A CONDUCTOR’S GUIDE TO DAN LOCKLAIR’S SINCE DAWN:
A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra (1995)

D.M.A. DOCUMENT

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By
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Abstract

Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra (1995) is a composition by North Carolina-based composer Dan Locklair that musically treats Maya Angelou’s 1993 inaugural poem “On the Pulse of Morning.” Since Dawn was commissioned by Wake Forest University for their 1996-1997 Year of the Arts and first performed in September 1996 by the combined choirs of Wake Forest University and The Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony with Dr. Angelou as narrator. The work has not been heard since, nor has any scholarship regarding the work been completed. This research study and conductor’s guide sheds light on and provides both historical and musical contexts regarding this unique choral/orchestral masterwork.

Chapter One is as an introduction that sets composer Dan Locklair and his secular choral output against the backdrop of an American choral style while also providing a brief biography of the composer. It also provides a background, need and purpose of the study alongside information regarding Since Dawn; general compositional influences and traits related to the music of Dan Locklair are also included. Chapter Two provides a brief biography of African American poet Maya Angelou and background information regarding the creation of “On the Pulse of Morning,” as well as both critical and poetic analyses of the poem itself. Chapter Three provides a structural and tonal analysis of
Since Dawn. Finally, Chapter Four serves as a conclusion and suggests directions for future study regarding Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, his secular choral music and orchestral output. A reference list and bibliography is provided.
Dedication

This document is in memory of:

Thad Christopher Russell (1985-1987) & Dr. H. Faith McNitt, D.Ed. (1919-2013)

And, in honor of my nieces and nephews: Kaija, Dresyn, Jashaun and Mia.

*We all stand on the shoulders of the wise elders who blazed the trail before us,*
*and we have a responsibility to share the story with those who hold our future.*
Acknowledgments

— to The Ohio State University Chorus and Symphonic Choir; Micah Morgan, narrator; Devra Laserson, soprano; Ryan Jenkins, tenor; and Matthew Ebright, collaborative pianist: for assisting me in delivering a worthy realization of Dan Locklair’s *Since Dawn* on March 6, 2013 and for “helping to make (me) a Doctor”

— to The Ohio State University School of Music and the Graduate Conducting and Choral Programs: for a wonderful three years of teaching and learning and growing

— to Joan Loewen, Lynn Phillips, Dr. H. Faith McNitt (deceased), Professor Emerita June Miller, Professor Emeritus Dr. D. Douglas Miller, Dr. Lynn Drafall and Dr. Anthony Leach: for providing a firm musical and philosophical foundation upon which to stand

— to conductor Judith Clurman: for sparking my research interest in American choral music

— to composer Dan Locklair for his encouragement and most generous and patient spirit in answering questions throughout my research and writing process

— to Columbia High School (Dr. Lovie Lilly, Principal Emerita, and Mr. Nicholas Santoro, Retired Fine Arts Supervisor) and Second Baptist Church (Rev. Dr. Howard Washington, Pastor, and Rev. Leon Troy, Pastor Emeritus): for teaching me what I needed to know about diverse communities of learners, teaching life and music ministry

— to my D.M.A. candidacy and document committee members Dr. Charles Atkinson, Dr. Timothy Gerber, Dr. Russel Mikkelson and Dr. Robert Ward: for challenging me to become a finer scholar, historian, musician educator and conductor

— to my doctoral mentor, advisor and committee chair Dr. Robert J. Ward: for encouraging me to stay the course, helping me to find balance and for teaching me that—often—the most valuable lessons to be learned are never ultimately found within the pages of a course syllabus or as a part of a planned course of study

— and, last, but not least…to my family—both immediate and chosen: thank you for believing in me, inspiring me and remaining a part of my life through both thick and thin
Vita

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Chapter 1: An American Choral Style, Dan Locklair and Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra (1995)

Toward an American Choral Style

In June 2012 a National Symposium on American Choral Music sponsored by the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) was held in Washington, D.C. The focus of the two-day symposium was “the search for an American Style.” As a preamble to this event John Silantien wrote:

During [the period 1870-1923] many American musicians received their musical training at European conservatories and adopted the Germanic idiom then current. Gradually, however, music schools arose in the United States that began training American musicians. Some of these home-grown composers searched for a national American style.¹

In the recent months following this symposium, however, no summative report has been published regarding either the symposium’s findings or proceedings in ACDA’s Choral Journal. Moreover, leading musicologists, scholars and commentators who have specialized in American music over the past few decades—including Gilbert Chase,

Richard Crawford, Kyle Gann, Charles Hamm, H. Wiley Hitchcock, Joseph Horowitz, Carol Oja, Alex Ross, Judith Tick and Barbara Tischler—have had very little, if anything, to say regarding American choral music or an American choral style. Most of their research and writing is focused on the development, performance and composition of classical orchestral or symphonic music, instrumental forms and other musical genres in the United States. However, Kyle Gann observes the following regarding “Americanness” in music:

The problem is that Americanness in music has been searched for in the qualities of the music itself, music that is far too diverse to generalize about.\(^2\)

And, Barbara Tischler makes the point that American music—in general—might be considered an eclectic, international style:

The international musical language was and remains a modern idiom that encompasses a broad range of styles and techniques. It is the music that European and American composers have been experimenting with, as serialists, Futurists, Dadaists, Neoclassicists, Neoromantics, minimalists, and eclectics since the years immediately following World War I. And for all its claim to international recognition, when composed by Americans, it is American music.\(^3\)

Choral scholars, on the other hand, do have something to report regarding an American choral style. David DeVenney, Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at West Chester University in Pennsylvania and author of the book *Varied*


Carols: A Survey of American Choral Music published in 1999, describes American choral music in the 20th-century as having been influenced by the Romantic compositional schools of the late 19th-century. He posits that—although American choral composers have explored other compositional trends such as impressionism, neo-Classicism, serialism and a number of other “-isms,” as well as experimental, avant-garde techniques—choral composition in the United States had settled into a happy “neo-Romanticism” by the end of the 20th-century. He also makes the following points:

In fairness, it must be said that this new “Romantic tradition” mirrors the late [20th-] century trend in other music besides choral, with the decline or demise of serial composition, brought about in part by the advent of minimalism, which itself is now falling out of favor.

It remains to be seen, of course, how many of these works will become staples of the repertoire, and which of them will be remembered long into the future. Among them, however, are true choral gems and inevitably a few masterworks.

And, choral scholar Dennis Schrock observes that:

The United States during the Modern era, while subject to a vast array of influences from around the world and while exposed to the many styles of writing from innovative and progressive currents in Europe, has been by and large the most conservative of all countries in the Western Hemisphere.

As far as recent academic choral scholarship is concerned, dissertations and DMA documents by Paul Aitken, Andrew Larson, Richard Schnipke, Adam Stich and Keith

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5 DeVenney in Heintze, p. 377.
Whitlock ultimately lifted up the names of living composers such as Jean Belmont (Ford), René Clausen, James Hopkins, Morten Lauridsen, Gwyneth Walker and Eric Whitacre, among others, as exemplars of an American choral compositional style.

Kenneth Lee Owen’s dissertation, in particular, speaks most to the unifying elements of the “neo-Romantic” style as espoused by DeVenney and as exemplified in the works of three of the most widely performed and recorded composers today: René Clausen, Morten Lauridsen and Eric Whitacre. The names of Morten Lauridsen and Eric Whitacre are also mentioned in a recent article on American choral music and repertory published in the 2013 edition of The New Grove Dictionary of American Music.

By the last decades of the 20th century a diverse group of new composers came of age, including Morten Lauridsen, Judith Zaimont, David Conte, Libby Larsen, Robert Kyr, and Eric Whitacre. They adopted a decisively more accessible style by using enriched tonal structures, warmly expressive melodies, active counterpoint, and less complicated rhythms. Whitacre and Lauridsen remain the most popular. Whitacre synthesized various late twentieth-century techniques with a more traditional approach, while Lauridsen created a transcendent mysticism with his shimmering, serene, and fluid writing.

Echoing the words of both Kyle Gann and Barbara Tischler, choral scholar Nick Strimple—Associate Professor of the Practice of Music at the University of Southern California—states the following regarding labeling choral styles in terms of either “Romantic”/subjective or “Classical”/objective ideals:

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At [20th-] century’s end a rich variety of musical languages coexisted. Jazz, serialism, and minimalism were shown to be much more closely related than originally thought. Avant-garde procedures were commonplace. Impressionism reassigned itself as many composers became preoccupied with tone colors and vertical sonorities. Canon and neo-Renaissance points of imitation became the favored contrapuntal techniques as composers abandoned the tonal implications and discipline inherent in strict fugal writing. Attempts to incorporate popular music into otherwise esoteric styles were often successful, and folk music remained an almost constant inspiration.  

Dr. Strimple also reaffirms and expands upon these observations in a recent article entitled “Choral music in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.”

Although it might be perceived that contemporary American choral music had settled into an accessible, “neo-Romantic” idiom by the turn of the 21-st century, an eclectic, broad-ranging international style ultimately reigns. And in the words of former President James Earl “Jimmy” Carter about the United States, in general, which might also be applied to thinking about American choral music:

We have become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams.

A composer who exemplifies this international and eclectic—yet American—mosaic of compositional styles is North Carolina-based composer Dan Locklair. One of his

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landmark compositions entitled *Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra* (1995) is an example of his compositional eclecticism.

**Dan Locklair: A Brief Biography**

Dan Stephen Locklair was born on August 7, 1949 to Archie Greer Locklair and Hester Helms Locklair in Charlotte, North Carolina. A prolific award-winning composer, Dr. Locklair currently serves as Composer-in-Residence and Professor of Music at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina—a position he has held since 1982. Prior to his tenure at Wake Forest University, Locklair worked in church music, performed as an organ recitalist and served as an Instructor of Music at Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York. Trained as both an organist and as a composer, Dr. Locklair holds degrees from Mars Hill College in North Carolina, the former School of Sacred Music associated with Union Theological Seminary in New York City and the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. His former teachers include composers Joseph Goodman, Ezra Laderman, Samuel Adler and Joseph Schwantner and organists Donna Robertson, Robert Baker and David Craighead. He also studied harpsichord with Eugenia Earle.

As a composer, Dan Locklair first garnered national attention when his *Constellations: A Concerto for Organ and One Percussion Player* (1980) was chosen as one of the finalists for the 1981 Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards. The live performance of this work was heard via international broadcast on National Public Radio
and Voice of America. Composed to honor the memory of Dr. Locklair’s father, Archie Greer Locklair, “changing perceptions” and EPITAPH—written in 1987 for four-part mixed chorus and piano accompaniment on texts by North American poets Carol Adler, Christine Teal Howes, Joy Kogwa and John Gillespie McGee, Jr.—won the top award at the Barlow International Competition in 1989. Locklair was also named Composer of the Year in 1996 by the American Guild of Organists (AGO)—a distinguished award given annually to an American composer who has not only enriched the organ repertoire, but who has also made significant contributions to symphonic and concert music. His five-movement liturgical suite for organ, Rubrics (1988), was premiered by concert organist Mary Preston and was subsequently championed and recorded by Dr. Marilyn Keiser in 1994 on her compact disc entitled “Rubrics: The People Respond-Amen!” Rubrics, possibly the most frequently played piece of Locklair’s organ works, earned him his reputation as a composer of significant stature among concert organists. Dr. Locklair has also won numerous ASCAP awards and has had his works premiered and/or performed by a number of important orchestras, choruses and organists—many of which have made recordings of his compositions. He has also completed a host of invited commissions for prominent performing arts organizations, ensembles and solo artists throughout the United States.

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13 These biographical notes are based on the materials found in the DMA doc. of Catherine Hicks (2003) and the DMA diss. of John Hollins (2002), as well as from the digital biography on Dan Locklair’s website: http://www.locklair.com/wp/about (accessed March 1, 2013).
Background, Need and Purpose of the Study


Even considering this scholarship, over the past decade very little has been written about Dan Locklair, his choral music or his organ works. He and his works were not included in any of the choral literature texts or handbooks authored by the aforementioned, prominent choral scholars David DeVenney, Dennis Shrock and Nick Strimple between the years 1999 and 2009. And, although primarily known as a composer of sacred choral music and organ works in the field of church music, Dr. Locklair’s catalogue does include approximately fourteen secular choral works for mixed chorus and eighteen works for orchestra, including works with soloist and/or chorus with orchestra. Listed among these works is a composition entitled Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra (1995). Since Dawn is unique in Dan Locklair’s
catalogue in that it is the only work listed for narrator, chorus and orchestra and that it is a tone poem based on a prominent, secular text by American poet Maya Angelou. Although *Since Dawn* is listed in the appendices of both John Hollins’ and Catherine Hicks’ doctoral research studies and in numerous biographical sketches about Dan Locklair, no scholar has written about, nor has anything been published, regarding the piece. That *Since Dawn* is a composition that sets the text of such a renowned American poet and is written by a home-grown, American composer and that such little scholarship exists regarding Dan Locklair, his secular choral works or orchestral compositions, this research study and conductor’s guide is needed. The purpose of this study is to provide a historical context for and a musical analysis of *Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra* (1995). This will introduce conductors and choral scholars to a relatively unknown work in Locklair’s oeuvre and hopefully encourage them to consider performing the work.

**About Since Dawn**

The composition and premiere of *Since Dawn* was a near “perfect storm” from both artistic and pedagogical perspectives. Dr. Maya Angelou, the famous author, teacher and poet—who also happens to be the Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University where Dan Locklair serves as Composer-in-Residence and Professor of Music—gave her blessing for Locklair to set her poem “On the Pulse of Morning” to music. This helped Dr. Locklair gain rights from her publisher, Random
House, to begin work on the piece.\textsuperscript{14} The first performance of \textit{Since Dawn} took place on September 28, 1996 in Wait Chapel at Wake Forest University. The 120-voice combined choirs of Wake Forest—prepared by Dr. Brian Gorelick, Director of Choral Activities—and the Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony, with Dr. Angelou narrating, were conducted by Peter Perret.\textsuperscript{15} Dr. Angelou has described the music as being "startlingly beautiful...heroic music, and it is ‘enspiriting.’"\textsuperscript{16} Not only is the piece “startlingly beautiful”, “heroic” and “enspiriting,” it is also pedagogically sound in that Dan Locklair knew for whom he was writing—both choral and orchestral forces—and, as a result, produced a composition of great magnitude, yet of accessible substance.

Dan Locklair wrote the following program notes regarding \textit{Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra} (1995):

\textbf{SINCE DAWN} (A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra based on Maya Angelou’s “On the Pulse of Morning”) was begun in November of 1994 and completed on 21 June (Summer Solstice) 1995. Written for the 1996-1997 Wake Forest University Year of the Arts, the score bears the following inscription:

“Dedicated to Maya Angelou and to all artists
who, through their art,
seek to make the world a better place”

Being the first poet since Robert Frost to be asked to create a poem for an American presidential inauguration, Maya Angelou in “On the Pulse of Morning” both challenged our nation and offered renewed hope as she read her poem at the 1993 inauguration of President Bill Clinton. Although the poem was created to be a part of a national political function, the significance of the poem goes far

\textsuperscript{14} Dan Locklair, e-mail message to author, March 27, 2013.
\textsuperscript{16} Maya Angelou as quoted by Gordon Sparber (Winston-Salem Journal) and as quoted in Gorelick, p. 2.
beyond the event for which it was created. As all quality art should be able to do, the poem clearly stands on its own as a work of art as it addresses all of creation.

I have long admired the many aspects of Maya Angelou’s creative work and value her both as a person and as a colleague. From the beginning of this project I was honored to have had her strong support and encouragement toward the creation of this, the first, musical setting of her “On the Pulse of Morning.”

The choral forces present in SINCE DAWN make it unique among the genre of pieces for narrator and orchestra (with such masterpieces as Aaron Copland’s A LINCOLN PORTRAIT and Joseph Schwantner’s NEW MORNING FOR THE WORLD immediately coming to mind). SINCE DAWN, approximately twenty minutes in length, is scored for an orchestra of pairs of woodwinds (flute 2 doubling piccolo and oboe 2 doubling English horn), four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, piano, timpani, percussion (3), narrator, eight-part chorus and a full complement of strings. In one movement, it is performed without pause.

Dr. Angelou’s “On the Pulse of Morning” emanates from three key words that form the first line of her poem: “A Rock, A River, A Tree...” The ideas represented by these three poetic images are developed throughout the poem. In SINCE DAWN, three musical ideas emerge, most often over a pulsating bass line, that correspond with each of the three poetic images: A gentle two-note, sixteenth/dotted-quarter fanfare idea (“A Rock”); a more lyrical and flowing melodic idea (“A River”); a rich and lush chordal idea (“A Tree”). As with the poem’s poetic ideas, the use and development of these three musical ideas are at the heart of the creation of SINCE DAWN.

Excepting the very final portion of SINCE DAWN, there is no textual repetition between the narrator (who functions as a true soloist) and the chorus (who, like the orchestra, functions both alone and in a supportive, coloristic role). In setting words to music, I feel it paramount that a poet’s words be fully respected and honored. Only then may a successful “marriage” of word and music be achieved.17

Since Dawn is published by Subito Music Publishing (ASCAP) of Verona, New Jersey. Subito Music publishes both a conductor’s study score as well as a reduced score of Since Dawn in the form of a piano/vocal reduction. The orchestral parts are available through Subito Music’s rental library. (There is a recording of the 1996 premiere performance of the piece at Wake Forest University with Maya Angelou as the narrator; however, due to a musician’s union contract, the performance cannot be distributed for public consumption.)18 The instrumentation for Since Dawn is listed as follows:

Flute 1, Flute 2 (Piccolo)

Oboe 1, Oboe 2 (English Horn [F])

Clarinets [B-flat] 1, 2

Bassoons 1, 2

Horns [F] 1, 2, 3, 4

Trumpets [C] 1, 2

Trombones 1, 2

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Piano

Timpani (4)

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18 Dan Locklair, e-mail messages to author, August 31, 2011.
Percussion (3 players):

#1 – Large Suspended Cymbal, Bell Tree, Temple Blocks (5), Large Tam-Tam, Chimes

#2 - Crash Cymbals, Large Suspended Cymbal, Crotales (one octave C-C, bowed and struck), Xylophone, Vibraphone (bowed and struck), Marimba

#3 – Tom-Toms (3), Bass Drum, Glockenspiel

STRINGS

NARRATOR

CHORUS (SSAATTBB)\(^{19}\)

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In order to complete an analysis of this work, it is important to consider what both Catherine Hicks and John Hollins had to report regarding Dan Locklair’s compositional style and the musical influences upon him.

His works are distinguished by two stylistic periods. His early style (mid-1970s to mid-1980s) features harmonic dissonance and rhythmic complexity while his later style (mid-1980s to present) is harmonically consonant, rhythmically less complex, and lyrical. His later works have earned him recognition and are appealing for their simplicity, economy of means, rhythmic animation, neo-Romantic warmth and lyricism, consistent motivic unity, overall levity, and musical language rich with the American vernacular elements of folk, jazz, and blues. Although the style is distinct and unmistakably his own, certain aspects are evocative of the music of Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), Aaron Copland (1900-90), and Benjamin Britten (1913-76).

The compositional style of Dan Locklair generally falls into two broad categories: (1) a thick, sonorous, slower, layered, horizontal, lyrical style; and (2) a rhythmic, dance-like, vertical, buoyant, mostly multi-metered style. In the music of the first category, the composer displays an affinity for meters based in the half note (or other “white-note” meters). […This trait is reminiscent of early music, but also conveys (musical) breadth.]

Hicks reports the following regarding Locklair’s employment of ostinato patterns:

Stravinsky’s stylistic influence on the…music of Locklair manifests itself in remarkable similarities in his implementation of rhythm, specifically in his uses of rhythmic ostinatos as a compositional technique. Both composers use layered rhythmic structures based on ostinato patterns.

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22 Hicks, p. 3.
Hollins, Hicks and Locklair make the following observations regarding the economical use of musical materials and compositional structure:

Craftsmanship and economy of musical material are significant aspects of Locklair’s compositional style. He adheres to the paradoxical axiom that greater structure provides greater freedom.\textsuperscript{23}

In discussing the influence of Copland on Locklair’s music, I focus on economy of means and lyricism in Locklair’s compositional style. Both composers base their works on a basic cell of restricted pitch content. From this minimum pitch content, Locklair uses compositional techniques similar to those as Copland to develop melodic and harmonic materials through repetition, accretion, and the interpolation of new elements. This process has been described as “melodic variation” (Starr, 1994, 181).\textsuperscript{24}

Britten’s influence on Locklair’s style similarly revolves around the economical use of a small amount of musical material. Britten and Locklair compose music characterized by melodic, harmonic, or textural simplicity in which the smallest amount of melodic, harmonic, or textural change yields dramatic results.\textsuperscript{25}

“The impetus may be extra-musical things (such as the structure of a poem that inspires the piece or structure or concept behind the words or extra-musical idea), or the happy results of spinning out a simple rhythmic idea, melodic fragment or harmonic progression. Pure color may even be the key. Inspiration, while important, is only the seed. For a composer worth his or her salt, craft then must take over and do something with the idea.”\textsuperscript{26}

As far as the marriage of text to music is concerned, Locklair reports the following, as quoted in Hollins and in his own program notes for \textit{Since Dawn}:

When setting text to music, Locklair always begins by absorbing the text to be set and is extremely sensitive to the natural syllabic stress, underlay, and inflection of words. Locklair comments on his philosophy/approach regarding the integration of text and music: “Text, well-set to music, should fit like a glove. Text is the

\textsuperscript{23}Hollins, p. 20.  
\textsuperscript{24}Hicks, p. 3.  
\textsuperscript{25}Hicks, p. 3.  
\textsuperscript{26}Locklair as quoted in Hollins, p. 20.
primary reason that a vocal/choral work exists. If the composer has no sensitivity to what he or she sets, then why bother? Write a string quartet.” Although Locklair generally allows the text to dictate the mixed-meter patterns of his more rhythmic style, there are cases where text must adapt to rhythm. As Locklair clarifies, “The key is to always make sure that the end result feels natural and is genuine and that no seams show. After all, I really like what poets say when they refer to ‘making a poem’. That’s the way I look on music composition.”

In setting words to music, I feel it paramount that a poet’s words be fully respected and honored. Only then may a successful “marriage” of word and music be achieved.

Regarding expressive markings in Locklair’s scores, Hollins reports the following:

Markings for dynamics, articulation, phrasing, tempo, and character are extremely specific in Dan Locklair’s scores. All gradations of dynamic levels are clearly indicated. Such detail generally serves to elucidate natural text inflection, harmonic tension and resolution, clarity of texture, and the overall shape and pacing of his works.

Indications for tempo and character are generally in English rather than in traditional Italian time words.

And, as Since Dawn is a tone poem which includes vamp-like material that undergirds the delivery of Angelou’s poetic text, the following two definitions must be considered:

**Symphonic poem** [Fr. *Poème symphonique*; Ger. *Symphonische Dichtung*]. An orchestral piece whose music is accompanied by a program, i.e., a text, generally poetic or narrative in nature, which is meant to be read by the audience listening to the work. As is true for other types of program music, the program may be rather brief and vague (and may even consist merely of a suggestive title), or it may be long and detailed. Similarly, the music may be related to the program only very generally or in a myriad of specific ways. Usually the term is reserved for a composition in one movement, as opposed to the multimovement program.

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27 Hollins & Locklair as quoted in Hollins, pp. 20-21.
29 Hollins, p. 21.
30 Hollins, p. 21.
symphony; though many symphonic poems do contain several contrasting sections, these sections tend to flow into one another (through transitional passages) and are usually unified by tonal or motivic interrelationships. The term tone poem was preferred by Richard Strauss, and it has sometimes been used to refer to all works in the genre.\textsuperscript{31}

**Vamp.** A verb meaning to extemporize the simple accompaniment to a vocal or instrumental solo. In popular music the instruction ‘vamp till ready’ indicates that a simple short passage is to be repeated by the accompanist until the soloist is ready to begin.\textsuperscript{32} [Also, a musical device utilized for scene changes in music theatre and often found at the end of pieces in gospel music.]

A conductor must understand all that has informed both Maya Angelou’s “On the Pulse of Morning” and Dan Locklair’s *Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra* (1995). The next two portions of this document will analyze and make musical observations regarding the marriage of both poem and tone in *Since Dawn*. The goal will be to make observations concerning the exchange and creation of ‘new’ musical meaning and metaphor in the transformation of Maya Angelou’s poem into Dan Locklair’s *Since Dawn*. And, in the words of Igor Stravinsky—one of Dan Locklair’s major compositional influences—while quoting Ludwig van Beethoven: “‘Music and words are one in the same thing.’ Words combined with music lose some of the rhythmic and sonorous relationships they obtained when they were words only; or, rather, they exchange these relationships for new ones—for, in fact, a 'new' music.”\textsuperscript{33} The form and function of the poem ultimately informs the form and function of the music, or tonal


setting. It will be discovered that Dan Locklair does indeed respect and honor Maya Angelou’s words in his musical setting of her inaugural poem.
Chapter 2: Maya Angelou and “On the Pulse of Morning”

Maya Angelou: A Brief Biography

Maya Angelou was born on April 4, 1928 in St. Louis, Missouri to Bailey Johnson, Sr. and Vivian (Baxter) Johnson.\(^{34}\) The name given to her at birth was Marguerite Johnson;\(^{35}\) her brother Bailey ultimately gave her the name “Maya.”\(^{36}\) Currently holding a lifetime appointment as Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina—a position she has held since 1981\(^{37}\)—Maya Angelou has had a long and varied career since her high school commencement in 1945. She has performed as a dancer and singer, as well as as an actress both on and off the Broadway stage, on television and in film. She has also worked as a free-lance stage and film producer, director, editor, scriptwriter and interviewer. Maya Angelou has also flourished in her more recent vocations as an author of books and poetry and in her capacities as an educator, lecturer and African American

\(^{35}\) Bloom, p. 157.
\(^{37}\) Bloom, p. 159.
Dr. Angelou is the recipient of more than four dozen honorary degrees and has received a significant number of awards recognizing her for her contributions to contemporary literature.  

Maya Angelou first garnered national attention as both an author and poet in 1970 with her first autobiographical book entitled *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. This publication was subsequently nominated for a National Book Award. She also became a recognized face in American culture as a result of her performance as Kunta Kinte’s grandmother in *Roots*, the 1977 television mini-series based upon the book entitled *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* by Alex Haley. Her complete autobiographies—written over the course of more than three decades—were published together in 2004 as *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings: The Collected Autobiographies of Maya Angelou*. This collection includes *Gather Together in My Name* (1974), *Singin’ and Swingin’ and Gettin’ Merry Like Christmas* (1976), *The Heart of a Woman* (1981), *All God’s Children Need Travelin’ Shoes* (1986) and *A Song Flung Up To Heaven* (2002). It also includes her initial autobiographical piece published in 1970. Maya Angelou’s poetic output includes the collections *Just Give me a Cool Drink of Water ’fore I Diiie* (1971), *Oh Pray My Wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well* (1975), *And Still I Rise*

**The Poem: “On the Pulse of Morning”**

The invitation to write “On the Pulse of Morning”—considered by Angelou to be a crowning moment in her career—was made by William Jefferson Clinton shortly after his election as President of the United States in November 1992. On the 20th of January 1993, Dr. Angelou read “On the Pulse of Morning” aloud from the inaugural platform erected at the U.S. Capitol building as a part of President Clinton’s swearing-in ceremony. The poem was not only heard and received by those standing in attendance on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., but it was also transmitted via national and international television and radio to be experienced by a world-wide audience.

Historically, Maya Angelou was only the second inaugural poet, the first African American and the first female to deliver a poem of such magnitude at such a prominent, national event; the first inaugural poet was Robert Frost who recited his poem “The Gift Outright” as a part of John F. Kennedy’s inauguration in 1961. As a result of the poem’s inclusion as part of such a prominent event and considering its world-wide reception, “On the Pulse of Morning” was subsequently published in a commemorative

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45 Hagen, p. 134.
booklet format by Random House in 1993 and, again, in 1994 as the final poem in the *Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou*, a collection which contains five of Angelou’s previously published poetry collections. A Random House Audiobooks, commemorative edition cassette tape entitled *The Inaugural Poem: On the Pulse of Morning Performed by the Author Maya Angelou* was also released in 1993. This audiobook won Dr. Angelou a spoken word Grammy Award in 1993.48

“On the Pulse of Morning” is a poem of significant length. It is composed of sixteen poetic stanzas and, in sum total, 114 verses or lines. As printed in the *Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou* (1994), the poem itself appears in the format below:49

1
A Rock, A River, A Tree
Hosts to species long since departed,
Marked the mastodon,
The dinosaur, who left dried tokens
Of their sojourn here (5)
On our planet floor,
Any broad alarm of their hastening doom
Is lost in the gloom of dust and ages.

2
But today, the Rock cries out to us, clearly, forcefully,
Come, you may stand upon my (10)
Back and face your distant destiny,
But seek no haven in my shadow.
I will give you no hiding place down here.

49 [Note: the stanza and verse numbers have been added by the author of this paper for ease of reference.]
3  
You, created only a little lower than  
The angels, have crouched too long in  (15)  
The bruising darkness  
Have lain too long  
Face down in ignorance,  
Your mouths spilling words  
 Armed for slaughter.  (20)  

4  
The Rock cries out to us today,  
You may stand upon me,  
But do not hide your face.  

5  
Across the wall of the world,  
A River sings a beautiful song. It says, (25)  
Come, rest here by my side.  

6  
Each of you, a bordered country,  
Delicate and strangely made proud,  
Yet thrusting perpetually under siege.  
Your armed struggles for profit (30)  
Have left collars of waste upon  
My shore, currents of debris upon my breast.  
Yet today I call you to my riverside,  
If you will study war no more.  

7  
Come, clad in peace, (35)  
And I will sing the songs  
The Creator gave to me when I and the  
Tree and the Rock were one.  
Before cynicism was a bloody sear across your brow  
And when you yet knew you still knew nothing. (40)  
The River sang and sings on.  

8  
There is a true yearning to respond to  
The singing River and the wise Rock.  
So say the Asian, the Hispanic, the Jew,  
The African, the Native American, the Sioux, (45)  
The Catholic, the Muslim, the French, the Greek,
8 cont’d.
The Irish, the Rabbi, the Priest, the Sheik,
The Gay, the Straight, the Preacher,
The privileged, the homeless, the Teacher.
They hear. They all hear (50)
The speaking of the Tree.

9
They hear the first and last of every Tree
Speak to humankind today.
Come to me,
Here beside the River. (55)
Plant yourself beside the River.

10
Each of you, descendant of some passed-
On traveler, has been paid for.
You, who gave me my first name, you,
Pawnee, Apache, Seneca, you (60)
Cherokee Nation, who rested with me, then
Forced on bloody feet,
Left me to the employment of
Other seekers—desperate for gain,
Starving for gold. (65)

11
You, the Turk, the Arab, the Swede,
The German, the Eskimo, the Scot,
The Italian, the Hungarian, the Pole,
You the Ashanti, the Yoruba, the Kru, bought,
Sold, stolen, arriving on a nightmare (70)
Praying for a dream.

12
Here, root yourselves beside me.
I am that Tree planted by the River,
Which will not be moved.
I, the Rock, I, the River, I, the Tree. (75)
I am yours—your passages have been paid.
Lift up your faces, you have a piercing need
For this bright morning dawning for you.
History, despite its wrenching pain,
Cannot be unlived, but if faced (80)
With courage, need not be lived again.
13  
Lift up your eyes  
Upon this day breaking for you.  
Give birth again  
To the dream.  (85)

14  
Women, children, men,  
Take it into the palms of your hands,  
Mold it into the shape of your most  
Private need. Sculpt it into  
The image of your most public self.  (90)  
Lift up your hearts.  
Each new hour holds new chances  
For a new beginning.  
Do not be wedded forever  
To fear, yoked eternally  (95)  
To brutishness.

15  
The horizon leans forward,  
Offering you space  
To place new steps of change.  
Here, on the pulse of this fine day,  (100)  
You may have the courage  
To look up and out and upon me,  
The Rock, the River, the Tree, your country.  
No less to Midas than the mendicant.  
No less to you now than the mastodon then.  (105)

16  
Here, on the pulse of this new day,  
You may have the grace to look up and out  
And into your sister's eyes,  
And into Your brother's face,  
Your country (110)  
And say simply  
Very simply  
With hope—  
Good morning.50

50 Angelou, pp. 270-273.
Literary Criticism and Poetic Analysis of “On the Pulse of Morning”

According to Lyman B. Hagen, author of *Heart of a Woman, Mind of a Writer, and Soul of a Poet*:

[Maya] Angelou herself does not consider [“On the Pulse of Morning”] a great poem. She says it is a good public poem and carries the message of unity she intended. She has a frequently recurring theme that, as people of diversity, we are more alike than unalike. This idea is contained in the inaugural poem. Angelou feels that one day she will rework the material into a more important private poem. This distinction she draws between public and private poetry is worthy of note.  

Bernard Norris, writing for the *Harvard Review* in the Fall of 1994, states the following regarding “On the Pulse of Morning”:

Cynics might see this poem as an inoffensive public performance by a politically correct figure, a Black, a woman, a well-known and widely respected writer. The poem would give no offense, certainly, for it mentions the Nation’s many minorities, the landscape, the “wrenching pain” of our history, the “bright morning dawning”, the “dream”, and the “new chances for a new beginning.” It does so without bloated rhetoric or declamatory pomp. Its graceful lines captivate because they understate an urgent appeal. The poem’s dignity derives from the simplicity of the language and universal message, represented by Rock, River, and Tree, symbols of the nation, the earth, the essential elements in the nation’s destiny. The poem does not proclaim; it reminds us of what can vanish and what can be, if we all have the courage, the wisdom, to wake to the morning.  

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51 Hagen, p. 134.  
Composer Dan Locklair reports the following about Maya Angelou and her poem “On the Pulse of Morning”:

Being the first poet since Robert Frost to be asked to create a poem for an American presidential inauguration, Maya Angelou, in “On the Pulse of Morning”, both challenged our nation and offered renewed hope as she read her poem at the 1993 inauguration of President Bill Clinton. Although the poem was created to be a part of a national political function, the significance of the poem goes far beyond the event for which it was created. As all quality art should be able to do, the poem clearly stands on its own as a work of art as it addresses all of creation.  

Lyman B. Hagen also writes the following about Maya Angelou’s poetry:

Angelou’s poems are dramatic and lyrical. Her style is open, direct, unambiguous, and conversational. The diction is plain but sometimes the metaphors are quite striking. The most successful of her poems are those that “have language close to speech or more nearly song,” those written in the vernacular.

And, Harold Bloom contributes even further regarding the influences, in a general sense, of African American culture and life on the poetry and prose of Maya Angelou:

Angelou’s achievement has a complex relation to at least two among the principal antecedents of African American memoirs: the slave narrative and the church sermon. Since she is a spellbinder of a storyteller, other elements in African American tradition, including the blues and the oral eloquence of street ways, also enter into her work. Though Angelou is essentially a secular biographer, her extraordinary and persistent sense of self, one that rises both through and above

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54 Hagen, pp. 130-131.
experience, seems to me to go back to the African American paradigm of what I have called the American Religion. What survived of West African spirituality, after the torments of the Middle Passage from Africa to America, was the gnosis that early black Baptists in America spoke of as “the little me within the big me.” Though converted to the slaveowners’ ostensible Christianity, they transformed that European faith by a radical “knowing” that the “little me” or most inward self did not stem from the harsh space and time of the white world, but emanated ultimately from their unfallen cosmos that preceded the Creation-Fall of the whites. Angelou’s pervasive sense that what is oldest and best in her own spirit derives from a lost, black fullness of being is one of the strongest manifestations in African American literature of this ancient gnosis.  

I think that this is part of the secret of Angelou’s enormous appeal to American readers, whether white or black, because her remarkable literary voice speaks to something in the universal American “little me within the big me.” Most Americans, of whatever race or ethnic origin, share the sense that experience, however terrible, can be endured because their deepest self is beyond experience and so cannot be destroyed.

In order to fully comprehend and understand Maya Angelou’s poem “On the Pulse of Morning,” one must consider aspects of the African American tradition—including the slave narrative, the biblically based church sermon and even some textual elements of the African American spiritual—that are fully embedded within the poem. Some of these traditional elements include a use of language that is at once open, direct, unambiguous and often conversational—even rhythmic in nature. Embedded metaphors, whether from the African American tradition or beyond, tend to be direct and are often quite striking; others are in need of definition. One must also understand that “the little me within the big me” concept is a theme that speaks towards the idea that all Americans, as a nation of diverse immigrants and peoples, are more alike than unalike.

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55 Bloom, p.1.
56 Bloom, pp. 1-2.
The poem’s dignity derives from the simplicity of its language and a universal message represented by a “Rock”, a “River”, and a “Tree,” symbols of the nation, the earth—all three essential elements as a part of United States history and destiny. These three elements—according to Maya Angelou speaking in her own words about the genesis of “On the Pulse of Morning” during a brief introduction to her 1993 spoken word Audiobook—are all based in the texts of four traditional African American or Black spirituals. The element of the “Rock” is derived from the traditional spiritual “No Hidin’ Place Down Here.” The element of the “River” is derived from two spirituals: “Deep River” and “Down By The Riverside.” And, the element of the “Tree” is derived from the traditional spiritual “I Shall Not Be Moved.” These three elements are also inspired by numerous biblical references to rocks, rivers and trees throughout the Psalms and the New Testament and, perhaps, even covertly represent the Holy Trinity. The texts for each African American spiritual can be found below:

**NO HIDING PLACE (Stanza 1 only)**

There’s no hiding place down here,

There’s no hiding place down here,

Oh, I went to the rock to hide my face, Rock cried out, “No hiding place;”

There’s no hiding place down here.  

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DEEP RIVER

Deep river, my home is over Jordan

Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground.

O don’t you want to go to that gospel feast,

That promised land where all is peace? Oh!

Deep river, my home is over Jordan

Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground.59

STUDY WAR NO MORE (Stanza 1 only)

Going to lay down my sword and shield, Down by the riverside,

Down by the riverside, Down by the riverside;

Going to lay down my sword and shield, Down by the riverside,

Going to study war no more.

I ain’t goingt’ study war no more, Ain’t goingt’ study war no more,

Ain’t goingt’ study war no more,

Ain’t goingt’ study war no more, Ain’t goingt’ study war no more,

Ain’t goingt’ study war no more.60

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59 Cleveland and Nix, p. 115.
60 Cleveland and Nix, p. 138.
I SHALL NOT BE MOVED (Stanza 1 only)

I shall not, I shall not be moved,

I shall not, I shall not be moved.

Just like a tree that’s planted by the water,

I shall not be moved.\(^{61}\)

The personification of the “Rock” crying out in the spiritual “No Hidin’ Place Down Here” can also be found in the more modern, gospel praise song known as “Before The Rocks Cry Out.” The idea of the “Rock” crying out has as its biblical basis Luke Chapter 19, Verse 40 in the New Testament where Jesus says, “I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”\(^{62}\) Direct poetic references to the “Rock” crying out can be found in Stanza 2 and in Stanza 4 (Verses 21-23) of “On the Pulse of Morning.” References to the “River”, a result of the traditional spirituals “Deep River” and “Down By The Riverside,” have multiple meanings. They have deeply embedded religious meanings, of course, but the code metaphor of crossing over the Jordan River for African Americans meant to get to the “promised land where all is peace”—freedom. African American slaves would often travel via the Underground Railroad network to get to the North either by crossing the Ohio River or by travelling northward along the Mississippi River in order to find safe haven in Illinois and beyond. Direct textual references related to the spiritual “Down By The Riverside” can be found

\(^{61}\) Cleveland and Nix, p. 35.

in Stanza 5 (Verses 24-26) and Stanzas 6 & 7 (Verses 33-35) of Angelou’s poem where the “River” is calling the nation to her riverside “clad in peace,” not “armed for slaughter.” The “Tree” planted by the river that shall not be moved references the spiritual “I shall not be moved” based in Psalm 1, Verse 3: “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season…” Stanza 8 (Verse 51), Stanza 9 and Stanza 12 (Verses 72-74) of “On the Pulse of Morning” clearly illuminate these words.

Stanza 3 (Verses 14-16) of Angelou’s poem include the words: “You, created only a little lower than the angels, have crouched too long in the bruising darkness.” These words are inspired by Psalm 8, Verse 5: “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.” Other aspects of the poem—some less familiar words, poetic phrases and metaphors—still require definition and context. The word “mastodon” found in Stanza 1 (Verse 3) and Stanza 15 (Verse 105) can be defined as a pre-historic mammal related to the woolly mammoth that once roamed the North American continent. The poem also makes reference to the mythological King Midas and his “touch” that turns everything in his path to gold in Stanza 15 (Verse 104). The word “mendicant” found in that very same verse can be defined as a beggar or a homeless street person. “Midas” and “mendicant” are metaphors for the economic classes of the rich and the poor. Angelou also makes metaphorical references to The Middle Passage of African slave trade across the Atlantic Ocean to the

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63 KJV Holy Bible, Old Testament, p. 544.
64 KJV Holy Bible, Old Testament, p. 547.
Americas; The Trail of Tears upon which Native Americans travelled westward, forced against their will to reservation lands in 1838; to the immigration of many from the European continent and beyond; and the Gold Rush of 1849. Slaves, Native Americans and immigrants were “often bought, sold, stolen, arriving on a nightmare, praying for a dream.” All of these images can be found in Stanzas 10, 11 and 12 that close with some of the most renowned words from Angelou’s poem: “History, despite its wrenching pain cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.” The lines from Stanza 13 that read “Lift up your eyes upon this day breaking for you. Give birth again to the dream” refer to the prophetic words spoken by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in his “I Have a Dream” speech, a speech that was delivered in 1963 during the height of the Civil Rights movement for African Americans and Blacks. The poem also mentions—from an inaugural platform—the many names, nationalities, professions, genders, labels and classes of the American people with great inclusivity and, ultimately, without discrimination, prejudice or judgment. Beyond the textual content and metaphorical contexts of “On the Pulse of Morning,” literary scholar Zofia Burr also believes that Maya Angelou used strands of such poems as Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself,” Langston Hughes’s “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” and Robert Frost’s inaugural poem “The Gift Outright” to help mold her own poetic ideas.65

65 Burr, p. 192.
Chapter 3: A Structural and Musical Analysis of Since Dawn

Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus & Orchestra (1995), like its counterpart poem “On the Pulse of Morning,” is of significant length; Maya Angelou’s poem contains sixteen stanzas and 114 verses or lines and Dan Locklair’s tone poem includes six major musical sections and 515 measures. Both the poem and the tone poem are through-composed, with the form and function of the poem ultimately informing the form and function of the music. Angelou’s poem is delivered stanza by stanza and line by line in Locklair’s musical setting of “On the Pulse of Morning” just as it appears in its 1993 and 1994 publication formats. Locklair expands upon or utilizes textual repetition with Angelou’s poetry in only two instances; once to set the words of stanza 13 in dance-like, mixed- and changing-meters and once to repeat and expand the words of stanza 16 into an alternating, varied and extended form in the closing section—the first and only time the chorus ever sings the same words that the narrator speaks in Since Dawn.

Since Dawn begins with a musical introduction—or prelude—that presents and develops the three motivic elements of the “Rock”, the “River” and the “Tree” (measures 1-74). Following a brief, five-measure bridge (measures 75-78), where all three motivic elements are successively stated in conjunction with the three poetic elements of the “Rock”, the “River”, and the “Tree” by the narrator, the music moves forward by
presenting three major sections that develop and transform both the textual and musical ideas of these elements. Section Two, or “The Rock” section (measures 75-149), delivers stanzas 1-5 of the poem; Section Three, or “The River” section (measures 150-226), delivers stanzas 6-8 of the poem; and Section Four, or “The Tree” section (measures 227-276) delivers stanza 9 of “On the Pulse of Morning.” Section Five, or “The History and The Dream” section (measures 277–397), delivers stanzas 10-15 of the poem. At the conclusion of Section Five, there is a transition that moves the piece into its final section. This sixth and final section (measures 398 to close)—which might be considered a heroic, grace- and hope-filled postlude—is in an A, B, A’, B’, Codetta form and declaims the text of stanza 16. Musically, Since Dawn moves through the tonal areas of C Natural Minor, G Major and then A Major; explores C, F and B-flat Minor, as well as A-flat Major, in its thirteen accompanimental, vamp-like narratives; dances with the A-flat pentatonic scale alongside a passing tone of C-flat; and closes alternating between C Major and A-flat Major, ultimately ending with a triumphant C Major fanfare mostly in triple meter. The tonal areas and harmonic structures mostly move in tertian, whole-step or half-step relationships and utilize chordal planing techniques similar to much French music composed around the turn of the 20th-century. (See Macro-analysis Chart on page 36.)
**Figure 1.** Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, Macro-analysis Chart [Structural, Tonal and Poetic Analysis]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Sections</th>
<th>Measure Numbers</th>
<th>Tonal Centers</th>
<th>Corresponding Angelou Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section One: “Prelude”</strong></td>
<td>mm. 1-74</td>
<td>C Natural Minor</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsection One</strong></td>
<td>mm. 1-34</td>
<td>C Natural Minor</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsection Two</strong></td>
<td>mm. 35-56</td>
<td>C Natural Minor</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsection Three</strong></td>
<td>mm. 57-74</td>
<td>A Major &amp; C Natural Minor</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section Two: “The Rock”</strong>&lt;br&gt; (includes vamps 1 &amp; 2)</td>
<td>mm. 75-149</td>
<td>C Natural Minor, A Major, A-flat Major &amp; F Minor</td>
<td>Stanzas 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section Three: “The River”</strong>&lt;br&gt; (includes vamps 3-5)</td>
<td>mm. 150-226</td>
<td>F Minor, G Major/“G” &amp; B-flat Minor</td>
<td>Stanzas 6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section Four: “The Tree”</strong>&lt;br&gt; (includes vamps 6 &amp; 7)</td>
<td>mm. 227-276</td>
<td>A Major, A-flat Major &amp; E-flat Major</td>
<td>Stanza 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section Five: “The History and The Dream”</strong>&lt;br&gt; (includes vamps 8-12)</td>
<td>mm. 277-397</td>
<td>B-flat Minor, A Major, A-flat quasipentatonic, A-flat Major, F Minor &amp; D-flat Major —&gt; C Major</td>
<td>Stanzas 10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section Six: “Postlude”</strong>&lt;br&gt; (includes vamp 13)&lt;br&gt;<em>A, B, A’, B’, Codetta form</em></td>
<td>mm. 398-515</td>
<td>C Major (alternating with A-flat Major) &amp; “C”</td>
<td>Stanza 16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section One: “Prelude”

The first section (measures 1-74) of Locklair’s Since Dawn can be considered in many ways a musical prelude or introduction. It can be divided and thought of in three smaller subsections. The first subsection lasts for thirty-four measures (measures 1-34) and introduces both the “Rock” and “River” motives; the second subsection (measures 35-56) is twenty-two measures in length and varies and expands the “River” motive; and the third subsection (measure 57-74), eighteen measures in duration, introduces the harmonically constructed musical metaphor of the “Tree.” Tonally, the entire first section is in C Natural Minor. The key signature is void of sharps and flats; however, a careful scan of the musical text indicates that there are three flats and that the tonality is indeed C Natural Minor. The only time the tonal center shifts is when the musical material representing the “Tree” is introduced in subsection three. It is here that the tonality shifts to an A Major centricity for nine measures, returning to C Natural Minor in measure 66. This section of Since Dawn is without poetic text; however, Locklair incorporates whistling by the chorus as a part of the orchestration.

The whistling, which appears seven times throughout the prelude, sounds an octave above its notated pitch. Conductor Brian Gorelick, in his unpublished paper on Since Dawn, considers this whistling to be, perhaps, a “pre-speech” vocal element that might also be symbolic of pre-historic communication among ancient peoples. When

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66 Dan Locklair, Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator Chorus and Orchestra (Verona, NJ: Subito Music, 1995), p. 1 or p. 2 depending on whether one is reading from the vocal score or the orchestral study score, respectively.
67 Gorelick, p. 3.
asked by the author of this paper about the origins of whistling in *Since Dawn* and some of his other choral works, Dan Locklair replied:

As for whistling, I'm honestly not sure where that influence came from. While I know Joe has used it, I can't honestly say that the influence was from him. I had long heard it in pop music and liked the effect in the right place(s). *Tapestries* was the first choral work in which I used the technique and I returned to it two years ago for one of the movements in the Harvard Glee Club commission, *Winter (from the for...)*. Important, I think, not to overdo it. But, in the right situation, it DOES help the atmosphere.

Other vocal elements that appear in the first section are in the form of “hums” and “ahs” for the chorus. These two vocal elements reappear and are expanded upon—in both Section Four (letter AA) and in Section Five (letter FF)—each time the A Major “Tree” idea is referenced and musically transformed. It is conceivable that the vocal elements of “hums”, “ohs” and “ahs” represent “the speaking of the tree” in the form of a spirit-filled wind rustling its leaves and moving through its branches.

**Subsection One**

Subsection one (measure 1-34)—marked as quarter note equals c. 54 and *gently pulsating and not hurried*—depicts “the pulse of the morning” via a repetitive, pulsating eighth-note figure and tonic pedal-point throughout its thirty-four measures. This

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68 [Note: “Joe” refers to Dan Locklair’s composition teacher Joseph Schwantner.]
69 Dan Locklair, e-mail message to author, March 5, 2013.
pulsating figure, however, is metrically altered and accentuated by the use of mixed- and changing-meters. Locklair also sets up a quasi-ostinato rhythm that counters the repetitive eighth-note pulse and augments the variation and accentuation within this metric hierarchy. The viola, second cello, second double bass, left-hand of the piano and bass drum keep the constant eighth-note figure moving forward while the first cello, first double bass and right-hand of the piano articulate the quasi-ostinato patterns. This rhythmic idea can also be observed in subsections two and three.

**Figure 2.** Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, mm. 1-7 [Pulsating Pedal-Point]
Above the rhythmic "pulse of morning" found in the first subsection, the sixteenth/quarter—or sometimes sixteenth/half-note—idea of the “Rock” crying out appears. This motivic device is stated in the horns—in call and response—alternating between 3rd and 4th horns and 1st and 2nd horns (measures 1–12) five times. This idea is restated and varied throughout the first subsection and can also be observed rhythmically in the whistling of the chorus.

**Figure 3.** Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, mm. 1-7 [The “Rock” Element in the Horns]

The first appearance of the “River” motive can be found in measures 23–26. This musical idea is highlighted by the English horn and supported by the flutes, oboe, clarinets and bassoons. It is echoed by the vibraphone.
Subsection Two

Subsection two (measures 35–56)—still at a quarter note equaling c. 54 and marked *flowing (same tempo)*—shifts towards a different metric feeling and overall texture. In order to achieve these expressive transformations, Locklair utilizes mixed- and changing-meters to develop the idea of the flowing “River” via groupings of 5/8, 2/4 and 3/4 time signatures. The “River” motive—which now appears in both a retrograde inversion form (measures 35-36) and a regular inversion form (measure 37–38) of the first four melodic intervals from measures 23 and 24—is initially colored by the first
trombones, bass trombone and marimba. Locklair expands the orchestration related to these new melodic ideas over the course of the next eight measures to include the upper woodwinds. The gently rocking, quasi-ostinato pattern played by the bassoons, tuba, violas and cellos is a retrograde inversion form of all five intervals contained within the initial “River” motive from measures 23 and 24. This quasi-ostinato figure accompanies the four-note melodic ideas above it, mostly in canonic imitation.

Figure 5. Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, mm. 35-36 [“River” Element in Two Retrograde Inversion Forms]

The music in measures 45-48, over a pulsating, tonic pedal-point, returns to material first observed in subsection one (measures 28-30). The “Rock” fanfare motive in measures 50-56 dramatically announce the lush, chordal “Tree” element found in subsection three through a broadening of both tempo and orchestration and an increase in metric complication.
Subsection Three

Subsection three (measures 57-74)—remaining at a quarter note equaling c. 54 and marked *very expressive (shimmering with flexible tempo)*—shifts via a tertian tonal relationship from C Natural Minor (measure 56) to establish the lush, A Major “Tree” material at letter D. The initial A Major chord is presented in first-inversion, moves up a whole-step to a G-sharp Minor chord in second-inversion and then through both a A Major and G-sharp Minor seventh-chords in second-inversion back to an A Major chord in first-inversion. This progression repeats itself two more times—with the chorus now contributing “hums” and “ahs”—before settling back into C Natural Minor, a sum total of three repetitions. Metrically, the “Tree” progression moves through 2/4, 3/8 and 3/4 time signatures. The lush, expressive quality that Locklair assigns to the metaphorical “Tree” element is a result of its block chord structure with first- and second-inversion chord constructions as well as an orchestration of singing, melodic upper strings; pulsating lower strings divided over six parts; and arpeggiated, harp-like chords played by the piano.
This third subsection closes, beginning in measure 66, with cascading “River” motives based in the pitch materials of the original melodic pattern found in measure 23. This transformed musical idea is presented by the upper woodwinds and is then followed by the brass. Everything comes to rest with a final “Rock” fanfare motive and choral
whistling over a pulsating, tonic pedal-point. The first major section of *Since Dawn* ultimately transitions to a second major section beginning in measures 74 and 75 (letter E) where the first declamation of text from Maya Angelou’s poem “On the Pulse of Morning” is presented.

**Section Two: “The Rock”**

At the beginning of Section Two of *Since Dawn*, Locklair presents all three motivic elements of the “Rock”, the “River” and the “Tree” in a summative, five-measure bridge. This bridge material begins at letter E where the narrator, who is ultimately functioning as a soloist, declaims the words “A Rock, A River, A Tree” from the first verse of the poem. These words are to be spoken immediately before each musical element is played by the orchestra. Of note is that the “River” motive is now in a retrograde inversion form of the initial material from measures 23-24.

**Figure 7.** Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, mm. 75-78 [Three Element Bridge]
Following the bridge, the first vamp-like, accompanimental passage appears in measure 79 where Section Two (measures 75-149) ultimately begins to commence. This pulsating, vamp-like passage—constructed of eighth-note figures and minimally orchestrated for viola, cellos and double bass—accompanies the narrator as verses 2-8 of the poem are read.

**Figure 8.** Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, mm. 79-80 [Vamp No.1]

Once the narrator finishes verse 8, the music continues forward in C Natural Minor, but shifts to an A-flat Major centricity by measure 86. The “Rock” fanfare
motive is omnipresent throughout and alternates between 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} horns, 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} trumpets and 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} horns, respectively. Following the words “But today, the Rock cries out to us, clearly, forcefully…”, the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} horns play a transformed version of the “Rock” motive that contains two sixteenth-notes followed by a half-note. This musical idea is intended to illuminate the text directly preceding it.

**Figure 9.** Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, mm. 89-91 [“Rock” Element Text Illustration]

Next, the second vamp appears, accompanying the narration of verses 10-13 in the same manner as before. Directly following at letter J (measures 93-101), the new
“Rock” motive—still suggesting an A-flat Major centricity—is stated in succession three times by the horns. The horn calls are echoed in canonic imitation by the trumpets while a tonic pedal-point (C Natural Minor) in the form of a rhythmic ostinato pattern is played by the lower strings. The chorus also enters at letter J with a “hum” that helps usher in the first portion of the Angelou text sung by the chorus alone.

Letter K (measures 102–135) is written in a four-part choral texture and is tonally centric in C Natural Minor. The flutes and clarinets provide support and color for the choral writing, and the lower strings maintain the tonic pedal. The tolling chimes—which sound five times—punctuate each phrase of the poetic text. Locklair sets stanzas 3, 4 and 5 of Angelou’s poetry in a homorhythmic manner, alternating between the changing meters of 2/2 and 3/2 in “white notation.” Throughout letter K there is a preponderance of C Minor chords in second-inversion which move back and forth between second-inversion, A-flat Major chords. This alternation between tonic and sub-mediant harmonies creates a piquant, sonorous effect. Passing G Minor chords are also present on occasion, as well as added-major-second dissonances that contribute to text painting on more descriptive words like “lower”, “darkness” and “slaughter.” The short-long rhythm of the “Rock” motive can be observed in measure 118 as the word “rock” cries out, and a rhythmically augmented and melodically varied version of the “River” motive from measures 23-24 can be observed in the Soprano solo that declaims “A River sings a beautiful song, beautiful song. It says…”

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At letter L—following the words “Come rest here by my side” that come to rest via an open-fifth interval—Locklair returns to the use of “black notation” and mixed- and changing -meters. Still in C Natural Minor, Locklair develops and varies the musical material found in subsection two of Section One (measures 35–44). Here, however, he adds a new musical idea in measures 137–138—an extension of the “Rock” motive\(^{70}\)—that is repeated two more times.

\(^{70}\) [Note: This “Rock” motive has as its basis the African American spiritual “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.” See quote and footnote number 72 on page 64.] Dan Locklair, e-mail message to author, August 9, 2013.
It is almost as if the slightly evolved “River” motive (measures 135-136)—highlighted by the brass, piano and percussion—is in dialogue with the new material (measures 137-183), an idea that is colored by added minor- and major-second intervals and highlighted by the upper woodwinds in combination with the brass. This dialogue occurs over the gently rocking, ostinato figure—still in retrograde inversion and related to the original five-note “River” motive—played by the viola, lower strings and tuba. These musical ideas create an interlude that helps to bridge the poetic element of the “Rock” found in Section Two to the poetic element of the “River” found in Section Three, complete with “Rock” fanfare motives (measures 145–150) heralding the next portion of text.

Section Three: “The River”

Section Three (measures 150–226) begins with a vamp-like, accompanimental passage. There are three vamps that exist between measures 151 and 162, all of which are centric in an altered form of F Minor—altered in the sense that there is a D-natural instead of a D-flat—and accompanied by viola and cello. This subsection declaims stanza 6 of Angelou’s poem; the vamp at letter M delivers verses 27–29, while the vamp at letter O delivers verses 30-32 and the vamp at letter Q delivers verses 33–34. Interspersed between the vamps are descending, open-interval “Rock” fanfare motives—played by the trumpets and accompanied by the strings—that collapse into dissonant tri-tone sonorities when the meter shifts from 2/4 to 3/4. It is conceivable that these tri-tone intervals reference the words “siege”, “struggle” and “war.” Following the words of
vamp 5, “Yet today I call you to my riverside, if you will study war no more,” a combined “Rock” and “River” idea emerges that then increases and broadens via orchestration, dynamics and metric augmentation to call forth a new, rhapsodic “River” theme.

This new rhapsodic “River” theme—with full orchestra from start to finish—begins at letter S (measure 163) and comes to a close in measure 177. The “River” theme—centric in G Major, yet sometimes melodically altered by a lowered third scale-degree—is conceived from the melodic four-note, retrograde inversion form of the “River” motive found in measure 35. This time, however, there is an interval of a descending minor-third instead of the initial major-third, and the half-step interval found between the second and third pitches in measure 35 becomes a whole-step interval in the transformed “River” theme.

**Figure 12.** Dan Locklair, *Since Dawn*, mm. 35-36 and m. 163

[“River” Element Comparative Transformations]
Locklair utilizes rhythmic augmentation with this same melodic material at measure 170 to begin the musical transition into letter T. A pulsating, eighth-note figure can be observed throughout this section, played by the lower strings and timpani.

At measure 178, Locklair transitions from “black notation” to “white notation” in order to begin the second portion of text that the chorus sings in *Since Dawn*. Letter T (measures 179–201)—marked at a half-note equals c. 54 and *very sustained and expressive*—is mostly written in a four-part choral texture that only expands into eight- and five-part divisi at two points. The strings complement the choral writing—often either preceding or following the chorus in rhythmic syncopation on weak pulses—with carefully placed, gentle accentuations from bowed crotales and a bell tree. Locklair sets stanza 7 of Angelou’s poetry in a homorhythmic manner, alternating between the changing meters of 3/2, 4/2 and 2/2. The entirety of letter T is centric in “G” with the presence of G Major chords, B-flat Major chords, G Minor chords and a transitional E-flat major chord throughout, all of which are linked by common tones and are mostly found in second-inversion. Of note are the B-flat Major sonorities that appear in conjunction with three nouns—“peace”, “songs” and “Tree;” the G Minor sonorities with added-major-second intervals that color the words “cynicism” and “bloody sear;” and, most striking of all, is the text painting of the words “when I and the Tree and the Rock were one.” It is here that the four-part choral texture divides into eight parts at the words “Tree” and “Rock” only to return to a unison pitch, “D”—at the octave—on the word “one” to illustrate the metaphor of all three musical and poetic elements becoming one.
The soprano and tenor soloists sing in canonic imitation over an E-flat Major sonority in measures 193–198 directly followed by the chorus echoing with the words “and sings on” in G Major. The rhythmic syncopations and harmonic repetitions of the strings, the canonic imitation of the solo passages, as well as the chorus echoing the soloists could conceivably represent the element of the “River” in “rippling waves of sound.”
Letter U (measures 202-213) establishes the tonal area of B-flat Minor while recalling the pulsating eighth-note figure, re-presenting the “River” motive in retrograde inversion and based on the initial musical idea from measures 23–24, as well as the “Rock” fanfare motive. The eighth-note figure is played by the lower strings, piano and timpani; the “River” material by the woodwinds and echoed by the vibraphone; and the “Rock” material by the horns and upper strings. By measure 213, Locklair lightens the overall texture—by reducing the orchestration—and presents new “River” material that could, perhaps, be the “River sweetly singing on.” This new melodic material, still in B-flat minor, is based in the pitch materials of the retrograde inversion “River” idea found in measures 203-204. Here, Locklair only uses five pitches—melodically orchestrated in the oboes and piccolo and accompanied by the violas, piano and vibraphone—throughout letter V to lead into the words “There is a yearning to respond to the singing River and the wise Rock.”

Figure 14. Dan Locklair, Since Dawn, mm. 213-219 [The “River” ‘Sweetly Singing’]
There are two vamp-like, accompanimental passages (letters W, X and Y) that underscore the narrator in delivering most of stanza 8 of Angelou’s poem. Verse 50, however, stands alone as the orchestral texture based in only two pitches—B-flat and C-natural—crescendos towards letter AA. The words “They hear. They all hear the speaking of the Tree” forms the linkage between Section Three and Section Four.

Section Four: “The Tree”

Section Four, or “The Tree” section (measures 227–276), delivers stanza 9 of “On the Pulse of Morning.” The pitches—B-flat and C-natural—that come right before letter AA move by half-step motion, both downwards and upwards, respectively. It is through this half-step motion that Locklair directly shifts from a B-flat Minor centricity to A Major where there is a return of the “Tree” material as described in subsection three of Section One. This progression—an A Major first-inversion chord followed by a G-sharp minor, second-inversion chord followed by a second-inversion A Major, major-seventh chord—is repeated three times. The orchestration is full and the chorus provides “hums,” “ohs” and “ahs” to augment the texture set in both mixed- and changing-meters.

At letter BB (measure 238), the chorus enters to deliver stanza 9 of the poem. Utilizing the same tonal materials as found in the “Tree” chord progression, Locklair sets up a micro A, A’, B formal structure where verses 52-53 are repeated, followed by verses 54–56. Verses 52–53 are first presented in a four-part choral texture supported by the
Section Five: “The History and The Dream” (and Bridge)

In Section Five, or “The History and The Dream” section (measures 277-397), Locklair delivers stanzas 10–15 of “On the Pulse of Morning” at a pace that moves more swiftly than the first four sections of musical material. At letters DD and EE the narrator reads the text from stanzas 10 and 11 over B-flat Minor vamps that are played by the oboes, bassoons and violas and are then expanded into a six-part choral texture following a brief restatement of the “Tree” progression. The second repetition of text is supported by the same orchestration as the first statement of verses 52-53 with the addition of the clarinets. At measure 250 the text “Come to me, here beside the river” (verses 54-55) appears. It is here that the “Tree” progression is fully stated in the orchestra while the chorus divides into eight parts. The “Tree” is now “speaking”—via the “Tree” chord progression, the eight-part choral texture and the text—to the diverse audience described at letter Y to “plant [themselves] beside the River.” When the word “river” is first declaimed in measure 253, the rhapsodic “River” theme from letter S (measure 163) reappears in the oboes and trombones. By the second declamation of the word “river” in measure 257, the harmony shifts from A Major to A-flat Major via a passing chord—perhaps, “planting” itself—and the rhapsodic “River” theme begins flowing in full force and effect at letter CC. The metaphorical “River” flows through A-flat, A and E-flat Major sonorities, coming to rest in B-flat Minor at measure 276.
viola and cello. Following the words “bought, sold, stolen, arriving on a nightmare, praying for a dream…,” the “Tree” material reappears in rhythmic diminution. The fully orchestrated “Tree” progression is repeated three times, with the chorus contributing “hums” and “ahs”—this time in S/A and T/B duet pairs that become a four-part texture at measure 283. This portion of music might be considered a dream-like, musical expression. “Rock” fanfare motives appear in measure 284, heralding the narrator’s proclamation of stanza 12. Locklair divides the ten verses of stanza 12 into five declarative statements for the narrator. An A Major triad with added-major-second and/or added-major-sixth sonorities—that rises and inverts over the course of these declarative statements—punctuates the text in a quasi, recitative-like manner.

Accompanied by the strings, the musical and textual drama climaxes at letters JJ and KK with the words “History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.” The held tremolando chord at letter KK—which is constructed of only four pitches—is undergirded by a snare drum roll.

Letter LL (measures 294–365)—marked at a quarter-note equals c. 152 and fast and energetic—is based on a synthetic, A-flat pentatonic scale with an added passing-tone of C-flat. This section of music is characterized by Locklair’s use of 2/4, 3/8 and 5/8 mixed- and changing-meters, as well as melodic and harmonic constructions derived from the six pitches of the quasi-pentatonic scale. These musical ideas occur over a driving eighth-note, tonic pedal-point which is often colored by the Tom-Toms and timpani. In measures 297–304, Locklair transforms the varied “Rock” motive found in

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71 Dan Locklair, e-mail message to author, July 2, 2013 and Gorelick, p 10.
the brass and woodwinds of measures 137–138 via rhythmic augmentation. This musical idea—marked \textit{ritmico} and \textit{heralding} in the score—first appears in the woodwinds and xylophone (measures 297–304), then in the horns and xylophone (measures 333–340) and, finally, in the upper strings and xylophone (measures 356–365).

\textbf{Figure 15.} Dan Locklair, \textit{Since Dawn}, mm. 137-138 and mm. 297-300

[“Rock” Element Extension Comparative Examples: Rhythmic Augmentation]

\footnote{Note: This “Rock” motive has as its basis the African American spiritual “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.” See quote and footnote number 72 on page 64.] Dan Locklair, e-mail message to author, August 9, 2013.}
Following the lead from the choral texture of the dream-like material found in measures 279-288, Locklair sets verses 82 and 83 of stanza 13 in a similar fashion where S/A and T/B duet pairs combine to become a four-part choral texture. Verse 82 is repeated three times each by the S/A and T/B duet pairs (measures 306–314), and verses 82 and 83 are stated once in combination by the S/A and T/B duet pairs (measures 314–322). In measures 322–333 the four-part choral texture appears; however, the vocal writing is scored for S/T and A/B melodic pairs, the pairs themselves moving in contrary motion with each other. It should be noted that Locklair constructs these duet pairs in unison, often utilizing an octave displacement technique to achieve the texture. Both textual and musical repetitions in groupings of three can be observed in these measures, as well as an ascending three-note ostinato pattern in the lower strings. Locklair uses the same musical ideas for setting verses 84–85; however, the duet pairs are reversed and the textual and musical repetition is truncated. The vocal parts are either supported in the orchestra by trumpets and trombones (measures 306–333) or by the oboes and bassoons (measures 342-359), respectively—with temple blocks adding color to each.

Letter **MM-VV** (measures 366-397) could be considered a bridge from Section Five into Section Six. Locklair delivers both Stanzas 14 and 15 of Angelou’s poem as a part of this bridge. Verses 86-91 and verses 92-96, respectively, are each preceded by seven ascending pitches—centric in A-flat Major—that are played by the chimes and tremolando strings. The narrator reads these verses after cluster-chords composed of six pitches—containing the leading-tone, but without a third scale-degree—are played by the chimes, piano and strings and are held in suspension via fermati. This same ascending
chime gesture is repeated a third time, this time rhythmically varied and plunging towards a projected F Minor centricity. At letter QQ, the vamp-like material returns and verses 97-99 of Stanza 15 are declaimed. “Rock” fanfare motives reappear in the horns at letter RR and verses 100-103 are declaimed at letter SS over a vamp. The “River” motive—in an inverted retrograde form—appears in the woodwinds directly followed by a slightly altered “Tree” chord progression in rhythmic diminution in the strings and piano at letter TT. Verses 104-105 are declaimed directly following at letter UU over a vamp.

Comparatively, letters MM-UU are essentially a parallel structure to letters GG-KK where Locklair punctuates the text in an expressively declarative manner of five statements each.

At letter VV the F Minor centricity descends by the interval of a major third to a D-flat Major centricity. Marked at a quarter note equals c. 76 and *move tempo ahead*, the seven-pitch chime idea from measures 366-370 is heard and rhythmically varied and/or transformed in five statements over the course of the next fifteen measures. At measure 384 a fanfare-like rhythm in “D-flat” played by the trumpets—and constructed of an open fifth with an added-major-seventh interval—gives way to an open fifth, C Major sonority via common tone. It is here (measure 385) that a C Major centricity begins and where the chime idea can be found in rhythmic diminution alongside a tempo that is to be increased to a quarter note equaling 96. Throughout letter VV, Locklair orchestrates the chime idea to ascend gradually through the lower brass into the upper brass and full woodwind sections, with coloration and accentuation from both the strings and percussion. The sixteenth-note, percussive toccata-like figuration in the piano is of
particular note and importance as it helps provides metric stability. A final “Rock” fanfare motive is heard in the trumpets and trombones in measure 393 just as the bridge material shifts into a rhythmic ostinato pattern constructed of a C Major triad with an added-major-second interval in $3/8$ time. This shift to C Major—the first appearance of this sonority in Since Dawn—perhaps represents a “new day” breaking.

**Section Six: “Postlude”**

Section Six of Since Dawn begins at letter **WW** (measure 398). The sixth and final section of music begins with a thirteenth and final narrative vamp scored for strings and piano. Here the entirety of stanza 14 is declaimed by the narrator. The pulsating, rhythmic ostinato pattern found in the vamp—still in $3/8$ time with the dotted-quarter-note equaling c. 96—coupled with the new C Major centricity initiates Locklair’s musical illustration of “the pulse of (the) new day” dawning. After a brief transitional exit from the vamp at letter **XX**, an **A, B, A’, B’** and **Codetta** form commences at letter **YY**.

Marked Joyous, with great energy [in one], the A-subsection of the “postlude” begins at measure 404. The six-note chime idea from measure 366 can be found in the bass line. This melodic idea supports a “joyous,” dance-like melody in the upper voices—a fully orchestrated, antecedent and consequent phrase (measures 404-419)—that introduces verse 106 as sung by the chorus.
Locklair sets the text of verse 106 four times in repetition, creating two nearly identical antecedent and consequent phrase pairs (measures 420-427 and measures 428-435, consecutively). When considering the material directly preceding the entrance of the chorus, these constructs actually conceive a grouping of three antecedent and consequent phrase pairs. Just like the four-part choral texture found in letter LL (measures 322-333), the music is scored for S/T and A/B duet pairs moving in contrary motion; the choral rhythms are also loosely based on the patterns found in that same section of music. The S/T melody contains five pitches that ascend to an apex within the antecedent phrase and then descend in retrograde order in the consequent phrase. The A/B duet pair is a counter-melody that moves against the S/T line. There is also a separate melodic line found in the bass trombone and tuba constructed of four notes that move in contrary motion with the S/T duet pair. The pitch pattern of this bass line descends in prime form and ascends in retrograde order.
This same bass line also supports another embedded countermelody that serves as a quasi-cantus firmus in the brass. The trumpets and trombones double the choral parts, but the horns—and particularly the 1st horn—present a melodic fragment from the first phrase of the African American spiritual “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.” This quasi-cantus firmus can be observed in measures 420-424 and again in measures 428-432 in the piano—for one pitch—with the rest of the material being presented by the 2nd and 4th horns.
When asked about the use of “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” in *Since Dawn*, Dan Locklair reported the following story:

As for “He’s Got the Whole World…,” to this day I can’t be sure that Maya really heard it (even though, after quizzing her of it, I did show it to her). Although the World Premiere of *SINCE DAWN* was thunderous (to a packed hall), the first playing of it was in Maya’s basement den. Her house-guests that week were her old friends, Nick Ashford and Val Simpson of the duo, Ashford and Simpson (i.e. *Ain’t No Mountain High Enough* and other hits). During my play-through of the score at the piano, Val was the most diligent as she sang the alto part anytime the chorus came around. Before the run-through, I had asked all three to be aware of that special spot (i.e. where *He’s Got the Whole World*…emerges), but asked them to guess as to what it was. When I asked the question after the run-through, there was silence! So, I then revealed it. Of course, since it is slightly altered, that made it a bit more challenging. But, at least, I told them it was there.73

When the A-subsection material returns at measure 447 as subsection A’, the core musical structure and material—which is 34 measures in length—is identical. Locklair

73 Dan Locklair, e-mail message to author, March 3, 2013.
varies the orchestration, however, especially with transformed figuration in the piano and the addition of woodwinds leading into subsection B’.

Marked slower at a half-note equaling c. 50, the B-subsection begins at measure 438 in 2/2 time—once again employing “white notation.” The musical material that Locklair uses to set verses 107-110 of Angelou’s poem is based on the “Tree” material found in prior sections of Since Dawn. The A-flat Major first-inversion and G Minor second-inversion sonorities followed by the A-flat Major second-inversion- and G Minor second-inversion-seventh chords undergird the homorhythmic vocal lines above them. These tonic and leading-tone sonorities—now, perhaps, firmly “planted by the River” (related to the A-flat Major sonority in measure 257)—are orchestrated for pulsating, lower strings and arpeggiated, harp-like piano gestures. The violins play a counter-melodic idea that complements the graceful yet syllabic, four-part choral writing. The choral writing is supported by the full woodwind section with all parts moving synchronously with one another. When the B-subsection material returns at measure 481 as subsection B’, the core musical structure and material—which is 9 measures in length—is identical, but Locklair varies the orchestration, especially with the addition of full brass to support the choral writing and new counter-melodic material in the now divided upper strings. Taking the lead from the choral writing at letter BB (measures 238-249), Locklair sets subsection B in a four-part texture and subsection B’ in a six-part texture.
On beat four of measure 489, Locklair sets up a musical transition to move verse 110 into verses 111-114 while repeating the words “your country.” It is here that he utilizes open-fifth sonorities constructed of B-flats and F-naturals—at the octave—over a G Minor chord to move the tonality back to C Major. In measures 490-491, the orchestration is swiftly reduced, the tempo is broadened and open-fourth and open-fifth sonorities—on the pitches of C-natural and G-natural—illuminate the words “And say simply, very simply” via a four-part choral texture with fanfare-like rhythms. In measure 493, the words “with hope” are declaimed by the now unaccompanied chorus. C Minor and A-flat Major passing chords expand the a cappella chorus from four to six parts on the word “with”. The word “hope” is set for seven parts with a G-flat Major chord marked sffzp—followed by a dramatic crescendo—moving towards a fermata. This “hope” chord is piquant as it is a diminished-fifth interval relationship with C Major; it is also the first and only time that Locklair uses this chord in Since Dawn.
The word “Good” of verse 114—set in eight parts—passes through F Minor and G Minor minor-seventh chords that are punctuated and supported by tremolando strings, woodwinds, Tam-Tam and timpani. The horns drive the harmonic motion forward, announcing the word “morning” with a return to C Major and open-fifth sonorities at measure 498. The words “Good morning” are repeated in measures 500 and 501. Set for full orchestra, measures 498-515 ultimately round out the Codetta portion of Section Six while alternating between 3/8 and 2/4 mixed- and changing-meters. The bass line repeats—and varies—a descending pitch pattern of E-flat, D-flat and C-natural three times while the treble voices rearticulate ascending open-fifth sonorities based in the chord materials of measures 496 and 497. Although Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for
Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra (1995) begins with a C Natural Minor centricity and then shifts to C Major for the majority of section six, Locklair concludes his tone poem with only open-fifth sonorities based in “C.” The defining interval of the third is completely absent in the last ten measures of Since Dawn, perhaps suggesting the essence of a “new day” breaking, the sense—or scent—of a new “dawn.”

I love puns and double meanings. I believe, early on, I shared with you my thoughts about the title of SINCE DAWN itself, where the scent of "dawn" is also there for the "sense" of it! In much the same way, I think the "tone poem" description works. As you note, there are a number of parallels to the 19th-century "tone poem" and I embrace them in this piece. However, "tone poem" in the 19th-century, as you also know, did not really denote a piece where the literary poem/program was spoken or sung. But, with the double meaning that I had in mind, I thought "tone POEM" also worked effectively. In the end, though, it is really a hybrid genre.

All that said, "tone poem" with this piece will likely be a bit mis-guided to non-musicians. Many in the general, non-musician public would not see the piece as a specific genre at all, but, instead, see it as a poem supported by music (I almost wrote "background music"!). Thankfully, you know the piece so very well and recognize its tightness of construction (effectively putting to rest any notion that it is only "a poem supported by music").

I look on all the elements of SINCE DAWN as equally important. This is perhaps the reason why it is difficult for me to envision it without orchestra. As with a motet, anthem or art song, the impetus for the piece and a large part of its soul is the poetry that is set. So, I'd personally have difficulty saying that it was a choral/narrator work accompanied by orchestra or an orchestral work that has narrator and chorus as a part of it. This, as I recall, is why "tone poem" made sense to me. It is a hybrid genre and none of the standard terms fit exactly. I hadn't thought about it until now but, perhaps, if the piece is performed with piano as its "accompaniment" the piece has more the feeling of a choral/narrator piece accompanied by an instrument. Yet, when heard with its orchestration, the sense of what it is may shift more into the realm of an equal partnership (with the narrator heard/seen even more in the role of "soloist" then).
I have always given pieces sub-titles (even if it just a designation as to its genre) following my first large orchestra piece, **PRISM OF LIFE**. Without the sub-title, you simply don't know what the piece "is". Truth is, that early '80's orchestral work is likely more a "tone poem" than is **SINCE DAWN**. But, with this many years away from its composition, I think it would be **s**enseless to tamper with it!\(^{74}\)

\(^{74}\) Dan Locklair, e-mail messages to author, June 24, 2013.
Chapter 4: Observations, Conclusions and Future Directions

Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra (1995) represents a diverse, international musical language that is inherent within the melded, cosmopolitan style and compositional techniques of composer Dan Locklair. Locklair not only employs compositional ideas and influences from the likes of Benjamin Britten, Aaron Copland and Igor Stravinsky—one American composer and two foreign composers who spent time living and teaching in the United States—in his work, but he has also been able to successfully incorporate aspects of Joseph Schwantner’s and Samuel Adler’s voices—among others—in conjunction with his own experiences as a concert organist, church musician and composer. Furthermore, as choral scholar Nick Strimple observes:

At [20th]-century’s end a rich variety of musical languages coexisted. Jazz, serialism, and minimalism were shown to be much more closely related than originally thought. Avant-garde procedures were commonplace. Impressionism reasserted itself as many composers became preoccupied with tone colors and vertical sonorities. Canon and neo-Renaissance points of imitation became the favored contrapuntal techniques as composers abandoned the tonal implications and discipline inherent in strict fugal writing. Attempts to incorporate popular music into otherwise esoteric styles were often successful, and folk music remained an almost constant inspiration.75

Aspects of nearly every one of Nick Strimple’s observations can be found within *Since Dawn*, as well as the impact of the American neo-Romantic school as espoused by David DeVenney. H. Wiley Hitchcock points out that the term “neo-Romantic”—coined by composer George Rochberg in 1963 as the “new romanticism” and later used as a broadly-encompassing term by composer Jacob Druckman around the year 1968—might also be considered synonymously with the terms “new accessibility”, “new mannerism” and/or “new tonality.” Locklair’s economical use of musical materials—although somewhat influenced by serial techniques—is based in tonal centricity and/or quasi-functional harmony; his utilization of text painting, pictorial writing and motivic transformations is artfully mannered; and his accessible writing for both voices and instruments could be considered a part of this “new (American) accessibility.” The detailed structural and musical analysis of *Since Dawn* provided in Chapter 3 shows an amicable co-existence of a number of the aforementioned compositional techniques and influences within the individual voice of Dan Locklair, a composer who cares deeply for both embedded musical meaning and metaphor in his work. As a result, *Since Dawn* is a composition that is indicative of “quality, aesthetic craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination, and authenticity.”

Locklair’s successful marriage of Maya Angelou’s words with music in his tone poem not only provides substantial material for a well-sequenced rehearsal series with both chorus and orchestra, but its poetic and historical contexts also provide an artistic-

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cultural construct that is wholly “American.” Beyond the musical, vocal and instrumental skills and/or concepts that are able to be taught and learned through *Since Dawn*, the preparation could be conceived as an interdisciplinary—or cross-disciplinary—study for students in that the work has as its basis a significant story related to United States history. *Since Dawn* is, after all, a work written by a prolific American composer who sets the text of a prominent African American, female poet, who—through her inaugural poem—provides a unique perspective regarding America’s story in metaphorical narrative. Pedagogically, Locklair’s writing for the chorus in *Since Dawn* is well conceived. He writes well for amateur and developing voices and understands what can be done successfully by intermediate-level college or university choruses. The work could also be played well by an intermediate-level college or university orchestra. An advanced high school choral and orchestral program might be able to prepare and perform *Since Dawn* as well.

Future directions for study and research related to Dan Locklair and *Since Dawn*: *A Tone Poem for Narrator Chorus and Orchestra* (1995) might include a comparative analysis of his other three orchestral tone poems *Prism of Life* (1980/81); *When Morning Stars Begin to Fall: A Tone Poem for Orchestra* (1986); and *HUES for Orchestra: Three Brief Tone Poems* (1993) alongside *Since Dawn*. His orchestral catalogue, as a whole, deserves an in-depth study as well. Another potential study might be to consider the compositional and text setting techniques employed by Dan Locklair in his secular choral works for mixed chorus, almost all of which are based on texts by North American poets:


Another potential project might be to engage a commissioning effort for the re-orchestration of *Since Dawn* itself. This would allow for reduced forces to perform the work. Dan Locklair suggests that—as an alternative to the tone poem as set for full orchestra—either an arrangement for four-hand piano and percussion, a reduced chamber orchestra version or a transcription for wind ensemble be completed. It would also be a worthwhile project to produce a professional recording of *Since Dawn* and other choral and/or orchestral works in order for Locklair’s compositions to gain a larger, national and/or world-wide audience—especially considering that the premiere performance of the piece is not allowed to be circulated due to a musicians’ union contract.

In the end, however, one must still return to leading American choral scholar, David DeVenney’s sage words, regarding music—and, particularly, American choral music—standing the test of time and cultural value judgments. Dr. DeVenney states:

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78 Dan Locklair, e-mail messages to author, February 2, 2013 & February 28, 2013.
It remains to be seen, of course, how many of these works will become staples of the repertoire, and which of them will be remembered long into the future. Among them, however, are true choral gems and inevitably a few masterworks.  

Dan Locklair is a composer who exemplifies an international and eclectic—yet American—mosaic of compositional styles. *Since Dawn: A Tone Poem for Narrator, Chorus and Orchestra* (1995) is a fine example of his compositional eclecticism indicative of “quality, aesthetic craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination, and authenticity.”  

Ultimately, *Since Dawn* might be considered by conductors and choral scholars as one of Dan Locklair’s masterworks and an American, choral/orchestral gem of accessible substance.

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79 DeVenney in Heintze, p. 377.
80 Reimer, pp. 191-200.


Whitlock, Keith W. “A Study and Performance of Two Choral/Orchestral Works of the Late Twentieth Century: Morten Lauridsen’s *Lux aeterna* and James F. Hopkins’ *Songs of Eternity*.” DMA doc., University of Southern California, 2002.