ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: CONTEXT, IDEOLOGY, AND PERFORMANCE IN
CHARLES IVES'S *SYMPHONY NO. 4*

Michael Alexander Jacko, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2014

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Symphony No. 4 by the American composer, Charles Ives (1874–1954),

represents a monument in Western music. This was Ives's signature work composed for

his grandest medium, the symphony orchestra with chorus, marking the most ambitious

musical endeavor that the composer ever completed. Realizing Ives's achievement,

however, presents a unique set of challenges to the performer. The piece consists of four

movements largely disparate in musical style and content. Since its full premiere in 1965,

the Fourth has proven as difficult to comprehend ideologically as it is to perform.

Set in two chapters, this study begins by presenting a context for the Fourth

Symphony, composed of relevant musical examples from Ives's *oeuvre*. The second

chapter focuses exclusively on the Fourth Symphony, rendering a performance-based

analysis of the work. This document serves primarily as a performance guide, confronting

a conductor's obstacles in rationalizing and disarming a conceptually and logistically

intimidating piece.

CONTEXT, IDEOLOGY, AND PERFORMANCE IN CHARLES IVES'S *SYMPHONY*

NO. 4

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF EXAMPLES

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

Symphony No. 4 by the enigmatic composer, Charles Ives (1874–1954), represents a monument in Western music, in symphonic music, and in American music. The signature work composed for his grandest medium, the symphony orchestra with chorus, Ives's Fourth Symphony (subsequently labeled "the Fourth") marks the most ambitious musical endeavor that Ives ever completed.

The Fourth is an exceptionally difficult piece, having presented a daunting set of challenges to performers since its full premiere in 1965. Two new editions of the Fourth have proven instrumental in clarifying this perplexing masterwork since their release in 2011, but performance of the piece still demands thorough investigation and thoughtful preparation. The work is as difficult to comprehend ideologically as it is to perform, as it consists of four movements largely disparate in musical style and content.

This study has three primary objectives:
1.   To define Ives's representative style and contextualize the musical rhetoric of the Fourth through examples from his other pieces.
2.   To examine the personal, philosophical, and musical ideologies that inspired Ives to compose the Fourth.
3.   To confront and resolve the unique performance challenges of conducting this singularly difficult symphonic work.

Set in two chapters, the study begins by presenting a detailed context for the Fourth composed of relevant musical examples from Ives's works. The first chapter concludes with an analysis of Ives's writings on philosophy and rhetoric, specifically in relation to the *Concord* Sonata and the Fourth Symphony. The second chapter focuses exclusively on the Fourth, examining Ives's ideological motives for composing the work and rendering a performance-based analysis. This document serves primarily as a performance guide, detailing a conductor's obstacles in rationalizing, preparing, and disarming a conceptually and logistically intimidating piece.

1

CHAPTER 1: CONTEXTUALIZING THE FOURTH SYMPHONY

In approaching a colossally complex piece by Charles Ives, it is necessary to understand the process behind his musical ideas. Why does his *Symphony no. 4* exist as it does musically, structurally, and philosophically? Out of context, certain constituent parts of the Fourth might appear daunting and off-putting to conductors and incomprehensible to performers. The answers to the large-picture questions of why and how Ives created this open-ended masterpiece only begin to come into focus by examining the context and precedents Ives established for this work. What follows in chapter 1 is a commentary on the building blocks of Ives's style—influence, melody, harmony, rhythm, orchestration, structure, and philosophy—accompanied by musical examples from peripheral works that directly define and contextualize the language he uses in the Fourth.

Section 1. Stylistic influence

A leading scholar on Ives's music, J. Peter Burkholder has written extensively on Ives's place in the classical tradition, his use of borrowed material, and his innovations with regard to structure. Burkholder has cited four primary fonts of inspiration that formed Ives's musical style: the American popular and folk tradition, the Protestant hymn tradition, the European classical tradition, and a penchant for experimentation.[1]

Popular and folk tradition

Living with his father, George Ives (1845–1894), in Danbury, CT, Charles gained a vast exposure to American popular music.[2] George was the leader of Danbury's town band, and he had formerly led the band of the Third Brigade of the Army of the Potomac—recognized by

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[1] J. Peter Burkholder, "Ives and the Four Musical Traditions," *Charles Ives and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 3–34.
[2] Laurence Wallach, "The New England Education of Charles Ives" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1973). This document is especially informative regarding Ives's musical formation and his relationship with his father.

some at the time as the best band in the army—during the Civil War.[3] Though popular music might often fall into the class of "low-brow" music in the scope of a classical composer's career, Ives retained his boyhood reverence for traditional American tunes in the style of Stephen Foster.

In his compositional maturity, Ives would criticize the simplicity and unimaginative writing in Victorian parlor songs, all the while incorporating elements from that very style into some of his most earnest works. He wrote lighthearted songs for voice and piano imitating the Victorian style, sometimes including a disclaimer: "Though there is little danger of it, it is hoped that this song will not be taken seriously, or sung, at least, in public"[4] or "which is worse? the music or the words?"[5]

One genre for which Charles developed a lifelong affinity beginning in his childhood was the march. Some of his earliest compositions for band and orchestra were marches, including the *Holiday Quickstep* (1887), and he maintained this stylistic influence through his mature compositions. The "street beat" rhythm permeated his works, even in the absence of a melody or marchlike character.

Example 1: Street beat rhythm
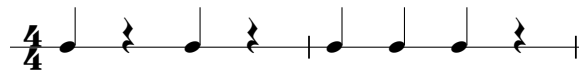
Protestant hymn tradition

Ives grew up as a practicing Protestant, attending the Methodist church and playing the organ in services between 1888 and 1902.[6] He took organ lessons from a young age and served as organist at the Second Congregational Church and Baptist Church in Danbury, St. Thomas Episcopal Church and Centre Church in New Haven,[7] and Central Presbyterian Churches in

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[3] Jan Swafford, *Charles Ives: A Life with Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 19–25.
[4] Charles Ives, "On the Counter," *114 Songs* (New York: Peer International Corporation, 1955).
[5] Charles Ives, "In the Alley," *114 Songs* (New York: Peer International Corporation, 1958).
[6] Charles E. Ives, *Memos*, ed. John Kirkpatrick (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972), 325–328.
[7] Burkholder, "Ives and the Four Musical Traditions," 8–11.

Bloomfield, NJ, and New York City.[8] During his time in these roles, Ives wrote music to be performed in church, carefully quelling his wilder compositional impulses and tailoring his music to the mood of worship at the services.[9]

Ives became comfortable setting psalms as a church organist, composing primarily miniature settings and culminating with *Psalm 90* (1894). His favorite hymn composer was Lowell Mason (1792–1872),[10] and he also admired anthem composer Dudley Buck (1839–1909).[11] Though Protestant hymns were predictable and generally consonant, Ives treated them with the same sincere reverence as he did popular music.

A pivotal event in Ives's musical career was the premiere of his cantata, *The Celestial Country*, in 1902. This performance, though successful, inspired Ives to quit his role as a church organist. Ives felt his musical voice weakening as he wrote specifically to please an audience, at which point he decided, "I either had to stop music or stop [compromise]."[12]

European classical tradition

Ives's greatest aspirations in his own music lay within the realm of classical forms, and his greatest achievements came in the forms of world-embracing symphonies, sonatas, and art songs. Even as a church organist, Ives adopted a more virtuosic and secular style for his solo recitals showcasing transcriptions of symphonic literature such as Rossini's *William Tell* overture, and his own original composition, *Variations on America*.[13] During his time at Yale (1894–1898), Ives studied with Horatio Parker (1863–1919), a high-profile American composer rooted deeply in the European classical tradition. Parker was leery of budding young composers who exhibited little respect for the past. Predictably Ives and Parker clashed, as Ives longed to

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[8] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 143.
[9] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 128–129.
[10] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 5.
[11] Burkholder, "Ives and the Four Musical Traditions," 9.
[12] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 160.
[13] Wallach, "The New England Education of Charles Ives," 151–153.

cultivate the sense of musical freedom he had inherited from his father. Parker served as a grounding influence on the young composer, who learned more at Yale than he would ever admit.

Ives continued to compose religious miniatures while at Yale, but he also began his First String Quartet (1902) and First Symphony (1902) during these years. He worked with Parker on contrapuntal writing, especially fugues, and he then adopted a motivic, contrapuntal style for much of his work. Ives did respect the great European romantic masters, notably Brahms, Dvořák, and Tchaikovsky. He wrote 129 art songs, two string quartets, four violin sonatas, and three piano sonatas. He completed four numbered symphonies, and furthermore he combined individual programmatic tone poems into symphonies (*A Symphony: New England Holidays*, i.e. *Holidays* Symphony) and three multi-movement *Orchestral Sets* regarded by many as symphonies. The *Universe Symphony* remained unfinished. For this work Ives envisioned a large number of antiphonal orchestras performing on the hilltops of Keene Valley, NY.[14]

Experimental music

Burkholder suggests that Ives "seems to have invented" experimental music. Having undertaken various regimented "compositional exercises" in private, Ives incorporated those processes "less strictly into [his] concert works."[15] The urge toward free experimentation certainly came from his father. George Ives was known to attempt to recreate the out-of-tune clanging of church bells on the piano and to lead two marching bands in opposite directions playing different tunes simultaneously.[16]

Most of Charles Ives's miniature psalm settings incorporated subtle experiments, which he then synthesized into the harmonically and formally adventurous *Psalm 90*.[17] He composed

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[14] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 106.
[15] Burkholder, "Ives and the Four Musical Traditions," 14.
[16] Ibid., 43.
[17] James Bagwell, "Innovation and Synthesis: The Psalm Settings of Charles Ives" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1999). This indispensible document details the experimental trajectory of Ives's sacred choral music.

Three Quarter-tone Pieces for two pianos and four *Ragtime Dances* for theater orchestra. Jan Swafford argues that his discovery and implementation of the ragtime style was Ives's final step in finding his mature voice.[18] Ives made innovations with his use of novel instrumental combinations, a unique and versatile harmonic idiom, cumulative form, and complex rhythms that would confound future generations of instrumentalists.

A gifted keyboard player with a legendary ear and musical memory, Ives was also an idealist in his beliefs concerning music, business, and politics. The difficulty of his work was simply a by-product of the idealistic, unadulterated voice of a musical genius. His success in the insurance industry precluded any dependence on the financial or commercial success of his music. When he did advocate for his own music, Ives enlisted colleagues whom he truly trusted: those up for the challenge of performing his works.

Synthesis and Ives's mature voice

Burkholder calls Ives's career "extraordinary" in its diversity and "coherent" despite lacking "consistency…and a single line of development."[19] Much of Ives's mature music incorporates his four primary stylistic influences, presenting elements of popular, sacred, and experimental music within classical constructs. Burkholder cites *General William Booth Enters into Heaven* (1914) as a prime example of the variety in Ives's style.[20] *General William Booth Enters into Heaven* is an art song combining marchlike street beat rhythms, Lowell Mason's "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood" as its primary refrain, and a harmonic framework ranging from traditional to audacious.

Ives's *Symphony no. 4* represents his most powerful synthesis of these four styles. Religious in its manipulation of hymn tunes, jovial in its quotation of popular music, and experimental in its treatment of the orchestra, the Fourth marks a high point of adventurousness

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[18] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 38.
[19] Burkholder, "Ives and the Four Musical Traditions," 4–5.
[20] Ibid., 23–28.

and realized potential within Ives's output. Burkholder's final conclusion in this matter asserts that, for Ives, classical forms provided "a framework within which he could write music that speaks of individual experience and expects its audience to listen with complete attention." The popular, church, and experimental components were necessary to "reflect his own experience…as authentically as possible."[21]

Section 2. Melody

Aside from his discourse on Ives's stylistic formation, Burkholder's primary Ives scholarship centers on the principles of melodic borrowing in Ives's music.[22]

General method

Laurence Wallach asserts that as a result of his study with Parker, Ives developed "'a thoroughly motivic approach to composition' relying on the manipulation and transformation of borrowed tunes to create motivically unified structures."[23] Particularly in his symphonies, Ives's themes originated as straightforward melodic statements lending themselves to thorough motivic manipulation. In many works, Ives wrote fairly square four- or eight-measure phrases that he would superimpose in counterpoint with various melodies and motives. Other times he presented his themes fragmentarily, leaving the full statement of a theme until after its development. Burkholder refers to this technique as cumulative form.[24]

In the first movement of his First Symphony, Ives created themes that were straightforward in both melodic contour and phrase length (Appendix: figure 1.01–1.05). The variety of this movement lies in its creative variation of phrase lengths and thematic interplay, much like in the symphonies of Joseph Haydn. Burkholder compares the second movement of

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[21] Burkholder, "Ives and the Four Musical Traditions," 29.
[22] The standard, comprehensive treatise on borrowing in Ives's music is Peter Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).
[23] Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 71.
[24] For his discourse on cumulative form refer to Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 137–266.

the same symphony to the Largo of Dvořák's *Symphony no. 9,* "from the New World" (1895).[25]
While Ives's opening English horn melody (figure 1.06) follows a similar contour to Dvořák's, its
length is more economical and its motivic characteristics more varied. Ives's third movement
follows a contrapuntal approach, introducing an eight-measure theme. He repeats this theme in
staggered, fugal entrances in the style of the scherzo of Ludwig van Beethoven's (1770–1827)
Ninth Symphony (1824).

In the introductory movement to his Second Symphony (1902), Ives unveiled themes one
by one in fragmentary states. His introduction of the tune, "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean"
(figure 1.07), only *alluded* to the complete tune, which he would state in its complete form in the
finale. Ives called his densely chromatic and highly contrapuntal Third Symphony (1911) a
"cross roads between the old ways and new ways."[26] He gathered the primary melodic material
for the first movement from Carl Gläser's (1784–1829) "Azmon" (figure 1.08) and presented the
tune's motivic content in an interesting sequence: the first measures of the symphony (figure
1.09) originate from mm. 7–8 of the hymn, and mm. 10–13 of the symphony (figure 1.10)
originate from mm. 5–6 of the hymn. Following this fragmentary thematic development, Ives
spelled out the "Azmon" theme its entirety beginning at m. 22 (figure 1.11).

Borrowing

Borrowing from pre-existing music permeated the creation and manipulation of melody
in many of Ives's works. He quoted some of his material directly, but in most of his melodic
borrowing, Ives would adjust his recollection of familiar tunes.[27] He borrowed liberally from
marches, popular tunes, hymns, and classical themes.

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[25] Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes,* 89–95.
[26] Ives, *Memos,* ed. Kirkpatrick, 128.
[27] For a comprehensive catalog of borrowed material in Ives's work, consult Clayton W. Henderson, *The Charles Ives Tunebook* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008).

One class of borrowing in Ives's music is self-quotation, or recycling of his own melodies. Some of his extended themes would float between genres. "The Housatonic at Stockbridge" originated as an orchestral sketch (1908) that Ives would lose before recomposing the work twice: as a song without words for orchestra (1914) and as a song for piano and voice (1921).[28] Ives derived his "Watchman!" setting for voice and piano (1910) from the third movement of his First Violin Sonata (1908–1911), and later developed this setting into the first movement of his Fourth Symphony. The primary theme of his *Country Band March* (1905) appears as the primary theme in "Putnam's Camp, Redding, CT" of *Three Places in New England* (1914), subsequently in the Hawthorne movement of his *Piano Sonata no. 2: Concord, Mass. 1840–1960* (*Concord* Sonata) (1915), and finally in the Comedy of his *Symphony no. 4*. On a more motivic level, Ives would recycle smaller gestures. Two excerpts from the first and third symphonies (figures 1.12 and 1.13, respectively) represent an example of a subtler means of self-quotation. In figure 1.12, Ives wrote a nondescript, repeated two-chord motive and expanded it into a sequence. Figure 1.13 represents a recycling of the same brief motive in the Third Symphony.

Systematic manipulation of borrowed material: paraphrase, patchwork, and collage

In his early large-scale works, Ives generated much of his melodic writing by means of "paraphrase." Ives knew too well that direct quotations of vernacular tunes would not constitute worthy symphonic themes. For this reason, he only used tunes as starting points: he embellished and expanded them to fulfill his formal goals. Ives's First String Quartet and first two symphonies employ paraphrase throughout, although in different capacities.[29] Burkholder writes, "If the First String Quartet shows the potential of thematic paraphrase for infusing a classical genre with vernacular tunes and the First Symphony demonstrates Ives's command of the

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[28] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 246–247.
[29] For further reading on paraphrase, consult Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 49–136.

symphonic tradition, the Second Symphony does both."[30] Another technique within same realm

is "extended paraphrase." Ives employed extended paraphrase in "The Housatonic at

Stockbridge" (figure 1.18), developing a long melodic phrase out of opening motives from

"Missionary Chant" (figure 1.14), "Dorrnance" (figure 1.15), "Martyn" (figure 1.16), and

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (1808) (figure 1.17).[31]

Ives occasionally fused two separate melodies into one hybrid melody, a technique

Burkholder calls "patchwork."[32] Here he employed literal quotation, shifting subtly from one

tune to the next *in lieu* of creating an original or paraphrased melody. In his song for voice and

piano, "He is There!" (figure 1.21), Ives quoted "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean" (figure 1.19)

and shifted mid-tune to "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp" (figure 1.20). A more seamless and motivic

patchwork occurs in "The 'St. Gaudens' in Boston Common" from *Three Places in New England*.

Based primarily on the minor-third interval, this movement features rising and falling minor

thirds, each interval representing the refrain from a different popular tune (figures 1.22 and 1.23).

Combined with the movement's lugubrious tempo, the free integration of these intervals blurs the

line between the two tunes. The resulting melodies shed little light on the movement's harmonic

trajectory; tonalities overlap and wander freely throughout (figures 1.24 and 1.25).

Ives's "collage" technique resulted from a combination of various borrowed melodies

within the same piece, either through juxtaposition or superimposition. Burkholder defines

collage as an overlaying of "tune fragments…atop a structure that is already coherent without

them."[33] "Washington's Birthday" (1913) and "The Fourth of July" (1917) from *Holidays*

Symphony represent two of Ives's mature collage movements, as does "Putnam's Camp." A

combination of two prior works, *Country Band March* and *Overture and March "1776"* (1903–

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[30] Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 89.
[31] For further reading on extended paraphrase, consult Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 327–339.
[32] For further reading on patchwork, consult Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 301–326.
[33] Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 370.

1904), "Putnam's Camp" incorporates new material into the established works' pre-existing structures. The result is a greater variety of melodic material and a more creative sense of counterpoint (figure 1.26). Ives assembled borrowed material in each movement of his Fourth Symphony as well, including multiple collages within an overarching symphonic structure.[34]

Section 3. Harmony

Given Ives's relative absence from the professional music scene, he developed an unprecedented sense of freedom in his composition. Because of his taste and temperament, Ives pushed his freedom to the fullest. Ives denounced the generally established practices of harmony, lamenting, "The simplest ratios, often called perfect consonances, have been used so long and so constantly that not only music, but musicians and audiences, have become more or less soft. If they hear anything but doh-me-soh or a near cousin, they have to be carried out on a stretcher."[35] Ives's response to this softness began to form in his youth, when he practiced drumming on the piano. Ives remembered "getting tired of using the tonic and dominant and subdominant triads, and Doh and Soh etc. in the bass. So [I] got to trying out sets of notes to go with or take off the drums—for the snare drum, right-hand notes usually closer together—and for the bass drum, wider chords."[36] For this reason functional harmonic analysis can be problematic in Ives's works, evident in the opening measures of *General William Booth Enters into Heaven* (figure 1.27).

Elliott Carter (1908–2012) related that Ives would continue to infuse his already-completed pieces with dissonances through their revision process. Of the revision of *Three Places in New England*, Carter recalled, "A new score was being derived from the older one to which he was adding and changing, turning octaves into sevenths and ninths, and adding

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[34] For further reading on collage in the Fourth, consult Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 389–410.
[35] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 42.
[36] Ibid., 42.

dissonant notes. Since then, I have often wondered at exactly what date a lot of the music written early in his life received its last shot of dissonance and polyrhythm." Ives's experimental tendencies led him in various directions, and there exists no single line of harmonic development through his career.

Bitonality

As Ives remembered, his father George

kept my interest and encouraged open-mindedness in all matters that needed it….He would occasionally have us sing…a tune like "The Swanee River" in the key of E-flat, but play the accompaniment in the key of C….I don't think he had the possibility of polytonality in composition in mind, as much as to encourage the use of the ears.[37]

Charles recalled thinking in his childhood, "If two major or minor thirds can make up a chord, why not more? And also, if you can play a tune in one key, why can't a feller, if he feels like [it], play one in two keys?"[38] Ives tested this notion without reservation throughout his career. Perhaps the first examples of outright bitonality in art music, his interludes from *Variations on America* (1891) (figure 1.28) presented staggered statements of the primary theme in two keys simultaneously. Similarly, the "Alcotts" movement of the *Concord* Sonata begins (figure 1.29) with a melody in B-flat atop an A-flat foundation. The result, while still polytonal, sounds less dissonant than the raucous interludes from *Variations on America*. Another bitonal piece, *Psalm 67* (1894) (figure 1.30), features two key areas separated by a fifth (C major and G minor) for an even less dissonant result. Ives also gave his music momentary bitonal infusions to create an effect of added space within the ensemble. In the final measure of his Third Symphony (figure 1.31), the bells play B minor and G-sharp minor triads against a B-flat major final cadence. This tonal ambiguity suggests church bells sounding from afar, their pitches warped by distance.

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[37] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 115.
[38] Ibid., 47.

Interval-based harmony

        Ives frequently based his harmonic language on specific intervals, most notably thirds

and fourths. The melody of "The 'St. Gaudens' in Boston Common" wanders uncertainly by

minor thirds, but even the foundation in the bass drifts ambiguously about the same interval.

Following a polychord in m. 1, the bass alternates between an A root and a C root (figure 1.32),

defying the traditional "do-sol-do" functionality of a bass line. Ives juxtaposed quartal harmony

with third-based harmony in his Second Orchestral Set (1919). In the first movement, the piano

and zither figure play wide stacks of fourths, often moving by thirds in parallel motion.

Simultaneously the melodic figures in the second violins and trumpet move in minor thirds

(figure 1.33). Another intervallic technique Ives employed in his *Psalm 24* was a "wedge" (figure

1.34): all voices begin in unison at middle C, only to branch out uniformly in contrary motion.

This effect, while owing little to functional harmony, produces a rich variety of registrational

spacing and maintains middle C as a stable harmonic center.

Other representative devices

        "Free-form chromaticism"[39] characterizes music that shifts tonality abruptly and often.

Ives pushed melodies upward and downward mid-phrase, where the listener might not expect,

thus destabilizing the key center. The flute solo in the tonally ambiguous "The 'St. Gaudens' in

Boston Common" (figure 1.35) slides downward and upward to depict the final withering gasps

of General Shaw's decimated fifty-fourth regiment. The second movement of Ives's Second

Violin Sonata (1910) adopts the style of a simple barn dance, embellished with rapid and

unprepared harmonic motion (figure 1.36).

        Ives often wrote "shadow lines" that contradicted the prevailing harmonic and rhythmic

structure. Ives wrote of his Third Symphony, "When the score was put onto full score lines, all

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[39] The term "free-form chromaticism" comes from Mark Zobel, *The Third Symphony of Charles Ives* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2009).

the [shadow parts] were not put in, probably because I thought they would be mostly misunderstood—but it is better to have them in the final score—if it is ever published."[40] The Third is a far more interesting harmonic specimen as a result of the restored shadow lines (figure 1.37).

One common device that feels wholly out of place within a discourse about twentieth-century harmonic exploration is the plagal cadence, which Ives often used as a concluding gesture. Elements of his harmony remained rooted in the Protestant tradition, but Ives only used "the simplest ratios" this heavy-handedly with structural motives in mind. Along with consonant plagal cadences, Ives wrote flat thirds and sevenths at the ends of movements. The B-flat atop the C major chord at the end of the "Alcotts" movement of the *Concord* Sonata (figure 1.38) is characteristic of the movement's bitonal language. However, the first violin shadow line at the end of the first movement of the Third Symphony (figure 1.39) resembles a soulful jazz lament atop the final, complete statement of "Azmon."

Ives often wrote percussive passages for the piano with little regard for harmony. At the climax of his song, "Charlie Rutlage" (1920) (figure 1.40), the piano imitates a crashing horse with clusters of white keys, and a message in the footnotes confirms, "The notes are indicated only approximately."[41] Ives knew this was not a common practice just yet. When he self-published and distributed *114 Songs* in 1922, he specifically selected "Majority" (1921) (figure 1.41) as the first song in the book. This was Ives's disclaimer for the collection: although one would find numerous songs with simple, beautiful harmonies—romantic Lieder, parlor songs, and country dances—it would not be worthwhile for someone who cannot handle the tone

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[40] Charles Ives, Letter-sketch to Bernard Herrmann, 6 March 1946, Charles Ives Papers (New Haven: Irving S. Gilmore Music Library at Yale University).
[41] Charles E. Ives, "Charlie Rutlage," *114 Songs* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Merion Music, Inc., 1933).

clusters of "Majority." He claimed to have placed "Majority" first to "keep [the 'old girls'] from turning any more pages."[42]

Ives would eventually employ quarter-tones in his Fourth Symphony, and he experimented in this vein early on. In 1903 he produced *Three Quarter-tone Pieces* for two pianos tuned a quarter-tone apart. Although this piece generally destabilized the twelve-tone world in which audiences had previously heard music, one of Ives's goals was to catch the notes between the notes, particularly on ascending and descending passages (figure 1.42, m. 6). In this piece, he often wrote for the two pianos in different registers (figure 1.42, mm. 1–5), exploring large registrational spacing between the two tunings rather than writing close quarter-tone harmonies for the sake of crunchiness.

Perhaps most emblematic of Ives's harmonic style is his setting of the text, "the stand-patters came in strong and yelled, 'Slide back! Now you're safe, that's the easy way!'" in his song, "Nov. 2. 1920" (figure 1.43). In this phrase, he strays from his typically dissonant language toward a jarringly simple ii^6-V-I progression. Ives frowned upon "the easy way," and while he valued the education that enabled him to write within the constructs of the old guard, he reached far more interesting territory by straying from the harmonic status quo.

Section 4. Rhythm

Though Ives exhibited a high level of harmonic freedom in his works, his rhythmic imagination brought perhaps his boldest innovations. Throughout his career, Ives displayed a creative and versatile sense of rhythm; he knew his writing was advanced in this respect, and he cared little whether his contemporaries understood his rhythmic idiom. As with his harmonic

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[42] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 127.

"evolution," there is no one straight line to track Ives's rhythmic development. He wrote rhythms

liberally and flexibly, gearing his music toward what his advanced ear was equipped to hear.

Ragtime

Jan Swafford cites Ives's early exposure to ragtime music as an experience that "gave his

rhythmic sense an infusion of fresh ideas without which he might never have found his voice."[43]

Central Park in the Dark (1906) begins as a quiet meditation for strings, but a raucous middle

section features music in the ragtime style for woodwinds and piano (figure 1.44). The

"Hawthorne" movement of the *Concord* Sonata also features pervasive ragtime writing (figure

1.45) within a vast stylistic palette. One primary gesture characteristic to Ives's ragtime style was

a four-against-three figure (four groups of three sixteenth notes for every three quarter notes).

Ives recalled developing this rhythm for *Variations on America* (figure 1.46),[44] and it

subsequently became commonplace in his writing.

Incongruent measure lines

In his First String Quartet, Ives wrote for different voices to play in different time

signatures simultaneously. The finale of this work demands that half of the ensemble continue in

$\frac{4}{4}$ time while the other shifts to $\frac{3}{4}$ (figure 1.47). The middle section of *Central Park in the Dark*

features a similar device, though Ives does not designate a specific tempo relationship between

the ragtime band and the underlying strings. The open-ended fermata-rest for the ragtime voices

at the end of this section (figure 1.48) indicates that they may finish freely in relation to the

strings' tempo.

Rhythm contradicting meter

Ives would often include conventional rhythms in unconventional metric notation. In his

Second Symphony, his first statement of the $\frac{4}{4}$ melody, "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean,"

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[43] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 38. Also consult Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 56–57.
[44] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 38.

occurs within a $\frac{3}{4}$ time signature more suited to the strings' figuration (figure 1.07). In his song, "Charlie Rutlage," Ives wrote a $\frac{5}{8}$ ostinato within the context of $\frac{4}{4}$ time (figure 1.49). Occasionally Ives added or removed rests to throw an idiomatic line off-kilter, unnaturally advancing or delaying repetitive statements (figures 1.50–1.51).

Rhythmic notation

Ives wrote complex rhythms, but his rhythmic notation has also exacerbated the difficulties of performing his music. Rather than developing a consistent, performer-friendly system of notation, Ives wrote whatever he felt best captured the spirit of the individual line in question. A passage from his First Violin Sonata captures Ives at his most vague (figure 1.52). He wrote two rhythmic possibilities, expressing a preference for the "ossia" staff rather than the primary staff. The performer must make a decision, of course, but given Ives's ambiguous instructions, a certain vagueness and flexibility are inherent to this passage.

In one example from his Second Symphony, Ives wrote duplet brackets for the horns (figure 1.53). In another example from "Thanksgiving and Forefathers' Day" (1919) from *Holidays* Symphony, he notated a duplet rhythm for the violins in $\frac{6}{8}$ time with dotted eighth notes (figure 1.54). It is unclear why he did not notate the violins in duple brackets or the horns in dotted quarters. Ives notated many figures in ways that would be difficult for players to count, and this has inspired editors of recent performance editions to re-beam these measures in a more performer-friendly fashion (figures 1.55–1.58). Some of his rhythmic subdivisions have proven so difficult to coordinate that editors have provided approximate rhythms (figures 1.59–1.61). While not exactly what Ives wrote, these alternatives can prove far easier for ensembles to play, and can certainly sound "close enough" given the complexity of Ives's rhythmic ideas.

Rhythmic layering

Rhythmic layering was perhaps Ives's most innovative and famous rhythmic technique.

He professed:

> I have with much practice been able to keep five, and even six, rhythms going in my mind at once, so that I can hear each one naturally by leaning toward it, changing the ear in each measure—and I think this is the more natural way of hearing and learning the use of and feeling for rhythms…after a while they become as natural as it is for Toscanini to beat down-left-right-up as evenly as a metronome for two hours steadily.[45]

When Ives juxtaposed rhythmic values, the result was an acceleration or deceleration of velocity, thus creating the illusion of a gradual tempo change (figures 1.62–1.63). In his pyramidal layering, however, Ives superimposed multiple rhythmic values (figure 1.64). Rather than containing each polyrhythmic gesture within the span of one measure, Ives would also write for separate ensembles to perform in different tempi simultaneously. In m. 67 of "Putnam's Camp," Ives wrote a street-beat cadence underneath an original oboe melody in the primary ensemble. In m. 68 another ensemble enters, playing the same street-beat rhythm to accompany "The British Grenadiers" at a faster tempo (figure 1.65). Ives opened the third movement of his Second Orchestral Set with a "Distant Choir," which plays one measure of $\frac{3}{4}$ for every measure of $\frac{4}{4}$ in the main orchestra.

In more extreme cases, Ives's layering creates a complete cacophony. Ives experimented early on with this effect in his sketches for "Thanksgiving," but he achieved his goal in "The Fourth of July." Figure 1.66 exhibits an extreme degree of Ivesian polyrhythm, but the composer thought carefully about how to produce his desired sound: "Each part in these periods made a strain of musical sense by themselves—that is, when played by themselves—each part of the general explosion of noise having its own natural beginning and natural end."[46]

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[45] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 125.
[46] Ibid., 105.

<u>Rhythmic layering and the *Universe Symphony*</u>

　　Ives found his escalating ambition difficult to fulfill as he composed increasingly grander

and complex music. When he set out to write his *Universe Symphony*, Ives began with his loftiest

idea: a work to capture all of time, space (physical and metaphysical), and sound. He intended to

compose a meditation set in three movements (past, present, and future) on the formation of the

earth, the evolution of nature and humanity, and the spiritual rise to heaven.[47] He envisioned

multiple ensembles situated on hilltops performing across the breadth of a wide valley.

Ultimately he failed to bring this work to fruition, and few pages of sketches survive. If

completed, the *Universe Symphony* might have served as a successor to the Fourth Symphony.

Ives described Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) as "a recorder freely describing the inevitable

struggle in the soul's uprise, perceiving from this inward source alone that 'every ultimate fact is

only the first of a new series.'"[48] The *Universe Symphony* represented Ives's quest to express his

ever-expanding artistic vision, a feature that he revered in Emerson, his favorite

Transcendentalist writer and thinker.

　　A major reason why Ives never made much progress on the *Universe Symphony* was his

compositional process. The earliest surviving sketches for some of Ives's most rhythmically

complicated works began as harmonic outlines. He sketched the pitch combinations he wanted to

hear, demonstrating little concern for notating specific rhythms (figures 1.67–1.68). Ives's

sketches for the *Universe Symphony* (figures 1.69–1.70) contain neither melodic nor harmonic

contour; many consist of pure rhythmic layering. Ives may have been experimenting with

polyrhythms and the effects they produced:

　　　　The listener, if he tries hard enough, will get the composite effect that's wanted, while
　　　　each player concentrates on his particular meter, hearing the others as secondary sounds,

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[47] James B. Sinclair, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Music of Charles Ives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 31–37.

[48] Charles Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata, The Majority, and Other Writings*, ed. Howard Boatwright (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), 11.

at least while practising them.…I don't know, even if it's done accurately, how effective it is to the listener, unless he's had some practice in listening to and playing them himself. But if the different meters are each played by groups of different sounding units, the effect is valuable, and I believe will be gradually found an important element in deepening and enriching all the depths of music, including the emotional and spiritual.[49]

Ives's approach to an experimental technique with such a large structural plan contradicted his regular process. Typically his greatest achievements synthesized multiple prior experiments,[50] but perhaps his most effective course would have been a series of miniature rhythmic exercises, followed by a work with a full symphonic structure. At this point—with his eyesight, handwriting, and general health deteriorating—Ives lacked the patience to retreat to square one. He abandoned the project in 1928, leaving it open for future composers to complete.[51]

Measures without measure lines

Perhaps Ives's greatest expression of rhythmic freedom was his tendency to write long passages devoid of time signatures and measure lines. This style of writing is characteristic of his solo piano music, violin sonatas, and art songs. In addition to the following example from his Fourth Violin Sonata (1916) (figure 1.71), the vast majority of his *Concord* Sonata is written in this very style: music without meter.

Section 5. Orchestration

As evidenced by his first two symphonies, Ives began to approach his most serious multi-movement compositions with a straightforward approach to orchestration. *Symphonies nos. 1* and *2* demonstrated a style of writing rooted firmly in the late romantic tradition. In many of his later works, however, Ives approached instrumentation about as freely as he approached harmony and rhythm. He would not only write for unconventional instruments (such as the zither in "An Elegy

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[49] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 125.

[50] This generalization refers specifically to *Psalm 90*, the *Concord* Sonata, and *Symphony no. 4*.

[51] George F. Roberts in Vivian Perlis, *Charles Ives Remembered: An Oral History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 188.

to Our Forefathers" and the accordion in "From Hanover Square North," both from *Orchestral Set no. 2*, and the Jew's harp in "Washington's Birthday"); he would also write for unconventional instrumental pairings. For example, *"Country Band" March* calls for a string section without violas, the Third Symphony calls for an eclectic chamber group of winds, and "Washington's Birthday" is still stranger, calling only for strings, flute, horn, and bells in addition to the optional Jew's harp. *From the Steeples and Mountains* (1901) features four sets of bells, trumpet, trombone, and two pianos; and *The Unanswered Question* (1906) pairs four flutes and a solo trumpet with a standard string section. He would occasionally augment solo piano music ("Thoreau" from *Concord* Sonata) and songs for voice and piano ("He Is There!" [1917]) with flute accompaniment, and he wrote a choral-orchestral finale in "Thanksgiving" from *Holidays* Symphony.

One of Ives's more experimental procedures in the field of orchestration was to write for multiple ensembles playing simultaneously. Much like his contemporary, Gustav Mahler (1860–1911), Ives sometimes indicated for these ensembles to play at a distance from each other. In "From Hanover Square North," he named the antiphonal ensemble "Distant Choir," or "DC," but without specifying how far the DC should separate from the primary orchestra. Ives indicated for the DC to play "off-stage,"[52] but whether that implies "behind the stage" or "elsewhere in the auditorium" is unclear. For the unfinished *Universe Symphony*, Ives imagined antiphonal ensembles playing at great distances across a valley.

Textural layering

Having received early training in counterpoint, Ives the experimentalist brought counterpoint to an extreme level through textural layering. His Second Symphony finale demonstrates an early tendency toward his mature layering: at the most exuberant moment

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[52] Charles E. Ives, *Orchestral Set no. 2*, edited by James B. Sinclair (New York: Peer International Corporation, 2001), 42.

(figure 1.72), four previously stated themes appear simultaneously. In his maturity, Ives would layer multiple lines with less structural preparation. "The Housatonic at Stockbridge" begins with an impressionistic setting of a still river in the upper strings, consisting of four separate rhythmic lines with little relation to the low strings' C-sharp major harmony (figure 1.73).

In *Tone Roads, no. 3* (1917), Ives employed a more gradual layering process. The piece begins with solo chimes that vanish into the background as more voices join the texture. *Central Park in the Dark* similarly begins with a string chorale marked "pianississimo," which continues, presumably unheard, through the chaotic middle section. During this middle section, the strings function as a background to the overall texture, but as layers vanish toward the end, the piece ends as it begins.

Role of the piano in orchestral composition

Early in his symphonic career, Ives attempted to write like Brahms and Dvořák had, that is, without inserting a piano into the orchestra. Ives wrote freely for piano, the instrument with which he was most comfortable, in sonata and song settings, but incorporating the piano into his orchestral music proved essential to Ives in discovering his mature symphonic voice.

The piano plays a fairly standard, non-soloistic role in Ives's *Three Places in New England* and "The Fourth of July" from *Holidays* Symphony. Originally Ives composed the First Set (*Three Places in New England*) for full orchestra with a piano part, and when he rescored the work for the Boston Chamber Orchestra in 1929, he used the piano to fill in missing wind parts. The result was a vastly expanded piano part, often calling for an optional second player. Ives's *Orchestral Set no. 2* featured an increasingly prominent piano part as well. At this point in his career, Ives felt more comfortable giving the piano a more prominent role within an orchestral ensemble. He composed his Fourth Symphony during the years between the first two versions of *Three Places in New England*. Before writing the Fourth, he had already begun to incorporate

the piano into the orchestra, and the Fourth became his first and only orchestral work featuring a part for "solo piano."

Section 6. Structure

In spite of the freedom of expression he exercised throughout his compositional career, Ives did hold European classical forms in the highest esteem, most notably the symphony. He referred to Emerson's musings as "symphonies of revelation"[53] and derived the cyclic theme of his *Concord* Sonata from the opening theme of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

<u>Form</u>

Ives's first two symphonies exhibit an imitative reverence for the forms of his romantic models, more so than his subsequent symphonic works. In each of the first two symphonies, Ives created a tonal plan based on third-relationships: the primary keys of the First Symphony are D minor, F major, and D major; and those of the Second Symphony are B minor, D major, A-flat major, and F major. Ives constructed the first movement of the First Symphony in a neat sonata form and the third movement in a traditional scherzo-trio form. The first and fourth movements of the Second Symphony function formally as prologues to the second and fifth movements. The second movement of the Second unfolds in a binary sonata form (long exposition, short or non-existent development) not unlike the finales of Johannes Brahms's (1833–1897) First (1876) and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's (1840–1893) Fifth Symphonies (1888). The finales of Ives's first two symphonies resemble the loose rondo-finale form that characterized many of Brahms's symphonic and chamber finales. Ives's Second Symphony recycles and shares so much thematic content among its five movements that, like the *Concord* Sonata, its overall form is cyclic.

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[53] Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata*, ed. Boatwright, 36.

Ives's Third Symphony ("The Camp Meeting") marked a departure from his prior symphonies in terms of orchestration, structure, and basic compositional language. Scored for a chamber orchestra with single winds (two horns, no trumpet or tuba) and optional timpani and bells, the third consists of three movements in B-flat, E-flat, and B-flat. The Third's most significant departures were manifest in Ives's openly programmatic subject matter and use of cumulative form. With the Third Symphony, Ives began to remove himself from the symphonic tradition of Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, and Brahms.

Coined by Burkholder, the term "cumulative form" refers to an original Ivesian device in which the primary theme (usually based on a hymn or popular tune) is presented in fragments, developed, and finally stated in its complete form at the close of a movement.[54] Ives followed this structural pattern in various movements from his piano sonatas, violin sonatas, and orchestral movements.

Ives completed five symphonies bearing the title, "symphony," the four numbered symphonies and the *Holidays* Symphony. He also completed three orchestral sets that have been classified as symphonies in their own right. As Burkholder points out, each of these works following the Second Symphony focused not on "national melody," but rather on "a celebration of American individuality, first of particular tunes, later of specific people, places, and events."[55] The freedom with which Ives composed after his Second Symphony yielded three symphonies and three sets organized programmatically; therefore, it may be just as logical to classify these three late "symphonies" as "sets," rather than the other way around.

<u>Closing gestures</u>

Ives developed a vocabulary of musical gestures to prepare the end of a work or movement. One device Ives used in his closing material was the plagal cadence. This consonant

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[54] For further reading on cumulative form consult Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 137–266.
[55] Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 135.

progression concluded slow movements with a placid, reverent character, but Ives applied the same harmonic principle to his more exuberant finishes as well. In various up-tempo closing movements, Ives arrived at the final tonic directly from the subdominant, accompanying the IV chord with an ascending arpeggio in the low voices. Ives added the sixth to the ascending arpeggio, giving these passages a pentatonic color (figures 1.74–1.75).

Though the plagal cadence epitomizes a tidy conclusion in the Protestant tradition, Ives aimed for extreme contrast in other works. "The Housatonic at Stockbridge," "Decoration Day" (1913), and "The Fourth of July" all build to total cacophony before shifting to gentle, reflective resolutions. Even the finale of the Second Symphony, which contains the aforementioned rising plagal arpeggio, ends with an extremely dissonant eleven-tone "stinger."

Evolution and economy

In his mature works, Ives tended to build upon his prior exercises, experiments, and full-scale pieces. For example *Psalm 90*, which represented a synthesis of his experimental psalm miniatures, greatly exceeded his prior psalm settings in scope and duration. Ives adopted a more economical plan for his later works. The Third Symphony represented a step backward in scale from the first two, both in terms of orchestration and form. Also based on the program of a camp meeting, the Fourth Violin Sonata maintains a tight, concise form and an exceptionally brief finale. A performance of the Fourth Symphony, which feels immense relative to its predecessors, lasts about as long as a performance of the First Symphony, or a few minutes shorter than the running time of the Second. The Fourth Symphony represents a formally tight work typical to Ives's mature period, but with such high density and elevated scope that one might perceive it as his heftiest symphony.

Section 7. Ideology and rhetoric

Ives believed that at its core music was "beyond any analogy to word language, and that the time is coming…when it will develop possibilities inconceivable now—a language so transcendent that its heights and depths will be common to all mankind."[56] He proclaimed the communicative power of music and its ability to stand on its own, but fortunately he did write a good deal of prose on music, particularly in relation to his own *Concord* Sonata. Ives debated the true origin and purpose of music in the prologue of his expository prose work, *Essays Before a Sonata*, intended to elucidate the composer's inspiration for the *Concord* Sonata. Since his most substantial works were programmatic, Ives wondered, "is not all music program music? Is not pure music, so called, representative in its essence?"[57]

While he carried programmatic images in his mind as he composed, Ives derived much of his musical style from the philosophers whom he admired. Most notably Emerson and his Transcendentalist contemporaries inspired Ives's mannerisms, cadence, and core beliefs. Ives defined the "greatest and most inspiring theme of Concord Transcendentalism" as "this courageous universalism that gives conviction to [Emerson's] prophecy, and that makes his symphonies of revelation begin and end with nothing but the strength and beauty of innate goodness in man, in Nature and in God."[58] Ives's two largest completed works, the *Concord* Sonata and the Fourth Symphony, aspired to convey the same powerful and open-ended ideals that he gathered from Emerson's writings.

<u>Manner and substance</u>

In his compositional process Ives would allow pieces to incubate for a long time before applying his final revision. The source material for the Fourth Symphony, for example, has origins dating back to 1901, but Ives apparently did not complete the work until 1926. Ives

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[56] Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata*, ed. Boatwright, 8.
[57] Ibid., 4.
[58] Ibid., 35.

hailed Emerson as a "creator whose intensity is consumed more with the substance of his creation than with the manner by which he shows it to others."[59] This philosophy accounts for the messiness with which Ives "organized" the pages of his drafts and notated his music. In his chapter on Emerson, Ives espouses, "vagueness is at times an indication of nearness to a perfect truth."[60]

Ives made a point to denounce the importance of the manner in which he presented his work; for him every decision related to the basic creation of the art by whatever means he deemed clear enough. He favored substance over manner, likening the two respectively to content and expression[61] and recalling Oxford Professor Henry Sturt's maxim, "The nearer we get to the mere expression of emotion…the further we get away from art."[62] However, with a total absence of manner, his body of work would have existed purely in his head, never transferred onto paper for posterity. Ives believed that for a composer to transcribe his most valuable ideas successfully, he must utilize every meaningful experience of his life and every tool at his disposal, assimilating them

> fervently, transcendentally, inevitably, furiously, in his symphonies, in his operas, in his whistlings on the way to work, so that he can paint his house with them, make them a part of his prayer-book—this is all possible and necessary, if he is confident that they have a part in his spiritual consciousness. With this assurance, his music will have everything it should of sincerity, nobility, strength, and beauty, no matter how it sounds.[63]

By remaining true to his desired substance, an artist can realize his manner in a way that does not interfere with the substance's artistic value.

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[59] Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata*, ed. Boatwright, 21.
[60] Ibid., 22.
[61] Ibid., 29.
[62] Henry Sturt, "Art and Personality," *Personal Idealism; Philosophical Essays by Eight Members of the University of Oxford*, edited by Henry Sturt (London: Oxford University Press, 1902), 307.
[63] Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata*, ed. Boatwright, 79–80.

Emerson

What Ives perhaps admired most about Emerson was his freedom in using every tool at *his* disposal. Ives described Emerson as "America's deepest explorer of the spiritual immensities—a seer painting his discoveries in masses and with any color that may lie at hand—cosmic, religious, human, even sensuous."[64] He defined Emerson's philosophical quest as "the wider search for the unknowable, unlimited in any way or by anything except the vast bounds of innate goodness, as it might be revealed to him in any phenomena of Man, Nature, or God."[65]

Ives's penchant for experimentation, freedom of expression, and otherworldly musical aspirations corresponded directly with Emerson's "unshackled search for the infinite."[66] Ives's search resulted in a Fourth Symphony ranging from phantasmagoric to sublime, as well as an unsuccessful foray in "cosmic drama"[67] through his preliminary sketches for the *Universe Symphony*.

Hawthorne

While Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864) certainly was not a greater poet than Emerson or Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862), Ives argued that, because of a greater imaginative impulse, Hawthorne was likely a better *artist*. Hawthorne displayed a careful manner through which he was able to "naturally and unconsciously [reach] out over his subject to his reader."[68] Ives's reverence for Hawthorne, whom he found "dripping wet with the supernatural, the phantasmal, the mystical, so surcharged with adventures, from the deeper picturesque to the illusive fantastic,"[69] was readily apparent throughout his musical maturity. Ives often left his compositional manner open-ended as Hawthorne did, in an attempt to "[feel] the mysteries, and

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[64] Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata*, ed. Boatwright, 11.
[65] Ibid., 17.
[66] Ibid., 18.
[67] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 167.
[68] Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata*, ed. Boatwright 39.
[69] Ibid., 39.

[try] to paint them rather than explain them."[70] While Ives's "search for the infinite" may owe

more to Emerson, the phantasmagoric elements of Fourth Symphony likely owe more to

Hawthorne.

Thoreau

The final movement of the *Concord* Sonata characterizes Ives's impression of Thoreau.

Ives believed wholeheartedly in Thoreau's naturalist and individualist doctrines; although he did

not model his compositional rhetoric after Thoreau's prose, his musical ideals owed much to

Thoreau's "universality"[71] and "susceptibility to natural sounds."[72] Ives often composed on his

family vacations in upstate New York, channeling nature as his primary inspiration.[73]

The *Concord* Sonata and the Fourth Symphony

A factor that helps to define the *Concord* Sonata and the Fourth as his most personally

valued achievements is the sheer amount that he wrote *about* each work. In the case of the

Fourth, he detailed a "program" for the second movement, as well as a catalog of notes for the

conductor to help clarify its performance challenges. In the case of the *Concord* Sonata, there is a

preface consisting of ninety-six (typed) pages of prose detailing the ideological connections

between the music and the writers to whom Ives dedicated the work.

Ives recognized that these two works would present a daunting challenge to any

performer, and he chose to begin each with a substantial guide to disarm the initial approach.

These two works synthesize a rich experimental tradition, and they certainly benefit from

explanation. Fortunately the written program to the second movement of the Fourth connects

closely to the "Hawthorne" movement of Concord. Conversely the philosophical beliefs outlined

in *Essays Before a Sonata* directly characterize the manner, substance, and rhetoric of the Fourth.

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[70] Ives, *Essays Before A Sonata*, ed. Boatwright, 41.
[71] Ibid., 52.
[72] Ibid., 53.
[73] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 241–242.

These texts are invaluable in approaching not only the works that Ives intended them to accompany, but also the rest of his *oeuvre*. Much as his *Psalm 90* synthesizes his prior choral miniatures, the *Concord* Sonata synthesizes all of Ives's prior piano music, and the Fourth stands at the apex of his entire output as his most ambitious completed project—an Emersonian "symphony of revelation."

CHAPTER 2: IDEOLOGY AND PERFORMANCE IN THE FOURTH SYMPHONY

While the preceding musical examples and philosophical principles provide an initial context and perspective, the challenges of performing the Fourth remain. Conceptualizing a coherent narrative for the Fourth can prove problematic to the interpreter, and the Fourth presents a unique set of challenges to the conductor: the work requires an esoteric combination of instruments, a close examination of various editions, a well conceived strategy for employing *multiple* conductors, and a thorough analysis of four stylistically disparate movements. Once completed, this regimen of comprehensive preparation should reward any conductor approaching this masterwork for the first time.

Section 1. Background

Thomas Brodhead (b. 1968) has deemed the Fourth "perhaps the last great romantic symphony."[74] Assembled in earnest between 1910 and 1916,[75] each of its four movements came to exist through different circumstances and within a different instrumental medium. The first movement, labeled "Prelude," is Ives's orchestral setting of Lowell Mason's hymn, "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night." The second movement, a scherzo bearing the title "Comedy," originates from a piano piece connected to Hawthorne's "The Celestial Railroad." The Comedy contains the most stylistically varied material, both within the symphony and in any single movement Ives ever wrote. The third movement "Fugue" originated from an organ piece and also became known in a slightly different form as the opening movement to Ives's First String Quartet. Ives based the fourth movement "Finale" on a lost *Memorial Slow March* and the finale of his Second String

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[74] Thomas Brodhead, quoted in Charles E. Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, edited by Thomas Brodhead (New York: Associated Music
Publishers, Inc., 2011), xvii.
[75] Ives claimed to have composed the Fourth within these years. Although he likely completed the score of the second movement as late as 1926, it is plausible that he had comprehensively sketched its source material by 1916.

Quartet. By Ives's own estimation the Finale provides the greatest music of the Fourth,[76] both for its musical complexity and philosophical ambition.

Ives considered the Fourth a religious work, and this characteristic accounts for the symphony's otherworldly ambition. He stated, "not until I got to work on the Fourth Symphony did I feel justified in writing quite as I wanted to, when the subject matter was religious."[77] Ives had composed music based on religious themes throughout his career, occasionally within secular forms. The Fourth was Ives's most powerful religious statement, synthesizing his Protestant background with the secular teachings he had come to value since his days as a church organist. These doctrines included Emerson's dogged individualism, Thoreau's exaltation of Nature, Hawthorne's moral mysticism, and Ives's own idealistic political and personal views stemming from his wartime fervency.[78]

Ives also felt comfortable working "with a more natural freedom, when I knew the music was not going to be inflicted on others."[79] Though Ives apparently completed the work in 1926, nobody heard the Fourth in its entirety until its complete premiere with the American Symphony Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski on April 26, 1965, eleven years after the composer's death. Eugene Goosens (1893–1962) led a partial premiere of the work in 1927, conducting the first two movements with members of the New York Philharmonic. Subsequently the Comedy was published in 1929 by *New Music* in vol. 2, no. 2.[80] The Fugue received various performances beginning with its premiere in 1933, but the Finale was not properly assembled into a performing edition until John Kirkpatrick (1905–1991) began the process in association with the Free

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[76] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 66.
[77] Ibid., 129.
[78] Swafford's biography contains further information about Ives's political beliefs. For a concise catalog of Ives's political activity in the wake of World War I, consult Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 306–316.
[79] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 129.
[80] Geoffrey Block, "Reviews," *Charles Ives and His World,* edited by J. Peter Burkholder (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 295–297.

Library of Philadelphia following Ives's death in 1954.[81] A cloud of mystery surrounded the piece leading up to its premiere, including an erroneous report that four pages were missing from the Finale's manuscript.[82] This first performing edition brought the Fourth into the public's consciousness. This first edition, though far from a comprehensive document, did represent a major step toward disseminating Ives's work.

Section 2. Edition, parts, and notation

The 1965 score to the Fourth served as the only published score until 2011. The Charles Ives Society completed a critical edition to accompany a 1989 recording project with Michael Tilson Thomas and the Chicago Symphony. The publication of this edition had to wait two decades before being finalized in 2011.

Along with the 2011 release of the critical edition, G. Schirmer and Associated Publishers of Music, Inc. also published a performance edition of the score edited and engraved by Thomas Brodhead. Brodhead, who also engraved the critical edition, attended early rehearsals and performances utilizing the new performance materials.[83] Through this process Brodhead communicated with players and conductors, making further edits as needed to the performance edition score and orchestral parts. G. Schirmer and Associated Publishers of Music, Inc. released this edition in January 2014.[84] These two new editions of the Fourth mark a triumphant achievement in clarifying the Fourth for future generations of interpreters.[85]

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[81] The Fugue that was performed between 1933—1965 was arranged by Bernard Herrmann and Jerome Moross. Ives's version of the Fugue was premiered alongside the Finale in 1965.

[82] Theodore Strongin, "Symphony by Ives to Get Premiere," *New York Times* (13 Apr. 1965), 33.

[83] Brodhead revised the performance score and parts based on feedback from players at the rehearsals for the following performances: Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra, Aug. 2012; Berlin Philharmonic, Sep. 2012; Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Sep. 2012; University of Kentucky Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 2012; New York Philharmonic, Apr. 2013; Detroit Symphony, Apr. 2013; Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Nov. 2013.

[84] The critical score is currently available for purchase, though the performance score is not. The latter is available through rental and online perusal at <http://www.musicsalesclassical.com/composer/work/47475>. The two are absolutely dependent on each other, and performers should study both in Janus head fashion. These documents are so intertwined that each page of the two scores is formatted to display the same musical content page-by-page for

In addition to Ives's extensive commentary on the program of the Comedy and his instructions for the conductor, Brodhead has included a number of documents in the preface to the performance score to answer commonly asked performance questions. His "survival guide" addresses performance, interpretation, instrumentation, and notation. Brodhead's preface material is essential reading for any conductor in the early stages of studying the Fourth.[86]

The performance score, while faithful to the critical edition, relies on elements of the 1965 edition to coordinate the more difficult ensemble passages. One element of notation that makes the performance edition more immediately playable than the 1965 edition is the beaming of difficult rhythms. The performance edition maintains the basic integrity of each rhythmic gesture,[87] though it translates various figures from Ives's unidiomatic "tuplet" notation into idiomatic, beat-by-beat beaming (figures 2.01–2.03).

The orchestral parts accompanying the performance score, also engraved and edited by Brodhead, function as informative road maps for each member of the ensemble. At each moment when a player's part diverges from the primary flow of the ensemble, the part offers an explanation. This includes crucial instructions for solo players or soli sections of the orchestra meriting explanation, but it also includes detailed guidelines for which players should synchronize with or desynchronize from the main ensemble throughout the work. The parts are filled with alternative notations and beamings, cues, counting numbers, and explanations—a significant departure from the 1965 parts, none of which contained a single cue, let alone explanatory text. These new parts, though more immediately legible than their 1965

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easy side-by-side study. I would assert that if one score is of more immediate importance for conductors, it is the performance score, as it matches the only available orchestral parts. That physical copies of the performance edition are not available for purchase is, though I believe a temporary oversight, quite disappointing and potentially misleading.

[85] The subsequent discourse on performance and notation includes specific examples from the new critical and performance editions, but it is advisable to have both scores available for reference while reviewing this chapter.

[86] Brodhead's preface to the Fourth is also available for download at <http://www.musicsalesclassical.com/composer/work/47475>.

[87] With one exception: the DC between mm. 40–44 in the Finale.

counterparts, also provide enough detailed information that any player who prepares thoroughly will approach the Fourth with a strong sense of his role within the symphony. By and large the new parts have greatly reduced player guesswork stemming from a lack of clarity. As a result, the process of learning the Fourth requires less grappling than it has before.

Regardless of how much studying or strategizing a conductor might undertake before leading a first rehearsal of the Fourth, he would be well served to examine the particulars of the orchestral parts closely. Through this process, a conductor may discover instructions that would supplant elaborately planned explanations in rehearsal, or notice a passage that is not notated in keeping with his own personal view of the piece.

A recurring theme within the alternative notation passages of the Fourth is a heightened rhythmic legibility from beat to beat. While these alternatives usually render figures more immediately playable, at times they strip down the spirit of Ives's rhythmic idea, vagueness and all. Generally Brodhead's performance edition incorporates three types of solutions:

1. Presenting Ives's original notation with a more idiomatic alternative, either for practice purposes or to help a player to conceptualize the rhythm more precisely (figure 2.04).
2. Presenting an idiomatic alternative with the original notation for the player's reference (figure 2.05).
3. Presenting a clearer beat-by-beat alternative without an indication of Ives's original notation (figures 2.06–2.07).

The first two solutions both provide the requisite information for players to encounter Ives's notation and potentially to read his rhythms with greater ease. Though perhaps more idiomatic and helpful in coordinating multiple sections, the third solution can prove dangerous, as Ives's notational concept of a particular rhythm vanishes from the performer's consciousness. For this reason, it is important for performers to examine the critical edition in order to discover the spirit of Ives's intentions, whether or not Ives's notation articulates his substance clearly. Although the performance score is vital for a conductor, the critical score is an essential

companion. The critical edition will help future performers to ascertain the origins behind each strange rhythm and to examine the independence of each instrumental line throughout the Fourth. If a conductor finds elements exclusive to the critical edition worth preserving in performance, he may work with his librarian to adjust the notation in the orchestral parts for these passages. Ultimately Brodhead's work in adjusting the notation of the Fourth is a momentous step in the direction of clarity, and any amount of tedious library work a conductor undertakes to adjust the new performance score will prove far less than what he would have incurred working with the 1965 materials.

Section 3. Overall instrumentation

Ives conceived each movement of his Fourth Symphony at a different time and under different circumstances. For this reason, Ives scored each movement for different orchestral forces. The Prelude, though thematically and ideologically similar to the Finale, calls for chamber winds and limited percussion. The Fugue, an adaptation of a string quartet movement, calls for an orchestra similar to that of Ives's petite Third Symphony. While the Comedy and Finale require substantial forces, the subtle differences in instrumentation between those two movements allow Ives to form vastly different sound worlds.

The Fourth features the orchestral complement of a standard, large romantic orchestra. In addition to double woodwind numbers and standard brass numbers (four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, one tuba), Ives enlists an extra flute and piccolo, one extra clarinet, tenor and baritone saxophone (for one or two players), four extra trumpets (with one doubling cornet), and one extra trombone. He designates a particularly large percussion section, requiring ten players to cover every part. In the preface to the performance score, Brodhead has included

comprehensive instructions regarding the nonstandard or unclearly labeled percussion instruments (Indian drum, "gongs," and high and low bells).[88]

Brodhead includes advice on the number of string players necessary to cover Ives's complicated string *divisi* markings. The optimum string section includes twelve to eighteen first violins, twelve to sixteen seconds, twelve to fourteen violas, ten to twelve cellos, and eight to ten basses. Brodhead also suggests a strategy for assigning violinists from the primary string sections to the "Distant Choir," dividing into three violin sections for the Finale, and executing the "extra" violin and viola lines in the Comedy.[89] It is important for the conductor to examine the string parts with the orchestra librarian before assigning parts, as the string divisions in the performance edition are carefully distributed among the desks of each section. Each desk's part is unique, and this enables players to cover Ives's *divisi* passages evenly and legibly.

In its 1927 partial premiere, Ives's Fourth was named, "A symphony for orchestra and pianos."[90] The piano is virtually omnipresent in the Fourth, with the exception of the Fugue. While the Fugue does call for an organ part, the rest of the symphony features a battery of keyboards: solo piano, orchestral piano (four hands), *scordatura* quarter-tone piano, celesta, and organ. Securing and tuning this array of instruments is a complicated affair from a logistical standpoint. Brodhead's preface includes guides on tuning the quarter-tone piano, both for a tuner who can read music and for one who cannot. The solo piano part is a veritable concerto-level part, and the soloist often plays near the front or middle of the orchestra as a soloist would in any classical or romantic concerto. A position among the strings facing the conductor head-on allows the soloist to follow the primary tempi closely as he interacts with the rest of the orchestra. Ives specified occasional quarter-tone pitches in the solo piano part, which are unrealizable in the solo piano's conventional tuning. The performance edition has transcribed these few pitches into a

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[88] Brodhead, quoted in Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, viii.
[89] Ibid., vi–viii.
[90] Ives; *Symphony no. 4*; ed. Brooks, Shirley, Sinclair, and Singleton; ix.

scordatura quarter-tone piano part, and therefore it may be advantageous to place the quarter-tone piano close to the solo piano.

In the Prelude and Finale, Ives called for a "Distant Choir" ("DC") of five violins and one harp. He does not indicate a specific distance for this ensemble, marked only "as in the distance throughout." The DC might remain onstage, slightly offstage within the auditorium, backstage, or in some distant corner of the auditorium.

The same outer movements also call for a mixed chorus, though ambiguously so. The Prelude has a choral part, marked "ad lib." and doubled by a solo trumpet throughout. The choral entrance at m. 17 bears the curious marking, "preferably without voices." In the First Violin Sonata, Ives includes the words corresponding to the "Watchman" tune, though presumably he does not intend for the violinist or pianist to sing. Similarly, here he has offered an option to the performing ensemble. As William Brooks suggests in his preface to the Prelude, "without voices in the first movement, the symphony is less formally bounded; the wordless chorus in the Finale augments, rather than returns."[91]

The contrast in orchestration from movement to movement in the Fourth presents a unique puzzle in selecting a configuration for the orchestra. Though a conventional set-up with the strings in front and the woodwinds and brass behind in the center generally works, unconventional options might yield uniquely rewarding results. Ives requested a specific prominence in the brass in the more chaotic passages, and there should be no disadvantage to placing the brass toward the front of the stage on one side or the other. The strings should remain unified and centralized, though not necessarily in the front of the orchestra. Ives designated interesting combinations of soloists within the string sections throughout the Prelude, Comedy, and Finale; occasionally as prominent first-desk solos (the Prelude, m. 5 and Comedy m. 217, for

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[91] William Brooks, quoted in Ives; *Symphony no. 4*; ed. Brooks, Shirley, Sinclair, and Singleton; xviii.

example), and occasionally buried under thick textures or to be played by back-stand players. In the first performance of the 2011 edition with Peter Eötvös and the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra, the woodwinds and brass sat toward the front edges of the stage, house left and house right respectively, with the strings centralized behind the piano soloist.

To the same end, a conductor should feel free to think creatively when deciding on his orchestra's spatial configuration. In the more texturally dense passages of the Comedy, Ives assigned certain lines "prominence indicators" with circled letters A through G. While it would be convenient to interpret these letters as "*Hauptstimme*" and "*Nebenstimme*" indications, they are actually suggestions of distance and intensity. Brodhead has included concise instructions along these lines in the foreword to the performance score, and a paper of his[92] advocates in greater detail for creative spatial performance in relation to Ives's prominence indicators.

Section 4. Use of assistant conductors

Ives conceived the Fourth as a piece requiring more than one conductor. Various conductors have strategized to perform the work without an assistant, but current practice calls for two or more conductors. The new performance edition presumes a multiplicity of conductors, occasionally suggesting dual beat patterns in the score and indicating in the parts which beat pattern each player should follow.

Additional conductors can certainly serve to synchronize groups within the ensemble, either while these groups play in different tempi or with asynchronous measure lines, but an extra conductor can also uphold the integrity of difficult lines in polyrhythmic passages. When players with awkward "tuplets" or rhythms beamed across measure lines are forced to feel their rhythms within the context of a different meter, it becomes far more difficult to play these

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[92] Thomas M. Brodhead, "Prominence Indicators in Ives's Fourth Symphony: A Radical Plan Revealed" (Unpublished, 1994).

rhythms with true independence. While two conductors can lead an adequately clear performance of the Fourth, a strategic coordination between four conductors may provide optimal metric clarity for the orchestra in the Finale.

Section 5. Performance practice and precision

Since Ives seldom oversaw rehearsals and performances of his orchestral works, nobody will ever know how strictly he would have policed ensemble precision. Moreover, it is unlikely that he would have pressed ensembles for a higher level of accuracy had he even desired it, given the bashful posture he adopted while editing and promoting his own music. In spite of his proximity to the 1927 premiere of the Prelude and Comedy, many elements of these movements' notation and performance remained unclear. Conductor Eugene Goosens said of the performance, "My dear boy, I didn't know what happened after the downbeat."[93]

An early champion of Ives's music, Bernard Herrmann (1911–1975) questioned the specificity of Ives's scores based on years of close collaboration with the composer. He described Ives's music as

> a kind of an abstraction that exists on paper….[Ives] was a very impractical man when it came to performances of music. By not being a professional musician in the sense that he did not have to make a living out of music, he entered into an abstraction of music. Because it was an abstraction, it didn't deal with any of the realistic problems.[94]

Herrmann supported this argument with a series of anecdotes of Ives's lackadaisical proofreading and wishy-washy editing. For example, when Herrmann would ask about a particular note or dynamic, Ives would respond, "You know better than I, so correct it," or "If it doesn't seem right to you, you know what to do about it."[95]

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[93] Eugene Goosens, quoted in Ives; *Symphony no. 4*; ed. Brooks, Shirley, Sinclair, and Singleton; x.
[94] Bernard Herrmann, quoted in Perlis, *Charles Ives Remembered*, 160.
[95] Ibid., 160.

Rather than demanding precision from conductors and players, Ives would reliably cede control of his music to the performer. One performance he did oversee, Nicholas Slonimsky's 1929 performance of *Three Places in New England* with the Boston Chamber Orchestra, he found more than satisfactory. When the orchestra brought the same piece on tour to Paris in 1931, Ives wrote in his letter of encouragement, "The concert will go alright. Just kick into the music as you did in Town Hall–never mind the exact notes or the right notes, they're always a nuisance. Just let the spirit underneath the stuff sail up to the Eiffel Tower and on to Heaven."[96] On a certain level, Ives dismissed his own efforts humorously, but he had written certain parts of *Three Places in New England* intending to create organized chaos. Between the cloudy harmonies of "The 'St. Gaudens' in Boston Common," the dueling bands and crescendo-to-pandemonium in "Putman's Camp," and the hazy river image of "The Housatonic at Stockbridge," Ives often designed music to yield dense textural images rather than clean orchestral etudes.

Herrmann recalled that Ives "didn't like music that was easy to play and perform. He wanted to give the players a workout."[97] Though Ives did not hear many of his most challenging orchestral works, he was acutely aware of the difficulty and confusion that his music would pose. One of his copyists, George F. Roberts, insisted that Ives knew exactly what he was doing: when conductors and copyists set out to "correct" his works, Ives responded, "Don't try to make things nice! All the wrong notes are *right*. Just copy as I have. I want it that way."[98] Ives did not trust most of his musical contacts the way he trusted Herrmann, but he knew even his most straightforward music would not appear neat and tidy to its interpreters.

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[96] Charles E. Ives, *Orchestral Set no. 1: Three Places in New England (Version 4: 1976 Performance Edition for Large Orchestra)*, edited by James B. Sinclair (King of Prussia, PA: Mercury Music Corporation, 2008), v.
[97] Herrmann, quoted in Perlis, *Charles Ives Remembered*, 159.
[98] George F. Roberts, quoted in Perlis, *Charles Ives Remembered*, 187–188.

John Kirkpatrick, one of Ives's closest confidants, who first performed the *Concord* Sonata and initially organized the Ives collection at the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library at Yale University, remembered a quotation from Ives via Henry Cowell (1897–1965): that Ives "always maintained he could play anything he'd written, and that he could hear everything he wrote in his imagination."[99] Ives certainly possessed a formidable set of ears: he referred to music lacking an adventurous sense of harmony as "cissy-ear sounds," "not music," and "emasculated art."[100] The complexity of rhythm and texture in certain passages of his orchestral music may marginalize certain lines into the background, but a conductor should assume that Ives would have hoped to truly hear each layer that he bothered to write.

For this reason, performers must strive to uphold the integrity of rhythm in Ives's complicated passages, especially when a rhythm is written for instrumental sections or combinations, inasmuch as the rhythm demands strict unity. Some rhythms are so unfamiliar to performers that editors have included alternative notation to aid a section in unifying a passage. In these cases, it may be more important to maintain unity within the sections than to play a perfectly accurate subdivision at the expense of valuable rehearsal time.

The precedent for confronting each rhythmic obstacle thoughtfully comes from Ives's chamber music. Between the hellacious demands of Ives's piano sonatas and the unrelenting ensemble challenges of the second movement of his *String Quartet no. 2*, Ives wrote some of his most difficult music in these exposed settings. One particular expectation in the Fourth is that each performer become an expert at counting and feeling a four-against-three metrical relationship with immediate facility. While the piece contains more complicated rhythms than four-against-three, this cross-rhythm is a fundamental obstacle that can immediately bring challenging ensemble passages into focus if navigated with ease.

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[99] John Kirkpatrick, quoted in Perlis, *Charles Ives Remembered*, 221–224.
[100] Charles Ives, Annotation from Ives's copy of *Concerto no. 23 in G Major for Violin* by Giovanni Battista Viotti (MSS 14, The Charles Ives Papers in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University), box 60.

Ives knew his orchestral music would demand extra effort from its performers, but he expressed his musical ideas confidently. He intended much of his music to sound clean, and some of it sloppy or bombastic. He developed an affinity for transcribing total chaos, as evidenced by his joyous reaction to the premiere of *Three Places in New England*: "Just like a town meeting—every man for himself. Wonderful how it came out!"[101] Ives knew what he wanted, but flexibility was a necessary part of bringing his music to life, and he ceded control to the performers whom he trusted.

In his conductor's note preceding the Comedy, Ives wrote, "after a certain point [giving the various parts in their intended relations] is a matter which seems to pass beyond the control of any conductor or player into the field of acoustics."[102] Though both new editions of the Fourth have clarified the piece tremendously, William Brooks of the Orpheus Research Centre in Music argues, "The workable anarchy of Ives's music is better manifested in his manuscripts than in publications; and it is the manuscripts which you—through whom Ives's music *sounds*—can and should enter. There can be no Ives *urtext*, no approved editions."[103] Ultimately a deep and earnest investment in each piece will yield a rewarding result, even if one might call the product "sloppy" or an "abstraction." Ives never expected perfect performances of his work, and it is the role of a conscientious conductor to determine how to enable Ives's symphonic music to express the composer's sound world.

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[101] Ives, *Orchestral Set no. 1: Three Places in New England (Version 4: 1976 Performance Edition for Large Orchestra)*, edited by James B. Sinclair, v.
[102] Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xxxi.
[103] Brooks, quoted in Ives; *Symphony no. 4*; ed. Brooks, Shirley, Sinclair, and Singleton; xviii.

Section 6. Symphonic unity

       After his Second Symphony, Ives assembled many of his large-scale works as "orchestral sets," and nearly every movement carried an explicitly programmatic connotation. Rather than dismiss the Fourth as a collection of four disparate movements, a thoughtful interpreter might bring the overarching ideological vision of the Fourth into focus after considering certain implicit elements of symphonic unity. While Ives assembled material from preexisting works to form each movement of the Fourth, he developed and tailored the movements to varying degrees to justify their unification as a single symphony. Ives developed a cyclic connection between the Prelude and the Finale, linking the two movements primarily with the opening theme ("urmotiv," figure 2.08) and the Lowell Mason hymn, "Bethany" (or: "Nearer, My God, to Thee," figure 2.09).

<u>A-sharp: Ives's "glory-beaming star" pitch</u>

       Any attempt to explain music on a verbal level can present more problems than it solves. Music can speak for itself as an art form so independent from verbiage that it defies any written or spoken definition. Fortunately Ives wrote extensively about his Fourth Symphony, and he included a text setting in the Prelude that holds great importance for the piece's structure:

Original text, John Bowring:	Revised text, Charles Ives
Watchman, tell us of the night,	Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are.	What its signs of promise are.
Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,	Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,
See that glory-beaming star.	See that glory-beaming star.
Watchman, does its beauteous ray	Watchman, aught of joy or hope?
Aught of joy or hope foretell?	Traveler, yes—it brings the day,
Traveler, yes—it brings the day,	Promised day of Israel.
Promised day of Israel.	Dost thou see its beauteous ray?

Ives specifically rearranged the Prelude's text, both to create a less repetitive

melodic contour, as well as to customize the intent behind the text.[104] The crux of the text

is the "glory-beaming star," the pinnacle of lines 1–4 and the subject of lines 5–8. The

text of the Prelude sets the stage for the long spiritual journey on which Ives embarks,

and the star functions as a guiding force, appearing at significant moments in the Comedy

and Finale. In Ives's original setting of "Watchman!" he adorned the word "star" with an

A-sharp$_5$ in the piano, held with a "tenuto" tempo marking (figure 2.10). At the parallel

moment in the orchestral version (figure 2.11), though denser with an F$_7$ in the celesta,[105]

Ives elevated the piano's A-sharp$_5$ to an A-sharp$_7$, the same pitch in the piano's highest

possible octave.

Following the Prelude, the Comedy's chaotic introduction gives way to a quarter-

tone fog (figure 2.12).[106] Ives used quarter-tones liberally in the second and fourth

movements, but A-sharp plays a significant role at the moment when Ives decided to

stretch his harmonic language beyond the twelve standard pitches. Ives juxtaposed two

sets of perfect fifths,[107] one set in quarter-tones and the other in standard tones, to obscure

the harmonic focus. When the top set shifts upward chromatically from quarter-tones to

standard tones, the bottom set also shifts upward by a quarter-tone, creating a teetering,

inescapable harmonic haze. The top line, which oscillates between an A-three-quarters-

sharp and a B natural, assigns a wandering quality to the "traveler" of the first

movement's text. Here the "glory-beaming star," an A-sharp$_5$ leaning upward, disappears

from focus to add uncertainty to this portion of Ives's symphonic journey. The resolution

of this journey happens as the Finale fades out (figure 2.13). In m. 83 Ives writes a

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[104] Ives chose only to set the first of three verses from Bowring's original text.

[105] Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, ix.

[106] Ives's earliest surviving sketches of the Comedy began the movement in m. 6, omitting the chaotic introduction altogether and beginning with a one-measure lead-in to the quarter-tone fog.

[107] The bottom set in the violin II section alternates between perfect fifths and perfect fourths.

fifteenth chord of stacked thirds, specifying for each violin pitch to fade sequentially from bottom to top, with the top A-sharp$_6$ holding the longest. This most prominent voice recalls the "glory-beaming star" of the Prelude, presenting a vision of the star more sustained than fleeting.

The beginning of the Finale marks another significant structural choice involving the guiding A-sharp. Following the introductory measures in the percussion, Ives began with a quotation of the third phrase of "Bethany" ("Nearer, My God, to Thee") in the basses (figure 2.14) beginning at A-sharp$_1$. The bass entrance falls on the fifth scale degree of "Bethany," and in all practicality Ives should have written a B-flat to function as the dominant of E-flat. His use of A-sharp, if considered as a functionally spelled note, would alter the primary key's spelling from E-flat major to the mythical D-sharp major. This is certainly not the case, as he spells the following tones as C-natural and G-natural rather than as B-sharp and F-double sharp. This passage is decidedly in E-flat, but the A-sharp spelling provides a structural continuity—a link to the first two movements of the symphony. John Kirkpatrick recalled an instance in the song, "Maple Leaves," in which the composer upheld his spellings even though they did not functionally describe the pitches he wrote:
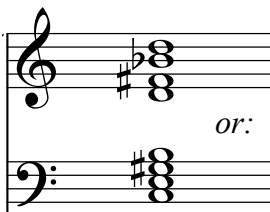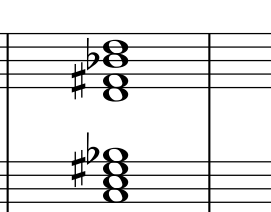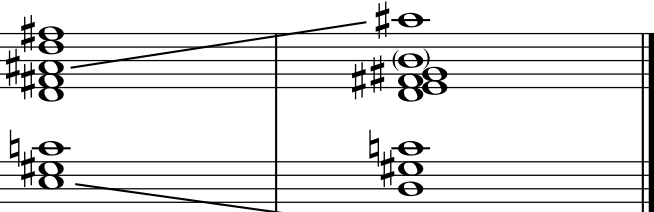
> He [had] a descending fourth for the words "The most are gone now:" A-sharp, A-sharp, G-sharp, F-natural, F-natural. Acoustically, and in the conduct of the melody, that A-sharp to F-natural acts as a perfect fourth. So I tried to explain to Ives that as far as I could perceive the musical beauty of that song, I thought my admiration for it was largely based on the beauty of that perfect fourth, and why didn't he spell it as a perfect fourth? He exploded, and that went on and on, largely about, "Why the hell, when something looks as if it might be 'la soh me'— why do you have to spell it a 'lah soh me'?" He finally ended up with, "I'd rather DIE than change a note of that!"[108]

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[108] Kirkpatrick, quoted in Perlis, *Charles Ives Remembered*, 220–221.

Following the percussion and bass introduction to the Finale, Ives restated and developed the urmotiv. Though he began the Prelude on the tonic in D minor, Ives set the urmotiv a minor third lower (truly a diminished fourth lower, given the A-sharp spelling) in the Finale (figure 2.15). The first three pitches of the Prelude proceed upward, first a minor second, then an augmented second. In the Finale Ives changed the intervallic sequence to a minor second and a minor third. Had he desired to spell the intervals identically, Ives would have written the first three pitches of measure 5 of the Finale, "B-flat, C-flat, D-natural," but again the importance of beginning this theme with an A-sharp superseded any notion of functional or parallel spelling.[109]

The A-sharp maintains an important presence throughout the Fourth, but its harmonic significance is not immediately apparent. Ives adorned the first iteration of the "glory-beaming star" A-sharp in the Prelude with one of his favorite chords, which he detailed in his *Memos*.

Example 2: Third-based chord from *Memos* and "glory-beaming star" chord from "Watchman!"

Here in transposition Ives's third-based chord, if one opts for the B-flat instead of the B-natural in the lower octave, produces each pitch of the "glory-beaming star" chord, except

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[109] Ives's original sketches began at m. 7 with a D, as in the Prelude, instead of an A-sharp.

for the additional B-natural. Since Ives catapulted the A-sharp into a higher register, the B-natural replaces the A-sharp$_4$ in the stack of thirds above G-sharp$_4$.

The Finale's D mixolydian conclusion, replete with C-naturals, contains a harmonic similarity to the "mystical seventh"[110] of Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. Ives intensified this harmonic idea by adding a descending whole-tone bass line at m. 72 (figure 2.16), which integrates both the "mystical seventh" C-natural and the "glory-beaming star" A-sharp.

<u>The Fourth and Dante's *Commedia*</u>

Ives was a fan of classic literature and moral allegory, and his certain familiarity with Dante's *Commedia* is evident in the structure of his Fourth Symphony. Though the Fourth is a symphony in four movements, the first movement's "Prelude" title shifts the balance, especially given its short length relative to the three subsequent movements. In his *Commedia*, Dante's structure centers on the number three: three "canticas" (Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise), each consisting of thirty-three "cantos" and concluding with a reference to the stars. A prelude canto begins the 100-canto tale. Ives's Prelude parallels Dante's prelude through the shared exposition of a pilgrim seeking guidance from the stars, and each of Ives's subsequent three movements represents a cantica from a structural standpoint.

Given its thematic and religious connection to the Finale, the Prelude provides a glimpse into the sound world of Paradise. Ives referred textually and musically to the "glory-beaming star" that awaits in the Finale before descending into the Comedy, and the text also addresses a "traveler o'er yon mountain's height." In his prelude canto, Dante described a similar image: a vision of the sun and stars above the surrounding mountains

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[110] The term "mystical seventh" originates from Leonard Van Camp, *A Practical Guide for Performing, Teaching, and Singing the Brahms Requiem* (Los Angeles: Alfred Music Publishing, 2002), 69. It refers to the E-flat in the opening measures of F major, which alludes to the mixolydian mode.

before embarking on his journey to Hell. Ultimately Dante's journey leads to a vision of God, which Ives foreshadowed in mm. 3, 35, and 41 of the Prelude with the DC's unobstructed quotations of "Nearer, My God, to Thee."[111]

The Comedy's similarity to Dante's Hell begins with the swirling chaos of the first five measures, and they continue with Ives's instructions for intonation. He obscured conventional tonality with a quarter-tone haze beginning in m. 7, and quarter-tones continue to play a vital role in the Comedy's harmonic palate. Ives also asked the timpanist to tune to approximate pitches just wider or narrower than an octave, though explicitly not an exact octave, for the entire movement. Ives's Comedy is an anarchic movement, but it does not pretend to depict the horrors of Dante's Hell directly. Instead Ives models his Comedy after a more concise parable, Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Celestial Railroad."

Though Ives had written his Fugue for string quartet well before he began work on his Fourth Symphony, this comparatively simple movement derives from Mason's "Missionary Hymn" (frequently featuring the text, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains"). The mountain connection coincides with the structural image of Mount Purgatory at this point in Ives's narrative, and the Fugue's musical association with "formalism and ritualism"[112] certainly matches Dante's moral objective. The most important quotation in the Fugue's first climax (m. 83) draws from Johannes Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's text in *Alto Rhapsody* is a prayer of love and renewal for a bitter loner—someone who, as Dante's narrator, has strayed from the noble path.

The Finale radiates a peaceful, complex religiosity, relying heavily on "Nearer, My God, to Thee" and a composite theme drawing from "Missionary Chant,"

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[111] Dante Alighieri, *The Inferno*, translated by John Ciardi (New York: Penguin Group, Inc., 1998), 27–33.
[112] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 360.

"Dorrnance," and "Martyn." Set in cumulative form, the Finale concludes with continuous statements of the second half of "Nearer, My God, to Thee" in the mixolydian mode. Ives described this movement as Dante may have described his final canto: "an apotheosis of the preceding content, in terms that have something to do with the reality of existence and its religious experience."[113] Both Dante and Ives attempted to answer the "what" and "why" questions of the universe through the most elevated means available, and each attempt resulted in a complex, poetic, and enduring masterpiece.

Section 7. Movement I: Prelude

<u>Genesis</u>

The Prelude evolved through two distinct chamber versions before Ives created the orchestral setting heard in the Fourth. Ives borrowed the Prelude's musical material, based on Lowell Mason's hymn, "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night," from the final movement of his own First Violin Sonata, composed between 1908 and 1911. In the sonata version, Ives altered the second half of the "Watchman" melody and text from their original sources (figure 2.17) to fit his own formal and thematic ends (figure 2.18). Ives inserted the text into the violin sonata, presumably so that the performers might follow the tune's text and intimately understand the reference to Mason's hymn. In the summer of 1910, at the onset of Ives's stated incubation period for the Fourth (1910–1916), he set this text as a song for piano and voice with a piano accompaniment virtually identical to that of the sonata.

That same summer, he began to orchestrate "Watchman" as the Prelude to the Fourth, remaining faithful to the song and sonata versions, though he developed a more

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[113] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 66.

powerful and elaborate introduction. It was particularly with the Prelude that Ives

attempted to establish a program for the Fourth:

> "The aesthetic program of the work is that of many of the greatest literary and
> musical masterpieces of the world—the searching questions of What? and Why?
> which the spirit of man asks of life….[the Prelude] would seem to derive from the
> silence of a Sabbath hour when the soul, beset and weary of earthly vexations,
> turns toward the Infinite, toward life and in upon itself with questions of the
> ultimate meaning of existence."[114]

Harmony

The first sixteen measures, rooted in interval-based harmony, maintain a modern

but concise harmonic language. In place of the "Watchman" introduction from the sonata

and song versions, Ives began the Fourth's Prelude (figure 2.19) with an ominous

proclamation of the "urmotiv" (the first emphatic, searching question) and a trumpet call.

In mm. 2–3 the DC enters with a statement of "Bethany" constructed primarily from

major thirds and perfect fourths, and the urmotiv receives its answer in m. 4. In m. 5 Ives

introduced a lyrical passage quoting "In the Sweet Bye and Bye." This section transitions

into mm. 14–16, which overlap with the final three introductory measures of the sonata

and song settings of "Watchman." Mm. 5–16 feature a harmonically unstable melody,

beginning in A major, with third- and fourth-based harmony in the accompaniment. The

basses' pizzicati across G major triads in mm. 5–11 foreshadow the three primary key

areas of the movement.

In Ives's song and violin sonata settings, Mason's D major tune begins above a

firm B minor accompaniment. The Prelude's "Watchman" setting (m. 17) begins rooted in

D major, vaguely hinting at B minor with an added B in the solo piano, cello, and solo

viola/clarinet. Ives manipulated the underlying harmonies to lower the tonal center by

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[114] Henry Bellamann, quoted in Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xxvi. It is presumed that Ives ghost-
wrote this note originally attributed to Bellamann (1882–1945).

thirds, first to B minor in m. 30 and finally to G major in m. 38. At m. 38 Ives extended

the downward third-based motion with an E "scarcely to be heard" in the top viola part.

The first two DC violins enter in the last measure with a C and an E, thus creating a

seven-tone diatonic (if rooted in G major) chord based on a stack of thirds. Ives further

embellished this pleasantly ambiguous tonality with an F-natural and C-sharp in the piano

(or celesta) and a G-sharp in the third DC violin. The solo piano at mm. 39–40 has a G

root, but its pitches are spaced out by perfect fifths from G_2 to B_4. In m. 41 the harp's

harmony is based on fourths, and the DC violins' on two sets of parallel major thirds

(figure 2.20). In spite of its three clear harmonic centers, the Prelude's pandiatonicism

and interval-based harmony contribute to a harmonic idiom more complex than it may

appear at first glance.

Instrumentation

Aside from the meager wind and percussion complement in the Prelude, the

chorus and DC pose a variety of questions that a conductor must address in his

preparation. Ives designated the voices "ad lib.," but he also wrote an ambiguous marking

at the chorus's entrance: "preferably without voices."[115] Combined with the solo trumpet

doubling the vocal line, this marking refers to Charles's father, George, who would

perform hymns on the cornet while "asking the congregation to imagine the words as he

played, that inner voice closer to the spirit than the singing voice."[116]

Depending on the number of violins in the orchestra and the location of the DC, it

is possible to assign five violinists from the back stands to cover the DC part in the

Prelude and Finale. The alternative is to assign five violinists to play these parts

exclusively and remain *tacet* during the interior movements. There are various options for

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[115] Ives; *Symphony no. 4*; ed. Brooks, Shirley, Sinclair, and Singleton; 4.
[116] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 353.

placement of the DC. This decision, which should weigh all options for spatial placement vis-à-vis the conductor's desired sound effect, will inform the conducting of the DC passages.

<u>Conducting performance</u>

While the DC may follow the primary orchestra conductor in mm. 1–4 and mm. 27–41 of the Prelude, in mm. 5–26 Ives indicated for the DC to "maintain previous tempo; not synchronized with Main Orchestra." If the DC plans to play without an assistant conductor between m. 5 and m. 26, especially at a long distance from the stage, the DC players must be familiar with the score. A brief DC-only rehearsal should clarify the players' roles in the first movement, but an even clearer and more expedient solution is to assign an assistant conductor to the DC, at least for mm. 5–26. During this period, the DC exclusively plays subdivisions of five quintuple half notes per measure. An assistant conductor can dictate five beats per measure at the correct tempo, slower than the main orchestra's tempo, while following the main orchestra's place to give the full-ensemble cutoff in m. 27. A conductor specifically assigned to the DC may be situated in the wings or balcony with the DC, or a secondary conductor may address the DC from the stage.

A secondary conductor for the main orchestra will prove useful in the Comedy and Finale, usually in a position clearly visible to the main orchestra. When addressing smaller sections of the orchestra in different spatial alignment, the secondary conductor might consider moving nearer to or farther from the primary conductor. If the secondary conductor addresses the DC in the Prelude, he can select a position onstage that faces the DC and only minimally distracts the main orchestra.

A performance of the Fourth requires as many conductors as are needed for absolute clarity, though without distracting from the performance beyond whatever theatricality is inherent in multi-conductor performances.[117] For the sake of clarity, three conductors should assume "posts" in the Prelude: a primary conductor, a secondary conductor, and a DC conductor. The value of the secondary conductor onstage for this movement lies in the choral passages mm. 17–26 and mm. 30–33. In these passages, most of the main orchestra would benefit from a three-pattern, while the flute/top violin 1, trumpet, celesta, and chorus would play or sing their lines more idiomatically atop a two-pattern. The secondary conductor, following the primary conductor's tempo, would provide this two-pattern for the aforementioned group, clarifying the $\frac{6}{8}$ that Ives intended to line up against the orchestra's $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Conducting the Prelude is a straightforward task when compared with the Comedy and Finale. Despite a few three-against-four-against-five polyrhythms and a colorful harmonic palette, the Prelude is relatively light in technical ambition and miniature in scale.

Notation

The Prelude does not present the same performance difficulties as the even-numbered movements, nor does it necessitate many instances of alternative notation. The performance score matches the critical score identically in most respects, with a notable exception in the DC between mm. 30–33. At m. 30 Ives wrote two $\frac{6}{4}$ measures for the DC to coincide with four $\frac{3}{4}$ measures in the main orchestra. The performance edition has consolidated these time signatures so that both the DC and the main orchestra may read four synchronous measures of $\frac{3}{4}$.

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[117] For example, a secondary conductor onstage could prove especially distracting to the audience if he addresses the DC *across* the audience.

In spite of the performance score's fidelity to the critical edition in this movement, select "-tuplets" do require careful examination. Certain four-against-three figures in the Comedy and Finale have undergone notational transformations, but the quartuplet figures in the trumpet in m. 2 and in the solo piano, cello, and bass in m. 4 have maintained their quartuplet notation. In the case of m. 4, a confident ensemble feeling four-against-three will play an accurate rhythm, but seldom in past recordings has m. 2 sounded accurately. A triplet eighth note under a quartuplet bracket is the same as a sixteenth note, and Brodhead has presented an alternative notation for the trumpet (figure 2.04) that certainly clarifies *when* to play, if not *how* to play. While the alternative notation emphasizes that the second D should coincide with the third beat and the E with the fifth, a player conceptualizing the line this way might accent these two pitches. If the player sees the original notation on a separate staff, he has the resources to understand the inflection and accentuation that the alternative notation obscures.

Section 8. Movement II: Comedy

<u>Genesis</u>

The origins of Ives's Comedy, especially the chronology of its composition, have provoked extensive discussion among Ives scholars during the past few decades. Ives originally claimed to have composed the Fourth between 1910 and 1916, but given the chronology of his *Concord* Sonata and his piano piece, *The Celestial Railroad*, it is highly unlikely that this claim is true. However, it was not an outright lie either: the original source for the Comedy was Ives's "Hawthorne Piano Concerto," a prototype completed in 1913 that would eventually become the Hawthorne movement of the *Concord* Sonata, which Ives completed in 1915 and privately printed and distributed

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beginning in 1921. The Comedy derives some content directly from the *Concord* Sonata,

but primarily it is an adaptation of the "Hawthorne Concerto." Separately from the

Concord Sonata, Ives expanded the "Hawthorne Concerto" into *The Celestial Railroad*, a

"Phantasy" for solo piano named and programmatically modeled after Nathaniel

Hawthorne's eponymous short story. Ives's *The Celestial Railroad* contains too much

material for one pianist to play at times,[118] and therefore serves more as a sketch than as a

solo piano piece: "a way-station between Ives's lost 'Hawthorne Piano Concerto' and the

[Comedy]."[119] Since the manuscript of *The Celestial Railroad* contains patches cut

directly from the printed *Concord* Sonata, Brodhead dates *The Celestial Railroad*

between 1921 and 1923.[120] With these three Hawthorne-inspired piano works, Ives had a

set of sketches that he would continue to rework and amplify until the Comedy's premiere

in January 1927.

The Comedy represents an amazing whirlwind of rhapsodic form and stylistic

variety. The tonality is rarely stable for extended sections of the movement, and Ives

introduced quarter-tones and an unspecified timpani tuning to further destabilize any

prolonged tendency toward functional harmony. Formally the narrative follows

Hawthorne's "The Celestial Railroad," a story that traces a narrator's dream of a train ride

from the City of Destruction through Vanity Fair and eventually to Beulah Land, guided

by Mr. Smooth-it-away. Once the dream ends, Fourth-of-July celebrations at Concord,

MA, ensue, complete with orchestral fireworks and Ives's *"Country Band" March*.[121]

John R. Sweney's hymn tune, "Beulah Land," lies at the center of the movement

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[118] Thomas M. Brodhead, "Ives's *Celestial Railroad* and His Fourth Symphony," *American Music* 12, no. 4 (Winter 1994): 395–396.
[119] Ibid., 418.
[120] Ibid., 398.
[121] For programmatic guides to the Comedy refer to Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 393–399 and Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xxv.

musically. Beulah Land represents the aim of the narrator's journey in Hawthorne's story, and various partial quotations of the tune precede its full, cumulative statement at m. 217p.[122]

Instrumentation

The Comedy features a vast yet strange complement of instruments. This orchestra would appear fully stocked, though the orchestral staple oboes and horns are inconspicuously *tacet* in this movement. Ives called for two "extra" violin II players and one "extra" viola player, both nestled toward the back of their respective sections. The pianos are extremely important, given the Comedy's pianistic lineage. The pairing of the solo piano with the orchestra piano, quarter-tone piano, and celesta inspired the "symphony for orchestra and pianos" title at the 1927 partial premiere, and the solo piano plays an extremely prominent role throughout.

Ives also offered further options in the orchestra, including the suggestion to substitute saxophone for first bassoon.[123] Sinclair addresses the saxophone option in the preface, as Ives suggested the substitution in an unclear manner. The first bassoon's music would divide between tenor and baritone saxophone, though it would be possible to cover the part with a single player.[124] Another option is to double melodic lines at certain points of the Comedy and Finale with an instrument that fascinated Ives: "Mr. [Leon] Theremin's ether organ." This likely referred to a keyboard harmonium or space-controlled Theremin, but an ondes Martenot can achieve similar effects with a similar

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[122] Measure numbers after m. 75 in this movement are inconsistent between the performance and critical scores. References to measure numbers after this point in the Comedy will either contain a "p" for the performance edition or a "c" for the critical edition.

[123] With this instruction, the reason to omit oboes and horns becomes clear: Ives intended to create a marching band sound world for the wind and brass sections. Saxophones commonly replace double reeds in marching bands, and standard marching brass consists wholly of bell-front instruments.

[124] Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xxviii.

sound.[125] Both the Theremin and ondes Martenot offer the capability of precise pitch control, including the quarter-tones in Ives's optional ether organ lines.

Throughout the Comedy, Ives marked various lines with letters A through G. These "prominence indicators" might inspire an initial "*Hauptstimme* and *Nebenstimme*" interpretation, but Brodhead has taken great care to dispel this misconception.[126] Prominence indicators might give the performer an idea of the level of intensity of each line, but Ives wrote specifically in his *Memos* about the spatial element of the performance of the Comedy and Finale of the Fourth: "If the players are put as usual, grouped together on the same stage, the effect of the sound will not give the full meaning of the music. These movements should not be played all in the foreground, with the sounds coming practically the same distance from the sounding bodies to the listeners' ears."[127] Ives conceived the Comedy with a certain level of spatial variety among the instrumentalists, and if this proves logistically impractical in preparing the Fourth, the performers should ignore these prominence indicators.[128]

Conducting performance

A palpable sense of narrative drama and theatricality permeates the Comedy, which Ives originally conceived as a two-conductor movement. It is decidedly the most difficult of the four movements to conduct and to play. Ives, sensing the challenge that an orchestra would face in this music, wrote a substantial amount of prose to clarify the Comedy. He left in the preface a "conductor's note" encompassing a list of options and guidelines for instrumentation and individual events in the piece, as well as an essay explaining the Comedy's spatial acoustics, philosophical impetus, and musical language.

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[125] Brodhead, quoted in Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, ix.
[126] Ibid., xxxiv–xxxv; Brodhead, "Prominence Indicators in Ives's Fourth Symphony."
[127] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 67.
[128] Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, x.

The essay is certainly interesting and the guidelines helpful, but many questions remain in the music itself. Nearly a century later, any conductor preparing the Comedy must strategize well beyond Ives's limited instructions.

The first page of Ives's manuscript for the Comedy is virtually aleatoric on sight, containing five different time signatures (including the absence of a time signature) to form a wild, dreamlike haze. This page in the critical score would present tremendous challenges for any conductor or ensemble of conductors, but Brodhead's performance score has distilled this chaos into three time signatures: the bassoons and basses remain independent, while the rest of the orchestra fits neatly within five measures of $\frac{6}{8}$ time. A second conductor should certainly guide the celli and basses, still without a time signature, as Ives asked for these instruments to play above the rest of the ensemble for the first five measures. The primary conductor may lead the main orchestra in $\frac{6}{8}$ time, and the bassoons can either play independently or follow a third conductor. Generally a third conductor is unnecessary in this movement.

In the preface material to the performance score, Brodhead addresses various conducting conundrums in the Comedy. What he names the "tempo malfunction" at m. 29 is a possible numerical miscalculation on the part of Ives. Here the conductor has the option to maintain the continuity of the viola line and change the tempo relationship between mm. 28–29 from the printed eight note = eighth note to the more natural dotted quarter note = quarter note. Maintaining the printed tempo relationship would vault the tempo forward in m. 29, resulting in a more abrupt accelerando and a faster final tempo at m. 35.[129]

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[129] For further reading on the "tempo malfunction," consult Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xiv.

One special event that Brodhead addresses is the "collapse" section from mm. 43–51. Ives suggested that a second conductor lead the "upper" orchestra during this passage, and this has become common practice among orchestras.[130] Though this asynchronicity demands an inherent amount of freedom and spontaneity, Brodhead has calculated that, if the two conductors follow Ives's tempi exactly, the upper orchestra's collapse should conclude between the second and third half note beats of m. 49 in the lower orchestra.[131] In any case, the upper orchestra's conductor should cue the lower orchestra's basses at the fermata, as they jump forward to m. 51 at the conclusion of the collapse. The second conductor must clearly denote the downbeat of m. 52 for the upper orchestra and basses so that they may resynchronize with the lower orchestra.

Another rehearsal nightmare is what Brodhead names the "battle of the triplet groups" between mm. 55–58.[132] Here Brodhead has divided the orchestra into four groups: the main orchestra, group 1, group 2, and group 3. Group 2 has triplets beginning on the second eighth note of each beat, and group 3 has the same figure beginning on the second sixteenth note of each beat. Brodhead has provided Ives's original notation, as well as alternative notation for each member of groups 2 and 3. Moreover, in the orchestral parts for all three numbered groups, he has indicated which instruments should synchronize. The alternative notations may not prove helpful here, but they at least provide an exact beat-by-beat idea of where the notes change. Ultimately each triplet group can rehearse independently, beginning their triplet figures *on* the beat to achieve an accurate reading before offsetting the line by an eighth or sixteenth rest.

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[130] In 2012 the Berlin Philharmonic enlisted the second oboist to conduct the upper orchestra here, as the oboes are *tacet* in the Comedy.

[131] For further reading on the "collapse," consult Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xv–xvi.

[132] Brodhead, quoted in Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xi.

Notationally Brodhead has synchronized the passage between mm. 115–120p through means similar to the first page of the Comedy. From a mess of five asynchronous meters, he has spelled each instrument's rhythm in $\frac{5}{8}$ and sorted the lines into two groups: one purely in $\frac{5}{8}$ ("in 5") and another essentially in $\mathbf{\frac{5}{16}}$ ("in 2"). He leaves the option open for a secondary conductor to lead the "in 2" group, but these players can place their quintuplet figures within the primary conductor's $\frac{5}{8}$ measures if necessary. A secondary conductor would assist in this passage, facilitating a confident coordination of the flutes, bells, gongs, and especially the orchestra piano and solo piano.

Between mm. 141–145p the saxophone, bassoon, and percussion remain in strict tempo, completing m. 145p well before the slackening main orchestra. Brodhead suggests that the assistant conductor cue the extra violin II player in m. 142p, but the secondary conductor should also stabilize the "strict tempo" effect by leading the saxophone, bassoon, and percussion between mm. 143–145p, possibly beginning as early as m. 141p.

The "Vanity Fair" section from mm. 149–161p contains syrupy sweet parlor music for the solo piano adorned by sparse orchestral accompaniment and various aleatoric lines. This passage would sound well enough with a "wind-up and let go" approach, in which the primary conductor cues the low bells, extra violin II, and extra viola, leaving them to their own devices until the middle of m. 161p. Ives does, however, request a particular relationship between the low bells and extra violin II, even advocating in his conductor's note that the low bells be placed near the extra violin II player. A secondary conductor can initiate the cue for these two players and keep them coordinated throughout this section, and either conductor can cue the extra viola following the entrance of the low bells. From there the extra viola may continue

unconducted, but the secondary conductor should give a special cutoff for these aleatoric players on beat three of m. 161p.

In various sections throughout the Comedy, part of the orchestra continues in $\frac{4}{4}$ time while different groups switch into a triplet feel. Between mm. 200–207p and mm. 211–216p, Brodhead splits the score into a $\frac{3}{2}$ group and a $\frac{4}{4}$ group, suggesting that a secondary conductor give three beats for every four beats in the main orchestra, but also hinting that this might not be necessary with adequate rehearsal time.[133] It would be clear and expedient to incorporate a secondary conductor whenever he might uphold the metrical integrity of a prominent line, and these passages certainly fit within this category. Other sections of the Comedy containing nested triplets for small instrumental groups would benefit greatly from a secondary conductor beating three-against-four: mm. 65–68 for the saxophone, viola, and cello; mm. 178–180p for the cornet, orchestra piano, and light gong; and mm. 246–248p for the bassoons and celli.

Notation: consolidation of meter

As the Comedy undoubtedly requires the most explanation and clarification of the four movements, it also contains the largest number of notational adjustments between the critical and performance scores. One important change between the critical and performance scores is the consolidation of time signatures at various points of the Comedy. This practice is rooted in the tradition of the 1965 edition, and many of the adjustments in the 2011 performance edition are modeled after these notational precedents. If not for these unifying measures, one of two undesirable scenarios would be necessary: certain players would either play their lines while counting a time signature that is absent elsewhere in the orchestra, essentially guessing where to play, or multiple

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[133] Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xii.

assistant conductors would frequently and simultaneously conduct unfamiliar meters against the primary conductor's beat.

As previously discussed in the conducting performance section, this adjustment is immediately evident in the first page of the performance score. Not only do the clarinets, orchestra piano, celesta, percussion, and violins fit neatly into a uniform $\frac{6}{8}$ meter, but the cello and bass line is clarified with dotted, editorial measure lines, splitting their unmeasured figure into three-beat units. This facilitates any reading by the cello and bass section, conducted or unconducted. Perhaps most important are the comprehensive instructions in the parts, which give the bassoons (figure 2.21), celli, and basses (figure 2.22) an idea of how their lines function within this quasi-chaos.

The passage between mm. 75–122p represents the most metrically complicated of the entire symphony. The 1965 edition consolidated these sections into $\frac{3}{16}$ (mm. 75–106p), $\frac{4}{4}$ (mm. 107–109p, mm. 112–114p), $\frac{5}{8}$ (mm. 115–120p), and $\frac{3}{4}$ (mm. 121–122p); and the new performance edition has upheld this notational framework. This consolidation between mm. 112–122p is absolutely essential in the performance score. While Ives has notated a bevy of specific, changing time signatures, practical unification of this section depends wholly on a common time signature. However, Ives's notation between mm. 75–109p only contains two prevailing time signatures in the orchestra at any given time, $\frac{3}{16}$ against $\frac{4}{4}$.[134] Two well-coordinated conductors could easily handle these cross-rhythms, aligning three beats of $\frac{4}{4}$ in the main orchestra with every four measures of $\frac{3}{16}$ in the auxiliary march group. While the new performance score has maintained the 1965 notation of these passages, this consolidation of $\frac{3}{16}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$ is unnecessary, as it obscures the polyrhythmic nature of an interesting polyrhythmic

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[134] The renegade orchestra piano in $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{5}{8}$, $\frac{6}{8}$, and $\frac{7}{8}$ could be grouped with either.

passage. Fortunately Brodhead, understanding this compromise, has achieved a balance by adding extra explanation in the orchestral parts for the $\frac{4}{4}$ group between mm. 75–106p and the original notation for the $\frac{3}{16}$ group between mm. 107–109p (figure 2.05).

In a relatively innocuous three-measure mini-section between mm. 208–210p, Ives superimposed one group in $\frac{6}{8}$ (timpani, solo piano, viola) with another in $\frac{4}{4}$ (celesta, cello, and bass). The cross-rhythms in these measures are not particularly difficult to feel with some practice, and the solo piano has the primary tune in this brief foreshadowing of the "Beulah Land" section. While this passage is clear and immediately playable in the performance score, the consolidated $\frac{4}{4}$ meter has forced the conductor's hand, strongly discouraging the option to conduct a slow $\frac{6}{8}$ in these three measures.

While the flute and piccolo measure lines in Ives's original notation align with those of the main orchestra from m. 252p until the end, the performance score has respelled their rhythms from Ives's original $\frac{3}{4}$ into $\frac{6}{8}$ notation. While the $\frac{3}{4}$ notation is important to uphold on one level, this passage flies by so quickly that preserving a $\frac{3}{4}$ inflection is not quite as essential as keeping this figure aligned with the main orchestra. The primary conductor at this point will be in a fast two, and the $\frac{6}{8}$ notation for flute and piccolo is quite helpful for feeling this line within the prevailing meter and tempo.

Other notable passages in which the performance scores unifies inconspicuous, asynchronous meters include mm. 33–34 (percussion), mm. 123–129p (bassoons), and mm. 248–251p (orchestra piano, percussion). While these adjustments may not all be necessary, they certainly help to unify the orchestra and will inevitably save rehearsal time while preparing an extraordinarily complex movement.

<u>Notation: respelling of rhythms</u>

In respelling a number of Ives's "tuplet" rhythms, the performance score offers a new, immediately clearer way to read many of the Comedy's complicated rhythmic gestures. In m. 16 the violins and violas play triplets nested within a duple beaming (figure 2.23). However one quarter note triplet nested under a three-beat duple is equal to a simple eighth note (figure 2.24). Similarly the performance edition has respelled the nested subdivisions in the solo piano part between mm. 232–235p and in the cornet in m. 238p to yield more reasonable rhythms.

The respelling of the first violin quartuplets and triplets between mm. 38–51 and mm. 181–185p, as well as the bass quartuplets in m. 54 results in a clearer beat-by-beat rhythm. The respelling of the quintuplets and septuplets in the violins between mm. 136–141p clarifies the inner articulations of the critical edition's subdivisions. While these figures appear beamed in two-beat groups in the critical edition, Brodhead's beat-by-beat notation immediately reveals that the top note in each figure should be articulated directly on beat two or beat four. The same heightened clarity results from the respelling of the saxophone and bassoon line between mm. 181–188p and the saxophone and trumpet 2 line between mm. 211–214p; and the same principle applies in consolidating the saxophone, bassoon, percussion, and low strings' figure with the primary meter beginning in m. 225p.

For certain repeated figures, Brodhead either elects to uphold or alter Ives's notation. In mm. 262–263p the high bells' notation, a triplet offset by an eighth, remains intact. In mm. 232–236p the piccolo and xylophone play the same rhythm, though the performance edition presents the figure in a more idiomatic, beat-by-beat notation. Similarly Brodhead has respelled mm. 62–64 beat-by-beat for the saxophone, viola, and

cello; inserting triplet sixteenth rests on each downbeat. While these rests may help to achieve a marcato style of accentuation and more accurate ensemble articulations, the performance score neglects Ives's true note lengths in this passage. This inconsistency is a prime example of why the critical edition remains an essential companion to ascertaining Ives's rhythmic intentions in the Fourth.

The syncopated figure in the saxophone, trumpet, viola, and cello between mm. 69–71 also appears rebeamed on a beat-by-beat basis in the performance score, and the same goes for saxophone and violins between mm. 191–193p.[135] While generally unessential, this change in notation should not obscure Ives's intentions on any level, especially given the performance edition's accentuation and dotted slur lines.

Notation: aleatoric passages

The performance score has taken full advantage of the most advanced engraving possibilities available, and as a result, the aleatoric characteristics of certain passages in the Comedy are immediately visible on the page. For example, the "collapse" section from mm. 43–51 contains the same number of measures between the upper and lower orchestra. In the 1965 edition and in the 2011 critical edition, both ensembles line up measure-for-measure, even though the upper orchestra has specific instructions to speed ahead of the lower orchestra starting in m. 45. In the 2011 performance score, the measures begin to condense in the upper orchestra in m. 45, and the upper orchestra's double measure line at the end of m. 51 lines up between beats two and three of m. 50 in the lower orchestra. The blank space on p. 23 after the upper orchestra's collapse visually confirms the temporal gap in the two ensembles' completion of m. 51. The performance score also includes extra reminders for the lower orchestra basses to jump ahead to m. 51

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[135] Mm. 191–193p do contain the original notation for reference in the orchestral parts.

once the upper orchestra reaches that point, not only in the bass line, but also near the tempo instructions for the upper orchestra. Even within the upper orchestra, special instructions will help the piccolo player to align this tricky part with the rest of the group (figure 2.25).

Similarly, the performance score contains intentionally misaligned the measure lines in three other sections: the "strict tempo" passage between mm. 143–145p, the "Vanity Fair" passage between mm. 149–161p, and the "Beulah Land" passage between mm. 217–224p. This graphic device serves to clarify aleatoric features. Because of conspicuous gaps in various lines of the score, a conductor will immediately see the instrument groupings that should not align with the main orchestra in the "strict tempo" and "Vanity Fair" passages. Though the "Beulah Land" passage consolidates multiple meters (an essential adjustment), the incongruent measure lines of the extra violin II accentuate the independence of this unique line.

Section 9. Movement III: Fugue

Genesis

The *Fugue for Organ* that Ives composed for Horatio Parker evolved into the first movement of his *String Quartet No. 1* (1902). The Fugue of the Fourth represents a lightly reworked version of this movement, labeled "Chorale" in the quartet version. Generally Ives inserted and removed one or two extra measures at the end of a few phrases, but the most interesting recomposition in the orchestral version lies between m. 94 and m. 103, where Ives inserted a new and tumultuous section paraphrasing the Prelude's urmotiv.

Compositionally, the Fugue differs extremely from the other three movements of the Fourth. Its source material comes from an early, non-experimental work in Ives's career, and the final product remains fairly faithful to the source. As a result of its divergence from the rest of the symphony, the Fugue incorporates various devices from Ives's earlier style that he forsakes elsewhere in the Fourth. This window into the contrapuntal style of Ives as a collegiate and recent graduate includes copious free-form chromaticism, conservative orchestration, and clear motivic development. Ives biographer Jan Swafford believes that the Fugue "is in a way the most revolutionary movement of all. To follow the wild outburst of the Comedy with the apparently traditional harmony and counterpoint of the Fugue belies every concept of stylistic integrity traditional or Modernist."[136] Though not particularly revolutionary as a free-standing entity, the Fugue is quite audacious within the context of the Fourth, both in its "formalism and ritualism."[137]

<u>Instrumentation</u>

In expanding and modifying his Fugue, Ives bolstered the string quartet into a chamber orchestra in the vein of the Third Symphony or "Washington's Birthday:" in addition to an expanded string section, he only called for a single flute, a single clarinet, horn or trombone, timpani, and organ. M. 45 marks the first entrance of the organ in the entire symphony. The organ was one of Ives's most familiar instruments, and it is crucial to the religious sound world of both the Fugue and the Finale. When the horn and trombone play simultaneously, they often play in unison, which would suggest (along with Ives's marking "horn *or* trombone") that a conductor might choose one or the other to play the entire movement—Ives would apparently prefer the trombone, as he notated

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[136] Swafford, *Charles Ives*, 360.
[137] Ibid., 360.

most of his brass writing on the trombone staff. Both should play in the Fugue, however, as Ives did write individual lines for both instruments (mm. 96–99, mm. 106–108).

<u>Thematic analysis</u>

Though more a "fugue-fantasia" than a strict "fugue," the third movement contains a clear, traditional subject (Mason's "Missionary Hymn," or "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," figure 2.26) and countersubject (from Oliver Holden's "Coronation," or "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," figure 2.27). Ives also introduced and developd four motives (figures 2.28–2.31) through the Fugue's episodes. Late sections of the movement paraphrase the final chorale from Johannes Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody* (mm. 83–95, figure 2.32) and the Prelude's urmotiv (mm. 96–99). Though Ives shortened the final phrase from the quartet version, he concluded the movement with a plagal cadence following a closing quotation from "Antioch" ("Joy to the World") in the trombone. These two gestures reinforce the Fugue's religious character.

<u>Notation and performance</u>

The Fugue is straightforward enough that the notational content of the critical edition is immediately legible and performable with a single conductor. The performance score has re-beamed the bass's full-measure triplets into half-measure triplets (mm. 33–36), but this modification will not substantially impact the line's continuity.

Section 10. Movement IV: Finale

<u>Genesis</u>

Completed in the summer of 1914, Ives's Finale has religious origins and attempts to address the "searching questions" posed in the Prelude. The Finale relies heavily on "Bethany" ("Nearer, My God, to Thee") and a lost organ piece by Ives from 1901 named

Memorial Slow March. The melody of the *Memorial Slow March* originated from a combination of "Missionary Chant," "Dorrnance," and "Martyn."[138]

Following a seven-measure percussion introduction, the Finale begins with the third phrase from "Bethany" in the basses, then a quotation and development of the Prelude's urmotiv. The movement continues with fragments of hymn tunes, culminating with full statements of the *Memorial Slow March* (mm. 40–62) and the third phrase of "Bethany" (m. 64–end). This cumulative setting of "Bethany" recalls a moment when Ives learned of President McKinley's assassination in 1901. "Everybody stood up and sang [Bethany]….It was a fine and deep personal experience which is better to remember than to put into words."[139] It also evokes the coda of the final movement from Ives's Second String Quartet, another setting of the third phrase of "Bethany" in D mixolydian. Moreover, within the context of the Fourth, the coda symbolizes the arrival of the traveler's journey described in the Prelude's "Watchman" text.

Instrumentation

For all of the colorful bombast of the Comedy, Ives scored the Finale for an even larger orchestra. Oboes, horns, extra trumpets, and a third violin section (divided as such only intermittently) play in addition to the complement from the second movement. He maintained each keyboard instrument from the Comedy and invited back the traditional organ from the Fugue and the optional ether organ from the Comedy. As in the Comedy, the interplay between the quarter-tone piano and the solo piano in this movement, notably between mm. 32–34, should encourage the two to project evenly. This idea may inspire an orchestral setup in which these two instruments are near to each other. The Finale consists of three separate ensembles: the main orchestra, the Distant Choir (DC) from the

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[138] James B. Sinclair, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Music of Charles Ives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 19.

[139] Ives, *Memos*, ed. Kirkpatrick, 66.

Prelude,[140] and the BU percussion ensemble. Many of this movement's conducting challenges lie in the coordination of these three groups.

Conducting performance

As in the Prelude and Comedy, certain passages in the Finale benefit greatly from a secondary conductor. Measure 59 is the first such passage, as Ives instructed certain voices to carry on in $\frac{3}{2}$ as most of the orchestra shifts into $\frac{4}{2}$. He indicated a "measure = measure" tempo relationship, in which the $\frac{3}{2}$ of m. 59 remains steady from m. 58, and each full measure of $\frac{4}{2}$ after m. 59 aligns with each full $\frac{3}{2}$ measure. The two conductors, therefore, must beat in a three-against-four relationship, but this begs the question of which conductor should beat three and which should beat four. It would feel natural for the primary conductor to continue beating three for continuity's sake, but the $\frac{4}{2}$ group immediately overtakes the $\frac{3}{2}$ group as the "main orchestra" in m. 59, and the tempo relationship between m. 63 and m. 64 relies on continuity of the $\frac{4}{2}$ half note. Therefore, the secondary conductor should beat $\frac{3}{2}$ in unison with the primary conductor one or two measures before m. 59, maintaining his tempo into m. 59 while the primary conductor leads the $\frac{4}{2}$ group from m. 59 through to m. 65.

By m. 65, the secondary conductor's work could be through, or he could continue to clarify a tricky quartuplet line within the main orchestra, which Ives wrote to coincide with the BU percussion's tempo. The performance edition has respelled the quartuplet rhythms at m. 65 to fit within the primary conductor's $\frac{4}{2}$ pattern, but it also provides the original quartuplet notation in case these "players can see BU conductor." Here the secondary conductor has the option to mirror the BU conductor inconspicuously so that

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[140] In m. 49 there is a quarter-tone chord that the DC harpist cannot play, and that the audience will likely not hear. If an ensemble is striving for extreme accuracy, it would enlist a second, *scordatura* harp to play only this chord, and to add two notes to the first chord of the lower staff of m. 45.)

the piccolo, oboes, clarinets, ether organ, and high bells can play a simpler rhythm, synchronized with the BU, without shifting their sightlines.

At m. 50 the critical edition lists a $\frac{4}{4}$ time signature for a small group of instruments. A secondary conductor might clarify these lines, but is ultimately unnecessary, as Brodhead's performance score has respelled each line to fit within the prevailing $\frac{3}{2}$ of the main orchestra.

Unlike in the Prelude, the DC plays in direct synchronization with the main orchestra's tempo throughout the Finale. The DC could follow the primary conductor, but depending on the distance and sightline of the DC from the primary conductor, it may be helpful to employ a DC conductor throughout the Finale. If the primary conductor deems the DC conductor for the Finale superfluous, this third conductor should conduct the BU percussion in the Finale. However, approaching the Finale with four conductors—two for the main orchestra, a third for the BU percussion, and a fourth for the DC—is the most certain formula for full synchronization.

Tempo vis-à-vis the BU percussion section

Perhaps the most important structural decisions a conductor must make in preparing the Finale are those of the basic tempo, and of the tempo relationships at each indicated tempo change. The movement begins with seven unnumbered measures of percussion, along with a mathematical description of how the percussion's tempo should relate to the rest of the orchestra (figure 2.33). In the first measure for the main orchestra, Ives specified a relationship of four quarter note beats for the percussion to every six quarter note beats for the basses (figure 2.34). He called each $\frac{4}{4}$ percussion measure the "BU," and each equivalent unit for the main orchestra an "orchestra unit," or "OU."[141]

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[141] The abbreviation, "BU," has elicited the speculative terms "basic unit" and "battery unit." Ives never used these phrases to refer to the "BU."

Practically speaking, the percussion does not emerge significantly from the orchestral texture beyond the first four numbered measures. The percussion parts also contain elements of isorhythm,[142] and they do not have much to do rhythmically with the main orchestra's music, or even with each other. For these reasons many performers, even world-class orchestras playing under the fussiest conductors, have not traditionally taken care to align the main orchestra with the BU percussion beyond a few measures, if at all. Often a member of the percussion plays his part while conducting the BU ensemble (an unchanging $\frac{4}{4}$ throughout), possibly adding or subtracting a few measures from the end of the movement. Ultimately neglecting Ives's stated relationship between percussion and orchestra will not produce an egregiously wrong-sounding performance: as long as the BU percussion stops playing shortly after the main orchestra fades away at the end, few audience members or orchestral players will know the difference (figure 2.13).

Allowing the BU percussion to perform freely and irrespective of the main orchestra's tempo, however, dismisses the mathematical beauty with which Ives constructed the movement. The percussion section's measure lines align precisely in relation to the main orchestra throughout the movement, and the percussion's beginning tempo should inform each tempo relationship in the main orchestra. With some careful collaboration between the primary conductor and the conductor of the BU, whether a percussionist or assistant conductor, it is possible to align the two groups closely, if not exactly, throughout the movement.

An assistant conductor with the sole responsibility to maintain this relationship would likely prove more successful than a percussionist within the section. Reading along with a full score, this extra conductor would calculate where each of his downbeats

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[142] There is an alternate BU snare part that maintains the isorhythmic integrity of this passage. Consult Ives, *Symphony no. 4*, ed. Brodhead, xiii.

falls within the main conductor's beat pattern, as well as his relationship to the main orchestra's tempo. In some cases the BU maintains a one-to-one relationship, other times four-to-three or six-to-five.

If the percussion's basic unit informed the main orchestra's tempo throughout, the main conductor would take care to frame his tempi based on the idea of the BU continuing in a steady $\frac{4}{4}$ for the entire movement. This practice, however, would yield a highly unmusical performance. Therefore, once the main orchestra is "up and running," it becomes the BU conductor's role to keep his constant $\frac{4}{4}$ pattern aligned with the complex ebb and flow of the main orchestra throughout the Finale. The main conductor will inevitably take the occasional rubato, and the BU conductor must follow, adjusting his tempo slightly to remain synchronized. Conversely, the main conductor must frame his tempo changes about Ives's BU-to-OU ratios so that the percussion's BU tempo may remain relatively consistent. As in all symphonic music, conductors personalize their decisions in navigating tempo relationships, but tradition has fallen far off-base in the case of this movement, beginning with Stokowski's 1965 premiere.

Thomas Brodhead provides BU and OU ratios in the performance score and in his survival guide, but these ratios do not explicitly suggest slowing down or speeding up at each tempo change. Here is Brodhead's guide with extra information detailing the true effect that each ratio will have on the main orchestra's tempo:

Table 1: Tempo relationship between OU and BU in the Finale

Measure #	OU:BU ratio	BU:OU conductor ratio	Tempo changes, primary conductor	Metronome markings
1–23	1 : 1.5	4 : 3	Tempo primo, 3 : 4 with BU	Half = 60
24–26	1 : 2	1 : 1	Faster, dotted quarter = half	Half = 80
27–34	1 : 1.5	4 : 3	Tempo primo, half = dotted quarter	Half = 60
35–39	1 : 1.5	4 : 3	Stesso tempo, quarter = quarter	Half = 60
40–49	1 : 1.25	6 : 5	Slower by 1/6 of a beat	Half = 50
50–58	1 : 1.5	4 : 3	Tempo primo, faster by 1/5 of a beat	Half = 60
59–63[143]	1 : 2	1 : 1	Faster, dotted quarter = half	Half = 80
64	1 : 2	1 : 1	Stesso tempo, quarter = quarter	Half = 80
65–71	1 : 1.5	4 : 3	Tempo primo, half = dotted quarter	Half = 60
72–88	1 : 1	1 : 1	Slower, dotted quarter = quarter	Half = 40

The most important ratios in this table for performance purposes are the third and fourth columns. The "BU:OU conductor ratio" informs the BU conductor, who should follow the tempo decisions of the primary conductor as to his beat frequency in relation to the main orchestra. For example, in mm. 1–23, the BU conductor should give four quarter note beats for every three half note beats in the main orchestra. The fourth column informs the primary conductor of Ives's suggested tempo relationships from section to section, based on the idea that the BU pulse remains relatively constant throughout the movement.

Notation

One of the performance edition's helpful devices to clarify the counting of this movement is the insertion of "counting numbers." Nearly every measure in the Finale contains between three and eight half note beats for the main orchestra. In long measures containing complicated rhythms, the orchestral parts contain counting numbers above the corresponding beats to help players remain aligned.

Generally the performance edition's adjustments of Ives's confounding "tuplet" notation in the Finale are especially clear and praiseworthy. Brodhead's respelling of the quartuplet for second horn and viola in m. 9; the quartuplet for violin I in m. 10; the

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[143] These ratios are calculated under the presumption that the primary conductor will lead the $\frac{4}{2}$ group beginning in m. 59.

quartuplet for DC harp and low strings in m. 21; the quartuplet and quintuplet for flute, clarinet, and violin II in mm. 47–48; the nested sextuplet for DC and awkward triplet for violin I in m. 71; and three-against-five for violin I between mm. 80–81 simplify each corresponding gesture and will certainly save rehearsal and practice time for any ensemble. The third beat of m. 49 in the DC is virtually incalculable as written in Ives's manuscript (figure 2.35), and the performance edition has unified this rhythm into a more idiomatic figure (figure 2.36). The group of piccolo, oboes, clarinets, ether organ, and high bells might otherwise choose an indiscriminate tempo for the quartuplet figure in m. 65 and proceed in or out of unity, but the performance edition's variety of rhythmic spellings provides all the necessary information to play this passage accurately.

In some cases, the performance edition upholds Ives's original notation, even if it does not represent the most idiomatic spelling of an eccentrically written rhythm. The Indian drum of the BU percussion, for example, plays a figure in the Finale that appears in alternative notation elsewhere in the Fourth: a triplet across the measure line (figure 2.37). While it might feel more idiomatic to read the dotted quarter note triplet on beat four simply as a quarter note without a triplet bracket, Ives's notated rhythm is not particularly difficult to read. Perhaps most importantly, retaining this three-note group (the final note of the first measure and the first two of the second) preserves the off-kilter intent with which Ives composed this particular triplet figure.

One section in the DC violins between mm. 40–44 contains such an awkward rhythmic gesture—three-against-eight across the measure lines—that the performance edition has altered the rhythm in the orchestral parts to yield an immediately playable figure. This is the only instance in which the performance edition alters the fundamental content of one of Ives's rhythms. Brodhead provides a detailed explanation, along with

the original notation, in the appendix to the DC violin parts. In this case an approximate rhythm is far from blasphemous, as Ives's original notation lies outside of any standard rhythmic lexicon.

At m. 59 Brodhead advocates for a secondary conductor for the main orchestra, but the orchestral parts to the performance edition nonetheless provide an alternative notation so the players in $\frac{3}{2}$ might read their rhythms in relation to the prevailing $\frac{4}{2}$ time. These alternative rhythms are extremely awkward, and they diminish the likelihood that the $\frac{3}{2}$ lines would sound idiomatically. The score indicates clearly who continues in $\frac{3}{2}$, and these players would certainly benefit from a secondary conductor through m. 63.

CONCLUSION

Charles Ives, though unpredictable in his experimentation, adhered to a fairly sturdy set of musical principles. Through examining a list of his representative works, it is possible to define the most common characteristics of his music in terms of stylistic influence, melody, harmony, rhythm, orchestration, and structure. A thorough understanding of these stylistic tendencies will assist any performer in confronting even the most complex and varied music Ives ever composed. Furthermore, investigation into Ives's personal, political, and philosophical interests will yield a clearer picture of his motives for composing as he did.

Although the Fourth contains an intricate array of interpretive and musical challenges, no performer with an interest in Ives should dismiss this masterwork as "incomprehensible" or "unplayable." It is a piece rife with the four primary traditions, melodic borrowing, third-based harmony, quarter-tones, rhythmic layering, eclectic instrumentation, collage, and cumulative form. Its unity is implicit and its challenges surmountable with dedication and an open mind. Especially with the new resources available for studying and performing the Fourth Symphony, the next generation of conductors should approach this work with renewed bravura and a willingness to usher in a new, highly informed performance tradition.

APPENDIX

The following examples come from the music of Charles Ives and from traditional tunes borrowed by Ives. Ives's original works have been reproduced or reprinted in this appendix by express permission from their respective publishers.

Figure 1.01
Symphony no. 1, movement 1, mm. 2–9. Clarinet (concert pitch).
Peer International Corporation, 1999.

Figure 1.02
Symphony no. 1, movement 1, mm. 10–13. Violin II.
Peer International Corporation, 1999.

Figure 1.03
Symphony no. 1, movement 1, mm. 98–101. Flute II and oboe I.
Peer International Corporation, 1999.

Figure 1.04
Symphony no. 1, movement 1, mm. 112–115. Composite violin I and violin II.
Peer International Corporation, 1999.

Figure 1.05
Symphony no. 1, movement 1, mm. 162–165. Violin I.
Peer International Corporation, 1999.
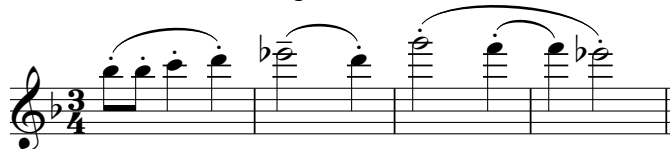
Figure 1.06
Symphony no. 1, movement 2, mm. 1–8. English horn (concert pitch).
Peer International Corporation, 1999.

Figure 1.07
Symphony no. 2, movement 1, mm. 66–71.
Peer International Corporation, 2007.

Figure 1.08
Carl Gläser, "Azmon."

Figure 1.09
Symphony no. 3, movement 1, mm. 1–2.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1990.

Figure 1.10
Symphony no. 3, movement 1, mm. 10–13.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1990.

Figure 1.11
Symphony no. 3, movement 1, mm. 22–28.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1990.

Figure 1.12
Symphony no. 1, movement 4, mm. 51–55. Composite horns and strings.
Peer International Corporation, 1999.

Figure 1.13
Symphony no. 3, movement 2, mm. 69–70.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1990.

Figure 1.14
Charles Zeuner, "Missionary Chant."

Figure 1.15
Isaac Baker Woodbury, "Dorrnance."

Figure 1.16
Simeon B. Marsh, "Martyn," mm. 1–5.

Figure 1.17
Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony no. 1, movement 1, mm. 1–5.

Figure 1.18
Three Places in New England, movement 3, mm.1–6.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.
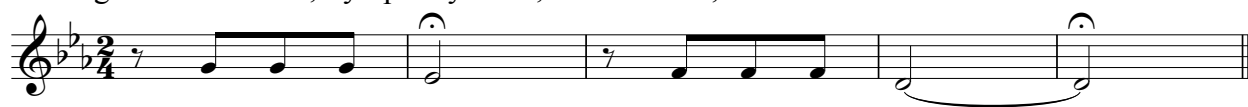
Figure 1.19
David T. Shaw and Thomas à Beckett, "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," mm. 1–2.

Figure 1.20
George Frederick Root, "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," mm. 1–4.

Figure 1.21
"He is There!" mm 19–27.
Peer International Corporation, 1956.

Figure 1.22
Henry Clay Work, "Marching through Georgia," mm. 9–12.
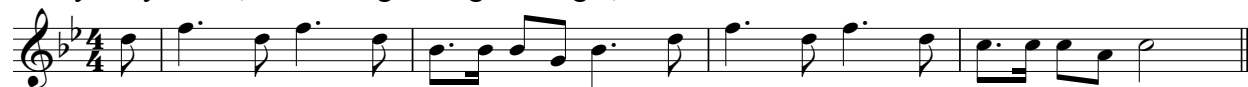
Figure 1.23
Stephen Foster, "Old Black Joe," mm. 9–10.

Figure 1.24
Three Places in New England, movement 1, m. 1.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.25
Three Places in New England, movement 1, mm. 39–40. Violin I.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.26
Three Places in New England, movement 2, mm. 27–28. Four-voice counterpoint featuring (top to bottom) "Arkansas Traveler," "Semper Fidelis," "Country Band March," and "The Liberty Bell."
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.27
General William Booth Enters into Heaven, mm. 1–2.
Merion Music, 1935.

Figure 1.28
Variations on America, interlude 1.
Mercury Music Corporation, 1949.

Figure 1.29
Concord Sonata, movement 3, systems 1–2.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1947.

Figure 1.30
Psalm 67, mm. 1–4.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1939.

God   be   mer - ci -ful un - to   us,   and   bless us;
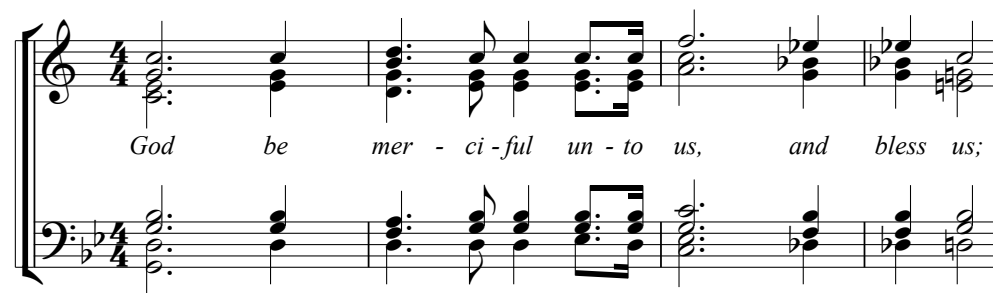
Figure 1.31
Symphony no. 3, movement 3, mm. 61–62.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1990.

Figure 1.32
Three Places in New England, movement 1, mm.2–3.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.33
Orchestral Set no. 2,
    movement 1, mm. 13–15.
Peer International
    Corporation, 2001.

Figure 1.34
Psalm 24, mm. 1–3.
Mercury Music, 1955.

Figure 1.35
Three Places in New England, movement 1, mm. 66–71. Flute.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.36
Violin Sonata no. 2, movement 2, mm. 20–36.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1951.

Figure 1.37
Symphony no. 3, movement 1, mm. 28–31. Manuscript 1A3i, p. 5.
MSS 14, The Charles Ives Papers in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University.
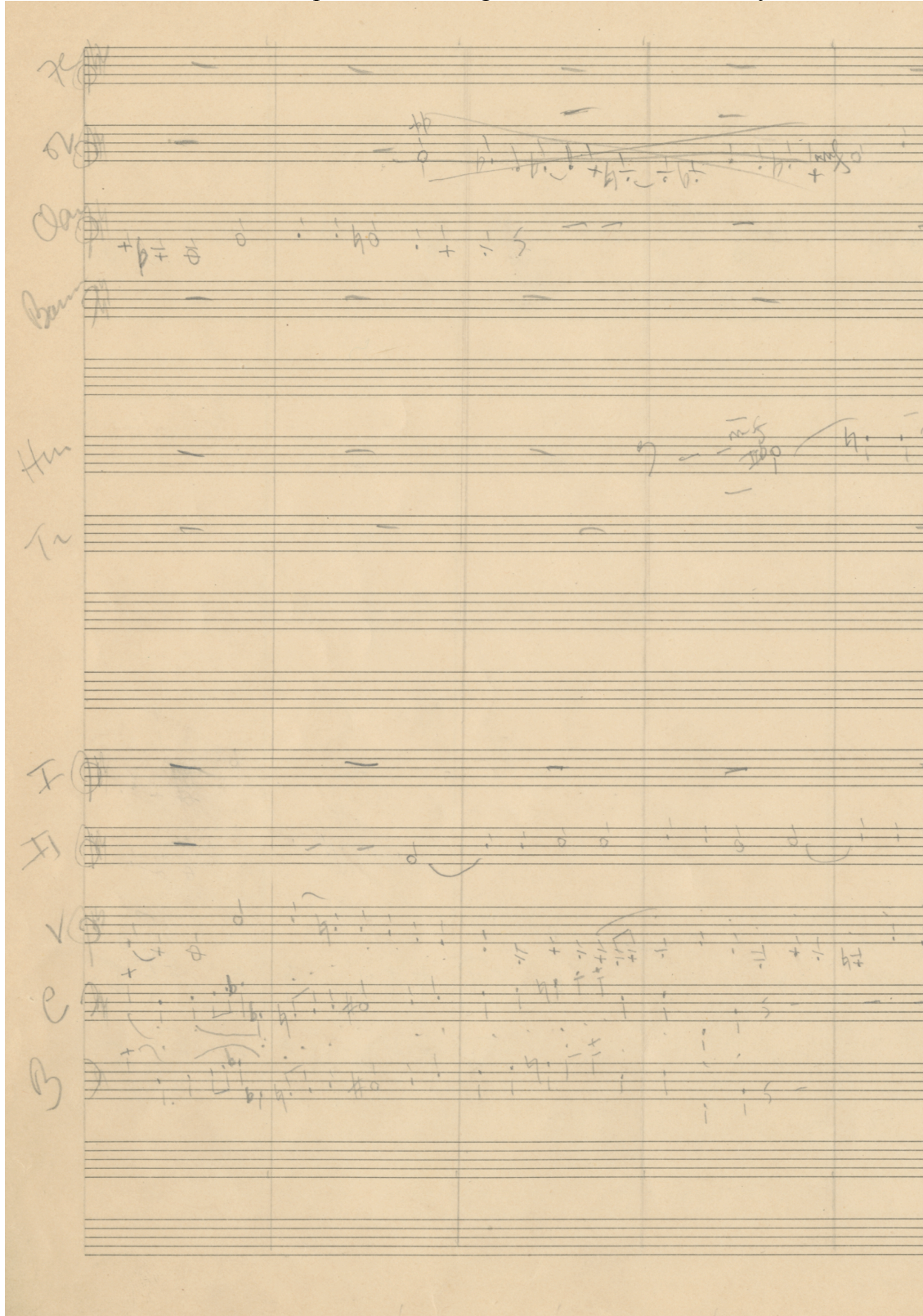
Figure 1.38
Concord Sonata, movement 3, final system.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1947.
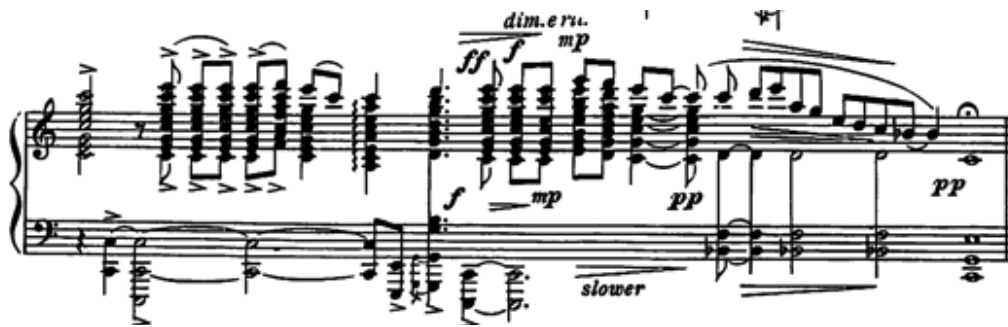
Figure 1.39
Symphony no. 3,
    Movement 1,
    mm. 118–128
Associated Music
    Publishers, Inc.,
    1990.

Figure 1.40
Charlie Rutlage, mm. 37–39.
Merion Music, Inc., 1933.

horse the creature spied   and turned and fell with him,   beneath poor
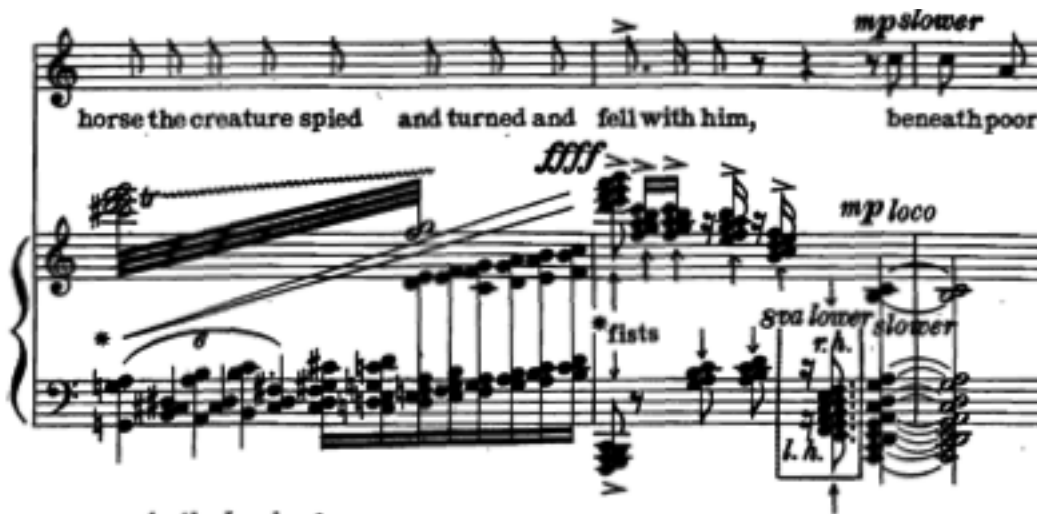
Figure 1.41
Majority, system 1.
Merion   Music, In   5.

Figure 1.42.
Three Quarter-tone Pieces, movement 1, mm. 1
C.F. Peters Corporation, 1968.

* Piano I to be tuned ¼ tone higher

Figure 1.43
Nov. 2. 1920, p. 4, systems 2–3.
Merion Music, Inc., 1935.

safe, that's the ea - sy way!' 'ck! Now you're

Figure 1.44
Central Park in the Dark, mm. 64–70.
Boelke-Bomart, Inc., 1973.

Figure 1.45
Concord Sonata, movement 2, p. 38, bottom system.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1947.

Figure 1.46
Variations on America, coda.
Mercury Music Corporation, 1949.

Figure 1.47
String Quartet no. 1, movement 4, p. 29, final 2 systems.
Peer International Corporation, 1963.

Figure 1.48
Central Park in the Dark, mm. 117–118.
Boelke-Bombart, Inc., 1973.

Figure 1.49
Charlie Rutlage, mm. 21–23.
Merion Music, Inc., 1933.

Figure 1.50
Violin Sonata no. 2, movement 2, mm. 41–44.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1951.

Figure 1.51
Three Places in New England, movement 2, mm. 39–40. Violin soli.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.52
Violin Sonata no. 1, movement 1, mm. 131–133.
Peer International Corporation, 1953.

Figure 1.53
Symphony no. 2, movement 3, mm. 59–62. Horn 1.
Peer International Corporation, 2007.
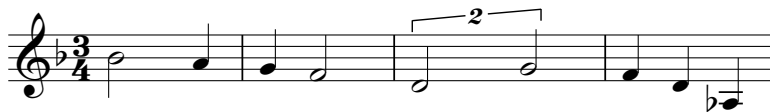
Figure 1.54
Thanksgiving and Forefathers' Day, mm. 118–119. Violin I.
Peer International Corporation, 1991.

Figure 1.55
Three Places in New England, movement 1, m. 7. Violin I.
Mercury Music Corporation, 1935.

Figure 1.56
Three Places in New England, movement 1, m. 7. Violin I.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.
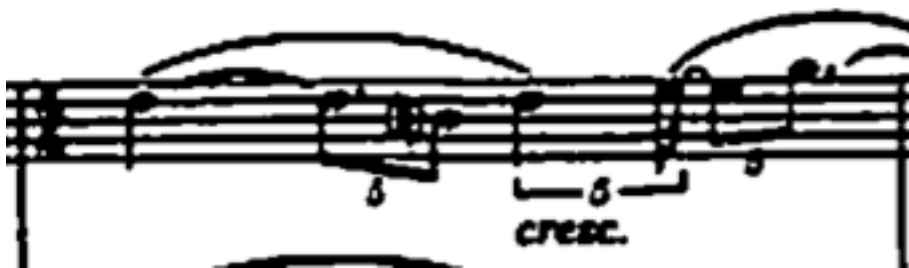
Figure 1.57
Three Places in New England, movement 2, mm. 53–54.
Mercury Music Corporation, 1935.

Figure 1.58
Three Places in New England, movement 2, mm. 53–54.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.59
Three Places in New England, movement 1, mm. 29–32. Cello A part.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.60
Three Places in New England, movement 3, m. 1. Violin IA part, original notation.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.61
Three Places in New England, movement 3, m. 1. Violin IA part, alternative notation.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.62
Symphony no. 2, movement 1, mm. 11–12. Violin I.
Peer International Corporation, 2007.

Figure 1.63
Three Places in New England, movement 2, m. 256. Flute, clarinet, and violin IIA.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.
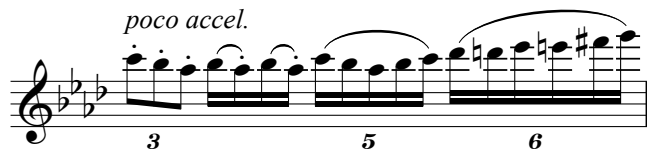
Figure 1.64
Piano Sonata no. 1, movement 4, mm. 16–18.
Peer International Corporation, 1954.

Figure 1.65
Three Places in New England, movement 2, mm. 67–70.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.66
The Fourth of July, mm. 117–118.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1932.

Figure 1.67
Symphony no. 1, movement 1. Sketches f0001.
MSS 14, The Charles Ives Papers in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University.

Figure 1.68
Three Places in New England, movement 1. Sketches f1011.
MSS 14, The Charles Ives Papers in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University.
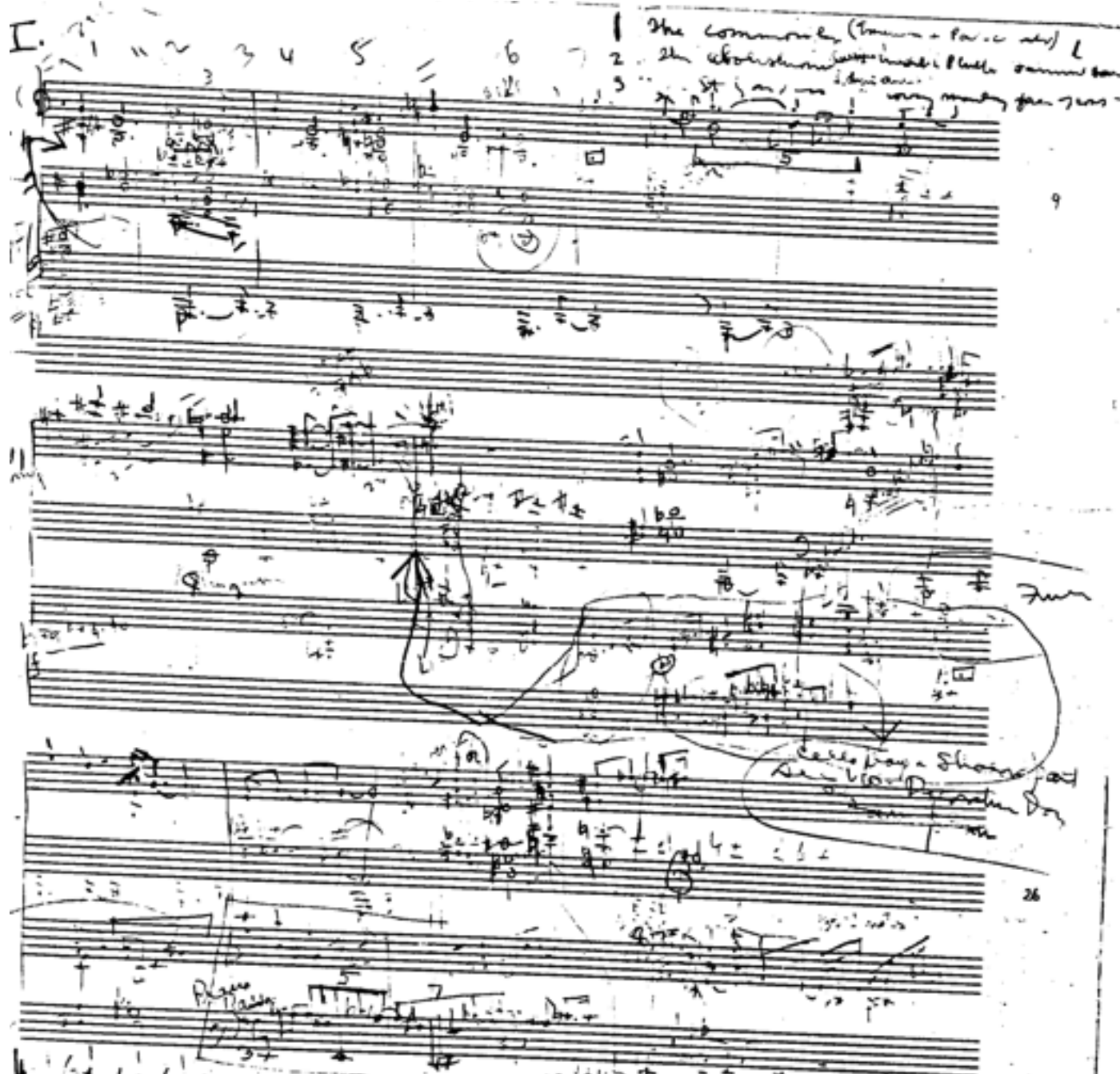
Figure 1.69
Universe Symphony. Sketches f1822.
MSS 14, The Charles Ives Papers in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University.

Figure 1.70
Universe Symphony. Sketches f1827.
MSS 14, The Charles Ives Papers in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University.
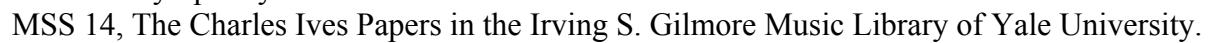
Figure 1.71
Sonata no. 4 for Violin and Piano, movement 2, system 2.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1942.

Figure 1.72
Symphony no. 2, movement 5, mm. 253–254.
Peer International Corporation, 2007.

Figure 1.73
Three Places in New England, movement 3, mm. 1–2.
Mercury Music Corporation, 2008.

Figure 1.74
Symphony no. 1, movement 4, mm. 408–411. String reduction.
Peer International Corporation, 1999.

Figure 1.75
Symphony no. 2, movement 5, mm. 274–276. String reduction.
Peer International Corporation, 2007.

Figure 2.01
Symphony no. 4, performance score, movement 2, m. 16. Flute.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1965.
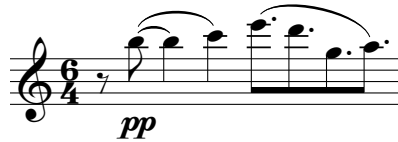
Figure 2.02
Symphony no. 4, critical edition, movement 2, m. 16. Flute.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.
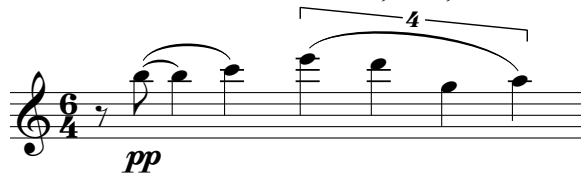
Figure 2.03
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, m. 16. Flute.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.04
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 1, m. 2. Trumpet.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.05
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, mm. 107–110. Trumpet 1 part.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.06
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, mm. 62–63.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.07
Symphony no. 4, critical edition, movement 2, mm. 62–63.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

113

Figure 2.08
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 1, mm. 1 and 4. Solo piano.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.09
Lowell Mason, "Bethany."

Figure 2.10
"Watchman!" m. 12.
Peer International Corporation, 1955.

Figure 2.11
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 1, m. 24. Chorus and solo piano.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.12
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, mm. 6–9.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

* Square-shaped notes = quarter tones (¼ ♯). Quarter-tone pitches employ accidentals with arrows for additional clarity.

** The Quarter-tone Piano includes regular notes in addition to quarter-tone notes. Either two stacked electronic keyboards, one a quarter-tone higher than the other (2 players), or a single acoustic or electronic keyboard with a scordatura tuning (1 player) may be employed. (Scordatura notation and tuning chart provided in the Quarter-tone Piano part.)

Figure 2.13
Symphony no. 4,
        performance edition,
        movement 4, mm. 88–
        end.
Associated Music
        Publishers, Inc.,
        2011.

117

Figure 2.14
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 4, mm. 1–2.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.15
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 4, mm. 5, 7.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.16
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 4, mm. 72–74.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.17
Lowell Mason, "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night."

Watch- man, tell us of the night, What its signs of pro - mise are. Trave - ler o'er yon moun-tain's

height, See that glo - ry bea - ming star! Watch - man, does its beau - teous ray Aught of

joy or hope fore - tell? Trave - ler, yes: it brings the day, Pro - mised day of Is - ra - el.

Figure 2.18
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 1, mm. 17–35.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Watch- man, tell us of the night, What its signs of___ pro- mise_ are. Trav'ler o'er yon moun-tain's height,

See that glo - ry - bea-ming star! Watch-man, aught of joy or hope? Trav'- ler___ Yes!

Trav' - ler, Yes!___ Trav' - ler, Yes; it brings the day,

Pro - mised day of Is - ra - el. Dost thou see its beau - teous ray?

119

Figure 2.19
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 1, mm. 1–4.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

★ Approximate timings of sections throughout the score

120

Figure 2.20
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 1, mm. 37–41.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.21
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, mm. 1–5. Bassoon 1 part.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.22
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, mm. 1–5. Bass desk 1 part.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.23
Symphony no. 4, critical edition, movement 2, m. 16. Violin 1A, violin 2, viola.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.24
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, m. 16. Violin 1A, violin 2, viola.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.25
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 2, mm. 38–46. Piccolo part.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.26
Lowell Mason, "Missionary Hymn."

Figure 2.27
Oliver Holden, "Coronation," mm. 10–14.

Figure 2.28
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 3, m. 16. Flute.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.29
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 3, m. 18. Violin I.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.30
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 3, mm. 23–24. Violin I.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.31
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 3, m. 55. Violin I.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.32
Johannes Brahms, Alto Rhapsody, mm. 116–119.

Figure 2.33
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 4, mm. A–G.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.34
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 4, mm. 1–4.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.35
Symphony no. 4, critical edition, movement 4, m. 49. DC.
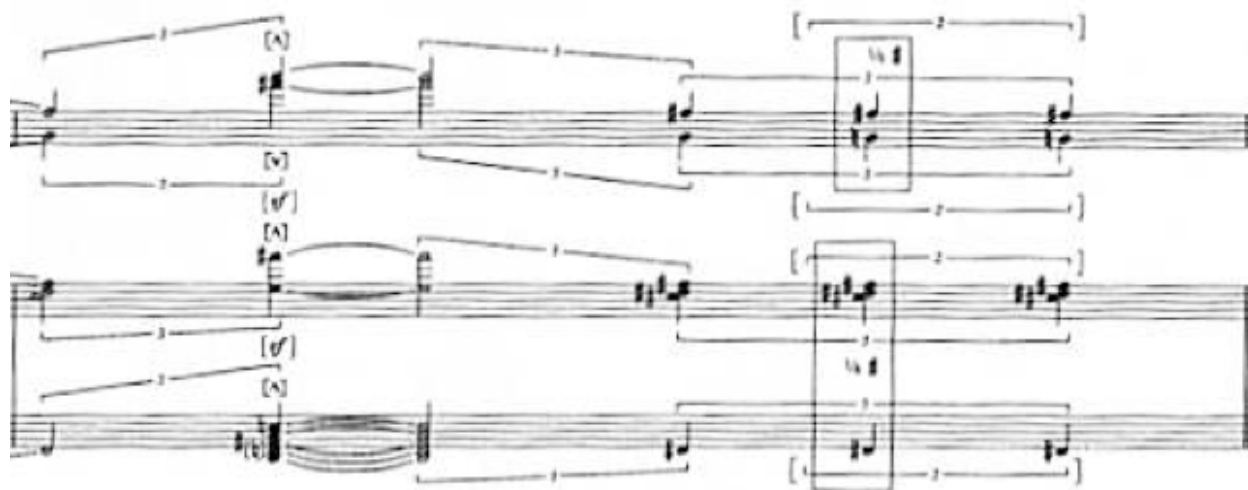Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.36
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 4, m. 49. DC.
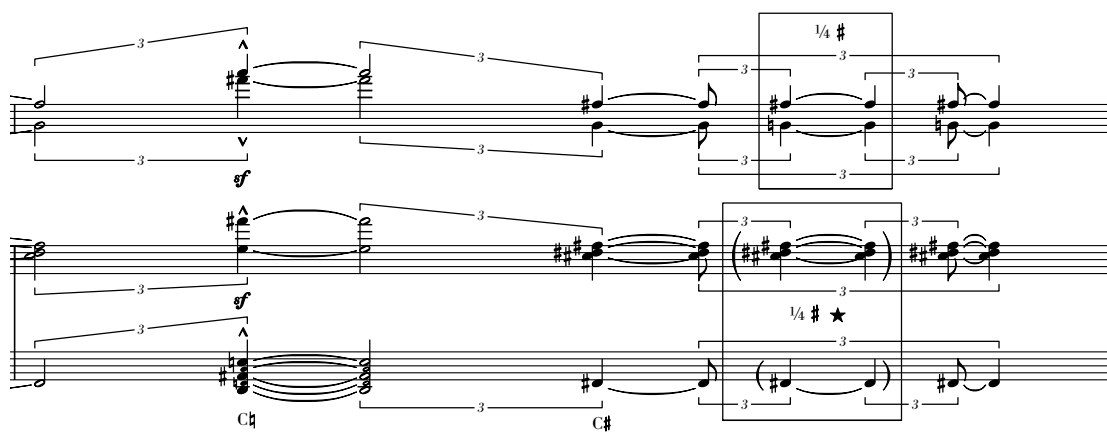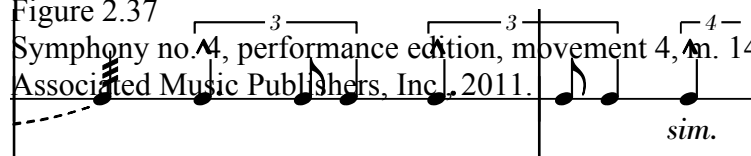Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Figure 2.37
Symphony no. 4, performance edition, movement 4, m. 14. Indian drum.
Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 2011.

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