Alec Wilder and the Development of the Trio for Horn, Tuba and Piano

by

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ABSTRACT

This project discusses the horn, tuba, piano sub-genre of brass chamber music. Alec Wilder wrote the first piece for this instrumentation in 1963 for his friends John Barrows and Harvey Phillips. Wilder's compositional style was directly affected by life events and relationships. Through letters, biographies, recordings and autobiographies the importance of his friendship with Barrows and Phillips are displayed to show the links between the two men and the composer's compositional output. A deeper look into the life of Alec Wilder and a thematic analysis of his Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano (1963), and Suite No.2 for Horn, Tuba and Piano (1971) shed light on the beginnings of the genre and provide a deeper understanding of the works. Since Wilder's two trios there have been at least twenty works written for this instrumentation. A brief overview of works written for the trio since 1971 provide a broad sense of the quantity and benefits of the trio in the hopes of inspiring new performances and compositions. This paper will combine the seemingly random compositions for the instrumentation into a collected repertoire. With an increase in exposure, the trio for horn, tuba and piano has the potential to become a standard brass chamber group that will benefit students, performers, and audiences alike.
To my family, teachers, and friends, your guidance and support have made this all possible.
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INTRODUCTION

Trios for horn, tuba and piano account for a growing subsection of brass chamber music. The first piece for this instrumentation was written by Alec Wilder (1907-1980) in 1963 as a commission for tubist Harvey Phillips (1929-2010) and hornist John Barrows (1913-1974). Since then, close to twenty original works have been written for this trio, a combination that has become popular literature for students and professionals alike. Although there are many places to look for information on Wilder and his compositional style, there is no scholarly research available whose main purpose is to discuss his two trios for horn, tuba and piano both developmentally and analytically. Justin Worley is the only previous author to provide information on all known trios for horn, tuba and piano.¹ The purpose of this paper is to provide the reader with an overview of the genre, its development, and progress since Wilder’s first composition for the trio in 1963.

The main method of inquiry will be to examine the life of Alec Wilder and his inspiration for writing his popular Suite No. 1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano in 1963 and the less popular Suite No. 2 for Horn, Tuba and Piano in 1971 through letters, biographies, autobiographies, recordings, manuscripts, scores, and scholarly projects. A look into Alec Wilder’s relationships with John Barrows and Harvey Phillips will show the development of the genre while a thematic analysis of his first two works demonstrate the capabilities of the instruments and the elements needed for a successful performance.

¹ Justin Kendall Worley, “An Annotated Bibliography of Music for Horn, Tuba and Piano,” (DMA diss., University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2014), 14-15, 34-35; Worley’s DMA dissertation was published to ProQuest on February 10, 2015 after original completion of this project; Phone call to ProQuest, March 23, 2015.
One goal of this project is to create a starting place for musicians interested in the genre to learn more about its origin and development. A discussion of Wilder’s life, friendships, and compositional style go hand-in-hand with the beginnings of the genre and his inspiration for the works. A thematic analysis of Wilder’s two works for the genre provides performers with a deeper understanding of the works in the hopes of stimulating more successful, genuine performances. A brief overview of all works written since 1963 provides insight into the development of the genre as well as what material is available. Another goal is to educate performers and composers about the trio in the hopes of increasing the genre’s popularity among performers and composers. With increased interest in the genre, the true potential of the trio can be fulfilled.
CHAPTER 1

ALEC WILDER: BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT AS A COMPOSER

Alec Wilder is a well-known American composer whose lifestyle and music are greatly intertwined. In a dissertation on Wilder’s music for horn, David Charles Calhoon accurately describes this idea:

A study of the biographical and philosophical underpinnings of musical style is especially appropriate in the case of Alec Wilder’s music for two reasons. First, his music is intensely personal. As much as any other composer, Wilder sought to reach out to other people and communicate with them at an intimate level through his music. The comment has often been made that familiarity with Wilder’s music will give one insight into his personality. The reverse is also true: familiarity with his life story contributes greatly to a full appreciation of his intensely personal expression.²

It is a challenge to discuss the non-musical aspects of Wilder’s life without mentioning the effects of music on his decisions, relationships and goals. In the following chapters, the ties between his compositional development align with his growth as a person.

Early Years

Alexander Lafayette Chew Wilder was born on February 16, 1907 into a family of wealth. He was the youngest of three children. Wilder’s father, George, died when Alec was two years old. He spent his early years living in Rochester, New York until his

family moved downstate to Garden City, Long Island.³ Alec was expected to take on the banking tradition, prevalent on both his mother and father’s sides of the family. He later commented, “I wanted no part of it … for my family was virtually littered with bankers, nor was I inclined to be friendly with the sons and daughters of the conventional families representative of my family’s world.”⁴

Throughout his childhood Wilder rarely felt comfortable and happy. He had no sense of welcome at home or at school. His mother, Lillian Chew Wilder, was an alcoholic and rarely showed her children affection. At school Wilder was constantly bullied from his early childhood into his high school years.⁵ Wilder went to at least three different schools to try and find an appropriate fit. He ended up studying at the Collegiate School in Manhattan and graduated in 1924 as “Most Likely to Succeed” although he had no set career goals at this point.⁶

Wilder decided to go into music between 1925 and 1926 after learning how to play the banjo and piano, and read music notation. He gathered a collection of popular sheet music and decided to try to compose his own. In the summer after graduation, 1924, he traveled with his Aunt Clara to Italy. He later states that it was on this trip that he officially decided to become a composer. He took his newfound, growing interest and

returned to his birthplace to study at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.\(^7\)

*The Eastman School of Music*

Wilder arrived at Eastman in 1926 but was never officially enrolled as a student. Due to his financial stability he was able to study privately. Throughout his time at Eastman he studied with Herbert Inch and Edward Royce, and learned orchestration from reading Cecil Forsyth’s manual.\(^8\) Through his studies Wilder developed an appreciation and admiration for the music of Bach. According to Philip Lambert, “Counterpoint would be the hallmark of Wilder’s compositions throughout his life.”\(^9\) As a student Wilder writes, “As far as counterpoint is concerned, little as I know about it, I’m convinced that it is the bones of music.”\(^10\) Wilder regarded Bach as a genius and admired his skill in producing successful contrapuntal works. During his years at Eastman, Wilder’s compositions were featured in concerts at the school including the American Composers Concerts created by the director of Eastman, Howard Hanson.\(^11\) It was also during the Eastman years that he met some of his lifelong friends including John Barrows.

\(^7\) Lambert, *Alec Wilder*, 3.
\(^8\) Ibid., 4-5.
\(^10\) Ibid., 86.
Wilder developed a love for riding trains. He liked the ability to leave whenever he pleased and take a train to someplace new. He writes:

Music was the constant factor, the dominating compulsion, but never to the exclusion of my love for railroads, of reading or of spending time in strange communities. I say “strange” because, in spite of my love for a few people, I still preferred to spend most of my time alone, and I was happier in towns where I knew nobody, had no fear of the phone ringing, no threat of appointments or dinner dates … So I went to Abington, Virginia, Charleston, New Orleans, Chicago, St. Petersburg, and countless villages whose names I’ve forgotten. But they had one trait in common: they all must be reachable by railroad. I disliked entering a town or city by automobile. Railroads to this day make a romantic mystery of travel.  

As Wilder traveled he continued to write music using what he learned at Eastman. In his art songs he would often use short poems (of numerous styles) for text, and looked to Debussy, Satie, and folk music for inspiration and guidance. It was in these early art songs that Wilder began breaking away from traditional forms and started incorporating popular influences. This would be a common trend in Wilder’s music. Wilder’s main goal was to convey the emotion of the lyrics in his writing. Lambert states: “What seems to have captured Wilder’s interest most intensely is the challenge of creating a novel, expressive progression of harmonies. This would become a familiar motivation in music of his later work.”

Wilder began writing film scores in the 1930s when he met James Sibley Watson Jr. Watson acted as a mentor to Wilder beginning during his studies at Eastman. The two

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13 Ibid., 8.
14 Ibid.
worked on cinematic projects and background movie scores. Watson introduced Wilder to new aspects of composition and became a lifelong friend. In an unsent letter to Watson written when Wilder was sick with cancer he writes about how important Watson was to him throughout his life, and how he has always wished to tell him everything. He writes:

I can die much easier since seeing you in that aisle seat. Much as I loved John Barrows, who kept me musically alive for thirty-odd years, I was more joyous knowing that you had made such a gesture, not to the opera, not to music, not to my having a performance, but simply to me.

While dabbling in the art of cinematic music Wilder continued to compose songs, particularly enjoying the uniformity of the form. Having the form already set by the text allowed him to focus on other aspects of his works such as harmony. Also in the 1930s, Wilder began composing and arranging for New York studios where he rewrote classical music in a jazz style. In an unsent letter to Barrows he writes:

I’ve been writing short pieces with elements of jazz in them. Curiously enough, I made the move because of arranging for recording singers. Arranging, after all, is a euphemism, for it includes composition as well as orchestrations.

Composing popular songs brought Wilder some needed currency as well as experience he would apply to later music.

Wilder moved back downstate to New York City in 1933. He had finally run out of his father’s inheritance money, and felt that he had learned all he could from Eastman and Rochester. He preferred to live in the Algonquin Hotel where he and his family stayed as a child. He considered the hotel his home; it was here where he felt most

17 Ibid., 88.
comfortable. He appreciated that the staff knew him and his tendencies to leave without a minute’s notice.\textsuperscript{20}

\textit{The Swing Era}

The Swing Era began in the mid to late 1930s. Wilder was often seen attending jazz clubs at night. It was here where he grew to appreciate a performer’s ability to move back and forth between classical and jazz styles.\textsuperscript{21} In the late 1930s Wilder got some publicity through his compositions for the “Wilder Octet.” In works for the group Wilder began heavily combining different styles of music including jazz, classical and pop.\textsuperscript{22} He comically called the music an “attempted union of legitimate and jazz ideas.”\textsuperscript{23} The unique chamber group consisted of bassoon, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, flute, harpsichord, bass, and drums.

Mitch Miller played an important role in having the first octets recorded in 1939.\textsuperscript{24} A great friendship with Frank Sinatra came about in this era. Sinatra was impressed with Wilder and his compositions, and played an important role popularizing his music by bringing his talent to the public’s ears. Wilder wrote Sinatra a four-piece work titled \textit{Airs} that featured woodwind soloists and string orchestra. Sinatra enjoyed the piece so much that he conducted the work on a recording with the CBS orchestra in 1945. “It goes without saying that Sinatra thus provided a watershed in Wilder’s career, helping

\textsuperscript{20} Lambert, \textit{Alec Wilder}, 11.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 17-21.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 19.
\textsuperscript{23} Wilder and Demsey, \textit{Letters I Never Mailed}, 115.
him to broaden his musical horizons and the two men were to share a lifelong mutual respect and admiration.”

Late 1940s-1950s, and Clark Galehouse

In the late 1940s Wilder began to shift away from popular music and towards composing for chamber groups, opera, and film. Wilder continued to develop his compositional skills in a variety of musical genres. From each, he would take away elements that he liked and apply them to new works. Wilder reflects on his impressions of his 1940s accomplishments in an unsent letter to Watson.

I have written children’s music to order; I have adapted mawkish standard arias and themes and have put calculatingly vulgar lyrics to them; I have written eight complete show scores; I have written over 200 attemptedly popular songs; I have sucked and rubbed around unscrupulous, vicious, corrupt men and women in their effort to crack the wall; I have cut my hair, shined my shoes, pressed my suits and cleaned my nails, I have learned small talk, Hollywood slang; I have buried ideals, held back thought, forgotten poetry; I have accepted loneliness’s … kept myself from shaking to pieces at radio and record rehearsals of my writings and orchestrations—and I have failed.

He wasn’t happy with the quality of his compositional output and quality of life.

The 1950s was another decade of experimentation in Wilder’s music. It was during this time that Barrows turned Wilder towards concert music. Barrows introduced Wilder to many great musicians including Gunther Schuller, Harvey Phillips, and Samuel Baron. The skills of these performers influenced Wilder to write for them. In the mid 1950s he stayed in Stony Point, NY for long periods of time. On Sundays he met with

25 Demsey and Prather with Bell, Alec Wilder, 13.
26 Stone, Alec Wilder in Spite of Himself, 87.
27 Ibid., 110.
many musician friends from the area to play music. The expected attendance each week would affect the new music Wilder wrote. This weekly meeting greatly enhanced his compositional output and showed off his creativity and skill.28

Wilder began writing for the New York Woodwind Quintet (NYWQ) when Barrows joined the group in 1952. Wilder enjoyed the instrumentation and felt comfortable writing for woodwinds thanks to his prior experimentation in jazz.29 Spending time with the group and sitting in on rehearsals lead to his first composition for woodwind quintet published in 1954.30 The piece has a jazzy feel, also seen in Wilder’s *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano* written almost ten years later. Through the rehearsing and touring experiences with the quintet Wilder was able to learn more about chamber music and timbral qualities of each instrument and their players. Throughout this exploration of chamber music certain elements become standard. According to Philip Lambert:

> A few distinctive features can be expected to appear in essentially all of these works: long, flowing melodies with irregular phrasing; extensive repetition and development of a handful of simple musical ideas, within or among movements (or both); a strong presence of counterpoint, either free or in the form of a fugato or canon; moments of whimsy arising form playful rhythms or quirky juxtapositions or denials of expectations; and a strong sense of warmth and sincerity, a bare rawness of emotion and sentiment, as if transporting the close personal feelings between composer and performers out through the air to the audience.31

The listed characteristics remain with his growing compositional style in chamber music.

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Through Barrows and the NYWQ, Wilder was introduced to record producer Clark Galehouse. Galehouse and Golden Crest Records would play an important role in recording Wilder’s music and inspiring the beginnings of the trio for horn, tuba and piano. From the first time Galehouse heard Wilder’s music he became an instant fan. In an unsent letter from Wilder to Galehouse he writes:

Clearly you have been everything the word “friend” implies. It’s wonderful to have believing music friends like John Barrows, Harvey Phillips … and other beautiful players, but there’s something extra special knowing someone is willing and eager to take the time and go through all the technical trouble to produce recordings.32

Galehouse thought so highly of the composer's works that he wanted to bring as much of it to the public’s attention as possible. He recorded over fifty works for Wilder including the two trios for Horn, Tuba and Piano, and other works written for Barrows and Phillips. “Galehouse recorded Wilder’s chamber music for years at what had to be no profit at all.”33

The 1950s was a time for Wilder to compose some of his first works for solo instruments and piano. Due to the important influence of Barrows, Wilder wrote for him two horn sonatas in 1954 and 1957 and his Suite for Horn and Piano in 1956.34 All three works show off Wilder’s eclectic compositional style. After the success of his first horn sonata Wilder wrote to Barrows and thanked him for his skill as a performer. He writes:

You’ve turned the key in a cell door and God knows what the results will be. Will the prisoner walk out calmly and amble out of the prison gates or will he come out dancing and yelling and beating the guards over the heads with dominant thirteen chords? – Or will he ask for some

32 Wilder and Demsey, Letters I Never Mailed, 238-239.
33 Stone, Alec Wilder in Spite of Himself, 127.
34 Lambert, Alec Wilder, 70.
manuscript paper, a pencil and a spinet and go back in his cell and get to work? – Thank you, thank you, thank you.\(^{35}\)

Wilder also wrote his first composition for tuba and piano for Phillips in 1959 along with a group of brass quintets for the New York Brass Quintet of which Phillips was a member.\(^{36}\) The two men became good friends, and would remain that way throughout Wilder’s life.

_The 1960s_

In the closing two decades of Wilder’s life he composed a great deal of concert music including many solo, chamber, and large ensemble works. Wilder also composed for university students once Barrows joined the faculty at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1961. Wilder would go out and visit, often writing music for special occasions at the school. He wrote many works for wind ensemble in particular.\(^{37}\) Wilder would later serve on the faculty as the composer in residence during the winter of 1968.

From 1960-1980 he wrote over 30 works for solo horn, solo tuba, horn and piano, tuba and piano, and concertos for the two instruments (see Appendix A).\(^{38}\) It was during this time that he also composed his first two suites for horn, tuba and piano, which will be discussed in detail in the following chapters. The first suite was written the same year as his _Sonata No.5 for Tuba and Piano_, and his _Air for Horn and Small Wind Ensemble_. As seen in Appendix A, he wrote his second suite the same year as he wrote the

\(^{36}\) Lambert, _Alec Wilder_, 72.
\(^{37}\) Ibid., 74.
\(^{38}\) Wilder wrote a large number of chamber works involving both the horn and tuba. Of these, the only chamber works listed in Appendix A are solos, duets for horn and tuba, and trios for horn, tuba and piano.
Convalescence Suite for solo tuba. In terms of the compositional style of Wilder’s sonatas and suites, he tended to stick with more traditional forms in sonatas than in his suites. “Works for more unusual combinations, often with the title of “suite,” are less predictably structured and are likely to mix stylistic elements more liberally.”

Of all genres of music, and instrument varieties Wilder wrote for there is a noticeable gap in his string writing. Stone writes: “Serious composers wrote for strings; Wilder wrote for winds and brass because the literature for strings was already in place, and because the instrumentalists he composed for badly needed his compositions.”

Wilder tended to write for his friends whose playing he enjoyed. Luckily he added a number of works to the horn and tuba repertoire for the instruments separately and together.

Wilder’s Final Decade

Throughout the end of his life Wilder continued to compose a variety of music including children songs, of which he would publish over 100 throughout his life. Wilder became seriously ill in the 1970s with lung cancer. Throughout his final years, “Wilder kept composing because it was the only thing he knew how to do.”

His greatest achievement in the 1970s was his recognition in American Popular Song: The Great Innovators, 1900-1950 where his music was recognized nationally. On December 24,
1980 he died after a difficult fight with cancer. In his closing remarks in *Alec Wilder*, Lambert writes of his compositional style and place in the group of American composers:

In histories of American music in the twentieth century, Alec Wilder has stood just where he intended to be: in the gaps. While his claims of embracing obscurity never seem completely genuine, he certainly took pleasure in testing the limits of traditional categories and prejudices, writing music that makes us question how and why conventional margins had been defined.  

Despite his shy, self-conscious personality, Wilder had an incredible ability to go beyond what was considered “the standard” in each genre to produce an eclectic style that continues to influence composers, and please performers today.

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45 Ibid., 111.
CHAPTER 2
FRIENDSHIP WITH JOHN BARROWS AND HARVEY PHILLIPS

The Importance of Friendship

Growing up under constant bullying from children his age and coming home to an uncompassionate household greatly affected Wilder’s mentality and general state of being. He was often seen as a self-conscious, shy man who would avoid confrontation and keep to himself. Friends provided Wilder with the backbone of support he always longed for as a child. Wilder wrote music for his friends in return for friendship and guidance. His music was seen as a special, personalized gift for whomever he was writing. There was a deeper sense of connection in his music when he was writing for a specific performer over writing for money. Due to this, his instrumental music in particular was held very close to his heart. According to Stone, “For the good musicians, nothing was held back.”

Barrows is known as saying that the price for a work by Wilder was merely the cost of a postage stamp.

To Wilder, it was quite simple. All those whose playing he admired and whom he liked and trusted as people he wished to write music for. Those whose playing he admired but didn’t cotton to or trust, he had no desire to write for. He greatly enjoyed writing for his friends because he felt that their performances added another dimension to his work. It was also due to his friends that Wilder met many influential people in New York. Of all the friends Wilder made throughout his life, John Barrows and Harvey Phillips were amongst his best.

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47 Ibid.
John Barrows (1913-1974)

John Barrows was born on February 12, 1913 in Glendale California. His family moved to Montana where he spent the beginnings of his childhood. His family moved again to San Diego when he was in High School. It was during his childhood that he began playing the euphonium and cello and later learned horn. After graduating from high school he moved to Rochester to begin studying horn at Eastman. This is where Barrows and Wilder first met, and became good friends. Barrows only remained at Eastman for two years, from 1930-1932. He then began studying theory and composition at San Diego State Teachers’ College from 1933-1934 before moving to Yale. During his study at Yale from 1934-1938 Barrows majored in composition with cello as his main instrument.

Barrows played horn in many larger orchestras including: the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (1938-1942), the Caselz Festival Orchestra in Puerto Rico (1958-1961), the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra (1947-1951), the New York City Ballet Orchestra (1952-1955), and the New York City Opera (1946-1949). After over a decade of performances in large groups, Barrows started to turn towards chamber music, especially woodwind quintets. He was a part of numerous chamber groups including The League of Composers Woodwind Quintet (1941), Fivewind Quintet (1946-1950), and the New York Woodwind Quintet (1952-1961). He was also an influential educator, teaching

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Barrows was married to pianist Tait Sanford Barrows who appeared on many of his recordings, including those with works by Wilder. As a hornist Barrows is remembered for his impressive technique, long lyrical phrases, and remarkable interpretations of musical works, especially those composed with him in mind.

Throughout his life as a composer, performer and educator, Barrows remained an important source of guidance and support for Wilder, and in return received numerous works from Wilder as a thank you. The two men had much in common and respected each other greatly both in and out of the music world.

Barrows and Wilder

Barrows had a unique way of influencing and shaping Wilder’s life and career. The two met during their year at Eastman together and remained friends as Barrows traveled across the United States and Puerto Rico. When he returned to New York, Barrows played a key role in introducing Wilder to musicians around the city, including Harvey Phillips and Gunther Schuller. “Barrows had further helped Wilder make personal connections within classical-music circles that would boost his productivity for years to come: the more friends he had, the more opportunities he would find to get his

52 See “Table 1” for solo horn, horn and accompaniment, and tuba-horn works dedicated to Barrows.
53 Schuller would later develop Margun Music, Inc. where Wilder’s music was published and made available to the public.
Meeting new performers led to a great deal of publicity and compositional output in instrumental genres.

Wilder began writing for Barrows when Barrows returned to New York. Wilder was happy about his old friend returning to live in the same area as him once again. Wilder writes that Barrows’ return to New York inspired him to write better music.\(^5^5\)

In an interview with James Maher, Wilder was asked why he enjoyed composing for John Barrows. He responded:

> There’s nobody like him in music. People who really know his work just feel that he is the high point of musical expression in their loves – and that’s the way I feel. He always has that personal, highly intense direction. Of course, any good musician does, but he’s a phenomenon, that’s all. And, it’s not just virtuosity. John does incredible things on the horn, of course, but he doesn’t make a point of it. His principle point, his only point, is to make music. And what he does is magic for me. His eye and ear tell him what’s involved when he looks at a piece. He balances phrases with his eye. He sees what’s desired. He sees where the piece is moving. He sees phrases that need to be nurtured and specially cared for. It’s partly intuition, and it’s partly his enormous control over the instrument itself. He takes desperate chances to get precisely the musical effect he wants.\(^5^6\)

In regard to playing Wilder’s music specifically Wilder says that because Barrows knows him, he is able to use what he knows about his personality and lifestyle as a guide to playing his music. “He has often said to me that the written notes are only a vague guide.”\(^5^7\) Wilder loves how Barrows adds a deeper layer of meaning to his works that he only hoped to accomplish during composition.

There was a great amount of trust between the two men, and Wilder thought very highly of Barrows’s opinion. Wilder would try hard to please him: “If you’ll stick with

\(^{5^4}\) Lambert, *Alec Wilder*, 72.  
\(^{5^5}\) Wilder and Demsey, *Letters I Never Mailed*, 145.  
\(^{5^6}\) Alec Wilder, Notes for *Sonata No.3 for French Horn and Piano*, recorded by John Barrows and Tait Sanford Barrows, Golden Crest Records, Recital Series RE 7034. LP.  
\(^{5^7}\) Ibid.
me, keep pushing me, curse me if necessary, then, darn it, I’ll do everything in my power to live up to your faith in me.” 58 When speaking of the relationship between the two men, flutist Sam Baron said:

There was no way an outsider could get into it, but I observed it often enough. The thing was that each had a tremendous loyalty and kind of idealism, and the idealism had to do with ‘we’re not going to get rich or famous, but we give up all to what we do.” 59

In the notes for the album John Barrows and his French Horn, Wilder writes again of his appreciation for Barrows as a friend and performer.

Mr. Barrows is also an extremely talented composer, orchestrator and musicologist. He is an inspiring teacher, a great cook and sports car enthusiast. He is a member of the New York Woodwind Quintet and the Casals Festival Orchestra. Without him, I promise you, none of the music in the album would have been written nor would dozens of other pieces. His faith in me is one of the few truly beautiful experiences of my life. 60

It is easy to see the influences the men have on each other, and their importance in each other’s lives. Wilder often writes of how he would have stopped composing if it weren’t for Barrows’s influence and continuous push to keep writing.

After the early death of John Barrows in 1974, Wilder went into a deep depression claiming that he was unable to write music and consistently questioning whether he would ever be able to compose again. Harvey Phillips commented on the struggle:

Barrows died In March 1974, John Barrows, a close friend and colleague of his since 1936, had passed away. When Alec lost a dear friend, he took

58 Stone, Alec Wilder in Spite of Himself, 110.
59 Ibid., 109-110
60 Alec Wilder, Notes for John Barrows and his French Horn, Golden Crest Records, Recital Series, RE 7002. LP.
it very hard. It just shut him down as a composer. Alec would go for months without writing a note because of his despondency over having lost a dear friend.61

It would take Wilder many months to get back to composing again. Although Barrows was gone from his life, his inspiring personality and ability to push Wilder as a person and composer remained a driving force in Wilder’s life.

Harvey Phillips (1929-2010)

Unlike Wilder, Harvey Phillips was born into a very musical family. Phillips was born on December 2, 1929. Although life during the Great Depression was hard, and Phillips frequently had to move from house to house, music was always heard at home. Phillips states: “Music heartened spirits and helped our family survive hardships, including the death of a family member and the loss of all property and savings in the Depression of the 1930s.”62 Phillips began playing the tuba at age 12 and played his first solo at a musical festival only three years later. Once he graduated from high school in 1947 he was awarded a scholarship to the University of Missouri.63 During the summer before his first semester at college, Phillips toured with the Kings Bros. Circus for nine weeks, getting a great deal of practice time on the tuba as well as some professional experiences.64

Phillips was only at the University of Missouri for a semester before he was invited to play with the Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey Circus. He continued to tour

61 Harvey Phillips, Mr. Tuba (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 311.
62 Ibid., 5.
63 Ibid., 15-16.
64 Ibid., 32.
with the group until 1950 when he received a scholarship to Juilliard to study with William Bell, principal tubist of the New York Philharmonic at the time. When he first got to New York City, Phillips began volunteering with many local bands and orchestras keeping two ideas in mind:

1. Always think big. It takes no more energy than thinking small… (A big idea can be refined and, if necessary, reduced in scope; a small idea cannot easily be enlarged).
2. You cannot be sure you’re doing all you can do unless you’re overcommitted.

In 1950 Phillips joined the New York Brass Ensemble, which led to his role as the first tubist in the New York Brass Quintet in 1954. In 1953 Phillips first came across the music of Alec Wilder by playing the bassoon lines of some of his popular octets.

After spending two years in the Army Field Band, Phillips moved back to New York and met record producer Clark Galehouse through John Barrows. The New York Brass Quintet recorded various pieces of repertoire at his studio multiple times including works by Wilder. Freelancing around New York City widened Phillips’s capabilities as a tubist. It was freelancing where he learned non-classical styles of music such as jazz and bebop. He writes, “I can’t think of anything more damaging to a freelance career than receiving a phone call and having to say, ‘No, I’m sorry. I can’t play that kind of music.’” In 1961 Phillips signed with the Metropolitan Opera, all the while teaching at

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65 Ibid., 61.
66 Ibid., 69.
67 Ibid., 112.
68 Ibid., 135.
69 Ibid., 136.
major collages. He began private teaching in 1956, teaching at the Manhattan Conservatory and Hartt School of Music in 1958, and Yale from 1960-1967.  

In 1967 he received a phone call from friend Gunther Schuller offering him a position as the Vice President for Financial Affairs at the New England Conservatory of Music. In 1971 he accepted the job of tuba professor at Indiana University. During his 23 years at Indiana University some of his greatest accomplishments included creating multiple outlets for tubas including the first “OctubaFest” and “TubaChristmas” for which Wilder wrote the music. He retired from Indiana University in 1994 and is considered a legend in the tuba world.

**Phillips and Wilder**

Wilder met Phillips in the 1950s and remained friends with him throughout his life. In the beginning years of the New York Brass Quintet, Wilder would often join the group on tours. Wilder became so close with Phillips that he was considered part of the family. Phillips was a great friend to Wilder and in return Wilder added an enormous amount of repertoire to the tuba world including multiple suites for tuba and piano, each dedicated to a member of Phillips’s family. “Wilder’s close friendship with Harvey Phillips gave rise to a number of new works for tuba, spearheading a revolution in the

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70 Ibid., 139.
71 Ibid., 233.
72 Ibid., 263.
73 Ibid., 288-311.
75 *Suite No. 5 for Tuba and Piano* is “Dedicated to a loyal friend” so it is not determined whether the piece was for a member of the Phillips family.
repertoire for that instrument.”

In the later years of Wilder’s life Philips played a crucial role in the publication of Wilder’s music. In an unsent letter Wilder writes of his gratitude:

I’m literally shocked when I look over this list. But frankly, it’s not an unpleasant shock. For even if most of the music is inadequate, at least the length of the list proves that I have done a hell of a lot of work! … That’s really what the shock is: all these years I’ve felt guilty for not having done enough. But the list denies that…

Similar to Barrows, Phillips was an important motivating force in keeping Wilder composing. After the death of Barrows, and Wilder’s deep depression, Phillips took it upon himself to get Wilder back on his feet. At this time Phillips was teaching at Indiana University and in the process of getting “TubaChristmas” started. Phillips asked Wilder to arrange some Christmas carols for his tuba ensemble. After some negativity and lack of self-confidence Wilder said he’d inform Phillips of his decision once he’d made his mind up. Phillips says: “The next day he called. He had been up all night arranging eighteen Christmas carols for tuba ensemble and had already taken them to a copyist. By the end of the week, they were on their way to me.”

With a helpful push of a dear friend Wilder was able to slowly begin composing again.

Through each achievement and struggle in his life Wilder turned to friends for support, praise, and encouragement. It was because of these friendships that Wilder was able to move forward with his life and his career. Barrows and Phillips were two guiding forces for Wilder. The two men influenced the composer to push himself beyond his self-

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76 Lambert, Alec Wilder, 83.
78 Phillips, Mr. Tuba, 311.
set limits and expand his music beyond standard boundaries. It was the impact of Barrows and Phillips as friends and musicians that influenced the writing of Wilder’s two trios for horn, tuba and piano.
CHAPTER 3
SUITE NO.1 FOR HORN, TUBA AND PIANO

Background

Wilder’s *Suite No.1 for Horn, tuba and Piano* was written in 1963 at the suggestion of Clark Galehouse. Galehouse had recorded both Barrows and Phillips separately and thought that the two would sound good together. According to Phillips, “In 1963, Clark Galehouse called Alec and told him that he thought Alec should write something for John Barrows and me, since he heard similarities in our phrasing.” As a result, a new genre of brass chamber music emerged. Wilder took Galehouse’s advice and wrote a five-movement work for Barrows and Phillips called *Suite No.1 for Horn, tuba and Piano*. At first, many thought the piece would be unsuccessful due to the unusual instrumentation. According to James Maher:

There is no need to explore the reasons why such a work seems, on the face of it, an absurdity — one certainly, that would expose the composer to a flight of handy slings and arrows. The origins of the suite tell much about Wilder. He is a composer who is deeply affected by great playing.\(^79\)

The new instrumentation surprised both Phillips and Barrows but their response to the piece was “it works,” and can be added to the growing subsection of successful chamber wind music.\(^80\) The piece was premiered by Barrows and Phillips in the summer of 1963 at the University of Wisconsin at Madison where Barrows would teach. “Wilder has written superlatively here for both of the brass “horns”, and, as in many of his other works, he

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\(^79\) James T. Maher, Notes for *Barrows and Phillips play Wilder, Poulenc, Scriabin and Persichetti*, Golden Crest, 1963, LP.

\(^80\) Ibid.
has provided the piano with continuously engaging music.”\textsuperscript{81} The trio became very successful, and is still played today.\textsuperscript{82}

\textit{Thematic Analysis for Performers}

Due to the eclectic influences on Wilder’s music, there are many challenges in a full theoretical analysis of his works.\textsuperscript{83} This paper will focus on thematic analysis in the hopes of aiding in performances of the work. Drawing attention to the role of each individual instrument in a given section will provide performers with a guide to which part should be brought out as well as the key to a balanced performance. All musical examples are displayed in concert pitch. Throughout the first suite there are many common motivic elements including the intervals of a perfect fourth, perfect fifth, tritone, and half step. These intervallic motives along with rhythmic motives help unite sections in each individual movement as well as all five movements as a whole suite.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} The \textit{Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano} is considered the most popular trio for the instrumentation based on the number of recordings the have been produced of the work compared to other trios for horn, tuba and piano. There are at least five recordings of the first suite including: John Barrows and Harvey Phillips, \textit{Barrows and Phillips play Wilder, Poulenc, Scriabin and Persichetti}. Golden Crest, 1963, LP; David Jolley, \textit{Alec Wilder: Music for Horn}, Arabesque Recordings, recorded August 22, 2008, CD; James Wilson and Jay Hunsberger, \textit{Oompah Suite}, Summit Records, 2011, CD; Gail Williams and Daniel Perantoni, \textit{Conversations}, Summit Records, 2012, CD; Charles Tibbetts, \textit{Four Suites}, Albany Records, 2014.
\textsuperscript{83} See Chapter 5 for details on specific challenges in performing a full theoretical analysis of the full work including harmonic analysis.
\textsuperscript{84} It should be noted that Wilder’s \textit{Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano} was edited by Gunther Schuller. It is unclear how much, if any material was altered from the original manuscript.
The first movement opens with the solo tuba playing the first theme seen in Example 1. The theme continues in the tuba from measure 1-6. From the start Wilder introduces many key motives that will continue throughout the piece. The perfect fifth, half step, and perfect fourth that open the theme are seen throughout all of his melodies. The tritone that ends the theme is also a frequent intervallic motive used by Wilder. Each occurrence is visible in Example 1. Within the first movement Wilder also introduces the themes in a canon technique, which is common throughout the suite.

Example 1 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. I. mm. 1-18

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The horn begins the theme in measure 5 on the same pitch the tuba ended on. The pitch is a perfect fourth above the opening of the theme, helping to draw in the perfect fourth motive on a larger scale as well as fugue-like elements. The tuba begins the first theme again in measure 11 once the horn has completed the entire theme, but doesn’t complete it. Instead, the piano joins the trio playing first theme in octaves while the horn and tuba play accompanimental roles. The piano remains in octaves throughout the movement.

After introducing the theme through a canon Wilder alters his restatement of the first theme by splitting it up between the tuba, horn, and piano respectively with each instrument playing consecutive pieces of the theme on their own. Measure 23 acts as a one measure bridge in which a sixteenth note figure starts in the piano and is taken over by the horn and tuba in octaves. The sixteenth note figure ties in the perfect fourth, perfect fifth, and half step motives that started the work. The figure alternates between perfect fifth, half step, and perfect fourth, half step. The tuba begins another statement of the first theme in measure 24 with new accompaniment in the horn line. After a one measure thematic extension in measure 29 is a transition from measure 30-32 comprised
of a sixteenth note sequence in the piano that moves through the fourth, fifth, and half step intervals. The horn and tuba join in measure 31 moving chromatically downward through a half step sequence as seen in Example 2. The piano figure in measures 31-32 hints at the second theme. The transition also has a ritardando marked in order to bring in the slower tempo of second theme and B section marked “Meno mosso.”

Example 2 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. I. mm. 31-40

86 Ibid.
The B theme begins in the horn in measure 33. The minor sixth leap downward followed by stepwise motion upwards reminds the listener of the piano leap-step sequence heard two measures earlier in measure 31. The second theme, seen in Example 2, begins with a legato figure at a soft dynamic followed by a staccato figure at a loud dynamic creating contrast both within the second theme and with the first theme. The theme occurs twice in the slower B section, with the horn having the melody both times. The second statement of the second theme ends differently than the first in order to prepare for the accelerando back into the original tempo and return of the A section. Again, there are jumps up and down a fourth as well as many chromatic half steps unifying the sections together.

The return of the A section and first theme begins in measure 41 with a unison statement of the theme in all instruments. In measure 42 the horn and tuba continue the theme in octaves while the piano plays a counter melody. In measure 46 the instruments switch roles and the piano has the first theme while the horn and tuba play the accompaniment. The meter changes to $\frac{8}{8}$ to add the triple feel before ending the work with a sequence of triplet eighth notes in the horn and tuba seen in Example 3.
The sequence is made up of an open arpeggio without the third followed moving up by half step. The piano continues the remainder of the first theme. The piece ends quickly with each instrument jumping an octave on C. The last note is significance due to the pitch. The final note of the movement is down one half step from the starting note tying in the half step motive on a larger scale.

87 Ibid.
II. Pesante

The second movement opens with the first theme in the piano from measures 1-4.

The theme can be split into two sub phrases each consisting of a full twelve chromatic tones. The first two-measure sub-phrase can be seen in Example 4.

Example 4 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. II. mm. 1-3

The piano is playing in octaves, as it was for the entire first movement of the suite. In measure 6 the horn enters with a second theme. The first four notes of the theme move in a step, leap, step, leap pattern seen in the previous movement.

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88 This is not referred to as a 12-tone row or 12-tone set, but rather a 12-tone melody because Wilder does not alter the melody in standard to set theory techniques.

89 Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. 

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Example 5 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. II. mm. 6-9

![Music notation image]

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The four-measure theme starts in the tuba in measure 9 and is stated in its entirety. The horn begins the theme in measure 10 creating an overlap while the piano continuously descends. In measure 13 the piano begins the opening theme again. The only difference between the restatement in measure 13 and the original statement in measure 1 is that the second time the first theme is heard, the piano is in octaves in three voices instead of two, and is slightly softer at mezzo forte instead of forte. Wilder includes this restatement to remind the listener of the opening twelve tone melody. The horn overlaps the first theme with another statement of the first. The tuba follows the horn’s lead and begins a full statement of the second theme in measure 18.

\[90\] Ibid.
The canonic figure continues with a horn entrance in measure 19 playing the first theme inverted. The piano plays an accompanimental, descending line during this phrase. In measure 23 another canon starts with the second theme in the piano. The horn joins one measure later in measure 24 and the tuba in 25. The piano begins another statement of the second theme in measure 29 but only plays the first two measures. This is the first section that the piano is not playing in octaves or unison for the first time in the work. The horn and tuba follow the piano in thirds one measure later and only play two measures of the first theme as well.

Table 1 shows the occurrences and overlapping of the first and second themes in measures 29-36. In measure 32 the first theme is reintroduced and split amongst the tuba and horn. The piano joins in measure 34 with a variation of the second theme as outlined in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Horn</th>
<th>Tuba</th>
<th>Piano</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Theme 2</td>
<td>Theme 2</td>
<td>Theme 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
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<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in Example 6, there are added accompanimental roles to support the passing of the theme between instruments.
Example 6 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. II. mm. 32-37

The piano begins a restatement of the opening motive of the second theme in measure 27 followed by the horn, then the tuba. From measure 42 through the end of the movement Wilder includes new material that gets gradually louder. As seen in Example 7, the final section barely reminds the listener of the opening theme with the sequence in the horn and tuba resembling the large leaps in measures 1, 3, and 4 and the rhythm in measure 47 resembling the rhythm in measure 5.

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91 Ibid.
Example 7 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano.* II. mm. 42-48

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Ibid.

92
The penultimate chord is an A chord without the third to determine whether the key is major or minor. Again the instruments ultimate and penultimate notes are octaves apart. The final section is loud and accented adding contrast to all preceding material.

III. In a Jazz manner

As seen in many of his instrumental works, Wilder includes a jazzy movement in his *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. The horn and tuba are not generally considered jazz instruments but the flexibility of Barrows and Phillips to play in multiple styles of music allowed for the compositional freedom to write a jazz inspired movement. The men’s comfort with jazz elements is reflected throughout the movement.

The third movement borrows heavily from jazz harmonies and rhythms. Throughout the movement Wilder uses triplets as a unifying element between themes and transitional material. As seen in Example 8 the movement opens with the first theme split between the tuba and the piano at the piano dynamic. Wilder emphasizes the importance of the triplet figure in the first theme by marking it forte.
The three-measure theme is then voiced differently in measure 4; the horn takes over the tuba line and the tuba takes over the piano response. This provides a new twist on the opening theme so repetitions don’t get monotonous.

After a two-measure bridge based on the triplet figure in measures 7 and eight, the second theme appears in the horn. While the horn introduces the second theme, the tuba plays the first theme as an accompanimental figure. The piano emphasizes the off beats and reaffirms the jazzy feel of the work.

\^\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.
Example 9 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 8-14

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94 Ibid.
In measure 12 the piano begins the first theme while the tuba and horn have a variation of the second theme split between the two instruments. The combination of these two themes adds a layer of metrical conflict with both duple and triple subdivisions occurring simultaneously. The piano begins the first theme again in measure 15 while the tuba moves upwards chromatically in triplet chunks. The horn accents the end of the phrase in measure 17 with the tuba closing out the phrase by itself on the downbeat of measure 18. Each time the themes are presented in a unique way keeping the listener and performer engaged and eager to hear what will occur next. Wilder also keeps the audience interested by varying the accompaniment with constantly repeating themes. Measures 18-20 resemble the short bridge seen previously in measures 7 and 8, again using triplets as a unifying factor. The purpose of this transitional section is to prepare for the ritardando into the second section marked “Poco meno mosso.” The piano foreshadows the new lyrical idea to come.
The B section of the movement is slower and much more lyrical than the first section with legato lines passing back and forth between the instruments creating long phrases to contrast to the first section of the movement with short staccato themes. As seen in Example 10 there is movement on each of the twelve beats of the measure creating one long phrase.

Example 10 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 21-25

Poco meno mosso \( \dot{=} \text{ app. 60} \)

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95 Ibid.
The eighth note lines transition between diatonic scales, octatonic scales and hint at modality. The $\frac{12}{8}$ time signature reaffirms the jazz influence with each of the four main beats having a swung triplet feel. This eighth note scalar line continues through measure 32 when an accelerando begins. The three measure accelerando reintroduces the staccato passages reminiscent of the first and second themes.
Example 11 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano.* III. mm. 30-35

Ibid.
In the following section at the original tempo, the first and second themes are played simultaneously in all three instruments with the horn and tuba playing the first theme and the piano playing the second theme. This section is down a fourth from the opening. Once the tuba and horn complete the first theme the tuba takes over the second half of the second theme from the piano. The horn mimics the tuba in measure 39 continuing the ascending motion. The piano continues the line in measure 40 with continuously ascending motion. Measure 40 acts as a one-measure transition back into the slower lyrical section. The section from measures 35-40 act as a final return to the opening A section. Instead Wilder returns to the B section.

The B section returns in measure 41, this time marked “meno mosso, come sopra,” or “a little less motion, as above.” As seen in Example 12 the section is similar to the first B section with the long lyrical passages passed between the instruments and the movement on every 12 beats but the section is not identical.
Example 12 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 41-46

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97 Ibid.
In the second B section the tuba plays an inversion-like piece of the eighth note figure first seen in the horn in measure 21. The tuba continues with another inversion-like figure in the following measure but down a half step tying in the half step motive. The horn plays descending lines to accompany the tuba until they join in unison motion in measure 43. Measures 43-44 resemble measures 22 and 24 with the ascending scalar motion. The piano plays an accompanimental role, filling in all remaining beats in the measure. In measure 45 the piano begins reintroducing the transitional figure first seen in measure 31 and 32 to prepare for the return of the A section. The horn and tuba in measures 45 and 46 resemble the piano figure in measures 25 and 26. As seen previously, the accelerando figure reintroduces the staccato, edgy feel of the opening melody. The two slower B sections marked at a slower tempo show Wilder’s unique ability to use the same motivic and melodic material in two different ways. Through his revamping of previous material
he is able to keep the listener engaged. The accelerando period from measures 49-50 closely resembles the material from the parallel transition in measures 33 and 34.

The A section returns in measure 51 with a version of the first theme. This time the theme is split amongst all three instruments with the piano taking the tuba role from measure 1 and the horn and tuba playing the piano part from measure 1 except holding the notes for a full dotted half note instead of just an eighth note. Instead of another restatement of the first theme, the horn and tuba begin the first and second themes in measures 45-47 exactly the same fashion as measures 9-12 including the same notes and rhythms.

Measures 57-61 pictured in Example 13 are slightly different than any preceding material in order to close out the piece.

Example 13 Alec Wilder, Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano. III. mm. 57-61\(^{98}\)

\(^{98}\) Ibid.
The final measures of the piece remain at the piano dynamic in the brass with the final triplet statement in measures 60-61 at fortissimo. This reminds the listener again of the same dynamic layout of the first theme seen in the opening of the movement. Again Wilder closes the movement with an octave jump in all instruments.

IV. Berceuse

The fourth movement is the only one given a title and subtitle. The movement, titled Berceuse (for Carol), is Wilder’s resemblance of a lullaby for Carol Phillips, Harvey’s wife. The piece can be divided into five separate sections, ABABA\(^99\). Although

\(^{99}\) This is not a standard ABABA form in that each new section is not identical to any previous section. The form is determined by tempo markings, meter, and thematic material. Harmonies, countermelodies and lengths of sections are not taken into account.
standard lullabies are in triple meter Wilder stays in common time for each A section. As seen in Example 14, theme one begins in the horn with the tuba playing a countermelody.

**Example 14** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. IV. mm. 1-5

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100 Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. 49
Throughout the movement the first two measures of the theme remain consistent while the second two measures frequently change. Wilder ties in the half step and perfect fourth motives in the first measure of the theme. The piano beings the theme in measure 5. The theme is up a perfect fourth in the right hand, with a new countermelody in the left hand. As mentioned above, the first two measures of the theme are the same while the second two contain new material. The horn takes over the melody again in measure 9 with the tuba playing new material. Two measures later, in measure 10, the piano finishes the horn melody with material resembling the horn line in measures 3 and 4. Measures 12 and 13 act as a transition to the upcoming B section with a hint at new melodic material in the piano seen in Example 15.

**Example 15** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano. IV. mm. 12-17*\(^{101}\)

\(^{101}\) Ibid.
The B section beginning in measure 14 is in the standard triple meter of a lullaby. The piano and tuba trade eighth note figures making a long melodic phrase until the horn takes over the moving line in measure 17. The piano drops out and the horn, tuba duo continue moving forward melodically until a restatement of the first theme. This section is similar to the first A section in that there is movement on all six beats of each measure.

The second A section begins with a restatement of theme one in the tuba in measure 22 while the horn plays new material as a counter melody (see Example 16).
Example 16 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. IV. mm.22-25\textsuperscript{102}

The second two measures of the theme are built on a falling seventh motive. The theme is stated again in measure 26 in the piano. The second two measures of the theme resemble the first measure and create a small two-measure sequence moving downward by third. The horn and tuba trade new melodic material in measures 30-38 with each instrument muted and playing two-measure sub-phrases in a call and response fashion\textsuperscript{103}. The horn enters again in measure 36 without the mute. The second measure in the two-measure sub-phrase reminds in the listener of the first theme in movement one as seen in Example 17.

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{103} Wilder’s *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano* is one of the first substantial pieces in tuba chamber music to call for a mute.
The piano continues in measure 38 with a sequence of figures resembling the first measure of theme one.
The meter change in measure 42 signals the brief return of the B section.

**Example 18** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano. IV. mm.42-43*[^105]

The piano begins the melodic material split between the tuba and piano in measure 14, and is followed by the horn taking over the flowing eighth note line in measure 44. As the brass and piano trade melodic material, the accompaniment has a descending sequential line into the return of the final A section.

The A section returns in measure 52 with the first theme. Although the key and accompaniment in the piano are different than the first A section, the full theme is exactly as it appeared in measures 1-5, including the tuba accompaniment. As seen in Example 19, the piano enters with the first theme in measure 56.

[^105]: Ibid.
This statement of the theme in the top voice of the piano is cut off by the tuba and horn in measure 58 where they begin another statement of the first theme. The piano continues the theme in measure 59 and the tuba and horn finish the movement. Unlike other movements, Wilder does not finish the lullaby with octaves.

\[106\] Ibid.
The final movement, marked “Alla caccia,” greatly contrasts the fourth movement in note length, tempo, and feel. The marking “Alla caccia” may be reminiscent of the 14th century Italian caccia that involved canonic figures between multiple voices or the 18th century orchestral horn called a corno da caccia. The movement opens similarly to the first movement with the tuba introducing the theme followed by the horn in measure 3, then the piano in measure 6.

Example 20 Alec Wilder, Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano. V. mm.1-3

When the horn begins the theme in the third measure the tuba jumps to an accompanimental role but accents the hiccup in rhythm seen in the first beat of measure 3. This rhythm is essentially a dotted figure that breaks up the monotony of an otherwise eighth note rhythm. When the piano begins the theme in measure 6 the brass take the accompanimental role, this time in straight eighth notes, but still emphasizing the

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\[\text{Ibid.}\]
sixteenth note rhythm first seen in measure 3. The tuba begins another statement of theme one in measure 9 followed by a full statement of the theme in the horn in measure 12 seen in Example 21.

**Example 21** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. V. mm.12-14

This specific horn statement is unique in that it is not marked staccato, and is slurred through each phrase except the sixteenth note rhythm.

Measure 14 begins a sequence of sixteenth note rhythms between the instruments.

In measure 16 the instruments join in unison rhythm until measure 17 when the piano begins a fortissimo statement of material previously heard in the movement.

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108 Ibid.
Example 22 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano.* V. mm.17-19

The piano line from measure 17-20 brings in different aspects of the main theme including the sixteenth note figure as well as an emphasis on the a legato half step motive first seen in measure 2. The accented, syncopated eighth notes in the horn and tuba in

\[109\] Ibid.
measures 17-18 bring another layer of accompaniment that reinforces the half step motive.

A recurring motive that will be known as motive A is introduced in measure 21. It begins at an accented forte in the piano. As seen in Example 23, the melodic material ties in the perfect fifth motive right away.

**Example 23** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano. V. mm.21-24*¹¹⁰

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¹¹⁰ Ibid.
The tuba joins in in measure 21 with the jumping fifth motive seen in many accompanimental passages, especially the first movement. The A motive appears again in the piano in measures 23 and 25, and 27. Measure 27 starts the use of the A motive as the start of new phrases.
The piano begins a four measure phrase with the A motive. In measure 30, the horn begins a variation of the A motive in contrary motion. The tuba joins in one measure later. The two instruments pass the motive back and forth until the piano takes over the theme and the accompaniment drops out in measure 36. The horn and tuba join in measure 38 and 39 with motive A as well. Measure 40 begins a unison rhythmic figure that emphasizes the half step and the fourth and fifth motives present throughout the entire work.

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
Example 25 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. V. mm.40-48

This transitional material creates contrast to the restatement of the first theme in measure 43.

The tuba begins the recall of the first measure and first theme in measure 43.

Wilder uses diminution to alter the theme into a legato lyrical line. The theme begins

\[ \text{Ibid.} \]
again in measure 49 in the horn with tuba accompaniment appearing as it did exactly in measure 3. The piano joins in measure 52 exactly as it had in measure 6. The accompaniment in measure 2 is similar to measure 6 but is made up of quarter notes instead of the opening staccato eighth notes. Measures 53-54 are identical to measures 7 and 8 in the solo and accompaniment lines. Measures 55-57 are an extension to the previous section and help prepare the final phrase. As seen in Example 26, the final phrase restates the B motive in canon and ends on a fortississimo.

**Example 26** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano*. V. mm.58-60

Wilder is unique (relative to most classical composers) in his choice to end the movement with material from the B motive instead of the A theme.

Throughout each movement Wilder incorporates various motivic and thematic elements that unify the work. As a performer, it is important to bring out these common

\[113^{\text{Ibid.}}\]
motives so the audience can hear the connections between movements. The themes in all parts should be brought out to emphasize importance. In cannon-like figures, performers should bring out each instrument’s entrance then back away slightly when the next instrument enters so all entrances can be heard equally. Another important element in the trio is balance between performers. There is never a time in the work when any voice completely covers another. Accompanimental voices should be equal in comparison to the voices with melodic material. Wilder is specific with his articulations, and, it is in these articulation that the true feel of individual movements come out. Accents should always be brought out, especially on the weak beats of the measure. Although the piece was written at the request of a friend with an unexpected outcome, Wilder’s first suite was a successful work for horn, tuba and piano that set the foundation for his second suite, and future works to come.
CHAPTER 4

SUITE NO.2 FOR FRENCH HORN, TUBA AND PIANO

Background and Thematic Analysis for Performers

After the success of the first suite Wilder wrote Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano for Barrows and Phillips in 1971. As with the first suite, the work was not commissioned, just written for friends. Throughout the work motivic elements play a key role, especially the perfect fourth and perfect fifth leaps, and the half step also seen in his first suite. According to Harvey Phillips, the suite and its recording held significance to both Phillips and Wilder because it was the last recording Barrows made. In an interview with Jason Roland Smith, Phillips says:

The last recording John Barrows did was the Suite No.2 for Horn, tuba and Piano. During this session, Milton Kaye and I would want to redo a passage to get it better, and John would say, “can’t do it fellows, we have to keep going if we want to try and get it all in.” At the time, John was really suffering from Hodgkin’s disease. But if you listen to that recording he sounds just as fresh as he did at his healthiest state.\(^{114}\)

The recording produced by Golden Crest Records was not as popular as Wilder’s first suite.\(^{115}\) The work is much more technically demanding with more challenging meter changes and interval leaps. The form of each movement is complex with numerous parts and non-standard returns of material.

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\(^{115}\) Popularity is based on amount of recordings of the work. As notated in footnote 82 on page 23, there are at least five commercial recordings of Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano.
The first movement begins with the horn and tuba playing the first theme. Each instrument’s individual line leads into the next with the phrase ending in thirds with unison rhythm and motion to the downbeat of the fourth measure (see Example 27).

**Example 27** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. I. mm. 1-4

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The piano begins the theme in measure 4 and the horn and tuba drop out. The first theme begins with jumps of a fifth and fourth and continuous in leaped arpeggio sequences until the third measure of chromatic stepwise motion, reaffirming the importance of the half step motive.

A transition-like section begins in measure 7. The tuba begins a slurred melodic line that contrasts the staccato opening.

**Example 28** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. I. mm. 7-14\(^{117}\)

\(^{117}\) Ibid.
Again the three instruments pass melodic material between them with at least one instrument tying over each bar line. The piano figure in measures 9, 10, 13, and 14 prepare for the upcoming second theme.

The second theme is much more legato than the first theme and is playable by one instrument at a time. The horn begins the second theme full of arpeggio-like leaps followed by scalar material.
The tuba follows the horn with an entrance of theme two one measure later in measure 16. The piano plays an accompanimental role until measure 21 when it takes the lead, performing theme one without any accompaniment.

Wilder quickly returns back to the second theme in measure 24 after a short return to the first theme.

\[118\] Ibid.
Example 30 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. I. mm. 24-27\(^{119}\)

The tuba plays the second theme and reminds the listener of the theme’s first occurrence in measure 15. The piano has similar chordal accompaniment to measure 15 as well. This four measure statement of the first theme leads into new transitional material that comes back again later in the work. The transitional material from 29-33 consists of the horn and tuba passing large leaped eighth note sets back and forth while the piano accompaniment moves in sequences of stepwise eighth note sets downward as well.

The return of the first theme is hidden in the piano in measures 33 where Wilder has the arpeggio-like tuba line from the opening paired with the stepwise horn line moving simultaneously. The transitional material from measures 36-45 consists of new material put together with motives that have been heard previously in the movement. As seen in Example 31, much of the piano material presented is similar to material from theme one. In particular, the descending and ascending arpeggio-like figures as well as the turning eighth note half step figures resemble the first theme.

\(^{119}\) Ibid.
The horn takes on a flowing melodic line in measure 40 with the tuba and piano as accompaniment.

\[120\] Ibid.
This new transitional material provides contrast to the upcoming return to theme one.

The first theme returns in measure 45 in the same fashion as it did in the opening of the suite. The horn and tuba trade the theme from measures 45-48, but instead of the piano restating the theme as it did in the beginning, measures 48 and 49 act as an extension of the theme. In measure 50 the first theme begins again but is all legato. The transitional material heard previously in measures 7-11, is performed again exactly the same in measures 52-56. The horn and tuba drop out in measure 56 and the piano continues with arpeggio figures for three measures. In measure 59 the same transitional material heard previously in measures 28-30 but is transposed to a different key. In the final nine measures of the movement the piano has a version of the first theme that has been slowed by augmentation of each beat.

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Ibid.
The horn and tuba play accompanimental roles until the surprise forte, descending arpeggio and trill figure in the last three measures leading to a quick triplet and ending in the key of Eb minor, the same key area the piece began in.

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Ibid.
The second movement is unique in that it starts with all three instruments on the downbeat. This is the only movement from Wilder’s two suites that this occurs. The first theme is introduced right away and continues through measure 12. The theme is much slower and connected than the opening of the first movement.

Example 34 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. II. mm. 1-9

The first four measures of the theme are seen frequently throughout the movement but are not completed in the full twelve-measure phrase until the end. The theme is repeated in measure 13 as it started in measure 1. After the first four measures, the horn and tuba play off of the quarter note half note rhythm that opens the theme and is also seen in measures 2 and 4 of the theme. The horn repeats the interval while the tuba alters the pitches. The horn and tuba drop out in measure 19 and the piano continues with a sequence of material including falling quarter notes in the upper voice. The intervals fall by fourths, one of the main motives of the work. There is a false return of the opening in

\[123\] Ibid.
measure 27. Measure 27-33 act as a version of the first theme, playing off of the quarter note-half note rhythmic motive.

The first theme returns in measure 34 but changes after the fourth measure.

Example 35 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. II. mm. 34-38

The horn and tuba play the quarter note-half note motive but expand intervallically while the piano repeats the figures seen previously in measures 16 and 17. Measures 40-43 act as a link to the following section.

The middle section of the movement lasts from measure 44-50. The opening six measures of this section guide the listener to the new theme presented in measure 50.

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124 Ibid.
The second theme is made up of mainly quarter notes in the horn line with the tuba and piano playing supportive, accompanimental roles. The tuba has a version of the second theme in measure 55 forcing the horn back into a supportive role.

The return of the first theme in its full form occurs at measure 61. This recapitulation-like entrance is almost identical to the opening of the movement. There are small changes between measures 1-17 and 61-74 include the starting tuba pitch as an E-sharp instead of an E-natural. Measures 13 and 14 from the opening are also omitted from the end of the movement. Measures 75-81 are included in Example 37.

\[125\] Ibid.
The final measures of the piece bring back the interval expansion heard previously in measures 37-39. After four repeated quarter note-half note motives, the horn and tuba hold for nine beats while the piano arpeggiates down to close the movement.

**III. Jazz Style**

The third movement of the suite is marked “jazz style,” similar to the marking of the third movement of the first suite which is marked “in a jazz manner.” The three-measure theme begins in the piano and contains both straight and swung material.

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126 Ibid.
The first half of the theme is staccato and separated while the second is all slurred and legato. A one measure bridge in measure 4 links the opening theme with the theme presented in the horn in measure 5. The tuba plays a descending bass line as the horn progressed through the theme. A transition-like section connects the first statements of the theme ending in measure 8 to the restatement of the theme in measure 15.
The transitional material contains many triplets in all instruments with an occasional chord in the piano.

Measures 15-20 act as a reminder of the opening phrases. In measure 15 the horn and tuba have an inverted form of the first theme.

128 Ibid.
Example 40 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 15-20

In measure 18 the tuba continues with the inversion of the horn line from measure 5 while the horn has the inverted tuba line from measure 5.

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Ibid.
The middle section of the tune begins in measure 21. The meter changes from common time to $\frac{7}{8}$. The texture is thinner in measures 21-24 with the tuba and horn acting as light accompaniment.

Example 41 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 21-25

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The piano incorporates an inversion of the first measure of the main theme in measures 21, 23, and 25 creating a sequencing effect. The first two measures of the piano line are

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130 Ibid.
sequenced up a step in measures 23-24 and again in 26-27. Wilder throws an extra measure of rest in the piano in measure 25 to throw off the expected 2+2+2 sequence. Measures 28-31 act as a transition back to the first theme. In this section the tuba has an eighth note one measure phrase that expands over large interval leaps and is repeated again a measure later up a step. The horn has the consecutive sixteenth note scalar lines generally seen in saxophone parts of jazz music. The piano leads the trio through the switch to $\frac{8}{8}$ in measure 30, and $\frac{7}{8}$ in measure 31.

Measure 32 brings back the first theme in the tuba. The horn has the inversion of the theme, and the piano has new material. The section begins with an immediate change in texture with all three instruments playing at the forte dynamic.

**Example 42** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 32-36

![Example 42: Alec Wilder, Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano. III. mm. 32-36](image)

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131 Ibid.
The full texture only remains for four and a half measures and is followed by a decrescendo into measure 38. In measure 38 the piano begins the first theme by itself. The horn and tuba finish the theme and lead into the new material in measure 41. The piano begins some new melodic material that is later passed to the horn in measure 43. The three-measure phrase consists of syncopated eighth note leaps. The slurring in these passages help portray the swung, syncopated feel of the material. Measures 46-48 transition back into the first theme. Measures 49-52 are full of canonic entrances on the first theme. The left hand of the piano begins the theme and is followed by the right hand a measure later. The horn and tuba follow a measure after that. These entrances can be seen in Example 43 below.
Example 43 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 49-57

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132 Ibid.
The table below shows the bigger picture in terms of thematic entrances between measures 32 and 52.

**Table 2** Thematic Analysis, *Suite No.2 for French Horn Tuba and Piano*, mm.32-52.

| mm. | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 5  | 5  |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| horn| Theme 1 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | Th. 1 | T |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| tuba| Theme 1 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | Th. 1 | Th. 1 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| pno. RH |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | Th. 1 | Theme 1 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| pno. LH |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | Theme 1 |    |

The piano plays a brief reference to the inversion of the first theme in measure 57 before the horn brings back material from the middle section, recalling measures 22-25. In measure 62 the horn plays the first theme with tuba accompaniment, similar to measure 5.

The final two measures of the piece tie in the character of the entire movement with the dynamic shifts and accented off beats.
Example 44 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. III. mm. 66-67

The penultimate measure recalls the first measure of the first theme and the final measure of the tune has a simple three-note response in the horn. Wilder’s rhythmic, harmonic, and articulation help portray the jazzy elements in the movement. The triplets, syncopation, starting of phrases on off beats, and chords with added pitches all help portray the swing feel of the movement.

**IV. Air**

The fourth movement, titled “Air,” begins with the first theme in the horn. The first two notes remind the listener of the half step motive prevalent in the entire suite. The long, slurred phrases travel up and down at mezzo piano without any major musical events to disrupt the flow and resemblance of air. The horn and piano accompaniment continue through measure 11.

133 Ibid.
Example 45 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. IV. mm. 1-11

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\(^{134}\) Ibid.
From measures 12-22 the tuba takes over the first theme from the horn and the horn moves into an accompanimental role. Measures 23-25 extend off of the previously heard theme in the tuba with the horn continuing the accompanimental line.

The tuba begins what sounds like a return of the first theme in measure 25, but is actually a false start. The full first theme actually enters in the horn in measure 26 and continues through measure 30 where the melody jumps into the tuba. The piano finishes the remainder of the theme from measure 34-36.

Example 46 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. IV. mm. 26-36

Ibid.
The meter changes to $\frac{6}{4}$ in measure 39. There is a sequence on the first two measures of theme one in the horn. The sequence occurs five times between measures 39 and 48. Both the sequential material in the horn and the material in the accompaniment gradually ascend to measure 45 then descend back to down from measures 45-48. The first theme returns in the bass notes of the piano in measure 48 and continues through measure 58. The horn and tuba accompany the theme from 48-51, then the other three voices in the piano are the only accompaniment to finish out the theme.
The theme returns in the horn in measure 58 with piano accompaniment. The melody remains in the horn for three measures before moving to the tuba line. The horn and tuba alternate sections of the melody two times, with the tuba ending the melody in measure 68. The last seven measures of the suite are seen in Example 47.

**Example 47** Alec Wilder, *Suite No. 2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. IV. mm. 69-75

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136 Ibid.
The first theme begins in the horn in measure 69, then the tuba in measure 71 with a variation of the theme. In the final section the themes only last for about three measures before the brass start preparing for the final pitch. The horn moves down to D, the tuba up to Bb, and the piano holding open chords throughout. The final chord of the piece is G minor. Although there is no set key for the movement, Wilder was clear in his ending key.

\[ V. \quad \mathfrak{f} = 108 \]

The final movement of Wilder’s *Suite No. 2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano* clearly displays his love of counterpoint and the music of Bach as a compositional influence for this movement. The movement resembles a fugue in the treatment of the themes but not in the standard structure of a fugue. There is also a lack of a countersubject. Wilder also uses the stretto technique each time the first theme/subject is presented, never allowing a full statement of the theme to occur before overlapping another voice. The first theme (or subject) is introduced in the tuba in measure 1 and is joined by the horn in measure 3 up a fifth. The piano joins in measure 5 up a fifth from the horn entrance. The piano begins the work in octaves.
Example 48 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. V. mm. 1-12\(^{137}\)

\(^{137}\) Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano.*
The two eighth note quarter note figure that opens the movement is accented to make each entrance obvious to the listener. The material contains the perfect fourth, perfect fifth, and half step motive seen throughout the suite. The quick changes in meter between \( \frac{4}{8} \) and \( \frac{7}{8} \) challenge the performer and distort the typical duple feel of a fugue. Measures 12-14 can be considered a quick bridge or episode in fugue terminology, accenting the first measure of the theme.

The first theme returns in the left hand of the piano in measure 15 and is finished by the right hand of the fugue in measure 17. The horn begins the theme up a fifth in measure 17 with the tuba following up a fifth from the horn line in measure 19. This section resembles the opening in that each instrument enters two measures apart, each up a fifth from the previous entrance. Measures 26-31 act as transitional material to the second them. These transitional measures remind the listener of measures 12-14 with accented repetitions of the first measure of the first theme.
Measure 32 begins the second theme in the tuba. The second theme has a much more jazzy feel than the first with accented off beats and syncopated rhythms (see Example 49).

**Example 49** Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. V. mm. 32-39

\[\text{Example 49 Alec Wilder, } \textit{Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano}. \text{ V. mm. 32-39}\]

Ibid.
The horn begins a statement of the second theme up an augmented fifth in measure 34 while the tuba trills. The two close out the phrase together before the piano coming in with the second theme in measure 37 up another minor sixth (augmented fifth). This use of fugue-like canon strays from traditional fugue and incorporates some of Wilder’s standard compositional techniques including the jazz influence and the advanced harmonies.\footnote{In a standard fugue the subject is in tonic, with the answer occurring up a major fifth. In the second theme Wilder has each entrance of his subject occurring up an augmented fifth.}

The horn begins another statement of the second theme in measure 39, and is followed by the left hand of the piano in measure 43, and the horn again in measure 46. While not playing the main subject, instruments play supporting roles that help emphasize the syncopated feel of the section.

Measure 47 begins another fugue-like canon of statements of the first theme similar to the opening of the movement. In measure 47 the horn begins the first theme again. The tuba begins the theme up a perfect fifth in measure 49, and the right hand of
the piano follows with an entrance up a fifth in measure 51. The bass line of the piano joins in measure 53 with an entrance of the first theme. This portrayal of the first theme is different than the first in that Wilder expanded it to a four-voice fugue, splitting the piano into two separate voices.

The movement ends with a mix of the two themes occurring both simultaneously and in canon amongst all three instruments.

Table 3 Thematic Analysis, *Suite No.2 for French Horn Tuba and Piano*, mm.59-68.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>59</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>61</th>
<th>62</th>
<th>63</th>
<th>64</th>
<th>65</th>
<th>66</th>
<th>67</th>
<th>68</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>Th. 2</td>
<td>Th. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>Th. 2</td>
<td>Th. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano RH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 2 Variation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>Th. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano LH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>Th. 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in Table 3, the horn beings the first theme in measure 59 while the piano plays a variation of the second theme. In measures 63 and 64 the tuba, horn, and piano each have entrances of the first theme two beats apart.
Example 50 Alec Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano*. V. mm. 59-68

Wilder, *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano.*
The penultimate measure of the work returns to the opening measure of the second theme. The final measure of the piece has a unison statement of the first measure of the first theme in all four voices (horn, tuba, piano right hand, piano left hand) in a crescendo to fortissimo.

Wilder’s second suite is more technically challenging than his first suite.\textsuperscript{141} Throughout both suites Wilder highlights the abilities of each instrument. By utilizing the conical timbres of the horn and tuba Wilder had the option of making them sound as one voice, or two separate voices. He plays with the timbral effects of both instruments through range, accents, mutes, articulations, and dynamics. Through these adjustments in sound Wilder is able to convey the intended feel of each movement. As with the previous movement, the thematic analysis is intended to provide performers with a basis of information regarding the role of each instrument from section to section.

\textsuperscript{141} Similarities, differences, and challenges will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5
SIMILARITIES, DIFFERENCES, AND CHALLENGES

Similarities and Differences

Wilder’s two suites for horn, tuba and piano have many similarities based on Wilder’s common compositional influences and musical characteristics.\(^{142}\) The two tables below show a brief overview of the two suites, their lengths, and approximate time.

**Table 4** Overview, *Suite No.1 for Horn Tuba and Piano*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Titles/Markings</th>
<th>Length in Measures</th>
<th>Approximate Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td><em>Maestoso</em></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td><em>Pesante</em></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td><em>In a Jazz Manner</em></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td><em>Berceuse (for Carol)</em></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td><em>Alla caccia</em></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1:46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5** Overview, *Suite No.2 for French Horn Tuba and Piano*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Titles/Markings</th>
<th>Length in Measures</th>
<th>Approximate Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>2:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td><em>Jazz Style</em></td>
<td>67</td>
<td>2:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td><em>Air</em></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td>68</td>
<td>2:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{142}\) Many of the characteristic elements of these works are also seen in his other instrumental works.
Although *Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano* has a slightly greater number of measures, the performance lengths of the two works are both close to 14 minutes.

In both works there are occasional tonal centers, but they are brief. Not only does Wilder write each third movement of the suites to be played in a jazz style, but he also incorporates jazz rhythms and harmonies into other movements as well. There is also an influence of popular music present in the progression of both suites. Each movement is fairly short, as is most popular music. Both suites contain five movements and have the same general fast-slow-jazz-slow-fast shape. Throughout each work Wilder provides each instrument equal playing opportunities, never allowing one instrument to lead an entire section or movement.

There is much motivic similarity in each suite that is also carried over from one suite to the next. Wilder frequently emphasizes the following intervals: half step, perfect fourth, tritone and perfect fifth. At least one of these intervallic motives is seen in every theme of both suites. Wilder also uses rhythmic motives throughout a movement to remind the listener of a specific theme or transition. This aspect of Wilder’s music helps unify the separate movements, even though each is written in a very different style. Thematically Wilder will often include contrast either within themes, in repetitions of the themes, or between the first and second theme. Frequently if the first theme is short and staccato, the second theme will be legato. If the first theme is loud and edgy, the second will be softer both dynamically and in terms of written articulation.

There is obvious contrapuntal influence in both suites. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Wilder was heavily influenced by the music of Bach, and incorporates some of his techniques into his work. The most popular techniques are canon and inversion. For
example, the fifth movement of the second suite (see Example 48) has many fugue-like qualities with the first theme acting as a subject in a fugue, and being passed around to all three voices. In this same movement, Wilder increases the amount of voices from three to four by splitting up the two hands of the piano. While he incorporates elements of counterpoint, it is evident that that is not Wilder’s main compositional goal.

Wilder’s intention was to create a balanced work that would suit his friends. Both of the suites for horn, tuba and piano achieve that goal. Wilder writes of his compositional technique in a letter to Whitney Balliett:

I work almost wholly intuitively. I have a few little technical things I use, but I believe that technique is a composer’s secret; any composer who talks about technique is simply offering a substitute for content. I have an innate sense of order, balance, and shape. I know most of the rules of counterpoint, although I never studied theory. When I start a piece, I try and find a melodic idea that I consider seminal, that I think will hold up. Then I find secondary themes as I move along. I work at the piano more often than not. I will play the parts I’ve written very slowly, and I’ll work as hard on eight sixteenth notes, trying to get that right balance and flow and feeling, as I will on an entire piece. It’s a process of searching and searching.  

The works are both interesting, challenging, and show off Wilder’s eclectic compositional techniques, and although they are similar in motives and shape, the two suites are each different and unique.

There are far fewer differences between Wilder’s two suites for horn, tuba and piano than there are similarities. Similarities in markings and length can be seen in Tables 4 and Table 5. In the first suite Wilder included musical markings in the beginning

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144 It should be noted again that Gunther Schuller edited the first suite and not the second. Without the original manuscript of the first suite it is hard to determine how much has been changed from the original work.
of each movement beyond the standard tempo markings. Each movement in both suites includes a tempo marking, but Wilder only included expression markings for two of the movements in the second suite. The second suite is much more challenging than the first in terms of meter changes, technique, and balance. Wilder often uses the piano as two separate voices in the second suite whereas the first suite was much less complex for the piano, especially with the first and second movements being almost completely in octaves.

Another major difference is the popularity of the works. The first suite was much more popular than the second.\textsuperscript{145} The reason why the first suite is more well-known is unclear. A potential reason can be that this was the first piece in the genre leading to new interest in the instrumental combination. The more the first suite was played, the more people wanted to play it themselves. Another potential reason is the difficulty of the second suite. \textit{Suite No.2 for Horn, tuba and Piano} is more challenging than the first suite for all three voices.

\textit{Challenges of Analysis and Performance}

Wilder’s compositional style is eclectic and derived from a wide-ranging array of sources including popular, jazz, and classical genres. As a result of his influences, Wilder’s music provides many analytical challenges. Although the music is not considered atonal, he rarely remains in the same tonal center for an extended period of time. Wilder also writes highly chromatic music, moving through various scales and arpeggios very quickly. The use of added harmonies and irregular spelling of chords may

\textsuperscript{145} Popularity is based on number of recordings was discussed in detail on page 23.
aid in performance, but adds another challenge to analysis. Wilder also uses non-traditional forms. With a large amount of non-classical influences it is a challenge to analyze Wilder’s works with common-practice techniques.

In terms of performance, Wilder had two specific performers in mind. This can be both a challenging aspect and a reassuring aspect for potential performers. Although the technique of John Barrows and Harvey Phillips is extremely high, Wilder often wrote accidentals and musical markings with the performer in mind. The technique and range can be very challenging, with large interval leaps and a wide variety of articulations. The range of the horn and tuba are similar in both suites and are seen in Table 6.

Table 6 Range of the horn and tuba in each movement of Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano, and Suite No.2 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano</th>
<th>Suite No.1 for French Horn, Tuba and Piano</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>movement</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horn</td>
<td>B2-Db6</td>
<td>A2-D5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuba</td>
<td>B1-C4</td>
<td>A1-D#4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The meter often changes between duple and triple time, changing which beats are emphasized. Especially in the second suite, the meter changes can be challenging to intermediate players.

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146 Range is in concert pitch for all three instruments. The range is listed in scientific pitch notation. The letters refer to each note name, the numbers refer to the pitch’s octave.
Because Wilder took the equality of all three players into such high regard in his two suites, balance plays an important role. The players should notice what is occurring thematically and adjust him/herself to bring out the themes. The non-standard harmonies can be challenging for a classically trained musician to hear and perform correctly. A brief knowledge in a variety of musical styles such as popular music and jazz will aid in a more comfortable and accurate performance of Wilder’s works.
CHAPTER 6

AN OVERVIEW OF WORKS FOR HORN, TUBA AND PIANO SINCE 1971

Alec Wilder paved the way for potential growth in the trio for horn, tuba and piano subdivision of brass chamber music. Thanks to Galehouse’s recordings and the performances of the pieces, the public was able to witness the ability of the horn and tuba to blend into one conical sound.

There were no known works written for the trio from 1963-1971. Since 1971 there have been close to twenty works written for the horn, tuba and piano. Some composers were drawn to the sound of two conical brass while others were commissioned by friends and colleagues. The list of all found works for the genre since Wilder’s second suite can be seen in Appendix B.\(^{147}\) A selection of these works will be discussed in order to provide performers with insight on each piece.\(^{148}\) The information will include title of work, composer, movements, level of difficulty\(^{149}\) and a brief description of each composition.

\textit{Sonoro} by: Roger Kellaway

Roger Kellaway (b.1939) wrote his trio titled \textit{Sonoro} in 1979 as a commission for Frøydis Ree Werke and Roger Bobo. The piece is written for horn, bass horn and piano. This piece was the first to use the bass horn.

\(^{147}\) This list is comprised of all known works for the trio for tuba, horn and piano. Unpublished works, or new works may not be included.

\(^{148}\) Not all works in Appendix B are discussed due to difficulties in obtaining scores for select works.

\(^{149}\) Range, meter, tempo, and overall technical challenges determine level of difficulty.
The bass horn was built by Los Angeles brass instrument maker Larry Minick with the parts (bell, valves, tubing, and metal) a gift to Roger Bobo from the Mirafone Corporation. Having contrabass instruments from all the brass families other than horn (contrabass trombone and contrabass trumpet), Bobo wanted to complete his collection with a representation from the horn family. As an instrument of beautiful sound and near-perfect intonation, this single five-valved bass horn in CC turned out to be far more than just the completion of an instrument collection.\(^{150}\)

The work is now performed by horn, tuba and piano. Each instrument is independent but there is a great amount of rhythmic unison between the tuba and horn in the middle of the piece. The general form of the piece is built around transitions from slow, relaxed themes to faster, louder, technical passages. The two sections alternate throughout the 13-minute work. This piece is much more challenging than Kellaway’s other work for tuba, horn and piano, *Dance of the Ocean Breeze*. The most challenging aspects are range, rhythm, balance, large interval leaps and endurance.

*Dance of the Ocean Breeze* by: Roger Kellaway

Kellaway wrote another trio for horn, bass horn and piano in 1979 titled *Sonoro*. This piece was also a commission by Frøydis Ree Werke and Roger Bobo. “*Dance of the Ocean Breeze*, originally named *Esque* and recorded with the famous Roger Kellaway Cello Quartet in the early 1970’s, was rewritten for horn, bass horn, and piano, because of its strikingly horn-characteristic melody.”\(^{151}\) The main theme in this one movement, up-beat work is introduced in the piano and brought back throughout the work with


\(^{151}\) Notes for *Prunes*. 

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intermittent episodes of new material. Other than two brief tuba solos in the beginning and middle of the work, two one-measure solos with accompaniment for the horn and tuba at the end of the work, and the final three measures, the horn and tuba remain in rhythmic unison for the entirety of the piece. The piano takes an accompanimental role while the horn and tuba are playing. The piece shifts through various forms of triple meter including \(\frac{15}{8}, \frac{12}{8}, \text{and} \frac{9}{8}\). The most challenging aspects of the work are range, balance, and meter changes. With rhythmic unison in the horn and tuba for a majority of the piece any rhythmic imperfections will be obvious. Both of Kellaway’s works would be most appropriate for advanced players. Although there are no direct ties to Wilder, Kellaway was also influenced by jazz and has had an eclectic career as a jazz pianist and bass player, conductor, and composer of a variety of genres. Like Wilder, he also wrote two works, both of which were for the same performers.

Répondre: Trio for Horn, Tuba and Pianoforte by: Philip Catelinet

The piece is broken into three movements. The first movement begins with the piano until the horn and tuba join in three measures later. The movement is marked “Allegro e Risoluto” and includes many dynamic shifts between instruments and sections of the movement. A unique aspect of the movement is that each instrument has its own cadenza resembling a three-part concerto. The middle movement labeled “Melancholy” has much more lyrical, legato lines with the horn and tuba often finishing each other’s phrases. The third movement, “Capriccio” goes back to a fast tempo. The triple feel of

\[^{152}\text{Roger Kellaway, Notes for Dance of the Ocean Breeze (Vuarmarens, Switzerland: Editions BIM, 1979).}\]
the movement propels the piece forward. The horn and tuba interact similarly to the previous movements in that they frequently build off of the other’s phrases. There is a cadenza section in the third movement as well providing each instrument time to showcase themselves. The piece involves mutes in both instruments. The work is playable by intermediate/advanced players. Main challenges include rhythmic and note accuracy in fast moving parts and over large interval leaps.

Divertimento by: Trygve Madsen

Divertimento by Trygve Madsen (b.1940) is a four-movement work published in 1986. The first movement labeled “Andante” has a relaxed feel and alternating melodic lines between the horn and tuba with piano in an accompaniment role. The second movement is quicker, marked “Vivace,” and stays in $\frac{6}{8}$ throughout. The piano plays a bigger role in this movement, taking over thematic material and playing extended solo passages. The third movement is made up of four repeated sections with long legato lines in each. The melody and lead role alternates between each instrument. The final movement marked “molto allegro” returns to triple meter. Articulations are much more separated than the previous movement to provide contrast. Although the horn and tuba do not play the same melodic material, the canon-like entrances are comparative to those in Wilder’s suites discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. The entire work is approximately eleven minutes long. With no extreme challenges the work is playable by intermediate-advanced players.
Five Ludicrous Derivations for Tuba, Horn and Piano by: Gerhard Wünsch

Gerhard Wünsch wrote a comedic five-movement trio for horn, tuba and piano in 1989. In the score, the work titled Recyclings: Five Ludicrous Derivations for Tuba, Horn and Piano is followed by an introduction of the composer as “Canada’s most spectacularly UN-successful composer.” The performance notes are as follows:\footnote{Gerhard Wünsch, Notes for Recyclings: Five Ludicrous Derivations for Tuba, Horn and Piano (Toronto, ON: Canadian Music Centre, 1989).}:

The performers will NOT be required to do any of the following:

\begin{itemize}
  \item a) blow their instruments into an open grand piano with the damper pedal depressed
  \item b) SING while they are playing
  \item c) produce sounds which their instruments were never intended to make
  \item d) take their clothes off
  \item e) burn the piano
  \item f) stand on their heads or assume lewd positions while playing
  \item g) talk to the audience in an insulting fashion
\end{itemize}

The first movement titled “P.H.D.\textsuperscript{2} -NEVER!!” is an abbreviation for the full title, “Paul Hindemith Dead”\footnote{Ibid.} and takes on a Hindemith sense of tonality and articulation. The movement has edgy articulations and shifts through various key areas. The second movement, “Grape Nuts: A post-cereal piece” is written in non-standard notation in which each player plays from a split-staff score. Extended techniques are required in the horn and tuba parts. The third movement “Schottische: I ‘Vot..-Agoyshe Tanz he writes, the meshujojene nebbich’” is marked “Polka schell.” The movement mainly consists of staccato sections. At various points in the movement the performers are directed to yell...
various phrases to the audience. The fourth movement, “Also in “C”: Music for a soap-opera” is marked to be played “Slow, with feeling.” The legato movement greatly contrasts the previous movement. The fifth movement, “Ta-Ka-tina” is marked to be played at “Minimal Speed: J = 100 (no speed limit).” The articulations remain short for a large portion of this movement. There are many large interval leaps in both the tuba and the horn. Wüensch, a composer and teacher, writes of his music:

I always try to write music which is accessible to the widest possible audience, reasonably well crafted and economical, in that it requires a minimum of rehearsal time. By today’s standards of “New Music”, my style is hopelessly outdated (I have even been known to employ key-signatures occasionally). Music critics tend to dismiss my music outright, while other composers at best tolerate it with a condescending smile.\(^{155}\)

Although the purpose of Wüensch’s music is to be accessible, his work is challenging for even advanced players to perform accurately. Wide interval leaps, fast tempos, meter changes, extended techniques and non-standard notation add to the difficulty of the work.

__Trio Number 1 by: Richard Nash__

__Trio Number 1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano by Richard Nash (b. 1928) was published in 1992. The three-movement work highlights each instrument at various points throughout the work. The first movement marked “Marche” and focuses on a sixteenth-note motive passed between the tuba and horn. Unlike traditional marches this movement is atonal and includes frequently use of triplet figures. The second movement, “Adagio” beings with a piano solo, then a horn solo with piano accompaniment, then a__

\(^{155}\) Ibid.
tuba solo with accompaniment. The end of the movement includes all three instruments joining together before the piano closes the work out in a final three-measure solo similar to the opening motive. The final movement opens with entrances in the tuba, then horn, then piano, each two measures apart. The “Allegro” close to the work is in $\frac{12}{8}$ and includes rips in both the horn and tuba. Each instrument has a notated cadenza where they are free to adjust the tempo. The short work, approximately seven and a half minutes, is written for advanced players.

 Dialogue for Horn, Tuba and Piano by: Anthony Plog

 Dialogue for Horn, Tuba and Piano by Anthony Plog (b.1947) was written for Michael Lind and Ifor James in 1992. Michael Lind is the tuba professor at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, and Ifor James is a British horn player and teacher. Plog is a well-known composer and professional trumpet player. The piece starts out with a tuba solo, and is joined by the horn eight measures later. The two instruments play a duet for the opening of the work. The piece opens at a slow tempo and advances to a fast tempo for almost the entire work. The work transitions between duple and triple meter and includes chromatic passages passed between the horn and tuba with the piano mainly in an accompanimental role. A horn solo in the original tempo brings the piece to the final phrase back in the second tempo. The most challenging aspects of this piece for advanced players are chromaticism, tonality, and meter shifts between duple and triple. As a well-known composer for brass, and brass player himself, it isn’t surprising that Plog wrote a trio for the genre, although direct connections to Wilder’s work are unclear.
Divertimento for Horn, Tuba and Piano by: David R. Gillingham

David R. Gillingham (b.1947) wrote his Divertimento for Horn, Tuba and Piano in 1993. Tubist Philip Sinder and hornist Janine Gaboury-Sly, both professors at Michigan State University, commissioned the piece. The piece is comprised of five movements, as are Wilder’s trios for horn, tuba and piano. The first movement, “Fanfare,” tosses rhythmic sixteenth note motives between the horn and tuba. The piano accents the changing time signatures in the beginning of the movement, then begins to interact with the horn and tuba, alternating and accentuating rhythmic and melodic lines.

In the second movement, “March,” performers are instructed to be “Playful, with ‘tongue in cheek.’” The off beats are frequently emphasized throughout the movement. There are no significant solos for the horn or tuba; the two generally play as a duet with piano accompaniment.

The third movement, “Nocturne” is much slower and more lyrical than the previous movement. After a brief piano introduction the horn presents the main theme and is later joined by the tuba. There are long lyrical phrases throughout. The fourth movement, “Scherzo” contrasts the style of the third movement with the tempo marked as “Fast and driving.” There are stopped pitches in the horn, and glissandos in both the horn and tuba. There are frequent meter changes and syncopated rhythms throughout the movement. The final movement, “Prelude and Ritual Dance,” begins at a slow tempo and quickly changes to a faster tempo. The contrasting sections transition back and forth from edgy and accented to long and lyrical. The biggest challenge in the work is rhythmic
accuracy, meter changes, and the understanding of chord placement in advanced harmonies. The entire work is approximately twelve minutes long.

*Canções Lunares* by: Jean-François Lézé

*Canções Lunares* by Jean-François Lézé (b. 1971) is a short four-movement work for horn, tuba and piano written in 2004. The notes about the work explain:

*Canções Lunares* (Lunar Songs) are a group of four small pieces for horn, tuba and piano. Respecting the language and aesthetics of the French “Mélodie et Chanson.” The horn stands out because of its lyrical involvement. The support in counterpoint of the tuba and the harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment of the piano can be noticed in this piece.\(^{156}\)

In the first movement, marked “Grave e inquieto” the tuba and piano play accompanimental roles and move in unison rhythms for the majority of the movement while the horn has the melody. The second movement is much faster with the piano playing a sixteenth note ostinato and the tuba accenting the strong beats of each measure. The horn has the melodic material again. The third movement marked “Adagio” is slower than the previous movement. The horn takes the lead in this movement as well. The final movement is unique in that each instrument is equal in presentation of melodic material. There is only one piano line throughout the last movement, with only the right hand playing. The work is playable by intermediate and advancing students.

\(^{156}\) Jean-François Léze, Notes for *Canções Lunares: for horn in F, tuba (bass horn) and piano* (Vuarmarens, Switzerland: Editions BIM, 2004).
Tango e Paso Doble by: Jean-François Lézé

Lézé also wrote another piece for the trio called Tango e Paso Doble in 2004. He writes of the work, “Tango e Paso Doble is inspired by the Argentinean tango by Astor Piazzolla and by the traditional Spanish dance “Paso Doble” in its metric, its harmony and in the dance pace without ever losing sight of the Latin sense of humour.”\(^{157}\) As seen in his Canções Lunares, the horn takes the lead throughout the work. The tuba provides a supportive role while the piano provides accompaniment. This piece is much more challenging for the horn player with longer passages in the high range and advanced rhythms. This work would be appropriate for advanced players. Works and people of various cultures inspire the Portuguese composer, adding an eclectic twist to his music. Like Wilder, he also wrote two pieces for the trio for horn, tuba and piano.

Night Fantasies by: Kenneth D. Friedrich

Night Fantasies was written by Kenneth Friedrich in 2008. The piece is made up of four short movements. “Snow Dancing in My Socks” is to be played “With Restraint” and begins with a piano introduction into a long tuba solo with piano accompaniment. The horn joins in almost halfway through the movement. The horn and tuba play a duet-like figure and the piano remains the accompanimental role until the return of the opening material. The next movement, “What’s Hiding in My Closet” has a very different feel than the previous dance-like movement. The second movement includes many quick

\(^{157}\) Jean-François Léze, Notes for Tango e Paso Doble: for horn in F, tuba (bass horn) and piano (Vuarmarens, Switzerland: Editions BIM, 2004).
changes in dynamics and has the horn and tuba frequently playing two separate parts that create a full line. The trade-off figures remain until the middle of the movement when the horn solos with piano accompaniment. In the final section the horn and tuba have trade-off motions again, but end the piece in rhythmic unison.

The third movement, “Land of Harps and Fluffy Stuff” is marked “Gracefully.” The rolled chords in the piano that open the movement help achieve the immediate contrast of the movement to the previous. The horn and tuba begin splitting up the legato line between the two of them. Frequently the horn begins a sub-phrase and the tuba finishes it. The remainder of the movement consists mainly of the horn and tuba playing the melody and counter-melody while the piano accompanies them. The piano frequently performs harp-like figures. The fourth movement, “Ready for My Close-Up” is more accented and staccato than the previous movements. The piano begins then is joined by tuba, then horn. The middle section is marked “Dolce” and consists of longer notes with less harsh articulations. The final section of the movement is to be played “Like the Beginning.” This work is intended for intermediate/advanced players with the hardest aspect of the work being the large interval leaps throughout the horn and tuba parts.

Suite for Horn, Tuba and Piano: “Dancing with Myself” by: Barbara York

Barbara York (b.1949) wrote Suite for Horn, Tuba and Piano: “Dancing with Myself” in 2008. Each of the five movements in the suite has dance-like characteristics. York writes:

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Barbara York also published the same work for Euphonium, Tuba and Piano in 2008.
The movements are all in dance meters and rhythms, but the piece itself is very much interconnected in thematic material and almost cinematic in quality. In that sense, the movements make sense individually but will often have a slightly unfinished quality to them unless they also proceed to the next one. You will notice that the first and third movements begin with the same thematic material, but wind up in different places through their development. I have also chosen to end the piece with the slowest and most introspective of the movements.  

Throughout each movement the horn and tuba interact more with each other. The two trade melodic material while the piano emphasizes the different dance-like rhythms of each movement. Each movement provides a unique twist on standard dance forms. York explains  

As the subtitle “Dancing with Myself” suggests, I am also reflecting on the fact that all of our relationships/dances with others are also in many ways, simply relationships with ourselves (or aspects of ourselves), mirrored back to us in our own perception. Its as if the tuba and horn are at times dancing together, and at other times dancing alone. The work is dedicated “to JLL and other friends” whom the composer thanks for providing her with a better understanding of herself. The work’s main challenges are rhythmic accuracy and endurance, making it most appropriate for advanced students.

Unseen Colors by: Brett Miller

Brett Miller is comfortable writing for the horn and tuba, and is aware of the tendencies of the instruments. His composition for the genre, Unseen Colors, was published in 2008. The piece was commissioned and inspired by tubist Chris Quade.

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159 Barbara York, notes for Suite for Horn, Tuba and Piano: “Dancing with Myself” (Salem, CT: Cimarron Music, 2008).

160 Ibid.
Both Miller and Quade are members of the United States Air Force Band. Miller writes of the piece

This work was commissioned by Chris Quade. Each movement represents a hidden side, or mood of colors we think we know so well. Imagine orange lying flat. Pick up a corner, peer underneath and see what is swirling about. Everyone assumes red is always feisty and bold, and so it is not hard to imagine it might make an enemy. However, what color would be so bold to fight with red? Or, is red wrestling with his own demons, trying to decide how best to represent himself? Yellow, so mild mannered and calming, what color could he possibly fall in love with? Alas, pink, always picked on and called “girlie.” What must pink be trying to tell us about his true nature? I think definitely he wants to be seen as a little cooler, hipper, more macho.\footnote{Brett Miller, Notes for Unseen Colors for Horn, Tuba and Piano (Louisville, KY: Potenza Music, 2008).}

The five-movement work involves a great deal of interaction and intertwining parts between instruments.

The first movement of the work is titled “The Underside of Orange-Part I.” The movement is in a slow \(\frac{5}{8}\). The tuba and horn trade melodic material while the piano has the accompaniment. A unique feature of the movement is that at the loudest dynamic, only the piano is playing. The second movement, “Red’s Enemy,” the horn and tuba act as the color red and red’s enemy. The two go back and forth with accented material before clashing their own melodies together at the fortissimo dynamic. The two instruments begin to go back and forth with melodic material and end the movement in rhythmic unison. The piano emphasizes the \(\frac{5}{8}\) meter of the work. “Yellow’s One True Love” opens with a piano introduction followed by a horn solo. The tuba joins the horn in a duet before beginning a brief tuba solo. The two close out the movement together after a brief piano solo. The long lyrical lines contrast the previous accented phrases of the
previous movement. The fourth movement, “Pink’s Alter Ego” demonstrates a rougher side to pink with crescendo passages through accented phrases. The piece frequently returns to a delicate piano before building back up to a loud dynamic. The three instruments have an equal amount of melodic material in this movement. The final movement, “The Underside of Orange-Part II” picks up where the first movement left off with the same slow, melancholy feel. The final movement has a big fortissimo climax in the middle of the movement, (which wasn’t present in the first movement), before working back down to pianissimo. The biggest challenge in the twelve-minute work is rhythmic cleanliness and clarity in each instrument. This work is approximately ten minutes long and is playable by intermediate/advanced players.

*Color Code* by: Elizabeth Raum

Elizabeth Raum (b. 1945) wrote *Color Code* as a commission for the International Women in Brass Conference, Lin Foulk, and Deanna Swoboda. Each movement of the three-movement work portrays a different color. The first movement, “Clash of Gold and Silver,” frequently shifts meter and transitions through various melodic materials that changes the pace of the movement although the tempo remains constant. The author writes that: “The first is dissonant and militaristic with the driving accented rhythm and sudden dynamic changes. The horn and the tuba repeat each other’s phrases, almost as in a competition. The quiet middle section has an ominous undercurrent, a lull in the
Based on the battle-like impression the composer chose to name the movement off of the general colors of the horn and tuba, silver and gold.

The second movement, “Shifting and Shimmering Shades of Violet and Gray” is much calmer. The movement opens with a piano introduction. The horn and tuba enter trading melodic material and adjust tempo and dynamics in each section. The colors of melodic material presented to the instrumentalists portray a sense of hopelessness. The author writes

The second movement begins full of tragedy and melancholy calling to mind the dark and forbidding colors of gray and velvet. This movement shifts between one shade of despair to another, as in “Shifting and Shimmering Shades of Violet and Gray.” The opening choral-like section is suddenly interrupted by the repressed anger of the hand-muted horn. The tuba and piano join, expressing growing angst until the first theme intercedes with an attempt to claim the anxiety, but it is thwarted again and again until finally a resignation is apparent although it’s left to the last move to brighten the spirits. The final movement has a completely different feel than second. The movement begins at a quicker tempo. Each instrument portrays happier thoughts with syncopated rhythms and shifting melodic lines. The dynamics add depth and contrast to the piece, especially in the quarter note, quarter note, half note motive passed around the instruments. The author writes “What better colors to signify having fun than “Champagne and Chocolate!” This movement’s sprightly and humorous themes, rather than tongue in cheek, bring Color Code to a fitting and happy conclusion.”

The work is technically demanding for each instrumentalist and requires great flexibility throughout range. Performers also need to be

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162 Elizabeth Raum, Notes for Color Code: for Solo Horn and Tuba with Piano (Camden, CT: Cimarron Music, 2010).
163 Ibid.
164 Ibid.
capable of quick changes in meter. The entire work is approximately eleven minutes long.

*Faraway Nearby for Horn, Tuba and Piano* by: Lon W. Chaffin

*Faraway Nearby for Horn, Tuba and Piano* by Lon W. Chaffin was written in 2007 and published by Potenza Music in 2013. Paintings by Georgia O’Keeffe inspired the work. The first movement, “Bones, Blue and White” beings with sustained chords in the piano before a legato horn solo. The piece continues into faster rhythms. The horn, tuba and piano trade melodic material back and forth. The composer states

As *Bones, Blue and White* begins, the music leads us to imagine the open, lonely desert. The instrumental melodies trace the circular lines of a sun-bleached pelvic bone. The white of the bone against the blue of the sky is symbolized in the opposing and overlapping scale structures of the horn and tuba.165

The second movement, “Hills, Red and Gray” transitions between different meters. All three instruments trade off melodic material. The composer writes

Dense chords, rising and falling, shifting between two harmonic hues, give us the impression of *Hills, Red and Gray*, protruding out of the flat desert. Two ascending and descending melodic patterns, in contradictory meters, carry on an animated dialogue as they continually modulate the musical timbre.166

The final movement of the piece, “Music, Pink and Blue” beings in the piano with sustained chords. As seen in the previous movements, the horn, tuba and piano interact

166 Ibid.
throughout passing melodic material between them and taking the leading role in the trio.

The composer notes

In *Music, Pink and Blue* we can see the empty space of the white bone, the layering and unfolding of flowers, and the slopes of the desert hills, all abstracted and manifested in subtle, gradient colors. The melodic lines follow the visual curves as the harmony paints an aural canvas both warm and cool.\(^\text{167}\)

The work is technically demanding for the tuba and horn with complex subdivisions of changing meter. The artistically inspired piece requires great technical skill and flexibility on both instruments and should be performed by advanced players. The entire work is approximately thirteen minutes long.

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**Vast and Curious** by: James M. Stephenson

*Vast and Curious* was written by James M. Stephenson (b. 1969) in 2014 as a micro-commission for a large variety of educators, soloists, chamber performers and orchestral musicians. The composer writes:

The work is in three movements. The title is of course a pun on “Fast and Furious,” which also musically inspires the piece. In mine, the “curious” part is mostly exemplified in the first movement, where I took on the most unique challenge of scoring the entire thing in unison (with displaced octaves) for all three players. An energetic line worms its way throughout, providing a performance challenge I hope to be both exhilarating and worthwhile.

The “vast” is represented by the tuba, of course, but also in the 2\(^{nd}\) movement I score with a wide-open sensibility, representing Gail Williams’ (premiering horn player) love for the mountains. I also desired to provide some space between the outer two frenetic movements. The last

\(^{167}\) Ibid.
movement is mainly a romp to the finish with fun melodies and galloping rhythms. The first movement is extremely fast and includes passages of unison, as stated by the composer. There are sudden dynamic changes and phases that move through all three instruments before completion. The second movement is much slower, marked “Adagio rubato” and later “Largo.” The horn, tuba and piano trade melodic phrases while there are accompanimental drone-like chords in the bass notes of the piano. The movement closes with a slightly faster finish. The third movement returns to the fast tempo and quick meter changes seen in the first movement. There are syncopated rhythms and constantly changing dynamics. Challenging rhythms, range, and meter changes make this piece appropriate for advanced players. The piece is approximately 14 minutes long.

Other Works for Horn, Tuba and Piano

There are five works listed in Appendix B that are not discussed in this chapter. These pieces include: Sonata for Horn, Tuba and Piano by Gary Kulesha, Sonata by Jónas Tómasson, and Trio for Horn, Tuba and Piano by Stanley Weiner. The scores of these works were unavailable to the author at the time of the writing of this paper. In addition, A Simple Theme and Variations by Ifor James, and Haunted America Suite by Justin Raines were noted after this paper was submitted for defense. These additional works, along with a brief summary of each may be found in Justin Worley’s dissertation titled “An Annotated Bibliography of Music for Horn, Tuba and Piano.”

Throughout these works there are few ties to Wilder’s original works. Unlike Wilder, many of the compositions were commissions. Similar to Wilder’s suites, many of
the pieces are intended for advanced players and provide technical challenges of varying
degrees. Each piece is unique in character and challenging elements, providing
perspective performers with the ability to chose which pieces suite his/her playing style.
The brief overview of works is provided as a method of introducing each work in the
hopes that the performer will find enough information about the work to make an
informed decision about whether or not the work is accessible to them.
CONCLUSION

The trio for horn, tuba and piano provides composers with an ensemble of two different brass instruments that have the acoustical ability to blend well, and with similar tone colors. Although the number of horn, tuba piano trios has been growing consistently since its introduction in 1963, composers and performers must be made aware of the development and capabilities of the horn and tuba in order to see the potential for the genre’s growth. A surprising aspect of the trio is lack of repertoire for the ensemble. As noted by Jean F. Martin:

A particularly engaging combination is the horn and tuba. However, there is still a lack of quality literature for these instruments. Many players of these instruments hoped that the success of Alec Wilder’s *Trio for Horn, Tuba, and Piano* would result in a deluge of pieces for this well-suited combination of conical instruments, but such has not been the case.  

Of the works described in chapter 6, there was only one appropriate for intermediate players, and none for beginners.

Another major aspect of the trio is its potential in education. The horn and tuba are two of the least popular choices for beginning band and are often excluded from the list of instrument choices due to size, or difficulty.  

It is much harder to convince beginning students to switch instruments once they are comfortable on their first. By performing horn, tuba, piano trios, both simple and complex, performers can educate

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students about the capabilities and sounds of the tuba and horn therefore expanding popularity amongst beginning students.

Throughout this project the main similarity between all works discussed is the level of difficulty. Each piece written for horn, tuba, and piano since its start in 1963 have been written for intermediate to advanced players. There is a large lack of material for beginners to intermediate players. With newly composed works for beginners, young players can experience the benefits of chamber music on individual technique and the ability to listen and play in a group. New works need to be written for beginners before the exact benefits of the trio on elementary players can be fully realized.

Wilder’s 1963 experimentation, composition, and success of *Suite No.1 for Horn, tuba and Piano* has led to a realm of new works for the horn, tuba and piano trio that has potential to grow into an educational experience for students, performers, and audiences alike.
REFERENCES


Barrows, John. *John Barrows and his French Horn*. Golden Crest Records, Recital Series RE 7002. LP.


_____ *Sonata for Horn, Tuba, and Piano.* Toronto, ON: Counterpoint Music Library Services, 1975.


_____ Sonata No.3 for French Horn and Piano. Recorded by John Barrows and Tait Sanford Barrows. Golden Crest Records, Recital Series RE 7034. LP.


APPENDIX A

WILDER’S WORKS FOR SOLO HORN, HORN AND ACCOMPANIMENT, TUBA, TUBA AND ACCOMPANIMENT, AND TRIOS FOR HORN, TUBA AND PIANO

All works and descriptions were compiled from the following three sources: Winston R. Morris, and Daniel Perantoni, Guide to the Tuba Repertoire: The New Tuba Source Book, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); Demsey and Prather with Bell, Alec Wilder; Zeltsdam, Alec Wilder (1907-1980).
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td><em>Concerto No.1 for Horn and Chamber Orchestra</em></td>
<td>Written for John Barrows</td>
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<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td><em>Sonata No.1 for Horn and Piano</em></td>
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<td>1956</td>
<td><em>Suite for Horn and Piano</em></td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td><em>Sonata No.2 for Horn and Piano</em></td>
<td>Written for John Barrows</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td><em>Sonata No.1 for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Written for Harvey Phillips</td>
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<tr>
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<td><em>Concerto No.2 for Horn and Chamber Orchestra</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Suite No.1 for Tuba and Orchestra</em></td>
<td>Written for Harvey Phillips</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Suite No.1 for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Arranged from <em>Effie Suite</em>, written for Harvey Phillips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Encore Piece for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Also known as “A Tubist’s Showpiece”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td><em>Suite No.1 for Horn, Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Written for Barrows and Phillips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Air for Horn and Small Wind Ensemble</em></td>
<td>Written for Barrows</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Suite No.5 for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>“Dedicated to a loyal friend”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td><em>Suite No.2 for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Written for Jessie Phillips</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td><em>Suite for Horn and Strings</em></td>
<td>For horn and piano</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Four Easy Pieces</em></td>
<td>For horn and piano</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Suite No.3 for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Written for Harvey Phillips, Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Suite No.1 for Tuba and Orchestra</em></td>
<td>Arranged from <em>Effie Suite</em>, written for Harvey Phillips</td>
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<td>1968</td>
<td><em>Small Suite</em></td>
<td>For tuba and piano</td>
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<td><em>Sons for Carol</em></td>
<td>For tuba and piano, written for Carol Phillips</td>
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<td><em>Suite No.4 for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Also known as the “Thomas Suite”, written for Thomas Phillips</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Concerto for Tuba and Wind Ensemble</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Convalescence Suite</em></td>
<td>For solo tuba, written for Harvey Phillips</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td><em>Entertainment No. 4 for Horn and Chamber Orchestra</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td><em>For Jessie Alone</em></td>
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<td><em>Twelve Etudes for Solo Horn</em></td>
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<td>1975</td>
<td><em>Elegy for the Whale</em></td>
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<td><em>Sonata No. 2 for Tuba and Piano</em></td>
<td>Written for Lottie Phillips</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td><em>Suite for Horn and Tuba</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Little Detective Suite No. 1</em></td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td><em>John Barrows: French Horn and Chamber Orchestra</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Six Short Studies for Horn</em></td>
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<td><em>Five Love Songs for Horn and Chamber Orchestra</em></td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td><em>Little Detective Suite No. 2</em></td>
<td>For solo horn</td>
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APPENDIX B

WORKS FOR THE TRIO FOR HORN, TUBA AND PIANO SINCE 1971

The following two sources were consulted in the preparation of this list: OCLC Worldcat “tuba, horn, piano”; Morris and Perantoni, Guide to the Tuba Repertoire, 189-216. The works by James and Raines were added to the list after completion of the paper in March 2015 after review of the dissertation by Worley; Worley, “An Annotated Bibliography of Music for Horn, Tuba and Piano,” 14-15, 34-35.
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<td>Sonoro</td>
<td>Roger Kellaway</td>
<td>Edition BIM</td>
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<td>Dance of the Ocean Breeze</td>
<td>Roger Kellaway</td>
<td>Edition BIM</td>
<td>1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Répondre: trio for French horn, tuba and pianoforte</td>
<td>Philip B Catelinet</td>
<td>Cinque Port Music</td>
<td>1985</td>
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<td>Sonata</td>
<td>Jónas Tómasson</td>
<td>Iceland Music Information Center</td>
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<td>Trygve Madsen</td>
<td>Oslo : Musikk-Husets forlag</td>
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<td>S.I : Wünsch</td>
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<td>Trio Number 1 for tuba, horn, and piano</td>
<td>Richard Nash</td>
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<td>David R. Gillingham</td>
<td>Tuba-Euphonium Press</td>
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<td>Ifor James</td>
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<td>Stanley Weiner</td>
<td>Köln Wolfgang G. Haas</td>
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<td>Canções Lunares</td>
<td>Jean-François Léze</td>
<td>Rivera Editores</td>
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<td>Haunted America Suite</td>
<td>Justin Raines</td>
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<td>Faraway Nearby</td>
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<td>Vast and Curious</td>
<td>James M. Stephenson</td>
<td>Stephenson Music</td>
<td>2014</td>
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March 3, 2015

Christina Romano
604 E Weber Dr. Unit 8
Tempe, AZ 85281

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