Alexander Floury
Sample of Score Preparation
Ewazen and *A Hymn for the Lost and Living*
Wind Music Literature

Eric Ewazen and *A Hymn for the Lost and Living*

Eric Ewazen is an American composer born in 1954 and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. His mother is Polish and father is Ukrainian. They shared a passion for music and inspired him to love music. His mother took him to art fairs and museum in her spare time when not doing business work and his father, who worked in a steel mill, played harmonica and had a love for eastern European folksongs and dances. Ewazen is influenced and inspired by such music. He recalls a trip to see a Russian dance company while he was young:

> ...most especially the Moiseyev from the U.S.S.R. when I was very young. Watching the dancers do the Gopak, the traditional dance of the Ukraine, was so inspiring. Often with those Ukrainian dances the music starts slow and gets faster and faster. Ultimately, as the dance becomes spectacular with unbelievable leaps through the air, the music whirls with terrific exhilaration. So, much of my music ends with big fast endings, and I trace this directly to that folk-music inspiration. (Altman)

Mrs. Ewazen bought an upright piano for the family when Eric was five and he began taking lessons that year from a neighborhood teacher. He soon began to compose his own music and sit at the piano for hours in awe at the music he had made. Variety shows and musical theatre really appealed to Ewazen. In the fourth grade Ewazen gathered up all of the neighborhood kids and began a yearly school production similar to variety shows. Ewazen directed, played piano, and taught everyone his or her

parts from the script he created. (McNally) The performances included *Mikado, The King and I, The sound of Music, My Fair Lady, A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and his own original rock musical *Apocalypse.* The same year that he wrote *Apocalypse* he attended Fortnightly Music Club, an amateur musician club that met in downtown Cleveland, which exposed him to great piano literature and gave him the opportunity to learn more about piano and perform major works like Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Humoresque*, which in his opinion was one of the greatest pieces written, as well.

In addition to piano he learned violin at the age of ten and switched to cello later on. While in high school, Ewazen cultivated his interest in composition by studying composition with Dr. Walter Winzenburger at Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio. (Springer) His high school band, orchestra, and chorus directors asked him to write original compositions for their respective groups and he credits his growth of love for composition to outstanding teachers. His senior year he decided that he wanted to become a composer.

With his sights set on music composition, Ewazen wrote several more pieces during his senior year including an orchestral piece entitled *Insurrection*, a twelve-tone work for chorus, wind ensemble, piano, and percussion. He also composed a solo piano work entitled *Entrance*, apiece based on a twelve-tone row built on perfect fourths. Ewazen says that the solo piano piece sounded "somewhat like Emerson, Lake, and Palmer." (Altman) *Insurrection*, *Entrance*, *Apocalypse*, and a piece unnamed for cello and piano were all submitted to the Eastman School of Music and helped Ewazen gain acceptance to the school in 1972. (McNally)

At Eastman, Ewazen's primary composition teachers were Joseph Schwantner, Samuel Adler, Warren Benson, and Eugene Kurtz. He was to cycle through classes with these four different composition professors to become expose to a variety of approaches to writing new music. Ewazen's first composition teacher was Joseph Schwantner, who brought to class recordings and scores of new works from Pulitzer Prize winning composers. Schwantner was adamant that his students become familiar with new contemporary composers such as George Crumb, Elliott Carter, and Krzysztof Penderecki. Schwantner also believed in experimenting with instrumentation and sound effects to achieve avant-garde style with new compositions. He began to compose in a more atonal language utilizing sound effects and complex chromatic lines. His first collegiate composition was called Devils Septet and was written for four tubas, two percussionists, and piano based on sound effects and tone clusters.

From his studies with Samuel Adler, Ewazen learned that the timing of the climax is crucial to the musical structure. While teaching in a contemporary style, Alder would use analysis of traditional scores of Haydn and others to demonstrate compositional structure. Between semesters at Eastman, Ewazen briefly studied with Gunther Schuller while attending Tanglewood, a summer music festival. Unique timbres and orchestration were crucial in Schuller's style of composition and teaching. While at Tanglewood, Schuller wrote an assortment of jazz and orchestral music, often containing unique timbre and sonorities, which had a profound impact on Ewazen's technique. (McNally)

Immediately upon attaining his Bachelors Degree in 1976 from Eastman, Ewazen

began his graduate degree in New York, at the Julliard School of Music. He spent 4 years at Julliard earning a Masters of Music in 1978 and a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Composition in 1980. Milton Babbitt, Ewazen's principle teacher at Juilliard, required all his students to account for all of the notes, to make sure that the music had direction, and to appreciate the sonorities that one employed. Ewazen felt that Babbitt challenged all of his students to begin developing a unique personal style.

Michael Ethen, musicologist at the University of Minnesota, interviewed Ewazen in 2004 for the Internet website "ComposersOnline." and Ewazen credited his teachers for many of the qualities inherent in his own compositions:

From Schwantner, I learned to explore and become thrilled with new colors and sonorities. From Adler, I got his wonderfully infectious joy at the simple act of creating new music, plus his great, rigorous approach to form and structure. From Benson, I really learned to write for wind instruments. He always insisted, when writing for a particular instrument, that I flatter the sound of that instrument completely - in other words, to be as idiomatic as possible. I had the pleasure to study with Gunther Schuller when I was working on an orchestral piece, and his vast experience with orchestration influenced my own approach to orchestration, which lasts to this very day . . . Babbitt, who was fantastic - from him I learned not to "coast," not to take any notes for granted. (Ethan)

In addition to his composition teachers, Schuman, Bernstein, Gershwin, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Bartok, Debussy, Ravel, and Crumb influenced his style. If you

know Ewazen's music, you know how this piece sounds-mainstream tonal, harmonically driven, and syncopated. Notably, his compositions exemplify an attraction to the harmonic and rhythmic drives of American composers. (Snedeker) He is a self-proclaimed cross between neo-Romantic and neo-Impressionistic composer and is proud of writing music that incorporates definite forms, musical structure, and singable melodies.

Ewazen is not particularly fond of music reviews regardless of whether or not they are flattering. He is confident that if he had listened to them years ago, he would not be the composer he is today. Many critics have written that Ewazen's music is too tonal; his response to this criticism is that he is writing for the performers and not the critics. He frequently writes without a key signature to allow him the freedom to move from key to key or chord to chord without the limits of key signatures. Ewazen has a tendency to prolong a tonal area until it is aurally established to his satisfaction and then suddenly shifting to a different tonal area.

In award-winning broadcaster Bruce Duffie's interview with Ewazen, he Described the composer's music as:

. . . Unabashedly tonal, yet sprinkled with touches and glimpses of many other styles. But whatever his output, the music gets played and recorded, which is part of the test of a prolific composer. It is also respected by his peers and by the musical establishment in general, as well as by forward-looking performers and seekers.

As a living composer, he has found acceptance among performers and audiences and is enjoying many performances across the United States and abroad. He is in high demand as a composer and has a commissioning schedule that consistently has an approximate three-year waiting period. Eric Ewazen has become an important and influential composer of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.(Ewazen)

Ewazen has composed for a wide variety of media including solo instruments, chamber ensembles, symphony orchestra, wind ensemble, and voices. His chamber music and sonatas for wind and brass instruments have become staples of the repertoire. To date, Ewazen has published thirteen works for large wind ensemble including *A Hymn for the Lost and the Living* and several concertos for solo instrument and winds.

A Hymn for the Lost and Living: In Memoriam, September 11, 2001 was commissioned by and dedicated to the US Air Force Heritage of America Band, Major Larry H. Lang, Director. On September 11th, 2001, in a series of coordinated suicide attacks by 19 members of al-Qaeda, two hijacked aircraft's crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City, while a third smashed into The Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia and fourth targeting Washington D.C. ultimately crashing into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. In total 2,996 people were killed. This horrific national tragedy has broken down the American people. But through the patriotism of working together in support of those who had lost loved ones, we overcame.

In 2002, Ewazen composed *A Hymn for the Lost and Living*; one year after the attacks. In his own “program notes”, Ewazen describes his inspiration for composing a

piece about September 11:

"On September 11, 2001, I was teaching my music theory class at The Julliard School, when we were notified of the catastrophe that was occurring several miles south of us in Manhattan. Gathering around a radio in the school's library, we heard the events unfold in shock and disbelief…During the next several days, our great city became a landscape of empty streets and impromptu heartbreaking memorials mourning our lost citizens, friends and family…A few days later, the city seemed to have been transformed...I saw multitudes of people holding candles, singing songs, and gathering in front of those memorials, paying tribute to the lost, becoming a community of citizens of this city, of this country and of this world, leaning on each other for strength and support. *A Hymn to the Lost and the Living* portrays those painful days following September 11th, days of supreme sadness. It is intended to be a memorial for those lost souls, gone from this life, but who are forever treasured in our memories."(Ewazen)

Ewazen states that this work is a "memorial." It is not as programmatic as Frank Ticheli's *An American Elegy,* yet it is more so than Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. It is clearly composed to elicit some kind of emotional response from the listener. Ronald Lo Presti's *Elegy for a Young American* takes the listener through the "Five Stages of Grief." Denial and Isolation, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and finally Acceptance. Eric Ewazen also takes the listener through the "Five stages of Grief" but while Lo Presti takes the listener through all of the stages in order, Ewazen revisits some of the stages even

after reaching the acceptance stage.

A Hymn for the Lost and the Living is scored for large wind ensemble including four parts for trumpet. There is also a part for contra-alto clarinet that is almost always double in the baritone saxophone. It is in arch form: ABCDEFGEBA. The tonic-dominant tonal relationship is a major feature of the tonality.

Played freely, without a conductor, the piece opens with solo trumpet playing a melody in C minor with several arpeggio figures reminiscent of "Taps." This opening theme sets a mood of reflection before going on to capture the emotions of that fateful day. The lone trumpet solo and sparse texture that follows creates a feeling of isolation.

Sections B through D that follow contain constant shifts dramatically in melody, tonality, texture, and timbre that give the piece a disjointed feel. There are also several moments of silence that add some very effective tension. The musical impact reflects on the emotions as the

day unfolded; emotions of shock, disbelief, anger, and sorrow.(Druffel)

The C Section consists of two contrasting themes each four measures long in the key of G minor, the dominant of C minor. The first theme, representing the stage of Anger, is slow moving with a narrow melodic range played by the saxophones and horns. Low woodwinds, low brass, and string bass play chords on beats two and four with some weight giving this phrase a pesante style. The second theme of the C Section, representing the stage of Bargaining, is faster moving and much more melodic. Trumpet 1 plays a two bar antecedent phrase that is answered by an upper woodwind consequent phrase.

Over one-third of the piece is complete before the primary theme, representing the Depression Stage, is finally presented. A mourning process, complete with a funeral (m.73, “Funeral March”), begins after having explored the emotions surrounding the tragedy. (Druffel) The primary theme is passed throughout the ensemble and evokes the depressing thoughts of that day from the listeners. The F section is the part where a brief rhythmic ostinato gives the impression of a funeral march, representing our Anger Stage. It quickly goes back to depression stage. In the midst of the E minor tonality here, there is an F-flat major chord at m.116 (enharmonic spelled E Major, the parallel key). This one measure of major tonality brings a brief moment of hope, the Acceptance Stage. Unfortunately, this glimmer of major lasts only briefly as the tonality suddenly becomes B-flat minor. Leading the composition back to denial, which would prove that the work is in arch form. The listener goes through all five stages and comes back to the unsettling isolation stage , with the “taps” theme, at the end symbolizing the idea that this is a massive tragedy. There are two beats of total silence followed by dissonant chords and the dark timbre of unison B-flats to end the piece in the Denial/Isolation Stage. This conclusion serves as a reminder that while we move on with life and remember the lost, the world will never be the same after September 11, 2001.(Druffel)

Ewazen has written many solo works for winds and percussion. For the purpose of this paper his chamber works include: *Fantasia for Seven Trumpets, (*1991*), Prelude and Fugue for Trumpet Choir, (*2000*), A Concert Fanfare for Trumpet Choir, (*2000*), Sonoran Desert Harmonies: Trumpet Choir, (*2003*), Sonatina for Two Trumpets, (*2004), *Grand Canyon Octet: Horn Ensemble,* (1996)*, Legend of the Sleeping Bear: Horn*

*Ensemble, (*2001*), High Desert Octet: Horn Ensemble, (*2002*), Woodland Quartet: Horn Quartet, (*2003*), Dagon II: Nine tracks of Bass Trombone, (*1980*), Concertino for Bass Trombone and Trombone Choir, (*1996*), Fantasia and Double Fugue for Trombone Choir, (*1997*), Capriccio for Bass Trombone and Trombone Choir, (*1999*), Myths and Legends: Trombone Quartet, (*2000*), Posaunenstadt: Trombone Choir, (*2000*), Great Lakes Fanfare: Trombone Choir, (*2002*),* Colchester Fantasy, (1987*), Frost Fire, (*1990*), A Western Fanfare, (*1997*), Grand Valley Fanfare, (*2001), *Symphony in Brass: Brass Ensemble w/ Percussion, (*1991*), A Western Fanfare: Brass Ensemble w/ Percussion, (*1997*), Grand Canyon Sinfonia: Brass Ensemble, (*2000*), Front Range Fanfare: Brass Ensemble w/ Percussion, (*2003*), Pastorale: for Trumpet, Trombone and Piano, (*1996*), A Philharmonic Fanfare: for Trumpet, Horn, and Trombone, (*1997*),* and *An Elizabethan Songbook: for Trumpet, Trombone and Piano, (*1998*).*

He has written *The Palace for nine Perfections* (2000) for percussion ensemble and *Roaring Fork Quintet for Wind Instruments* and *Cascadian Concerto: Woodwind Quintet with Piano*, (2003), for woodwind quintet. For mixed ensembles he has composed *Trio for Bassoon, Horn and Piano, (*1983*), Quintet for Trumpet and Strings, (*1990*), Trio for Trumpet, Violin and Piano, (*1992*), Mosaics: Flute, Bassoon, Marimba, (*1993*), Ballade, Pastorale and Dance: Flute, Horn, and Piano, (1993), Mandala: Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Violin, Cello, (*1999*), Art of the City: Clarinet, Horn, String Quartet, (2000), Trio for Trumpet, Cello and Piano, (*2007*).*

Ewazen's Wind Ensemble and Concertos with wind Ensemble accompaniment consist of:

"Legacy", for symphonic wind ensemble, (2000), "Flight", for symphonic wind ensemble, (2001), “A Hymn for the Lost and the Living”, (2001), "Celtic Hymns and Dances", for symphonic wind ensemble, (1990), "Celebration of a Cherished Life", for symphonic wind ensemble, (2002), "Shadowcatcher", a concerto for brass quintet and wind ensemble, (1996), “Cascadian Concerto for Wind Quintet and Orchestra” (2003), “Danzante”, a concerto for Trumpet and Wind Ensemble, (soon to be published), “Concerto for Tenor Trombone and Wind Ensemble” (2001), “Visions of Light”, a concerto for Tenor, Trombone and Wind Ensemble, (2003), “Concerto for Euphonium and Wind Ensemble”,(2003), “Concerto for Bass Trombone or Tuba and Wind Ensemble” (2000), “Concerto for Marimba and Wind Ensemble”, (2003), "Concerto for Bassoon and Wind Ensemble", (2002), and "Concerto for Euphonium and Wind Ensemble" (2003)

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