SEEKING THE FOUNDATION

Steven M. Weimer

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

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Committee:

Marilyn Shrude, Advisor

Mikel Kuehn
Seeking the Foundation is an eighteen-minute work scored for 12-member chamber ensemble. The piece is divided into three movements, each of which explores a different musical aspect that is important to me. The first movement features large-scale symmetry to organize elements of form and pitch. It was inspired by structural studies of the opening movement of Lutoslawski’s 4th Symphony in which a two-part form alternates between contrasting textures. In my work, a thin, static texture is presented, anchored by the unchanging woodwinds and aggressive strings. This is counterbalanced by a highly imitative texture that uses gestural motion to move the music. A brief violin solo interrupts these textures before returning to material presented in the opening of the movement.

The second movement uses elements of serialism to occupy pitch and register decisions. Large, recurring ten-note vertical collections are formed from stacks of minor seconds and perfect fifths, where the remaining two notes (B and G) are used as a melodic motive. A light clavés rhythm underlines much of the movement and serves to unify many of the sudden changes. Time elements such as rhythm and form are unstable and chaotic to contrast the structured nature of the pitch content. The third and final movement explores elements of post-tonal centricity as a means of reacting to the previous two movements. The basic form uses a cello solo built on minor and major seconds to unify the movement. These two intervals become frequent melodic gestures as pulsating eighths in the
piano and marimba drive the work towards the conclusion. The final section brings back the cello solo within light piano and upper strings to resolve unstable elements from the previous movements.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Instrumentation

Flute
Oboe
Clarinet in B-flat
Bassoon
Horn in F
Percussion 1
Suspended Cymbal, Bass Drum, Vibraphone (Hard Mallets)
Percussion 2
Tam-Tam (Medium), Snare Drum, Clavés, Marimba (A2-F7) (Hard Mallets)
Piano
2 Violins
Viola
Violoncello

Performance Notes

Glissando between given pitches.

Pizzicato markings in the piano are to be played on the strings of the piano. They are to be plucked with the tip of the finger and sustained for the duration of the written note through the use of the damper pedal.

Measure 26 in the piano (first movement) is to be performed by muting the piano string with the fingertip while playing the written pitch on the keys of the piano. Damper pedal should be used.

The score is transposed.

Duration: ca. 18’ 30’’
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Flute
Oboe
Clarinet in B
Bassoon
Horn in F
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Vibraphone
Marimba
Piano
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello

Legato, Static
Ped. ad lib.
Ped. ad lib.
Ped. ad lib.
Transparent
Transparent
pizz. (Pluck string with finger tip)

f
mf
mf
mf
f
pizz. (Pluck string with finger tip)
