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The Kenyan Influence in the Music of Paul Basler

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THE KENYAN INFLUENCE IN THE MUSIC OF PAUL BASLER

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ABSTRACT

This treatise examines the influences of Kenyan music and culture on Paul Basler’s compositional style with an emphasis on pieces involving the horn. Knowledge of Basler’s Kenyan-influenced style will aid musicians in improving their performance of these works. The compositional techniques Basler uses in his Kenyan-influenced style are discussed in Chapter three. Chapters four, five, and six examine these techniques in three of Basler’s most well-known Kenyan-inspired works: Harambee for five horns, “Alleluia” from Songs of Faith, and the Kyrie from Missa Kenya. Chapter seven discusses performance considerations for the horn player derived from the author’s personal interactions with the composer. Basler’s experiences in Kenya are reflected in the simplification of his compositional style, the formal organization of his music, his use of centricity, and the rhythmically driven nature of his works. His Kenyan-influenced compositions are energetic, based on call and response and motivic manipulation, use a pitch-class center instead of functional harmony, and gain their interest from rhythmic patterns.
CHAPTER ONE

BIOGRAPHY

Paul David Joshua Basler was born on June 22, 1963 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Peter and Necmiye Basler. He is the second of four children; he has an older brother Mark and younger siblings Michael and Theresa. The Basler family moved to Menomonee Falls, a western suburb of Milwaukee, when Paul was two years old. Peter and Necmiye were avid amateur musicians who encouraged all of their children to participate in music as well; the four Basler children performed together frequently. Paul began playing the piano at a young age and started learning the horn when he was 11 years old. His pre-college horn teachers include Amy Dee Domres, Wayne Fraederich, Barry Benjamin, and Glenn Estrin. In junior high and high school, he was involved in a wide variety of musical activities through participation in the band, orchestra, concert and swing choirs, and school musicals. He was also principal horn in the Milwaukee Youth Orchestra and Wisconsin All-State Band.

In 1980, James Croft from Florida State University was the guest conductor of the Wisconsin All-State Band, and he immediately offered Basler a full scholarship to FSU. Basler accepted the offer and began studying horn performance with William Capps and composition with John Boda. Croft generously offered to play Basler’s compositions with the FSU wind ensemble. Young Basler flourished at Florida State University under

\[1\] Nicholas A. Kenney, “A Performer’s Guide to the Original Works for Solo Horn, Horn and Piano, Two Horns, and Two Horns and Piano by Paul Basler,” DMA diss., University of Nebraska, 2010. All pre-college biographical information regarding Basler is from this source.
the encouragement of Capps, Boda, and Croft; he graduated magna cum laude with Bachelor of Music degrees in horn performance and composition in 1985. After his graduation from FSU, Basler began his graduate studies at The State University of New York at Stony Brook. He studied horn with William Purvis and composition with Bulent Arel, Billy Jim Layton, and John Lessard. Basler completed three graduate degrees at Stony Brook; in 1987, he received his Master of Arts in composition and Master of Music in horn performance degrees and, in 1989, completed a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in horn performance.

Paul Basler’s professional life began in 1985 while he was still a student when he served as a visiting artist at Caldwell Community College in Lenoir, North Carolina. Following his graduation from Stony Brook, Basler accepted a position as professor of horn and composition at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina. After teaching at WCU for four years, Basler sought a change in his life. He wanted a new challenge, and applied to a posting for a Fulbright Senior Lecturer position at Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya, which he was awarded in 1993. In 1994, Basler accepted his current position as professor of horn and composition at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida.

Throughout his career, Paul Basler has received numerous awards, honors, and recognitions. He has been given two American Cultural Affairs Specialist Grants from the U.S. Department of State, was a Visiting Professor with the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and a Visiting Artist-in-Residence with the Dominican Republic’s

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Ministry of Culture and the National Conservatory of Music. He was also awarded the University of Florida Teacher of the Year Award 1995-1996 and was a 2001-2003 University of Florida College of Fine Arts Research Foundation Professor. Basler has performed with the Brevard, Charleston, Valdosta, Greenville, Asheville, Tallahassee, and Gainesville Symphonies. He is frequently a guest artist at International Horn Society workshops and was resident hornist at the Composers Conference in Boston from 1991-2004. Basler has also been a guest at several international festivals, including the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales, the Winchester International Music Festival in England, the Festival Internacional de Música de Cantonigrós in Spain, and the St. Petersburg International Chamber Music Festival in Russia. He has been a recipient of the North Carolina Arts Council Composer’s Fellowship and several National Endowment for the Arts Composer and Teacher grants. His compositions have been performed throughout the world, including at Carnegie Hall, the Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Tanglewood, the Spoleto Festival, Symphony Hall in Chicago, the Kennedy Center, the National Theaters of the Dominican Republic and Kenya, Lincoln Center, the Sydney Opera House, the Aspen Music Festival, the Grand Teton Music Festival, and in Shanghai by the Shanghai Philharmonic. Basler’s compositions are published by Carl Fischer, Colla Voce Music, Walton Music, Hinshaw Music, Southern Music, R.M. Williams Publishing, and the IHS Press.
CHAPTER TWO

BASLER'S KENYAN EXPERIENCE

Paul Basler was a Fulbright Senior Lecturer in Music at Kenyatta University outside of Nairobi, Kenya from 1993-1994. During his residency at the university was growing quickly, having gained full university status less than ten years earlier. Kenyatta University began in 1965 as Kenyatta College, which consisted of two divisions: the Secondary Education Division and the Teacher Education Division. In 1970, Kenyatta College became a constituent college of the University of Nairobi. The newly named Kenyatta University College offered Bachelor of Education and undergraduate Diploma in Education degrees. The Diploma in Education was a two-year program used to prepare students for education degree programs in science and special subjects. In 1978, the University of Nairobi transferred its Education faculty to Kenyatta University College, making it the only college to offer education degrees, including both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. On August 23, 1985, the Kenyatta University Act gave the school full university status. Kenyatta University immediately began instituting new constituent colleges. The university now has colleges in Humanities and Social Sciences, Visual and Performing Arts, Education, Pure and Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Environmental Science, Applied Human Sciences, Health Sciences, Business, Economics, Agriculture and Enterprise Development, Law,

Hospitality and Public Health, Tourism, and a Graduate School, which offers a variety of disciplines.

Basler was a Fulbright Senior Lecturer in the Department of Music and Dance, which is part of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Today the Department of Music and Dance has approximately 90 undergraduates, 30 postgraduates, and 80 teachers and other school-based students who attend classes on weekends. Degrees are offered in Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Arts in Music, Bachelor of Education Arts (Music), Master of Music in Performance, Master of Arts in Musicology, Master of Music Education, Master of Arts in African Music, and Master of Arts in Ethnomusicology, as well as PhD and DMA degrees.

Life in Kenya was friendly and varied for Paul Basler. He lived in a house on the campus of Kenyatta University, where he taught classes in music theory, music composition, and brass performance and accompanied the university choir on piano. He had many friends in the neighborhood and they often came by for tea and biscuits. Basler offered computer classes from his home in the evenings; he primarily taught the music notation software Finale. Once a week, he conducted the Nairobi Symphony Orchestra. The NSO is the oldest orchestra in Africa and its members consist of both native Kenyans and foreigners that are in the country for various reasons. Outside of his music-related activities, Basler enjoyed getting fresh produce from local markets, spending weekends

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on safari, and eating Indian food in Nairobi. He interacted with non-musicians and took every opportunity to experience the culture of Kenya, which he adored.

The Kenyan people had a lasting effect on Basler. Kenyan culture is built around families and working together, a stark contrast to American perfectionism and consumerism. The Kenyans have adopted a national motto of “Harambee,” which is a Kiswahili word that translates to “all pull together.” This refers to their goals of working together, giving assistance to those in need, mutual responsibility, and community self-reliance. Basler describes Kenyans as being “intelligent, talented, and kind” and emphasizes that they “taught [him] patience, sympathy and gratefulness in life” which changed him musically and personally. Basler believes Western tonal music and Kenyan music mirror the values of their societies. While Western music often seeks to impress or is full of special effects, Basler explains that Kenyans have “honesty in the intent of their music;” he translated this honesty into his own music by writing clearer and leaner pieces while striving to write “music that sings.” Basler continues to write with the goals he established in Kenya, “towards music that communicates without pretension” and “to invite listeners to the musical table.”

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5 Paul Basler, interview by author, January 1, 2013.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
CHAPTER THREE
MUSIC OF KENYA

This document will discuss the formal organization, pitch organizations, and rhythmic techniques used by Paul Basler in his Kenyan-influenced compositions. Basler uses call and response and motivic manipulation as organizational methods. Basler’s Kenyan-influenced compositions are centric instead of using functional harmonies and they are driven with rhythmic and metrical techniques such as syncopation, regrouping of beats, and changing meter.

3.1 Formal Organization

Paul Basler’s experiences in Kenya are reflected in the formal organization of his music: he uses call and response frequently. Alexander Akorlie Agordoh finds it natural “that in a continent that is said to attach so much value to community, the interplay between individuals becomes re-enacted in the characteristic (and virtually ubiquitous) leader-chorus form.”\(^9\) The Kenyan people’s value of community and emphasis on working together are imitated in music with the use of call and response, the most common organizing principle in traditional Kenyan music. Basler alluded to the link between community involvement and music when he replied to a question about collaborating with Kenyans with his characteristic abundance of enthusiasm, “Every day! … Singing everywhere – really!”\(^{10}\)

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\(^{10}\) Paul Basler, interview by author, January 1, 2013.
Call and response is a simple musical form in which a soloist sings or plays one phrase that is then answered by a second soloist or a group. This trading continues as if the musicians are having a conversation. The responses can take many forms: they may overlap the call or begin after the call has finished, they may be an echo or a related musical idea; they may be the same response to a variety of calls; or use a different instrumentation than the call. Any number of combinations and variations are possible. Call and response allows the whole community to participate in music making by responding to the calls of a soloist in numerous ways. Basler uses call and response frequently in his Kenyan-inspired compositions.

Another organizational compositional technique used by Basler in his Kenyan-inspired works is motivic manipulation. In describing his compositional process in the May 2007 issue of *The Horn Call*, Basler says “the music tends to reveal itself through a motive, rhythmic gesture, chord, etc. which I then begin to shape into a work.”¹¹ He finds a fragment or two that he would like to work with and then creates the entire piece from them; many African songs are also formed this way with repetitive rhythmic patterns. This motivic manipulation comes from necessity, as the limitations of the percussive instruments often do not allow for more than a few pitches to be played with each instrument. The community participation in music making also gives rise to the necessity of motivic manipulation: a unifying motive provides accessibility. Senoga-Zake adds that even for singers “the melody is in most cases short, repetitive and

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monotonous, but it is effective,” stirring the emotions of the participants. Motivic manipulation also allows Basler to write the leaner, communicative, clear and expressive music he wanted to write after spending time in Kenya.

3.2 Pitch Organization

Theorist Joseph Straus says that in order “for a piece to be tonal, it must have two things: functional harmony and traditional voice leading.” Basler does not use either of these, yet his music has a distinctly tonal sound. Instead of being tonal in a traditional sense, Basler’s Kenyan-inspired music is centric, “focused on specific pitch classes or triads.” Basler himself defines his own music in this way, although less definitively, explaining that he does write tonal music under his definition: “tonal implies non-randomness in the selection of important pitches.” The way in which Basler emphasizes the pitches and pitch classes that he deems important falls into the definition of centric as defined by Straus. Centric music abandons the hierarchy of chords and pitches within a scale that are the basis of tonal music, replacing the hierarchy with emphasis on pitches, pitch-classes, or harmonies. Basler reinforces specific pitches by using them frequently and stressing them metrically and rhythmically. The emphasis of a specific pitch or pitch class through repetition mirrors Basler’s desire to simplify his

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13 Paul Basler, interview by author, January 1, 2013.
15 Straus, 89.
16 Lanham, 90.
compositions after his interactions with Kenyan culture; there is no hierarchy of chords, instead there is a single pitch or pitch class.

3.3 Rhythmic Techniques

Basler notes that the “complexity of rhythms involved [in Kenyan music] was fantastic.”\textsuperscript{17} George Senoga-Zake declares in his book \textit{Folk Music of Kenya} that “Kenya’s indigenous folk music is rich in rhythm.”\textsuperscript{18} A discussion of music from any region in Africa would be lacking if it did not address the important role of rhythm.

Music has always been a part of everyday life in Africa, and Kenya is no exception. The multitude of tribes and groups all have their own ceremonial songs, work songs, traditional songs, and songs for any number of occasions. Drums are the most frequently heard instrument in African music: Senoga-Zake explains that “complex rhythms characterize the playing of Kenyan, and indeed all African, drums.”\textsuperscript{19} Most Kenyan instruments are percussive, with the majority falling in the categories of membranophones, such as drums, or idiophones, instruments that are plucked, struck, shaken, or hit together. This predisposition for percussive instruments leads to an emphasis on rhythms for interest in the absence of strong melody.\textsuperscript{20}

Basler’s Kenyan-influenced compositions are rhythmically driven although they do not have the complexity of Kenyan traditional music. He chooses to use constantly changing meter, syncopation, and regrouping of beats to reflect the rhythmic nature of Kenyan music. These techniques shorten and occasionally lengthen beats, which

\textsuperscript{17} Paul Basler, interview by author, January 1, 2013.
\textsuperscript{18} Senoga-Zake, 5.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, 169.
prevents a static pulse; the shortening of beats propels the music forward. Basler also chooses to use a rhythmic motive instead of a melodic motive when he utilizes motivic manipulation to organize a work.

3.4 Other Kenyan Aspects

Basler does use some distinctly African sounds in his Kenyan-inspired choral music. The choir is accompanied by drums, usually played with the hand as are many Kenyan drums; however, Basler chooses to write for drums that are readily accessible in the United States. He also uses steady hand clapping to keep the pace of the piece. Occasionally he calls for the choir to “ululate” which is the word given to the wailing, howling sound made in Africa and the Middle East as an expression of extreme emotion. The wailing sound, which is loud and carries a long distance, is accompanied by quick movements of the tongue in the mouth and is done with much abandon. Ululation is used to signal a momentous event in many African tribes.

3.5 Scope of This Project

This document will examine three of Paul Basler’s Kenyan-influenced compositions involving horn. The first, Harambee for five horns, is the most performed of Basler’s works for horn in this style. Basler has used sections of Harambee to construct several other compositions for horn, frequently quoting himself directly. The other two works discussed in this document involve the horn with choir, a genre for which Basler has written extensively. His “Alleluia” from Songs of Faith and Kyrie from Missa Kenya, composed shortly after Basler moved back to the United States, use all of
Basler’s Kenyan-inspired techniques and touch a personal note with the composer and his remembrance of friends and experiences in Kenya. Chapter four will discuss *Harambee*, chapter five examines the “Alleluia,” and chapter six explores the Kyrie.

The following terminology will be used in this document for the explanation of formal organization. Larger sections of the works will be designated with upper case letters (A, B, C, etc.). Smaller segments within the larger sections will be designated with lower case letters (a, b, c, etc.). The term segment is used in reference to a small portion of the larger section in which content changes in a significant manner; these segments are not phrases because they lack cadences.
CHAPTER FOUR

HARAMBEE FOR FIVE HORNS

Paul Basler’s quintessential Kenyan-influenced composition involving horn is *Harambee*. *Harambee* is written for five horns: two solo parts and three parts that play as an accompanimental group. Basler did not use any Kenyan folk song quotations, but he was inspired by the melodies and rhythms found in Kenya. The work is rhythmically driven and organized with call and response and motivic manipulation. Among horn players *Harambee* is the most popular and most performed piece of Basler’s Kenyan-influenced works.

4.1 Formal Organization

*Harambee* is organized in a three-part ternary form, ABA’. The first section, A, opens and ends with a segment of call and response; between these calls are seven segments in the form of abacada’. The B section then has a transition into a new key area, has a segment in the new key, which is followed by a transition back to the original pitch center. The third and final section, A’, uses segments found in the seven-part portion of the A section. The following chart (Figure 4.1) shows the ABA’ ternary form and the division of the sections into their individual segments.
Figure 4.1: Harambee form chart

Basler used the African tradition of call and response throughout Harambee. The two solo parts are either conversing with each other or the group of three horns answer the solo horns. The opening A section begins with calls in the solo parts, horn 1 first, then horn 2, followed by both together. The responses played by horns 3-5 are short interjections; these opening calls are seen in Figure 4.2.
The motives in *Harambee* are created from the rhythm of the opening call. The rhythm of this primary motive begins with three eighth notes, frequently of the same pitch, followed by a quarter note, then syncopation as shown in Figure 4.3. A variation of this single rhythmic motive provides the basic rhythmic framework throughout *Harambee*. Motivic manipulation gives the work a clear sense of unity.
The first appearance of the refrain segment, a, in the A section begins in measure 9 and features a rhythmic accompaniment in horns 3-5. The refrain, shown in Figure 4.4, reappears in measures 26-32 and 41-47, then partially returns a third time in measures 56-59 prior to being interrupted by the return of the opening calls in measure 59. Measures 1-66 are in the form OC-a-b-a-c-a-d-a’-OC where OC is the opening calls, a is the repeating rhythmic refrain, and b, c, and d are call and response sections related to the rhythmic motive being manipulated in *Harambee*.

![Figure 4.4: Harambee mm. 9-15](image)

Each of the segments in the A section has its own variation of call and response. The b segment is made of two short calls in solo horn 1 to which solo horn 2 responds. This segment is characterized by sforzando-piano attacks in the accompanimental horns at the beginning of each measure where a call or response begins. The next segment of new material, c, begins with a unison call in the solo horns. Horns 3-5 respond, also in unison; the response extends into a second call. This in turn is responded to by the solo horns. Segment c is the only segment in which the responding horns provide the call and the original callers become the responders. Segment d is comprised of short, single-measure calls, first in solo horn 1, then in solo horn 2, with responses in horns 3-5. The segment ends with a two-measure call in solo horn 1 which is answered by solo horn 2.
In this segment, the calls are still related to the rhythmic motive established in the opening calls; however, this time they begin on the beat instead of off the beat as they did in the beginning.

The B section of *Harambee* starts with a transitional segment to a new pitch center, moving from C to F. The middle segment of section B is the only segment of *Harambee* centered on F instead of C; the centricity of this work will be discussed further in section 4.2: Pitch Organization. The transition segment begins after the repetition of the opening calls finishes in measure 66, closing the first large-scale section, A. This first segment of section B manipulates elements from the A section’s segments a and b. The calls from the end of the A section continue, but the responses begin to elide with the ends of the calls in measures 67-69. The sforzando-piano attacks from segment b are combined with the rhythmic figure from segment a in measure 71. Measure 76 uses calls from segment b in the solo horns while horns 3-5 form a transition changing the pitch center from C to the arrival of F in measure 86. A unison line in the solo horns completes the transition from measure 82 to the next segment, e, which is the second of section B, in measure 86.

The e segment in the B section features another repeating rhythmic pattern based on the opening motive. The fifth note of the motive has been extended to a quarter note instead of an eighth note causing the pattern to span all eight beats instead of beginning after the downbeat of the first measure. The newly modified repeating rhythm of the F-centric segment is shown in Figure 4.5.
This pattern is played four times by horns 3-5 until measure 94, where the solo horns resume their call and response conversation. This is the most repetitions of a single motive found in Harambee without the addition of another voice. Horns 3-5 resume their pattern again in measure 95, accompanying the calls and responses of the solos. The B section then ends with rapid calls and responses that bring the key back to its center on C; these calls are similar to the opening rhythmic motive beginning with three eighth notes and ending with syncopations in the second half of the pattern. The call that begins in measure 107 in solo horn 1 is continued while solo horn 2 responds in measure 109, landing on a C major chord where the a segment from the first large-scale section, A, returns. This is the start of the A’ closing section of Harambee.

The final section of this work, A’, utilizes pieces and fragments from the first large-scale section. The complete segment a from the A section of the piece begins again in measure 111 and is continued until the opening calls return in measure 126. The calls are answered in a variety of ways, first by horns 3-5 playing measures 9-10, then in an echo, which continues with the accompanimental figure. The rest of the piece continues to use more variations of call and response, including a repetition of the c segment from the A section in measure 146. Measure 156 is a conversation between solo parts, and the piece ends with the solos playing the calls together with answers by the other horns.
The ternary form and motivic manipulation connect all three sections of *Harambee* together. The first, A, has four repetitions of the refrain segment, a, as well as an opening of call and response that are used again in the final section, A’, of the piece. Pieces of the other segments from section A are used to create new segments in section B and segment c is repeated in A’. Each segment in the entire work is based on manipulation of the rhythmic motive defined in the opening call and response segment. *Harambee* is unified by repeating segments, motivic manipulation, and a near constant use of call and response.

### 4.2 Pitch Organization

*Harambee* is a centric work, which does not have typical tonic-dominant-tonic motion. Despite its lack of functional harmony, *Harambee*, like Basler’s other Kenyan-inspired music, does not sound atonal due to its clear pitch class center. *Harambee* is centered on C in the opening and closing sections; the middle section centers on F. These are solidified by the repeated resolution to C or F on either a unison/octave, a major triad, or a second inversion chord with the pitch center as the lowest note.

Unisons and octaves are found at important structural points of *Harambee* and are frequently heard in Kenyan choral traditions. The first instance of parts moving in parallel octaves is found in measures 7-8 as the solo horns play the last of the opening calls; these same measures return at the end of the first large-scale section before the first transition. The rest of the opening section A features a unison texture in the middle segment c. These unisons from the c segment of A return just before the end of section A’ in measures 146 to 151, giving the piece a sense of dramatic closure.
The first large-scale section is centered on C: the original two calls begin and end on C, the first response ends on an F major chord with its fifth, C, in horn 5, and the second response ends on a C major, root position chord. The repeating accompanimental section a that is heard four times during the A section emphasizes a C major chord on its longer notes and on strong beats as shown in Figure 4.6. Horn 5 also plays a C pedal throughout this portion of the segment.

Figure 4.6: Harambee mm. 9-15 accompaniment

The middle section, B, which is centered on F in its only non-transitional segment, establishes the center in the same manner that as first section. The repeating syncopated figure that begins in measure 86 starts on an F major chord. Horns 3-5 move in parallel motion through the repetitions of this figure; this planing leads the parts back through the F major chord at the structural points of the figure. The first statements ends on an F major second inversion chord on the third beat of measure 87; this beat is strengthened by the syncopations that precede it giving emphasis to the return of the F major chord. The first repetition of the figure, measures 88-89, begins and ends on an inverted F major chord. The second repetition, measures 90-91 starts on a root position F major chord that also ends the third repetition in measure 94. This continual return to F, shown in Figure 4.7, solidifies it as the pitch center of the section.
The A’ section repeats the parts of the first section that strongly emphasize the pitch center C. The section begins with segment a, which repeats a C major chord through its entirety. Then the opening calls—and their repetition of the note C—return and the responses are changed to the more C-focused accompanimental figure from measures 9 and 10. The calls in the end of the final section repeatedly end on a C emphasized by the unison/octave texture.

Basler’s use of centricity also affects the transitional sections. The move from the center C to F in *Harambee* is done by parallel motion of triads in measures 75 through 82, preceded by the appearance of an Eb major chord in measures 71 and 73. The parallel motion of the triads moves Eb-d-Eb-F-G-A-B on each eighth note in measure 75 in horns 3-5. This planing motion begins the move to the new tonal center. Measures 75-76 are shown in Figure 4.8.
The whole-step motion continues in horns 3-5 with longer note values on B-C#-B-A-G-F in measures 76 through 82. Throughout this section of sustained motion in the accompanying horns, the solo parts play the rhythmic motive in unison. The descending unison solo lines begin and end on F as they wind their way to the firm F major chord and the syncopated, rhythmic, F-centered segment at measure 86.

The segment centered on F ends with a similar line in the solo voices. The call and response in measures 103-104 ends on F and is followed by another call and response that ends on C. Solo horn 1 then starts a third call which continues when solo horn 2 begins its response, winding back to C. Horns 3-5 resume with the accompanimental rhythmic figure from measure 9 on a C major chord at the end of the descending solo line in measure 111, firmly centering the piece is back to its original pitch center of C.

### 4.3 Rhythmic Techniques

The rhythmic motion in *Harambee* is created with rhythmic patterns that do not fit within a single meter. In the rhythmic pattern of segment a, which begins in measure
9, the emphasis is on the quarter notes. This makes the grouping of eighth notes into two
groups of three instead of three groups of two as shown in Figure 4.9.

![Figure 4.9: Harambee mm. 9](image)

A musician who is unfamiliar with Basler’s Kenyan-influenced style may misread
his intentions in this 3/4 measure and instead play with emphasis on the first eighth note,
assuming that beats 2 and 3 are syncopated. Basler’s recording of *Harambee* and this
author’s own personal experiences with Basler and the piece confirm that Basler intends
this measure to be played as if it were in 6/8, regrouping the eighth notes into two groups
of three. This 3/4 measure with groupings of three eighth notes is followed by two
quarter notes in a 2/4 time signature. The interruption of the more lilting 6/8 feeling with
two straight quarter notes propels the rhythm forward through the 2/4 measure. The
technique of grouping three eighth notes together instead of two comes from the rhythmic
motive that opened the work. The motive should be performed with emphasis on the first
quarter note then again on the eighth note that ties over into the following measure. A
comparison to the repeating rhythmic figure of the refrain that begins in measure 9 can be
seen if the opening motive is written in a 3/4 time signature as shown in Figure 4.10. Just
as measure 9 could be written in 6/8 in order to more accurately reflect the desired
emphasis on the quarter notes, so could the second measure of the rhythmic motive.
Throughout *Harambee* the meter is constantly changing to fit the rhythmic motion of the piece. An example of this is found in Figure 4.11.

The rhythmic accompaniment in horns 3-5 requires switching between 3/4 (with a 6/8 feel) and 2/4 time signatures. The interjection of the solo horns in measure 12 changes the meter to 4/4 for a measure before the accompaniment begins again. The solo horns play a measure in 4/4, grouped 3+3+2, instead of following the pattern of alternating 3/4 and 2/4 in order to arrive on the downbeat of measure 14 with the re-entrance of horns 3-5 playing the rhythmic accompaniment. The meter throughout is dependent on the rhythmic motive and Basler’s manipulation of it instead of that manipulation being dependent on the meter.

### 4.4 Summary

Paul Basler’s *Harambee* for five horns is his quintessential Kenyan-inspired work for horn. The effect of Kenyan culture and music on Basler formed the foundation for his
Kenyan-inspired works and *Harambee* has become the most popular of these pieces. Call and response and motivic manipulation provide the organization of the piece and reflect the widespread use of these techniques in Kenyan music. The organizational methods used in *Harambee* come from the emphasis on community in Kenya, a tradition admired by Basler. Call and response makes participation possible by the entire community, as there is a role for everyone. The motivic manipulation provides unity and ease of audience comprehension.

Basler does not follow the functional harmony and voice leading of traditional tonality in his Kenyan-inspired works; nonetheless, *Harambee* is centric because Basler has carefully selected pitches in important locations that put an emphasis on a pitch center, following his personal definition of tonality. His use of unison/octave texture and parallel motion limits the intervals heard to mostly consonant ones; this adds to the sense of clarity in his work.

Kenyan music is rhythmically driven; Basler uses rhythm to dictate his Kenyan-inspired works as well. He uses repeating rhythmic patterns with changing meters to move the piece forward. The rhythmic patterns determine the meter of the music, which does not fit within a single predetermined meter.
CHAPTER FIVE

“ALLELUIA” FROM SONGS OF FAITH

FOR SATB CHORUS WITH PIANO, HORN, AND PERCUSSION

ACCOMPANIMENT

Paul Basler’s “Alleluia” is part of Songs of Faith written in 1998 to celebrate the American Spirit. Each of the individual movements is dedicated to a different choral conductor and his ensemble. “Alleluia” is dedicated to William Hall and the Chapman University Choir. Songs of Faith is a set of five songs. The outer movements are two psalms, “Psalm 150” and “Psalm 23,” the middle movement is a hymn tune setting, “Be Thou My Vision,” and the second and fourth movements are based on two Latin texts, “Ubi Caritas” and “Alleluia.” The piano and horn parts are integral to the entire work. The horn is especially important in the “Alleluia” movement and Basler makes sure to mention in the introductory notes that the horn should never be omitted. While there are similarities among all the movements of Songs of Faith, the “Alleluia” has been chosen for discussion due to the prominent role of the horn and prevalence of Kenyan-inspired techniques.

5.1 Formal Organization

The organization of Paul Basler’s “Alleluia” involves the repetition of segments and parts of these segments. This is similar to Kenyan choral traditions and their community singing—the music is repetitive which makes participation easier. The repetition of segments in “Alleluia” fulfills the same function as the motivic manipulation
in Harambee by aiding in audience understanding and participation while unifying the piece.

The work can be divided into three sections: the beginning through measure 38, measures 39-73, and measures 74-134, with a coda ending the piece. Each of the sections, referred to hereafter as section A (measures 1-38), section B (measures 39-73), and section A’ (measures 74-134), takes the same form. The piece is in a ternary form as seen in the following chart, Figure 5.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>segment</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comments</td>
<td>begins with intro</td>
<td>fragment 2 meas. lead-in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.1: “Alleluia” form chart

Section A begins with a four-measure instrumental introduction before the first segment, a, which is 15 measures long. Segment b is 12 measures long and begins with the soloistic entrance of the horn in measure 20. A portion of the first a segment, measures 13-19, returns in measures 32-39, rounding out the section. “Alleluia” is ternary and each of the three sections it is in three parts as well.

Section B follows the same form pattern as section A. There is a two-measure instrumental lead-in to the first segment, c. Segment c is altered when it returns as c’ instead of being shortened as segment a was when it returned as a’ in section A. The accompaniment is different in c’ than it was in c: most of c does not have instrumental
accompaniment, while the c’ has added piano and percussion and the meter has been changed. The effect of the changed meter will be discussed in section 5.3 of this document.

Section C follows the same pattern of dividing into three segments with the third being related to the first segment of that section. The idea of returning segments is taken to a larger scale in the third section when b and a’ from the first section are combined to create the first segment of this final section. Measures 74-92 are a repetition of measures 20-38. The circle of repetitions is completed when the first segment, a, of section A is used as the third segment of section A’. This third segment is, of course, related to the first segment of section A’, the b+a’ segment, just as the a’ segment was related to the first segment, a, in section A. Instead of using a smaller motive as the basis for his “Alleluia” from *Songs of Faith*, Basler repeats and manipulates longer segments. These repetitions provide unity and structure for the piece similar to that found through motivic manipulation in Kenyan music.

The African tradition of call and response is again prevalent in “Alleluia” just as it was in *Harambee*. Each of the three sections contains at least one segment that uses call and response. The first entrance of the voices in measure five features the soprano and tenor performing the calls and the alto and bass answering. This is followed by calls in the horn, which are responded to by the voice parts in the b segment of the A section shown in Figure 5.2.
Figure 5.2: "Alleluia" mm. 5-12 chorus call and response
Segment c, beginning at measure 41, also has call and response in the voices between the bass and the tenor. This continues even as the soprano and alto parts trade accompanimental alternating eighth notes between themselves. The first entrance of the soprano in measure 42 sounds like a second response to the bass call until the alternating eighth-note pattern becomes repetitious in the soprano and alto voices in measure 44 and following. When this section returns in measure 68, the bass and tenor switch parts of the call and response as shown in figure 5.4, in contrast to the original version in figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3.1: “Alleluia” mm. 41-46
Figure 5.3.2: “Alleluia” mm. 41-46 continued

Figure 5.4.1: “Alleluia” mm. 68-72
The clearest and longest portion of call and response is segment d of section B. The horn performs the calls and the chorus answers on the syllables “ya-la-la-la.” This passage is accompanied by drums and clapping on each beat in the measure, leaving the calls and responses unobstructed by any other vocal lines and supported by rhythmic percussion as shown in Figure 5.5.
Figure 5.5.1: “Alleluia” mm. 53-61, section B, segment d
Basler takes the opportunity to contrast traditional tonality with his own Kenyan-influenced sense of centricity by not using a leading tone to move between pitch centers; instead, he focuses on two centers that are a whole step apart, moving freely between the two. The opening pitch center of “Alleluia” is established clearly in the beginning four measures. The key signature indicates D major and the opening lines solidify the key when the piano plays a D pedal and marches up to the fourth scale degree in unison with the horn in measures one and three; the horn then moves from the fifth back down to tonic while the piano repeats the upward line as seen in Figure 5.6.

Figure 5.5.2: “Alleluia” mm. 53-61, section B, segment d continued

5.2 Pitch Organization
Figure 5.6: “Alleluia” mm. 1-4

The piano continues this same pattern when the first segment of call and response begins in measure 5. The voices are in octaves, a typical African characteristic, and they emphasize the pitch center of D by beginning or ending on the fifth and placing D at structural high points, such as the middle of the call and in the octave slur in the middle of the second response in measure 11, and the D pedal point in the piano as shown in Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7: “Alleluia” mm. 9-12 call begins and ends on A, D octave slur in m. 11
Section B begins with a change in key signature at measure 39. This is not a clear indicator of the pitch center unlike the original key signature. The first segment, c, in section B is a series of call and response statements that either begin or end on G which does not match the single flat in the key signature. Each statement ends with the descending motion of A-G as seen in Figure 5.8. Both A and G will sound like centers due to their relationship to D.

![Figure 5.8: “Alleluia” mm. 41-46 bass and tenor call and response](image)

The B section has one flat and begins with a Bb pedal and repetitive eighth notes in the piano, which seem to indicate the key of d minor through the notes D-E-F; however, a definitive key is never achieved in the second section. The section is D-centric rather than in a specific key. The pitch center of D is established by emphasizing the relationships between A, a perfect fifth above D, and G, a perfect fifth below D. This emphasis is created through the repeated A-G motion in the calls and with the re-entrance of the piano in measure 52, Figure 5.9, playing a d minor chord with an added G (D, F, A, and G).
The next segment, d, reverses the A-G motion: the first calls and responses begin on G and end on A starting with the horn in measure 53. The c’ segment brings back the call and response from the c segment, but transposes it up a perfect fourth in measure 68. The transposition changes the A-G motion to D-C with many calls and responses also beginning on C. The piano accompaniment, shown in Figure 5.10, aids in the emphasis of C as the pitch center by playing F, a perfect fifth below, and G, a perfect fifth above simultaneously just as it had emphasized D with A and G previously.

The B section first emphasizes D, with G and A surrounding fifths, then C, with F and G fifths. The motion from between D and C happens several times in “Alleluia.” The c’ segment leads the tonal center from C back to D for the beginning of the third section with whole-step motion from C-D. This whole-step motion to move between tonal centers is not traditional in Western music; however, Basler has set up it in earlier segments of the “Alleluia.” The horn has already played C-C octave glissandi that move
to D in measures 16-17 and in measures 35-36 as shown in Figure 5.11 and the piano plays C-D underneath the horn as well.

Figure 5.11: “Alleluia” mm. 35-36: horn and piano C-D

The b segment in the A section, the segment that has the horn glissandos, also has frequent C naturals despite the section being in the centered on D. The accompaniment in the piano keeps D constant and either adds A or C to it, shown in Figure 5.12. This presence of C and D foreshadows the motion of the pitch center from D to C.

Figure 5.12: “Alleluia” mm. 21-24 piano

The alternation between emphasis on D and emphasis on C continues throughout the rest of the “Alleluia.” Measure 95 begins segment e, which is rhythmically unlike the rest of the work, but tonally follows the same pattern of emphasizing a pitch by using both a perfect fifth above and below, in this case C again. The fifths in the piano set this up with the motion of F-C-G quarter notes repeated in the bass (Figure 5.13). The use of F, C, and G simultaneously continues into measure 103.
The alternation between D and C and the methods of emphasizing these tonal centers are related to Kenyan and African choral traditions. The doubling of a melody at perfect intervals is found frequently in community singing, and Basler has taken this predilection for open-sounding intervals and used it to establish pitch centers.

Singing in octaves is prevalent in Basler’s “Alleluia,” just as it is in Kenyan choral music and all other monophonic textures where men and women sing together. Frequently the voices sing in pairs, soprano an octave above the tenor and alto an octave above the bass. This happens when they are singing call and response, as in measures 5-12 shown in Figure 5.14 as well as when all four parts sing together, as in measures 13-16.
5.3 Rhythmic Techniques

“Alleluia” from *Songs of Faith* is more rhythmically diverse than *Harambee* since it is not based on a single rhythmic motive. The voice parts tend to be homorhythmic but the addition of horn, piano, and percussion parts allow for more layers of rhythmic interest throughout the piece. Figure 5.15 shows measures 13-16, material from which recurs frequently, and is an example of multiple rhythmic layers in “Alleluia.”
There are also several instances of syncopation in “Alleluia,” which adds to the rhythmic interest of the piece. One example occurs in the e segment of the third section; the time signatures used are 9/4 and 6/4 and it is labeled with a tempo marking of dotted half note equals 52. This tempo marking and the piano part’s grouping of the repetitious quarters into threes give the segment a pulse of two beats (dotted half note) per measure. The tenor line, however, is grouped differently, as seen most clearly in measure 99, Figure 5.16.
Figure 5.16: “Alleluia” m. 99 tenor and piano

The tenor line groups the measure into four dotted quarter notes while the piano plays quarter notes resulting in four notes in the tenor against six in the piano therefore the tenor plays syncopation against the established beat in the piano.

Another instance of syncopation is found in measure 142 where the percussion instruments play the usual 12/8 grouping of four beats each consisting of three eighth notes that has been established throughout the piece. The voices sing in a rhythm that groups only two eighth notes together instead of three making their part sound like six beats to the measure against the four played in the percussion. This syncopation is shown in Figure 5.17.
The opening section includes a rhythmic motive that recurs throughout the piece. This line features beats split into two eighths instead of three, creating a contrast between the vocal parts and the eighths in the piano as seen in measure six, Figure 5.18. These small moments of rhythmic diversity add some complexity to the otherwise straightforward rhythmic nature of the piece.
Even though Basler does use meter signatures, he writes rhythmic motives and patterns that are not dependent on the specified meter. Meter signatures are given as a frame of reference for the performer. Basler primarily uses syncopation to add interest to his rhythmic lines in “Alleluia.” While Kenyan music is much more rhythmically complex, Basler still takes the importance of rhythmic motives from African music to form his Kenyan-influenced compositions.

In the B section Basler uses changing meter to alter the repetition of segment c. The measure lengths have been shortened with time signature change from 12/8 to 9/8 in many of the measures in the repeated segment, which causes the parts to overlap in ways
they do not in the original segment. An example of this is shown in Figure 5.19. When
the statement in the bass voice from measures 46-47 reappears in measures 71-72 (Figure
4.20) it is now split between the bass and the tenor in order to fit the line into the
shortened 9/8 measure. The beat that would have been the last in a 12/8 measure is now
on the downbeat of the next measure in 9/8. The second half of the line is placed in the
tenor voice to allow this newly-placed downbeat to overlap with the beat that followed it
in the original statement and the line to fit within the new meter. The accompanimental
alto and soprano parts also begin to overlap in measure 72. This overlapping adds
interest to an otherwise straightforward repetition of segment c, giving c’ more
complexity than the original c.

Figure 5.19: “Alleluia” mm. 46-47

Figure 5.20: “Alleluia” mm. 71-72
5.4 Other African-Inspired Aspects

Measures 53-74 use two other Kenyan-inspired aspects. Basler instructs the chorus to “all clap on the beat” at measure 53. Kenyans, like all Africans, get their entire bodies involved in their music-making, dancing to the driving rhythms.\(^{21}\) Music is used as a vehicle of personal and group expression, so Kenyans are not reserved when participating in music and tend to clap, dance, and call out with emotion. Basler is attempting to encourage the choir to emulate this freedom of emotional expression in this section. He also instructs the choir to singing in an “‘earthy’ – slightly nasal’” sound on the nonsense syllables “ya-la-la-la” in measure 55, a sound that gives the piece a natural African feel.

5.5 Summary

“Allhuela” is a piece for chorus, horn, piano, and percussion written in Paul Basler’s Kenyan-influenced style. This work is more rhythmically diverse than others in this style, which are monorhythmic or based on a single rhythmic motive. The rhythmic diversity is taken from the rhythmically-driven nature of Kenyan music, where rhythmic complexity is the norm. The layers of various rhythms played by instrumentalists in Kenya result in a meter; Basler chooses to reflect this in his Kenyan-inspired style, and in “Alleluia,” with constant metric shifting, which is dictated by the rhythmic lines he writes.

The “Alleluia” is also greatly influenced by Kenyan choral traditions, a favorite of Basler. He uses open harmonies—especially octaves—in his vocal writing and even

establishes the pitch centers with the open sound of perfect fourths and fifths. These intervals are conducive to group singing, which happens on a daily basis in Kenya.

Basler’s formal organization in his “Alleluia” is based on repeating segments from previous sections and bringing music back at the end of the work that had appeared in the beginning. This mimics Kenyan choral music and its repetitive nature stemming from call and response traditions. Community singing becomes more accessible to everyone, regardless of ability, with repeated sections. The music of Kenya has also affected Basler’s choice of centricity, which while retaining a tonal sound, does not follow traditional tonality and functional harmony. All of these aspects of Basler’s Kenyan-inspired compositions are found in his “Alleluia” from Songs of Faith.
CHAPTER SIX

KYRIE FROM MISSA KENYA

FOR SATB CHORUS WITH HORN, PERCUSSION, AND PIANO

As a self-described spiritual person, Paul Basler had been thinking about the possibility of writing a mass for many years.\(^{22}\) His time in Kenya gave him the inspiration to create and unify his Missa Kenya for SATB Chorus and Tenor Solo with Horn, Percussion, and Piano Accompaniment. Basler wrote Missa Kenya in 1995 for Ronald Burrichter and the University of Florida Concert Choir. The music of Kenya gave Basler stylistic, formal, and tonal organizational ideas, and the Kyrie exemplifies this Kenyan-inspired style and also gives the horn a prominent role.

6.1 Formal Organization

An eight-measure slow introduction precedes the Kenyan-influenced body of the Kyrie; this introduction also returns at the end. This discussion of the Kyrie from Paul Basler’s Missa Kenya will focus on measures 9-98 and 107-109, which are in his Kenyan-inspired style. The introduction and its return in measure 99 are not in the Kenyan-inspired style.

The Kyrie’s formal organization relies on the conversational call and response technique that is common in traditional Kenyan music. Throughout the Kyrie, the horn and chorus trade phrases and statements. The horn begins this alternation after the

\(^{22}\) Paul Basler, Missa Kenya for SATB Chorus and Tenor Solo with Horn, Percussion and Piano Accompaniment (Ft. Lauderdale, FL: Plymouth Music, 1996). Notes on inspiration for the mass are from the introduction printed on the score.
percussion has established their repeating background rhythm in measure 12. The overall form of the Kyrie is ternary form, ABA’. The relationship between the first and third sections comes from the similarities of the horn segments. The chorus segments are frequently make use of call and response within the larger-scale conversation of the horn and chorus. The ABA’ form is surrounded by the introduction and a repetition of the introduction; a short return of the Kenyan-inspired style ends the Kyrie. The form of the Kyrie is shown in Figure 6.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A’</th>
<th>Intro.</th>
<th>Ending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>segment</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>x₁</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>measures</td>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>12-25</td>
<td>26-29</td>
<td>29-37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comments</td>
<td>non-Kenyan</td>
<td>horn</td>
<td>chorus call+response</td>
<td>horn then added chorus</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Section</th>
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<th>Ending</th>
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<td>y</td>
<td>x³</td>
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<tr>
<td>measures</td>
<td>38-52</td>
<td>53-59</td>
<td>60-67</td>
<td>68-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comments</td>
<td>chorus</td>
<td>horn</td>
<td>chorus</td>
<td>horn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.1: Kyrie form chart

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23 The segments that have a direct relationship to material in other segments have been given a letter name designation (a, b) reflecting this relationship. Segments that do not have a relationship to material in other segments are labeled x (chorus) and y (horn).
The chorus’s first entrance in measure 26 is made of short, single-measure calls and responses. The soprano and tenor call, and the alto and bass respond. This chorus call and response segment is an answer to the horn statement from measures 12-25. The horn statement is a call, which is responded to by the chorus statement within which call and response is also used. The end of the horn statement and the chorus call and response answer is shown in Figure 6.2. This portion of the Kyrie ends with another statement by the horn that continues during the chorus response.

Figure 6.2: Kyrie mm. 22-29 chorus call and response

The B section of the Kyrie once again uses call and response within the larger-scale conversational trading of segments between chorus and horn. The chorus segment from measures 38-52 begins with the tenor and bass together, the soprano and alto parts then answer the call from the male voices. The horn provides a link between them in measure 44. The horn answers the chorus’s call and response segment in measures 53-60, and the section ends with the chorus all together in measures 64-67.
The A’ section of the Kenyan-inspired portion of the Kyrie is similar to the first section. The horn plays several phrases, segment a’, in measures 68-82, that are related to measures 12-26, segment a. The chorus again answers with its own call and response in measures 82-92. The horn has one final statement, segment b’, in response before the slow introduction returns in measure 99.

6.2 Pitch Organization

The pitch center of the Kyrie is not as easily defined as the pitch centers of Harambee and the “Alleluia.” When the chorus is not singing in unison or octaves, there are never more than two parts (if all four parts are used, they are paired), the majority of the intervals between the parts are consonant and dissonances on the beat are rare. The first entrance of the chorus in the Kenyan-inspired section, Figure 6.3, provides a model for the rest of the Kyrie.

Figure 6.3: Kyrie mm. 26-36 chorus
The slow introduction seems to emphasize D by using the techniques for defining centricity found in Basler’s other Kenyan-inspired works. Measures one and three begin on D; this is the only appearance of unisons/octaves in the introduction. The last measure, measure eight, uses two techniques, one on each beat. The first beat puts D in the bass voice with a second inversion G chord; this is the same technique found frequently in Harambee. The second beat has a D and both a fifth above, A, and a fifth below, G; Basler also used this technique in “Alleluia.” Measure eight is shown in Figure 6.4.

![Figure 6.4: Kyrie m. 8 G6/4 followed by G/D/A](image)

As soon as D has been established in the introduction, the Kyrie moves immediately away from it. The perfect fifths above and below D in the last beat of measure eight move down a step on the downbeat of measure nine. At this point C begins to be the center, solidified with a fifth above, G, and below, F. The C-centricity is further emphasized by the following statements in the horn and chorus, which all begin on C, and the chorus statements that end on C with octaves in measure 29 and, finally, a
unison in measure 36. This is the same step-wise modulation that Basler used in “Alleluia.”

From this point, the center becomes weaker. The center C returns when the material related to measures 12-36 appears, starting in measure 68. The chorus starts on C in octaves and ends on a unison C in its answer to the horn statement that began on a C in measure 68. When the slow introduction is brought back, D is emphasized again. The final measure of the repeat of the introduction has been altered: on the second beat there is no A, but rather a perfect fifth of G and D. There is a three-measure addition to the end of the Kyrie that is back in the Kenyan-inspired style and quicker tempo of the body of the Kyrie. This three-measure ending moves from the G-D perfect fifth to a C-G perfect fifth. The choir holds their fifth while the horn has one last statement. The Kyrie ends when the horn lands on F; the final sound is C with a perfect fifth above, G, and below, F, which is very common in Basler’s Kenyan-inspired works. The final statement is shown in Figure 6.5.
Paul Basler uses the rhythmic techniques of syncopation, changing meter, and layers of rhythmic patterns in his Kyrie from *Missa Kenya* as he did in *Harambee*, “Alleluia,” and in his other works of his Kenyan-inspired style. The Kyrie is the clearest example of multiple rhythmic patterns being played simultaneously, a rhythmic technique that Basler utilizes sparingly in his Kenyan-inspired compositions preferring instead to focus on a single rhythmic pattern at a time. The independent nature of the chorus, horn, and percussion parts leads the performance of several rhythmic patterns at once when all parts play at the same time. Measures 33-36 layer four different rhythmic patterns: the chorus in unison rhythm, the horn, the tambourine, and the conga drums as shown in Figure 6.6.
An example of syncopation is found as a rhythmic link within the A section of the Kyrie. The conga drums and tambourine play three accented groupings of two eighth notes, as shown in figure 6.7, instead of the normal 6/8 grouping of two groups of three.

The percussion parts play this same rhythm, grouping two eighths instead of three, at the end of the Kyrie. The chorus and horn are also playing, and the syncopation in the
percussion causes a hemiola with the accented notes in the horn part under the sustained notes in the voices. The horn and percussion parts are shown in Figure 6.8.

Figure 6.8: Kyrie mm. 108-109 horn and percussion accented hemiola

Kenyan traditional music layers complex rhythms giving it a strong and steady pulse even without a notated meter; although Basler does begin with a stated meter he imitates the rhythmically-dictated meter by also allowing his rhythmic lines to determine the pulse; this results in a constantly changing meter. The relationship of the horn part in measures 68-82 to measures 12-26 is an example of Basler altering the meter in a repetition. In the later presentation of this material, the time signature has been changed to 6/8 from the original 5/8. To accommodate this change, some durations are lengthened by one eighth note and tied over the measure lines, leading to syncopation that was not present in the original version. A few notes have also been altered with accidentals. A comparison of the two is shown in Figures 6.9 and 6.10.

Figure 6.9: Kyrie mm. 12-26 original horn statement
Basler’s Kenyan-inspired works, like the Kyrie from *Missa Kenya*, are reliant on rhythmic interest. The Kyrie presents multiple rhythmic patterns simultaneously through its independent parts, syncopation and hemiola created with accent patterns, and constantly changing and altered meters.

### 6.4 Other Kenyan-Inspired Aspects

The inclusion of percussion parts in a mass is rare although it is found more frequently in 20th century works than earlier mass settings. By writing for percussion in his *Missa Kenya*, Basler pays tribute to the traditions of Kenya and the instruments used there, yet remains realistic about the availability of instruments in the United States by choosing readily available percussion instruments. The addition of tambourine and conga drums to the Kyrie help propel the piece with repeated rhythmic patterns and add to the layers of rhythmic material occurring in the piece. The Kyrie also makes extensive use of hand clapping in the chorus parts. Music in Kenya—especially the choral traditions that inspired Basler—is a participatory activity that involves the entire body; Basler imitates this with the addition of hand clapping. In measure 69, the choir is instructed to “ululate to m. 82.” Basler incorporates the ululation in the Kyrie when he begins to bring music back in a varied repetition.
6.5 Summary

Paul Basler’s Missa Kenya was inspired by the experiences he had during his stay in Kenya. The Kyrie gives an important role to the horn and uses all of the elements of Basler’s Kenyan-inspired style. The form of the Kyrie is created with a conversational trading of sections between the horn and chorus, and the chorus segments themselves are frequently made up of call and response between vocal parts. Call and response comes from Kenyan choral music in the participatory community traditions of that country. The return of melodic material also comes from these same traditions.

The centricity of the Kyrie is established in Basler’s Kenyan-inspired manner. Open intervals of octaves and consonances and the prevalence of unisons at the beginnings and ends of phrases center the music on specific pitches. Basler uses techniques such as the inclusion of notes a fifth above and a fifth below a given pitch to emphasize that pitch in the Kyrie as he does in his other Kenyan-influenced works.

Rhythm is an important factor in Kenyan music and the same is true in the Kyrie from Missa Kenya. The Kyrie contains passages involving multiple rhythmic patterns, syncopation and hemiola, which all appear in Kenyan traditional music. Kenyan music has a strong pulse but does not have a notated meter. Since Basler is writing for Western musicians in a style influenced by Kenyan music, he does indicate a meter signature in his music. The meter is constantly changing in the Kyrie from Missa Kenya; in this way, Basler has been inspired by the lack of notated meter and the complexity of rhythms in Kenyan music and has combined it with the needs of Western musicians.
CHAPTER SEVEN
PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

The style of horn playing necessary for the performance of Paul Basler’s Kenyan-influenced compositions is not always clear to musicians who have not worked directly with him. The author gained first-hand knowledge of the style desired by Basler in these works by studying with him at the University of Florida.

Paul Basler is a very enthusiastic and exuberant man. His time in Kenya positively changed his outlook on life, and continues to inspire him to this day. This happiness is reflected in the celebratory, dance-like nature of his Kenyan-influenced works. Basler gives immediate instructions to the performers in “Alleluia” by marking each initial entrance with the words “exultant – sempre marcato” and later, in measure 53, labels the horn part “energetic – light.” He also made sure to instruct the performers of the Kyrie to play in a joyous style by using markings such as “athletic” (measure 12), “energetically” (measure 25), and “non legato” (measure 33). Basler did not label Harambee with instructions; however, after the author studied the piece with Basler it was clear that his intentions were the same. He would stand in front of the ensemble during rehearsal, wave his arms around, and shout “Short! Short!” while bouncing in front of each player to demonstrate the style he wanted.

Basler’s enthusiastic and joyful style translates into note shapes that have a clearly defined attack at the front followed by a steep decay, mimicking the sound of a struck African drum. This note shape contrasts the block-like style that many players may assume from their first look at Basler’s Kenyan-influenced compositions. Assuming that
notes without a specified articulation marking should be played in a legato style will not accurately communicate the lighthearted mood of his works. The triangular note shape allows for the bouncier, dance-like style Basler demonstrated in *Harambee* rehearsals. The swinging compound meters of the two vocal works and the compound grouping of eighth notes within the duple meter of *Harambee* further enhance the lively style. Basler’s frequent changing between groupings of two and three eighth notes keeps his music from falling into a predictable pattern and instead gives it a playful quality.

Performers of Basler’s Kenyan-influenced compositions should play them joyfully and enthusiastically, and with clear articulation and light and lifted style. Playing in this manner will express Basler’s feelings regarding his time in Kenya and connect the musician and audience to the Kenyan musical and cultural traditions Basler admires.

Basler’s instrumentation and scoring choices require some consideration from the horn player. When playing with the choir the horn is not merely accompanimental; it has a strong role and must play as such. The call and response between chorus and horn in both the “Alleluia” and the Kyrie require the horn to be equal to the chorus. The horn player should play loudly but take care to not lose the correct style. This is especially true when the plays simultaneously with the chorus. Basler’s scoring in *Harambee* allows for doubling of the accompanimental horn parts making the piece suitable for a larger horn ensemble as well. If the performers choose to double horns 3-5 the soloists should be conscious to play very strongly and confidently to balance the larger ensemble.

Occasionally Basler will use a rhythm that has a tendency to trick the performer. He ties notes over measure lines, temporarily obscuring the meter. The players are
advised to ignore the printed meter signature to avoid overanalyzing the rhythms. Connecting the rhythms to other, easier to read, motives in the piece with assure accuracy.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

Basler wanted to avoid what he perceived as the pitfalls of American compositional styles by removing what he considered superfluous notes and special effects.\(^{24}\) He felt dissatisfied with the music he was writing that used plenty of these effects and sought a change. A desire for honesty and lack of ostentatious additions in his music led Basler to begin to compose in his Kenyan-influenced style. This style is marked by several characteristics and compositional techniques that emerge from Kenyan music making. Kenyan traditional music frequently uses call and response as an organizing principle. A leader or small group will sing or play one phrase that is then answered by a larger group. This participatory style of music allows for all members of the community to participate in the traditional music of Kenya. Basler also frequently uses call and response in his Kenyan-inspired compositions. Basler uses the clarity that results from the repetitive nature of call and response to create the honesty and accessibility that he seeks in his compositions.

Repetition also leads to clarity and understanding through motivic manipulation and the return of material throughout a composition. All of Basler’s Kenyan-influenced works utilize motivic manipulation, repetition of previous sections, or both techniques. Frequently, the motive is a rhythmic one rather than a melodic motive. A single motive can be the basis for an entire work in Basler’s Kenyan style as it is in *Harambee*. Repetition of material makes comprehension—and therefore enjoyment—of a musical

\(^{24}\) Basler, interview by author, January 1, 2013.
composition easier for audiences. This ease of understanding is in line with the Kenyan cultural desire of community involvement and participation that Basler admires.

Much of the tonality heard in traditional Kenyan music comes from the monophony of the choral tradition of singing in unison, octaves, and other consonant intervals. Basler especially enjoyed the choral traditions of Kenya and Africa and this is reflected in his compositions. Not only does Basler choose to write for chorus and horn, he writes vocal lines that often sing in octaves mimicking the sound of men and women singing together in Kenyan choral music. Basler describes his music as being tonal, which he defines simply as non-randomness in the selection of important notes.\textsuperscript{25} The open sounds of the octaves and unisons added to the choice of specific notes leads to the creation of pitch class centers in Basler’s Kenyan-inspired music making his music centric, not tonal. He starts and ends phrases on the same unison or octave, solidifying that starting note as a pitch class center. He also strengthens centers by using the chosen pitch in the lowest voice or surrounding it with perfect fifths. Basler’s Kenyan-influenced music should not be viewed vertically; instead, Basler’s compositions must be considered from a horizontal perspective due to their monophonic textures. The repetition of the pitch class center in various ways and significant junctures give the center its importance.

Rhythm is the foremost aspect of Kenyan, and all African, music. Drums are the most widely used instruments in Africa; as a result rhythm, instead of melody, is relied upon to drive the music. The lack of written traditional music and the aural learning of African music make the notation of a specific meter unnecessary. The rhythms of

\textsuperscript{25} Basler, interview by author, January 1, 2013.
African music weave together through complicated patterns. Musicians who are used to Western music traditions may have trouble comprehending the rhythms without the framework of a time signature. Since Basler is seeking clarity and accessibility in his music he chooses to write music that uses time signatures; however, he changes them frequently to fit the rhythmic patterns he desires. Many different rhythmic techniques emerge from the rhythmic complexity of African music and Basler has chosen the simplest of these for use in his Kenyan-influenced compositions. The most frequent is that of syncopation and hemiola. Kenyan rhythmic complexities lead to an abundance of polyrhythm; Basler chooses instead to occasionally layer multiple rhythmic lines while mostly relying on homorhythmic parts.

Basler’s Kenyan-inspired compositional style borrows from Kenya in his choice of instrumentation. While he writes regularly for horn, the instrument he studied, plays, and teaches, he also chooses to write for chorus due to his immense enjoyment of Kenyan choral traditions. To this he adds drums\(^\text{26}\) where they are not traditionally used, hand clapping, and even ululation. All of these textural choices are drawn directly from Kenyan music and culture.

Musicians playing Basler’s Kenyan-influenced compositions will improve their performance with an understanding of the formal organization, pitch organization, and rhythmic techniques used as well as the style of horn playing that Basler desired. By recognizing the relationships between motives, segments, sections, and pitch class centers, performers will be able to convey not only the spirit of Basler with correct style,

\(^{26}\) Basler only uses percussion instruments that would be accessible to a choir in the United States; this is in line with his dedications of works to specific choirs/directors he knows in the U.S.
but his love of Kenyan culture and choral traditions and desire for honesty and clarity in music. This will allow the audience to have the easy understanding and enjoyment that Basler seeks for them.
APPENDIX A

LIST OF COMPOSITIONS IN KENYAN-INFLUENCED STYLE

*Missa Kenya* for SATB chorus and tenor solo with horn, percussion and piano accompaniment – Colla Voce Publishing, 1996


*Ken Bits* for two horns or horn and trumpet – RM Williams, 1998 (both versions)

*Songs of Faith* for SATB chorus with piano, horn, and percussion accompaniment – Colla Voce Publishing, 1999


*Jambo* for sixteen horns – RM Williams Publishing, 2009

*Majaliwa* for two horns and piano – RM Williams Publishing, 2009
APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH PAUL BASLER

Question: What was daily life like for you in Kenya?

Answer: I lived in a spacious attached home on campus. I had many friends in the neighborhood with loads of children. They would always come to see me after school and play on my truck. We would have tea and biscuits together. Every day I would teach classes in theory and composition to incredibly gifted students. And also play piano for the university choir. Afterwards I held classes in computer courses at my house – primarily use in the music software Finale. Once a week I traveled to Nairobi and conducted the Nairobi Symphony Orchestra. This is the oldest orchestra in Africa and its members include Kenyans as well as foreigners who were in the country on various work. My concertmaster was the principal 2nd violinist of the Scottish National Chamber Orchestra. The principal trumpet was a dentist from Colorado. We often went to the local market for food. Some of the finest, freshest produce imaginable. Almost every weekend I was off on safari around the country. There is nothing like waking up in the Masai Mara to go watching the beautiful animals of Africa. Most Sundays were spent eating at some of the Indian restaurants in Nairobi. Had a super relationship with one of the most prosperous camera store dealers – Indian but had been in Kenya for many years.

Q: What music did you listen to there?

A: I of course heard much music written by my students as well as traditional choral music from various tribes. The complexity of rhythms involved was fantastic. But also there was the very important aspect of communication… to insure that the music and lyrics are always understood. Oh yes, I got a radio while there – it might seem a small task but understand that since an attempted coup right before I arrived the president decried that all radios must have been registered with the government! So my favorite stations broadcast Kenyan popular music and also music of Dolly Parton and Michael Jackson (go figure!).
Q: Which aspects of Kenyan music most interested/interests you?

A: The superb rhythmic complexities of their music plus the fantastic honesty in the intent of their music. There are no wasted notes… unlike Western tonal music which tries so hard to impress with special effects.

Q: Did you collaborate with musicians in Kenya? How?

A: Every day! We performed together in orchestras, bands, choirs, chamber groups…. Singing everywhere – really! I would wake up to hear students singing on the way to class. Many concerts throughout the country.

Q: How do you feel your time in Kenya influenced your compositional style?

A: My music was transformed - beforehand I was a typical American composer trying to impress with special effects and technique. My time in Kenya taught me how to clean out the mess in my music and write leaner pieces.

Q: Was there a specific Kenyan artist or musical style the inspired you?

A: Not really… I was influenced by many of the tribal traditions. Of course, the choral music of Kenya had the most important influence on my compositional style. I strive to write music that “sings.”

Q: Are there any aspects of Kenyan culture that influenced your work?

A: Kenyans are wonderfully intelligent, talented and kind human beings. They taught me patience, sympathy and gratefulness in life. I was very happy living there.

Q: When did you begin writing in your Kenyan-influenced style?
A: About 2 months after arriving in Kenya. Truly, this happened so seamlessly. Music was all around me every day.

Q: Why do you continue to write pieces in this style?

A: My many months in Kenya (the first 10 months a the Fulbright Scholar and subsequent visits arranged by the US Dept. of State) have solidified my goal towards music that communicates without pretention. I strive to invite my listeners to the musical table.

Q: Do you feel that your time in Kenya changed you? How?

A: My time in Kenya profoundly changed my views of life. It was the most important influence in my musical and personal career. There is not a day that goes by that I don’t miss being there. The US consumerism and constant striving for being the greatest “whatever” is so alien to Kenyan society. They are more concerned with family/community/communication.

Q: Do you still listen to Kenyan/African music today? Which styles/artists?

A: I often listen to music from Africa. My interests include instrumental music from West Africa as well as the amazing choral music of East and South Africa.

Q: Do you stay in contact with people from your time in Kenya?

A: I am still in touch with quite a few of my students and colleagues. One student in particular, Ken Wakia, has become one of the most respected and famous musicians in the country. He received a Fulbright scholarship to study here in the USA. He graduated from the University of Miami with a masters in choral conducting. Ken is an incredible composer and conductor.
Harambee permission

Michelle Stebleton <mstbleton@fsu.edu>  Mon, Mar 18, 2013 at 4:18 PM
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Measures: 8; 12-57; 68-82; 10-109

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BIBLIOGRAPHY


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Rebecca Jane Chambers (b. 1984) holds a Doctor of Music in Horn Performance degree from Florida State University awarded May 4, 2013. She began playing the horn at the age of ten after telling her parents for a year that she wanted to learn the instrument despite not knowing exactly what it was. Her aspiration to play the horn came from a childhood spent seeking to do things just outside the norm; she did not know anyone that played the horn and therefore had to do it.

Dr. Chambers went on to earn a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Central Michigan University in 2007 and a Master of Music degree from the University of Florida in 2010. Her primary teachers have been Linda Deatrick, Dr. Bruce Bonnell, Dr. Paul Basler, and Michelle Stebleton.

Dr. Chambers is a founding member of the Coreopsis Quintet, a Tallahassee-based woodwind quintet established in 2011 with a mission of serving the community through the joy of music. In 2013, the Coreopsis Quintet was selected to participate in the Promising Artists of the 21st Century program at the North American Cultural Center in San Jose, Costa Rica where they performed recitals and benefit concerts, taught master classes, and led cross-cultural conversations with Costa Rican students. The Coreopsis Quintet has also held benefit concerts for the Big Bend Homeless Coalition and has done educational outreach tours in Florida and Georgia.

Dr. Chambers currently holds the positions of second horn in the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, fourth horn in the Ocala Symphony Orchestra, and is a section horn with Sinfonia Gulf Coast. As an active freelance artist Dr. Chambers has performed with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, Northwest Florida Symphony, Albany (GA)
Symphony, and the TallaBRASSee Brass Quintet. She has been a Regional Artist and Lecturer at the 2012 and 2013 Southeast Horn Workshops, performed a recital at the 2013 Florida Music Educators Association Conference with TallaBRASSee, presented a warm up session at the 44th International Horn Symposium in Denton, Texas, and will perform as a Contributing Artist at the 45th International Horn Symposium in Memphis, Tennessee.