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David Amram (b. 1930) Analysis of Selected Works for Wind Band

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Ode to Lord Buckley

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DAVID AMRAM (b. 1930)

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED WORKS FOR WIND BAND

KING LEAR VARIATIONS

ANDANTE AND VARIATIONS ON A THEME FOR MACBETH

ODE TO LORD BUCKLEY

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The repertoire of the modern wind band has experienced a dramatic metamorphosis throughout the past one hundred years. With firm beginnings in the British band movement at the turn of the century with noted composers such as Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, and Percy Grainger, this unique literature has continued to expand with other composers including Darius Milhaud, Paul Hindemith, Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, and others. Among the current pioneers of notable wind music composers stands David Werner Amram (b. 1930). Spanning the past fifty years, Amram's musical output rivals that of many of his contemporaries. This composer has etched a distinctive position in the American musical culture. As the first composer-in-residence in the history of the New York Philharmonic, Amram secured his stature as one of the world's leading composers, but his background and life experiences have produced a style that is uniquely his own.

Amram's professional career includes an eclectic diversity, which encompasses working with jazz legends such as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. He has also achieved fame for his collaborations with Joseph Papp and his Shakespearean performances in New York City. In addition, he has traversed the globe as a major advocate of world music.

As a composer of opera, symphonies, concertos, chamber music, and film and television scores, David Amram has developed a style that is purely his own. His compositions are essentially tonal, occasionally dissonant, at times neo-Elizabethan, but very often infused with a distinct jazz element and other folk tendencies.

This thesis will trace these elements through an investigation of three compositions for wind band, comparing and contrasting specific traits that are unique to Amram. The titles include *King Lear Variations*, *Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth* and *Ode to Lord Buckley*.

As one source for this paper, in addition to the Sources Consulted and personal analysis, David Amram spoke with me in a one hour tape recorded session on June 1, 2009. The focus of this session included questions and discussions of various aspects of his life, philosophies, and
compositional techniques from 1967 to the present, following on his autobiography *Vibrations*, which chronicles his life from 1930-1967.

Concluding comments on this topic will discuss commonalities of these three pieces and the impact his compositions have had on the overall contribution to the repertoire of the wind band.
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CHAPTER ONE

BIOGRAPHY: EARLY YEARS

Born in Philadelphia on November 17, 1930, David Werner Amram III has experienced a life and musical career as a composer, conductor, performer, world music leader, author and collaborator. Through numerous professional experiences and personal encounters, Amram has traveled a path that has tied seemingly random events into an interesting mosaic.

After receiving a Boy Scout bugle for his sixth birthday Amram stated, “This first experience was the beginning of a lifelong addiction.” (Amram 2001, 2) Shortly after receiving this gift his mother moved with the young David and his sister, Marianna, to Pass-a-grille, Florida where Marianna had a better chance to recuperate from an illness. The following spring they moved again to a large family farm in Feasterville, Pennsylvania. This is where his father, Phillip Werner Amram, taught him to embrace, understand and appreciate the value of hard work in all aspects of life. The elder Amram had a college degree in agriculture, but also studied law while continuing his exploits as an amateur musician. “By the sweat of thy brow,” he would say, “thou shalt earn thy bread.” (Amram 2001, 9)

Of all his early influences, Amram’s Jewish background has had the greatest impact upon his personal life as well as upon his music. Growing up in rural Pennsylvania as the only Jewish student in his school was difficult. During his formative years in Feasterville, his grandfather taught him Hebrew, and his father taught him how to box, sending him to the gym so that he could begin to prepare himself to ward off anti-Semitism, mocking and general persecution. (Amram 2001, 9) These two life lessons helped to guide him through many difficult times. His father also enlightened him in both the Christian and Jewish faiths so that he could understand the difference. The elder Amram shared his view that those of the Christian faith during the
Depression needed a scapegoat for their woes, and the Jews fit the mold. The Amram family was the only family in town to own a car, for example, and subsequently seen as capitalists. Daily fights for the young Amram during recess and after school became the norm; however, this also afforded him the strength to embrace his faith. Performing music, both secular and sacred, during Passover and other Jewish services became a family tradition. Amram states, “The little bit of singing my father did when he conducted the Friday night services was to affect me very strongly when I wrote a *Friday Night Service* of my own years later.” (Amram 2001, 10)

His earliest influence in jazz occurred in the late 1930’s while listening to radio broadcasts that featured big band artists such as Harry James and Cab Calloway. The young Amram was always intrigued by the rhythmic sounds of the farmhouse heating system and would actually play and tap along with it. “This began my informal rhythmic studies and I think somehow gave me a foundation for a rhythmic sense that I never lost.” (Amram 2001, 6) David began studying piano at age seven and moved from the bugle to the trumpet at age eight.

David was also profoundly influenced by his uncle, David Amram, for whom he was named. Uncle David was a seasoned merchant marine who traversed the world with a receptive attitude to most things that he encountered. It was he who also got the young David interested in world travel, which is a path that he has pursued with vigor later in life. In addition, when David was only six years old his uncle took him to a Philadelphia Orchestra concert, and four years later to hear the Duke Ellington Orchestra. Amram summarizes his uncle’s guidance toward musical discrimination this way:

> He showed me that both jazz and European classical were great kinds of music and that both were worth a lifetime of study. (Amram 2008, 93)
In 1942 the Amram family moved to Washington D.C. While attending Gordon Junior High School he played tuba and trumpet in the band. It was during this time that he and some other kids went to a party where a local band was playing. It was a small jazz combo led by Louis Brown. When Brown saw that David had brought his trumpet he asked him to sit in for a few tunes. Amram relates, “When it was my turn for my solo and I began the first chorus, I got that sensation that has remained with me ever since whenever I play under good conditions and things are right.” (Amram 2001, 21) David clearly made a favorable impression because Brown invited him to play at an Elks Club the following week. Brown stated, “The reason I like you is you got a nice sense of rhythm. You got real good time and you don’t rush.” (Amram 2001, 22) The dance job turned out to be a complete success. Amram, as a thirteen year old white boy in an all black club, made a tremendous impression upon everyone. “This was old school of jazz, as I was to find out.” Amram said, “It gave me a foundation, an appreciation for many attitudes that helped enormously as a musician.” (Amram 2001, 24) As it turned out, this was a significant milestone in the musical development of David Amram.

The time in Washington was difficult at many levels. It was a racially charged environment and at times quite violent. David was often unsupervised, and as a consequence he frequently skipped school. However, his behavior completely changed when he graduated from junior high and enrolled at a progressive school with a strong music program in rural Vermont. At fourteen years of age, Amram was contemplating a career as a trumpet player and composer. But a decision to have braces put on his misaligned teeth partially changed this path, not as a budding composer, but as a brass player. The braces made it virtually impossible for him to produce a good sound on the trumpet. His school music teacher suggested French horn because
of the smaller mouthpiece. The gamble worked and it “opened up another world for me.”

(Amram 2001, 43)

Two years later, in the summer of 1946, David Amram had the good fortune of meeting
the venerated conductor, Dmitri Mitropoulos. Amram’s mother was a lifelong friend with a man
named Henry who was working with Mitropoulos that summer while he conducted the
Philadelphia Dell Concert Series. When he finally had two days off, Mitropoulos wanted to get
away from the music scene, so Henry suggested that they visit the Amram’s seaside home. For
two days Amram listened to Mitropoulos talk about topics in music and life. In addition,
Mitropoulos took time to look at an early score of Amram’s *Trio for Horn, Violin and Piano.*
While he did encourage him to continue his efforts in music, he suggested that Amram learn to
modulate better.

I realized that although the melodic ideas were sufficient, the use
of harmony in my piece was extremely pallid and primitive. I
realized that if I could use more harmonically interesting lines in
addition to the lines I had, it would add so much of a dimension
that there would really be something to listen to over and over
again. (Amram 2001, 49)

**EDUCATION**

After graduating from Gordon Junior High School, Amram was offered the opportunity to work
at a camp in Vermont for the summer. His musical talents were recognized during this time, and
he enrolled in the previously mentioned progressive school in the fall, which was at the same
location as the camp. He performed in the orchestra and band, organized jazz combos and
informally studied theory and composition. In addition, he assembled chamber ensembles to
perform classical music and listened to many recordings of Renaissance, Classical and Romantic
literature. After four productive years of high school, Amram was accepted by the Oberlin
College Conservatory of Music in Ohio. He had his first formal French horn instruction with Martin Morris, a member of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra. Even though Amram learned musical and life lessons while at Oberlin, after only one year he knew that he could not continue his studies in that area of the country.

I felt the precious cloistered aura of the institution was more important than the students, and the blandness of the Midwest was driving me crazy. No amount of 3.2 beer could calm me down. Most of the girls were valedictorians and militant virgins and I felt that four years there would be like a stretch in a refined reform school. It was killing my soul, so in June of 1949 I decided I couldn’t make it there anymore. (Amram 2001, 64)

Back in Washington the following fall, Amram began private instruction with William Klang, the principal French hornist of the National Symphony. This proved to be an invaluable experience but also a great connection for his future, eventually helping to secure a position for Amram as an extra horn player with the National Symphony Orchestra. David had decided that he would pursue a career in music, but that his performance and composition education would come through private instruction and not through an institutional degree. After enrolling at George Washington University he was inspired by a history professor, Dean Louis Kaiser, and subsequently declared European History as his major. Amram finally felt like a real student; learning was now a joy. (Amram 1968, 70-71)

It was during his tenure at George Washington University that Amram lived in a basement apartment and frequently had jam sessions until dawn. This was a gathering place for many musicians, artists and fans. After attending a Charlie “Bird” Parker concert one evening, David invited Parker to his place to meet people and talk about music. That one evening proved to have an immense impact on Amram as he was able to converse with the real Charlie Parker and to witness the man behind the horn.
Charlie Parker’s whole concept of music, his dedication to it and the spirit he created, influenced me as a composer as much as any other musician that I can think of. His music made me aware that every sound is related to every other sound. He was like an architect and a painter and a poet all at the same time. His attitude of an open mind and an open heart, of playing with anybody, listening to everything, trying to appreciate everything and then being able to distill all these experiences in his own way—all this affected me and a whole generation of people who were aware enough to get the message. (Amram 1968, 106)

MILITARY SERVICE

After graduating with a Bachelor’s degree in European History from George Washington University in 1952, Amram felt it was his duty to enlist in the military. When he arrived at Camp Breckenridge in Kentucky, he was able to bring one book, and he chose *Harmony* by Walter Piston. After surviving racial issues and other boot camp and band school injustices, such as the fact that this was the “New Army” and was supposedly integrated, there was an “all-Negro” National Guard Band, but the base band had an all white membership. Amram was later assigned to the 7th Army Symphony Orchestra in Stuttgart, Germany to play French horn. The orchestra’s very successful initial five-week tour led to another six-month tour crisscrossing Europe, primarily in Germany, always playing to rave reviews. It was also during this time that Amram had the opportunity to play first horn in the orchestra for a production of *The Barber of Seville*. During the rehearsals for this production David intensely studied the score and saw the relationship of the music to the set design, acting and singing.

I saw that in addition to his [Rossini’s] impeccable clarity of musical expression, he also had a true dramatic instinct. The way the opera was staged, I saw the possibilities of writing modern opera in a way where the music was of paramount importance. The atmosphere of great music and true dramatic situations eliminated the necessity of gigantic sets, opulent costumes and all the things
that I felt instinctively were such an encumbrance to most American operatic productions. (Amram 1968, 149)

Even though David Amram had a fine musical experience while in the Army, the overall structure and policies involved made it almost impossible for him and many of his fellow band mates to conform and survive in that environment. He felt suppressed with the constraints and tedium of curfew, hair style regulation, uniforms, schedule, and so forth. This suppression eventually tainted him against military service and even led him to feel like he couldn’t return to America. David stated, “The army probably trains more people into becoming adult delinquents, arsonists, rapists, homosexuals and criminals of various types than any other force in the country.” (Amram 2001, 161)

After being discharged while still in Europe in August of 1954, Amram assembled a combo of jazz musicians, mostly from the 7th Army Symphony Orchestra, to tour for a short stint throughout Europe. In December of the same year Amram moved to Paris where he would stay for nearly a year. He was happy while he was in Paris, and he immersed himself in the Parisian culture and jazz scene, stating that “... the international army of lovely girls and the food surpassed any dreams I had ever had of paradise.” (Amram 2001, 171) Amram met many well-known musicians during this time, but Edgard Varèse had the most profound impact. He saw Varèse as “... one of the true genuine avant-garde musicians of his time and a man who had a real vision in his music rather than being a phony or a sensation seeker.” (Amram 2001, 181) In a certain sense Varèse reminded Amram of Mitropoulos in that Varèse was knowledgeable in traditional European classical music, but also American jazz and many things new and experimental such as the use of percussion and electronics. Amram admired Varèse because he maintained an open mind and was receptive to most views. There is no doubt that this is how
David Amram has continued to lead his life. He also made his first commercial recording playing jazz French horn with Lionel Hampton while he was in Paris. But after long discussions with several of his closest friends, David decided “... to go back to America, study composition ... and become a new man.” (Amram 2001, 209)

Amram returned to the United States in 1955 where he wanted to “... restudy theory, harmony, counterpoint, [and] orchestration.” (Amram 2001, 221) He enrolled in the Manhattan School of Music and began composition studies with Vittorio Giannini and Ludmila Ulehla. Gunther Schuller also coached his woodwind quintet and taught him horn lessons. At the same time he was soon performing with a virtual “who’s who” in jazz from the 1950’s. Amram either toured with or jammed with the likes of Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, Max Roach, Oscar Pettiford, Art Farmer, Lionel Hampton and others. However, his main problem throughout this period was a lack of funding. Collecting his GI payments was difficult, and he wasn’t yet making money from composition. After one year at the Manhattan School of Music he was out of money and had to drop out of school. Although David wanted to attend for four years, he realized that he didn’t need a formal music education for motivation to compose.

**SIGNIFICANT COMPOSITIONAL MILESTONES**

David Amram went on to achieve success in a variety of genres, but one of his first accomplishments was on Broadway writing incidental music for *Comes a Day* starring George C. Scott and Judith Anderson in November of 1958. This was a feat, considering Amram had only been to one Broadway musical which was *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein. Due to the success of *Comes a Day* he soon received a call from the noted director Elia Kazan to work on
his play, *J.B.* Amram’s compositions were being noticed by more people in important positions, and this was beginning to pay off. David said, “I was being paid more for working on *J.B.* than all the other composing I had done in my life put together, and was even going to get $25 royalty for each week that the play ran.” (Amram 2001, 305) This play, premiering in December 1958 and starring Christopher Plummer, would go on to win the Pulitzer Prize and run for an entire year. (Amram 2008, 133)

By this point in his life, David Amram had made innumerable connections in the jazz scene and on Broadway that led him down various paths. In 1961 he was offered the opportunity to work on two feature length films; *The Young Savages* directed by John Frankenheimer and starring Burt Lancaster, and the Oscar winning *Splendor in the Grass* directed by Elia Kazan and featuring Natalie Wood and Warren Beatty. The following year he wrote the music for the *The Manchurian Candidate*, once again directed by Frankenheimer with Frank Sinatra as the lead. Even though Amram has written many more television and film scores, his final major Hollywood film project was writing the score in 1969 for *The Arrangement* directed by Elia Kazan with actors Kirk Douglas and Faye Dunaway. Amram describes his approach to writing film scores as follows:

> What I did was I watched the film and instinctively followed where it seemed that music could enhance the musicality that was already there. I always used the two precious maxims ‘Less is More,’ and ‘When In doubt Leave It Out.’ (McAvoy 2005, 2)

With over one hundred scores for orchestra and chamber ensembles to his credit, Amram knew early in his professional career that he would write a great deal in this genre. “Each week the new programs at the [New York] Philharmonic renewed my faith in the symphony orchestra
as a form of communication unparalleled in music.” (Amram 2001, 458) In 1959 conductor John Perras and the Washington Square Chamber Orchestra in New York performed Amram’s *Autobiography for Strings*. This was the first time his orchestral music was performed by professional musicians. In 1960 Perras performed Amram’s *Overture and Allegro for Unaccompanied Flute* at Carnegie Recital Hall “…and even got a good review in *The New York Times.*” (Amram 2001, 349) *Shakespearean Concerto* for oboe, two horns and strings was also composed and performed at this time. This was the piece that Amram later used for his conducting debut with in Corpus Christi, Texas. In 1961 David turned to his Jewish roots and composed *Sacred Service for Sabbath Eve* (Shir l’Erev Shabbat) with much inspiration coming from his youth and his father’s Friday evening services. Amram made his New York Carnegie Hall conducting debut with that piece in 1967.

1967 continued to be a memorable year. As the first-ever composer-in-residence with the New York Philharmonic, Amram was informed by Leonard Bernstein that he wanted to program one of his pieces on March 23, 24 and 27. The result was a performance of his *King Lear Variations for Wind Orchestra and Percussion*.

The performance was broadcast and heard all over the country. I sat there hypnotized. The Philharmonic played so beautifully that I heard all kinds of things in the piece I had forgotten about. (Amram 2001, 463)

This piece has become a significant milestone of the modern day wind band repertoire.

Amram continued to compose at a steady pace for the next several years. In 1976 he was commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra to write *Trail of Beauty*, which was inspired by Amram’s passion for the music of Native Americans.
As I was orchestrating the second movement and in a kind of trance, hearing the actual sounds of Lakota singers and drummers in my head, and trying to match those sounds with symphonic instruments… (Amram 2008, 112)

After its premiere, the composer wrote many more pieces based on original Native American themes.

During the 1980’s Amram’s output continued to grow, including the creation of two pieces selected for this document; Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth and Ode to Lord Buckley. One of Amram’s more recent compositions was commissioned by the international flute virtuoso, Sir James Galway. Giants of the Night, written and premiered in 2002 by Galway, is a three movement work dedicated to Charlie Parker, Jack Kerouac and Dizzy Gillespie, three individuals he worked with and admired throughout his adult life.

Amram ventured into the world of opera two times in his career and with both received critical acclaim. He had worked on The Twelfth Night with Joseph Papp for several years early in the 1960’s, but the score remained incomplete until 1968. It was that experience, however, that helped him write the music for The Final Ingredient. The ABC television network had commissioned and broadcast this production in 1965. It is a story of the holocaust and a group of concentration camp prisoners who went outside the barbed-wire fence to get the egg inside of a bird’s nest. This egg would be the final ingredient for the secret Passover service to be conducted inside the walls of the camp.

I worked on the average of fourteen hours a day. I found that there were a few central themes I was able to draw upon, over and over again. By combining them with other themes, it seemed to give the work a cohesive structure dramatically as well as musically. This simplest of compositional devices helped to tie the whole opera together. . . . The music, the dramatic story, the singers and the general shape and structure of the work were the message. (Amram 2001, 428)
Of his overall compositional technique Amram offers the following:

So, because of the fact that I had been brought up loving Bach and the Brandenburg Concertos, and Bix Beiderbecke and Louis Armstrong and all the jazz masters…. and then in 1949 or 1950 when I heard a record called Birth of the Cool, and I heard those extraordinary compositions and arrangements using all those sophisticated harmonies and wonderful colorings, it reinforced the fact that because I loved Stravinsky’s Firebird and Berlioz’s Roman Carnival Overture and the Brahms Horn Trio, and Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn and Dvorak, and all the pre-Bach composers from Machaut through Palestrina all the way up to Bach, that melody, harmony and counterpoint were not as dead as I was informed they were. That I didn’t have to be a 12-tone composer in order to justify being alive. I figured there were already enough people doing that, and it was clear to me that Arnold Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, coming along when they did, and the symphonies had gotten so gigantic, especially the ones by Bruckner and Mahler, some of them over an hour long, which are wonderful pieces; and all of the incredible stuff that Richard Strauss did, and of course, Wagner’s music that went on forever and slid all over the place, that they [Schoenberg/Berg/Weber] were just saying let’s just clean the slate and start all over again and kind of created a fresh page, in a society that was saturated with all that beautiful music, and a sophisticated society that wanted to hear something else. When I studied La Bohème, way back when, I saw the phenomenal orchestration of Puccini, and the amazing coloristic and emotional feelings that he had…. But I chose to follow my heart and write what I feel and what sounds good to me. And I didn’t want to copy any of those composers that I have mentioned, I was just inspired by them. I certainly didn’t want to copy what Schoenberg, Webern and Berg had done, and I honestly feel that the last they would have ever have wanted was to have people copy them. As some would say ‘Achtung! This is the only way to write music!’ Rather, they were individualists expressing what they felt…. So ultimately, every single thing that I write in the end is done by instinct and feeling, and what seems to be right. (Amram Interview, 2009)
CHAPTER TWO

PROFESSIONAL CAREER

PERFORMER

David Amram has had a diverse performance career spanning the past sixty years. “A pioneer player of jazz French horn, he is also a virtuoso on piano, numerous flutes and whistles, percussion, and dozens of folkloric instruments from 25 countries, as well as an inventive, funny improvisation lyricist.” (Amram Biography, 1)

As previously mentioned, Amram’s first paying job was with the Louis Brown Jazz Band. Even though he was only paid one dollar, the young thirteen-year-old found inspiration that has lasted a lifetime. After horn study with William Klang, his next teacher was the new principal horn player of the National Symphony Orchestra, Abe Kniaz. Following Kniaz’s advice, David played with as many amateur orchestras as possible. As a result he performed regularly with the Arlington Symphony, the Department of Agriculture’s Symphony Orchestra, The Washington Civic Symphony and various chamber groups. It all paid off for him as he became a regular substitute with the National Symphony Orchestra during the 1951-52 season.

Soon after his debut recording session in 1955 with Lionel Hampton in Paris, Amram moved to the Lower East Side of Manhattan where he was performing and jamming regularly with many jazz artists, but in particular with Charlie Mingus. Through that association he started his own jazz combo with tenor saxophonist George Barrow. They went on to perform and record for many years, most notably in 1957 when Amram’s quartet was hired for an eleven week stint at the Five Spot in New York City.
The honor of being among the first musicians to play jazz in the Five Spot belongs to the David Amram-George Barrow group, to Cecil Taylor’s quartet with Steve Lacy, to Randy Weston, and to Charlie Mingus. By that time, the future had clearly been decided, and this small East-Side bar was a going New York jazz club. (Williams 1992, 92-93)

ASSOCIATION WITH JOSEPH PAPP

David Amram’s work with Joseph Papp for free Shakespearean productions in New York City is known to many New Yorkers and other ardent followers. Although various sources report a differing number, Amram told the Boston Globe in 1999, “I’ve also written music for 31 Shakespearean productions in Central Park…” (Blumenthal, Boston Globe) With very modest beginnings in the mid 1950’s, Papp asked Amram to compose the music for Titus Andronicus. There was no budget for musicians or actors, but Amram was able to convince friends from the Manhattan School of Music to record his music for this production pro bono. Amram states, “Writing for Shakespeare in the Park from 1957–1967 I would have very few instruments, maybe a flute, viola and bassoon to do one session, then we could have something with a trumpet, French horn and trombone to do another one, and then sometimes we would have three or four strings, so essentially I had to learn to write things that were short, to the point, which were playable, which created some kind of an emotional feeling so that when they were in the context of a Shakespeare play but wouldn’t drive the actors out of their mind while on the stage, or drive the audience to their exit.” (Amram Interview, 2009) His personal approach to writing music for these productions proved to be a success, and the project grew every summer. In 1957 the city granted Papp a site in Central Park, and in 1961 he secured funds for an amphitheater to
be built, which is known as the Delacorte Theater. The first performance in the new venue in 1962 featured George C. Scott and James Earl Jones in *The Merchant of Venice*.

Although it took four to five years to write this two act opera, *The Twelfth Night* would be one of Amram’s greatest triumphs of the 1960’s. He had previously written music for the play when it ran in Central Park. Amram and Papp thought that it could be a great opera.

Joe Papp said he would like to adapt the libretto and we agreed that we would cut the play but use only Shakespeare’s words. We thought we could use some of the music I had written for the Central Park production as a basis. (Amram 2001, 299)

After years of effort the opera was given its premiere at the Lake George Opera Festival in upstate New York on August 1, 1968, and has been a part of the opera repertoire ever since.

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**

In early 1966 Amram was not receiving any commissions or other offers that he had been experiencing, like those he had received for his work on Broadway. Consequently he was strained financially and felt that he had to turn elsewhere. He received a job offer to teach composition at a music conservatory, but after contemplating this possibility for a while he decided that, “Everything I could say to music students could be boiled down to an hour or two then they could ask questions just as Mitropoulos had done when he spoke to young people.” (Amram 2001, 451) As a result of this conviction he turned the job down and decided to train to become a bartender. This way he could still make some money and would be able to compose during his free time. Shortly after this decision Amram heard from the Rockefeller Foundation that Leonard Bernstein was interested in his compositions. In September 1966 it was announced that David Amram would be the first composer-in-residence with the New York Philharmonic.
for the 1966-67 concert season. Every day that year was a new learning experience for Amram as he observed and conversed with Bernstein, the assistant conductors, and the musicians.

[ Bernstein] had a chance to look at some more of my music and gave me many helpful suggestions, criticisms and, most of all, encouragement. . . . I found as I studied the scores of the masters that when I looked at them now at the age of thirty-six instead of as a teenager, I could see them in a completely new light. Having composed a great deal of music myself, I could look at these scores and hear them in a completely fresh way. (Amram 2001, 459)

As previously mentioned, this is the year that the New York Philharmonic performed his King Lear Variations for Wind Orchestra and Percussion to significant acclaim.

COMPOSER-AT-LARGE

As a professional musician, David Amram has had abundant experience in composing, performing and conducting, but he has never been associated with one particular job. He has been able to remain independent and has had the good fortune of securing a succession of varied employment opportunities. For more than fifty years Amram has been composing music, and much of that has been from either a specific commission or during a residency at an institution or other venues. A recent example includes being the composer-in-residence for the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado. In May 2009 he was invited to compose and perform for Pete Seeger’s 90th birthday party at Madison Square Garden in New York City alongside many current stars such as Bruce Springsteen, Dave Matthews, John Melloncamp, Emmy Lou Harris, Joan Baez, Kris Kristofferson and dozens more. Whether in classical, pop, folk, jazz or world music, David Amram has been associated with the most elite performers of their genre. Yet along the way he has remained humble, focused and dedicated to his art. At David’s 70th birthday party Winton Marsalis summarized him this way:
“[Mr. Amram is] one of the courageous – at the forefront of combating prejudice, ignorance and elitism.” (Shattuck 2000, 2)

Although he is nearly 80 years old, David Amram shows no signs that he is interested in retirement.
CHAPTER THREE
MULTI-DIMENSIONAL OUTPUT IN A VARIETY OF GENRES

David Amram has an impressive list of compositions that includes classical, jazz, vocal, Broadway Theater, film, movies, and world music pieces. To accomplish all of this he has written and continues to write for orchestra, wind band, choir, jazz combo, and chamber ensembles. The following is a sample of some of his important works (Amram, Internet Home Page):

**ORCHESTRA**

*Across The Wide Missouri* (1984)

*American Dance Suite* (1986)

*Autobiography for Strings* (1959)

*Bassoon Concerto* (1972)

*Concerto for Horn and Orchestra* (1966)

*Concerto for Jazz Quintet and Orchestra* (1971)

*Concert for oboe, two horns and strings* (1990)

*Elegy* (1970)

*En Memoria de Chano Pozo* (1977)

*Giants of the Night* (2002)

*Kokopelli, A Symphony In Three Movements for Orchestra* (1996)

*Honor Song for Sitting Bull* (1983)

*Ode to Lord Buckley* (1980)

*Shakespearean Concerto for Oboe, two horns and strings* (1960)

*The Trail of Beauty for Mezzo-Soprano, oboe and orchestra* (1976)
Triple Concerto (1970)

Violin Concerto (1980)

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA


Shakespearean Concerto (1959)

Theme and Variations on Red River Valley (1976)

BAND

Andante and Variations on a Theme from Macbeth (1984)

En Memoria de Chano Pozo (1977)

King Lear Variations (1967)

Ode to Lord Buckley (1982)

CHAMBER MUSIC

Dances for Oboe and Strings (1966)

Dirge and Variations (1962)

Violin, Violoncello and Piano

Discussions (1961)

Flute, Violoncello, Percussion and Piano

Native American Portraits (1976)

Violin, Piano and Percussion

Overture and Allegro (1959)

Flute Solo
Quintet for Winds (1969)
   Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon

Sonata for Violin and Piano (1964)

String Quartet (1961)

Three Songs for Marlboro (1961)
   Horn and Violoncello

Trio (1958)
   Tenor Saxophone, Horn and Bassoon

Triptych for Solo Viola (1969)

The Wind and the Rain for Viola and Piano (1963)

Wind Quintet (1968)

Zohar (1978)
   Alto Recorder (Flute)

VOCAL

Five Shakespeare Songs (1972)
   Voice and Piano

Four Shakespeare Songs (1986)
   High Voice and Piano

Three Shakespeare Songs (1968)
   Bass (Baritone) Voice and Piano

Three Songs for America (1969)
   Bass Voice, Wind Quintet and String Quintet

CHORAL

By the Rivers of Babylon (1966)
   Soprano Solo, SSAA a cappella

Friday Evening Service (Shir L’Erev Shabbat) (1961)
   Tenor Solo, SATB, Organ
Three Songs for Young People (1969)
Voices (1-3 parts), Percussion (4)

Two Anthems (1964)
Mixed Voices a cappella

CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA
A Year in Our Land (1964)
The American Bell (1962)
Let Us Remember (1965)

OPERA
The Final Ingredient (1965)
Twelfth Night (1968)

MOVIE SCORES
The Arrangement (1969)
The Manchurian Candidate (1962)
Splendor in the Grass (1961)
The Young Savages (1961)

JAZZ
Brazilian Memories (CD release 1997)
Going North (CD release 1997)
Pull My Daisy (1958)
São Paulo (CD release 1997)
Tompkins Square Park Consciousness Expander (CD release 1997)

Waltz from After the Fall (CD release 1997)

Wind from the Indies (CD release 1997)

This is not an exhaustive list, but it is certainly representative and proof of the diversity that David Amram has displayed through his compositions. To confirm his own attitude regarding the value of all kinds of music Amram stated in 1997:

Now it’s nice to see at the end of the century with the embrace of multiculturalism, we find that Columbus was right: The world isn’t flat. My feeling is that the more you can appreciate all of these kinds of wonderful music, it makes Beethoven, Mozart and Brahms sound a lot more beautiful. We can listen with a bigger heart. (Rosenberg 1997, 2)
CHAPTER FOUR
INFLUENCES ON HIS PERSONAL STYLE

JAZZ COMMUNITY

As previously mentioned, David Amram was profoundly affected by a concert featuring the Duke Ellington Orchestra performing in Philadelphia when he was a young boy. It was his uncle David who had taught him that both jazz and classical styles were equally worthy of his attention. When Amram at thirteen years of age, performed with Louis Brown his musical life took a new path. Since that time he has performed with and composed for many of the most distinguished international jazz artists spanning from the 1950’s to the present. This impressive list of jazz colleagues includes Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonius Monk, Oscar Pettiford, Tommy Flanagan, Art Farmer, Stan Getz, Lionel Hampton, Don Byas, Ornette Coleman, Nat Adderley, Chet Baker, Clifford Brown, Max Roach, Earl Hines, and more contemporary artists such as Arturo Sandoval, Paquito D’ Rivera, Clark Terry and countless others.

Even though his time at Oberlin was short-lived, he did meet numerous students and faculty who were interested in jazz. In particular, fellow student and jazz flutist Paul Horn opened Amram’s eyes to the connection of present and past performers. For example, he learned that Charlie Parker was a musical descendant from players such as Coleman Hawkins, Don Byas and especially Lester Young. It was also Horn who introduced Amram to Darius Milhaud’s jazz influenced piece, La Création du monde.

While we both agreed it was a marvelous composition, it was really more of an attempt to graft one kind of music to another, rather than something really organic. We both felt that you can’t use jazz in a composition unless it’s really a natural part of you. (Amram 2001, 63)
It is generally agreed by jazz enthusiasts that Charlie Parker contributed many musical innovations to the jazz world. But it was conversations that Amram had with Parker in 1952, particularly in his basement apartment that would leave a significant impact on David with regards to his being open-minded and accepting of all kinds of music. As an example, and apart from jazz, Parker talked a great deal about classical music, especially of Stravinsky, Bartók and Delius, the latter as a true orchestral innovator. In reviewing Amram’s life it is clear that Amram espoused Parker’s philosophy and has welcomed any and all kinds of music from around the world.

Meeting and playing with Dizzy Gillespie during this same time period would eventually lead to an impressive adventure. In 1977, under President Carter and the State Department, Amram, Gillespie, Earl Hines, and Stan Getz were the first U.S. representatives to perform in Cuba since 1961. Together with other American tourists, their jazz quartet traveled “. . . from New Orleans to Havana to give a goodwill concert as a first step towards finding a rapprochement between the two countries.” (Amram 2008, 84) Refusing to follow the expected protocol and itinerary, Amram led impromptu jam sessions whenever the opportunity arose. In fact, immediately after they docked and cleared customs, the first of many improvised sessions began.

Organizing some of the youths into a clap-along-in-rhythm group, [Amram] pulled a small fife out of a bag and played a jaunty solo, then produced a second fife and played them both at once as the crowd responded with roars of approval. (Feather Passion, 39)

While still in Cuba, Amram composed En Memoria de Chano Pozo. It was dedicated to the late Chano Pozo who was the great Cuban drummer and singer with Gillespie’s band for many years.
In 1952 Amram entered the Army and was stationed in Kentucky at Camp Breckenridge. This is where he met Maceo Hampton, the cousin of Lionel Hampton. Maceo would teach David a new method of voicing simple chords, with the third and seventh doubled, allowing for easier fingerings.

With this extremely simple device, I was able to spend hours figuring out my own ways of voicing chords. Maceo’s lesson gave me a whole new way of using tonal harmony as a point of departure for my composing as well as playing. (Amram 2001, 115)

After his stint in Paris following his service in the Army, Amram relocated to the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Within a few days of being back in the United States he met the legendary bass player, Charlie Mingus. Without even auditioning Amram, Mingus offered him a job playing in his quartet at the Bohemia Club. During this time Amram played all night and went to the Manhattan School of Music during the day. The affiliation with Mingus ultimately linked Amram to George Barrow, who was Mingus’ tenor player. They soon formed their own quartet that lasted for decades. The influence of these and other jazz experiences have continued to make their way into the fabric of Amram’s compositions throughout his entire professional career.

JACK KEROUAC

Jack Kerouac first met Amram at the Five Spot where Amram’s quartet had been playing. Kerouac was fascinated by Amram’s jazz French horn playing and recognized the possibilities of fusing jazz and improvised poetry. The two became close friends and two of the cornerstones of the Beat generation along with Alan Ginsberg, Gregory Corso and Peter Orlovsky. In December 1957 an historic event transpired at the Brada Art Gallery on East 10th Street in Manhattan. It
became known as the first jazz-poetry readings in New York City. Kerouac, along with other poets, read their poetry and Amram improvised along with them, complimenting the words and fusing his music with their poetry.

Amram read over the poems first and marked places for musical interpolations; then he’d perform the kind of music that suited the material – pop, blues, jazz, neo-classical, Renaissance, or even “modal music” to give a feeling of rainfall, the ocean, Route 66, or Iowa cornfields. (Amburn 1998, 287)

Even though the readings were not advertised, the gallery was packed. This led to many more successful reading sessions around the city. Others soon joined in this movement and it eventually became too commercial for Amram, leading him and others to an underground approach in private settings in the homes of close friends. Although this new art form only lasted a couple of years, it has had a lasting impact on both the literary and musical world as it still appears in the curriculum of some colleges and universities.

The improvisational approach to these readings would spawn an even larger project. In 1959 producer Alfred Leslie filmed the now classic independent film, *Pull My Daisy*. With director Robert Frank, Leslie put together a cast of artists including Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Peter Orlovsky, David Amram, Richard Bellamy, Alice Neel, and the only “real” actor in the group, Delphine Seyrig. Everything about this film was nonconventional, snubbing the Hollywood approach. Corso explained, “This is supposed to be real and poetic, beautiful and soulful, not that show business bullshit.” (McNally 2003, 263) After shooting more than thirty hours of film over the course of several days, it was then edited down to 28 minutes. After that task was completed it was Amram’s turn to write the music for the film, and for Kerouac to spontaneously recite a narrative that would be overdubbed on the silent film. The title track, *Pull My Daisy*, was written by Amram and set to lyrics that Ginsberg, Kerouac and Neal Cassady had
written in 1949. Beyond Amram’s jazz quartet, he also utilized alto saxophone, English horn, baritone saxophone, viola, contrabass and bassoon. The lyrics for the title song are as follows:

Pull my daisy
Tip my cup
All my doors are open

Cut my thoughts for
Coconuts
All my eggs are broken

Hop my heart son
Harp my height
Seraphs hold me steady

Hip my angel
Hype my light
Lay it on the needy

Throughout history, experimental films have experienced short lifespan and *Pull My Daisy* was no exception, initially only having a few bookings before being shelved. But like many of Kerouac’s works, *Pull My Daisy* has survived long after his death and has attained an almost cult-like status. It pained Amram that Kerouac’s genius would not be recognized until after his death. “It killed him that his books were just being ignored and being tossed off as inconsequential,” recalled David Amram. (Amburn 1998, 285) But in due time, Kerouac, during the last few years of his life, was considered a great literary artist. Dr. Audrey Sprenger, a Canadian sociologist who teaches at the University of Denver “. . . felt that what Kerouac chronicled, as well as what so many other artists and visionaries of the period created, was now considered by many to be work of enduring value which seems more alive and meaningful today than ever before.” (Amram 2008, 246)

It is known to many that Jack Kerouac had a serious drinking problem, eventually dying from liver disease in 1969 at the age of forty-seven. But before he passed away, Kerouac left the
literary world a vast amount of writings, not the least of which was *On the Road*. This book chronicled the author’s travels with Neal Cassady across North America and Mexico. Further evidence of its popularity occurred in 2001 when the owner of the National Football League Indianapolis Colts, James Irsay, purchased the original *On the Road* scroll for $2.4 million dollars, the highest price ever paid for a literary document according to some sources. Irsay has continued to support the literary influence of this book by having the scroll viewed in public settings in many cities across the United States. In addition, public readings of *On the Road* still happen today in numerous libraries, coffee shops and book stores throughout America with David Amram sometimes in attendance and participating.

It is important to note that the original cast of characters who created the “Beat” generation did not completely agree with that term or what it came to represent. Amram states:

. . . . Kerouac always told me that he felt Beat was about the search for the spiritual and the practice of Beatitude, but that eventually Beat became eclipsed by the derogatory word, beatnik, after *On the Road* was published. With the book’s enormous popularity, the “beatnick,” and eventually the word “Beat” itself, both became pop-culture merchandising terms, used in a derogatory way to stereotype a new generation of artists and visionaries as nothing more than a bunch of untalented, infantile, whining, self-loathing blameologists and worthless losers, whose only value to society was to spawn sales of berets, bongos, paste-on goatees, and dark glasses, even though in all the pictures of us, none of the original “Beats” ever looked like beatniks, or any other group who all wore matching uniforms. (Amram 2008, 256-257)

**WORLD CULTURE**

It has been stated many times in many sources that David Amram was multicultural before there was multicultural. But it was probably stated best in 1997 by music critic Donald Rosenberg saying, “Multiculturalism was part of Amram’s artistic consciousness long before the term was coined.” (Rosenberg 1997, 1) Beyond his mastery of the French horn and piano, Amram is
accomplished on dozens of instruments from over twenty-five countries from around the world, including African talking drums, dumbeks, wooden flutes and ocarinas, pennywhistles, shanai, shofar, and many more. One of the important aspects that define his approach to writing for world instruments is that he feels he has to go to the region and get to know the people. In addition, he strives to understand and speak their language, and when he has accomplished this he will then skillfully learn to play the indigenous instruments. It is at this point that he will actually compose music representing a different culture. Amram has stated:

A lot of anthropological ethnomusicologists . . . really don’t spend a lifetime hanging out with the people who create that music so they can sing, dance, play and eventually notate the music correctly. What you do is humble yourself each time you sit down to the situation, as if you were 5 years old and you were saying A, B, C, Run, Spot, Run. (Loerzel 2002, 2)

Before and after the aforementioned trip to Cuba in 1977, Amram has traversed the world covering more than twenty-five different countries over several decades. His first trip to Nairobi, Kenya, in 1975 proved to be a success, but just how his life experiences intersect even perplexes Amram himself.

Like so many of the other highlights of my life, this first trip to Africa happened as the result of a combination of good luck and the random twist and turns of chance happenings. I doubt that any career counselor, guru, or astrologer could have ever predicted that any or all these events could have possibly ever led to anything of value. (Amram 2008, 45)

Prior to the Kenya trip Amram was playing weekly jazz vespers at a small church in Manhattan. John Taylor was in attendance and loved the approach of Amram. In a venue like that it often included playing and jamming, short lectures with questions and answers, and culminated with full audience participation. At that time the World Council of Churches employed John Taylor as their guide to help find creative musicians and speakers for their
events. The 1975 conference in Kenya included participants from more than one hundred different countries, and as expected, when Taylor offered Amram a spot to be the musical headliner, he accepted. Amram concluded the conference with a two-and-a-half hour program with everyone on their feet participating by singing and dancing. Programs of this nature remind him of his musical course in life. “This is why I was going to Africa, instead of actually living in Hollywood and writing a score to accompany films about Africa . . . I realized how lucky I was to be able to still try and pursue my dreams.” (Amram 2008, 50) Since that trip Amram has been funded to inspire people in North America, Central America, Europe, the Middle East, and many other corners of the globe.

For more than twenty years David Amram has also been exploring the music and art of Native Americans. It is the principles by which they lead their lives that have inspired him to compose in this style. Amram stated, “Many Native Americans have a motto: ‘Respect, Love, and Sharing.’ That’s all you need to know to make music anywhere with anyone. You just put that into action.” (Amram 2008, 2) His collaborations and performances with Floyd Red Crow Westerman have inspired him to compose music that is true to the Native American culture. In 1976 Amram composed two works that relied heavily on Native American traditions. Native American Portraits for violin, piano and percussion and Trail of Beauty for mezzo-soprano, oboe solo and orchestra both freely employ motifs of Native American musical heritage. Honor Song for Sitting Bull was written in 1983 as a cello concerto that was based on a traditional Sioux melody. Composed in 1996, Kokopelli is a major three movement symphonic work. Amram describes the composition as follows:

Kokopelli, the magical spirit widely known among the Pueblo peoples, is always depicted as a flutist, carrying a sack of seeds on his back. Leslie Silko, the award winning Laguna poet, told me her people feel that Kokopelli’s symbolic planting of the seeds
represents the spreading of the life force, giving joy, hope and energy to everyone when he plays his flute. (Amram 2008, 123)

Consistent with his multicultural approach, the first movement is *Lene Tawi* (*Flute Song* in the Hopi language), movement two is *Mizmor Kaddum* (*Song of Antiquiry* in the Hebrew language), and the third movement is *Danza del Mundo* (*Dance of the World* in the Spanish language). Amram’s humility with regards to his respect and reverence for Native Americans and their many cultures was evident when he said, “I hope that my work can be a small thank you for the privilege of living in this beautiful Indian land we call the continent of the Americas.” (Amram 2008, 132)

It is no surprise that David Amram has also immersed himself into the American pop and folk music scene. Even though he has engaged in jam sessions for the sole purpose of creating music, he often has appeared with other musicians where ‘service to others’ is the goal. Because Amram grew up on a small farm in Feasterville, Pennsylvania, and because he manages his own farm in upstate New York today, he has developed a tremendous appreciation for the plight of small town farmers across the nation. As a result of his conviction and dedication, he has joined forces many times with numerous artists to raise awareness for a number of causes. Since 1987, for example, Amram and other celebrities have joined with Willie Nelson and his Farm Aid benefit concerts in raising funds and creating support throughout the United States for the small farm style of life that is often in peril.

Regarding American folk music, Amram has continued since the 1960’s to the present to perform and jam with international super stars such as Pete Seeger, Woodie and Arlo Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Lyle Lovett, Peter Yarrow, Neil Young and even current movie star and amateur musician Johnnie Depp. Newspaper writer, Jose Pagliery states succinctly, “With his long list of
historically profound association, Amram calls himself an ‘advocate for the arts and ambassador for culture.’” (Pagliery 2008, 2)

Given all of David Amram’s unique life experiences involving the jazz community, the literary world and multiculturalism, it is his personal philosophy and coined phrase, “University of Hangoutology,” that best sums up his approach. He has lived his life by absorbing everything he encounters and then transforming these experiences into his own unique spirit and sound.
CHAPTER FIVE
ANALYSIS OF THREE MUSICAL SCORES

King Lear Variations
Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth
Ode to Lord Buckley

KING LEAR VARIATIONS

King Lear Variations was commissioned and premiered by Robert Austin Boudreau and the American Wind Symphony Orchestra (AWSO) in 1966 and subsequently published in 1967. This piece received its national radio broadcast performance with members of the New York Philharmonic on March 23, 1967 with Sylvia Caduff conducting.

Instrumentation for this piece is not like that of other “standard” wind band literature. Amram’s intentions were to use the different choirs of wind and percussion instruments both as families and as soloists to explore variation form. The orchestration reflects that of an expanded orchestral wind and percussion section. The score calls for the following thirty-seven musicians:

4 Flutes (2, 3 and 4 double on piccolos; 3 and 4 Alto Flutes if possible)
4 Oboes (3 and 4 double on English Horns)
4 Clarinets (3 and 4 double on Bass Clarinets)
4 Bassoons (4 doubles on Contrabassoon)
6 Horns in F
4 Trumpets in Bb
4 Trombones
Tuba
Timpani
Percussion (5 players on 21 different instruments: Snare Drum, Field Drum, Bass Drum, Conga Drum, Crash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal, Finger Cymbal, Sock Cymbals, Tom-Toms, Bongos, Gourd, Triangle, Cow Bell, Tambourine, Chinese Gong, Xylophone, Vibraphone, Tubular Chimes, Wood Block, Glockenspiel, Marimba)
The number of each of the instruments listed above sets it apart from other wind band works. The American Wind Symphony Orchestra’s original instrumentation included the following: 6 flutes, 2 piccolos, 6 oboes, 2 English horns, 6 clarinets, 2 bass clarinets, 6 bassoons, 2 contrabassoons, 6 French horns, 6 trumpets, 6 trombones, 2 tubas, percussion, harp, keyboards and string bass. (Battisti 1995, 18) This expanded wind and percussion instrumentation provides composers with a varied musical palette from which to choose tonal colors. However, it is reasonable to assume that not all ensembles will have access to alto flutes, for example; therefore, Amram wrote the range to be accessible for the C flute as an option. In addition Amram states, “I also wrote for two English horns, which I would never do again. But that was their [AWSO] instrumentation, so I figured that I would honor the orchestra by writing for what they had.” (Amram Interview, 2009) Other than issues of that nature, the instruments chosen are standard, including trumpets and clarinets in Bb, for example. The tessitura for each of the instruments is generally accessible with a few notable exceptions. Based on the system that connotes middle C as C4, the ranges for each of the primary instruments are as follows (transposed pitch where applicable):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>B₃ – A₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oboe</td>
<td>B₃ – F₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinet</td>
<td>E₃ – G♭₆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassoon</td>
<td>C₂ – C₅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horn</td>
<td>B₂ – G♯₅ (majority of the notes are C₄ – G₅ with ample doublings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>B₃ – C₆ (mostly within 1 ½ octaves of C₄)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombone</td>
<td>E₁ – F₄ (E₁ is only Trombone 4 in Variation 6, otherwise it is a moderate range as with the trumpets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuba</td>
<td>D₁ – G₃ (D₁ only occurs in Variation 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timpani</td>
<td>8 different pitches, 12 including octaves. Variation 5 is the most difficult regarding tunings, requiring 10 different pitches and a controlled glissando.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The composer maintained a balance of usage of each instrument with a few exceptions.

This piece has an Introduction/Theme, followed by six variations and a Finale for a total of eight...
movements. For example, the following instruments were used exclusively in four movements: flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, trumpet, trombone, trombone, tuba and contrabassoon. The bass clarinet and English horn appear in three movements, the piccolo and piano in two movements (with the piano only playing the last note of the Finale), and the alto flute is called on only one time. However, the three instruments that perform in a total of five movements include the bassoon, timpani, and snare drum, and Amram chose that trio to introduce the theme by which the entire composition is based. It is the different combinations of instruments from which Amram was able to create the varying and interesting tone colors of this piece.

The main theme created for this piece was taken from a song that Amram had composed in 1961 for a Joseph Papp production of the same title. (*King Lear Variations* 1967, score notes) Initially the timpani present a skeletal framework of the theme and tonal direction, which is centered on E minor. An overall chordal progression of i-iv-V-i is implied. A minimalistic snare drum part is also added for color and suspense.

Example I – 1

*King Lear Variations*, Introduction, mm. 1-8

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This material is followed by the bassoon stating the theme in its entirety.

Example I – 2  
*King Lear Variations*, Introduction, mm. 9-26


Three measures after rehearsal 2 of the previous example outlines a B major tonality, which serves as a colorful alternate dominant V chord function in E minor over a pedal E and B respectively. The final cadence of the theme resolves on the large beat two, the weak beat, by the timpani. As will be shown, this is a cadential proclivity of the composer.

The linear progression of the main theme is largely conjunct, with the widest interval being a perfect 5th which becomes a unifying interval throughout the entire piece. This, combined with the actual melodic contour, provides the composer with a myriad of options for variation. Also of special note is the phrasal structure, which one might assume in an eight bar phrase to be 2/2/2/2 or 4/4. However, after the 8 measure Introduction (5/3), the Theme is clearly divided into the scheme of 5/5/4/4 measures for a total of 26 (8/18) measures. Whereas these numbers may reflect something less than ‘normal,’ the overall flow of the melody is symmetrical and cohesive.
Amram treats all instruments as equals with regards to harmony and melody, whether they are in a primary or secondary role. His treatment of the percussion section is significant. As will be seen in subsequent analysis, Amram has a propensity to introduce subject material with a few or multiple percussion instruments, and *King Lear Variations* is no exception. The opening statement by the timpani and snare drum not only serve as a foundation for the presentation of the theme by the bassoon, but also as a springboard for the rest of the composition.

Variation 1 (*Legato espressivo*) is written exclusively for the double reed section, employing 2 oboes, 2 English horns, 2 bassoons and contrabassoon. The theme is an exact restatement given earlier by the bassoon for the full eighteen measures, and is presented in octaves by the oboes. Even though the melody is written with the same pitches, the variation can be found in the accompaniment. Instead of E minor, the accompaniment at first centers around C# minor, offering that key’s dominant (G # minor) and subdominant (F #minor) chords on the subsequent beats. This presents a fresh personality to the theme. However, by beat 2 of measure 2, C major now supports the theme, which moves as a VI chord leading back to E minor in measure 3 as seen in Example I – 3.
Example I – 3

King Lear Variations, Variation 1, mm. 1-3


The previous example also displays a small but recognizable jazz element in measure 3 with the English horn’s colorful intrusion which rises to the flat 8th in E minor, which is an enharmonic equivalent to a major 7th. Whether obvious or subliminal, elements of jazz are frequently used by Amram.

By the resolution on beat 2 of measure 5 Amram lands on an E major chord, which is the relative major to C# minor, a precursor to the final chord of the movement, and that is the continued progression to measure 6. The final measure concludes with a suspension to the fourth eighth note beat with a definitive E major structure (Example I – 4).
Following Variation I which was written exclusively for double reeds, Variation 2 (Pastorale, poco piú mosso) is written entirely for single reed woodwinds and flutes, creating a completely different woodwind timbre. Instrumentation includes the following: 4 flutes (piccolo), 2 clarinets and 2 bass clarinets. The theme in this movement is found in flutes 3 and 4, or alto flutes if available. The low range of the C flute or the mid range of the alto flute produces a relatively soft and calm emotion which is reflective of the marking “Pastorale.” It is once again an exact statement of the original theme but with one minor rhythmic difference in measure 17 where Amram inserts a dotted quarter note in the theme and not the original quarter note - eighth note sequence. Even though there are two flute players, the theme is stated in the low register and extends to low B with a marking of piano. Issues of balance must be considered because the
countermelody in the clarinet 1 voice, and later in the flute parts, is marked mezzo forte followed by crescendo and decrescendo markings. At first glance it appears that Amram has changed key centers once again, but the opening chordal accompaniment of Db-E-Ab is the enharmonic equivalent of the Variation 1 C#-E-G#. The harmonic progression that follows is essentially the same with some variation. For example, the C major found in measure 2 is now in 2nd inversion, offering less stability. He continues once again with E minor followed by F major, but this time it is an F major 9th chord, demonstrating more interest and variation, and as before offers a touch of the jazz element which is important in his life.

Example I – 5

*King Lear Variations*, Variation 2, mm. 1-5
The previous example once again displays the same jazz element in measure 3 but this time with the clarinet rising to the flat 8th (major 7th) in E minor. The movement resolves in E major, on the weak beat, but now flute 1 delays it even more by cadencing on the final eighth note.

Example I – 6
*King Lear Variations*, Variation 2, mm. 17-18

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Variation 3 (Alla marcia) is scored for the entire ensemble and is the first of four consecutive movements written in simple meter and not compound meter. The overall scheme of this movement is ABA (march/trio/recapitulation). The main theme is now introduced in trumpet 1, loosely in the framework of F minor. The composer has also now shifted the melodic structure from 5/5/4/4 to the more common phrase of 4/4/4/4; a 16 measure phrase. Within this melody the intervals are identical to the original theme with the exception of the second half of measure 9, measure 10 and the first half of measure 11.

**Example I – 7**

*King Lear Variations*, Variation 3, mm. 1 - 16
Measure 4 of the previous example also illustrates the jazz tendencies in the accompaniment of the woodwinds which play Ab 7 and Gb 11 descending arpeggiated major chords. Example 1 – 7
also reveals the opening chord to be similar to previous variations with the trombones playing Db – Ab (C# - G#); however, with a concert F added in the trumpet part it now is sounding in Db major, parallel to the previous C# tonality. He quickly leaves that tonality in favor of Bb major, which can be seen in measures 5, 8 and 13. From this point forward all of the major cadences outline F major.

The Trio contains new material, but much of it is still based on the interval of a 5th or its inversion. The character of the variation is a march, which is in sharp contrast to the more somber reflection of the original theme. Continuing in F major, the Trio infuses an upbeat approach with increased chromaticism, rim shots, trills, glissandi and at times a comic and playful mix of instruments to create an almost circus-like environment. This is evident in the following example where the music bounces from low trombone to trumpet to piccolo and then to woodblock.

Example I – 8

King Lear Variations, Variation 3, mm. 45 – 49


Overall the movement is unified by the interval of a 5th both harmonically and melodically, and also frequently in parallel fashion. The intervals of the opening four pitch sequence of the original theme are also used to now support the theme in canon with various instruments.
Variation 4 shifts to the key of G minor and presents the theme in its entirety one time as a cantus firmus (*King Lear Variations* 1967, score notes). This augmented statement takes place over the course of the thirty-three measure movement, and is stated by the tuba, trombone 3 and the contrabassoon. The theme is once again precisely repeated with the exception of measure 18 where the composer has the third half note of the triplet rise to F# instead of remaining on the E. Occurring simultaneously is the theme in diminution, first stated by the horns and later by the trumpets. In conjunction with this compositional technique the composer adds more color in the woodwinds with rising sextuplets in octatonic form, which in jazz theory can be regarded as a diminished scale because of the two interlocking diminished seventh chords (Example I – 9).
The opening four-pitch motive continuously appears in the rest of the movement in variation form as well. The closing two measures have an ambiguous G/D pedal tone in the brass with the oboe and flute giving a final statement of the octatonic scale figure. This final chord could be considered the dominant of the upcoming Variation 5 in C minor.

Variation 5 (Moderato) is written for percussion and piano. The percussion instruments include timpani, snare drum, bass drum, tom-toms, conga drum, bongos, suspended cymbal, sock cymbal, crash cymbals, finger cymbals, xylophone, marimba, vibraphone, glockenspiel, chimes, triangle, Chinese gong, cow bell, tambourine and gourd. Whereas Amram has employed the standard percussion instruments of the wind band of the 1960’s, he has also included many auxiliary instruments to create an exotic and foreign sound. This is also significant because during the first half of the twentieth century composers used percussion instruments primarily in a supportive role. However, from the 1950’s and moving forward composers such as Vincent Persichetti and H. Owen Reed began to feature the percussion section as an equal family in the wind band. This variation is a clear continuation of the idea that the percussion section can be as important as other instruments with regards to melody and harmony. In this short twenty-seven measure variation Amram reveals the theme through a variety of permutations. With the use of triplets, the timpani once again introduce the opening of the theme but quickly acquiesce to the piano which plays an altered thematic form in C minor with a flat 9\textsuperscript{th}. The piano is also accompanied by the xylophone with the familiar motive followed by a rising Db major 9\textsuperscript{th} arpeggio. Measure 4 is a clear Bb major 7\textsuperscript{th} chord which is followed immediately by the original E – B 5\textsuperscript{th} in the piano.
Example I – 10

*King Lear Variations*, Variation 5, mm. 1–5

Variation 5, Percussion

**Moderato** \( \frac{2}{4} \) \( \frac{76 - 84}{ \) change to **Susp. Cymb. w. Timp. sticks**

- **Timp.**
  - \( p \)
  - with **Timp. sticks**

- **Sn. Dr.**
  - \( p \)

- **Susp. Cymb.**
  - \( pp \) change to **Trg. beater**
  - \( pp \) with **free hand**

- **Xyl.**
  - \( pp \)
  - \( ff \)

- **Bass Dr.**
  - \( ff \) change to **Marimba**

- **Piano**
  - \( L. H. \)

- **Susp. Cymb.**
  - \( ff \)

- **Sn. Dr.**
  - \( f \)

- **Tom-Tom**
  - \( f \) change to **Cow Bell**

- **Trg.**
  - \( f \)

- **Xyl.**
  - \( pp \)

- **Mar.**
  - \( pp \) **Hard mallets**

- **Piano**
  - **loc.**

These first measures can be considered the “A” section followed by the “B” development until “A” returns in measure 21 for an exact recapitulation preceding the final four measures of concluding material. The development section shows alterations of the main motive in all voices. Constant use of the 5th along with the original motive can be found in every measure. One example can be found in a canon technique of the motive starting in measure 14 and sounding in the glockenspiel, chimes and piano.

Example I – 11
*King Lear Variations*, Variation 5, mm. 14 – 16

Instruments of indefinite pitch are used creatively with complex rhythmic variations to support and color the melody and harmony. This can be seen at rehearsal 22 where the bongos and conga drum perform 32\textsuperscript{nd} note combinations with ties, rolls and hemiola.

Example I – 12

*King Lear Variations*, Variation 5, mm. 8 – 9

The movement ends quietly as the timpani provide two last motivic statements with eighth notes and quarter note triplets that have a swing feel.
As with the Theme, Variation 6 (Hymn, Andante mesto) is eighteen measures in length. Along with his rich harmonies, Amram now presents the theme in retrograde as seen in the following short excerpt.

Example I – 13
*King Lear Variations*, Variation 6, mm. 1 – 3


Example I – 14 once again displays the trumpet playing the theme for the last two measures of the movement. This time the intervals of the opening theme are reversed, starting from the end and moving backwards.

Example I – 14
*King Lear Variations*, Variation 6, mm. 17 – 18

The Finale is a return of Variation 2 in the original key, but this time it is scored for the entire ensemble plus timpani and snare drum. All of the same elements of melody and harmony are presented but now with a much more commanding and fuller texture. The dynamics range from piano to forte and most parts are doubled until the recapitulation at measure 19, written for the original three instruments – bassoon, timpani and snare drum. However, this time the bassoon and timpani have an exact repetition through sixteen of the eighteen original measures but then play a pedal E for four measures. This occurs in measure 35 and marks the beginning of the coda which lasts nine measures. Playing above the pedal E are the woodwinds with a simple C major – G major progression. The flute then offers a prelude of the upcoming final duple section. In measure 37 the horns follow but center on E, and finally the low brass and trumpet lead the listener to the tonality of G#, which will eventually serve as the 3rd of E major in measure 41. In measure 40 Amram shifts to 8/8 as a meter and not 4/4. This is most likely to preserve the relationship with 6/8, which has been the dominant meter of several movements. After two final statements of the primary four-note motive, the piece concludes on a pianissimo unison E.
ANDANTE AND VARIATIONS ON A THEME FOR MACBETH

In 1982-83 David Amram was the first composer-in-residence at the Ithaca College School of Music in Ithaca, New York. After this successful residency he was commissioned by the Ithaca College Beeler Commissioning Series to write a work for Wind Ensemble. Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth was subsequently published in 1984 and premiered by and dedicated to Rodney Winther and the Ithaca College Wind Ensemble. (Ithaca College Wind Ensemble 1992, CD notes) Amram says of that experience, “Rodney is such a consummate musician, and he also appreciated my music, so I knew if he was conducting it he would be able to make sense out of it, including certain things that were so simple and melodic and grounded in American folklore, he would be able to hear it.” (Amram Interview, 2009) Both the Andante (movement I) and the Variations (movement II) are based on previously composed music for piano. The first movement is derived from a 1960 composition which reflects his earlier association with previously mentioned jazz artists such as Mingus, Hampton, Gillespie and others. The second movement comes from a 1957 piano composition that was written for a Joseph Papp production of Macbeth. (Ithaca College Wind Ensemble CD notes, 1992) As an ancillary note, Amram used the same 1957 melody for a commission from the Atlanta Chamber Players in 1988.

Instrumentation for Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth is standard, calling for percussion and eighteen different wind instruments, but in this case with no doublings. The score shows the following:

- Flutes 1 – 2
- Piccolo
- Oboes 1 – 2
- English horn
- Soprano Eb Clarinet
- Bb Clarinets 1 – 2 – 3
Eb Alto Clarinet
Bb Bass Clarinet
Eb Contra Bass Clarinet
Alto Saxophone
Tenor Saxophone
Baritone Saxophone
Bassoons 1 – 2
Horns 1 – 2 – 3 – 4
Trumpets 1 – 2 – 3 – 4
Trombones 1 – 2 – 3 – 4
Euphonium
Tuba
Timpani
Percussion (4 players on 15 different instruments: Snare Drum, Field Drum, Xylophone, Marimba, Bongos, Tom-Toms, Crash Cymbal, Brake Drum, Wood Block, Rachet, Whip, Cow Bell, Sock Cymbal, Glockenspiel, Set Drums)

The range for each of the instruments is once again generally accessible with a few exceptions. Based on the previously used octave identification system, the ranges for each of the primary instruments are as follows (transposed pitch where applicable):

Flute: C4 – Bb6
Piccolo: C#4 – Bb6
Oboe: C4 – Eb6
English Horn: C4 – G5
Soprano Eb Clarinet: C4 – F#6
Bb Clarinet: E3 – Gb6
Eb Alto Clarinet: E3 – C6
Bb Bass Clarinet: E3 – F#5
Eb Contra Bass Clarinet: Eb – F#5
Alto Saxophone: D4 – E6
Tenor Saxophone: D4 – E6
Baritone Saxophone: C4 – C#6
Bassoon: Bb1 – F# 4
Horn: A3 – Ab5
Trumpet: C4 – C6
Trombone: A1 – F4
Euphonium: F2 – F4
Tuba: D1 – D3 (D1 is listed as ossia)
Timpani: Andante – 10 different pitches
Theme & Variations – Var. 3 – 6 pitches; Var. 6 – 5 pitches
This composition is comprised of two movements, but the second movement has seven sections consisting of the theme followed by six variations, for a total of eight movements/sections in the composition. As with the *King Lear Variations*, the frequency of exposure of instruments is relatively balanced with a number of exceptions. The only instrument that plays in all eight movements is the Bb clarinet. Whereas most of the ensemble receives individual attention and is required to perform in some type of solo capacity, this is not the case with the euphonium. It only plays in a total of 28 measures, or 9% of this 300 measure piece, and in every instance the euphonium is doubled either by the trombones or the horns. Ensuing analysis will show that Amram will write for this instrument more frequently and even use it in a solo capacity, perhaps indicating the lack of playing time in this piece as being indicative that the composer eventually becomes more comfortable writing for the euphonium. It should also be noted that Amram treats the tuba and low woodwinds as primary solo instruments, and not simply used for harmonic support.

As is customary with Amram, this piece reflects the fusion of European tonal harmony and jazz, in particular the blues. As in *King Lear Variations*, Amram chose the timpani and snare drum to introduce the motive of a perfect 4\textsuperscript{th} (and later its inversion of a 5\textsuperscript{th}) to be a cornerstone of material for the *Andante* (Example II – 1). Although this movement moves through many key centers including B, Gb, Db, E, C# minor and others, its primary center is Bb.
This is immediately followed by the horns that continue the rising 4th motive and are subsequently joined by the low brass and timpani to establish a Bb 9th chord in measure 9.

Also of interest in the previous example is the flat 6th (Gb) approach to the dominant F chord in measure 8. This is a propensity of the composer and is seen frequently throughout this piece.
Although the main theme begins with the horns in measure 15, the main melodic idea is presented by the solo trumpet beginning in measure 17 (Example II – 3).

Example II – 3
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement I - Andante, mm. 15 – 24

![Music notation image]

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It is this melody that will be transformed numerous times with different accompaniments. It is also fragmented as colorful intrusions and altered with other compositional techniques such as augmentation. Written a full step higher than the original theme, Example II – 4 shows the theme begins with the flutes but is soon joined by the clarinets. This continues until there is a tutti statement in the final two measures. For dramatic emphasis it is also marked fortissimo and ben sostenuto. To accompany the theme is a constant use of a “bluesy” triplet figure which includes an upper neighbor grace note to add to the jazz inflection (Example II – 4).
Example II – 4
Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement I - Andante, mm. 30 – 40
As previously alluded to, most instruments are utilized as soloists at some point through thin textures. Of particular interest is the frequent solo appearance of the tuba and contra bass clarinet to present material in short segments. As seen in Examples II – 5, II – 6 and II – 7, these
instruments are not relegated to their standard role for rhythmic and harmonic support, but are often called on to present the main melodic material.

Example II – 5
Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement I - Andante, mm. 41 – 44

Example II – 6
Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement I - Andante, mm. 116 – 119

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The Andante movement concludes much the same way as did the *King Lear Variations*. There is a final restatement by the timpani and snare of the opening four measures, but this time the timpani pitches are inverted with Bb on the primary pulse. Instead of ending on a pitch center, Amram chooses to end the movement in the tonality of Bb major, and once again at a *ppp* dynamic level as seen in Example II – 8.
Example II – 8

*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement I - Andante, mm. 139 – 143

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Movement II of *Variations on a Theme for Macbeth* is comprised of an introduction of the theme followed by six variations (Pastorale, March, alla [Viennese], alla Spagnuola, alla Down Home, Maestoso) which are all presented without pause as one unified movement. Amram chose the clarinet section as the only timbre for the entire twenty-four measure introduction. The theme is centered on C minor and can be found in its entirety in the voice of clarinet 1.

Example II – 9
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement II - Variations, mm. 1 – 24

The interval of a 5th is once again prime material for the theme, as well as for future development in each of the variations. It should be noted that Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* during the English Renaissance. In music during this time the intervals of a 5th and/or a 4th as harmonic cadential material was considered consonant and appropriate. In addition, the lowered 7th (subtonic) instead of a leading tone was also the norm. Amram’s use of these intervals represents an appropriate correlation. The previous example shows that the interval of a 5th can be found
ascending such as measure 1, descending in measure 5, or through stepwise motion as seen in measures 3 – 4. In addition, the rhythmic figure of the sixteenth note followed by another sixteenth note tied to a quarter note (motive b) found in measures 21 and 23 will also be a source of motivic development. Intervallic movement of the theme is primarily conjunct.

The key center symmetry of the Andante (beginning and ending on Bb) is also seen in movement II, but this time opening in C minor and ending in C major. Not counting the final measure of the introduction, which serves as an anacrusis to the next section, Variation I (Pastorale) is a short sixteen measure movement which features the woodwind section. As the clarinets ended the previous movement in C minor, the flutes now begin with motive b descending from G to C; however, the composer quickly departs with new material in foreign key areas. One of the dominant rhythmic figures is now the sixteenth quintuplet, both descending and ascending. This figure enhances the now varied theme, which has changed from the three eighth note figure to a dotted eighth-sixteenth-eighth note, which exudes a swinging character. That particular rhythm is found in nine of the sixteen measures. It can be seen here as introduced by the English horn.

Example II – 10
Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement II – Variation I, mm. 1 – 3

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The quintuplets most often have an intervallic progression of $2^{\text{nd}}-4^{\text{th}}-2^{\text{nd}}-4^{\text{th}}$, or the opposite with $4^{\text{th}}-2^{\text{nd}}-4^{\text{th}}-2^{\text{nd}}$. This can clearly be seen in the clarinet part in the following example in both rising and falling fashion.

Example II – 11

*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement II – Variation I, mm. 36 – 37

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These figures and others serve as colorful accents with the melody.
As in the *King Lear Variations* March movement, Variation II (March) takes on a notably different character throughout its thirty measures. The meter shifts from the previous compound to simple, and this variation is marked Alla marcia with the quarter note to equal mm.120. This variation is riddled with cadential “punch chords” on the last eighth note of the measure with either a single tone or a major 7th chord in third inversion. Extreme range juxtapositions also add to the interest. Example II – 12 reveals the established key of Gb major in the first four measures with the accent of the tuba and bass drum in measure 4. The range also immediately shifts to high and in the key of G minor in measure 5. Nearly every time a key is established on the last eighth note, the next measure continues in a key one half step higher for a surprising transition.

Example II – 12
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement II – Variation II, mm. 1 – 5*
The first notes of the oboes and trumpets from the previous example demonstrates the root and 7\textsuperscript{th} of a G\textsubscript{b} major 7\textsuperscript{th} chord, but its use as a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} adds to light-heartedness and gaiety of the variation. Another example of the 7\textsuperscript{th} chord third inversion followed by a rising half step is found in measures 61-62 of Example II – 13 in the clarinets and percussion with an A major 7\textsuperscript{th} “punch” chord immediately followed by B\textsubscript{b} in the flutes and piccolo.

Example II – 13
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement II – Variation II, mm. 59 – 62

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As can be seen in Example II – 14, the last four measures serve as a pseudo recapitulation. It begins with the original measures 1 and 3 in succession followed by a G major transition leading to an E major cadence and concluding on the weak beat. The E major cadence also serves as a dominant function leading to the next variation.

Example II – 14
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement II – Variation II, mm. 67 – 71*

Variation II is also the first time that the composer uses a more disjunct approach to linear melodic movement.

Variation III (Alla Viennese) continues with the familiar shifts in texture, quickly moving from high woodwinds to low brass and then back again. Along with this technique Amram returns to the rhythmic motives of Variation I, the dotted eighth-sixteenth-eighth note figure,
which hints at a Viennese waltz, and to a lesser extent uses motive b. The clarinet opens with the two-bar phrase (Example II – 15) and is subsequently repeated by numerous instruments with slight variations including those by the oboe, flute and trumpet.

Example II – 15
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement II – Variation III, mm. 72 – 73*

This same swaying rhythmic style seen in the previous example can also be found as a rhythmic and melodic composite between the horns, bassoons, low clarinets, clarinet 1 and the oboes in measure 83.

Example II – 16
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement II – Variation III, mm. 80 – 83*
The composer’s half-step key relationship remains consistent in this variation as well. In measure 1, for example, it is a clear A major tonality, but by measure 3 there is an abrupt shift to Bb major. It should be noted that even though a key is established, Amram maintains musical interest through frequent modulations.

Variation IV (alla Spagnuola) is a short twelve-measure movement that primarily features the brass section, and in particular trumpet 1 as the soloist. Spagnuola (Spagnola) is an Italian term referring to Spain, and this piece emulates the Spanish ethnic flavor effectively. The harmonic progression is a key element to establishing one of that country’s characteristic sounds, and is common among much of the Spanish traditional folk music. The first four chords supporting the trumpet move in a descending A minor fashion as follows: i (A minor) – VII (G major) – VI (F major) – V (E major). It is that progression that exudes a Spanish connection, but Amram has designed the trumpet solo to enhance the mood within this context. These components can be seen in measures 1 – 4.

Example II – 17
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement II – Variation IV, mm. 1 – 4
Amram marks this movement Largo Doloroso (slow and sorrowful) with the quarter note equaling mm. 52, which significantly contributes to the overall mood. After a second statement of the trumpet theme starting in measure 110, Amram uses the final measure as a transition to the next variation. He begins by using the woodwinds to share the familiar triplet figures to support an E major linear triad moving to a G major triad. Next the trombones and low woodwinds lead the last beat of the measure as a dominant chord movement to the next variation. The sextuplet figures also offer a rhythmic connection to Variation V.

Example II – 18
Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, Movement II – Variation IV, mm. 11 – 12
The tertian relationship represented in the previous case, referring to the E major to G major progression, is a compositional technique that the composer uses to a significant extent.

Variation V (alla Down Home) is composed in the American blues idiom. The blues is a mixture of traditional European music and African music of southern blacks from the early 1900’s. Blue notes are generally considered the flat 3, 5 and 7 of a diatonic scale, therefore, the importance of the interval of a 5th, as discussed regarding the main theme, has now become a flat 5 which is at the heart of a blues scale. Within the sixteen measures of this movement the composer does not follow the typical blues progression of I (4) – IV (2) – I (2) – V (2) – I (2), but instead uses other elements to evoke the sense of the blues such as swinging triplets and displaced accents. The low woodwinds present the material starting on A and rising to Eb (b5) in unison. This occurs again in measure two beginning on G and going to Db (b5). By measures 3 – 4 the low brass have joined the ensemble but this time from B to F (b5), and finally back to an A minor tonality once again that leads to F blues which supports the alto saxophone with the solo. Measure 5 also indicates “Tempo di Swing” to set the style. In addition, the percussion section is added at this point with set drums, wood block, cow bell, snare drum and tom-toms, all with a swing feel with the use of triplets. Example II – 19 illustrates many of these effects.
Example II – 19

*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement II – Variation V, mm. 1 – 6

*Variation V* – *alla Deam Home*

\[ \frac{\text{\textit{V}}}{} \]

\[ \text{\textit{V}} \]

\[ \frac{\text{\textit{alla Deam Home}}}{} \]

\[ \frac{\text{\textit{alla Deam Home}}}{} \]

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In addition to all of the specific instructions to the percussionists as can be seen in the previous example, Amram adds the word “Bwah” in the saxophone parts with the explanation of that term on the bottom of the score page which reads, “Approximate this phonetic sound each time upward gliss occurs in this Variation.” This is an obvious jazz inflection that Amram wanted to insure would be present in this blues movement. The remaining 10 measures continue with the entire wind band sharing much of the same material.
The final part of movement II is Variation VI (Maestoso). The main theme in the original key as presented by the clarinet in the introduction (Example II – 9) can now be found with the exact concert pitch scheme in the bass and contrabass clarinet, baritone saxophone, bassoons, trombones, euphonium, tuba and marimba. It is presented in an exaggerated augmentation and includes the first three measures of the introduction before it departs and prepares the conclusion of the piece. The woodwinds, horns and trumpets also join to accompany the theme, but now in the style of Variation V, emphasizing the blue notes and in a swinging triple style, sounding as a written-out improvisation. The result is that Amram has used C minor and the C blues simultaneously for an exciting culmination. Evidence of this can be observed within the first two measures of the variation.
After a succession of jazz riffs in the woodwinds, trumpets and horns in measure 5 – 6, the music reaches an increased level of intensity in the high register of the woodwinds with piercing trills until it gives way to the flutes alone on a high A/Bb trill. Once again employing extreme registers, the tuba enters on a low Gb until it comes to rest on a G natural from measure 140 – 145. This accompanies the now lower register flute, making a tranquil segue until it reaches the clarinets in measure 146 for a series of meaningful suspensions followed by the return of the original theme in C minor in measure 150. Amram uses an exact restatement of the first eight
measures of the introduction, only in note values twice as long because the meter has transitioned from 6/8 to 6/4. To complete the symmetry of the second movement, the entire ensemble plays the final chord, but sounding a C major chord and once again at a pianissimo level. Example II – 21 shows the closing ten measures with the clarinet family performing the final statement.

Example II – 21
*Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, Movement II – Variation VI, mm. 148 – end

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ODE TO LORD BUCKLEY

When David Amram was commissioned by Ken Radnofsky and the Portland (Maine) Symphony in 1980 to write a concerto for alto saxophone and orchestra, his inspiration came from his earlier association with Lord Buckley (Richard Myrle Buckley, 1906 –1960) in the 1950’s. Amram says this about Lord Buckley, “He was a visionary and a true American original who influenced a whole generation. All who heard him recognized him as an underground genius of spontaneous American poetry and humor.” (Amram 1981, 1) Buckley’s death on November 12, 1960 was surrounded by controversy. Many believe that because of a 1941 arrest for marijuana possession, officials seized his cabaret card in October of 1960. Records of his death are not clear, but because he was unable to work without his card, it is believed by some that he suffered a stroke brought on by malnutrition. On the night before Buckley’s death, Amram and other friends had spent the night with Buckley talking about all the different types of music from around the world, along with many other topics. Amram never forgot that experience. (Howey 1994, 7) Twenty years later Amram recalled those events and wrote a composition that honored Lord Buckley and at the same time displayed many eclectic styles in one concerto. This concerto was premiered in 1981, subsequently arranged for alto saxophone with wind band accompaniment and published in 1982. As was seen with King Lear Variations and Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth, the music itself cannot be categorized in one style. Strong elements of classical, jazz and Middle Eastern flavors make their way into the fabric of this piece. It is written in three movements in the classical sense with movement I (Overture) being fast, movement II (Andante espressivo) slow, and movement III (Eroico) fast again. It also contains a cadenza in each movement which is written-out but sounds improvised.
Instrumentation for *Ode to Lord Buckley* is nearly identical to that for *Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth*, once again calling for percussion and eighteen different wind instruments plus the solo alto saxophone. The score shows the following:

- Flutes 1 – 2
- Piccolo
- Oboes 1 – 2
- English horn
- Soprano Eb Clarinet
- Bb Clarinets 1 – 2 – 3
- Eb Alto Clarinet
- Bb Bass Clarinet
- Eb Contra Bass Clarinet
- Alto Saxophone
- Tenor Saxophone
- Baritone Saxophone
- Bassoons 1 – 2
- Horns 1 – 2 – 3 – 4
- Trumpets 1 – 2 – 3 – 4
- Euphonium
- Trombones 1 – 2 – 3 – 4
- Tuba
- Solo Alto Saxophone
- Timpani
- Percussion (4 players on 20 different instruments: Small Cowbell, Wood Blocks, Tom-Toms, Conga, Triangle, Snare Drum, Field Drums, Temple Blocks, Tambourine, Sock Cymbals, Bongos, Tuned Drums, Mounted Finger Cymbals, Dumbek, Xylophone, Marimba, Ride Cymbal, Bass Drum, Crash Cymbals, Suspended Cymbal)

The differences from the previous score layout are that the composer moved the euphonium above the trombones on the score page, increased the percussion instruments, and added the solo alto saxophone. This author’s experience has most often seen the solo part of a concerto on the top line of the score when there is a wind band accompaniment. In the case with an orchestral accompaniment the order from top to bottom is usually woodwinds, brass, percussion, soloist and then strings. Amram’s choice of score layout for this piece follows the example of the latter
with the top to bottom order as woodwinds, brass, soloist and then percussion. Perhaps this is because the piece was originally written with orchestral accompaniment.

The tessitura for each of the instruments is again accessible with a number of exceptions. Using the same octave identification system, the ranges for each of the primary instruments are as follows (transposed pitch where applicable):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Octave Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>C4 – A#6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piccolo</td>
<td>F4 – G6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oboe</td>
<td>Bb3 – D6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Horn</td>
<td>Db4 – B5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soprano Eb Clarinet</td>
<td>A4 – D6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb Clarinet</td>
<td>F3 – F6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eb Alto Clarinet</td>
<td>G3 – C6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb Bass Clarinet</td>
<td>Eb3 – A5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eb Contra Bass Clarinet</td>
<td>D#3 – C#5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alto Saxophone</td>
<td>C4 – F#6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor Saxophone</td>
<td>C4 – E6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baritone Saxophone</td>
<td>A3 – Bb5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassoon</td>
<td>Bb1 – A4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horn</td>
<td>Bb2 – A5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>B3 – D6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphonium</td>
<td>F2 – Ab4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombone</td>
<td>Bb1 – Ab4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuba</td>
<td>E1 – F3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timpani</td>
<td>Movement I – 11 different pitches (including enharmonics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement II – 11 different pitches (including enharmonics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement III – 11 different pitches (including octaves)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo Alto Saxophone</td>
<td>Bb3 – F#5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the above mentioned ranges, a few points need to be clarified. In the previous selection the euphonium was relegated to a very nominal role. Whereas its part continues to be mostly doubled, in particular by trombones, there is a much greater presence in this piece. The euphonium, in fact, is the solo instrument that opens the second movement. This seems appropriate since the part is not technically difficult, but the timbre of the euphonium is a close tie to the lower range of the celli, which play the first four measures in the orchestral version. The D6 in the trumpet part is actually found in trumpet 3 – 4, indicating Amram’s expectations
for all parts to be equal. The following instruments received a “solo” indication at some point in the piece: flute I, II, III, oboe, English horn, trumpet, horn, and euphonium. But other instruments also receive solo attention even though they are not marked as such. This can be found in the many thin textures where a solo exists even though it is not indicated. Amram exploits the entire range of the alto saxophone in the solo part, with the exception of the altissimo register. As will be seen, the solo part at one moment can be lyrical and beautiful, but in an instant the player must navigate the entire range with exceptional speed and grace.

As seen in the first two compositions of this chapter, Movement I (Overture) of *Ode to Lord Buckley* once again begins with percussion, but this time it is not the timpani and snare drum that state the motive. It is the timpani, cowbell, woodblocks and tom-toms that set up an exotic pulse and rhythm with syncopation and accents. In the original orchestral version, the celli and bass present the melody, but in this version Amram chooses the bassoons. This is perhaps paying homage to its double reed (oboe) predecessor known as the shawm, which existed from the Medieval through the Renaissance periods and has a Middle Eastern association. This is the first of two themes of this movement, which is marked giocoso (joyful).

Example III – 1

*Ode to Lord Buckley*, Movement I, mm. 1 – 8
The opening section gradually expands by first adding the clarinets to the theme, then the oboe and finally the flute. This is followed by the humorous approach used by the composer by jumping from low to high ranges within various textures. The introduction continues to center around the key of D while utilizing all of the colors of the ensemble and engaging in various fragments of the theme. There is an unexpected tonal shift up one half-step in the measure where the soloist finally enters as an anacrusis in measure 87. After eighty-six measures of an introduction in D, the soloist now presents the theme in Eb.

Example III – 2

_Ode to Lord Buckley_, Movement I, mm. 1 – 85 – 91
As Amram continues to develop ideas around the theme, he offers a glimpse of the Middle Eastern flavor that will permeate the third movement. The Arabic mode which is the source of this sound is explained in greater detail on page 90 with regard to movement III, but of special note is the augmented 2\textsuperscript{nd} (G-A\#) in the following short example. That interval is the key to the exotic flavor, but at this point in the composition Amram only offers a brief statement.

Example III – 3
\textit{Ode to Lord Buckley}, Movement I, measure 96

Even though the piece clearly returns to the key of D by measure 104, Amram chooses the relative minor of the second key center of Eb, which is now C minor.

Example III – 4
\textit{Ode to Lord Buckley}, Movement I, mm. 1 – 112 – 115
As the movement continues, Amram develops fragments of both themes utilizing different combinations of winds and percussion for musical interest. Having now introduced both European classical style with typical diatonic major-minor modes, and a hint of Middle Eastern style, the piece slows to a quarter note equaling mm. 80 and is marked “Swing style.” At this point Amram presents jazz as the third style for this movement. This continues until there is an extensive written-out cadenza beginning in measure 223 and continues through 272. The material is based on all elements presented thus far and is marked “dolce e poco ad libitum.” After the cadenza, and followed by a brief interlude by the ensemble, the solo saxophone has a recapitulation of theme I in the key of Eb beginning in measure 282.

As with many composers, Amram reuses previously composed material, and the main theme found in movement II of Ode to Lord Buckley is no exception. In 1980 Amram wrote the music for the Broadway play Harold and Maude, and even though the play was a failure on stage, the music was considered a success. Amram said of the experience with this play, “Harold and Maude only lasted for five performances and it was a disaster. They gave me the banjo that Harold played in the show since they couldn’t pay me any royalties, although I got paid for writing the music. They were so bankrupt they gave me the banjo and said I could have the music back.” (Amram Interview, 2009) The composer also stated, “Eventually the first part of the overture to Harold and Maude became the introduction to my saxophone concerto Ode to Lord Buckley. The melody of one of the lyrical, Renaissance-flavored songs, written for Janet Gaynor to sing, which was cut from the show, became the principal theme of the second movement of the concerto.” (Amram 2008, 148) Later, Amram stated in a letter to his sister in 2005, “I ended up the program by playing a recording of my saxophone concerto, Ode to Lord Buckley, since part of the concerto used a portion of the music for As You Like It, which I
composed for a long-gone 1961 production at the Stratford, Connecticut, Shakespeare Festival forty-four years ago (!!!)” (Amram 2008, 262)
The second movement (Andante espressivo) is introduced by the solo euphonium (Example III – 5) on a melody marked “Espressivo, con calore ma semplice” (expressive, with warmth but simple), which sets the stage for this three part movement. It is generally centered on D minor, but the parallel D major and relative F major key centers are also explored.

Example III – 5  
*Ode to Lord Buckley*, Movement II, mm. 1 – 4

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After a twenty-four measure instrumental introduction the solo saxophone enters with the main theme. Even though the accompaniment has chords that cadence on D minor, F major, Bb major, and more, the melody itself speaks during the first four measures in F major, and the second four measures revolve around Bb major (Example III – 6). This will be reversed when A′ is reached in this ternary form.

Example III – 6  
*Ode to Lord Buckley*, Movement II, mm. 25 – 32

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After a short cadenza in the A section, the B section once again turns to the jazz idiom beginning in measure 114 and marked “Adagio con Sentimento di Swing.” Once again, even
though the solo sounds as if it is being improvised, it is completely written-out with all of the nuance of a brilliantly improvised solo.

Example III – 7
_Ode to Lord Buckley_, Movement II, mm. 114 – 116

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At the conclusion of the B section there is a brief eight measure transition to return to the original theme at measure 147 (A'). This time the theme begins in Bb and modulates to F.
Amram continues to utilize Western musical sounds in the third and final movement (Eroico), but most of the movement revolves around the Arabic Hijaz (also Hejaz, Hedjaz) mode. As a way of explanation in comparison to Western theory, one could look at a major scale with a flat 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 6\textsuperscript{th}. Each tetrachord would then begin with a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} followed by an augmented 2\textsuperscript{nd} as shown here with the tonic being C:

\begin{align*}
\text{C Db E F G Ab B C}
\end{align*}

It is that intervallic relationship that produces the Middle Eastern “Arabian” sound, which Amram skillfully presents in both the solo and accompaniment.

This movement is sectionalized in the presentation of its material. After a bold introduction by the brass in the first eight measures, the woodwinds present the Eastern sound for six measures until arriving in measure 15 on C as the tonal center. To further enhance the exotic Hijaz mode, the woodwinds must glissando between Bb and C, and percussion is added including the ethnic dumbek, along with the tom-tom, finger cymbals and tambourine.

Example III – 8

\textit{Ode to Lord Buckley}, Movement III, mm. 15 – 18

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example_iii_8}
\end{center}

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This four-measure introduction sets the stage for the soloist with the primary Eastern theme which is clearly centered on concert C.

Example III – 9

_Ode to Lord Buckley_, Movement III, mm. 19 – 26

The final measure of Example III – 9 is actually used by the entire ensemble seven additional times as cadential material. When the oboe and English horn enter for a duet at measure 29 and directly after this cadence, the instructions read “With a Middle Eastern feeling.”

The following section begins in measure 71. The tempo is the same but the meter shifts from 4/4 to 2/4, and the solo saxophone is alone with the percussion for a series of three eight-measure phrases that are a variation of the principle theme. The next four eight-measure phrases are performed by the ensemble in unison while remaining in the Eastern style. Measure 198 is a new section with the brass entering “Robusto e Maestoso” in the related key of Eb, but also in Western style with diatonic block chords. After eight measures the key center returns to C for the re-entry of the soloist with the ethnic theme, and also returns to 4/4 meter at measure 210. This continues in similar style and sequence until the cadenza which begins in measure 243. The first fifteen measures of the cadenza are performed over a C ostinato which shared throughout the low instruments. The final three measures, still in the Hijaz mode, transition to a new section at measure 361. The melody played here by the soloist is reminiscent of the second theme of movement II, but it clearly is new material in the style of Western tonal music, which gravitates around major (Ionian) and minor (Aeolian) modes. Even though the accompaniment is in E
minor, the overall effect is in G major because the melody itself is diatonic and has its own personality centering on G. The phrase is a full sixteen measures; however, Example III – 10 shows the first eight measures as being representative.

Example III – 10

*Ode to Lord Buckley*, Movement III, mm. 261 – 268

In measure 277 the woodwinds take over this theme with the support of the tuba and eventually the horns. Percussion enter in measure 292 with a crescendo leading to the entire ensemble and bringing one final statement of this majestic theme for the next eight measures. Measure 301 announces the final section with the drums returning to the Middle Eastern spirit for two
measures followed by the final eight measures. This begins with the soloist and then alternates measures with the ensemble in the now familiar Eastern style with the full ensemble. As another way of fusing styles, it could be said that even though the flavor at this point is Eastern, the idea of trading 2’s, 4’s or 8’s in an African call and response form is directly attributable to the American jazz idiom. Example III – 11 shows the final three measures.
Example III – 11

*Ode to Lord Buckley*, Movement III, mm. 308 – end

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The piece concludes on beat four of the last measure on an appropriate C/G perfect 5th with a brilliant and exciting exclamation.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

Over the centuries composers have consistently created their own sound, something that is distinguishable and attributable only to them. For example, when listening to Brahms, Stravinsky, or Copland, there are usually certain characteristics that define the composition. In the case of David Amram, it is difficult to place his music into any one category, but in analyzing and investigating these three pieces for wind band, this author has found the following to be common elements:

- The instrumentation for *Andante and Variations on a Theme for Macbeth* and *Ode to Lord Buckley* is nearly identical, and *King Lear* is also clearly in the wind band vein.

- Jazz is clearly an integral part of Amram’s sound and style. With the use of jazz inflections and chords, grace notes, special accents and specific rhythmic figures Amram reveals his extensive background in this style. Even when writing out cadenzas that sound improvised, Amram worked repeatedly to make them sound authentic. Regarding *Ode to Lord Buckley*, for example, Amram said, “Radnofsky is a phenomenal sax player, but he couldn’t improvise. So I tried to create it musically and as a whole. As a composer, you have a 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 4\textsuperscript{th}, 5\textsuperscript{th} and 97\textsuperscript{th} chance to keep changing it, editing it, so you can get it to feel as if it’s natural.” (Amram Interview, 2009)

- Regarding his classical style, Amram has an affinity for the Renaissance period, which began in his youth and continued in his work with Joseph Papp. While he often breaks from that style, his background composing music for Shakespearean productions is clear.
One particularly unique aspect of his writing is that he is not afraid to combine varying genres in the same composition. He traverses from western music to eastern music to jazz in a seamless fashion. Amram states, “I usually decide if I’m going to do something regarding this, like the last movement of *Lord Buckley*. But I didn’t want it to sound like a Bar mitzvah or something, so I had to do something else, so I used some Rondo form, which you can’t beat that, ABACA, and also try to do some other wonderful idioms that reflect something that would be in keeping so when I finally have that hymn come in at the very end it would be more meaningful. This is just like Mendelssohn did in the *Scottish Symphony*, when that magnificent theme comes in at the very end so that even the most sour, sleep deprived listener…or victim of the penitentiary of bad taste, they hear that symphony, and anybody can get that.” (Amram Interview, 2009)

The use of percussion instruments for the introduction of themes and the continued development of motivic material is standard for this composer. All three works investigated in this document begin with percussion alone. This is also evident in Amram’s movie scores. Regarding this technique, Amram said, “Dizzy Gillespie told me, ‘Everybody is the drummer. When you can tune in to the drum, everything that I do is based on the drummer, and being in sync with the drummer.’ Percussion is the heartbeat of all music, whether or not the drums are playing.” (Amram Interview, 2009)

Whereas the ranges employed for each instrument are accessible, overall the composer does exploit the lowest to the highest extremes.
Regarding textures, this composer utilizes quick shifts as a progression involving full ensemble to one instrument and back again as a method of surprise and interest. As has been shown, Amram sees every instrument as a possible soloist, either with thin texture or standing alone. Amram explains, “I try as best I can, and I’m still trying to learn how to write as gracefully for each instrument as possible. It makes a big difference because now the players have something to express themselves, and it’s not just like going into an obstacle course or a hundred mile triathlon exclusively. And then if you ask something that might be difficult and is musical, and they have parts that are musical, they won’t be thrown off by technical challenges.” (Amram Interview, 2009)

While Amram uses the entire gamut of dynamics ranging from \textit{pppp} to \textit{sfffz}, he appears to have a fondness for ending movements or entire pieces at some level of piano. Considering all variations as movements, there were a total of nineteen analyzed. Of those, fourteen begin piano (\textit{p}, \textit{mp}) and fourteen end with piano (\textit{pppp}, \textit{ppp}, \textit{pp}, \textit{p}, \textit{mp}). Only five begin or end forte. Amram expresses his thoughts on dynamics this way, “Tabuteau, the great oboist with the Philadelphia Orchestra told me, ‘Just remember, you end the piece with a timpani roll and trombones, otherwise it will be a disaster!’ And he told me all the pieces that ended loudly were popular and all the pieces that ended softly didn’t get played that much. For some reason I still ended many of my pieces on a soft note, and I don’t know why that is except for some particular pieces, sometimes seem to be better that way. I don’t really have a formula; each piece is just a brand new experience.” (Amram Interview, 2009)
Intervals of a 4th and 5th are very important and are the most prominent sources for his melodic and harmonic development. When asked about this point Amram responded, “I’ll be perfectly honest, I wouldn’t really know. I’m not trying to be disrespectful, I never think about that. I think about what other people are doing, but if I start to analyze myself I think I might freak out! The only rules that I try to maintain as much as I can is to use contrary motion, avoid parallel fifths, all the fundamental, nitty-gritty, Dick and Jane, Run Spot Run stuff. But for my own stuff, I just don’t have a system. I go from the heart… but also looking it over 500 times!” (Amram Interview, 2009)

Cadential material often resolves on a weak beat. There are strong beat exceptions, but they are outweighed by the former. In watching the movies Splendor in the Grass, The Manchurian Candidate, and The Young Savages this author heard a predisposition of this tendency as well. Cadences are also often quickly taken away with related material in a new tonal direction.

As has been noted previously, David Amram is very skillful in using musical material based on his previous compositions, whether written for people such as Joseph Papp or something that he had written for himself and saved for a later time. This principle is true for all three of the pieces examined in this study. Regarding Ode to Lord Buckley, for example, Amram states, “I wasn’t stealing from Rachmaninoff, I was stealing from Amram, which Beethoven did in his Choral Fantasy, which is Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony but a reduced version.” (Amram Interview, 2009)
 ➢ When it comes to a method of modulation, Amram demonstrates a proclivity for half-step transition relationships.

 ➢ Amram often writes without the use of key signatures. This seems appropriate since his music is in constant fluctuation regarding tonal centers.

 ➢ Amram employs shifting harmonies that at times avoid any stable and consistent tonality. A pervasive use of suspensions is another significant earmark.

 ➢ Amram reserves tutti for significant purposes only and avoids a homogenous approach.

 Having stated those commonalities, David Amram cannot be compartmentalized since he crosses all musical boundaries from jazz to classical, folk to Latin jazz or Native American to Middle Eastern. His music is distinct and unique, and his contribution to the wind band repertoire is invaluable and revered by many.

 David Amram married Lora Lee Ecobelli in 1979 and moved to Putnam Valley, NY. They have two daughters, Alana and Adira, and a son, Adam. All three children are musicians living in the New York area. When Amram is not conducting, performing, composing or touring around the world, he continues to manage his small upstate New York farm.
INDEX OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

**King Lear Variations**

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