

THE PUBLISHED CHORAL MUSIC OF DAVID CONTE

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FOREWORD

This document is part of the dissertation requirement for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Performance. The major portion of the dissertation consists of four public recitals. Copies of the recital programs are bound at the end of this paper, and recordings of the recitals are on file in the Music Library.

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ABSTRACT
THE PUBLISHED CHORAL MUSIC OF DAVID CONTE
STEPHEN A. SIMMONS

A twentieth-century composer, David Conte's choral music has much to offer the performer, ensemble and audience. Firmly grounded in tonality yet liberated by twentieth-century processes, his music is a combination of tertian and expanded harmonic and rhythmic procedures—resulting in a sound that is both accessible and appealing to musicians and audiences. In an effort to promote and support the compositions of current composers such as David Conte, this project endeavors to demonstrate, through discussion and illustration of basic musical elements, the skillful craftsmanship that he brings to his works. Ultimately, the goal of this research is to foster a greater understanding and appreciation for modern choral composition and to demonstrate its viability in performance.

Larry Wyatt, Major Professor

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

As the Twentieth Century comes to an end, it is difficult to assess what the influences of this century's musical life will have on the future of musical performance, composition, and critical thought in the next century. Scholars, students, and amateurs alike feverishly debate the integrity of many composers and compositions that have been born out of one of the most revolutionary periods in musical evolution. Indeed some would argue for the term regression referring to the abandonment of tonality and the birth of serialism at the beginning of this century and later to the emergence of avant-garde music propagated by composers such as John Cage and George Crumb. The result of these new compositional procedures has led, in many instances, to a music that bears the characteristics of tonal, atonal, and avant-garde composition. This synthesis of the traditional with the modern produces a music that is both accessible and challenging to the listener—providing uniqueness within a comfortable tonal framework. In this way, composers have expanded the spectrum of colors available to their art. Similarly, David Conte's music is a synthesis of tonal practices with the liberties afforded by techniques created at the beginning of this century by composers who strove to emancipate dissonance and sensitize the public to a radically new musical aesthetic.

Conte is currently a faculty member at the San Francisco Conservatory in California where he has taught composition for fifteen years and is an active composer

producing not only choral music and opera but also works for orchestra, organ, piano, and voice. In addition to his studies with Karel Husa and Steven Stucky, Conte was one of the last students of Nadia Boulanger (under a Fulbright Scholarship). He has received commissions from groups such as Chanticleer, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, the Dayton Philharmonic, the Oakland-East Bay Symphony, and the Boston Gay Men's Chorus. Several of his works are available on the Delos, Teldec, Chanticleer, and Skylark labels.

This document will examine the use of elements that define David Conte's musical vocabulary, and demonstrate how his compositional practices are a combination of tertian and extra-tertian procedures. As a result, his choral music is extremely diverse yet remarkably accessible to performers and audiences. This document will further endeavor to address the stereotypical misconception that many people subscribe to concerning twentieth-century music—that it is inherently inaccessible, difficult to learn, and confounding to audiences. Because of this general attitude, works by contemporary composers have been somewhat underrated and receive little performance time as compared to the more traditional repertoire. Through this discourse, it will become clear that such misconceptions are largely unfounded—especially as they might pertain to the choral music of David Conte.

In the following discussion, melody, harmony, rhythm, accompaniment, and form will be given individual attention in an effort to define their function as they relate to David Conte's musical style.

CHAPTER TWO

MELODY

The most familiar and accessible of musical elements is melody. Conte's melodic material is closely related to the type of mood and shape he is ultimately trying to achieve in a particular work. In addition to those pieces that are centered around beautiful, well rounded, soaring melodies there are those that have angular melodic material. Additionally, there are instances where melodic material becomes more a function of some harmonic event or vocal effect where any sense of perceived melody is absorbed into the harmonic or rhythmic texture of a piece. In either case, Conte carefully crafts melodic material that will be satisfactory to both the overall structure of the piece and to the text. Conjunct and diatonic in construction, his lyrically based material is free of awkward skips and excessive chromaticism. This is not to imply, however, that pieces that begin in a lyrical fashion will be immune to areas of dissonance and disjunct material. As will be discovered, such areas frequently occur as a result of rhetorical necessity. Representative of Conte's lyrical style are two excerpts from *Valediction*. Notice the diatonicism and regular phrasing in both the women's entrance (example 2-1a) and later the men's entrance (example 2-1b).

Just as *Valediction* demonstrates Conte's adroit use of lyricism, so does *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*. Having first existed as a composition for solo voice and accompaniment, the choral arrangement begins with the same lyricism one would anticipate from a solo vocal piece. Similar to the previous example, it is extremely diatonic though harmonically more modulatory (example 2-2).

Example 2-1a. *Valediction*, mm. 1-20.

Moderately, sustained throughout

Soprano
Alto

tutti: mf

Leave me, O
Love, which reach-es but to dust; And thou,
my mind, as - pire to high-er things: Grow rich in
that which nev - er tak - eth rust; What - ev - er
fades but fad - ing pleas-ure brings.

Example 2-1b. *Valediction*, mm. 25-44.

Draw in thy beams and hum - ble all thy
might To that sweet yoke where last - ing free - doms
be; Which breaks the clouds and o -
pens forth the light, That doth both shine and give
us sight to see.

Example 2-2. *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, mm. 1-17.

Moderately flowing, ♩ = 84 *unis. mf*

Soprano
Alto

The musical score is written for Soprano and Alto voices in 3/4 time, with a tempo of 'Moderately flowing' and a metronome marking of ♩ = 84. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16 indicated. The lyrics are: 'stab - le - lamp is light - ed Whose glow shall wake the sky; The stars shall bend their voic - es, And ev - 'ry stone shall cry. And ev - 'ry stone shall cry, And straw like gold shall shine;'. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf*, *f div.*, and *mf unis.*, and a section labeled 'A' at the end of the piece.

4
stab - le - lamp is light - ed Whose glow shall wake the

7
Soprano
Alto
sky; The stars shall bend their voic - es, And
sky; The stars shall bend their voic - es, And

10
ev - 'ry stone shall cry. And
ev - 'ry stone shall cry. And

13
ev - 'ry stone shall cry, And straw like gold shall
ev - 'ry stone shall cry, And straw like gold shall

16
f div. shine; *mf* A
f div. shine; *mf unis.* A

Inclusive in Conte's use of melody are processes that result in melodically ambiguous material. Though each voice may participate in the overall texture, there is no sense of a defined melody in the voice parts (example 2-3). Unlike the opening material in example 2-2, the lyricism of the initial melody is effectively absorbed, in the return of the A section, into a texture that de-emphasizes the lyrical nature of the music in favor of a

more intense harmonic movement. As the last section commences, what begins as a lyrical reflection of the first A section is quickly transformed into a harmonically driven area where lyricism is suppressed in favor of a richer more textually appropriate sound as the choir sings 'and every stone shall cry, In praises of the child' (example 2-3).

Example 2-3. *A Stable-Lamp is Lighted*, mm. 101-109.

The musical score consists of four systems of four vocal staves each. The first system (mm. 101-103) features lyrics: 'cry. And ev - 'ry'. The second system (mm. 104-106) features lyrics: 'stone shall cry. In', 'Ev - 'ry stone shall cry. In', and 'stone shall cry. In'. The third system (mm. 107-109) features lyrics: 'prais - es of the child'. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, and *div.* (divisi). The music is written in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The vocal parts are arranged in four staves per system, with lyrics written below the notes. The score shows a transition from a more lyrical style to a more harmonically driven and textually focused style.

In a similar example from the same work, Conte avoids simple melodic construction in favor of a more intense organization in an effort to amplify the relationship between text and music. Consequently, the opposition of one voice part to another reflects the darkness of the poetry. Similar to choral writing from the Renaissance, each voice part is melodically interesting and independent of each other which allows for great variety of movement and musical sculpting within individual parts. As each line progresses, the constant forward movement encourages a sense of urgency and momentum. Together, each melodically independent line prevents identification of a single important melodic gesture within the context of the whole. The entire process is harmonically inspired and effectively constructed (example 2-4).

Example 2-4. *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, mm. 55-66.

55
sky shall groan and dark-en, And ev-ry stone shall
sky shall groan, the sky shall groan, And ev-ry stone shall
sky shall groan and dark-en, And ev-ry stone shall
die; The sky shall groan, shall groan, And ev-ry stone shall
61
cry. And ev-ry stone shall cry, For
cry. And ev-ry stone shall cry, For
cry. shall cry. And ev-ry stone shall
cry. And ev-ry stone shall cry, shall

In addition to melodic material that is lyrically and harmonically inspired, there exists angular writing that contrasts with Conte's lyricism and demonstrates his versatility. These angular melodies are rhythmically driven and may also include frequent intervallic skips. Conte's *Alleluia* proves a telling example of this type of writing. Here, the disjunct melodic contour is coupled with syncopated rhythmic figures providing an energetic and forward moving line (example 2-5).

Example 2-5. *Alleluia*, mm. 1-3.

With spirit ♩ = 144

Voice 1
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Voice 2
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Another example of this type of melodic construction is evident in the second movement of *Invocation and Dance* where, even though intervallic skipping is not as apparent as in the *Alleluia*, the rhythmic nature of the melody is angular in design and complements the text—describing the wondrous curiosities that stem from scientific and theoretical investigation of objects and curiosities that lie well beyond our general comprehension or everyday familiarity. As alluded to earlier, text considerations play a significant role in determining compositional procedures—a topic that will be explored later in this discourse. Note the significant syncopation in the melodic writing. Not only do the dotted quarter notes produce syncopated rhythm, but the careful placement of tenuti also emphasize rhythmic contours. The tenuto in bar 22 calls attention to the agogic properties of the choir's last note that is tied over to the 5/4 bar (example 2-6).

Example 2-6. *Invocation and Dance*, mvt. 2, mm. 21-25.

20

f cant.
Prais'd be the fath-om-less u - ni - verse,

f cant.
Prais'd be the fath-om-less u - ni - verse,

23 (3 + 2)
Prais'd be the fath-om-less u - ni - verse,

Prais'd be the fath-om-less u - ni - verse,

Another brief example from the same piece further illustrates the marked syncopation that is characteristic throughout *Invocation and Dance*. Here, asymmetrical and dynamic meter changes reinforce the angularity of the melodic material (example 2-7).

Example 2-7. *Invocation and Dance*, mvt. 2, mm. 48-55.

The musical score consists of four staves. The first two staves are vocal parts, and the last two are piano accompaniment. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 8/8. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 48-51, and the second system covers measures 52-55. The lyrics are: 'love but praise! praise!' (measures 48-51) and 'praise! for the sure en-wind-ing arms of cool en- fold- ing death.' (measures 52-55). Performance markings include *div.* (divisi), *ff* (fortissimo), and *unis.* (unison). The piano accompaniment features complex rhythmic patterns and dissonant chords.

Coupled with an energetic, brilliant accompaniment, the melodic angularity becomes more pronounced as it is amplified by added syncopation and dissonance. Melodic and accompanimental writing is often complementary—adding scope and dimension to already well-conceived choral material—an issue that will be investigated in detail in chapter 6.

In addition to traditional concepts of melody, vocal effects, though uncommon, do occur. Conte's *In Praise of Music* offers an example of such atypical writing. Whereas one might identify such scoring as accompanimental, here the choral parts function as an

Melodic interest is also generated in pieces where polyphonic entrances occur. Noticeable are those areas where, after an extended homophonic section, there is a polyphonic entrance of imitated material. Imitation of the initial voice may be followed by a limited duplication of the primary melodic gesture, or it may be a literal exposition of the material. Representative of the former is Conte's *Ave Maria*. After eleven measures of homophony, the texture temporarily shifts to a brief area of imitation where, for the first time, there is obvious melodic intent. Though short in duration, this is a decisive contrast to the homophonic writing that characterizes the beginning of the piece (example 2-9).

Example 2-9. *Ave Maria*, mm. 9-13.

9

mp *p* *mp*

mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus, be - ne - dic - tus

mp *pp* *mp*

mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus

mp *pp* *mp* *div.*

in mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus

mp *pp* *mp*

in mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus

Polyphony that is more literal in its imitation of material is found in *The Waking*. After several pages of primarily homophonic writing, melodic material is presented by the altos and imitated by the sopranos. Unlike the previous example, here, the initial melody is duplicated exactly by the second voice (example 2-10).

Example 2-10. *The Waking*, mm. 95-100.

The image shows a musical score for 'The Waking' (mm. 95-100). It consists of four systems of staves. The first system (mm. 95-97) features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a rest, then has a note on 'I' with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The piano accompaniment has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The second system (mm. 98-100) features a vocal line, a piano accompaniment, and two lower staves labeled 'Tenor' and 'Bass'. The vocal line starts with a rest, then has a note on 'I' with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The piano accompaniment has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The Tenor and Bass staves have rests.

Aside from these two examples, there are many instances of motivic and melodic imitation.

These areas are especially obvious when preceded by homophonic sections in which a sense of melody may be vague.

Lyricism in Conte's music is generally constructed in a unison texture or by homophonic harmonization by another voice. In pieces in which homophony prevails in a four-part texture, melodic interest is weak. In these circumstances, Conte often includes small areas of imitation that broaden the melodic spectrum of the piece—adding variety and calling attention to a single melodic gesture.

CHAPTER THREE

HARMONY

Conte's harmonic style is firmly rooted in tonal practices. His tonal language is expanded and given broader scope, however, with his use of chordal extensions, cross relations, simultaneous modes, whole tone constructions, and unresolved cadences. Frequently employed, these characteristics result in an expanded range of color and provide uniqueness within a comfortable framework of tertian harmony. One of his most tonally oriented pieces, *The Great Spirit of Love* is harmonically predictable as the chordal structure is clean and free of any of the aforementioned harmonic devices (example 3-1).

Example 3-1. *The Great Spirit of Love*, mm. 1-12.

Moderately, not too slow, with simple dignity ♩ = 84

S.
A.
T. *mf*
B. *mf*

When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its
When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its

Moderately, not too slow, with simple dignity ♩ = 84

Piano
mf legato and sustained throughout
mp

Example 3-1 (continued).

way in - to your mind — You will know from that day for - ward — it is
way in - to your mind — You will know from that day for - ward — it is

9

mf
When the

mf
When the

p
love that rules the world.

p
love that rules the world.

mf
"Ubi Caritas"

mp

In contrast to Conte's comfortable tonal writing, his harmonization of *Silent Night* casts this seasonal favorite in an entirely different light. The unusual harmonization of this standard melody results from polytonal structures within each measure. Instead of basing the entire piece on a slowly changing polytonal scheme, for example allowing for two key areas to be expanded over several measures, the polytonal structure is dynamic—changing from measure to measure (example 3-2).

Example 3-2. *Silent Night*, mm. 1-8.

The musical score for Example 3-2, *Silent Night*, measures 1-8, is presented in a standard vocal and keyboard arrangement. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) are written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo and dynamics are marked *sempre pp*. The lyrics are: "1) Si - lent night, Ho - ly night, 2) Si - lent night, Ho - ly night, All is calm, All is bright; Shep - herds quake at the sight; All is calm, All is bright; All is calm, All is bright; All is calm, All is bright;". The keyboard part is written in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and provides accompaniment for the vocalists. The score is divided into two systems, with the second system starting at measure 5.

Interesting to note, in the above example (3-2) is the preponderance of common tones employed in the first six measures. Between measures one and two, for instance, the basses are sustaining a B which functions in measure one as the third of a G-major triad while functioning as the fifth of an E-major chord in measure two. Similarly, measures nine through eleven employ a common tonality. Though each measure is bitonal, each contains a D-major sonority. Not only does this technique provide added stability within

an extremely dynamic harmonic structure, but it also alludes to a weak V-I relationship as the D-major sonority leads to an inconclusive arrival point of G major in measure twelve.

Example 3-3. *Silent Night*, mm. 9-12.

The image shows a musical score for the first four staves of 'Silent Night' (measures 9-12). The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: 'Round yon vir - gin Moth - er and child. Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,'. The second staff is another vocal line with lyrics: 'Round yon vir - gin Moth - er and child.' The third staff is a third vocal line with lyrics: 'Round yon vir - gin Moth - er and child.' The fourth staff is a bass line with lyrics: 'Round yon vir - gin Moth - er and child.' The bottom two staves are piano accompaniment. The score is written in G major and 3/4 time. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'mm.' (measures per minute). The score is numbered 9 at the beginning of the first staff.

This combination of tertian harmonic hierarchy combined with the more extra-tertian practice of diffusing tonal centers with polytonal structures is characteristic of Conte's overall style. After 23 measures and a delay of any sense of a tonal center or strong cadence, the harmonic ambiguity and tension that has accumulated is resolved with an E-major triad at the end of the first section (example 3-4).

Example 3-4. *Silent Night*, mm 21-24.

The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of 'Silent Night'. It consists of four staves, each representing a different vocal part. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff (Soprano) has the lyrics: 'Sleep in heav - en - ly peace. Christ the sav - ior is born.' The second staff (Alto) has: 'Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.' The third staff (Tenor) has: 'Sleep in heav'n - ly peace.' The fourth staff (Bass) has: 'Sleep in heav'n - ly peace.' Dynamics are marked as *pp* at the beginning and *ppp* at the end of each staff. A measure rest '8' is indicated at the start of the third staff.

Throughout this piece, tonal pluralities *are* the compositional process employed to create this unique arrangement of *Silent Night*. Combinations of multiple key areas, however, are more typically fleeting occurrences in other Conte works. In *Cantate Domino*, for example, simultaneous modes are not uncommon, but in the context of the entire work are not a means to an end as the polytonal structures are in *Silent Night*. Rather, they are simply an enhancement to the overall harmonic coloring of the piece. In the following example the major/minor mixing of keys is clearly illustrated and occurs each time on the final beat of the measure (example 3-5).

Also Characteristic of Conte's style is a preponderance of chordal extensions. Not only are they likely to occur frequently throughout a piece as the harmonic movement progresses, but are often included in final cadences where they are left unresolved.²

²The 7th is typically omitted in these cadential areas—producing a more open and less dissonant sound.

Example 3-5. *Cantate Domino*, mm. 127-135.

In tempo ♩ = 132

128

f Can - ta - te Do - mi - no, Do - mi - no

in tym - pa - no. Can - ta - te Do - mi - no, Do - mi - no

sub. f

In tempo ♩ = 132

sub. f

in tym - pa - no.

in tym - pa - no.

can - ti - cum no - vum, can - ti - cum, can - ti - cum

can - ti - cum no - vum,

f Can - ta - te Do - mi - no, Do - mi - no

Can - ta - te Do - mi - no, Do - mi - no

Can - ta - te Do - mi - no, Do - mi - no

Such an extension exists in the last chord of *A Prayer of St. Theresa*. In this example, the first inversion D-major sonority is extended by a ninth in the alto voice. There is no resolution given by the accompaniment which ends, itself, unresolved as a subdominant sonority is substituted for the mediant of an implied A-minor triad (example 3-6).

Example 3-6. *Prayer of St. Theresa*, mm. 54-64.

54 *mp* *mf* *pp*
God suf - fic - eth.

mp *mf* *pp*
God suf - fic - eth.

mp *mf* *pp*
God suf - fic - eth.

mp *mf* *pp*
God suf - fic - eth.

Dulciana 8'
pp
Vox Humana 8'

p

60 *rit. al fine* *ppp*

A similar instance of a ninth extension in the concluding bars of a work exists in *Ave Maria* where the primary sonority of B major is extended with a ninth in the soprano. Due to the placement of the ninth in the highest tessitura, the dissonance seems stronger

than that found in the previous example and creates more of an urgency for resolution upward to a stable chord tone (example 3-7).

Example 3-7. *Ave Maria*, mm. 29-33.

The previous two examples illustrate chordal extensions that have a profound sense of dissonance in relation to the non-chord tones' placement within the given chord. Since, in both excerpts, the structure of each chord is built with four notes, the non-chord tone is exceedingly obvious as its weight is distributed equally among the other surrounding pitches. There is, however, the possibility of weighting the chords in such a way as to minimize the dissonant chord tone by diffusing it within a structure saturated with tonic and dominant sonorities. The concept of relative dissonance is largely attributed to Hindemith's work which attempted to codify levels of dissonance within a theoretical hierarchy. In Conte's *Charm Me Asleep*, the final chord is once again extended by a ninth, but this time, it is surrounded by a wealth of tonic and dominant chord tones. Of the eight notes that constitute this C major chord, half of them are tonic. The remaining pitches are two dominant tones, a mediant, and the dissonant ninth. The power of the ninth extension in this chord is so weak that despite its presence, the chord

still feels stable and only slightly dissonant as compared with the previous two examples. Note, too, that in the measures preceding the final chord, there are several dissonances created by extensions (ninths and elevenths) that occur in the general harmonic progression of the work (example 3-8).

Example 3-8. *Charm Me Asleep*, mm. 79-84.

Slow and serene

79 *mp* take my flight, *p* my flight

div. p take my flight

p I take my *mp*

p flight, my flight

82 *pp* For Heav - - en. *ppp*

pp For Heav - - en. *ppp*

div. pp For Heav - - en. *ppp*

flight For Heav - - en. *ppp*

pp For Heav - - en. *ppp*

div. pp For Heav - - en. *ppp*

pp For Heav - - en. *ppp*

Aside from dissonances created by chordal extension, occasionally there are those resulting from cross relations. In the following example from *Charm Me Asleep*, a marked dissonance occurs as two independent lines cross through Gs. The soprano crosses through a Gb while the bass passes through a G natural. The resulting minor second is sharply apparent and arises from the soprano proceeding in a D-flat sonority while the bass progresses in a secondary key area of A-flat major. This cross relation is repeated once again in the following measure, but this time, it occurs over two beats instead of simultaneously. The second one is not as noticeable as the first and is, perhaps, more typical of the type of cross relation that one might normally encounter. It is an extra-tertian procedure operating within a tonal context (example 3-9).

Example 3-9. *Charm Me Asleep*, mm. 13-16.

The musical score for Example 3-9 consists of four staves. The top staff is the soprano line, followed by two vocal staves (likely alto and tenor) and a bass line. The score includes various performance instructions such as *f*, *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *rall.*, *Tempo I*, *div.*, *unis.*, and *gently rocking*. There are also dynamic markings like *mf* and *f* with hairpins. The lyrics are: "hence I go I go A - way in eas - y rav-ished, Hence, I go, I go A - way in eas - y rav-ished, Hence I go, I go A - way in eas - y rav-ished, Hence, I go A - way in eas - y". The score features a key signature of two flats and a time signature of 4/4. There are annotations for a trill (marked '3') and a tempo change from *rall.* to *Tempo I*. Arrows point to specific notes in the soprano and bass lines, highlighting the cross relations mentioned in the text.

CHAPTER FOUR

RHYTHM

Rhythmic organization in Conte's music encompasses a wide range of complexity. There are pieces that exhibit a high degree of regularity and predictability such as *Ave Maria* and *Thou, O Lord* and those that are relatively complex such as *Charm Me Asleep* and the second movement of *Invocation and Dance*. A visual comparison of *Thou, O Lord* to *Invocation and Dance* clearly illustrates this vast rhythmic difference. In the first example, *Thou, O Lord*, it is clear that the texture is homorhythmic and free of syncopated figures (example 4-1). In contrast, the second movement from *Invocation and Dance* is polyrhythmic and highly syncopated (example 4-2).

Example 4-1. "Thou, O Lord" from *Three Sacred Pieces*, mm. 9-20.

9 Poco accel. - - - - *meno f* - - - - poco rall.

And the heav'ns are the work of Thine

meno f

And the heav'ns are the work of Thine

meno f

And the heav'ns are the work of thine hand, Thine

meno f

And the heav'ns are the work of thine hand, Thine

poco accel. meno f - - - - *poco rall.*

v

13 *a tempo* *mf*

hand, In Thine hands are the strength of the

hand, In Thine hands are the

hand, In Thine hands are the

hand, In Thine hands are the

cant.

a tempo *mf*

17

hills, and the sea and the

hills, and the sea and the

hills, and the sea and the

hills, and the sea and the

Example 4-2. *Invocation and Dance*, mvt. 2, mm. 169-172.

es, Dance on, sing prais -
es, Dance on, sing prais -
Prais'd be the fath-om-less u-ni-verse, Prais'd be the

The musical score consists of several systems. The first system includes two vocal staves and a bass line. The second system contains two empty staves. The third system features a grand staff with piano accompaniment. The fourth system includes a grand staff with piano accompaniment and a bass line with figured bass notation.

Example 4-2 (continued).

169

In the above example (4-2), syncopated ostinato figures are present in both the vocal parts and in the accompaniment contributing to the obscurity of the downbeat. Adding to the rhythmic ambiguity are the accented notes that, for the most part, occur on weak beats or between beats. Altogether, there are four distinct rhythmic layers that are combined to form a polyrhythmic texture which serves to illustrate the "jazzy exuberance" of the text. Below are the component parts that form this syncopated section followed by a brief descriptive annotation (examples 4-2a; 4-2b; 4-2c; 4-2d).

Example 4-2a. This figuration appears in both the bass part of the secundo piano part and bass part of the choral score. It is the primary melodic material from the initial choral entrance in measure 21.



Example 4-2b. Recurring syncopated chords in the primo piano part. Material is unrelated to previous sections. It is, however, rhythmically almost exactly like the rhythmic pattern of the alto and tenor material from the same section. Additionally, the left hand of the primo part carries the tenor melody in the upper-most notes. This figuration, however, is offset by several beats from the material that it mimics and therefore creates increased rhythmic tension.



Example 4-2c. This figure is a simple recurring figure that interacts with the choral material in the bass. It functions to further obscure any definitive perception of a downbeat.



Example 4-2d. This pattern appears in the right-hand secundo piano part and is identical to the alto/tenor material—both of which occur concurrently.



The comparison of the passages from *Thou, O Lord*, and *Invocation and Dance* clearly illustrates the rhythmic diversity within Conte’s music. In both of these examples, rhythmic considerations are directly correlated with issues of text setting and function as a musical elaboration of the text—a characteristic that will be addressed further later in this discourse.

Syncopation is a vibrant aspect of Conte’s works and in some instances prevails as a major characteristic of a composition. Just as the previous example from *Invocation and Dance* emphasizes rhythmic organization, similar characteristics are eloquently integrated in his *Alleluia*. Not only is the accompaniment syncopated throughout, but the choral parts are as well (example 4-3).

Example 4-3. *Alleluia*, mm. 1-3.

With spirit ♩ = 144

With spirit ♩ = 144

In the above example, accents contribute to the syncopated texture. Additionally, accents are used in the accompaniment that define eighth-note groupings of twos and threes (example 4-4). In the context of a steady 4/4 meter, these fluctuations in the eighth-note

pulse function to obscure a consistent metric pattern—effectively adding to the overall syncopated nature of the piece.

Example 4-4. *Alleluia*, mm. 1-3.

With spirit ♩ = 144

f

Voice 1
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Voice 2
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

With spirit ♩ = 144

f

Keyboard

3 2 3 3 2 3 3 3 2

Although one might tend to associate syncopated material with fast tempi, a brief excerpt from the B section of *Alleluia* demonstrates the contrary. Again there is the alternation between groups of three and two, just as in the previous example. Unlike the opening bars, however, the accompaniment supports the groupings of the eighth notes in the vocal writing. The syncopation here is more subtle than in the A sections because the melodic material becomes more lyrical, yet maintains its angular characteristics within a slower tempo. Accents, which are used generously in the outer sections, are conspicuously missing—replaced, instead, by slurs (example 4-5).

Example 4-5. *Alleluia*, mm. 17-22.

17 *expressively* ♩ = 69 *p*
al - -
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - -

20 *f*
le - lu - ia,
le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
mf

Toward the end of the B section of *Alleluia*, the motivic gesture in the right hand of the accompaniment begins a transition from its previous constant, predictable pulse, to a slightly more syncopated one (example 4-6). Theagogic accents (marked) in measures 24-28 take the place of written accents in such a way as to inspire a syncopated feeling without being overstated (example 4-6).

Example 4-6. *Alleluia*, mm. 23-28.

23

p

al - le - lu - ia. Al - le -

p

poco rall.

26

pp

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

poco rall.

pp

Just as the above example illustrates Conte's use of syncopated melodic material within a slower tempo, so does his *Set me As a Seal*. In this piece, the primary melodic material is driven by a syncopated figure that seems predictable following the organ's similar disjunct opening (example 4-7).

Example 4-7. *Set Me As A Seal*, mm. 1-7.

Moderately, not too slow (♩ = 88)

Soprano & Alto

Tenor & Bass

Moderately (♩ = 80)
Ch.: gentle solo stop

Organ
(or Piano)

Sw.: Foundations 8'
p

Ped.: 16' 8'

4

mp legato

Set me _ as a seal up-on thine heart, _____

p

In addition to syncopated material, Conte frequently employs triplets within a duple meter and duplets within triple meter. The high degree of occurrence of these borrowed divisions makes them characteristic of his style even though such rhythms are widely found in works of both tonal and atonal composers. A brief example from *Thou, O Lord* illustrates this simple rhythmic displacement as triplet figures are introduced within a duple meter (example 4-8).³

³ Concerning performance practice, whenever a note is tied to an eighth, as in m.41 of example 4-7, the final consonant is to be placed on the beat. In this case, the 'd' of Lord should go on beat two. This type of writing is seen in many of Conte's pieces. However, he has revised this practice as it proved somewhat

Example 4-8. "Thou, O Lord" from *Three Sacred Pieces*, mm. 41-44.

The musical score consists of four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Lord, — Thou art the same as in the beg - in - ning,". The score is in 2/4 time and features a complex rhythmic structure. The vocal parts use a combination of long and short notes, often grouped in pairs (2+1), which creates a hemiola effect. The piano accompaniment features triplets in both hands, which further contributes to the rhythmic complexity. The score is divided into four measures, with the first measure being a half-measure. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

Additionally, rhythmic diversity is achieved even in the most seemingly relaxed and soaring of melodies by employing this opposition of triple and duple division through hemiolas—a more elaborate type of rhythmic displacement often erroneously defined in terms of three notes against two. The illusion of a temporary shift from a duple to a triple meter is achieved in two ways in the following example: through the combination of long short, long short—or 2+1 in the choral writing—and the three note phrasing in the right hand combined with the triple rhythmic constructions of the left hand in the accompaniment. In the following example from Conte's *Valediction*, this process yields two areas of hemiola, the first more distinct than the last (example 4-9).

confusing to choral conductors. The same measure would now simply be written as a quarter note to the word 'Lord.'

Example 4-9. *Valediction*, mm. 33-44.

The image displays a musical score for three systems, each consisting of vocal and piano parts. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 5/4. The first system (mm. 33-36) features a vocal line with lyrics "be; Which breaks the clouds and o -" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *mf* and a performance instruction "Sw: add Flute 4'". The second system (mm. 37-40) continues the vocal line with "pens forth the light, That doth both shine and give" and the piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *f*, a performance instruction "Ch. (Sw./Ch. 8)", and a pedal marking "Ped. +16'". The third system (mm. 41-44) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "us sight to see." and the piano accompaniment.

Similar to the polyrhythmic characteristics of *Invocation and Dance* is the polymetrical structure in "Canticle," from *Three Sacred Pieces*. As is clearly illustrated, Conte superimposes opposing meters—5/4 against a variable metric scheme in the choir

and secundo accompaniment (example 4-10). Text inspired, this section produces a rhythmic motion that is metrically opposed but which, to the ear, is less intrusive rhythmically than some of the more overt syncopated gestures discussed earlier.

Example 4-10. "Canticle" from *Three Sacred Pieces*, mm. 44-47.

Additional polymetric writing is present in *The Waking*. Unlike the above example, however, each measure holds an equivalent number of eighth notes. These six notes are simply grouped differently and result in a syncopated feel. To guard against the possibility of the accompanist falling into a triplet feel, and to encourage added rhythmic contrast, Conte has masterfully written in notes in the left hand that are played on three, and in one instance on two (example 4-11).

The rhythmic processes described in this chapter demonstrate Conte's facility with manipulation of rhythm. Subtle combinations and well-planned schemes pervade all of Conte's works. Whether clearly defined or intricate in design, rhythm is carefully

constructed in an effort to adequately reflect the sentiment of the text. Through this process, Conte is able to bring greater depth to textual ideas.

CHAPTER FIVE

ACCOMPANIMENT

Just as Conte's melody, harmony, and rhythm are masterfully constructed, so are his accompaniments. This chapter will describe Conte's use of accompaniment and a somewhat unusual effect it has on the rehearsal as well as its inseparable influence on both the harmonic and musical structures of a piece. Frequently, the instrumental writing is challenging and requires a high degree of technical fluency both in rehearsal and in performance. A significant issue arises concerning the marriage of accompaniment and choral writing in that it is often independent of the choral parts. In some instances, the accompaniment is so far removed from the general harmonic and/or rhythmic plan of the choral scoring that it results in frustration when the initial attempt is made to add accompaniment during rehearsal. One of the most telling examples of this disparity is seen in the "Dance," from *Invocation and Dance*. After an extended instrumental introduction that creates a vigorous rhythmic atmosphere, the choir enters and is met with an accompaniment that is rhythmically and melodically completely independent of the choral writing—note the many intervals of a second that occur between the two (dissonances are marked in example 5-1). Due to the frequent dissonance and rhythmic disparity between the choral and instrumental writing, it is essential that the choir be well prepared and advised of the difficulties inherent in such a piece. The conductor, too, must take care not to add the accompaniment too late in the course of preparing for a

performance. Though apparently disassociated from the choral writing, the accompaniment is actually a superb reflection of the text's jubilant theme. The energy and excitement generated by the accompaniment creates an atmosphere of celebration that permeates this exceptionally rhythmic piece.

Example 5-1. *Invocation and Dance*, mvt. 2, mm. 20-22.

The musical score for Example 5-1, titled "Invocation and Dance, mvt. 2, mm. 20-22," is presented in a multi-staff format. It begins at measure 20, marked with a tempo of 20. The score is divided into three systems. The first system features two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are marked *f cant.* and contain the lyrics "Prais'd be the fath-om-less u-ni-verse, —". The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand part with a rhythmic, dance-like melody and a left-hand part with a steady bass line. The second system continues the vocal and piano parts. The third system shows the vocal parts concluding their phrase, while the piano accompaniment continues with a more complex, rhythmic pattern. The score is written in a key signature of two sharps (D major) and a 4/4 time signature.

An additional example from the above piece further illustrates the idea that, though similar in expressive intent, there is a marked independence between choral material and accompaniment.

Example 5-2. *Invocation and Dance*, mvt. 2, mm. 136-139.

The image displays a musical score for Example 5-2, spanning measures 136 to 139. It features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment consisting of two staves (Right and Left Hand). The vocal parts are marked with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and include the lyrics: "From me to thee, — glad ser - e - nades, —". The piano accompaniment is marked with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand, indicated by a "(3 + 2)" marking. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C).

Another instance where the accompaniment is engaged in a seemingly disassociated interplay with the voices appears in a small area in the B section of *Valediction*. In this example, the piano is accompanying the choir with material that is melodically related to the soprano and alto parts but that is aurally disguised within the many dissonances created between the choral writing and accompaniment. Though odd at first, this section is successful in communicating the primary textual ideas set forth by the following text: "*In this small course which birth draws out to death, And think how evil becometh him to slide.*"

Example 5-3. *Valediction*, mm. 56-63.

56 SOPRANO I
In this small course which birth ___ draws out _____ to death ___

SOPRANO II
In this small course which birth ___ draws out _____ to death ___

ALTO
In this small course which birth draws out ___ to death ___

60 *p molto legato*
— And think how e - vil be - com - eth him to slide, -

p molto legato
— And think how e - vil be - com - eth him to slide, -

p molto legato
— And think how e - vil be - com - eth him to slide, -

Immediately following this passage, another instance occurs where the accompaniment functions not so much in a supportive manner as in a *complementary* one. Notice how the eighth notes in the organ part are either in sixths or thirds with the soprano and alto lines—almost as if the pairing is seen as a duet rather than a supportive mechanism for the choral writing. Notice, too, the word painting on the word 'heav'n.'

Example 5-4. *Valediction*, mm. 64-67.

64 *cresc.*
 Who seek - - eth heav'n, who seek-eth heav'n,
cresc.
 Who seek-eth heav'n,
cresc.
 Who seek-eth heav'n, who seek-eth
cresc.
 Ped: 8'

Just as the previous two examples illustrate a close association between text and accompaniment, so does Conte's *Hymn to the Nativity*. Ideally, this piece would be performed in its original version, scored for orchestra, as the timbres of the instruments add great depth and color to the atmosphere as inspired by the text that opens stating "So

peaceful was the night . . . " Conte's accompaniment is masterfully constructed as it offers a transparent, calm texture indicative of a cold winter's night (example 5-5).

Example 5-5. *Hymn to the Nativity*, mm. 1-10.

Adagio (♩ = 66)
pp mysterious, calm

T
pp mysterious, calm
 Hm.

B
pp mysterious, calm
 Hm.

I
p mysterious, calm
 (Str.) *Sva* (Ob.)
 (E. Hn.)

Piano 4-Hands (Orchestral Reduction)
 II
mp *p* *pp*
 mysterious, calm

7
poco rall. [A] *a tempo* *pp*
 Hm.
pp
 Hm.

(Cel. Hp.) *mf* *p* *poco rall.* *a tempo*
Sva
 6 5

p *poco rall.* *a tempo*
mp *p*
 3 3

Later as the choir commences singing the text, "*The winds with wonder whist, smoothly the waters kissed,*" the accompaniment dramatically changes to aurally create a sense of undulating winds and waters and is, again, written in support of the text (example 5-6).

Example 5-6. *Hymn to the Nativity*, mm. 48-51.

48 G Più mosso, animated (♩ = 96)
mp

The winds with wonder whist, —
The winds with wonder whist, —

p (Cel.) (Fl., E. Hn.)
p (Hp., Str. trem.)

8va.....
8ba.....

A final example from the same work demonstrates Conte's descriptive powers through accompanimental constructions that add scope and depth to the text. As the choir sings, "*Glory to God in the Highest*," the accompaniment in the right hand of the secundo part engages in an ascending series of seventh chords while the primo part offers rapidly ascending sextuplet figures (example 5-7).

Just as the above illustrations demonstrate a marked association between text and accompaniment, there are a wealth of other possible examples that exemplify Conte's use of accompaniment to support and, in some instances, transform the choral writing. In *A Stable-Lamp is Lighted*, accompaniment is used to fill out a harmony that, through analysis of the choral parts alone, one would not predict. After an extremely consonant section and an accompaniment that has been primarily supportive in nature, there comes a typical "Conte moment" where the accompaniment takes on a complementary rather than a supportive role—adding dissonance and a harmonic twist where the choral writing alone suggests a completely different progression. Notice how the pitches to the words "among us," suggest a simple 5-1 scale degree progression in F major (C-F) (example 5-8).

Example 5-8. *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, mm. 114-117.

114

scent a - mounng us _____ The worlds are

scent a - mounng us _____ The worlds are

scent a - mounng us _____ The worlds are

scent a - mounng us _____ The worlds are

An unanticipated harmonization, Conte substitutes what is expected of such a melodic gesture with what is unexpected—and thus exciting—by harmonizing the fifth scale degree with a B-flat 9 chord instead of the expected dominant chord constructed in F major. The ninth scale degree in B flat is C therefore transforming the apparent dominant

C of the vocal parts into the ninth of a B-flat major chord (example 5-9). This eloquent transformation is achieved through a simple common tone procedure that, when heard, is unexpected and interesting (example 5-9).

Example 5-9. *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, mm. 114-117.

114

scent a - mounq us _____ The worlds are

scent a - mounq us _____ The worlds are

scent a - mounq us _____ The worlds are

scent a - mounq us _____ The worlds are

The last illustration of this type of compositional procedure that will be examined occurs toward the end of Conte's "Thou, O Lord," from *Three Sacred Pieces*. As in the previous examples, the accompaniments and choral writing are scored in a complementary fashion and are harmonically complete only when joined. Without the accompaniment, the unison G written in the choral parts seems to be a straightforward seventh-scale degree within an overall movement of 6-3 in A-flat major (example 5-10).

Example 5-10. "Thou, O Lord" from *Three Sacred Pieces*, mm. 37-40.

37 *p* 6 7 1 2 3 *mf*

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

Because the accompaniment harmonically redefines the melodic material, the apparent simplicity of this line is transformed as the G now functions as an eleventh extension of a D-flat major chord (example 5-11).

Example 5-11. "Thou, O Lord" from *Three Sacred Pieces*, mm. 37-40.

37 *p* *mf*

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

and pass a - way. But Thou, O

These synergistic moments represent a wonderful and exciting aspect of Conte's writing that allows for a true synthesis of harmonic complexity to permeate his works. There are in any given accompanied piece, these same types of harmonic transformations that can be potentially hazardous to a choir when the accompaniment is initially added during rehearsal. An obvious solution to this problem is to rehearse with as much harmonic background as possible in an attempt to avoid major problems in the few weeks preceding a performance. A marked sophistication and high degree of craftsmanship is evident in all of Conte's pieces which not only make them attractive from a formal standpoint but provide structural and musical integrity to his works as a whole.

CHAPTER SIX

FORM AND CONTENT

Structurally, Conte favors classical forms such as binary, ternary, through-composed and strophic designs that are easily identified. Typically within an ABA form, the B section will be harmonically more complex than the outer sections—in many ways alluding to the intricacies that define classical development sections. In *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, the B section is harmonically complex, thus offering a marked contrast to the tonal predictability of the first A section. At its most involved, this B section features several measures where the basses and tenors are singing in parallel whole-tone scales at the third while the sopranos and altos are engaged at the fourth or fifth in parallel motion in the key of D-flat major. After several measures, all voices are singing some form of a whole-tone scale before the final diminished chord that ends the section. All of the tension and harmonic ambiguity that takes place in this middle section is inspired by the text (example 6-1). At this stage in Richard Wilbur's poetry, the mood is decidedly dark and alludes to the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ stating:

Yet he shall be forsaken,
And yielded up to die;
The sky shall groan and darken,
And every stone shall cry.
And Every stone shall cry,
For stony hearts of men:
God's blood upon the spearhead,
God's love refused again.

Example 6-1. *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, mm. 67-79.

67

ston - y hearts _ of men: God's _ blood up -

ston - y hearts _ of men: God's _ blood _ up -

cry, _ For ston - y hearts _ of men: God's _ blood up -

cry, _ For ston - y hearts _ of men: God's _ blood up -

72

on _ the spear - head, _ God's love re -

on _ the spear - head, God's _ love re -

on _ the spear - head, God's _ love re -

on the spear - head, God's _ love re -

Example 6-1 (continued).

76

fused a - gain.

fused a - gain.

fused a - gain.

fused a - gain.

(Organ: play only lower note of right-hand octaves)

Always careful with text setting, Conte casts this verse within a disturbing framework of wandering and disassociated harmonic motions as a magnification of the powerful, dark meaning in the poem's third verse. In the other verses the message is uplifting and positive and therefore receives a vastly different musical setting that is tonal and harmonically settled as the women sing the following (example 6-2):

A stable-lamp is lighted
Whose glow shall wake the sky;
The stars shall bend their voices
And every stone shall cry.
And every stone shall cry,
And straw like gold shall shine;
A barn shall harbour heaven,
A stall become a shrine.

Example 6-2. *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, mm. 1-17.

Moderately flowing, ♩ = 84

Soprano/Alto *unis. mf*

Moderately flowing, ♩ = 84

Piano (or Organ) *mp* *mf*

(Organ: observe the dotted ties)

4

stab - le - lamp is light - ed Whose glow shall wake the

mp *sempre legato*

7

Soprano

sky; The stars shall bend their voic - es. And

Alto

sky; The stars shall bend their voic - es, And

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features three staves: Soprano/Alto, Piano (or Organ), and a vocal staff for Soprano and Alto. The tempo is 'Moderately flowing' with a metronome marking of ♩ = 84. The score begins with a piano introduction (mm. 1-3) marked *mp* and *mf*, with a note for the organ to observe dotted ties. The vocal entry begins at measure 4 with the lyrics 'stab - le - lamp is light - ed Whose glow shall wake the'. The piano accompaniment continues with a *sempre legato* marking. At measure 7, the Soprano and Alto voices enter with the lyrics 'sky; The stars shall bend their voic - es. And'.

Example 6-2 (continued).

10

ev - 'ry stone shall cry. And

ev - 'ry stone shall cry. And

13

ev - 'ry stone shall cry, And straw like gold shall

ev - 'ry stone shall cry, And straw like gold shall

16

shine; A

shine; A

f div. *mf*

f div. *mf unis.*

Just as the B section of *A Stable-lamp is Lighted* offers text-inspired harmonic complexities, so does the middle section of *Valediction*. Though not as harmonically daring as *A Stable-lamp is Lighted*, *Valediction's* B section is more dissonant than its outer sections. Whereas the B section of the previous example proved dissonant as a consequence of the interaction of the choral parts with each other, *Valediction's* B section is dissonant due to the marriage of choral parts with accompaniment. Similar to the previous example (6-2), Conte illuminates the text through harmonic ambiguity—providing a sense of restlessness, tension and darkness as the choir sings (example 6-3):

O take fast hold; let that light be thy guide, In this small
course which birth draws out to death; And think how evil
becometh him to slide.

Example 6-3. *Valediction*, mm. 49-63.

49 S. A. *mp*
O take fast hold;

Sw: Flutes 8' + 4'
p
Sw

52
let that light be thy guide

Example 6-3 (continued).

56 SOPRANO I
In this small course which birth ___ draws out ___ to death ___

SOPRANO II
In this small course which birth ___ draws out ___ to death ___

ALTO
In this small course which birth draws out ___ to death ___

60 *p molto legato*
— And think how e - vil be - com - eth him to slide, -

p molto legato
— And think how e - vil be - com - eth him to slide, -

p molto legato
— And think how e - vil be - com - eth him to slide, -

As is typical of Conte's ternary forms, the B section is more difficult than the outer A sections.

Unlike the more complex ternary forms, Conte's strophic works are simple and straightforward. In *The Great Spirit of Love*, each section of music follows the divisions

of text. Though the melodic and harmonic content are rather static elements throughout, each section is, structurally, slightly different—having different accompaniment, transformed rhythm and varied use of vocal pairings and entrances. In the following examples (6-4/6-5), note the slight variance between the original melodic and rhythmic material and its second appearance in measure 26.

Example 6-4. *The Great Spirit of Love*, mm. 1-6.

T.
B.

When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its
When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its

way in - to your mind — You will
way in - to your mind — You will

Example 6-5. *The Great Spirit of Love*, mm. 24-30.

24
27

mp
mp

When the
When the

Great Spir-it of Love finds its way in-to — your life — You will
Great Spir-it of Love finds its way in-to — your life — You will

p

Just as the choral writing is varied in each section, so is the accompaniment. In an effort to avoid dull repetition from one section to the next, Conte modifies the accompaniment (bringing interest to each consecutive section). A visual comparison of the following excerpts (6-6/6-7) demonstrates this characteristic.

Example 6-6. *The Great Spirit of Love*, mm. 1-8 (section 1).

Moderately, not too slow, with simple dignity ♩ = 84

S.
A.
T. *mf*
B. *mf*

When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its
When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its

Moderately, not too slow, with simple dignity ♩ = 84

Piano
mf legato and sustained throughout
mp

5
way in - to your mind — You will know from that day for - ward — it is
way in - to your mind — You will know from that day for - ward — it is

Example 6-7. *The Great Spirit of Love*, mm. 24-30 (section 3).

24

mp
When the

mp
When the

f

27

mf
Great Spir-it of Love finds its way in-to your life You will

mf
Great Spir-it of Love finds its way in-to your life You will

div. p
When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its way in - to your

p
When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its way in - to your

let top note ring

p *sim.*

(pp)

Similar to the strophic structure of *The Great Spirit of Love*, Conte's *Silent Night* employs modified textures to vary each section. The design is simple:

Verse I: Choir.

Verse II: Soprano soloist accompanied by the choir
which hums its chordal material from verse I.

Verse III: Choir with descant sung by a few tenors and
sopranos (descant material also adds a
slight harmonic change to the original
material).

Though strophic forms are inherently repetitive, Conte's designs exhibit much variety—helping to keep them interesting and musically vibrant.

Like the strophic pieces, Conte's through-composed repertoire demonstrates his unflinching ability to bring variety to each verse with interesting harmonic and melodic material. In *Ave Maria*, sections are clearly divided according to the natural divisions of the poetry. Each section is unique in character, texture, and harmony and may be divided as follows:

Section I: mm. 1-11. (Homophonic)

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum,
Hail Mary, full of grace, the lord is with thee,
Benedicta tu in mulieribus.
Blessed art thou among women

Section II: mm. 12-16. (Polyphonic entrance, more motion)

Et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus.
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.

Section III: mm. 17-20. (Return of opening material)

Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

Section IV: mm. 21-33. (Animated, poly/homophonic)

Ora pronobis peccatoribus, Nunc et in hora

Mortis nostrae. Amen.

Pray for us sinners, now until the hour of our
death. Amen.

Example 6-8. *Ave Maria.*

Moderately, with simple expression

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first four systems are for the vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Each vocal line begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The lyrics for all parts are: "A - ve Ma - ri - a, gra - ti - a ple - na,". The Soprano part is in a soprano clef, Alto in an alto clef, Tenor in a tenor clef, and Bass in a bass clef. All vocal parts are in the key of D major and 3/4 time. The fifth system is for the Piano, labeled "Piano (for rehearsal only)". It consists of two staves, treble and bass, with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment features a simple harmonic structure with chords and moving lines in both hands.

Example 6-8 (continued).

5

Do - mi - nus te - cum, Be - ne - dic - ta tu - in —

Do - mi - nus te - cum, Be - ne - dic - ta tu - in —

Do - mi - nus te - cum, Be - ne - dic - ta tu

Do - mi - nus te - cum, Be - ne - dic - ta tu

9

mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus, be - ne - dic - tus

mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus —

in mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus

in mu - li - e - ri - bus. Et be - ne - dic - tus —

Example 6-8 (continued).

A bit slower

14

fruc-tus ven-tris tu-i Je-sus. Sanc-ta Ma-ri-a

fruc-tus ven-tris tu-i Je-sus. Sanc-ta Ma-ri-a

fruc-tus ven-tris tu-i Je-sus. Sanc-ta Ma-ri-a

fruc-tus ven-tris tu-i Je-sus. Sanc-ta Ma-ri-a

fruc-tus ven-tris tu-i Je-sus. Sanc-ta Ma-ri-a

A bit slower

In tempo

19

Ma-ter De-i, pec-ca-to-ri-

Ma-ter De-i, pec-ca-to-ri-

Ma-ter De-i, O-ra pro-no-bis pec-ca-

Ma-ter De-i, O-ra pro-no-bis pec-ca-to-ri-

In tempo

Example 6-8 (continued).

24

bus, Nunc et in ho-ra mor-tis no - - - stræ,
 bus, Nunc et in ho-ra mor-tis no - - - stræ,
 to - - - ri - bus, Nunc et in ho-ra mor-tis no - - - -
 bus, Nunc et in ho-ra mor-tis no - - - -

div. mp unis. mf
 mp mf
 mp mf div. cresc.

29

men, A - - - men, stræ, A - - - men, A - - - men,
 men, A - - - men, stræ, A - - - men, A - - - men,
 men, A - - - men, stræ, A - - - men, A - - - men,
 men, A - - - men, stræ, A - - - men, A - - - men.

ff mp p > pp
 ff mp p > pp
 ff ff mf p > pp
 ff ff mf p unis. > pp

rit. al fine
 rit. al fine

Just as form is a product of textual context in the preceding example, there are other text-inspired structural events, that contribute to the cohesion of Conte's pieces. Such an event is evident in *The Great Spirit of Love*. In this work, the overall message is love's ability to overcome all adversity and conquer even the most hardened heart—freeing the world of all evil and binding the world together through a common thread of love. In an accompanimental meditation on the text, Conte weaves the chant melody “*Ubi Caritas*” into the melodic material of the piano (example 6-9). This addition is appropriately worked into the fabric of this piece since the Latin text *Ubi Caritas et amor, Deus ibi est* translates as ‘Where charity and love are, God is there.’

Example 6-9. *The Great Spirit of Love*, mm. 9-12.



The above measures are preceded by the first stanza of poetry which states:

When the Great Spirit of Love
Finds its way into your mind
You will know from that day forward
It is love that rules the world.

Given the tone of the text, the *Ubi Caritas* theme brings added depth to the work. This melodic quotation is repeated throughout the piece and brings structural and thematic continuity to its strophic form. In context, the moment of this theme's arrival creates an atmosphere of quiet reflection and meditation on the opening text (example 6-10).

Example 6-10. *The Great Spirit of Love*, mm. 1-12.

Moderately, not too slow, with simple dignity ♩ = 84

S.
A.
T. *mf*
B. *mf*

When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its
When the Great Spir-it of Love finds its

Moderately, not too slow, with simple dignity ♩ = 84

Piano *mf* legato and sustained throughout *mp*

5

way in - to your mind _ You will know from that day for - ward _ it is
way in - to your mind _ You will know from that day for - ward _ it is

Example 6-10 (continued).

9

mf

When the

mf

When the

p

love that rules the world.

p

love that rules the world.

"Ubi Caritas"

mf

mp

As is clear from the examples examined above, textual influences on form are common. Accompaniments that magnify textual ideas are also prevalent and therefore impact a selection's musical characteristics. Such an influence is evident in the second section of *In Praise of Music*. The close relationship between text and accompaniment is stunning as the poem states:

I pant for the music which is divine,
 My heart in its thirst is a dying flower;
 Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine,
 Loosen the notes in a silver shower;
 Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,
 I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

Conte's accompaniment complements the text, especially the third and fourth lines, as it shimmers with sixteenth-note figurations (example 6-11).

Example 6-11. *In Praise of Music*, mm. 49-58.

49

S flow'r; _____

A flow'r; _____

T flow'r; _____

B flow'r; _____ *f* Pour

8^{va} 3

51 *f* *div.* *unis.* 3 3

S Pour forth, the sound like en - chant - ed

A Pour forth, pour the sound like en - chant - ed

T Pour forth, pour the sound like en - chant - ed

B forth, pour forth, the sound like en - chant - ed

(8^{va})

winds with wonder whist, smoothly the waters kissed," the accompaniment is drastically altered. As triplet figures in both the primo and secundo parts replace the previous section's chordal tendencies, a musical landscape is created that characterizes the undulating winds and waters portrayed in the poetry (example 6-12).

Example 6-12. *Hymn to the Nativity*, mm. 42-54.

42 F

reign of peace up - on the earth be - gan:

reign of peace up - on the earth be - gan:

pp *mp espress.*

pp *mp espress.*

48 G **Più mosso, animato** (♩ = 96)

The winds with won - der whist, —

The winds with won - der whist, —

p *p*

(Cel., Hp.) *(Fl., E. Hn.)* *(Hp., Str. trem.)*

8va... 8ba...

Example 6-12 (continued).

52

p *cresc.* *mf*

Smooth - ly the wat - ers kissed The

p *cresc.* *mf*

Smooth - ly the wat - ers kissed The

p *mf* (Ob.)

mf

mf

Unlike the more isolated structural influences of text, there are also pieces which expand the idea that musical content is textually inspired. In "Canticle," from *Three Sacred Pieces*, the entire second section is an elaboration of the text that states, "From the rising of the sun, until the going down of the same, I will praise Your name forever." In an effort to reflect the concept of "forever," Conte employs a minimalistic accompaniment that emphasizes a constant eight-note pulse. After persisting for approximately eleven pages, the effect becomes mesmerizing and successfully conveys the musical equivalent of "forever" as the choir sings (example 6-13):

Let all the earth, all that hath breath,
 Let ev'rything praise the Lord.
 All fish and fowl, all men and saints,
 Let ev'rything praise the Lord.
 Alleluia.

Example 6-13. "Canticle" from *Three Sacred Pieces*, mm. 44-51.

44

From this point on, rhythmic ensemble can be achieved if the singers listen for the accented downbeat which occurs every two measures in Piano I.

p legato; singing

Let all the earth, all that hath breath,

legato; singing; accompanying
p

Piano II should pedal to catch the accented downbeats of Piano I.

48

let ev' - ry - thing praise the Lord.

Similar to the minimalistic style of "Canticle" is *The Waking* (example 6-14). Conte's comments relating to this work's conception provide helpful information about his compositional process:

My setting of *The Waking* is simple and direct. The circular structure of the poem's villanelle form with its repeated lines inspired me to ground Roethkre's gently soaring verse and subtly varied repetitions with a steady minimalist-style accompaniment.⁴

Example 6-14. *The Waking*, mm. 1-12.

♩=96 Moderately, steady and calm throughout

mp

gently mark the bass, eighth notes always in the background

3 *simile*

8

⁴ Quote taken from the preface to Conte's score *The Waking*.

Textual imagery and ideas often influence form, structure and musical content. This feature brings considerable cohesiveness and craftsmanship to Conte's music. Ultimately, form is determined by poetic necessity and functions as an elaboration of the text.

Structural unity is also achieved through motivic gestures. In *Valediction*, Conte achieves cohesiveness with a recurring motive that is present not only in the vocal writing but is also an integral part of the accompaniment. The basic design of this motive is simple and maintains its intervallic integrity as it consistently moves in the same pattern of up and down motions. Though the interval sizes vary, they are not radically different and successfully relate to each other as a unifying gesture. Below are three examples that illustrate the subtle intervallic differences in the motive (examples 6-15a; 6-15b; 6-15c).

Example 6-15a. *Valediction*, mm. 3-4.



Example 6-15b. *Valediction*, mm. 11-12.



Example 6-15c. *Valediction*, m. 26.



Clearly, Conte's intention is to bring the highest degree of structural unity and craftsmanship to each of his works and, in doing so, he successfully integrates many compositional elements. This is highly effective and results in remarkably descriptive choral writing.

CHAPTER SEVEN

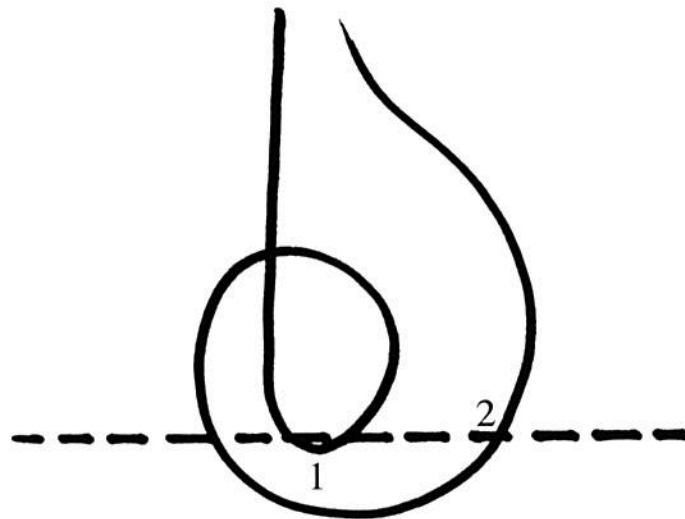
CONDUCTING THE PIECES: PROBLEMS RELATED TO GESTURE, AESTHETICS AND REHEARSAL

With its asymmetrical, fluctuating meters, polymetric textures and extra-tertian harmonies, twentieth-century music confronts conductors with added difficulties. Not only do these difficulties manifest themselves in performance, but are prevalent in rehearsal as well. The following discourse will explore problematic sections in Conte's music and offer possible solutions. Suggestions relating to gesture and aesthetics will also be given. As has previously been noted, Conte's rhythmic writing is remarkably dynamic. Though exciting, the challenges it presents can be trying for both choir and conductor. In the following example from *The Waking*, the conductor is confronted with an accompaniment that is in 3/4 while the choral parts are in 6/8 (example 7-1). The obvious dilemma is whether to conduct the section in two or three. There are two compelling reasons for choosing a two pattern:

1. A three pattern will result in a syncopated feel in the choral writing that is clearly not the intended effect as Conte has placed a tenuto over the dotted quarter notes. In doing so, he has specified that the motion from one dotted quarter to the next should be smooth—void of any rhythmic animation.

2. A two pattern will allow the conductor to show the type of uninterrupted, consistent, even flow of notes and breath. This is especially important in the measures where rests occur (mm. 52 and 54). A simple circular motion beginning on one and carried through two has the desired effect and is aesthetically helpful in encouraging the choir to think through the rest—in essence, de-emphasizing a break in sound and redefining the breath as part of the overall phrase (figure 1). The same effect does not occur when the passage is conducted in three.

Figure 1. Circular motion encourages the choir to integrate the breath into the phrase where rests occur.



Example 7-1 (continued).

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system (measures 52-54) features four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ear, from ear to ear, from ear, from ear, to ear, from ear, from". The piano accompaniment includes a *cresc.* marking. The second system (measures 55-57) features four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ear to ear, ear, ear, to ear, I wake to". Dynamic markings include *ff* and *p*. The piano accompaniment includes a *ff* marking and a *f* marking.

Though the accompanist must maintain a quarter-note pulse in the above example (7-1), as opposed to a dotted-quarter pulse, the passage should not pose a significant problem.

Similar to *The Waking* is a passage in "Canticle" from *Three Sacred Pieces*. Here, as in the previous example, the problem lies in which meter to conduct. Unfortunately, there is an added difficulty: though the primo part in the piano remains in a constant 5/4 meter, the paired choral and secundo piano parts shift meters frequently. Conte's instructions at this point in the score state, "From this point on, rhythmic ensemble can be achieved if the singers listen for the accented downbeat which occurs every two measures in Piano I." Though plausible, there is a second, perhaps safer solution. To ensure accuracy and security within the choir, the conductor's gesture should mirror the metric shifts in the choral writing. Piano I will be able to easily identify the eighth-note pulse at times when the choral meter shifts to a quarter note pulse (i.e. 3/4, 2/4, 5/4 . . .). Though odd at first viewing, this section of music poses no significant technical problems (example 7-2).

Example 7-2. "Canticle" from *Three Sacred Pieces*, mm. 36-77.

36

40

mp From this point on Piano I should predominate slightly

p

8va - - - - -

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system starts at measure 36 and ends at measure 39. The second system starts at measure 40 and ends at measure 77. The score is written for piano, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first system features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *mp*, and a performance instruction: "From this point on Piano I should predominate slightly". The score also includes a section labeled "8va" with a dashed line, indicating an octave shift.

Example 7-2 (continued).

44

From this point on, rhythmic ensemble can be achieved if the singers listen for the accented downbeat which occurs every two measures in Piano I.

p legato; singing

Let all the earth, all that hath breath,

legato; singing; accompanying
p

Piano II should pedal to catch the accented downbeats of Piano I.

48

let ev' - ry - thing praise the Lord.

More straightforward, rhythmically, is *Valediction*. Although this piece is less complex than the previous example, there is one aspect that can be enhanced through an alteration of the conducting gesture—hemiola. Wherever these areas of implied triple

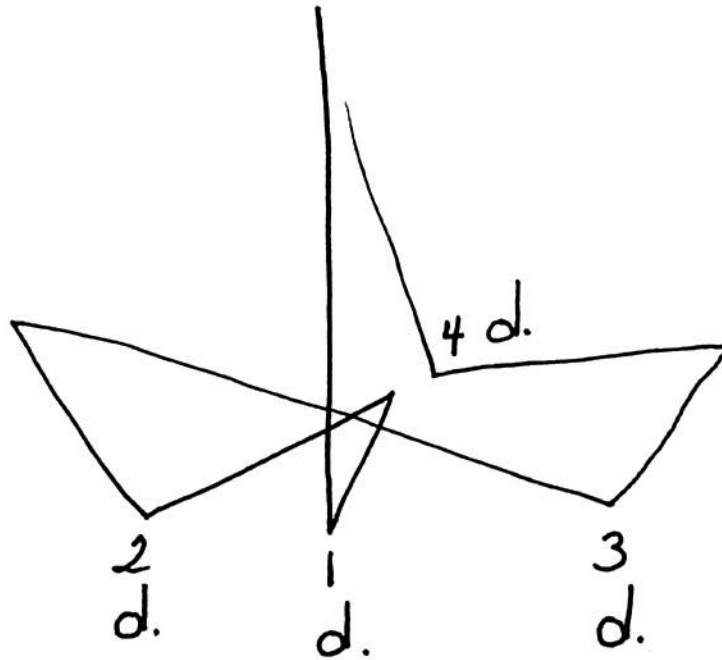
meter occur, there is the possibility of modifying the gesture to facilitate the feel of the hemiola. Whether to implement such a change is obviously discretionary and must be carefully decided as the resulting modification can disrupt the intended rhythmic motion of the line. In this instance, the change is warranted because the overall flow of the melodic material is smooth and lyrical. Aesthetically, a visual change in gesture will encourage the choir to sing with a lifted, buoyant sound — resulting in a forward, energized line. In example 7-3 and 7-4, areas of hemiola are marked. Figure 2 and 3, which precede the examples, suggest patterns for gesture modification. There are two primary areas in *Valediction* where such a rhythmic displacement occurs: measures 13-19 (example 7-3) and measures 33-42 (example 7-4).

Figure 2. Suggested modified pattern. The quarter-note pulse remains constant. The same pattern is to be used in mm 17-19; 40-42.

Figure 2 illustrates a suggested modified pattern for gesture modification. The diagram shows a vertical line with a downward-pointing arrow. To the left, the tempo is indicated as $d=63$. To the right, the pattern is labeled $3=d$. Below the arrow, the pattern is further defined as $1=d. 2=d.$

The musical score below the diagram shows the suggested modified pattern applied to measures 13-19. The score is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "that which nev - er tak - eth rust; What - ev - er". The first three beats are labeled "Beat 1", "Beat 2", and "Beat 3".

Figure 3. Suggested modified pattern for measures 35-37. Each beat represents one grouping of three quarters.



35

mf

Beat 1 Beat 2 Beat 3

be; Which breaks the clouds — and o —

Beat 4

pens forth the light,

Example 7-3. *Valediction*, mm 9-20.

9
my mind, as - pire to high - er things: Grow rich in

13
that which nev - er tak - eth rust; What - ev - er

17
fades but fad - ing pleas - ure brings.

Gt: Foundations 8'
(Upper voice only)
cresc.

Detailed description: This musical score is for a vocal and piano piece. It consists of four systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: 'my mind, as - pire to high - er things: Grow rich in that which nev - er tak - eth rust; What - ev - er fades but fad - ing pleas - ure brings.' The piano part features a steady accompaniment with some melodic lines in the right hand. The final system includes a guitar part labeled 'Gt: Foundations 8' (Upper voice only)' with a 'cresc.' marking.

Example 7-4. *Valediction*, mm. 33-44.

33

be; Which breaks the clouds — and o —

Sw: add Flute 4'

mf

37

pens forth the light, That doth both shine and give

Ch. (Sw./Ch. 8')

Ch.

f

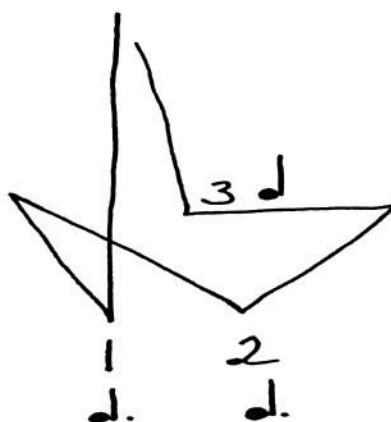
Ped: +16'

41

— us sight to see.

In a more rhythmically active piece where rhythmic drive is considerable, a change in gesture from the specified meter to another in order to facilitate vocal accuracy would only serve to dilute the excitement of the line (figure 4)—an issue that should be addressed in rehearsal so that the choir is secure with the syncopation as written and conducted as the composer intended. In the second movement of *Invocation and Dance* (example 7-5), there is the temptation to facilitate an otherwise tricky syncopation in the choral parts by conducting the following passage in three (3+3+2).

Figure 4. Inappropriate modification of gesture for choral entrance in example 7-5.

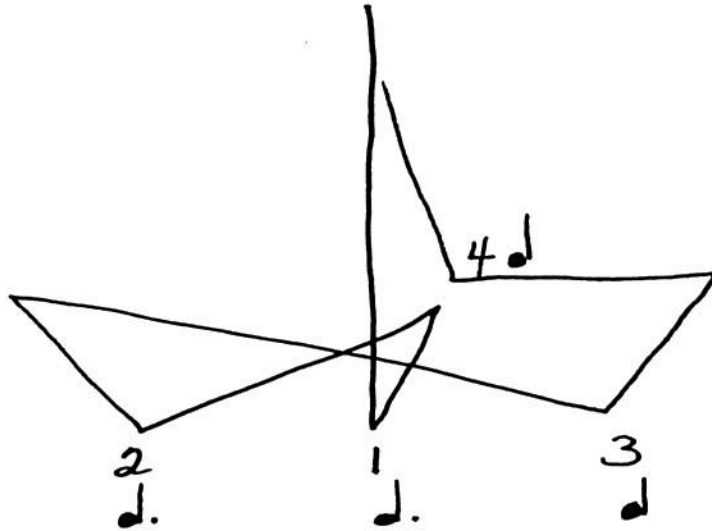


Example 7-5. *Invocation and Dance*, mvt. II, mm. 20-22.

Though seemingly logical, it is not an appropriate use of such a modified gesture: it is counterproductive to the composer's intended rhythmic conception of the piece. When this same passage is conducted in four, as indicated, it has the effect of amplifying the rhythmic action since the rhythm then becomes a syncopation rather than a temporary shift in meter as we saw in *Valediction*. In modifying the gesture to accommodate the dotted-quarter note, the conductor would be facilitating a more legato, less rhythmic passage. As the piece as a whole is extremely rhythmic, a modification of the gesture is undesirable.

Similar to the above example are the opening measures of the same movement (example 7-6). Whereas it is possible to modify the gesture to reflect a four pattern of 3+3+2+2 (hence following the syncopated rhythm in the xylophone and primo-piano parts), the alteration would instead serve to smooth out the syncopation (figure 5). As Conte has specified the grouping of 3+2, there is no compelling reason for any modification. There is an additional aesthetic reason for not altering the gesture in this piece. Since, overall, the movement is extremely angular, angularity in the gesture promotes a more rhythmically vibrant piece and musically promotes the ideas being expressed in the text.

Figure 5. Inappropriate modification of the gesture for example 7-6.



Example 7-6. *Invocation and Dance*, mvt. II, mm 1-4.

Xylo. (hard sticks)

f

(4 x)

With jazzy exuberance (♩ = 144)

(3 + 2) *div.*

f

(bring out the left hand)

(4 x)

f

(4 x)

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Xylophone, Piano, and Bass. The Xylophone part is marked 'Xylo. (hard sticks)' and 'f', with a tempo of 144. The Piano part is marked 'With jazzy exuberance (♩ = 144)', '(3 + 2) div.', 'f', and '(bring out the left hand)'. The Bass part is marked 'f' and '(4 x)'. Each part has a first and second ending, with '(4 x)' indicating the number of times each ending is repeated.

Any modification in gesture must be carefully considered and skillfully executed. Ultimately, the conductor is responsible for the musical integrity of the piece and therefore must strive to reflect the score as accurately as possible while at the same time manifesting a gesture that facilitates the singing. Aside from the problematic areas discussed in this chapter, all of Conte's music is quite accessible. Though there are

numerous rhythmic and ensemble complexities, clear patterns and good technique in rehearsal will facilitate the teaching process.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND THOUGHTS ON ACCESSIBILITY

A major point of this document is to demonstrate that David Conte's music, despite obvious twentieth-century influences, is firmly grounded in tonal theory. It is this more traditional framework that allows his music to maintain a high degree of accessibility to performers and audiences alike. Significant determinants of accessibility, tonality and atonality appear to influence popular opinion with regards to music's relative appeal. Of particular note is the atonal style of the early 1900s. With the advent of the dodecaphonic movement, the chasm between audiences and composers widened and, arguably, created a rift that continues today. As a result numerous organizations (orchestras, choirs, The National Endowment for the Arts and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's *Focus on Piano Literature* symposium) have put forth an effort to encourage the composition and performance of twentieth-century works. The intent of all of these organizations is to reconnect audiences with modern music—to demonstrate that twentieth-century music can be accessible to both musicians and the general public. Similarly, this document, through analytical research, has demonstrated that David Conte's music is decidedly accessible with the hope that it will encourage the performance of his works.

Conte has worked to bring his pieces to ensembles of different voice types by arranging many of them for various voicings⁵—increasing their performance potential. Since his music lacks extreme difficulties, it is easily programmed for choirs of various capabilities: madrigal groups, large festival choirs, college choirs, high school ensembles, amateur choral groups and church choirs.

With its expanded tonality, rhythmic variety, and poetic sensitivity, David Conte's choral music is a welcome addition to the repertoire.

⁵ See appendix for a complete list of compositions currently in print.

APPENDIX
DAVID CONTE'S CHORAL MUSIC
AVAILABLE THROUGH HIS PUBLISHER, ECS

DAVID CONTE'S CHORAL MUSIC
AVAILABLE THROUGH HIS PUBLISHER, ECS

TITLE	ECS NUMBER	VOICING	ACCOMPANIMENT	SACRED	SECULAR
Alleluia	4777	SA	Keyboard	•	
Ave Maria	4729	SATB	a cappella	•	
Cantate Domino	4184	SSAATTB B	a cappella	•	
Canticle from Three Sacred Pieces	4170	TTBB	Piano/4-hands	•	
Canticle from Three Sacred Pieces	4180	SATB	Piano/4-hands	•	
Carmina Juventutis	4906	TTBB	Piano/4-hands		•
Celia Singing	5182	SATB	a cappella		•
Charm Me Asleep	4835	SATB	a cappella		•
Elegy for Matthew	5470	SATB	Piano or Orchestra		•
Elegy for Matthew	5471	TTBB	Piano or Orchestra		•
Great Spirit of Love, The	5108	SATB	Keyboard		•
Great Spirit of Love, The	5109	TTBB	Keyboard		•
Great Spirit of Love, The	5110	SSAA	Keyboard		•
Hosanna	4187	SSAA	a cappella	•	
Hosanna	4188	SATB	a cappella	•	
Hymn to the Nativity	4271	TTBB/Sop Solo	Piano/4-hands or Orchestra	•	
In Praise of Music	4742	SSA	Piano or Orchestra		•
In Praise of Music	4973	SATB	Piano or Orchestra		•
Invocation and Dance	4179	TTBB	Piano/4-hands or Orchestra		•

DAVID CONTE'S CHORAL MUSIC
AVAILABLE THROUGH HIS PUBLISHER, ECS

Invocation and Dance	4378	SATB	Piano/4-hands or Orchestra		•
TITLE	ECS NUMBER	VOICING	ACCOMPANIMENT	SACRED	SECULAR
O God, thou Hast Been Our Refuge from Three Sacred Pieces	4189	SATB	Piano	•	
Prayer of St. Theresa	5111	SATB	Organ	•	
Psalm 121	4868	SATB	Organ	•	
Set Me as a Seal	4272	SATB	Organ	•	
Silent Night	4562	SATB	a cappella	•	
Stable-lamp is Lighted	5332	SATB	Piano or Organ	•	
Stable-lamp is Lighted	5247	SSAA	Piano or Organ	•	
Stable-lamp is Lighted	5399	TTBB	Piano or Organ	•	
Thou, O Lord from Three Sacred Pieces	4193	SATB	Piano	•	
Valediction	4608	SATB	Keyboard	•	
Valediction from Somerset Anthem Books, Vol. V	5141	SAB	Organ	•	
Waking, The	4182	SATB	Piano		•

SOURCES CONSULTED

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DOCTORAL RECITAL PROGRAMS



Presents

STEPHEN SIMMONS, *conductor*
in
Graduate Recital
University Chorus

A.G. "Chip" Williams, *piano*
Kalin Tchonev, *piano*
Jennifer Evans, *flute*

Thursday, December 4, 1997 • 2:30 p.m. • Recital Hall

If ye Love Me	<i>Thomas Tallis</i> (1505-1585)
Sicut locutus est from <i>Magnificat</i>	<i>Johann Sebastian Bach</i> (1685-1750)
Break Forth, O beauteous heav'ly light from <i>The Christmas Oratorio</i>	<i>Johann Sebastian Bach</i>
And the Glory of the Lord from <i>Messiah</i>	<i>George Frideric Handel</i> (1685-1759)
Riu, Riu, Chiu	<i>Anonymous</i>
The May Night	<i>Johannes Brahms</i> (1833-1897)
La, la, la, je ne l'ose dire	<i>Pierre Certon</i> (1500-1572)
Der Tanz	<i>Franz Schubert</i> (1797-1828)
Te Deum	<i>Colin Brumby</i>

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Cantique de Jean Racine	<i>Gabriel Faure (1845-1924)</i>
I was glad when they said unto me	<i>C. Hubert H. Parry (1848-1918)</i>
Thou Must Leave Thy Lowly Dwelling from <i>Childhood of Christ</i>	<i>Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)</i>
Praise the Lord	<i>arr. Ralph Johnson</i>
The Star Carol	<i>Alfred Burt</i>
Fum, Fum, Fum	<i>arr. Mack Wilberg</i>
A Prayer of Saint Patrick	<i>John Rutter (b. 1945)</i>
I Can Tell the World	<i>arr. Moses Hogan</i>

Mr. Simmons is a student of Larry Wyatt. This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting.



SCHOOL OF
MUSIC

Presents

STEPHEN SIMMONS, conductor

in

Graduate Recital

University Chorus

Jennifer Evans, *mezzo-soprano*

Virginia Gay Gandy, Amanda Hammond, *soprano*

Francisco Rodriguez-Quijano, *tenor*

Richard Conant, *narrator*

A.G. "Chip" Williams, Kris Sanchack, *piano*

Wednesday, April 15, 1998 • 4:00 p.m. • Recital Hall

Le Roi David (King David)

Arthur Honegger
(1892-1955)

First Part

Introduction

The Song of David, the shepherd

Psalm: "All praise to Him"

Fanfare and Entry of Goliath

Song of Victory

March

Psalm: "In the Lord I put my Faith"

Psalm: "O! had I wings like a dove"

Song of the Prophets

Psalm: "Pity me, Lord"

Saul's Camp

Psalm: "God the Lord shall be my light"

Incantation of the Witch of Endor

March of the Philistines

Lament of Gilboa

Second Part

Song of the Daughters of Israel

The Dance before the Ark

over

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Third Part

Song: "Now my voice in song up-soaring"
Song of the Handmaid
Psalm of Penitence
Psalm: "Behold in evil I was born"
Psalm: "Oh, shall I raise my eyes?"
The Song of Ephraim
March of the Hebrews
Psalm: "In my distress"
The Crowning of Solomon
The Death of David

Mr. Simmons is a student of Larry Wyatt. This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting.



presents

Summer I Chorus

Richard Conant and Stephen Simmons, Conductors
Wendy Channel, Accompanist

Magnificat

Franz Schubert

Requiem

Gabriel Fauré

selections from

Hymn of Praise

Felix Mendelssohn

USC School of Music Recital Hall
Sunday, June 28, 1998—4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 30, 1998—7:30 p.m.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

PROGRAM

Magnificat Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

- I
- II
- III

Requiem Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

- Introit and Kyrie
- Offertory
- Sanctus
- Pie Jesu
- Agnus Dei
- Libera me
- In paradisum

Hymn of Praise Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

- Duet and Chorus: I Waited for the Lord
- Chorale: Let All Men Praise the Lord

The June 28 recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting. Mr. Simmons is a student of Richard Conant.

Summer I Chorus

Richard Conant and Stephen Simmons, *Conductors*
Wendy Channel, *Accompanist*

<i>Soprano</i>	<i>Alto</i>	<i>Tenor</i>	<i>Bass</i>
Jane Ballentine	Jennie Barham	Jack E. Aldrich	Michael Barker
Wendy Brown	Melissa K. Dowler	James Chu	Bob Bly
Karen Chronister	Ashley N. Herring	Albert LeDoux	Nick Campbell
Virginia Gay Gandy	Tootie Hooks	Lanny McManus	Andy Johnson
Sallie Guess	Dionne T. Hough	Chuck Walvoord	Jay Ligatti
Héloïse D. Herbert	A. Camille Jones		Jeremy Smith
Mary Jo Nash	Laurie J. Nuovo		Stephen Simmons
Kim Peters	Bonny J. Sweat		Michael Sumter
Gena E. Poovey			J. Yarborough
Anne Williamson			

Soloists

June 28 Performance

Magnificat

Virginia Gay Gandy, soprano
A. Camille Jones, alto
Jack E. Aldrich, tenor
Lanny McManus, baritone

Requiem

Gena E. Poovey, soprano
Richard Conant, bass

Hymn of Praise

Mary Jo Nash, soprano
Gena E. Poovey, soprano

June 30 Performance

Magnificat

Virginia Gay Gandy, soprano
Melissa K. Dowler, alto
Chuck Walvoord, tenor
Lanny McManus, baritone

Requiem

Mary Jo Nash, soprano
Andy Johnson, bass

Hymn of Praise

Kim Peters, soprano
Gena E. Poovey, soprano



SCHOOL OF
MUSIC

Stephen A. Simmons
in
Graduate Lecture-Recital

University Chorus
A.G. "Chip" Williams, *accompanist*
Linda Kershaw, *accompanist*
Virginia Gay Gandy, *soprano*

Wednesday, November 17, 1999
4:30 p.m.
Recital Hall

The Choral Music of David Conte

I

Elements of David Conte's Style

II

Prayer of St. Theresa

David Conte
(b. 1955)

'Thou, O Lord,' from *Three Sacred Pieces*

Silent Night

Joanna Malcolm, *soprano*

Laurie Joseph, *soprano*

Katie Frogner, *alto*

Audrey K. McCall, *alto*

Celia Singing

Alleluia

Ave Maria

Valediction

Mr. Simmons is a student of Larry Wyatt. This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Soprano

Meredith Barkley
MaryBeth Boss
Melanie Cooper
Melissa Dagley
Kia Faison
Andrea Sue Fannin
Jennifer Forseth
Ginny Gernon
Angela Gordon-Epting
Amanda Hardigree
Leah Hardwick
Jennifer Hill
Maya Hollinshead
Melissa Jackson
Kendra Joyner
Joanna Malcolm
Jill Martin
Ashley Michelle Miller
Asleigh Lane Morse
Emily Northrop
Katarina Park
Katie Pfrogner
Marion Rogan
Laurie Joseph
Erin Smith
AnnaLisa Underhay

Alto

Ronda Brown
Bonnie Ellenberger
Dawn Fassnacht
Abigail Fisher
Adrienne Gadson
Dionne Hough
Heather Janney
Sara Beth Kirby
Audrey McCall
Mary Catherine
Osborne
Kristen Shelley
Lina Stanly
Adrienne Supernault
Betsy Wall

Tenor

Cameron Bailey
Bobby Lckov
Carl J. Melton
Charlie Moon
Christian Newman
Stephen Pinnell
Mateusz Stanicki
Jeremy B. Whistine

Bass

David Belinkie
Chann Carroll
David Cobb
Sean Madden
Joe "Mac" McDomick,
III
George Mitchell
Greg Pipkin
Jason Shealy
Nathan E. Woody

Graduate Students

Caroline Carson
Beth Rauh
Joseph Ohrt
Mark Russell
Eric Wilkinson
Virginia Gay Gandy
Mary Jo Nash
David Daniel
Cliff Russell