72, SEASCAPES, AND SOLO VIOLIN: THREE CHAMBER WORKS

MASAKUNI OKUBO

72, Seascapes, and Solo Violin: Three Chamber Works

by

Masakuni Okubo

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This thesis was prepared under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor, Dr. Stuart Glazer, Department of Music, and has been approved by the members of his supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Dr. Stuart Glazer, Thesis Advisor

	Dr. Timothy \	Walters	
	Ten	Test	
	Dr. Kenneth	Keaton	
Ten Frah			
Chairperson, Department of Mi	usic		
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ABSTRACT

Author:

Masakuni Okubo

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72, Seascapes, and Solo Violin: Three Chamber

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Three unaccompanied chamber pieces of Masakuni Okubo are discussed from several different aspects. They were composed for solo clarinet (72), two flutes (Seascapes), and solo violin. Each piece is analyzed in terms of its historical background, compositional techniques, and formal and stylistic characteristics.

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I. Stylistic Influences:

I composed these three pieces during 2000-2001. Each draws on several existing currents in contemporary composition:

- 1 Non-tonal motivic development
- 2 Synthetic scales
- 3 Aleatory
- 4 Minimalism

Non-tonal motivic development:

The solo clarinet piece (72) is my first atonal piece. It shows an influence of early Arnold Shoenberg. While Schoenberg is famous for the invention of dodecaphony, his earlier works are in late Romantic style. He later slowly moved on to non-tonal motivic development and finally reached the system of dodecaphony. George Perle describes his earlier non-tonal style as free atonality, and defines this style as follows.

The "free" atonality that preceded dodecaphony precludes by definition the possibility of a statement of self-consistent, generally applicable compositional procedures. A referential complex of tones may be restricted to a single pitch level in one piece, freely transposed in another, and entirely avoided in a third, even where these are different movements of a single opus. The "rightness" of a particular note depends not upon its possible containment within a preestablished harmonic unit, as it does in tonality, but upon larger compositional factors whose meaning must be discovered within the work itself. Thus an unprecedented degree of ambiguity attaches to the individual progression in general,

and this is paralleled on the rhythmic plane by the extreme flexibility of a beat that no longer serves as a support for functional harmonic elements.

A central problem, that of defining the "thematic" material and differentiating it from secondary and transitional material without the benefit of the articulative procedures of tonality, is uniquely presented and solved in each atonal work. Sometimes only certain features of the initially stated pattern retain sufficient individuality to function referentially. In general, the atonal "theme" emerges only in the course of the composition and does not appear as a salient design at the outset of the work, as in tonal music.

The integrative element is often a minute intervallic cell, which may be expanded through the permutation of its components, or through the free combination of its various trans positions, or through association with independent details. It may operate as a kind of microcosmic set of fixed intervallic content, satiable either as a chord or as a melodic figure or as a combination of both. Its components may be fixed with regard to order, in which event it may be employed, like the twelve-tone set, in its literal transpositions: prime inversion, retrograde and retrograde-inversion. (Where it is stated as a simultaneity the order is not generally defined, so that only "prime and inversion are meaningful terms.) Individual notes may function as pivotal elements, to permit overlapping statements of a basic cell or the liking of two or more basic cells (Perle 9-10).

Schoenberg's approach to the non-tonal motivic development can be seen in several pieces: <u>Drei Klavierstücke</u>, <u>Erwartung</u>, and most importantly, <u>Pierrot lunaire</u>.

My approach to organizing atonal music was influenced by the music of Schoenberg's middle period. 72 was composed with the use of a small number of motives with development and variation. Even though my intentions was to use a limited number of ideas rather than to

compose an atonal work, it clearly shows the influence of Schoenberg's middle period.

Synthetic scales:

Bela Bartok was the first to use synthetic scales extensively in compositions.

Elements of Bartok's individual style became increasingly apparent in his work in 1908-11. Around 1908 he began to write melodies and harmonies based on modal and pentatonic scales; to combine modes or, as he described it, to color one with another' to construct chords by stacking fourths instead of thirds, or to used simultaneously the major and minor third (Though he always placed the minor third upper-most (Stolba 476).

In Concerto for Orchestra, he used a synthetic scale (Hungarian minor).



Example 1 – A Hungarian minor, A B C D# E F G# A (A harmonic minor with #4)

That shows that

in addition to the medieval modes, there exist many scale possibilities found in the music of Africa, the Near East, the Far East, and southern Europe (Copley 101).

The existence of the medieval modes with their wide variety of arrangements of half-steps and whole-steps may suggest that a mode having special desired characteristics. Such a mode is designated as a "synthetic mode". For example, the charming sound of the minor dominant and the brilliance of the Lydian mode might result from a mode using both the lowered seventh and the raised fourth step (Copley 103).

Bartok called the following scale the acoustic scale.



Example 2 - C Acoustic scale C D E F# G A Bb C

Using scales based on altered modes, there are many different possibilities of sound.

There is also the influence of Oliver Messiaen, whose systematic use of synthetic scales is well-documented; he called some of these "modes of limited transposition."

If diatonic chords still constitute a large part of his harmonic vocabulary, their normal functions are weakened or annulled by their use within the framework of his 'modes of limited transpositions' – modes in which a pattern of intervals is repeated through the octave (e.g. his 'second mode', B-C#-E-E#-G-G#-A#-B, where the repeating unit is a whole tone plus a semitone). So his music is generally derived of normal harmonic impetus and hence of the necessary force for long-range continuity. (Nothing shows this better than his few early attempts at sonata form, such as the last of the <u>Preludes for Piano.</u>) (Griffiths 495).

The use of synthetic scales is employed in most of <u>Seascapes</u> and the first and second movement of <u>Solo Violin</u>. However, although my method of creating and composing with synthetic scales is different from that of

Bartok and Messiaen, those pieces show a great deal of influence from them.

Aleatory:

Aleatory is

a term applied to music whose composition and/or performance is, to a greater or lesser extent, undetermined by the composer.

As defined above, the term 'aleatory' ('aleatoric' is an etymological distortion) applies to all music: it is impossible for a composer to prescribe every aspect in the realization of a composition; even the sound result of a tape playback will depend on the equipment used and the acoustic conditions. However, the term is usually restricted to music in which the composer has made a deliberate withdrawal of control, excluding certain established usages, which fall within this category (Griffiths 341).

A single composition could include different use of aleatory, of which there are three main techniques:

- 1. The use of random procedures in the generation of fixed compositions.
- 2. The allowance of choice to the performer(s) among formal options stipulated by the composer.
- 3. Methods of notation, which reduce the composer's control over the sounds in a composition.

This is in some ways inherent in all music from the notation of dynamics up to total improvisation (Griffiths 341).

Until the middle of the 20th century, composers used increasingly complex musical notation in order to gain more control of the result;

aleatory music was a reaction this, giving more control to the performers (341).

There were, however, some trivial examples of aleatory music in the 18th century, when schemes were published for generation of simple pieces in response to the results of dice throws. These games usually left only one aspect to guided chance: the ordering of bars supplied with the scheme, for instance, or the melody to be placed over a given rhythmicharmonic pattern.

Aleatory composition involves the use of random procedures in determining musical aspects that are to be notated; unless other aleatory techniques are also used, the resultant score is no less fixed that a conventional composition (Griffiths 342).

John Cage is the most famous composer of Aleatory music.

Cage began to use what he called 'chance operation' in composition during the early 1950's, notably in the <u>Music of Changes for Piano</u> (1950) (Griffiths 342).

After a few years,

Cage had gone much further in abandoning the control exercised by the composer, or even the performer(s), reaching an extreme point in 4'33" (1952), whose only sounds – those of the environment – are quite unpredictable. And though Cage remained true to non-intention, even he went back to staff notation in Cheap Imitation (1969) and many later works. A kind of superficial looseness (represented, for example, by ad libitum repeats of figures, or by 'time-space' notation, in which duration is determined by length on the staff) remained as part of the lingua franca of moderate modernism, and improvisation continues as the mainstay of experimental music. But Cage's later music is unusual in the period for the precision of its invitations to chance (Griffiths 342).

The concept of the aleatory can be also considered as central to any musical experience

While a musical score contains information on pitch, relative duration and often some indication of relative dynamics, articulation, and an outline of phrase structure, it cannot express innumerable details of a musical realization. These details include precise tempi, subtle fluctuations of tempo, expressive rubato, tone quality, precise dynamics, and the combination of all elements to form a cogent, balanced structure that conveys the emotional insight of both composer and performer (Gould and Keaton 146-147).

Aleatory and improvisation can be considered to be related, differing only in degree rather than essence (Gould and Keaton 148). I used Aleatoric ideas such as repetitions of the note groups without limit of rhythm, time and repetition; phrases without limiting numbers, freedom of time without bar line; and rhythmic crescendos. These passages occur in the fifth movement of <u>Seascapes</u> and the first and second movements of Solo Violin.

Minimalism:

Minimalism can be defined as

the gradual process of unfolding a very limited (minimal) body of motivic material, often with a high degree of literal repetition. The material is often simple, tonal or modal, and largely diatonic (Benward and White 358).

It is also defined as

a term borrowed from the visual arts to describe a style of composition characterized by an intentionally simplified rhythmic, melodic and harmonic vocabulary (Potter 716).

However, although minimalism was born with the strong connection to minimalist art, it was also considered as a reaction against the modernism of both total serialism and aleatory. Terry Reiley, Phillip Glass, and Steve Reich were at the forefront of this movement.

According to Bruce Benward and Gary White, total serialism is defined as

All (or at least most) of the elements or the dimensions of a twelve-tone serial composition are serialized (Example: serialization of pitch, intensity, duration, and timbre.) (362).

Reich's exploration of the gradually shifting relationships that result when modal musical material is deployed against itself contrapuntally – what came to be known as 'phrasing' – is the central technical feature of almost all his compositions of 1965-71, culminating in <u>Drumming</u>. Glass's investigation of systematically organized additive and subtractive processes plays a similar role in his music of 1967-74, culmination in <u>Music</u> in Twelve Parts (Potter 717).

Unlike cultivated 20th Century music, minimalism is more closely related to vernacular traditions, especially rock, than to Western art music (Potter 716).

I have used minimalism in the fourth movement of <u>Seascapes</u> and the second movement of <u>Solo Violin</u>. The second movement of the violin piece is almost entirely written with minimalist techniques. However, the fourth movement of <u>Seascapes</u> is a combination of minimalism with

motivic development. The A and B section is influenced by Phillip Glass and Steve Reich. Steve Reich thought that

modality and pulse has more in common with that of his erstwhile colleague Glass. In channeling their energy into composing rather than improvising, both were initially concerned to establish a formal rigor for the unfolding of individual works (Potter 717).

Both composers influenced my work, though through different approaches.

II. Compositional Techniques:

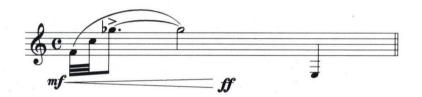
72 (Seventy Two):

<u>72</u> is a single-movement piece for unaccompanied solo clarinet. It is the first piece that I composed with priority given to melodic integrity rather than harmony. This piece is also intended to be organic with minimal musical ideas. The piece is a prototype of a horizontal approach to composition. I discovered that this approach could bring a new way of conceiving music. By writing a solo clarinet piece, I successfully improved contours of melodies in my pieces in general. Since the clarinet can only create one pitch at a time, I had to concentrate only on the melodic line. My tendency of thinking of music in a vertical context could not be used.

There were also other reasons for picking this instrument. The Bb clarinet is one of the most common instruments in music schools. Since getting a performance of the piece is not easy in a school situation, composing an unaccompanied solo clarinet piece was a practical idea because a piano accompanist is not required. The clarinet also has a wide range of register, dynamics and timbre. In addition to these advantages, it is an agile instrument. These characteristics were very attractive to me, since this was my first unaccompanied solo piece. Besides these advantages, writing for an unaccompanied solo clarinet

helped me to improve some other aspects of my composition. I had some tendencies to make things too complicated and too continuous with, not enough space (rest) in most of my compositions. Composing for a solo instrument forced me to deal with the issues of rest and breath. The player must breathe and there must be some breaks for the player.

This piece was composed using one intervallic cell, which were stated in the first few measures, and derivation thereof: F and C (perfect fifth) and the Gb above C (diminished fifth).



Example 3 - 72 measure 1

All motivic material is derived from these intervals. For example, a diminished 5th added to a perfect 5th is a minor ninth. Conversely, a diminished 5th subtracted from a perfect 5th is a minor second. Through octave displacement, a minor 9th is the same as a minor 2nd. The entire piece primarily consists of these intervals: perfect 5th, diminish 5th, minor 9th, and minor second.

As a result, this piece was composed based on two ideas: intervals of a 5th (perfect and diminished) and pitch classes created by inverting

intervals and the use of the chromatic scale which is the repetition of the minor second which is derived by the original interval set.

Seascapes:

<u>Seascapes</u> is a six movement flute duet, written immediately after <u>72</u>. It was originally composed as an experimental short single movement. After finishing the movement, I decided to write 5 more short movements.

After I decided to complete the six-movement piece, I formed a general idea of what each movement would consist of. I wanted to contrast tempos, alternating slow and fast. All movements have similar endings with consecutive long notes. Each movement is two minutes long for a total of twelve minutes.

Since the first movement was composed with a synthetic scale, I decided to compose 5 other movements based on synthetic scales, which were derived from the scale used in the first movement. As a result, the "Seascapes" was composed almost exclusively using synthetic modes. The original synthetic mode (from the first movement) is derived from original church modes with alterations. Some of modes used in this piece include more than 7 notes in one octave.

"Morning Tide Arrives"

The movement is written with drastic change of dynamics and plenty of silent space. As a result, this movement has lots of breathing space for players and audience. The use of space and the wide range of the instrument create the mood of this movement.

"Morning Tide Arrives" employs a scale, which includes the following pitches.



Example 4 - Synthetic scale for "Morning Tide Arrives," FG# AB# C# DEF

Unlike the diatonic scale, this scale includes two pairs of augmented seconds and two consecutive half-steps. The augmented seconds are a half step apart: implying the flavor of a symmetrical scale. The consecutive half-steps imply the chromatic scale or passing tones in the diatonic scale. These two elements make this scale strong and unique.

"Morning Tide Arrives" was composed with two considerations: the contrast in dynamics and the use of silent space. The sudden change of dynamics contrasted with gradual change of dynamics is key to the performance. The piece starts with *pianissimo* and suddenly increases to fiff. At the beginning of the piece, this dynamic change is shocking to the

listener. Along with dynamics, pitches are also contrasting. Consonance (octave) goes to dissonance (minor seconds): creating tension.

"Rocky Shoreline"

The second movement is contrasting to the first movement. The dynamics and tempo are opposite from the ending of the last movement. This movement and has many meter changes, and includes asymmetrical meters.

"Rocky Shoreline" is in a fast tempo with frequent change of meter.

This movement includes several difficult passages caused by the combination of tempo and large interval skips. The first part of the movement primarily uses the following scale:



Example 5 – Synthetic scale for "Rocky Shoreline," D E# F# Gx A# B C# D

This scale is a transposed version of the scale used in the first movement.

The Second movement starts with a succession of major sevenths between the two flutes.

"The Sailfish"

The third movement is the most lyrical. This movement emphasizes the solo playing of each player. The solo parts are written with fewer restrictions in order to give the players a freedom of interpretation. The call and response in the beginning emphasizes the subtly different timbre created by each individual player of the instrument.

"The Sailfish" employs the following scale.



Example 6 – Synthetic scale for "The Sailfish," G Ab Bb Cb D Eb F# G

The scale is a mode of the original scale, and uses the following intervals: half-step, whole-step, half-step, augmented 2nd, half-step, augmented 2nd, and half-step. The form of the movement is A (a), B (b, c, d), A` (a`) and coda: a (mm 1-11), b (mm 12-22), c (m 23-26), d (mm 26-35), a` (mm 36-46) and coda (mm 47-49).

"Undercurrents"

The forth movement is minimalistic. The most important part of the performance is the timing, involving frequent meter changes and the

trading of melodic lines. As middle movements, the third concentrates on melody and the fourth on rhythm.

Since a single flute cannot be played continuously, my focus for this movement became rhythm and creating continuity with two flutes while using minimalistic ideas.

The scale includes B, C, D, Eb F# G, A#, and B.

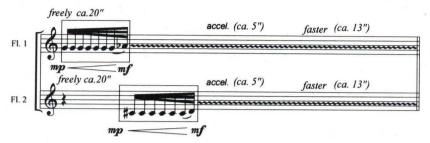


Example 7 – Synthetic scale for "Undercurrents," B C D Eb F# G A# B.

The intervals are half-step, major second, half-step, augmented second, augmented second, half-step and half-step. The tempo of the movement is quarter note at 100. This movement is written in the form ABC with coda: A (mm 1-17), B (mm 18-39), C (mm 40-54) and coda (mm 55-56).

"Song of the Whale"

The fifth movement is the slowest in tempo, and uses aleatory techniques. The rhythmic crescendo



Example 8 a - Rhythmic Crescendo

can be played freely with the player's interpretation. Aleatory composition was used in order to emphasize the mysterious mood of the movement.

"Song of the Whale" is composed with following scale.



Example 8 b – Synthetic scale for "Song of the Whale," C Db ,Ebb, Fb, Gbb, Ab Bbb C.

This is the mode of the original scale.



Example 9 – Synthetic scale for "Song of the Whale," F Gb A Bb C# D E F.

The two scales share the same notes. This movement is the least melodic, and contains the smallest melodic rage. Trills and grace notes create the

impression of melodic ambiguity. The slow tempo (quarter note at 60) and subtle dynamic changes between *pianissimo* and *mezzo forte* also avoid intensity and create dramatic contrast with the next movement.

"Dance of the Dolphins"

The final movement has the quickest tempo. Triplet and regular eighth notes are used along with frequent meter changes. This is the most technically difficult movement. The contrasting theme at the beginning of the middle section is the only relaxing part of the movement. This movement contains the final climax before the end of the piece. The ending of the piece is similar to the other movements.

The scale created for this movement includes C, Db, Eb, E, G, Ab, B, and C.



Example 10 – Synthetic scale for "Dance of the Dolphins," C Db Eb Fb G Ab B C.

This is the same scale used in the third movement with a different pitch center. Except for the solo in the middle section, this movement is entirely composed with unison rhythm. The alteration of intervals (moving in parallel within the modes) between 2 flutes controls the level of

dissonance. For instance, the 7th is used to create tension, and the octave is used for the resolution. Unlike the fifth movement, the speed and change of the dynamics, as well as the range of the instrument, is fully exploited. Intensity is kept high throughout, except for the solo by flute 1 in the middle section, which is designed to ease tension for a moment. At m 106, the two beats of rest prepare the listener for the last 6 measures of long notes with decrescendo. The last measure concludes the piece in slow tempo in order to remind the listener of the first movement. In addition, ending with the long held dissonant interval (major 7th) also implies the connection with the other movements.

Solo Violin:

Solo Violin is a three-movement piece for unaccompanied violin. This was composed immediately after Seascapes. The tempo of the three movements is slow, fast, slow. The first and second movements are composed with synthetic scales; the third movement employs a standard mode: C Lydian. Like Seascapes, I originally intended this to be a one movement piece, but upon reflection decided to expand each theme into a separate movement.

As soon as I decided to compose a solo violin piece, I thought about the difference between violin and clarinet. Since I had already

composed an unaccompanied solo instrumental piece, composing without a harmonic background was not a problem. However, I had to consider the characteristics of the violin. Chords are an option, and there is no need for rests for breathing.

Movement 1

The first movement was composed with synthetic scales. The original scale was G, Ab, B, C, Db, Ebb, F#, and G.



Example 11 - Synthetic scale for Movement 1, G Ab B C Db Ebb F# G.

Intervals of this scale are follows: minor 2nd, minor 3rd, minor 2nd, minor 2nd, minor 2nd, minor 2nd, minor 2nd, and minor second. This scale sounds very different from the any of the scales I used in the flute piece. It has a major 3rd in between the fifth and sixth notes. There is another major difference in the compositional method. Unlike <u>Seascapes</u>, I composed the melody first and then I derived the scale afterwards. In other words, the first several measures of music were created before the creation of the mode.

This movement employs two contrasting devices: aleatory and complicated rhythm. The first and the final part of this movement include

some music without bar lines and with occasional rhythmic crescendos. In general, the level of rhythmic complexity increases after the tempo is introduced. Several measures include specifically notated rhythm as well as rhythmic crescendo: mm 17 and 27. Additionally, at m 35, the use of ritardando (which is even more pronounced at m 37) gives subtleness to the ending of the phrase.

Performance techniques unique to the violin are used in several pieces. At the second line of the music, a double stop with the tremolo is used. Right after the tremolo line, there is a *pizzicato* near the end of the phrase.

Movement 2

Although this movement also employs a synthetic scale, unlike the first movement, it was composed after the mode was set. The mode is used with several developing devices. For instance, I used several different synthetic modes, derived from the original scale. I also used an octatonic scale. These modes are also derived from the original scale. For example, I combined the mode of the transposed original scale



Example 12 - Synthetic scale for Movement 2, C# D E# F# G Ab B# C#.

with a mode of the original scale,



Example 13 – Synthetic scale for Movement 2 Db Ebb F# G Ab B C Db.

and formulated these into the new scale.



Example 14 – Synthetic scale for Movement 2 C# D E# F# G Ab B C C#.

The entire melodic idea is based on the notes from the original and derived scales.

This movement is rhythmically very complicated. From m 4, the meter changes almost every measure for remainder of the piece. There is a reason I wanted to make the rhythm so complex: simplicity of the melody. The melody is entirely written with a minimalistic approach. Descending and ascending scales form almost the entire movement. Along with the rhythm, the note grouping and accents build the rhythmic strength. Every note group has an accent. Accents in this movement can be overemphasized in order to reinforce the effect of the switching of

meters. Since, the violin can be played continuously, I used a different approach in this movement: continuous melody.

Movement 3

The third movement of the piece was composed with C Lydian mode.



Example 15 - C Lydian, C D E F# G A B C.

Since the previous movements are in synthetic modes and very dark and intense, I wanted to make this movement as bright and mellow as possible. Even though the melodies of these movement feature large intervals, they are entirely memorable and create a good melodic contour. There are no augmented or diminished intervals between two consecutive notes, also adding to the lyricism.

The first motive uses intervals of the major 7th and major 6th. These large intervals are employed in the movement extensively. In addition to that, the C major 13(#11) arpeggio at measure 6, frequently emphasized tonic note (C) and lack of the tonal cadence creates the strong modal sound.

III. Brief description and analysis:

72 (Seventy Two):

There are three notes F and C (perfect fifth) and the Gb above C (diminished fifth), which is the basic cell of the whole piece. The most obvious place to see these intervals is the first few measures of the piece.



Example 16 - 72 measure 1-3

These three notes are played within the first half beat and the last note is held with crescendo from mezzo forte to fortissimo. The lower register of the clarinet is thick sounding and is different sounding from the preceding Bb. This large skip and change of timbre along with the pitch class change creates an effect of atonality. In m 2, the opening motive is played again and repeated using octave displacement. In the third measure, the same pitches are repeated with a rhythmic variation. Tension is enhanced by the increased rapidity of the crescendos in these measures.

After the repetitions of the motive, a chromatic scale goes down to the low E again.



Example 17 - 72 measure 4-5

In order to emphasize the timbre of the lowest note of the instrument, the last two notes of the chromatic scale are repeated twice followed by a five-note chromatic scale to the same pitch (E). After these chromatic lines, there is a pause. After the pause, the chromatic idea is developed, leading to a C above the staff and held with a dynamic change of fortissimo to mezzo piano and fff. The section concludes with a variation of the main motive. The last note (F# above the staff) is emphasized with a trill.

The next section starts at m 14. It is also derived from the main motive. Two pitches a half-step apart are used as little motives in three note groups, such as E, F and E.



Example 18 - 72 measure 12-16

These note groups were derived from the first half of m 12, which was taken from the original motive minus the second note. The first three notes

form the basic cell to be developed. Mm 17-18 is the repetition of the last three bars with some variation. From m 19, the motive is transposed a half-step up to create tension, and leads into the rhythmic trill going up half steps.



Example 19 - 72 measure 19-20

These trills are followed by the interval skips of the perfect 5^{th} , perfect 4^{th} (inversion of perfect 5^{th}), and Major 7^{th} (inversion of minor 2^{nd}).

After the F# is played again in the lower register, the chromatic line (which is derived from m 7) is played.



Example 20 - 72 measure 24-25

The last 9 notes are repeated twice in order to emphasize the ending of the phrase. When it is repeated the second time, it is rhythmically different with the omission of the last note from the original note group.

The last note E is held followed by glissandi.

After the whole rest (m 28), a trill is repeated 3 times a minor ninth apart.



Example 21 - 72 measure 29-30

The minor 9th interval is, again, derived from the original theme (perfect 5th + tritone). Since the minor 9th interval is dissonant, tension is created. After the trill, this pitch group is played in the lowest register of the instrument, and played with octave displacement of the minor ninth (half-step). This half-step motive is taken from m 12.



Example 22 - 72 measure 12-13

After the restatement of the original cell from this section, the E is played 2 octaves higher with a trill. The trilled pitches are E, B, and F: the same interval relationship from the original them in m 1.



Example 23 - 72 measure 30-32

The rhythmic variation of the original theme is restated and emphasized with trills. In order to emphasize these three notes, drastic changes of dynamics are used with each of the final three notes fading away.

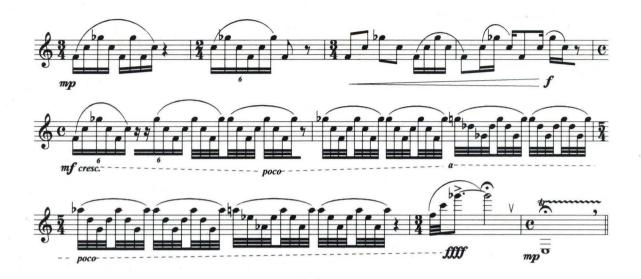
After one measure of rest, the next section introduces a lyrical melody, which has contrast to the preceding material. The intervallic relationship among the notes used in the first part of this section are perfect 4th, half step, tritone, perfect 4th, perfect 5th, perfect 5th, perfect 5th, and tritone.



Example 24 - 72 measure 34-35

These intervals are derived, as is the entire theme. The end of the theme is extended and developed, climaxing in m 47.

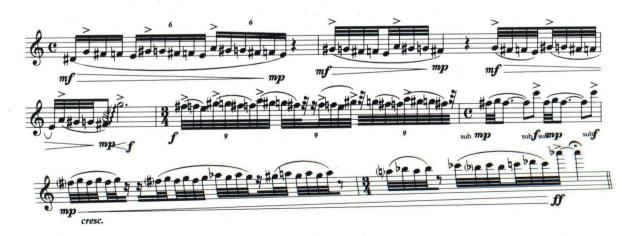
The new section, which starts from m 49, functions as the development section. Mm 49-57 are based on the 3-note group (F, C, and Gb) of the original theme.



Example 25 – <u>72</u> measure 49-57

The original phrase (m 49) gradually becomes more rhythmic and complex (mm 50-52); and at m 53 it becomes sequential. The intensity is developed in two ways: the succession of the half step transposition and the use of the higher register of the clarinet.

Mm 58-64 is based on the chromatic line from m 8.



Example 26 - 72 measure 58-64

The idea is stated in m 58 and is developed at mm 59-60. At m 61, it becomes rhythmically very complex which increase the tension, leading to a climax in m 64. At m 65 the chromatic idea and the original three-note motive are combined leaching to the main climax of the piece in mm 75-76.

The last section begins with the restatement of the original motive (mm 1-5). The last 2 pitches of the phrase (F and E below the stuff) are repeated at different dynamic levels and have trills.



Example 27 - 72 measure 80-84

The last note of this phrase is stretched with a fermata and fades away with a diminuendo. Eight beats of rest (mm 85-86) prepares for the surprise of the upcoming fast passage. Mm 87-93 is taken from mm 7-13. These seven measures restate the first section of the piece before the ending. The final five measures serve as a coda, summing up the melodic material used in the piece.

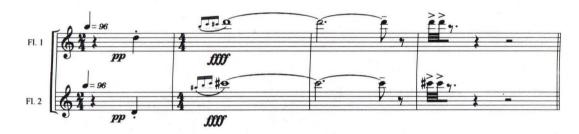
The form of the piece is A (a, b), transition, B (c, d), C (Development), (e, f, g), A' (a'), and coda: a (mm 1-13), b (mm 14-28),

transition (mm 29-32), c (mm 34-41), d (mm 42-48), e (mm 49-57), f (mm 58-65), g (mm 66-76), a' (mm 77-93), and coda (mm 94-96).

Seascapes:

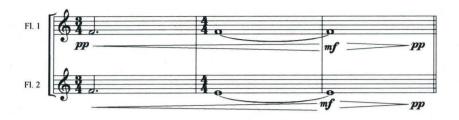
"Morning Tide Arrives"

In the first movement, the minor 2^{nd} interval in m 2 is held for seven and a half beats and ends with a short repetition of the interval.



Example 28 – "Morning Tide Arrives" measure 1-4

This is followed by 11 beats of silence. As stated above, one of the most important concepts in this movement is the use of space. This eleven beats of rest almost seems too long at this tempo (quarter note at 96); however, it prepares the listener for the long quiet tones and rests in mm 7-13. At m 11, a unison changes to a minor second, recalling the opening measures.



Example 29 - "Morning Tide Arrives" measure 11-13

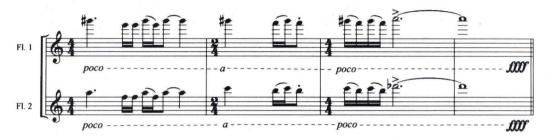
At m 15, flute 1 starts creating motion while flute 2 repeats the melodic half-step from mm 7-8. The spaces between phrases decrease each time: 11 beats, 8 beats, 4 beats, and 3 beats, creating tension.

The material in mm 15-16 is developed until the minor second cadence at m 26.



Example 30 – "Morning Tide Arrives" measure 15-16

The descending lines at m 28 make up a short section (b), which is extended (b') in mm 43-54. M 33 begins the A' which contains the climax of the movement in mm 38-41.



Example 31 - "Morning Tide Arrives" measure 38-41

After the climax, the descending lines from m 29 are extended in mm 43-54. A short coda (mm 57-60) recalls the unison to minor second relationship from section A.

"Rocky Shoreline"

The second movement is written in ABA' with coda: A (mm 1-16), B (mm 17-51), A' (mm 52-61) and a coda (mm 62-73). The A section starts with consecutive major 7th intervals, which are found in the synthetic mode used in this movement.



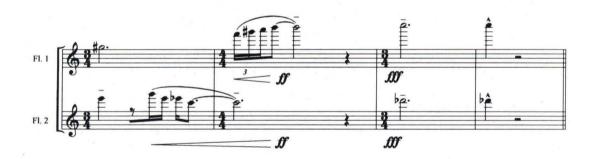
Example 32 - "Rocky Shoreline measure 1-4

This movement involves frequent rhythmic displacement by meter change and the change of rhythmic values. For example, the A section has 6

meter changes within 15 measures. The tempo of the piece and the rhythmic change emphasizes this movement's activeness.

Even though the same mode is used entirely, the tonal center of the mode changes. The use of the same scale with different tonal center makes the whole piece cohesive even if it is not strictly composed with certain sets of pitches.

The A section of the movement features repetition of upward motions with large interval skips. As a contrast to the A section, the melodic line of the B section is more stepwise in intervallic content, and descends until m 27. A set of notes is repeated with rhythmic variation reaching the highest pitch at m 43 (climax).



Example 33 - "Rocky Shoreline measure 41-44

After the break, the tension created at the climax is slowly brought down with a descending line (mm 46-50).



Example 34 - "Rocky Shoreline measure 46-50

The A' section is a shortened version of the original A section with some rhythmic variation. After stating the theme one briefly the melody continues, using repeated pitches with rhythmic variation. At the coda (m65), the descending line is derived from B. The A theme is briefly implied at m 70 before the movement's end.

"The Sailfish"

In the third movement, the A section is 10 measures of call and response between the flutes. From mm 5-10, ideas which are derived from first four measures are developed and concluded the A section.



Example 35 - "The Sailfish" measure 5-10

Four beats of silence prepares for the next lyrical section (m 13).

In the B section, flute 1 is heard alone for the first time in the piece. Mm 12-21 are composed with the same scale as the A section. This is the most melodic part of the piece. Melodies are both lyrical and rhythmic. Large intervals create some tension in the melody, as in beat 2 of m 13, the last 2 beats of m 14, and the last note of the triplet at beat 2 of m 20. Melodic tension is also created by transition of the highest note of each phrase: B (m 15), D (m 18), Ab (8va) (m 20), and, finally, A# (m 21).

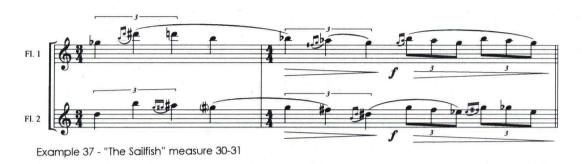


Example 36 - "The Sailfish" measure 15-21

After the end of the last phrase, four beats of rest prepare the listener for the next entrance of flute two.

The C-section is very brief, functioning as a transition into the d section. At m 23, two notes are repeated with rhythmic variation into the next measure (24). This idea is developed at m 26 with involvement of

flute 1. The climax (m 30) uses three-note groups with displacement of phrase marks in order to create the continuous effect.



This section is ended with a dissonant interval (minor second), which foreshadows the ending of the next section (a`).

The A' (mm 36-47) uses the material from mm 1-11 with some rhythmic variation. The last note of the coda is resolved to unison for the first time; it is played with decreasing volume and a fermata in order to avoid the implication of strong cadence.

"Undercurrents"

The whole fourth movement is based on its first measure. In the A section, small notes-groups are used extensively with some partial repetitions and rhythmic variations.

The first part of the motive is a 3-note group (C, B, and F#). The C note resolves to B and skips up perfect fifth (F#).



Example 38 - "Undercurrents" measure 1-3

The next part is extended by adding G between B and F# and creates the interval of a minor ninth. After the F# is emphasized twice with large intervals, there are three notes from the scale going up to the first note of the second statement of the motive (C). There are some rhythmic and note changes in the second measure; they are achieved by the extension of the meter (an extra beat) and displacement of rhythm with some changes of notes. From mm 1-12, notes-groups are also implied with accents and slur. For example, flute 1 (mm 1-3) can be divided into seven note groups: 3, 4, 4, 2, 1, 4, and 3. Flute 2 enters from m 3 and states the answer for flute1 (mm 1-3). Answer is based on the combination of the 1st part of the motive and variation of the second part. Mixtures of the three-and four note groups are used in flute 1's second entrance.



Example 39 - "Undercurrents" measure 7-9

This idea is developed, extended, and concludes the A section at m 16.

The B section begins as a canon and is developed with some variation to each part. Basic rhythmic value is decreased from eighth note to sixteenth note. Tension is created with two elements: slight increase of dynamics and range of the phrase. M 18, volume is piano. It is slowly increased and reaches to fortississimo at m 31-34. Along with the dynamics changes, the tessitura of the phrases also increases. At measure 18, the highest pitch in the measure is A#. It reaches to D# in flute 2 and finally reaches E on the last beat of 25. From m 26, the motive is transposed a major third up and, again, even higher. It reaches the highest point and descends (mm 31-34).



Example 40 - "Undercurrents" measure 31-34

After the 2 beats of rest, the motive goes back to the original key at m 36. Mm 36-39 is derived from m 36; it is in a different rhythmic value, which creates the effect of slowing down.



Example 41 - "Undercurrents" measure 36-40

The last two notes from m 36 are emphasized in m 40 and lead to the climax. At m 44, the descending scale (derived from flute 1 mm 3-13) is repeated and developed and reaches the climax at m 52. After the climax (m 53), the 3-note group is repeated at successively lower octaves.

"Song of the Whale"

The fifth movement has a compound form: A (a, b), B(c, b`, d) and A` (a`, d`). It is basically the A, B, A` form; however, it has small forms within the overall form. The first measure is composed without bar lines. This is the slowest and most subtle movement of the composition. It starts with exchanging trill between flute 1 and flute 2 with slight change of dynamics in both parts. After the flute 2 repeated the first statement of flute 1, it goes to glissando with flutter tongue. After the note D is emphasized with glissando, the same pitch is played repeatedly with rhythmic crescendo.



Example 42 - "Song of the Whale" measure 2-3

While flute 2 is emphasizing D note, flute 2 is going up the mode from F, G#, C, C# and D with increasing number of grace notes. It goes down to C# at measure 3 and create dissonant interval (major 7th).

After 2 beats of rest, both parts go down a half-step and maintain the major 7th interval for 4 beats and, then, flute 1 descends, resolving to the Db unison. Flute 2 is featured for 3 measures after the unison and it leads into the next section.

The first part of the B section is the repeated notes with flutter tongue and rhythmic crescendo. This section is played for approximately 20 seconds. At m 17 (b`), the melodic line goes down to C# again followed by the 2nd measure of flute 2 again. Flute 1 is added from m 72 (d) and it reaches the climax at m 24.

At m 26, A` (a`), the beginning of the piece is briefly repeated and ends with the long held note like the other movements. This time, the two parts are resolved into a unison and there is a moment of relaxation before the intense final movement.

"Dance of the Dolphins"

This movement shares several characteristics with the second movement: fast tempo, changes of meter, wide dynamic ranges. The Form of the movement is A (mm 1-22), B (mm 23-37), A' (mm 38-46), C (mm 47-77), transition (mm 78-80), A'' (mm 81-100), with coda (mm 101-112). A and B are mostly sequential material based on the synthetic mode. The A section features ascending lines, which use large intervals and diatonic second sequences. The B section features descending and ascending lines, with the parts rhythmically displaced.

The C section features a melodic line by flute 1. After 7 measures of solo, flute 2 joins and creates a dissonant interval for intensity.



Example 43 - "Dance of the Dolphins" measure 52-54

This idea is slowly developed into the climax at m 76. After the transition (mm 78-80), the A is restated with little variation. The A` has a second climax at mm 93 in order to emphasize the material from A. From m 94, melodic lines repeat the idea without strong intensity and prepare the listener for the Coda, which, again, restates the large interval skips. In the

second half of the coda, long notes are employed for implication of the unity with the other movements.

Solo Violin:

Movement 1

The form of the first movement is A (mm 1-8), B (mm 9-39), A (mm 40-51) with coda. It starts with a non-metered section employing rhythmic crescendo with change of dynamics. The A section sets up the sound of the scale and mood of the movement.

The B section is in compound form (a b a` within B). The highest noste of the each phrase emphasizes the melodic contour; it moves from Ab, Db, B, F, D, and ends with a Db above the staff. Once the melody goes up to Db, it slowly descends, with the rhythmic variation, to G below the staff.



Example 44 - Movement 1 measure 19-23

From m 24, the melody goes up again and emphasizes the D above the staff twice at the climax (mm 24-25). M 27 brings the melody back into the low register.



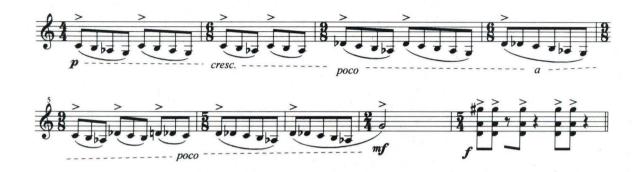
Example 45 - Movement 1 measure 24-27

The first material is repeated at m 40. After the material from A is repeated, it leads to the coda, which is derived from the material from A. This phrase is repeated twice in different rhythms, and it leads to the ending with the tremolo.

Movement 2

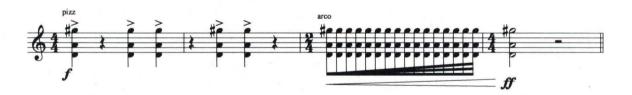
Unlike the first movements, the second movement is in a fast continuous tempo. This piece is composed in binary form with introduction, transition, and coda: introduction (mm 1-3), A (mm 1-49), transition (mm 50-53), B (mm 53-74) and coda (mm 75-80). It starts with the chord played with *pizzicato*. This repetitive melody is influenced by Bartok (meter change, rhythm, displaced accent, and synthetic scale),

and minimalism (repetition of the small cells). After m 4, the meter constantly shifts between note groups of 3, 4, and 5.



Example 46 - Movement 2 measure 4-12

At m 12, a chord is played as punctuation and melodic line goes back on the track again. After the large interval cadence at m 24, it is developed until the climax at m 45. After chord is played with *pizzicato* and *arco* at m 46-49,



Example 47 - Movement 2 measure 46-49

the line descends until m 52 (transition). The coda is formed with the material from introduction with the punctuation of the chord at the end.

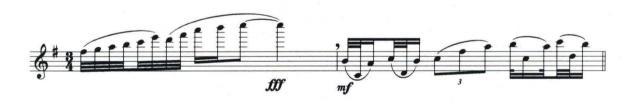
Movement 3

The final movement of <u>Solo Violin</u> is composed in ternary form: A (mm 1-10), B (mm 11-17), C (mm 18-23) and *coda* (mm 24-31). This movement is composed with a single 3 note motive and its development and variation.



Example 48 - Movement 3 measure 1

The main motive is developed at B (m 11), and becomes more lyrical, reaching the climax at m 17. Even at C (m 18) the same motive is developed, a little differently, and emphasizes the importance of the original motive.



Example 49 - Movement 3 measure 17-18

The Lydian sound is emphasized at the ending of phrases and also by arpeggio at m 6-7 and mm 24-26.



Example 50 - Movement 3 measure 24-26

Unlike the previous movement, the focus here is the relaxation toward the ending. Slow tempo, the use of the Lydian mode, and beauty of the melody strengthen the ending of the piece.

Conclusion:

Composing has helped to raise my understanding of music. It has taught me the beauty of the balance of unity and variety, which is the essence of good music. Standard training in any university music school includes classes dealing with theory, ear training, history, performance, conducting, and pedagogy. Composing music helped me to understand the unity and interdependence of these disciplines. My musical knowledge, which was acquired separately, unites in the act of composition.

IV. Scores

<u>72</u>

<u>Seascapes</u>

Solo Violin

*All trills are played with the note half step above the original pitch.

Masakuni Okubo



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Seascapes

I. Morning Tide Arrives Score Masakuni Okubo with expression ffff fff pp pp Copyright© 2001 by Masakuni Okubo





II. Rocky Shoreline

with momentum







III. The Sailfish





IV. Undercurrents







V . Song of the Whale





VI. Dance of the Dolphins









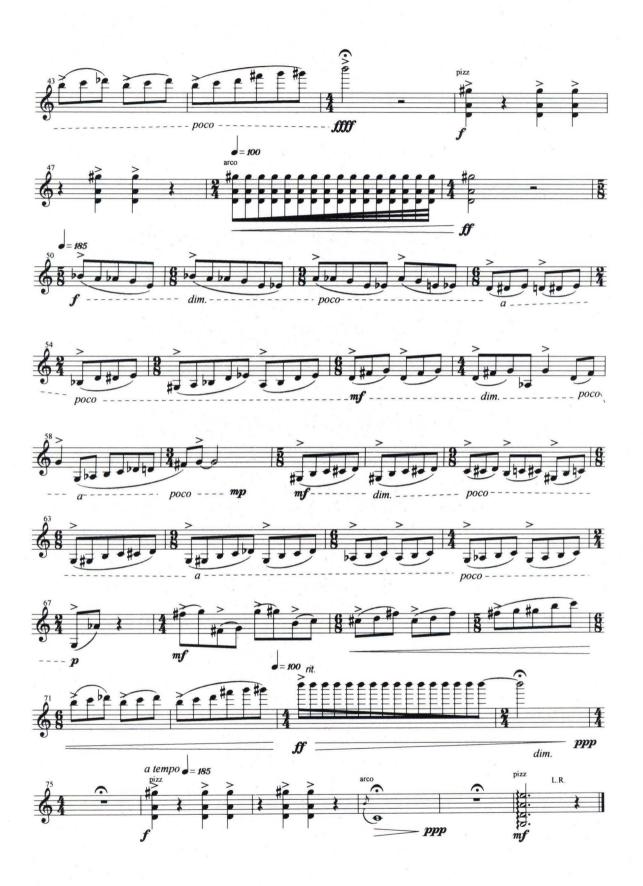




Solo Violin I











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