ISSN 3034-3836 (Online)

Contemporary Musical Art

Original article
UDC 785.1
https://doi.org/10.56620/RM.2024.4.087-100
EDN: FKKXZL

A Successful Blend of Diverse Styles, Genres and Techniques in Andrew Thomas' Orchestral Works from the End of the 20th Century

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Abstract. Andrew Thomas is a distinguished American composer of considerable renown. He has written numerous compositions for solo piano, various chamber ensembles, solo voices, chorus, and orchestra. He is also a pianist, a conductor and a composition teacher, who taught for over fifty years at the Pre-College Division of the Juilliard School in New York City. He has instructed composition already to several generations of composers, many of whom have since become prominent members of the American contemporary music scene. Among the most significant compositions Andrew Thomas has written are his works for orchestra. This article shall discuss the composer's orchestral works — the Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra *Loving Mad Tom* (1990) and *The Heroic Triad* (2000). Analysis of these two works is provided, and the cultural context for their creation is given.

Keywords: Andrew Thomas, composer, American music, orchestral compositions, pianist, conductor, composition teacher, Concerto for Marimba, *The Heroic Triad*

For citation: Rovner A. A. A Successful Blend of Diverse Styles, Genres and Techniques in Andrew Thomas' Orchestral Works from the End of the 20th Century. *Russian Musicology*. 2024. No. 4, pp. 87–100. https://doi.org/10.56620/RM.2024.4.087-100

Introduction

Andrew Thomas is a distinguished American composer of considerable renown. He has written numerous compositions for solo piano, various chamber ensembles, solo voices, chorus, and orchestra. He is also a pianist, a conductor and a composition teacher, who taught for over fifty years at the Pre-College Division of the Juilliard School in New York City. He has already instructed composition to several generations of composers, many of whom have since become prominent members of the American contemporary music scene.

Andrew William Thomas was born on October 8, 1939 in Ithaca, New York. He studied with Karel Husa at Cornell University and Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Then he studied composition with Elliott Carter, Luciano Berio and Otto Luening at the Juilliard School, from where he received his Master's and Doctoral degrees. From 1970 until 2023 he taught composition at the Pre-College Division of the Juilliard School, having been the head of the Pre-College Division from 1994 to 2006. He has received numerous prizes, including a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Distinguished Teacher Citation from The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. He has also taught composition in a number of other countries outside of the USA, most notably, in the People's Republic of China, where he has regularly visited since 2000 and where his music has been performed numerous times, including the Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra *Loving Mad Tom* and the ballet *Focus of the Heart* set to a libretto written by Howard Kessler. The score of the ballet makes use of a traditional Chinese orchestra and a Western orchestra. The ballet was performed in Beijing in 2009. The first time the composer went to China in 2000 was as a judge at a piano competition in Hong Kong. Since 2003 Thomas has taught, read lectures and performed as a pianist in Korea at The Seoul Music Festival and Academy, one of the directors of which he was, which included the participation of Korean and Western piano and string instruments instructors. He has conducted several orchestras, including the Prime Symphony Orchestra, the Suwon Philharmonic Orchestra and the Korean Symphony Orchestra. In October 2019 Dr. Thomas made a trip to Moscow Russia, where he gave lectures at the Moscow Conservatory and the Gnesin Russian Music Academy. He participated at the Music Festival Commemorating George Crumb's 90th Anniversary and John Corigliano's 80th Anniversary, where, along with music by George Crumb, a number of his musical compositions were performed at a concert at the Conservatory's Myaskovsky Hall, including his piano pieces *Music at Twilight* and *A Quiet House* he performed himself at the piano. [1]

Andrew Thomas has written a significant number of compositions for orchestra. In this article, I shall examine two of his most important compositions — the Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra, subtitled *Loving Mad Tom*, and *The Heroic Triad* for guitar, marimba and string orchestra.

The Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra *Loving Mad Tom*[1]

A very significant work by Andrew Thomas involving orchestra is his Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra, subtitled *Loving*

[1] Thomas A. Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra *Loving Mad Tom*. The score of this composition is unpublished and is preserved in the composer's personal archive at the American Composers' Alliance.

Mad Tom, which was composed during the years 1989 and 1990. The famous marimba soloist William Moersch, for whom the work was written, played in its premiere performance in Louisiana. Since then, the work has been presented by different orchestras in many countries, including the Deutscher Orchester Berlin under the direction of Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Korea Symphony Orchestra with the composer at the baton. The Marimba Concerto was inspired by the poem *Loving Mad Tom*, a long poem by an anonymous 17th century poet. [2] The work presents a frighteningly intense illustration of a homeless insane person wandering throughout England and raving in his madness. The composer attempted to convey these feelings by means of his music.

By the time Andrew Thomas composed the Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra, he had already written a number of compositions for marimba, for which he had earned a considerable amount of respect and fame. His most celebrated piece for the instrument is titled *Merlin*, and it was composed 1983 for William Moersch, who at that time was a free-lance musician in New York City. *Merlin* has been performed all over the world, including Moscow Conservatory's Rachmaninoff Hall in 2018 by percussionist Sergei Glavatskikh. For many years since *Merlin* was created, the composer has been approached by various people who told him that this was the composition that made the marimba a respected concert instrument. Since then, Andrew Thomas has written numerous other works involving the instrument, including *The Great Spangled Fritillary* for violin and marimba, *Moon's End* for cello and marimba, and *Three Transformations* for two marimbas, the latter work involving greatly altered metamorphoses of works by J. S. Bach arranged for the two instruments. It was stemming from this that the composer decided to compose an entire concerto for marimba. He had the wish to make a contribution to the concerto repertoire by composing a very serious work for marimba and orchestra. Up to that point he thought that the marimba had been treated by the few composers who had written concertos for it, including Paul Creston, as a rather superficial instrument. In contrast to that, he wished to compose a large-scale work that would be expressive in a morbid way and philosophical in its approach. The dark quality of the marimba's sound is especially what appealed to the composer in the instrument, similarly to the dark registers of the harp.

This work is indicated both as a concerto for marimba and orchestra and as *Loving Mad Tom*, the latter designation virtually forms its second title. The work, in fact, combines the characteristic features of a marimba concerto, a symphony and a programmatic work, and also features traits of ballet music. [3] It is a marimba concerto because its most important instrumental features are a solo marimba part and the orchestra part, the former possessing all of the necessary attributes of a solo instrumental part of a concerto in its immensely virtuosic technique and the numerous lengthy passages in the work presenting solo passages for the marimba, as well as its interplay with the orchestral part, characteristic of all works in the concerto form. Its lengthy duration, four-movement form, overall dramaturgical qualities, contrasts between diametrically different textures and emotional moods, as well as the overall grandiose philosophical semantic message — all of these, undoubtedly, endow the work with a resemblance to a symphony. At the same time, the adherence to the program of the content of the 17th century English poem, which the work, describes, brings in a resemblance to a large-scale programmatic work, similar to Liszt's symphonies and symphonic poems and the tone poems of Richard Strauss. The overall theatrical,

colorful quality of the work, emphasized by the neoclassical orchestral textures and the motoric, lively rhythms, bring in the resemblance to ballet music. Technically, the latter qualities of the work make the possibility conceivable that a ballet producer could create choreography for the work and have it performed with dance as a ballet.

The Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra *Loving Mad Tom* consists of four contrasting movements, altogether, very much resembling a symphony. The first movement starts with a slow introduction, and then switches to a fast tempo, which takes up most of the movement. The second movement, which proceeds from the first without introduction, possesses many attributes of a scherzo of a symphony in its lively tempo and dance-like textures and mood, the third movement is the slow movement, possessing a very eerie and mysterious mood. The fourth movement returns to a fast tempo and, thereby, resembles a traditional symphonic finale.

The work is endowed with a mixture of neoclassical and neoromantic stylistic features with a limited amount of additions of moderately avant-garde, sonoristic textures. [4] At the same time, the darkly expressive quality of the work endows it with certain aspects of expressionism. The overall harmonic language is that of extended tonality or tonal centricity, the harmonies ranging from almost entirely diatonic to extendedly chromatic. The orchestration ranges from demonstrating neoclassical textures to presenting elements of modernist orchestration and even avant-garde sonoristic effects, albeit, most of them are harmoniously blended in the predominating neo-classical sounds.

The composer picked four verses from the poem and based each of the four movements of the Marimba Concerto on one of the each. The combination of the four verses of the long poem was chosen as the epigraph for the work:

From the hag and hungry goblin
That into rags would rend ye
All the spirits that stand by the naked man
In the Book of Moons defend ye!
That of your five sound senses
You never be forsaken
Nor wander from yourselves with Tom
Abroad to beg your bacon.

While I do sing ‘Any food, any feeding,
Feeding, drink or clothing’
Come dame or maid, be not afraid,
Poor Tom will injure nothing.

O thirty bare years have I
Twice twenty been engagèd,
And of forty been three times fifteen
In durance soundly cagèd
On the lordly lofts of Bedlam,
With stubble soft and dainty,
Brave bracelets strong, sweet whip’s ding dong,
With wholesome hunger plenty.

With an host of furious fancies,
Whereof I am commander,
With a burning spear, and a horse of air,
To the wilderness I wander.
By a knight of ghosts and shadows
I summoned am to tournay,
Ten leagues beyond the wide world’s end.
Me thinks it is no journey. [2]

All four movements are endowed with titles formed from lines extracted from the long poem. The first movement is titled “…from the hag and hungry goblin…,” the second — “Come dame or maid, be not afraid,” the third — “…on the lordly lofts of Bedlam…,” and the fourth — “With an host of furious fancies.”

In the first movement of the work, the marimba plays its solo part accompanied solely by the string section of the orchestra, with only a minimal amount of percussion behind it, while the winds and the brass appear only at the end of the movement and are prominent

throughout most of the second movement. The full orchestra is not demonstrated in its entirety until the end of the second movement. From that moment on throughout the last two movements the full orchestra is used in the most diverse ways. The composer himself felt intimidated by the violent emotions present in the poem that he projected in his music, since it reminded him of certain tragic episodes in his own life, some of which involved members of his family. In the last verse of the long poem, when the mad chief protagonist goes wandering off into the countryside again in the wilderness, it provides only a semi-positive note at the end. The last movement is endowed with a joyful mood, but there are still elements of fright, loneliness and madness present in the writing.

In addition to the subject matter, the composer was also greatly appealed by the archaic quality of the language of the poetry, which at that time was somewhat different from contemporary English. He was greatly impressed by the incantatory style of many of the poetic lines in the literary work, such as: "From the hag and hungry goblin that into rags would rend ye all the spirits that stand by the naked man in the Book of Moons defend ye!" The line "In durance sadly caged on the lordly lofts of Bedlam" indicates the place in the poem where the main character is put into a mental institution. "With stubble soft and dainty, brave bracelets strong" is where he has been handcuffed. "Sweet whip's ding dong with wholesome hunger plenty" also demonstrates a very vivid picture. Another reason why the composer chose to use these texts as the basis to his score was in order to explain why there are certain exotic and highly expressive fragments in the music highlighting certain instruments in their respective solo passages. This was done in order to demonstrate that the purpose for these instrumental solos was to express the content of the poem and not to present the instrumental virtuosity for its own sake.

The composer chose the particular orchestration — first using the strings, then winds and brass and then the entire orchestra — particularly because at the time he had previously written a number of orchestra pieces, and in order to present a contrast to his previous works, he wished to separate the orchestra into its components, presenting merely certain sections of the orchestra in the first and second movements and then the full orchestra in the latter two movements. Ultimately, he realized that by presenting only the strings in the first movement and the winds and brass in the second movement he was plunging deeper into the musical material, so that he would have more ideas for all of the four movements in dealing with the entire ensemble.

The overall harmonic language of the work is that of extended diatonicism, which, notwithstanding a free use of tonality, by no means limited to traditional tertial harmonies and, at times, delving significantly into a chromatic or almost atonal harmonic world, undoubtedly, possesses tonal centricity, in the manner of the music of Hindemith and Bartok. The orchestration in the orchestra part and the solo marimba line are predominantly neoclassical, resembling the music of Stravinsky and, to a lesser degree, Aaron Copland, however, do possess a moderate share of characteristic features of sonoristic effects present in the works of some European avant-garde composers of the second half of the 20th century, most notably, Ligeti, Berio and Lutosławski. [5] The organic combination of predominantly traditional, neoclassical stylistic features with elements of avant-garde instrumental thinking bear resemblance with the late works of Lutosławski and Penderecki, who after having renounced their avant-garde styles in favor of neoromantic trends, preserved elements of their previous avant-garde approaches, blending them organically into more traditional instrumental writing. Most

importantly, despite the decisively neoclassical features in the work's instrumental writing and rhythms, suggesting its affinity to ballet music, it definitely possesses expressive emotional content and a philosophical message, which endows it with the traits of neo-romanticism, rather than being a purely neoclassical work.

The slow introduction in the *first movement*, titled "…from the hag and hungry goblin…" (marked with a metronome mark of quarter equals 104), is scored for the string group, endowed with plenty of divisi, the sole percussion instrument being the tubular bells. The composer meant it to express an evocation of the countryside. It begins with sparse chords, spelled out by the divisi string lines alternating with each other and the tubular bells. The top divisi line of the first violins plays out an expressive melody, first consisting of stepwise motion, and then of dramatic large leaps (mm. 15–20, then mm. 31–34).

The textural intensity and dramatic momentum gradually accumulates, and before long, the first movement proper begins on m. 44 (marked with a metronome mark of quarter equals 120), featuring dynamic, virtuosic motion on the marimba, playing fast sixteenth-notes, set against a passive accompaniment of the string instruments playing chords in harmonics. The form of the fast section of the first movement presents a set of variations. The harmonies in this section are less diatonic and more expressively grotesque. The string accompaniment also gradually intensifies, first bringing in simultaneous glissando motion (mm. 47–49), and then also presenting swift sixteenth-note passages, spelling out repeated chords and contrapuntal lines set against the marimba part. While the marimba part continues throughout most of the first movement with its speedy, virtuosic sixteenth-note motion, the density of the string orchestra part changes continuously, ranging from transparent chords played in harmonics to thicker sounding chords played arco, and then swift sixteenth-note melodic motion or motoric repetition of chords. At certain points in the middle of the movement, the string orchestra falls silent, and the marimba continues its virtuosic passages all by itself, or accompanied by the tubular bells. At short periods of time, the marimba changes its regular sixteenth-note motion to chords of three or four notes played in eighth-note durations. This change of textures of the marimba and especially the string orchestra is what builds the dramaturgy of the movement.

Towards the middle of the movement, the music becomes generally quieter in its dynamics, without abating in its motoric rhythmical dynamicity. At a discernible spot in the second half of the first movement, the string orchestra stops entirely, and the marimba plays a virtuosic cadenza, which also varies in its dynamicity, acquiring more static qualities towards its middle, before picking up in dynamicism again. In this cadenza, the marimba is accompanied only by the vibraphone. Here the composer was especially interested in presenting the cadenza form, in which he would extend the color of the solo instrument in a related manner, involving the accompaniment of another instrument that is texturally close to the soloist. That particular resulting sound presents itself as very strikingly effective.

After the cadenza, the string orchestra comes in, one instrument at a time, hazily marking an end of the cadenza, and gradually accumulates its texture and dynamics back to loud and fast music, making way for the second movement, to which it passes *attacca*, without any pause. Towards the end of the first movement, as the orchestral texture becomes fuller, the wind instruments gradually come in, adding an additional coloristic element to the orchestral sound.

The *second movement*, marked with the quotation from the poem "come dame or maid,

be not afraid," begins immediately after the first, with no break. The element of dance is predominant in this movement and is demonstrated in its traditional aspect. In this movement, the composer makes use of dance form, especially expressed in cadences and peculiar tonal structures. The homeless man is begging for money, so he can be seen performing dances and reassuring people that he does not wish to kill them, but that he merely wants food. In terms of its tempo, this movement presents an almost entirely even continuation of the first movement, in dynamics and texture, expect for being only slightly slower (bearing the metronome mark of quarter equals 104).

The movement begins with a prominence of woodwind instruments and trumpets spelling out colorful chords predominantly in eighth-note durations, the sixteenth-note passages being more limited in number. Later in the movement, the entire brass section is heard together with the woodwinds, the trombones standing out especially. The highly theatrical orchestral texture and overall mood in this movement bring in strong associations with Stravinsky's neoclassical works from the 1920s. Whereas some percussion instruments are distinctly heard, bringing in additional color, the string instruments play a very modest role in the movement, their involvement being reduced to a minimum.

After a while, the marimba comes in, playing its virtuosic passages, albeit, containing more eight-note durations than sixteenth notes. Unlike the first movement, the marimba does not predominate in the texture, but sounds on equal footing with the orchestra, at times being virtually drowned out by the latter. Only towards the middle of the movement the marimba demonstrates itself in a more conspicuous manner, protruding its virtuosic lines from the orchestra. Throughout the movement the density of the orchestra varies considerably, ranging from loud tuttis to sparser, more subdued sections in which the woodwind instruments predominate. Only towards the end of the movement does the marimba erupt in a very short, but dynamic cadenza, after a few measures of which the orchestra gradually comes in and accumulates its texture to a loud and bouncy close. Notwithstanding the seeming theatrical gaiety of the movement, its overall sound continues to evoke the morbid, eerie qualities, present in the first movement, aimed at depicting a wild, grotesque literary character.

The *third movement* is the slow movement of the cycle, bearing the metronome mark of quarter note equals 72 and the time signature of 3/4, and titled with the line of the poem "…on the lordly lofts of Bedlam…". It marks a distinct change in tempo, texture and emotional character of the work. Here, finally, the full orchestra is used, albeit, having an abundance of muted sounds and such peculiar effects as the players breathing through the instruments. This is about the only extended technique which is present in the work, and dramatically this is the most appropriate place for it. It creates a very dismal sound, portraying the main protagonist's loneliness. The composer created a variety of exotically sounding color painting in the orchestra to suggest the whipping, the loneliness, and the echoing quality of the prison and the cold the main protagonist has to endure during his homeless wanderings. There are more dissonant sonorities and atonal harmonies present in this movement than in the other three movements, however, the composer's intention was still to merge these effects with elements of more traditional music and a neo-classical sound world.

The beginning is marked by isolated eighth notes played in the low register of the marimba, soft, eerie chords played by three horns and extremely soft rolls on the timpani. Gradually the texture somewhat increases, with *sul ponticello* eighth-note triplet passages in the string instruments, short, fast runs on

woodwind instruments, soft, yet dramatic chords on the string instruments played on harmonics, and the mysteriously sounding chords in the brass instruments. The marimba plays eerily sounding repeated passages of two or three notes in the middle-low register, which recur regularly at certain times after ceasing to sound. Almost nowhere in the movement does it demonstrate its virtuosic soloistic passages that characterize its part in the other three movements, but virtually presents itself merely as one of the many textural units of the total sound palette of the movement.

Textural and timbral alterations of the varying instrumental colors play an important part in this movement, loosely reminding of Schoenberg's Klangfarbenmelodie technique or the sonoristic effects of European avant-garde composers of the second half of the 20th century. There is more of a presence of modernist textural instrumental effects in this movement than there are in the other three movements of the composition, yet they are organically combined with the neoclassical harmonies and orchestral textures predominating in the other movements, yet still being present in this movement, too.

Towards the middle of the movement, the dynamics and the textural orchestral intensity increase, with the different instrumental groups playing more extensively coherent lines in counterpoint with each other. There is a dramatic, albeit moderately soft passage solely for the entire brass section. Then the marimba part becomes more dynamic, playing eighth-note triplets. Then, there is a change of the metronome mark to quarter equals 80, and the overall dynamics and textures become louder and faster with quicker rhythmic durations becoming more prominent. There are some fast, shrill sounding passages in the upper woodwinds, spelling out swift and intensely chromatic harmonic and melodic progressions. These are joined by string, brass and percussion instruments, presenting rhythmically dynamic passages in short alternating fragmented motives, accumulating to loud repetitions of a single chord in sixteenth-note durations, alternating with tremolo passages on the marimba. This presents the climax of the movement, which then gradually dissipates. After that, the mysterious sound world of the beginning of the movement returns. Then woodwind instruments present fast and dynamic sounding passages, which are interrupted by the bass drum rumbles and tremolo sounds on the marimba. Close to the end of the movement there is a short cadenza for the marimba, which plays a juxtaposition of several contrasting textures, the only time in the movement that it really presents itself as a soloist. Then the movement closes with a softly sounding chord played by the marimba and the brass instruments.

The *fourth movement* returns to the swift motion of the first two movements and the virtuosic character of the marimba part. It has the metronome mark of quarter note equals 144 and bears the title "With a host of furious fancies." Here the composer expresses a celebration of freedom the main protagonist of the poem enjoys. The overall form is rather spontaneous and was essentially created during the process of composition of the work, the composer having avoided all formal pre-planning. The harmony ranges from tonal and tonal centered to dissonant and chromatic. Following the tradition of finales of 18th century symphonies and concertos, it has a meter indication of 12/8. Unlike the other movements, this movement starts with a solo for the marimba, delineating hybrid chromatic melodic motion, followed by arpeggio and chordal motion, which leads to the entrance of the full orchestra, playing intensely dynamic, rhythmically motoric passages, into which the marimba part subsequently intersperses itself. Throughout the movement there are different contrasting instrumental textures present, juxtaposing themselves with

each other. Although the marimba part has an abundant amount of swift virtuosic passages, wherein the soloist can demonstrate his or her technique, these passages, for the most part, are evenly balanced with the vibrant orchestral part, which in its autonomy presents attributes of a symphony. For most of the movement, the virtuosic marimba part asserts itself together with the almost self-contained orchestral part, presenting itself more conspicuously only in a short passage close to the end of the movement. The very end of the movement ends with a very clear, beautiful and decorated *C major* chord, which, however, is presented in first inversion. This demonstrates a small degree of emotional tension, an unresolved quality left at the very end of the work. According to the composer's description of the emotional content of the concerto's ending, "it is resolved, but it might tip over and fall down."

The fourth movement fulfills its function as a finale of a symphonic or concerto work, continuing the momentum of the first two movements, yet adding a greater amount of dance qualities to it by its faster tempo and differing time signature, contrasting the 4/4 of the first two movements and the 3/4 of the third movement. It also continues the tendency of the first two movements of combining a neoclassical instrumental textural sound world with more chromatic harmonies and melodic lines than those typically associated with a neoclassical style and a mysterious, grotesque imagery, frequently associated with expressionism.

The Heroic Triad

The Heroic Triad is a large work for guitar, marimba, percussion and string orchestra[2]. It was composed in Santa Fe in 1999–2000 on a commission from the Santa Fe Orchestra and the concert organization supporting it. It is a one-movement work with programmatic content, being based on a scenario by Howard Kessler,[3] inspired by Paul Hogan's book *The Heroic Triad* dealing with the history of Santa Fe. [6] The composition contains several contrasting sections, aiming to depict and present an homage to the three peoples that inhabited the area of Santa Fe, where the composer has a summer residence. The three peoples are, respectively, the Indians, the Spanish and the British. Several centuries ago, these three peoples were constantly warring with each other, but, nonetheless, each of them has contributed to the area with its own respective culture. The work is written in one large movement which contains several sections — the storm scene, the Navajo scene, the Spanish scene and in the introduction to the descendants of the British, the battle between the three peoples in the second part, and then the resolution.

The Heroic Triad work has elements of being a concerto for guitar and orchestra, although the guitar comes in only during the second and third movements, presenting itself as the featured solo instrument. This way, it essentially changes its genre in the middle of the piece. The composition has not found its place in the concert hall program as a guitar concerto, because during the first third of the work, during the Native American section, the guitarist is absent. This provides an extremely effective dramatic device, but does not allow it to be classed as a conventional concerto. Similar to the Marimba Concerto *Loving*

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[2] Thomas A. *The Heroic Triad* for guitar, marimba, percussion and string orchestra. The score of this composition is unpublished and preserved in the composer's personal archive at the American Composers' Alliance.

[3] Kessler H. *The Heroic Triad*. Scenario for Andrew Thomas' composition *The Heroic Triad* for guitar, marimba, percussion and string orchestra. 1999–2000. Unpublished, pp. 3–4.

Mad Tom, *The Heroic Triad*, likewise, merges in itself features of a symphony, a concerto and a symphonic poem with programmatic content. It also combines together traits of a one-movement work with a composition consisting of several contrasting movements (albeit, performed continuously, without breaks in between).

The scenario of the work contains four parts, which are correspondingly depicted in the musical composition, which, nonetheless, also possesses its own titles, different from those of the scenario. Part 1 is titled "From this Earth," and the text of the scenario recounts Native American mythology about the birth of humanity by the Spirits. According to the text of the scenario, "the knife sharp peaks of the Rockies tore holes in the clouds, spilling out the fluid that incubated life in the upper world," as the result of which "the Spirits created one great related Family." Part 2 is called "To this Realm," and this part of the scenario recounts the arrival of the Spanish, "The Soldiers of the Spanish King," who also served a "King of Kings," who built cities and created new laws, but could not find common ground with the Native Americans and, as a result, "trapped the beating hearts of their Spirits and drowned them in the rattle of armor and the clash of swords." The text describes how the Spaniards tried to construct a new home on this territory and replicate the conditions of their native Spain. Part 3 is called "On this Territory," and it describes the descendants of the British coming to the West from the area of the Appalachian Mountains in order to find food and wealth, and how they clashed with the Indians and the Spaniards and, nevertheless, asserted themselves on this land and built their own culture there. The Epilogue speaks of "a triad of peoples," each of which has made its own contribution to the land and its culture.

The first section of the musical work is called "From this Earth" and its first subsection is called "The High Rockies." After the first measure with the piercing chords in the string orchestra, the loud strike of the slap stick, and the soft rumble on the cymbal, it features fast sixteenth-note passages in all of the instrumental lines of the string orchestra *divisi* with chromatic, dissonant harmonies, frequently, but not always, denoting the octatonic scale. At times these passages are interspersed with virtuosic passages of the marimba part, at other times, they are complemented by it playing simultaneously. This section of the composition describes the Rocky Mountains in a storm and the genesis of the Spirits. Gradually, the sixteenth-note lines become replaced by more diversely rhythmed dynamic passages, featuring distinct harmonic and melodic lines, as spelled out by the string instruments, punctuated with isolated strikes by percussion instruments, with a few greatly dramatic glissando sweeps adding to the momentum. The dynamism gradually dissipates, and the parts of the string instruments are gradually reduced to holding a lengthy static chord. This section ends abruptly on m. 89 with all the string instruments playing a G-D chord *col legno*.

According to the composer, he wrote the opening of this work, the storm scene, as a demonstration for his students, when he was giving master-classes in composition. He set the metronome to go at the desired tempo, turned on the recording machine and sang the opening. After having made several recordings of his singing, he found the one that felt right. After having achieved this with the help of the metronome clicking, he came up with the precise idea, how many beats and measures long it was. He made a graph diagram of a line rising and falling over that period of measures, and then he wrote on the ascending and the descending line, describing what he was doing. As the result of this, when he started composing, he already had a shape and a form. As the result, the rather confusing opening of the composition was essentially controlled

by graph paper. This was the first time the composer had engaged in compositional pre-planning in his music. This pre-compositional planning was crucial for bringing organization to the structure of the work, especially to its extremely chaotically sounding and impulsive introductory section.

At this spot, a new section of the work, describing the American Indians begins, titled "The Creation of a People." There is an immense contrast in the orchestral writing in this section from the previous one, marked by the single chord on the strings played with *col legno* bows. The Native Americans are represented chiefly by the Navajos. This section is markedly more tonal and melodic than the previous introductory part and contains melodies that are stylizations of Native American music. In order to create the appropriate melodies, the composer listened to a lot of Hopi and Navajo chants and wrote them down as dictations. After this, he composed his own singing line based on what he had studied while listening to these chants on CDs. The melodic writing in this composition does not have any quotations of American Indian music, but merely evocations of it.

On m. 89 the marimba begins an incanting solo melody in *G minor* with a limited amount of pitches. The melody continues on with the string instruments being silent and only repeating the selfsame chord *col legno* at intervals of two or three measures from each other. It is developed as a set of variations throughout this entire section. On the upbeat of m. 37 one of the *divisi* cello lines comes in, playing the same tonal melody, after which the other instruments gradually join in, their lines being sparse at first, and then gradually accumulating in their textural density. Throughout this section, the solo marimba part and the cello part play the chief melodic lines in counterpoint with each other. Towards the end of this section, the entire cello section plays a distinctive, colorful melody in minor, suggesting Native American music. The drum section becomes especially intensive at the end of this section.

On m. 132, the next section of the composition begins, titled "The Hand of the Rock," still describing the Navajo Indians, but with a slight change of texture. This section is more of an evocation of the religious aspects of the Native Americans, who worshipped the Great Spirit. Five tom-toms reinstate the initial melody of the marimba from the previous section, albeit, in a non-pitch way, which is followed by a soft, highly expressive, harmonically chromatic chord entering in the string orchestra and sustained by it, during which first the cello, then the viola, then the second violin play short virtuosic lines in stepwise motion in fast sixteenth and thirty-second note durations. The music clearly demonstrates the composer's heartfelt emotional involvement in and appreciation of the American Indian culture and music. The string orchestra part gradually accumulates its texture, becoming more dissonant harmonically and containing mysterious eerie sounds, including glissandi and tremolos on eighth notes played softly *sul ponticello*.

The following section is titled "The Arrival of the Spanish People" or "The Spirit Quest." One prominent feature of the work is the section with the prominence of the solo guitar, which is heard here, later in this section, for the first time. This section indicates the metronome mark of a quarter note equaling 84, and begins with a moderately dynamic melody in *C minor* played by the entire cello section, which is accompanied by a mysterious sounding accompaniment of the string instruments playing sixteenth notes and beats of a snare drum. Gradually, more melodic lines appear in the violin and viola parts, providing counterpoint for the melody in the cello. After the string orchestra accumulates to a climax, the guitar enters, describing the arrival of the Spanish. It presents introductory material and features kind of an accompanied cadenza. It has some allusions to Renaissance

music. The guitar part begins with repeated pitches on regular sixteenth notes, from which gradually scalar motion appears. The solo guitar passage is supplemented with isolated chords and groups of four or eight sixteenth notes repeating chords, later playing descending scalar passages in unison and creating an assortment of other textures, against which the guitar part maintains its superior position. The guitar part gradually slows down in its rhythm, changing to eighth-note triplets, then shedding its regular rhythms for a more freely and supply rhythmed section. this marks the end of Part 1 of the composition.

On m. 220 the following section begins, denoting the beginning of Part 2, and depicting the Spanish, titled "Soldiers of the Spanish King." Here there is a very expressive melody on the guitar, resembling Spanish Renaissance guitar music, accompanied with separate notes played pizzicato by the cellos and the double basses, occasionally joined by short virtuosic passages on the marimba and the string instruments. After a short passage with quartal harmonies in the guitar, the instrument continues playing tonal minor music, resembling Spanish Renaissance music — this is in fact a quotation from a Mass by Spanish 16th century composer Tomas Luis de Vitoria. The quotation is presented with embellishments and an elaborate marimba accompaniment, which develops on the quoted theme. The first half of this Spanish section presents the quotation from the Mass by Vitoria. And then the music gradually becomes more "secular," as a guitar cadenza appears, which becomes more resembling of Spanish popular music. The Renaissance-style music becomes passed down to the string orchestra, with the guitar accompanying it with scalar motion.

The following section starts on m. 282 with the title of "The Drowning of the Spirits," and it describes the frequently conflicting relations between the Spanish and the Indians. The metronome mark indicates a quarter note equaling 88. There is a return to the themes of the Native Americans from the previous sections, then the guitar plays arpeggios, with the soft dissonant sounding chord coming in the strings. This is followed by the string orchestra, once again, playing tonal minor polyphonic themes resembling Spanish Renaissance music, after which the guitar plays virtuosic solo scalar and arpeggiated passages in eighth and sixteenth notes, later interspersed with sporadic soft, chromatically dissonant passages in various parts of the string orchestra. Then there is more Spanish renaissance music in the string orchestra and the marimba, then joined by the guitar.

Then, in the next section, bearing the title "The Dominion of the House," the guitar plays the Spanish music solo in a rather plaintive and expressive manner. Twice the marimba comes in, softly playing a chord based on perfect fourths tremolo, over which the guitar continues its expressive Spanish Renaissance music, at times faltering with retardando effects, at times holding the rhythm. This section finishes with the guitar slowing down into a cadence, accompanied by a marimba chord played tremolo.

The following section, titled: "Part 3, the Engine of the Machine," describes the arrival of the descendants of the British from the Eastern part of the present-day United States. It begins with fast, virtuosic passages played by the solo guitar. Starting from m. 383 the first violin section comes in with swiftly played melodic sounds resembling American country music. Then the music in the guitar part slows down a bit and repeats some of the more lyrical-sounding melodic passages from the previous section, this time accompanied by slaps on the percussion instruments and soft, isolated chords played *arco* by the entire string section. These are interrupted by a robust entry by the string section on m. 401, first playing detached chords in quarter notes, interspersed with sixteenth-note runs on the open strings

played by the first violin section, and then, after two measures of sixteenth-note chords played by the lower strings (mm. 408–409), by a livelier, fast section played by the entire string section in a motoric rhythm with eights and sixteenth notes, repeating the country music melodies sounding in the first violin section at the beginning of Part 3, with steady sixteenth-note percussion beats in the accompaniment. Then on m. 429 the full string orchestra is replaced by soloists from each of the main instrumental sections of the string group playing the same melodic material as the full string section did before.

On m. 442 the guitar plays a repeated accompaniment motive based on perfect fifths and octaves, while the string section plays slightly less rhythmically active music, diversified in the separate lines of the instruments. The violins play a more expansive melody in *A minor* consisting predominantly of quarter notes, remotely resembling the Spanish Renaissance music, with the second violins at times bringing in the country music motive in a fragmented form (mm. 450–452). A short while afterwards, starting from m. 464, the marimba joins this assemblage with its own figuration. On m. 493 the key signature of four sharps, representing the key of *E major*, comes in, and the texture becomes sparser, featuring only the guitar and the solo violin playing the country music theme, albeit, in *E minor*, instead of *E major*, then presenting it in sequences and in variations in the different related keys along the circle of fifths. Starting from the upbeat to m. 509, similar thematic material is presented by the entire first violin section tutti, to which the marimba part is added. Subsequently, throughout the rest of this section there are alternations between basically two themes recurring sequentially and as variations, as well as alternations between the "tutti" sections, featuring the entire string orchestra, and the "solo" sections, wherein the solo violin plays the main theme of this section, which ends with a final statement of the main theme in a homophonic setting of the entire string orchestra, with the guitar and the marimba playing accompanimental parts.

On m. 641 the introductory chromatic music with the intricate contrapuntal textures and novel sound effects, featuring the depiction of the initial storm, returns for a short while. This is followed by the final section of the work, titled "Epilogue: A Triad of Peoples," featuring tonal harmonies in *G minor* and a return to several of the most conspicuous themes of the previous sections. In this section, all of the three peoples — the Indians, the Spanish and the descendants of the British — are depicted as merging into one nation. The Indians are depicted by the recurring melody in the marimba part, greatly varied, the descendants of the British are depicted by the drawn-out melody in the first violin part, whereas the Spanish are depicted by the contrapuntal texture in the string orchestra, as well as in the expressive melody appearing subsequently in the short solo section in m. 573. After that, the different melodic themes depicting the three peoples appear juxtaposed to each other in the epilogue, which ends with expressive chords in the string orchestra featuring non-tertial dissonances within diatonicism, and after one last statement of the theme describing the British played by the solo violin on m. 621, the composition closes with a final *G major* chord in the string orchestra, heightened by expressive arpeggios in the guitar and chords on the marimba, starting on m. 624 and lasting for ten measures.

Conclusion

This analysis provides an insight to the immense substance and depth present in the two compositions for orchestra by Andrew Thomas introduced and described in this article, demonstrating him as a composer of exceptional merit, whose musical

compositions, especially those for orchestra, deserve great attention. Some of the most distinguished features of these two works are the harmonious blend of different styles, genres and techniques contained in them, altogether forming a highly original personal style. Both compositions combine a self-sufficient symphonic musical approach with emotional expression and figurative depiction of the programmatic content, essentially describing literary works (a poem depicting a lonely, crazy tramp and a scenario describing historical events that have taken place in Santa Fe). The predominantly traditional style, featuring mostly harmonies based on tonal centricity, neo-classical musical textures, accessible motoric rhythms and distinct melodicism, is complemented by additions of dissonant, chromatic, at times atonal harmonies, extremely colorful, intricate avant-garde instrumental textures and complex rhythms. The genre of both compositions is a complex combination of symphonies, concertos (for one or several solo instruments), and symphonic poems depicting programmatic narrations. Nonetheless, despite the diversity of styles, genres and techniques present in both works, there is a strong sense of artistic unity and integrality present in both works, and this is what provides a great artistic achievement. Both works are worthy of being performed by symphony orchestras, studied and analyzed by composers, musicologists and conductors and broadly disseminated to the general public to listen to and appreciate.

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Received: 29.10.2024
Revised: 26.11.2024
Accepted: 28.11.2024