC 650 at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, Summer 2022).

with nontraditional instrumental techniques that generate unusual new sounds, all of which have progressed the nature of compositional and performance techniques throughout the history of flute literature.

Participants and Setting

Population

The population relevant to this study is that of contemporary composers for flute literature. The sample chosen for research will be made up of several living composers who wrote works for flute in response to events or circumstances of civil unrest, either experienced or observed. These composers will be grouped in a portion of analysis according to their naturally occurring era of composition, and the specifics of those definitions will be determined once final literature selections have been made so that era groupings are logical and practical.

Recruitment Plan

In order to identify potential composers for this study, a general survey was conducted through social media platforms targeting groups of flute performers and composers. The general flute community was asked to provide recommendations for pieces they knew of that fit the criteria of this research. Several pieces were recommended by flute players, and one directly by the composer who is a member of the flute community. After identifying a few common names through these recommendations, the researcher reached out to select composers to request background information on the pieces and to see if they had further recommendations within their compositional body that would be a good fit for the criteria. As living composers were contacted, the researcher requested their input for further research through interviews and surveys.

Sample Size

The sample size for this research will include seven works for solo flute that fit the criteria of the research. These selections will be made based on the thirty-minute performance time. The researcher will attempt to include a variety of pieces as time allows, and some selections may be influenced by the length of each composition that is a candidate. Also factoring into this choice will be the willingness of living composers to participate in the study. Finally, the difficulty of each piece will be a factor in selecting performance repertoire as there is a limited amount of time to prepare for performance.

Sample Demographic

The demographics of the sample group will not play a factor in their selection for participation, but demographic information will be collected through the survey and research process and will be considered in the analysis process.

The Researcher

The researcher is presently teaching music history with several units focused on the social implications of both popular and Western-classical music. As she has studied and presented this information to students, the relationship and correlation between music and social events, particularly controversial events surrounding oppression and political division, has become fascinating to her and is the main influence for her choice in this topic. With the current teaching and political climate's recent recognition of, and sensitivity to, Critical Race Theory, these factors have become an avenue of curiosity to the researcher. With that in mind, this research will be conducted through the lens of critical pedagogy, as defined by Paulo Freire in

Pedagogy of the Oppressed.⁵⁸ As this text emphasizes, the desire to restore humanity to an oppressed people will influence interpretation of this research, and the composers' attempts at depicting these events and emotional responses in their compositions will be analyzed with this theory in mind.⁵⁹

The researcher believes that particularly egregious acts of oppression and injustice will provoke strong responses in compositional techniques that tend towards atypical methods and will tend to push the boundaries of commonly accepted performance practice for the flute. It is also the researcher's assumption that these atypical compositional techniques will become more common over time and will seek newer unconventional ways for sound creation on the flute. It is her assumption that exposure to a wider variety of knowledge, especially culturally, has influenced the open-mindedness of composers throughout various eras of composition. As a narrativist researcher, she will attempt to tell the stories of each composer through providing understanding of the compositional methods utilized and demonstrating them for an audience in performance.

Instrument

The instruments used in this research project will include surveys and interviews, both of which have been specifically designed for the purposes of this project.⁶⁰ Similar questions will be used in both surveys and interviews, and the chosen instrument will be determined by the

⁵⁸ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed 30th Anniversary Edition* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, 2005).

⁵⁹ Ibid., 56.

⁶⁰ John. W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2014), 160-161.

availability and willingness of living composers to participate in this portion of the research. When possible, these questions will be addressed in interview format to allow for the ability to observe the personal expression of the composers, which will inform the understanding of their responses. When live interviews cannot be conducted with living composers, the same questions will be administered as a survey through email or social media platforms as preferred by the participant. Interviews and surveys will be conducted in two phases.

The first phase will purpose to identify appropriate compositions for further research. Once selections have been made, a second phase of interviews will take place. These instruments have been designed to ascertain the relevance of each composer's work to this study in phase one. In phase two, the purpose of the instruments is to identify demographic information, data about each composer's personal experience and perspectives, their intentions throughout the compositional process, and other factors that help to understand their compositional process. See Appendix A for instrument.

Procedures

Data Collection

Data collection methods for this study will primarily involve interviews and archival research. Since this study will focus on understanding the compositional practice of composers related to specific circumstances, qualitative methods like these will be the most effective. Composers will be interviewed with a mix of survey questions to gather background and demographic information, and open-ended questions to gain understanding of their compositional process and methods for conveying their responses to these circumstances through music. Additionally, archival research methods will be utilized to study the historical events and circumstances on which the selected compositions are based, to analyze various elements of the

musical compositions themselves, and to gain understanding of the composers' worldview and personal experience through biographical and narrative data when interviews are not possible.

Interviews

Interviews with living composers will be conducted in order to gain a more thorough understanding of each composer's personal experience, perspective, and worldview related to the selected works.⁶¹ Communication will need to occur in two phases in some cases. The first phase of communication will serve to identify whether a composer's works are an appropriate selection for this research and to identify the historical events and circumstances that are relevant to their compositions. After initial historical research, more detailed aspects of the interviews will be conducted as a second phase of interviews. Composers included in interviews will be selected from a list of composers who have composed works for flute in response to civil unrest, either experienced or observed.

These interviews will be conducted primarily via virtual meetings, but other mediums will be applied as preferred by the composer which may include telephone conversations, email, or conversations through social media platforms.⁶² Interview data will be summarized and compared with musical analysis in order to illustrate how each composition communicates what the composer intended. Whenever possible, interviews will be conducted in written format through email or social media communication platforms. When composers prefer to communicate face-to-face through virtual interviews, these interviews will be recorded. For any

⁶¹ Cresswell, *Research Design*, 190.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 191.

face-to-face communication that is unable to be recorded, the researcher will maintain a journal record of these communications that will provide accurate data for analysis.

Archival Research

Archival research will constitute a portion of this study and will focus on a variety of sources, beginning with historical research on related events and circumstances represented by each of the selected compositions. Research on historical context will provide a general understanding of the dominant social values and climate of the time as it compares to the perspective of the composers. Beginning with historical information and facts about events and circumstances related to the compositions will provide a foundation for understanding more personal implications of the composers' experiences or observations and for understanding the music and events from their perspectives as further research is conducted. Following contextual and historical research, the next step in archival research will involve studying biographical and narrative documents recorded of or about composers who are unavailable for interview.⁶³ This will be followed by a score analysis of the selected compositions which will provide an understanding of how the composers used the mediums of music composition and the flute to communicate their perspective and accomplish their goals.

Historical Data

Finally, historical research will be conducted to better understand the social values and climate pertaining to the events or circumstances represented by these compositions as well as the influence of compositional methods on the intended audience. This will include magazine and newspaper articles, or other secondary sources that will provide an understanding of social

⁶³ Cresswell, *Research Design*, 190.

values and perspective at the time. It may also include historical records of the relevant events and circumstances.

Document Analysis

In addition to archival research, document analysis will provide significant insight to this topic. Document analysis will be conducted on the compositional scores for the selected flute pieces. When analyzing the scores, this research will attempt to identify any trends in compositional technique. If possible, compositional methods will be tied to emotions or categories of reactions to see if there is any correlation. Additionally, this analysis will attempt to identify how frequently composers feel the need to expand their compositional methods to include extended techniques on the flute or other unconventional compositional methods in order to accurately convey their message, or if they typically feel more traditional methods were adequate for serving this purpose. Any other trends that present themselves in research will be documented as well.

Biographical and Narrative Data

Biographical and narrative information will be gathered from sources like previously recorded interviews, program notes, and other biographical or autobiographical texts as they are available for each of the selected composers.

Analysis of Compositions

Primary sources will be used in the analysis of compositions in an attempt to reveal compositional methods used by the composer for elements like harmonic structure, form, use of melody and motive, tempo, rhythmic structure, and methods for communicating unconventional sound creation for the flute. Results will be analyzed to serve the purposes previously mentioned.

Data Analysis

Due to the nature of this study, data analysis will focus on identifying relevant themes in each compositional process based on interviews, narrative data, and historical research, and determining which data are most relevant to the study and therefore are most appropriate for final presentation. As information is gathered, the data analysis process will include reviewing the data collected in order to determine the appropriate organization and structure for the final presentation.⁶⁴ Score analysis, personal experiences of composers, intended message of communication, and compositional methods will be considered in order to identify any trends or correlations between these factors.⁶⁵ Additionally, these data will be analyzed to determine the validity of the initial hypothesis, and to identify avenues of further research related to this topic.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Cresswell, *Research Design*, 195.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 162-163.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 165.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

202-456-1111, Laura Kaminsky

Background

202-456-1111. The public access phone number for The White House. Since January 2017, one can no longer leave a message. What does this say about the relationship between the current President and his citizenry? The election results of November 2016 were an alarming wake-up to the country as a whole, no matter which side of the divide one is on. Like many, I am afraid of the new direction our government has taken, and mightily concerned about the content and the quality of public discourse. These worries were foremost in my mind as I began composing. I struggled with how to synchronize my bleak mental/emotional state with the task at hand = writing for the golden combination of flute and piano. I couldn't find my way. One day after an unsuccessful attempt to leave a message of dissent on the White House line, I had a flash - I would use that phone number, with the "0" represented as a rest. Suddenly, I had focus. The resulting work, *202-456-1111*, is in one movement, and reveals the many different emotions of an uneasy citizen at the dawn of a new political era.

- Laura Kaminsky

Listed above are the program notes for the piece, *202-456-1111*, by Laura Kaminsky. The composer shares her concern about the circumstances surrounding the public comment phone number for The White House while maintaining a somewhat balanced approach to the subject and avoiding any inflammatory comments. This has been a challenging task for many Americans since the 2016 election in which Donald Trump was elected as President of the United States of America.⁶⁷ The division between political conservatives and liberals grew significantly during this election, but a great deal of division was also seen within the Republican and Democratic

⁶⁷ Brian Duignan, "Presidential election of 2016 of Donald Trump," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed February 19, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Donald-Trump/Presidential-election-of-2016>.

parties.⁶⁸ According to one study, the division that emerged in 2016 was centered around issues of national identity, race, and moral values. This differs from many of the political divisions in the past, which were typically centered around economic issues.⁶⁹ Concepts of identity seem to have divided the nation significantly, no matter one's political leanings.

Kaminsky discusses how the only line of access for the citizens of America to make a public comment to the White House was cut off when this phone line was disabled.⁷⁰ While emails could still be sent to an open email address from the general public, there was, for a time, no longer an option for making a verbal comment. On February 19, 2023, the author made an attempt to call this phone number to determine the current status of the line. When the call was connected, the author was informed that public comments were only accepted from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, Tuesday through Thursday. This is a very limited window of time considering it is a recorded comment line. However, in January of 2017, the comment line was unavailable completely.⁷¹ During the last week of President Obama's term, the comment line was shut down, directing the public to make comments through email or Facebook Messenger.⁷² According to news outlets, the Facebook pages to which the public was being directed were not capable of

⁶⁸ Lee Drutman, "Political Divisions in 2016 and Beyond: Tensions Between and Within the Two Parties," *Democracy Fund Voter Study Group*, June, 2017, Accessed February 19, 2023, https://www.voterstudygroup.org/uploads/reports/Final-Reports/PoliticalDivisions_2017june12.pdf

⁶⁹ Drutman, "Political Divisions in 2016 and Beyond."

⁷⁰ Laura Kaminsky, interview by author, Zoom, February 19, 2023.

⁷¹ Dave Boyer, "White House shuts down call-in line: 'But your comment is important to the president,' notes an automated greeting," *The Washington Times*, January 14, 2017, accessed February 19, 2023, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/jan/14/white-house-shuts-down-call-line/>.

⁷² Janko Roettgers, "White House Comments line closed," *Soundcloud*, 2017, accessed February 19, 2023, <https://soundcloud.com/janko-roettgers/white-house-comments-line>.

messaging functions.⁷³ This was an unsettling situation for many Americans as Donald Trump prepared to assume the Presidency later that week. Coupled with the resulting social media activity surrounding it, these events demonstrate the impact of emotional responses of Americans on politics as The White House attempted to leverage that factor during the government shutdown in 2018.⁷⁴ This climate of emotional manipulation and limiting access to the government provides the foundation for Laura Kaminsky's work, *202-456-1111*.

Kaminsky was raised in a politically engaged household and developed a personal desire to be engaged and active in both her community and politics from a young age.⁷⁵ By the age of thirteen, she was already participating in political activities and events like protest marches. In January of 2017, she had grave concerns about what the election of Donald Trump would mean for the future of the pluralistic democratic society that America had become, and she felt the need to voice her concerns as an American citizen in light of the upcoming presidential term. She made a call to The White House, to 202-456-1111, only to find that she could not get through. Feeling as though she did not have a voice in this country, she experienced a wide range of emotions as she attempted to reach The White House, including anger, fear, and concern about freedom of speech and civil rights. She was worried that many things this country had worked so hard to achieve would be dismantled. Surprisingly, she also remembers experiencing some nostalgia for earlier times and even hope for the future.

⁷³ Tanya Chen, "The White House Has A New Voicemail Following The Government Shutdown And It's...Something," *Buzzfeed News*, January 20, 2018, accessed February 19, 2023, <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/tanyachen/the-white-house-has-a-new-voicemail>.

⁷⁴ Colin Agur and Lanhuizi Gan, "Actors, Partisan Inclination, and Emotions: An Analysis of Government Shutdown News Stories Shared on Twitter," *Social Media + Society* 7, no. 2 (2021): 1–12, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/20563051211008816>.

⁷⁵ Kaminsky, interview.

Not long before making this phone call, a flute and piano duo reached out to her looking to commission a piece, and she had been struggling to decide what to write about.⁷⁶ The day she made this phone call, she knew this would be the subject of her next composition. While she originally composed this for an audience in Duluth, Minnesota, her hope is that this piece would be noticed by the greater flute community and reach a larger audience. She hopes this piece will be a unique piece that contributes meaningfully to the standard body of flute literature.

The Composer's Approach

For Laura Kaminsky, the compositional process begins with a narrative or some sort of philosophical topic.⁷⁷ She then looks for musical tools that will successfully portray this narrative or topic. In this way, the instrument becomes a tool for expressing her idea, rather than beginning the process with specific musical goals like harmonic structures, specific techniques, or other similar elements. In her perspective, an audience who knows nothing of the story behind the music should still find the music engaging, interesting, or even challenging. The first layer of her compositional process is making sure the music is interesting. Once that has been achieved, conveying her message becomes the next priority. This balance is evident in her composition, *202-456-1111*, as she works to incorporate the phone number into a “motivic cell,” represented by pitches, while still maintaining the integrity of the piece as a musical work of art.

Using the zero as a rest, she creates what she calls a motivic cell of pitches that correspond to each number in the phone number, providing the basis for the melodic content of this composition. Her motivic cell is as follows:

⁷⁶ Kaminsky, interview.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

0 = rest
 1 = C
 2 = D
 4 = F
 5 = G
 6 = A

Referring to Figure 1, one can see that the first few notes of the flute part contain the phone number, as represented by notes or rests, in the correct order. When there are four ones in the phone number, there are four Cs in a row, shown in measures 7-8. This pattern can be seen to repeat in measure 9, and again in measure 10, though a different rhythmic idea is used. While this motivic cell is prevalent throughout the piece, it is not the only idea that shapes the piece. Kaminsky uses a variety of other melodic and rhythmic content for musical expression, along with textual cues to aid the performer in making artistic choices. In the opening of the piece, she describes the piano part as “loud exasperation” with “crashing chords and low rumbles.”⁷⁸ She uses a variety of expressive verbiage in the composition to encourage the performer to experiment with their own interpretation of the feelings she was attempting to capture in her work. These include phrases like “with increased energy - forward looking,” “fierce,” “shrieking with anguish,” “free-flowing, molto rubato,” and “dolce, innocently.”



Figure 4.1. Opening measures of 202-456-1111, Laura Kaminsky

⁷⁸ Kaminsky, interview.

In addition to the melodic cell, Kaminsky often includes pitch classes that are not part of the melodic cell as expressive tools.⁷⁹ In the passage shown in Figure 2, she draws on her own personal compositional style to create a sort of groove featuring chromaticism. These sections, which are repeated throughout the piece in both the flute and piano parts, provide musical interest for the piece, while still serving to convey a feeling of frustration, as she felt when she was unable to reach The White House by phone. Kaminsky describes the chromaticism used in these sections as “its own language trying to have an emotional conversation.”⁸⁰ In her view, these are the right pitches to convey the musical gesture she is working towards, and musicality takes over the compositional process to serve that end.

The image shows a musical score for measures 13-19 of the piece 202-456-1111 by Laura Kaminsky. The score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. Measure 13 is marked 'semi-legato, breathy' and 'mf'. Measure 15 is marked 'f'. Measure 18 is marked 'flutter, overblow to "explosion"' and 'fff'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Figure 4.2. Measures 13-19 of 202-456-1111, Laura Kaminsky

⁷⁹ Kaminsky, interview.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

In Figure 3, her repeated use of the E and F sharp demonstrate her persistence in reaching The White House to voice her concerns. She was not giving up but was experiencing frustration as she tried to get through on the number but could not do so.⁸¹ E and F sharp are not part of the motivic cell generated by the phone number and serve as a metaphor for being blocked as she attempted to call. One other metaphorical use of composition is shown in Figure 4 in measure 135. Here is where Kaminsky experienced the limits of the flute as a medium in a small degree, though it suits her message well. Achieving a *fff* volume on a low B is an impossible task as the flute does not project well in that register and is not very responsive there either. In this way, struggling to achieve the written marking was part of the purpose. The performer will want to achieve what is on the page, but is unable to do so, just as Kaminsky wanted to voice her thoughts to The White House but found it to be an impossible task. In working to prepare this piece, the performer finds the low B to be a daunting challenge and considers giving up on the whole endeavor all the way to its conclusion. This mirrors well the frustration experienced by the composer.

⁸¹ Kaminsky, interview.

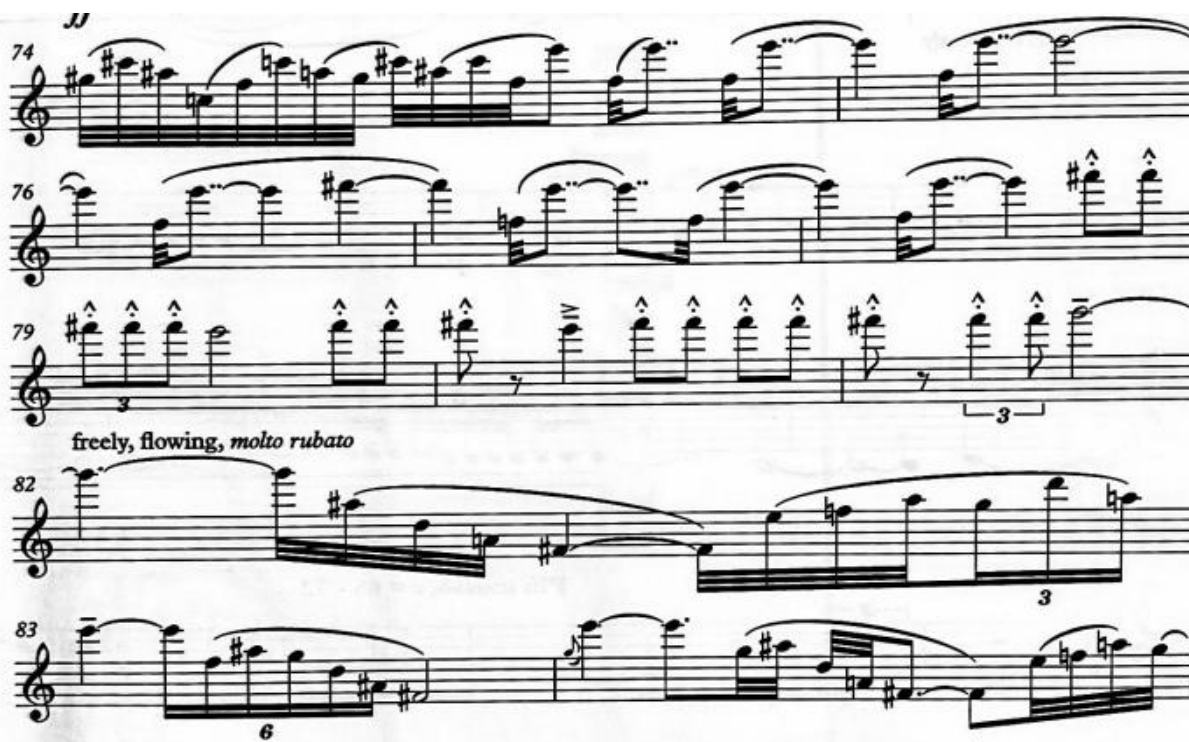


Figure 4.3. Measures 74-84 of 202-456-1111, Laura Kaminsky



Figure 4.4. Measures 129-142 of 202-456-1111, Laura Kaminsky

While Kaminsky does not utilize much of what is considered to be extended techniques for the flute, she nevertheless has a variety of creative ways to express her narrative and chooses to stay within trusted methods for flute in order to achieve her musical goals.⁸² Though she used a very traditional combination of flute and piano, she found her means of expression only limited by the flute's range, which is effective in higher tessituras, but is lacking in the lower register. She chose not to utilize changes to alto or bass flute due to other challenges those instruments present, and while additional lower octaves would have enhanced her composition, she feels the flute was not significantly limiting as a medium. To anyone viewing the score, her use of the motivic cell is somewhat straightforward, but the more one studies her compositional methods, the more Kaminsky's nuanced and expressive approach can be appreciated.

⁸² Kaminsky, interview.

The Power of Names, James Devor

Background

names reveal
the true nature and
power of a being
- JD

Composer James Devor chooses not to use program notes, but instead lists only the speech element of his composition, which reflects on the importance of names and points towards the source of inspiration for this piece, the #SayTheirNames movement. This piece was composed in 2021 in response to the events surrounding race issues during the pandemic in 2020.⁸³ The #SayHerName movement began in 2014 by the African American Policy Forum (AAPF) to draw attention specifically to black women who have been victims of police violence.⁸⁴ Since then, the sister-phrases, #SayHisName and #SayTheirNames, have been used to draw attention to police violence and racism towards all black Americans, but these phrases were brought to the forefront of American society in 2020 after the death of George Floyd.⁸⁵ The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, initially begun in 2013 after George Zimmerman, who shot and killed Trayvon Martin, was acquitted, also gained mainstream recognition after George Floyd's death.⁸⁶ The pairing of these events and movements became widely recognized in the

⁸³ James Devor, interview by author, Microsoft Teams, February 25, 2023.

⁸⁴ #SAYHERNAME, *African American Policy Forum*, accessed March 4, 2023, <https://www.aapf.org/sayhername>.

⁸⁵ Henry H. Wu, et. al., "Say their names: Resurgence in the collective attention toward Black victims of fatal police violence following the death of George Floyd," *PLOS ONE*, January 11, 2023, accessed March 4, 2023, <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0279225>.

⁸⁶ "About," *Black Lives Matter*, accessed March 4, 2023, <https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>.

summer of 2020 and caused a record-setting response on social media in America as recorded by use of the victims' names on Twitter.⁸⁷

In 2020, composer James Devor was living near Philadelphia, where he grew up frequently observing race issues, and where he was an active participant in the 2020 protests in Philadelphia.⁸⁸ In 2021, Devor was at the University of Hartford, The Hartt School of Music, studying composition and preparing for an upcoming clinic and reading session with composer and flutist, Nathalie Joachim. For this event, she asked him to write a solo flute piece, and he drew on his experiences with racial injustice as the inspiration for this composition.⁸⁹ Since Nathalie Joachim is a talented singer as well as a flutist, he chose to incorporate singing and other vocal elements into his work, creating an emphasis on speech and voice that was an appropriate for highlighting the #SayTheirNames movement and the power of speaking names.

The Composer's Approach

In James Devor's view, names are powerful and meaningful, and can make an issue more personal.⁹⁰ Names have the power to take a large movement and transform it into "specific dedications that make things more meaningful."⁹¹ As a white American who grew up in a culturally diverse area, he was not personally subject to issues of racial injustice but was able to observe a great deal of racism and sexism from a young age. He had many friends from

⁸⁷ Wu, "Say their names."

⁸⁸ Michaela Winberg, "A week that changed Philadelphia: How the George Floyd protests unfolded," *BillyPenn at WHYY*, May 28, 2021, accessed March 4, 2023, <https://billypenn.com/2021/05/28/philadelphia-george-floyd-protests-timeline/>.

⁸⁹ Devor, interview.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

marginalized groups, including people of color, and grew up sensitive to those issues as a result. When he was in college, he felt that his university promoted diversity, but described it as “forced,” or for “political gain,” rather than a true concern.⁹² As 2020 unfolded, he noted how negatively the events across the nation and the protests were depicted in the news. Though he was not personally at the rally where tear gas was deployed on the crowd, he had close friends who were present.⁹³ These observed experiences provide the backdrop for his composition, “The Power of Names.”

Though this work is full of modern extended flute techniques, when composing this piece, Devor hoped that it would connect with an audience who was newer to the world of contemporary classical music, a community he feels traditionally thinks music should “speak for itself, or not have a specific meaning.”⁹⁴ Devor, however, feels “it is ignorant to say that music can be removed from cultural context.”⁹⁵ To effectively reach this audience, he incorporated strong tonal and melodic elements to maintain a sense of familiarity, while still emphasizing modern techniques that appealed to his community of contemporary music enthusiasts. His ultimate goal was that people from any music background would say the piece “made them feel surrounded by an emotion,” and that they would think deeply about what they listened to and reflect on its context.⁹⁶ Devor considered the population involved in the #SayTheirNames

⁹² Devor, interview.

⁹³ Ryan Briggs, “Philly police OK’d use of tear gas on protesters and residents, investigation finds,” *WHYY*, January 27, 2021, accessed March 4, 2023, <https://whyy.org/articles/philly-police-chief-okd-use-of-tear-gas-on-protesters-and-residents-investigation-finds/>.

⁹⁴ Devor, interview.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

movement as well, and wanted this music to be able to reach this audience who may be less acquainted with modern contemporary music, but who he wanted to reach with the music despite the possible disconnect. For him, achieving this balance required much planning, research, and sketching before he even began working on musical composition.

Increasing the emotional impact of names was the main goal of his compositional approach.⁹⁷ To accomplish this, he begins with a simple folk-like melody that has a pentatonic feel, and is generally in the key of b minor, though no specific harmonic progression played a role in his compositional process. He combines this melody with more avant-garde or musically academic techniques, working towards merging the two worlds throughout the piece. Each small section of the piece is meant to provide a different way of emotionally experiencing the piece, sometimes as an observer, and sometimes living in the moment more tangibly.

Another pivotal factor in his compositional approach was his choice of the flute as a medium.⁹⁸ Devor acknowledges that it is difficult to write for a solo instrument, particularly a wind instrument, when one cannot rely on piano or other instruments to reinforce the sound, and especially considering the need to manage phrasing and breathing. He also finds it difficult to make these types of compositions feel cohesive. Because of these limitations of composing for solo flute, he prioritized form and delineation of phrases in the earlier stages of composition. Additionally, while the flute possesses a great deal of timbral variety, there are many stereotypes and expectations about the way a flute should sound, and Devor chose to avoid these more cliché sound choices in his work. While he occasionally incorporates the natural sound of the flute in

⁹⁷ Devor, interview.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

this piece, he does not begin with it, but rather uses it to provide contrast to the opening timbral explorations.

Devor's choices in form can be clearly identified with his rehearsal marks, and at the opening of the piece he begins by introducing fragments of the melody in Section 1 with a variety of changes in timbre through the use of techniques like whistle tones, bisbigliando, multiphonics, and incorporation of voice. In Section 2, shown in Figure 5, he introduces speech, using fragments of the text provided in lieu of program notes. Here, he highlights a few of the key words while not fully stating the text until later in the piece. He also introduces a twelve-tone row for the pitches in this section, leaning on the academic compositional methods of the modern idiom that he prefers.

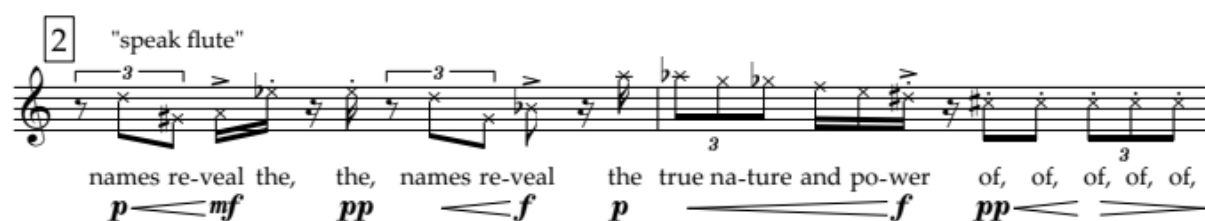


Figure 4.5. Section 2 of *The Power of Names*, James Devor

In Section 3, he plainly states the simple melody for the first time, though it is accompanied by singing. His intention here is to provide a very resonant but ominous sound.⁹⁹ The singing is brief and is followed by the natural sound of the flute, which is heard here for the first time. But before the listener gets too used to that timbre, he adds in singing again, this time in canon with the flute, following the same melodic line. This can be seen in Figure 6.

⁹⁹ Devor, interview.



Figure 4.6. Section 3 of *The Power of Names*, James Devor

Here, the singing is intended to feel like it is happening in the distance. While many elements of the piece are simple, this particular technique requires a mental challenge for the performer, which was his intention as he wanted the performer to be required to be emotionally engaged in the piece.

In Section 4, Devor introduces multiphonics based on fifths. This technique was a strength of his original performer, Nathalie Joachim, and provides an other-worldly feeling.¹⁰⁰ This section of fragmented timbral changes leads to Section 5, where the twelve-tone row from section 2 is revisited with the notes in the passage that are emphasized with dynamics or accents, as seen in Figure 7. This is interjected to intentionally pull the listener away from the melodic

¹⁰⁰ Devor, interview.

content, and it incorporates more of the academic modern writing elements that were part of his compositional goals.

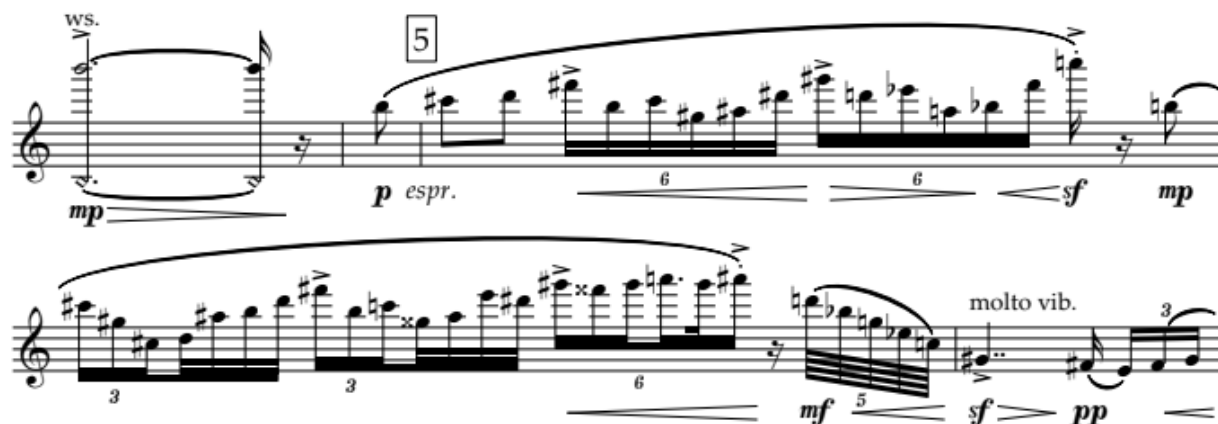


Figure 4.7. Section 5 of *The Power of Names*, James Devor

In this section, the twelve-tone row is transposed and reversed from its statement in Section 2. In his view, this was a way to further ornament some of the previously stated content, while avoiding the more conventional sounds of the flute.

As Section 5 progresses to the *a tempo* marking, the whole tone ascending line does not resolve as expected. It instead leads to a restatement of the folk melody, though this time the melody is highly ornamented with arpeggiated figures and singing, providing a clear climax for the piece. Arriving at Section 6, shown in Figure 8, the speak-flute technique is revisited as the text of the piece is stated in its entirety, and with more clarity. This is intended as a reflective coda, inviting the listener to revisit the words and all of the emotional experiences that have occurred.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Devor, interview.

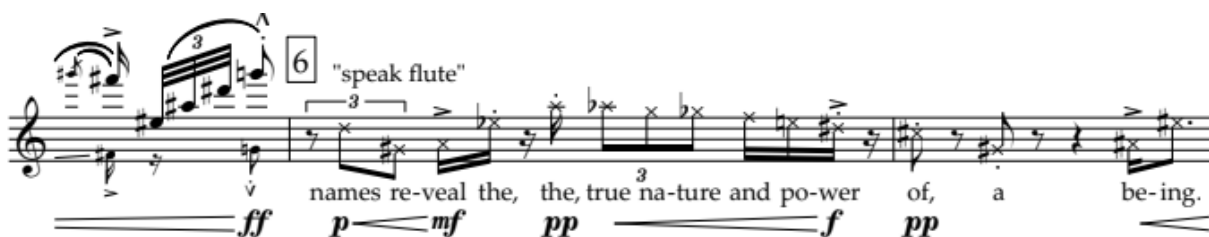


Figure 4.8. Section 6 of *The Power of Names*, James Devor

The final measures of this piece use the same whistle tone technique that opened the piece, but this time without the very clear V-I resolution experienced in the first few notes. Instead, the V moves up by a half step in order to leave the piece feeling unresolved at its conclusion, which can be seen in Figure 9.

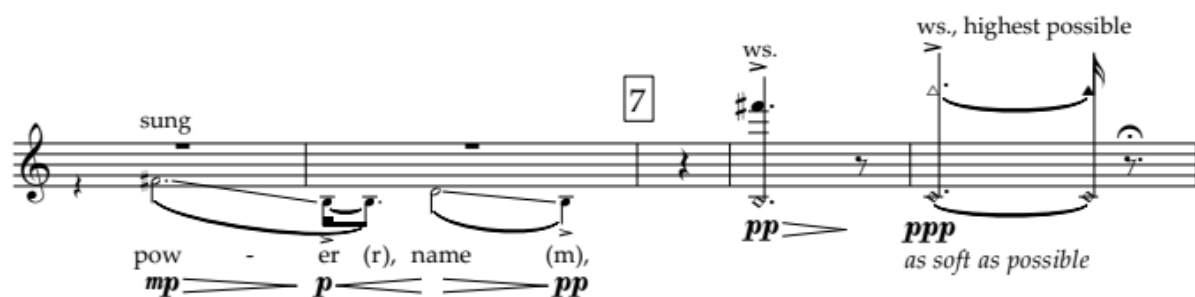


Figure 4.9. Section 7 of *The Power of Names*, James Devor

In efforts to communicate his intentions to the performer, Devor removed all references to meter besides providing an initial tempo as a guideline.¹⁰² He did not want to confine the performer to specific tempi or meters and wanted to encourage the performer to move freely throughout the piece. He slightly modified the typical notation for singing and playing, which is commonly notated with two sets of note heads, one on the played pitch and one on the sung pitch. Devor used smaller note heads on the sung pitches to indicate that the singing should be quieter and feel as if it is distant as shown in Figures 6 and 9. His thought was that, at least

¹⁰² Devor, interview.

subconsciously, the performer would feel as if the larger notes were more important. His use of dynamics was also very specific and intentional. This is especially true of the speak-flute sections like the one depicted in Figure 5, where many of the dynamic markings and accents are counterintuitive to speech. His goal here was to break up the phrasing into unusual sections and emphasize specific words. Additionally, in Section 5, the dynamics are intended to highlight the important notes in the highly ornamented melody, while the ornamentation provides an unsettling feeling. Devor also made use of a “Performance Notes” section, which provides explanations of specific notation and extended techniques that are used in the piece, which can be seen in Appendix B.

Elegy, Kristen Stoner

Background

Elegy for solo alto flute was composed in response to the pandemic and other social justice issues Americans experienced in 2020.¹⁰³ The list of tragedies and social challenges facing America during this year is long, and all of these played at least a small role in composer Kristen Stoner's need to create this piece at the time. Some of the major events of that year included the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic, George Floyd's death and the resulting BLM movement, many devastating wildfires and other events related to human-caused climate change, Donald Trump being acquitted of impeachment charges, the United Kingdom withdrawing from the European Union (BREXIT), the United States leaving the Paris Climate Agreement, Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death, Ghislaine Maxwell's arrest for her role in the Jeffrey Epstein case, murder hornets arriving in the US, a Bitcoin scam involving hacking the Twitter accounts of many prominent figures, and struggles for women's rights and LGBTQ rights in America in the face of several anti-transgender bills that emerged across the United States.¹⁰⁴

Though Stoner grew up primarily in Texas and Florida, as an American of Western and Northern European descent, she was always keenly aware of issues of injustice toward women, people of color, and the LGBTQ population.¹⁰⁵ She feels that her background often provided for an easier life experience than others, but she has remained sensitive to the struggles of others.

¹⁰³ Kristen Stoner, interview by author, Microsoft Teams, February 25, 2023.

¹⁰⁴ History.com Editors, "2020 Events," *History.com*, December 21, 2021, accessed March 5, 2023 <https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/2020-events>; ACLU Editors, "Past Legislation Affecting LGBT Rights Across the Country," *ACLU*, March 20, 2020, accessed March 4, 2023, <https://www.aclu.org/past-legislation-affecting-lgbt-rights-across-country-2020>.

¹⁰⁵ Stoner, interview.

Regarding the pandemic, she acknowledges that this was a tragedy shared by people across the world regardless of cultural background, since many countries were equally devastated. In some ways she feels the effect was less harsh in America, especially in her economic class, due to access to health care, vaccines, and access to goods like food and water throughout the pandemic.

The composer notes that the pandemic was the primary source of stress for her, but social issues like BLM and LGBTQ rights also had a particularly strong impact on her.¹⁰⁶ As a single mother, she had very little control over most of these situations, felt unable to protect her family, was under quarantine and unable to spend time with those who were close to her, and did not want to add to the stress on her children at the time. This led to her feeling very isolated and overwhelmed by all of the grief, loss, and emptiness she was experiencing at the time. As she was looking for a way to deal with these feelings at home, she turned to composition. At the time, she had been asked to write a piece for an international music conference in response to the pandemic, which served as the perfect outlet for her need to express her reactions. Through *Elegy*, Stoner was able to feel comfortable acknowledging and expressing her sadness at home and used this piece as an emotional outburst of grief and sadness. When composing *Elegy*, Stoner did not have a particular audience in mind; instead, this piece was written for herself. However, she did share this work online with a video of herself playing it, in hopes that it would have an impact on the greater flute community.

¹⁰⁶ Stoner, interview.

The Composer's Approach

Kristen Stoner felt that the alto flute had a unique timbre that was perfect for expressing the emptiness and loss she felt during the time she was composing this piece.¹⁰⁷ Harmonically, she used a minor tonality and chromaticism in order to create an atmosphere that reflected tragedy. While Stoner did not use extensive extended techniques in this piece, she did use many timbral trills, pitch bends, and tongue rolls to create specific effects. Many of her techniques are intended to incorporate ululation, which is a form of expressing strong emotions common to many world cultures, including Arabic nations, various parts of Africa, and many indigenous tribes in America. In Stoner's mind, ululation is the sound of grief, and her efforts to incorporate different varieties of ululation represent that every person mourns differently. Her inclusion of these techniques also represents the worldwide reach of the pandemic and its effect on all of humanity.

In using timbral trills, Stoner creates a different tone color, which in her mind represents crying, sadness, and reminiscent of ululation.¹⁰⁸ Pitch bends are always found in a descending pattern in this piece and are meant to depict crying. Her use of tongue rolls serves as the strongest representation of ululation in this work. Finally, her use of leaps in the melody are intended to imitate crying out. After leaping up, these melodies descend downwards, which is a musical sound that has been related to sadness or weeping as far back as the Baroque period of music.¹⁰⁹ While she does use a few more modern techniques for flute, they are fairly minimal, and her notation is straightforward and primarily traditional in its form. She does, however,

¹⁰⁷ Stoner, interview.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ivan Fónagy and Klara Magdics, "Emotional Patterns in Intonation and Music," *STUF - Language Typology and Universals*, 16 no. 1-4 (1963): 296-326, <https://doi.org/10.1524/stuf.1963.16.14.293>.

include a page of performance notes, which can be found in Appendix C, to help the performer choose appropriate fingerings for timbral trills and to explain the tongue-roll technique in detail. She feels that she knows the flute well and is comfortable expressing herself through its abilities.

Greta, Keyna Wilkins

Background

In 2019, Greta Thunberg was *Time*'s Person of the year as a result of her efforts regarding climate change, and more specifically because of her now-well-known speech given at the United Nations Climate Action summit in September of 2019.¹¹⁰ As outlined at the summit, the planet can only allow for a 1.5-degrees-Celsius increase in global temperatures before experiencing severe life-threatening consequences.¹¹¹ Arctic temperatures continue to rise, and are up three degrees Celsius since 1990, as measured in 2023.¹¹² As a result, sea levels have risen, coral reefs are dying, and toxic air pollution continues to increase leading to increased effects on food supplies and drought.¹¹³ This summit was intended to present solutions that would bring the planet to a goal of zero emissions by 2050 – solutions that were needed for a 2020 deadline of the Paris Agreement on climate change.¹¹⁴ In 2016, when the Paris Agreement was signed, 175 countries joined the initiative, including the United States.¹¹⁵ Presently, 195 countries are part of this agreement.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ Jieun Jung, et. al., "When a Girl Awakened the World: A User and Social Message Analysis of Greta Thunberg," *Sustainability* 2020, 12 no. 7 (2020): 2707, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12072707>.

¹¹¹ UN.org Editors, "2019 Climate Action Summit," *United Nations*, accessed March 12, 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/2019-climate-action-summit>.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ UN.org Editors, "List of Parties that signed the Paris Agreement on 22 April," *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*, accessed March 12, 2023, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/04/parisagreementsignatures/>.

¹¹⁶ Britannica Editors, "Paris Agreement," *Britannica.com*, accessed March 12, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Paris-Agreement-2015/Negotiations-and-agreement>.

At the summit, Greta Thunberg, who was fifteen years old at the time, gave a moving speech that gained significant attention around the world. This effect was especially strong in the United States, as was observed through social media activity following the summit.¹¹⁷ As composer Keyna Wilkins was beginning the process of a new composition, Thunberg seemed an obvious subject for her work considering her lifelong interest in environmental issues.¹¹⁸ Wilkins grew up primarily in Sydney, Australia, and has always been passionate about environmental issues, and even started a group in high school focused on making the school “greener.” She is half-British and half-Australian and has spent long periods of time in both areas. As the daughter of vegetarian parents who were generally mindful of environmental issues, she noticed a clear difference between the way economic issues are handled Australia and how they are addressed in Europe, especially in Germany. Because of this background, she naturally gravitates towards environmental issues. She notes that, as she has gotten older, she works intentionally to make each composition meaningful in a way that is more concrete. She wants her pieces to speak a powerful message to people, especially if the subject is political. For this composition, once she decided on the topic, she conducted a Google search for Greta Thunberg’s speeches. When she found this one, she felt the length was perfect, and was further swayed by the powerful event to which it was attached and the naturally rhythmic cadence of Greta Thunberg’s speech, so it became the foundation for her composition, *Greta*.

¹¹⁷ Jieun Jung, et. al., “When a Girl Awakened the World.”

¹¹⁸ Keyna Wilkins, interview by author, Microsoft Teams, February 26, 2023.

The Composer's Approach

For Keyna Wilkins, the goal of this piece was to enhance the spoken element and provide emphasis for parts of the text.¹¹⁹ She feels that music creates atmosphere and mood; it speaks to the emotions and provides a vehicle for enhancing the message of the speech. Additionally, she wants to bring the message of climate change to a more varied audience. While she acknowledges that composer cannot control the outcome of a piece, she hopes to raise more awareness of climate change issues and get a new audience thinking about and talking about this concern. To accomplish this, she takes an approach with her work that is meant to highlight elements of Greta's speech and match the intensity and drama of her words. Wilkins works to balance this without interfering too much. She wants to support the text but keep the music from being so complicated that it takes away from the words.

The opening of the piece begins with a tribal, rhythmic feel on an ostinato low D, and is meant to feel almost like a war cry, which is fitting for Greta's opening statement of, "This is all wrong!"¹²⁰ Through each section of the text, Wilkins shifts between melodic fragments and rhythmic motifs, playing with different ranges of the flute and developing the melodic fragments, trying to give each statement or paragraph of text a different mood. In some sections, like where Greta exclaims, "How dare you!" the flute leans into the drama with a melodic motif that repeats along with her frequent restatements of this claim. When Greta is discussing economic growth, a less provocative section of the text, the music is calmer, but builds alongside the text. The piece reaches a peak over the text, "irreversible chain reactions," and the music plays into this theatrical moment as well. As the speech comes down from that peak, the flute takes on a more

¹¹⁹ Wilkins, interview.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

reflective and somber role, rather than the previously expressed anger. Wilkins introduces two loops that create an effect she describes as “wishy-washy” and “almost religious.” She is intending for the music to feel like a chorale or to have a more religious ambiance. After this, the piece relaxes towards the end. For the final section, the loops are still ongoing with melodic content, but she reintroduces the tribal rhythmic ostinato from the beginning of the piece.

As a flutist, Wilkins knows the strengths and limitations of her instrument.¹²¹ Since she was writing for solo flute, which she often feels is “dry” to the audience, she chose to add a looping pedal to create harmonies and provide a fuller, richer sound. Additionally, she chose to improvise a large amount of the content for this piece, which she later transcribed for this researcher to perform and study. As an experienced improviser, Wilkins mentally outlined some key notes she wanted to center this piece around, which were D, A, G, E-flat, and B-flat. Rather than thinking in a tonal sense, her approach was to find a few notes that she felt fit the mood of the piece well and center her improvisations around those key notes. In the end, it has a fairly modal feel, but does incorporate many semitones. She feels that using semitones is a bit dark and serious, and they allow the performer to powerfully make a statement. These chromatic moments are often incorporated in the more dramatic sections of the piece. In performance of this piece, Wilkins has included a video of Greta Thunberg’s speech, requesting that, if possible, the performer allow the video to play during performance for a greater impact on the audience.

¹²¹ Wilkins, interview.

Spicy Story, Keyna Wilkins

Background

“for flute and voice of Helal Uddin
(Bangladeshi refugee and cook detained for 9 years by Australia
for arriving by boat and seeking protection)”

Helal Uddin, also known as “Spicy,” fell victim to a 2013 policy change in Australia regarding immigration that resulted in his detainment in a number of facilities, including the Manus facility in Papua New Guinea and the infamous Bomana Prison, for many years.¹²² Helal was a cook in Bangladesh, where he was given the nickname, “Spicy,” and for many years, he used this skill to cook meals for his fellow detainees at the Manus Island Detention Centre.¹²³ Uddin’s story is a complex one that begins with his political activism in Bangladesh. After participating in protests against the ruling left-wing Awami Party, he fled Bangladesh and sought asylum in Australia.¹²⁴ However, a policy change in Australia had just taken place that excluded anyone who arrived by boat seeking asylum, or who did not already have a valid visa.¹²⁵ According to the composer and Australian-native, the policy is borne of racist ideals that target Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian immigrants, most of whom are from a Muslim background, including Uddin.¹²⁶ Operation Sovereign Borders is a policy designed to combat “maritime

¹²² Kaldor Centre Editors, “Australia’s refugee policy: An overview,” *UNSW Sydney*, July 17, 2020, accessed March 18, 2023, <https://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/publication/australias-refugee-policy-overview>; Steven Trask, “Former asylum seeker languishes in notorious Papua New Guinea prison,” *SBS News Dateline*, July 19, 2021, accessed March 18, 2023, <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/dateline/article/former-asylum-seeker-languishes-in-notorious-papua-new-guinea-prison/zhzhlc3xw>.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Wilkins, interview.

people-smuggling” and protect Australia’s borders.¹²⁷ In this policy, refugees arriving by plane, usually from European countries, are commonly granted entrance and visas. Those arriving by boat, usually from the Middle East or Southeast Asia and traveling through Indonesia, are sent to detention facilities while their cases await a decision as to whether or not they are legitimate refugees. Often the boats are turned back to Indonesia.¹²⁸ In 2015, allegations were made that Australian government officials were paying the crews of these vessels as much as \$40,000 in cash to return to Indonesia.¹²⁹ These allegations have not been confirmed or denied by the Australian government. Composer Keyna Wilkins believes this policy is inherently racist and is the product of political racism that is intended to reduce the number of immigrants from minority descent in Australia.¹³⁰ She believes this policy is the result of a shifting racial climate in the aftermath of 9/11 and a terrorist bombing in Bali around the same time. Wilkins also notes that there has not been a single terrorist incident linked to a refugee arriving by boat, and there are no events connected to any refugees at all. Though it cannot be concretely proven at present, she believes there is a direct link between these major terrorist events and Australia’s policy changes, and that Halal Uddin’s experience was an unfortunate consequence of this policy change.

When Halal arrived in Australia, he was sent directly to Manus Island Detention Centre for processing, since he arrived by boat. He spent three years in the Manus facility, which is

¹²⁷ Kaldor Centre Editors, “Australia’s refugee policy: An overview.”

¹²⁸ Kaldor Centre Editors, “Turning back boats,” *UNSW Sydney*, February 26, 2015, accessed March 18, 2023, <https://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/publication/%E2%80%98turning-back-boats%E2%80%99%E2%80%99>.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Wilkins, interview.

well-known for extreme human rights violations.¹³¹ In 2016 when he was released, Papua New Guinea's (PNG) National Court stated that Uddin had been "unlawfully detained," and he was released after two and a half years.¹³² After his release, he lived in PNG and met his wife, Alice. They were married in 2017, and had a child, Mohammed Ali. During this time, Uddin had an active claim for refugee status, which was denied in 2018.¹³³ He was then arrested and deported back to Bangladesh. Uddin made every effort to return to PNG legally, and even his dependent

Image removed to comply with copyright.

Figure 4.10. Wife and Son of Helal "Spicy" Uddin

visa application was denied. Since he was separated from his wife and child, Uddin sought other means to return to PNG, and eventually paid a smuggler to return him by boat through Indonesia once again.¹³⁴ On this journey, friends were shot and killed, but he survived. For several months, he lived and worked happily with his family with no trouble. However, in 2019, he was arrested

¹³¹ Steven Trask, "Australia put Helal 'Spicy' Uddin in detention. Papua New Guinea deported him. Then he returned," *SBS News Investigations*, October 13, 2020, accessed February 19, 2023, <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/australia-put-helal-spicy-uddin-in-detention-papua-new-guinea-deported-him-then-he-returned/pxn0qi38y>.

¹³² Trask, "Australia put Helal 'Spicy' Uddin in detention."

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

and sent to Bomana prison.¹³⁵ There is no record of why he was arrested. As PNG prepared to deport him again, he lodged a case against the PNG government for human rights violations, which would allow him to stay in the country if he won the case. This case was heard during the pandemic by Justice David Cannings in April of 2020. Justice Cannings granted him three years of residency in PNG due to human rights violations.¹³⁶ He was released for a total of ten days before authorities appealed the case and returned him to Bomana prison to remain detained while awaiting the appeal.¹³⁷ His appeal was heard in October of 2020, but one of the judges ruling on the case died from Covid-19 before the ruling was decided, which pushed his case to a second hearing.¹³⁸

Image removed to comply with copyright.

Figure 4.11. Helal “Spicy” Uddin and Son Separated

¹³⁵ Trask, “Australia put Helal ‘Spicy’ Uddin in detention.”

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Refugee Action Coalition NSW, “Free Spicy: Release Bangladeshi asylum seeker, Helal Uddin, from Bomana Prison,” *Change.org*, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://www.change.org/p/free-spicy-release-bangladeshi-asylum-seeker-helal-uddin-from-bomana-prison>.

While in Bomana prison, the pandemic became a serious issue, since medical care and sanitary resources were inaccessible or very poor at the facility. After interviewing with BuzzFeed News in 2020, the prisoners had been granted one small bottle of hand sanitizer to share. Before this, they had no soap or other form of sanitation.¹³⁹ During this time, Uddin was housed in a room with fifty men, including one who had tuberculosis, and did not have a bed of his own.¹⁴⁰

Uddin is unable to return to Bangladesh since he converted to Christianity during this time. In a conversation through social media, he told the author he would be killed if he returned to Bangladesh because of his new faith. Uddin also told the author that he is now in a third-party country in a safe house while he works with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to find a safe country where he and his family can travel safely and reunite. The author corresponded with him on March 18, 2023, which happened to be his son's sixth birthday. He was able to talk to his son but has not seen him in two years.

In her composition, *Spicy Story*, Keyna Wilkins is trying to draw attention to the gross injustice occurring in Australia and Papua New Guinea towards refugees in hopes that it will create awareness and inspire change.¹⁴¹ She was drawn to Helal "Spicy" Uddin's story after writing an entire album while working with a poet who had spent six years in a detainment camp. Upon the success of this album, Wilkins felt like addressing these topics through an art form could actually work, and she sought out other refugees with which she could work. This was how

¹³⁹ Hannah Ryan, "This Man Has Come By Boat To Two Countries Without A Visa, And Now He's Facing The Coronavirus In An Overcrowded Prison," *BuzzFeed News*, April 15, 2020, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://www.buzzfeed.com/hannahryan/coronavirus-asylum-seeker-jail-png-hand-sanitiser>.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Wilkins, interview.

she was introduced to Uddin, who she was told had an excellent singing voice. She communicated with him regularly to learn more about his story, and he made a recording of himself singing from his prison cell using a cell phone.

Through this composition, Wilkins hopes to raise awareness of the policy changes that took place in 2013.¹⁴² She does feel as if public opinion has changed in the last ten years, and the current Labor party has relaxed laws regarding refugees, but she does not feel that these changes are sufficient. Wilkins has witnessed the gross injustice and human rights violations experienced by refugees due to what she sees as racist policies and finds it to be a contradiction to the welcoming country that Australia presents itself to be internationally. She says many Australians know about these issues but will not talk about them or address them. As she has learned more about the situation of these immigrants, she has learned of people who have stopped eating, children who no longer have a desire to play, and many who refuse to engage in life in any way, to the point of needing to be put on an intravenous drip for nourishment. Their extreme depression leads to serious manifestations, especially for children, as they are brought to Australia and separated from their parents. Australians have coined an expression to refer to these behaviors, “resignation syndrome,” which has become a common occurrence in places like Manus Island and Nauru Detention Centers.¹⁴³ While Uddin’s son is a PNG citizen and is not in a detention center, many other children are.

¹⁴² Wilkins, interview.

¹⁴³ Ben Doherty, “‘Begging to die’: succession of critically ill children moved off Nauru,” *The Guardian*, August 24, 2018, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/aug/25/begging-to-die-succession-of-critically-ill-children-moved-off-nauru>.

The Composer's Approach

In her attempts to draw attention to the issues with refugees in Australia, composer Keyna Wilkins began with a recording of Helal “Spicy” Uddin singing from his prison cell.¹⁴⁴ In this short song, Uddin tells his story of deportation and heartbreak while Wilkins highlights his text with a call-and-response style incorporation of the flute, alternating melodic flourishes with drone-like tones as the flute alternates with the voice. Uddin uses his foot to stomp out a drum beat while humming a melodic introduction. Wilkins uses the flute as a drone, roughly at the pitch A, and occasionally adds embellishments to the drone in the opening. In this piece, the flute has to have the pitch center lowered about forty cents in order to match the pitch of Uddin’s singing. With the exception of altering the pitch center of the flute, Wilkins does not call for any extended techniques or unusual usage of the flute. Her techniques and approach follow classical conventions, though they are reminiscent of the jazz tradition, since call-and-response is a technique iconic to jazz that was inherited from African music traditions.¹⁴⁵ Her melodic figures are mostly improvised, similar to her other piece, *Greta*, a practice with which she is comfortable.¹⁴⁶ She describes her biggest challenge in working with this recording is that it does not always maintain a steady meter or time signature, which makes timing difficult in some sections. While she prefers a free approach, it made transcription challenging.

In order to capture the intended feeling of the piece, Wilkins needed to communicate the free nature of this composition and encourage use of the ear rather than depending on notation.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Wilkins, interview.

¹⁴⁵ Richard D. Crawford and Larry Hamberlin, *An Introduction to America's Music*, 3rd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2018), 222.

¹⁴⁶ Wilkins, interview.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

This was difficult to communicate in notation, though she gives continuous verbal cues to help line up with and match the energy of the recording. The author was able to speak to the composer directly about portraying this freeness in the piece and relying on the ear, which was helpful. There is an optional loop section as well, which is unmetered and intended to add a choral ambiance to the piece. She further requested that video or photos of Uddin and his family be used in performance to help humanize him and generate empathy for his situation. To honor that wish, photos have been included in this paper as well.

Image removed to comply with copyright.

Figure 4.12. Helal “Spicy” Uddin and Son Together in 2021

Thoughts and Prayers, Leanna Keith

Background

The voice of this track is the real interview recording of Carrie S. - a woman who was present during the Westroads Mall Shooting in Omaha, Nebraska on December 5, 2007. The 19-year-old shot and killed eight people and wounded four others - including Carrie's husband - before committing suicide and shooting himself in the head.

Carrie was not physically injured but, through this piece, I hope that the performer and the audience can gain a better understanding of what it is to experience a traumatic event and subsequent PTSD.

During the process of writing this piece (from the original commission date in 2019 to the finished work in 2022), there have been 1,557 mass shootings in the United States in which "the definition of mass shooting should be four or more people, excluding the shooter, who are shot in a single event regardless of the motive, setting, or number of deaths." While I had not been present at such an event at the time of receiving the commission, this changed in the summer of 2020. A gunman ran his car into a crowd, opened the door, and shot. I was at the front of the car, and ran for my life. I find that I now have trouble being in large crowds, and am prone to anxiety attacks in loud spaces.

If this piece moves you in any way, I urge you to vote for stricter gun policies, and donate to the March for Our Lives, as well as other nonprofit organizations making strides towards gun control.

- Leanna Keith

Dr. Christine Erlander Beard, at the time of this writing, is professor of flute at the University of Nebraska in Omaha. Flutist Leanna Keith studied with Beard throughout junior high and high school, until she graduated high school in 2014.¹⁴⁸ In 2019, Dr. Beard asked Keith to commission a piece for her about social justice. Not long before this request came, seventeen people were killed in a shooting at a Parkland, Florida high school.¹⁴⁹ At the time, the victims of the Parkland shooting were speaking out frequently. Keith remembers watching the way the high

¹⁴⁸ Leanna Keith, interview by author, Zoom, February 24, 2023.

¹⁴⁹ Elizabeth Chuck, Alex Johnson, and Corky Siemaszko, "17 killed in mass shooting at high school in Parkland, Florida," *NBCNews.com*, February 15, 2018, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/police-respond-shooting-parkland-florida-high-school-n848101>.

school students from this school responded, and especially how they talked about their reactions.¹⁵⁰ Their reflections sparked the idea for the piece. Keith grew up in Omaha, and Beard lived in Omaha for many years. Keith reflected back on a shooting that happened there when they were both residents of that city. This was the Westroads Mall shooting in 2007, in which nineteen-year-old Robert Hawkins shot and killed eight people before committing suicide.¹⁵¹ Keith knew the wife of a man who was injured in the Westroads Mall shooting, and knew she was very vocal and outspoken about the incident, so she reached out to her to collaborate on this project.¹⁵² Her name is Carrie S., and it is her voice that provides the foundation of this piece through her spoken testimony of the recovery process regarding this tragedy.

While this particular shooting was not the personal experience of the composer, Keith feels it is important to note that everyone is within much closer proximity to a mass shooting than they often realize, especially if they reside in the United States.¹⁵³ She describes it as being similar to the “six degrees of Kevin Bacon” analogy, except noting that in the case of gun violence, she believes it is closer to three degrees.¹⁵⁴ As evidence of this, while Keith was still working on this composition, she was involved in the Black Lives Matter protests taking place during the summer of 2022 in Seattle, Washington, where she lived at the time.¹⁵⁵ During one of

¹⁵⁰ Keith, interview.

¹⁵¹ CBS News Editors, “Omaha Mall Shooting,” *CBSNews.com*, December 5, 2007, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/omaha-mall-shooting>.

¹⁵² Keith, interview.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ David Greene, “The History of ‘Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon’,” *NPR*, September 14, 2012, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2012/09/14/161130024/the-history-of-six-degrees-of-kevin-bacon>.

¹⁵⁵ Keith, interview.

the protests, a man drove into a crowd with a firearm and began shooting.¹⁵⁶ While only one person was shot, and the shooting did not result in anyone's death, the car drove right into where Keith was in the crowd. The shooter was within arm's reach of her. She now also struggles to cope with this experience and its lasting effects in many ways.¹⁵⁷

While Keith had a specific vision for this piece, Dr. Beard also had her own vision for the piece, and Keith worked to pair these two ideas together.¹⁵⁸ Since she had recently experienced gun violence personally, she did not want to cause people to feel as if they were being attacked as they experienced this piece. She did not want people to feel what it was like to go through this, necessarily, but she did want to show the recovery process and to highlight the long-term physical, mental, and emotional trauma that results from an event like this. For her, this piece was about the echoes of these experiences. Dr. Beard's aim was more to show others what the experience of being there was like. As Dr. Beard began working on the piece and preparing it for its premiere, she made many musical decisions that Keith had not necessarily notated, but that contributed significantly to the overall effect of the piece. This included her take on the "garbage noise" notation that is discussed in the next section, and the use of breathing in the flute.

As a mixed-race American – white and Chinese – Keith is familiar with the experience of being a minority in America.¹⁵⁹ During the time of her composition, the Covid-19 pandemic played a pivotal role in her experiences, and she remembers a surprising number of people that

¹⁵⁶ Sara Jean Green, "Man accused of driving into Seattle protesters and shooting a man held on investigation of assault," *The Seattle Times*, June 8, 2020, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/law-justice/gunman-accused-of-driving-into-george-floyd-protesters-and-shooting-a-man-held-on-investigation-of-assault/>.

¹⁵⁷ Keith, interview.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

she knew being attacked in parking lots and public places and being told to go home due to the blame many Americans placed on Chinese people for the coronavirus. While she does not feel that gun violence is specific to any particular race, since it effects people from all ethnicities, this background shaped her view by helping her to understand that public mental health and public safety are connected, and none of these factors or events are unrelated.

In composing this piece, Keith hoped that it would evoke an emotional response in people and motivate them to action.¹⁶⁰ She hoped people would feel like they could and must do something about it. She realizes that, with events as serious and devastating as mass shootings, it can be difficult for a person to allow themselves to fully feel that experience, since it can be very overwhelming, and since these events happen so frequently. One must have a certain amount of flippancy to cope with the frequent and extreme nature of these events. Her goal was to help people fire up their sense of empathy for these events again, as she feels that our society has become too deadened to mass shootings, and are no longer doing enough to prevent these scenarios from happening. She did find it difficult to define a specific audience for which this piece was intended, noting that the people who most need to hear this message are the ones who would “see it on the program and would walk out of the room.”¹⁶¹ The type of person who would intentionally listen to a work like this is likely one who is already working on the issue in some way. Despite this, she feels the work is still valuable, and needs to be done. She is realistic about the audience that will likely be exposed to it, although she is hopeful its reach will be greater than her expectation. The composer states in the program notes that, between the time of commission in 2019 and the publishing date of this composition in 2022, there were 1,557 mass

¹⁶⁰ Keith, interview.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

shootings in the United States. At the time the author wrote the section of this thesis focusing on *Thoughts and Prayers*, it is the third week of March of 2023. Since the beginning of 2023, one hundred and fifteen mass shootings have occurred in less than three months' time.¹⁶²

The Composer's Approach

In her own words, Leanna Keith is a “really weird composer.”¹⁶³ Her thinking in the composition process does not follow the typical progression of harmonic structures. For *Thoughts and Prayers*, she began with the interview provided by Carrie S., working to piece together a story that was not linear by reorganizing chunks of the interview to present the story in a linear fashion. After that, her first task was to map out where she wanted the flute and voice to interact or to be independent. Initially, she planned to add electronic instruments to the narrative track as an accompaniment to the flute. But, when she was not happy with the way this approach was working, she opted to sing the newly added elements. This idea came to her after experiencing a shooting herself. With the perspective this new experience brought, she wanted the listener to hear the voice of two people who actually experienced these events themselves – both Keith and Carrie S. She also preferred the grit it created in the sound, as well as the overlapping layers that resulted. Her vocal part was completely improvised and notated later. The chords that are experienced were not meant to serve a particular harmonic structure but were created based on the improvised expression of the composer. After these elements were complete, she added the flute part. In this way, the flute part had its own agency and was able to communicate independent of the vocal elements. Sometimes it interacts directly with the text,

¹⁶² GVA Editors, “Mass Shootings in 2023,” *Gun Violence Archive*, accessed on March 20, 2023, <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/reports/mass-shooting>.

¹⁶³ Keith, interview.

but other times the flute has its own melodic line that emphasizes the spirit of the experience and depicts the emotional processing of these events.

As an experienced improviser with a larger “sound world,” as Keith puts it, that includes extended techniques, she expected to incorporate some of these elements into her work.¹⁶⁴ However, she notes that though there are a variety of interesting techniques that exist for flute, many options are not the most effective in a given setting. In her view, the flute is highly effective, but these unusual techniques need to be chosen for their appropriateness, rather than used for their own sake, so that they can have the greatest effect. This piece includes a variety of performance techniques, some of which are more traditional, and others that are more avant-garde. She incorporates pitch bends right as the flute enters, and these are intended to imitate the natural sound of the human voice, which does not follow a strict twelve-tone format. In this way, the flute becomes equal with the human ego. Her use of air sounds frequently imitates the text spoken by the narrator as a sound effect, but also serves to show off some of the unique sounds that are capable of being produced by the flute. She uses harsh and dry articulations that are meant to sound like rapid gun fire in the distance, or feet running away. As a traditionally melodic instrument, the flute is not well-known for harsh or brief sounds. Keith incorporates many harmonic flourishes like rolled fingerings layered with overtones, which are intended to be more organic as they follow the natural harmonic series. Also appearing frequently in her piece are grace notes. This is Keith’s nod to her own Chinese background since flute music in the Chinese tradition is full of grace notes due to the nature of how the instrument is articulated. She incorporates grace notes in all of her works as a type of trademark.

¹⁶⁴ Keith, interview.

Later in the piece Keith uses multiphonics, choosing a combination that is simpler to achieve to allow the performer to sustain the pitches for a longer duration and achieve a good amount of “crunch” in the sound.¹⁶⁵ The flute is traditionally known for clarity of sound, but she emphasizes what she calls “disclarity” with the use of multiphonics.¹⁶⁶ She also incorporates timbral trills, which she generally likes the sound of, and flutter tonguing, which is aimed at creating siren-like sounds. During some of the more intense and provocative sections of the piece, Keith combines singing and playing. This is intended to further emphasize the voice in this piece, giving the performer the opportunity to be involved in the vocal elements as well. Singing and playing also creates a highly distorted effect that can sound very loud and aggressive, similar to an electric guitar. The more radical extended technique sections of this piece are highlighted by something Keith calls “garbage noise,” which is an idea she attributes to composer Kaley Lane Eaton, who she had previously worked with and who has also written pieces for her.¹⁶⁷ This technique comes with an unusual notation method that is incredibly clear and effective, as seen in Figure 4.13 and 4.14. In the two figures shown, the increase of intensity requested of the performer is clearly indicated in example B when compared to example A. In this technique, there is no intention of pitch, or rhythm. Instead, the performer should aim for the loudest, most aggressive, and nasty sound possible. Rather than having any melodic content, this notation requests a wall of this type of sound. When Keith incorporates the garbage noise notation, it comes at a time when she has reached a maximum amount of pressure that can be

¹⁶⁵ Keith, interview.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

expressed in her writing. Providing this notation gives the performer a chance to take the music to the next level.



Figure 4.13. “Garbage Noise” notation example A, *Thoughts and Prayers*.

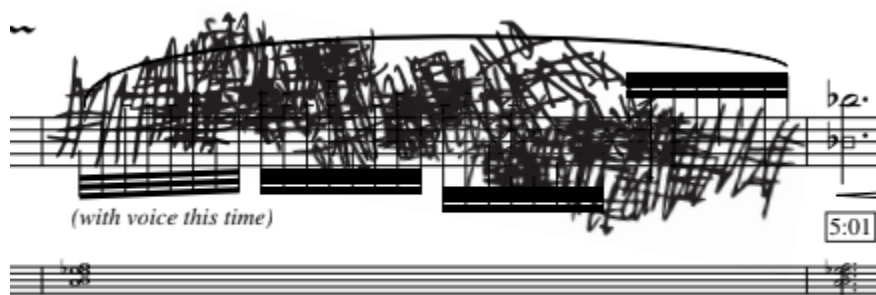


Figure 4.14. “Garbage Noise” notation example A, *Thoughts and Prayers*.

Towards the end of the piece, Keith instructs the performer to breathe in and out of the flute, using the tube as an amplifier for the breath.¹⁶⁸ Throughout the backing track, the composer has added sounds of hyperventilating and panting from running, which provides a rhythmic element throughout the track. When the breathing on the track cuts out, the performer replaces it. At this time, the rhythmic element begins slowing down in an attempt to move out of panic and into a more centered state of being, and the slowed breathing provides grounding for this. To conclude the piece, Keith incorporates whistle tones on the final note. Whistle tones, according

¹⁶⁸ Keith, interview.

to the composer, have the ability to make the audience think the performer is playing for much longer than they are in reality. She refers to them as a type of magical, ethereal stage magic.¹⁶⁹

When discussing the limitations of the flute as a medium, Keith explained that she was drawn to the use of voice so strongly because it is “powerful in a different way than the flute,” and “really needed to be present in this piece in a big way.”¹⁷⁰ She features the voice prominently because she felt that people needed to hear Carrie S.’s voice. She considered a number of compositional approaches, and even pursued an option without voice, but notes that it is very different, and did not have the right effect in the end. Though *Thoughts and Prayers* includes very detailed performance notes (see Appendix D), she feels that the backing track provides as much, and often clearer, instruction to the performer than the score is capable of providing. While the score gives the performer reference points and technical instruction, the track provides context that is vital to the interpretation of the piece. As a music educator, Keith feels that many scores do not communicate well to the performer, and she further notes that many performers have to rely on recordings of others to figure out how to properly achieve techniques. She sees this as a failure of notation and worked diligently to communicate to the performer in an effective way. Keith worked with an editor who is a musician, and she credits him with helping her to make sure her intentions are understandable. In contrast to the troubles of notation, the backing track provides cues for pacing, timbre, emotional energy and momentum, and many other performance elements that are highly effective.

¹⁶⁹ Keith, interview.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

Summary

Six pieces were selected for study and performance for this lecture recital, covering a variety of social issues familiar to America and many other countries, and employing a wide variety of playing techniques, compositional approaches, and notation methods. *202-456-1111* takes a traditional approach with instrumentation, using the common pairing of flute and piano, while taking a modern approach to the composition process itself. While composer Laura Kaminsky only uses traditional notation methods and playing techniques, she achieves a very nontraditional sound through the use of a motivic cell based on the phone number depicted in the title. In stark contrast, James Devor's piece, *Thoughts and Prayers*, draws upon a wide range of extended techniques for flute as he attempts to find common ground between modern and traditional perspectives in the music world. His piece emphasizes the use of voice and text as well as mixing modern flute techniques with a traditional folk-style melody. In Kristen Stoner's *Elegy*, the alto flute is chosen to provide an unusual, and more melancholy, timbre. While some extended techniques are present in this work, they serve the purpose of exploring the idea of ululation in mourning and creating timbral effects to underscore the anguish and despair that inspired this piece's creation. Keyna Wilkins also utilizes voice as a powerful tool in both *Greta* and *Spicy Story*. While each highlights a completely different social issue – climate change and immigration policy, respectfully – she employs similar techniques to highlight the text. Her use of improvised call and response is intended to enhance the mood of the speech or singing present in the tracks, while still allowing for clarity and power in the message itself. Finally, *Thoughts and Prayers* by Leanna Keith also strongly emphasizes voice, through the interview with the victim, the voice of the composer singing in the track, and the voice of the performer. Her unusual techniques and notation provide clear communication to the performer and effective

dialogue with the listener. The variety of compositions explored in this study represent a wide range of performance, composition, and notation techniques, as well as a variety of significant social issues that impact this generation.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

Extended Techniques

Excluding the use of the flute, which was a prerequisite for this study, the researcher has noted that there are very few observed qualities shared by all the pieces chosen for this study. Flutter tonguing is the only technique that could be considered an extended technique for flute that is seen in Laura Kaminsky's piece, *202-456-1111*, but neither *Greta* nor *Spicy Story* by Keyna Wilkins incorporates flutter tonguing in their works. It's also noteworthy that the earliest use of flutter-tonguing for flute was in the ballet, *The Nutcracker*, by Tchaikovsky, which was written in 1892.¹⁷¹ While this technique was not common for some time, Tchaikovsky's use of flutter-tonguing precedes any era of music associated with extended techniques. *Greta* does have a small section of harmonics, but those were used even earlier in flute literature, as can be seen in Albert Franz Doppler's *Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise*, which was composed in 1870.¹⁷² If flutter tonguing and harmonics are excluded, only three of the six pieces chosen for study in this thesis employ extended techniques for flute.

Commissions

Only two of the six chosen works were commissioned for writing, which is not surprising, given that the nature of these works is deeply personal and political in subject. For the

¹⁷¹ Matteo Gemolo, "Extended techniques on the traverso (part 2): the case of the flutter-tonguing and microtones in the post-modernist repertoire for the one-keyed flute," *IMPAR Online journal for artistic research*, 3, no. 1 (2019): 5-23, <https://proa.ua.pt/index.php/impar/article/view/3914/2951>.

¹⁷² Breanna Vazquez, "Breanna Vazquez, Flute" Junior recital program notes, DePaul University School of Music, 2020, https://music.depaul.edu/concerts-events/news-events-calendar/Documents/Winter%202020%20Programs/3_1_20%20Breanna%20Vazquez%20Jr%20Recital%20Final.pdf.

two pieces that were commissioned, one composer, Laura Kaminsky, was not given specific topics or inspiration and was free to explore topics of her choosing. In the case of Leanna Keith's *Thoughts and Prayers*, the commissioner requested a topic of social justice issues.

Fixed Audio and Instrumentation

When considering fixed audio, three out of six pieces employ this technique, while two are unaccompanied, and one uses the more traditional combination of flute and piano. *202-456-1111*, was commissioned by a flute and piano duo, which shows that it was not chosen by the composer, but was a limitation provided by the performers. Two pieces did call for alto flute instead of the standard C flute.

Improvisation

As the writer interviewed each composer, she noted that, when the composer chose to lead their artistic process with emotion as the emphasis, rather than with technique, tonality, other elements, they tended to emphasize improvisation in their approach. This is true of Leanna Keith's *Thoughts and Prayers*, and both *Greta* and *Spicy Story* by Keyna Wilkins. In the case of both composers, they were already experienced with improvisation, and it seems they were both able to use improvisation as an organic means of expression because of their experience, whereas traditional composers might be limited to their theoretical understanding and other traditional approaches characteristic of Western-classical music. When one considers the oral traditions of American slaves, who were the creators of Negro spirituals and early blues, the direct tie between emotional intent and improvisation seems natural. It is worth considering that experience and familiarity with improvisation are effective means of communicating with an audience through music that is often inaccessible to musicians of the Western-classical tradition.

Like Negro spirituals and early blues, these composers began with improvisation and later transcribed the music they created.

Political Activism

After completing interviews with each of these composers, the researcher notes that each of these composers share a proclivity for political activism. Four of the six composers noted their experiences in marches or protest events related to current social or political issues, while the other two discussed their personal involvement in activist organizations or platforms. In each case, the composers are well-informed about a variety of social and political issues and have demonstrated a history of involvement for the causes that are important to them.

Borrowing Techniques

Several of the composers selected for this study employed extended techniques, and while discussing these techniques, some of them openly shared about how they discovered these techniques. For James Devor, many techniques were chosen based on the strengths of the performer for which his composition was written. He also notes that he relied heavily on Robert Dick's book on extended techniques for flute called, *The Other Flute*.¹⁷³ Devor is one of two composers discussed in this thesis who combine voice and flute in their works, and he noted using this book as a reference guide for what was possible for the flute, specifically seeking out elements that used flute and voice as a combination. Leanna Keith credits Kaley Lane Eaton for the creation of the garbage noise technique and notation, noting that she only requested the incorporation of voice into one iteration of this technique as a variance in her own usage of this

¹⁷³ Robert Dick, *The Other Flute: A Performance Manual of Contemporary Techniques*, second edition, (Woodbury, CT: Lauren Keiser Music Publishing, 1989), <http://robertdick.net/product/the-other-flute/>.

technique. If other composers borrowed techniques or notation for their pieces, it was not discussed during the course of their interviews for this research.

Compositional Trends

In reflecting on their works, some trends have become apparent in these composers' compositional approaches. In literary art, it is well-documented that there is a link between social dynamics and world events, but this is less widely acknowledged with music, possibly because the art form is, by nature, more abstract. Through this study, it is clear that many composers are striving for a more literal approach to their expression. They are achieving this through the use of sound effects - some that were created with their purpose in mind specifically, the use of text or speech in their works, and mixed media experiences incorporating voice and video. These techniques all lead to a more literal experience for the audience, making their message clear and accessible to a broader audience by bypassing the need for extensive training and theoretical understanding of Western Classical music traditions.

Implications for Critical Pedagogy

One of the important tenants for Critical Pedagogy is reclaiming humanity for those who are oppressed, and several of these works were composed with that intention, or at least served that end.¹⁷⁴ Wilkins's composition *Spicy Story*, for example, includes a request for video and photo as a part of the performance in order to help humanize him and generate empathy for his situation.¹⁷⁵ In Devor's piece *The Power of Names*, he emphasizes the use of names to make his message more powerful and meaningful, thus generating empathy for victims of racist police

¹⁷⁴ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 56.

¹⁷⁵ Wilkins, interview.

violence.¹⁷⁶ Stoner's work, *Elegy*, while not addressing a specific population, brings recognition to the suffering of people around the world through expressing another form of mourning in ululation. Stoner features forms of ululation in her compositional methods but does not directly address specific populations in her piece. She did, however, discuss her intent to draw attention to those who suffered more during Covid-19 due to their economic circumstances in her interview with the researcher.¹⁷⁷ Kaminsky included program notes for her piece, *202-456-1111*, that address her concerns about the population of America. The effect of this highlights the disconnect between American citizens and government leadership in a tangible way. Even Greta Thunberg's speech addresses the whole world as a population who will suffer due to climate change in Wilkins's piece, *Greta*. Similarly, Keith's program notes for *Thoughts and Prayers* depict a growing population of Americans who are victim to gun violence. While she acknowledges that this issue affects people from all cultures and demographics, the victims become a relatable and very real population in her treatment of the issue in this composition.¹⁷⁸ In each work selected for this study, implications exist for a population who is underserved in some sense. Though the population may be addressed directly or indirectly, some call of action is present as well, aligning each piece with the tenets of Critical Pedagogy.

Many composers included in this study had an initial goal of drawing attention to their topics in order to inspire change. While others may not have set out with this goal, their works serve the purpose, nonetheless. In this way, their works are spreading their message across the music community and reaching a larger audience outside of their situation through this study and

¹⁷⁶ Devor, interview.

¹⁷⁷ Stoner, interview.

¹⁷⁸ Keith, interview.

its performance component, as well as through other performances of their pieces. When considering the framework of Critical Pedagogy, these works are serving to educate an audience that includes the subjects of these pieces, and those outside of these situations, which is an important step towards achieving liberation. In this way, composition and musical performance seem to be an ideal method for addressing social or political issues, especially when considering the ability for modern compositional approaches to generate a desired emotional response or to accurately communicate an experience.

Relevance to Modern Music Education

In the researcher's experience through eight years of collegiate-level flute study, and over a decade of performance and teaching experience, it is clear that the modern education system does not reflect contemporary trends in performance and composition. It is worth noting that the average music student does not receive much education on extended techniques, and it is not a required facet of study for the flute. While these methods seem to occasionally be included at the discretion of some teachers, in the researcher's experience, these techniques are often limited to those that have been in existence for more than forty years, including limited use of multiphonics, flutter tonguing, and occasionally singing and playing. Singing and playing, however, is often used as an exercise for developing sound rather than as a performance technique. Newer methods of sound creation do not seem to be emphasized in the flute world, and these types of techniques are even less prominent in other instrumentals areas with the exception of percussion and possibly saxophone. These two instruments are relatively new additions to the world of formal musical study, so it makes sense that their population would be more adept at incorporating modern techniques, since their traditional literature is much more limited in history.

The use of mixed media and electronics is even less prominent in formal musical study than extended techniques, especially in the study of applied music. Collaboration between departments of a music program is uncommon. While the researcher has always sought out opportunities to perform with other disciplines, it was never recommended by professors, and was extremely nontraditional in her experience. This is especially true of digital mediums, though this study and performance have demonstrated that incorporating mixed-media and digital mediums produces a convincing and effective performance. Regarding electronics, those studying music education are likely to get an introductory course on notation software, and possibly digital audio workstations (DAWs). However, the scope of their coverage is extremely limited in an undergraduate, and even a graduate-level degree. While compositions that incorporate technology are limited and emerging in the overall body of literature, they are important elements of contemporary music, and students are often left unprepared to incorporate them into performance. The researcher relied on YouTube tutorials and her husband's prior experience with technology, which was also derived from online sources and tutorials, in order to properly perform these pieces. As a result, the performer frequently had to problem-solve issues with little knowledge or resources, and experienced technical problems throughout the process, including at the performance.

It is the researcher's observation that modern education for flute, and for other musical disciplines, should encourage collaboration between disciplines, and should emphasize the use of technology. Students studying music need to be able to utilize recording equipment effectively, work with prominent digital sound platforms like Ableton Live, Mainstage, Logic, and other similar programs, and should be familiar with performing using common devices and technology like looping pedals, samplers, and live sound processing. Students should have the skills to set up

recording pathways for their performances and should have the understanding and familiarity with recording equipment to pursue their use in performance independently. Modern formal music training programs leave students ill-equipped for performances of this nature, despite their growing presence in the profession.

Consideration should also be given to pedagogical approaches of music history taught in the Western Classical tradition. This content is often taught with an emphasis on data rather than context, but it does not exist without context. To some degree, context is usually provided as to the evolution of musical practices, but social context is frequently sidelined in favor of compositional and theoretical practices, with an emphasis on studying works that serve as milestones for performance practice. While this is an important area of study, it should be supplemented with the study of historical and social context. In the researcher's experience, even works from past musical eras, as far back as can be documented, music does not exist independently of social context. However, in modern music history, this dynamic is not explored in depth. This is unfortunate because it is an excellent way for students to find the information relatable, and to better understand both the history and the music itself. It also prepares future music educators to have a greater influence on their students and prepares performers for more effective and convincing performances. This study clearly shows the relationship that exists between personal experience and compositional art. While these examples were more intentional in this purpose than others, the dynamic is present throughout all music, and can foster greater meaning and understanding with a broad audience if approached in a way that emphasizes their experiential and cultural context.

Success in their Goals

After working through each piece to learn them, having in-depth conversations with the composers about their work, methods, and intent, and further polishing these pieces for performance, the research would like to acknowledge the criteria for success identified for each composition and her impression of each composer's success in reaching their goals. Beginning with Laura Kaminsky's *202-456-1111*, the composer wanted to create a musical work that was engaging on the surface, while communicating a deeper meaning. In this goal, she was successful. As a performer, the researcher feels that this piece creates an interesting groove and, while it lacks a tonal center, it does provide melodic contour and resolution. Some sections of the piece achieve the composer's goal of portraying her frustration with not being able to get through on the phone line successfully. The persistent emphasis on high F and F sharp, with occasional wanderings away from this idea, draw a clear parallel to the experience of repeatedly dialing a number and being unable to get through, while periodically being hopeful that the call might get through next time, ultimately ending with no success. Other sections depict the despair of being unheard as one cries out in frustration, as well as slowly and begrudgingly accepting the new reality. An additional goal of Kaminsky's for this piece was for it to become a well-known piece for flute and piano that was accepted as standard literature but stood out as unique amongst other selections. In this goal it has not yet reached success. As of the writing of this thesis, no recording has been published of the piece, though it was performed once by the commissioning artists. It is likely that the researcher's study and performance of this piece will contribute to this goal in some way.

With *The Power of Names*, James Devor's musical goal was to successfully combine a simple, folk-like melody with avant-garde compositional in order to provide a piece that would

be palatable to newer consumers of contemporary classical music. The researcher finds it noteworthy that the composer did not have a larger goal of drawing attention to the #SayTheirNames movement, though it provided a provocative subject for the work.

Additionally, it is curious that the piece does not actually call for the performer to say the names of any of the black American victims of police violence, as is the purpose of the movement, nor does it call for them to be listed in the program. The researcher finds it surprising that these are not more prominent goals for the piece. However, after spending a significant amount of time studying the piece, she feels the piece is successful in melding extended techniques with the folk-like melody, as the composer intended. Initially, the piece feels replete with extended techniques, but with more academic study of the piece, the interweaving of the two elements is more apparent and is successful, in the author's opinion. At this time, it is not possible to discern how a less-familiar audience would respond to this piece and its approach. While this piece has been performed publicly at least once, no recordings of it exist at the time this thesis was written.

Kristen Stoner's *Elegy* seems to have seen some early success in achieving one of its secondary goals of helping people process the world events of 2020, particularly the pandemic. She notes that it has already been performed several times since its initial publication. Stoner did not intentionally write this piece for a specific audience, but instead wrote it for herself as a means of expressing her own grief in a healthy way. In that respect, this piece has been very successful, and is being shared with others in the flute community to the same effect. From a performance perspective, the piece feels like mourning, and the timbral elements especially help the performer to engage in exploring emotions of grief and tragedy. Once she learned of the composer's intent to incorporate ululation, and learned more about what that means in other cultures, the piece became even more effective in this way. The only difficulty the researcher

finds in achieving that goal of this piece is the tempo marking. In her view, the tempo seems a little too fast to allow for the reflection necessary to achieve the right feeling, but she has chosen to take it slower in performance to allow for this.

For *Greta* and *Spicy Story*, one of Keyna Wilkins's most prominent goals was to highlight the texts that served as foundations for these compositions. She wanted to emphasize the spoken or sung text, and to use the flute to provide a greater feeling of depth and meaning. In these aspirations, both pieces are successful. Wilkins understands call-and-response and knows how to ensure the flute does not obscure the text, but still enhances the mood and drama of the narrator. The use of looping pedal, especially as it is done with less precision, as specified by Wilkins, creates a dense yet simple atmosphere, which the researcher feels is highly effective. The only difficulty in reaching the goal of generating more awareness and activism for *Greta* is the fact that this speech is not always taken seriously by American audiences. Instead, her speech is often the source of cynicism and criticism. While this may not be the case in other countries, it may impede her reach to audiences in America. It is also worth noting that Wilkins has performed these pieces many times in Australia and is preparing for a tour of the United States in 2023 where she will continue to perform these pieces and reach new audiences. The researcher feels that Wilkins will continue to see success with reaching new audiences about these topics and gaining more support for change.

When considering *Thoughts and Prayers*, there are many goals established by the composer and commissioner that require reflection. First, the piece was intended to highlight the long-term effects that experience with gun violence can have on a person, and in this way it is quite effective. Carrie S.'s words from personal experience are provocative and engaging on this subject. She effectively draws the listener's attention away from the events of that day to the

days, weeks, and even months beyond the shooting event and what that experience was like for her and her husband. While Keith did not necessarily want a person to experience these events themselves through this piece, that was a goal of Dr. Christine Beard, who commissioned the piece. After performing this piece, the researcher feels that it is highly effective in drawing the performer, and likely the audience, directly into the events. Keith's use of electronic elements, breathing, the effective arrangement of the narration, and nuanced performance techniques for flute creates an experience for the performer that is hard to ignore. In this way, her piece is captivating, and truly draws one into the experience, even if it was not designed to do so directly. While Keith never expected this piece to reach the audience that she feels needs to hear the message most, in less than a year since its publication, it has already had two prominent performances, one at the National Flute Association annual convention in 2022, and one at the Mid-Atlantic flute convention in 2023, providing exposure for the piece to the larger flute community. The researcher feels that her performance of the piece will help it to reach some of the broader audience that would otherwise overlook a work like this or avoid it entirely due to its title and subject matter. In this way, Keith is already seeing some of her intended success regarding exposure for the piece, in addition to her notable success with compositional methods.

Limitations

This study was limited by the choice of flute as the performance instrument, and by the time constraints of the researcher to prepare selected works for performance at her recital. It was also limited to living composers who were willing to be interviewed for the purposes of this research. Initially, the researcher planned to include *rapid-fire* by Jennifer Higdon, but the short time frame for preparation and the difficulty of the piece led to her ultimately excluding it from her study. The researcher would like to note, however, that, based on her limited study of this

piece, it seems to share many commonalities with other pieces covered in this project. It would have also added considerably to the library of extended techniques and notation methods explored in this study. The researcher initially prepared another piece for performance as well: Allison Loggins-Hull's *Homeland*. Ms. Loggins-Hull was unavailable for interview, and the researcher had more music prepared than was ideal for the lecture recital portion of this project. Though her piece would have contributed meaningfully to the stylistic approaches explored in this study, it ultimately had to be excluded.

Recommendations

This study could be expanded to include a greater number of contemporary compositions like the ones listed previously in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the current climate of works composed in response to issues of civil unrest. Additionally, it would be enlightening to see how works by historical composers fit into this narrative. It is the researcher's suspicion that many composers throughout Western-classical music's history have also drawn on issues of civil unrest, or social and political events for their work, and this would be an excellent topic for further research. Finally, the reactions and responses to these works from audiences representing a variety of backgrounds would be an excellent topic of research and discussion. The researcher would like to suggest that documentation of their responses and emotional reactions, as well as their understanding of the referenced events and willingness to become activists, be the source of future research regarding these pieces and others like them.

Conclusion

Contemporary works for flute that were written in response to issues surrounding civil unrest employ a wide range of compositional approaches and notation methods, and they utilize the flute in many different ways to convey the reactions and perspectives of the composer.

Among the six compositions chosen for study, very few commonalities are shared across all compositions. The composers differed in their choice to utilize extended techniques or traditional compositional approaches, improvisation, and fixed audio. Each composer's impetus for creating these works was similarly varied. The one common trait that seems to be shared amongst these works is the composers' passion for political or social activism. Some compositional trends are noted as well, including a tendency to depict scenarios more literally through the use of sound effects, and the incorporation of mixed media and electronics in these works. The use and importance of voice seems to be a common trend as well, regardless of the composers' primary instrument. Most of these compositions were written in recent years with a variety of intended purposes and outcomes expressed by the composers. Despite their intended purpose or outcome, each piece is nested well in the theoretical framework of Critical Pedagogy, and serves to humanize an oppressed population, to spread awareness of these issues, and to educate a larger population in order to equip them to address the problems. Additionally, it is noted that consideration should be given to the modern formal music education system in order to better prepare students to connect with and perform contemporary works with success, and to better situate our understanding of compositional works in a historical and social context. Due to the short time frame, it is difficult to determine the success of these pieces when considering the criteria provided by each composer. However, some of these works have achieved notable success in this time frame, based on the composers' ideas of success.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Phase One Interview Questions:

RQ1: What events or circumstances inspired your composition?

RQ2: Were these events or circumstances personally experienced by you or were they observed by you?

Phase Two Interview Questions:

RQ3: What is your cultural background, and how did it shape your perspective of the events or circumstances you experienced or observed?

RQ4: What message, reaction, or perspective were you working to convey in your composition?

RQ5: What audience were you trying to reach with this piece?

RQ6: What goal are you hoping to achieve with this piece, or what purpose do you hope it will serve?

RQ7: How did you use musical elements to express your reactions, perspective, or intended meaning of this composition? This could include form and structure of the composition, harmonic structure, use of melody and motives, dynamics, extended techniques, rhythm, meter, or any other applicable expressive element.

RQ8: Did you have trouble conveying any particular idea(s) because of your use of the flute as the medium? If so, how did you overcome that?

RQ9: Were there any uncommon techniques you needed to utilize or create in order to accurately communicate your intentions to the performer? If so, can you discuss those?

RQ10: Were there any performance elements that were specifically requested of the performer to aid the audience in better understanding your composition? If so, can you discuss those?

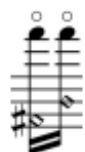
Appendix B: *The Power of Names*

PERFORMANCE NOTES:



ws. - whisper (whistle) tones; produce the upper note very softly using the fingering of the diamond notehead; a triangle notehead means to produce the highest possible whisper tone on a given note, preferably any note higher than three octaves above the fundamental

bisbigl. - *bisbigliando*; switch between two given fingerings (one regular, one harmonic) of the same note



harmonics - notated by an 'o' above the notehead; produce the note using a lower fingering, when multiple possibilities exist, use the fingering of the diamond notehead

singing/humming - the player is asked to sing and/or hum both independently and whilst playing, notated "sung"; a consonant in parentheses following a syllable means to sustain the consonant sound; singing may be done in any octave comfortable for the performer



"speak flute" - say the given text over the mouthpiece of the flute while fingering the notated pitch

glissandi - should all use a fingering to produce a slow, smooth transition from note to note



harmonic multiphonics - notated by several pitches with an 'o'; the player should use the fingering of the diamond notehead to simultaneously produce the multiple notated overtones

Appendix C: *Elegy***Performance notes for *Elegy* by Kristen Stoner***Timbral Trills:*

A-flat – trill F, E, and D keys
A natural – trill F and E keys
Middle D – trill C key
Low B-flat – trill G, F, and E keys
High D – trill E and D keys
C-sharp – trill B key
High B-flat - trill F, E, and D keys

*Best fingerings may differ
with various brands and models of alto flutes

Tongue roll: vocalize “aye-aye-aye” with the back of the tongue,
gently disrupting but not stopping the airflow

Appendix D: Thoughts and Prayers

Leanna Keith

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

A Meditation on Recovery for Flute and Tape

Commissioned by Dr. Christine Erlander Beard

2022

Performance Notes

The track consists of sounds made by my own voice, as well as a beat which I pressed each individual attack. As a result, things shift due to human error/intention and is not perfectly aligned to a metronome. The flute part should not strive to line up perfectly as well - attacks can occur before or after an event as it may appear in the score. Rubato is encouraged throughout.

Not all sounds present in the track are notated. Instead, the score serves as a guide for things to listen for as you perform the piece.

In order to balance the track and the performer, I suggest balancing based on the loudest moment of the piece (around m. 68). The track and the flute part should be almost overwhelming at that point. The flute should be mic'd, ideally with a touch of reverb.

Notation Guide



Pitch Bend. Use the mouth to bend the pitch drastically. Lean into any beating you may hear with the track. No need to follow the shape of the line, rhythmically or by pitch. Whenever the pitch bend lines are present, simply bend the pitch up and down in whatever speed is natural to you. You may also vary the speed of the pitch bend as you wish.



Pitch Bend Fall. Similarly to pitch bend, except only bend downwards until the sound stops, do not come back up to the original pitch.



Rapid Air Oscillation. As quickly as possible, create an air sound which has many attacks in rapid succession. Airy tone is essential - try to avoid pure flute sound. I find the mouth shape for the word "you" to be the most successful. For this pattern, I would say "youyouyouyouyouyou" with my tongue shape, while pushing air on each of the "ou" sections. If this does not work for you, find a consonant/vowel pattern that is not too percussive but still creates an air oscillation effect.



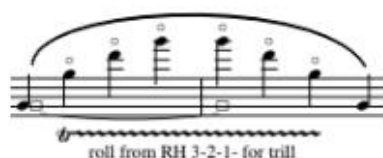
Tongue Clicks. Aggressively hit the tongue against the top of the mouth as if saying the word "too" and remove all vowels. The voice part in the track is actually doing the same technique if you want to refer to that sound.



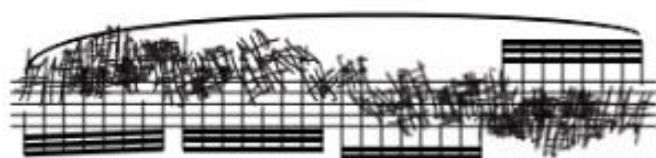
Sing-and-Play. The sung note will always be rectangular. If there is only a rectangular note present, the voice is singing the same note as the played note. If there is a regular note stacked next to the filled-in rectangle, the flute fingers the regular note and sings the other. Octave is whatever is comfortable for your vocal range.



M. 24-25: In this moment, we are transitioning from an airy sound (could be done with "cha") to a sing and play moment. The voice should begin quietly regardless of the volume of the flute, and slowly becomes louder until the forte whole note in the following measure.



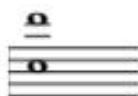
M. 29-30: Sing-play the G, and then shift the air through the harmonic spectrum while keeping the voice on the lower G. Additionally, roll your righthand fingers from the ring to the pointer for the trill.



Garbage Noises. A name that I have lovingly stolen from composer Kaley Lane Eaton in which the performer improvises a sequence of "garbage." Rapidly wiggle fingers with no particular notes in mind, use whatever articulations you would like, utilize air sounds, but whatever you do - don't make anything sound "pretty." Rhythm is also arbitrary. At M. 74, this happens again, but this time use your voice as well for aggressive garbage.



Pitch Bend. Bend from high D to approximately E quarter-flat by slowly venting the D Key tone hole, and then back.



Multiphonic. Finger D above the staff, while also letting the lower C speak. Achieved by splitting the air between the lower and higher octave. Surprisingly, the only multiphonic in the piece.



Sing and Play. Continue the flute line from the previous measure while singing the indicated note.



Inhale, Exhale. Cover the embouchure hole with your mouth entirely, breath in and out of the flute, using the flute as a resonator for your breath. Triangle facing up is an inhale, triangle facing down is an exhale. Breath should be audible (and ideally, loud as possible), which means that you may want to use different vowels or mouth shapes than you may normally do for regular breathing.



Whistle Tones. As you decrescendo to nothing let whistle tones emerge from the main note.

If you have further questions about the performance techniques in this piece, please email me at leannakeith@gmail.com.

Electronics

The electronic track for this work can be downloaded at www.ummpstore.com.

Appendix E: Defense Decision Form

MA: Ethnomusicology / MA: Music Education / MA: Music and Worship**Defense Decision**

The thesis Advisor and Reader have rendered the following decision concerning the defense for

Stephanie Strait

on the Thesis/Performance Lecture Recital

In Response to Civil Unrest: An Analysis Of Compositional Techniques As Used By

Contemporary Composers For Flute

as submitted on

Friday April 21 2023

 X **Full approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.**

The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.

Provisional approval pending cited revisions.

The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.

Redirection of project.

The student is being redirected to take ETHM/MUSC/WRSP 689 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.



4/23/2023

Print Name of Advisor

Signature

Date



4-23-23

Print Name of Reader

Signature

Date

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