

## Curt Ebersole: Some Considerations for Score Study

### Score Study

Purpose: Discover the intent of the composer, and determine your own individual interpretation to bring the music to life. The process includes:

Composer → Score → Head → Heart → Body → Arms → Ensemble → Listener

Resources: Research, readings, listening to various conductors' recordings of the same work, and shared discussion can also be valuable tools.

Study site: Finding a regular place to study can make the process more productive. Make sure you use a wide desk with plenty of room, substantial lighting, in a location with a quiet atmosphere. A metronome and a keyboard/pitch device are also important tools.

Layer study technique: Each study pass of the score reveals more of the composer's intent. Consider these suggestions as points of departure to build a thorough understanding of the composition:

1. Overview and question
  - a. Page through the score and just peruse it
  - b. Number each measure (I prefer numbering odd measures only, at the bottom of the page)
  - c. Mark all meter and tempo changes in a way that suits you (I have my own system)
  - d. Ask general questions which occur to you from this first perusal and write these down (save these questions for step #8)
2. Research
  - a. Use creative sources to discover information on the composer, the composition's origins and premiere, and historical perspective.
  - b. The information you discover will be enlightening for you (and your students; see #8).
  - c. Create a Study Guide for your ensemble; content can include (but not be restricted to) the composer, the composition, historical perspective, form and structure, technical considerations, stylistic considerations, rhythmic development, melodic development, scales and key centers, terms used in the work, composition challenges, questions/projects for further study.
3. Graph the composition
  - a. Form of the work – Be sure you can identify the form succinctly.
    - i. Consider using graph paper to simply, scale “x” number of measures per block
    - ii. Use one side of paper only so entire composition is on one sheet
    - iii. Use an umbrella diagram or other similar strategy to determine phrasing, major harmonic areas, major theme groups, meter changes, etc.
    - iv. If done right, you could conduct the work from this diagram
  - b. Other possible graphs
    - i. Energy of the work – Be sure you understand the rising action, climax, denouement.
    - ii. Tempi
    - iii. Dynamics
4. Mark the score
  - a. Pencil can be used for chord and harmonic analysis, phrase analysis and micro-phrasing, elements that may change with retrospection
  - b. Using the form and phrasing you discovered in step #3, mark these back into the score.
  - c. Mark the percussion parts thoroughly. Publishers often give only sparse information regarding the specifics of instruments in the percussion section of the score.

- d. Color can be used for more permanent choices (orchestration, cues/releases, meter changes, dynamics, and articulations) as well as delineating percussion lines. (Crayola makes erasable crayons which can also highlight.) I use:
  - i. Red – increases of tempo/dynamic
  - ii. Blue – decreases of tempo/dynamic
  - iii. Green – primary melodies/themes
  - iv. Yellow – secondary melodies/themes; solos
  - v. Orange – time meter changes; mutes in (box in pencil for mutes out); special articulations
  - vi. Purple – Bracket the horns, L’istesso tempi, unchanging dynamics
5. Sing/play the score
  - a. Melodic/rhythmic solfege
    - i. Use fixed do
    - ii. Sing one line at a time
    - iii. Be sure you can produce the pitch and rhythm of each line
    - iv. Use clefs for transposition
      1. Tenor clef for Bb instruments
      2. Bass clef for Eb instruments
      3. Mezzo soprano clef for F instruments
  - b. Play reduction at the piano (tempo is less important than harmonic understanding)
6. Improvised movement
  - a. Sing or think melodies, or use a recording (someone you trust)
  - b. Improvise movement according to your reaction to the sound
  - c. Any movement is allowed, but do not conduct!
7. Conduct the work in front of a mirror
  - a. Do I look like the sound?
  - b. Can you recognize the low and high levels of the work from what you see?
8. Review questions you wrote in step #1. Did you have found all the answers? Consider writing a study guide for your students – it is likely to be an excellent summary for your students and for you.

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*Kirkpatrick Fanfare* – Andrew Boysen, Jr.  
Sample Overview Questions for Step 1

1. What is a frame drum?
2. How important is the use of the tin whistle for the flute solo at m.5?
3. How is the range of the number of percussionists I need?
4. Is the long melodic line at m.31, in the low reeds and low brass the motivic germ of the piece?
5. What does *Kirkpatrick* refer to?
6. What inaccuracies should I expect from my players when dealing with the compound subdivision?
7. What is the “hook” of the work? There are long melodic lines in the brass and low reeds at m.133 – is this the “secret” of the piece? How does this link to the title? Does it link to the low WW/low brass melody?
8. How do I make musical sense of the overlapping and jumbled woodwind motives after m. 107?

# Timothy Broege – Three Pieces for American Band, Set #2

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## The composer

Timothy Broege was born, and continues to live and work, in New Jersey as an organist/choir director and faculty member of the Monmouth Conservatory of Music. He is a graduate of Northwestern University. He is a prolific composer with more than forty published works to his credit, including *El Jadin de Esperanza*, commissioned by Curt Ebersole and the NVOT Wind Symphony in 2001. He received the Goldman Award in 1994 from the American School Band Directors Association for his compositions for school bands.

## The composition

The work was commissioned and premiered in 1978 by the Gilbert S. Lance Junior High School Band of Kenosha, Wisconsin. The outer movements were conceived as a prelude and postlude to the central movement. The movements' themes are inter-related: the final movement utilizes themes from the previous two movements to culminate the work. Broege utilizes short themes and transitions, and moves quickly between melodic concepts.

The first movement, Fanfare, has two themes and is structured as an A-B-A'-Coda form.

The second movement, Pavan to a Ground, combines a ground (otherwise known as a chaconne: a set of variations on a harmonic progression) and a pavan (a Renaissance court dance). The form is A-B-C.

The third movement, Fantasia, begins with a complex chord in the full ensemble based on polytonal perfect fifths, a minor seventh, and a major ninth, creating a distinct intonation challenge. Both themes from the first and second movements are presented in quick succession, followed by the main theme of the movement (presented three times). The movement ends with the ground from the second movement with a bi-tonal chord of A major over D major.

The three movements were originally entitled "The Jewel in the Grass," "The Queen in the Lake," and "The Door in the Tree," taken from *Edwin Mullhouse: The Life and Death of an American Writer*, by Steven Millhauser.

## Historical perspective

The work is based on musical ideas which were popular in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Broege found much of his inspiration from the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, an English collection of keyboard works written in the time of Queen Elizabeth I (the same time as the life and work of Shakespeare). The chaconne developed at this time and was founded on a harmonic ostinato or ground bass. Other works that draw inspiration from the same period are *William Byrd Suite* by Gordon Jacob, *The Battle Pavane* by Tielman Susato, arranged by Bob Margolis, and *First Suite in E-flat* by Gustav Holst.

## Form and structure

Section	Measures	Event
<b>Fanfare: ABA' Coda</b>		
A section	1-4	A theme in brass, centered around G-A major second, expanding to a minor seventh
	5-6	WW repeat A theme one-half step higher

	7-10	Transition to B section, syncopation introduced in brass
B section	11-16	B theme stated in piccolo, bass clarinet and bells, then solo cornet and tambourine
	17-22	Development of B theme and transition back to A section (m.22 is exact quote of m.10).
A' section	23-26	Return to A theme, with variation
	27-30	Transition (same as m.7-10)
Coda	31-35	Chorale style in thinner scoring, ending in D major
<b>Pavan to a Ground: ABC Coda</b>		
A section – Ground/Chaconne	1-6	First statement of 6-measure harmonic progression (A theme), in D
	7-12	Second statement; ground varied rhythmically (add saxes)
	13-18	Third statement, melody in cornet solo
B section – Pavan	19-22	Pavan theme (B theme) in flutes & clarinets, plus tenor drum, in F major
	23-26	Second statement in upper WW
	27-32	Third statement in WW with harmonic variation
C section – Development	33-37	B theme in upper WW, A theme in brass and low WW in D minor
	38-42	Forte, tutti. B theme varied in call/answer between WW and cornet 1-2; A theme in brass and low WW in dotted rhythm
	43-46	B theme in brass, tenor drum, chorale style
	47-50	B theme in brass, A theme in WW (with ½ beat anticipation) which extend to m.52
	51-55	B theme in saxes, tenor drum
	56-58	B theme in brass, segmented
Coda	59-62	B theme (similar to m.19-22)
	63-68	A theme returns in staccato eighth notes; perfect fifth highlighted in solo cornet, bells, chimes, 3 <sup>rd</sup> clarinets; final suspension resolves to D major.

<b>Fantasia: Intro AAB Coda</b>		
Introduction	1-2	Complex introductory chord made up of a major seventh and major ninth over Ab, plus two perfect fifths based on F# & C#.
	3-4	Fragment of “Fanfare” A theme
	5-6, bt 1	Fragment of “Fanfare” B theme
	6-7	Fragment of “Pavan” A theme
	8-9	Fragment of “Pavan” B theme
	10	Intro of A section, foreshadows ostinato
A section	11-14	New Fantasia A theme in cornets over ostinato
	15-19	A theme varied, call-and-answer, dynamic contrasts
Repeat of A section	11-14	Fantasia A theme in cornets over ostinato, add upper WW’s
	15-19	A theme varied, call-and-answer, dynamic contrasts
B section	20-29	A theme varied through augmentation and minor tonality
Coda	30-37	Chorale based on “Pavan” A theme in bassoons & low brass, building to final tutti chord of bitonal A major over D major root

### Technical considerations

Solos occur in piccolo, flute, oboe, bass clarinet, cornet, tenor drum, and bells.

### Stylistic considerations

Warm sustained playing is required to establish the ground/chaconne in the second movement and the third movement coda. Broege thinks and writes in choirs of sounds, using sections of instruments according to their register, as if writing for a pipe organ. Because of this, timbral unity and contrast are important and each section of instruments should be aware of their importance. Articulations should be smooth and light. The staccato eighth notes at m.63 in the second movement should have a lift and not be too short, with a “da” or other softer articulation.

### Rhythmic development

Based on its Renaissance roots, all three movements are written in simple meter with straightforward rhythms. Syncopations through accents, entrances after rests, and tied-note figures are prevalent. A steady pulse is needed throughout, especially because of the use of ostinato figures.

### Melodic development

The “Fanfare” has two themes. The first utilizes a major second in its harmony and expands to a minor seventh.



The second recalls Gregorian chant of the medieval period, with a twist of 20<sup>th</sup> century accents.



The “Pavan to a Ground” contrasts the pavan theme, which alternates between D major and F major, with the chaconne/ground which is steadfastly set in D minor. The two ideas contrast and collide, with the ground winning in the end in D major. The ground is a six-measure pattern. The Pavan (B theme) is:



The “Fantasia” begins by quoting each of the themes from the first two movements (four in all). A new theme in F major is then presented, which is singular to the last movement:



### Scales & key centers

The work is centered around D, both in major and minor. Scales in C and F major are also prevalent. Players in the ensemble should be comfortable with all the scales in these keys.

### Terminology

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
A section	The first section of a form design, usually followed by and alternated by a B, C section, etc.
First theme	The first melody of a form design, usually followed by a second theme
Transition	The section which a composer writes to move from one theme area to another
Coda	Literally “tail.” The final closing section of a composition.
Pavan	A stately court dance (Renaissance period, 17 <sup>th</sup> century)
Ground	A set of variations on a harmonic progression, rather than on a melodic theme. Also known as a chaconne.
Pedal	A sustained pitch which is held through various chords or a chordal progression
Tenor drum	Snare drum, performed with the snares turned off to create a hollow sound

Lunga	Sustained longer than usual (often with a fermata)
Allegro moderato	A moderately fast (running) tempo
Allegro energico	An energetic fast (running) tempo
Sostenuto	In a sustained fashion or tempo
Tacet 1 <sup>st</sup> time	Silent the first time; play the 2 <sup>nd</sup> time only
Both times	Play on both times of the repeat (usually after a tacet marking)
Rallentando	Gradually slowing down
Dim.	Diminuendo – gradually softer
Ostinato	A repeating rhythmic or melodic figure
Timbre	Tone color
Timbral	Having to do with tone color

### Questions/Projects for further study

- What is significant about the book, *Edwin Mullhouse: The Life and Death of an American Writer*, by Steven Millhauser?
- What is the significance behind the Northern Valley commission from Timothy Broege in 2001?