

Sounds of Scotland

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Abstract

My composition, *Sounds of Scotland*, was inspired my semester abroad in St. Andrews, Scotland, where I learned about the various musical traditions of the country. The piece combines multiple styles of music (classical, folk, pop, and rock) into a cohesive three movement work. The piece is written for an eleven instrument ensemble capable of providing a variety of timbres and techniques spanning many different Scottish musical inspirations. The first movement integrates Scottish instrumental folk tunes and textures into a classical sonata form framework, drawing inspiration from composers that have integrated Scottish folk music into classical pieces such as Hamish MacCunn and James Oswald. The second movement is an arrangement of an alternative rock song I composed while in Scotland, following a strophic form with some modifications. The final movement is inspired by Scottish vocal music, consisting of a series of variations on two popular vocal folk tunes, with harmonies, textures, transitional material, and other elements influenced by pop and rock songs from Scottish artists. The overall twenty-seven minute work intentionally combines different musical stylistic elements with Scottish roots, comparable to the symphonies of the Western classical canon but with a modern twist. I intend for the diversity of styles combined in one piece to be a symbol of unity, and hope that listeners will gain a greater appreciation for Scottish music (in its many forms) and Scotland through listening to the piece.

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Introduction

On my semester abroad in St. Andrews, Scotland, I learned a lot about the different musical traditions of Scotland. In my Scottish music course, I studied Scottish folk, pop, rock, and art music. Outside of class, I immersed myself in folk jam sessions at a pub in town and heard the latest pop music on the radio in restaurants. I played some of my own music at open mic nights and was inspired to compose an alternative rock song about my experience in Scotland. Though some Scottish folk music (bagpipes, fiddle music) is pretty widely recognized by the world, it occurred to me that many Scottish music forms are often overlooked in traditional music courses. Additionally, many famous Scottish musicians/groups known outside of Scotland are seldom recognized as being Scottish by foreign listeners. I pride myself on being a versatile musician, both as a multi-instrumentalist and a player of multiple genres (classical, jazz, pop, and rock). As I learn more about music, the line between these different forms of music becomes increasingly blurred. Inspired by my Scottish ancestry, my fascination with the music I learned about while in Scotland, and fond memories of my adventures in Scotland, I set out to compose a piece that combines elements from Scottish folk, pop, rock, and Western art music.

In order to achieve a wide range of styles, I chose a versatile ensemble that resembles a small orchestra, with some slight changes for added flexibility. Given the financial and logistical difficulties with hiring many musicians, I wrote the piece for an eleven piece chamber orchestra capable of crossing between styles, but which generally fits within a Western classical orchestra framework. The instruments are: two violins, viola, cello, bass, trumpet, flute, clarinet, piano/keyboard, guitar (acoustic and electric), and drum kit/percussion. While most of these instruments are found in traditional Western orchestras, the violin, flute, and clarinet can provide similar timbres to the fiddle, pennywhistle, and bagpipes respectively. The keyboard, drums, and

guitar along with double bass lay a solid foundation for pop and rock styles, with electric guitar clearly referencing rock music, and synth, organ, and electric piano providing timbres similar to current pop music, 70s rock music, and 80s soft rock music respectively.

The piece consists of three large movements. The first movement combines folk and classical genres, drawing inspiration from composers who have integrated Scottish folk music into classical pieces such as Hamish MacCunn, James Oswald, AC Mackenzie, Sally Beamish. It focuses on Scottish instrumental music (dances and marches), placing four instrumental folk tunes into the classical sonata form. The first two themes, “Struan Robertson” and “Colonel Robertson,” are existing folk tunes that are reinterpreted, while the other two tunes are entirely original takes on the popular reel and jig dance forms. The second movement is an orchestral arrangement of an original alternative rock style song called “Lost in Time” which I wrote during my time in Scotland. It includes folk and classical (and jazz to an extent) accompaniment, with an epic rock guitar solo near the end. The final movement draws inspiration from Scottish vocal music. It is based on two popular Scottish vocal tunes: “Auld Lang Syne” and “Loch Lomond.” The movement follows a theme and variations form, presenting five contrasting variations of each theme with a combination of the two at the end. Each theme statement and the transitions between them draw influence from pop and rock songs by a variety of Scottish artists such as Dougie MacLean, Amy MacDonald, Runrig, CHVRCHES, Gerry Rafferty, Franz Ferdinand, Teenage Fanclub, The Proclaimers, and Simple Minds. The overall twenty-seven minute work is intended to contribute to extramusical symbols of unity and appreciation for unfamiliarity through its keen combinations of different Scottish-inspired musical stylistic elements.

My approach to integrating Scottish musical styles comes with inherent bias. My early musical training included Western classical and jazz piano lessons as well as pop and rock music

(drums, guitar, vocals, piano). I tend to gravitate towards jazz, rock, and pop rhythms, harmonies, and melodies as a result of listening to and playing this music heavily in my youth. Even though I have recently come to appreciate a variety of Scottish musical types, my compositional drive and approach to writing music stems from an earlier place in my musical training, which includes some combination of Western music theory and rock/pop song writing. Moreover, I did not grow up in Scotland, and only experienced small pieces of Scottish music while I was there, so my composition is in no way intended to be a perfectly accurate representation of Scottish music. With this in mind, my approach was to look to certain Scottish musical features and musical selections that stuck out to me, as well as other aspects of my experience in Scotland, as inspiration for *Sounds of Scotland*.

First Movement

Classical Inspiration

One of my favorite pieces that I studied in Scotland was *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood* by Hamish MacCunn. A talented musician from a young age, MacCunn left his home in Scotland to attend the Royal College of Music in London when he was 15 (Purser 222). By the time he was eighteen, he had enough formal training in Western music to write *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, (Oates 41) an approximately nine minute, single movement, romantic style overture (Jamieson 59). Soon after the piece was finished, it was premiered at the Crystal Palace in London in the year 1887 (Oates 50). It is MacCunn's best known piece to this day, with many similarities to Mendelssohn's Scottish inspired piece *The Hebrides* (Oates 54). The piece is a symphonic poem inspired by the Scottish countryside (Jamieson 56-57) very closely modelled on the sonata form (Jamieson 59). The exposition follows sonata form closely, with a theme in minor, followed by a relative major theme. The development really enhances the programmatic

aspect of the piece, taking the listener through an intense thunderstorm before the sun comes out and shines over the hills of the highlands (Pettegree, *Hamish MacCunn* 15). For the recapitulation, the two themes from the exposition are repeated, but with the second restated lower in the parallel major key. MacCunn's masterpiece closes with a brass choir feature and triumphant variants of the second theme in a powerful and dramatic finish (Jamieson 59-60).

There are a few other Scottish classical composers that inspired this movement as well. While MacCunn crafted his own "Scottish" sounding tunes for the themes of *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, James Oswald and Alexander (AC) Mackenzie frequently used existing folk tunes in their works. A contemporary of MacCunn, AC Mackenzie composed three Scottish Rhapsodies, one of which was based on three songs collected by Robert Burns, Scotland's national poet (Barker). Oswald's *Sonata on Scots Tunes* is a five movement work in the "galant" style of the mid-18th century, in which each movement is based on a Scottish tune (Pettegree, *James Oswald* 17). Sally Beamish is a contemporary composer who is interested in crossing genres and creating evocative soundscapes (Pettegree, *Sally Beamish* 13). In her 1998 composition *The Caledonian Road*, she develops plainchant fragments from the 13th century St Andrews Music book in a Theme and Variations form (Pettegree, *Sally Beamish* 17-22).

My main focus for the opening movement was to combine Scottish classical and folk elements. Inspired by MacCunn's *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, I chose sonata form for this movement since it is one of the most prominent classical forms and is a popular first movement form. Next, I needed to determine the themes in the sonata form. I wanted to build on existing folk tunes like Oswald, Beamish, and MacKenzie, and also try my hand at composing some tunes from scratch like MacCunn. I pursued a "hybrid" of these approaches, using two existing folk tunes in theme 1, and composing two completely original tunes for theme 2. I chose

to integrate some programmatic elements, similar to MacCunn's piece, but instead of following the typical harmonic structure of sonata form like MacCunn, I opted for a more abstract approach that draws on folk-inspired harmonic devices. In addition to folk inspired harmonies, I took my piece further than classically orchestrated Scottish tunes, offering traditional folk textures and instrumentation mixed with more typical Western classical orchestration, even adding in some electric guitar occasionally. My overall goal was to draw inspiration from Scottish classical composers, Scottish folk tunes, and classical sonata form without relying on specific technical precedents or past practices, while also following (possibly non-Scottish related) musical ideas and discoveries which I found personally compelling.

General Scottish Folk Characteristics

Before delving into my compositional choices in detail, I will provide more on the distinguishing features of "Scottish music" in the folk realm. Similar to folk music in other cultures, Scottish music draws heavily on "gapped" scales. Scottish folk songs are typically based on the pentatonic or the hexatonic scale, which have two or one gaps respectively compared to the typical seven note diatonic scale of classical music (Collinson 4-5). Many non-Western folk musics, such as Chinese music, frequently use pentatonic scales as well (McKerrell 145), so this is not necessarily a feature unique to Scottish music. Another general feature of folk music compared to Western classical music is its monodic (and sometimes heterophonic) texture. Eighteenth century folk tunes in Scotland were typically transmitted orally with no harmony. It wasn't until the late 19th century when the concertina, the first naturally harmonic instrument, came to Scotland (Johnson 93). Melodies were often accompanied by bagpipe drones or bass fiddle (cello) drones (Johnson 93). Even in the 18th century however, the lines between folk and classical music were blurred. There were many folk song books (especially for fiddle) published featuring

“Italianized” interpretations of tunes with classical techniques and harmonization (Johnson 115 - 119).

Possibly the most recognizable “Scottish” element that theorists and musicologists have drawn attention to is the abundance of dotted rhythms, particularly the “Scotch Snap.” The Scotch Snap is typically notated as a sixteenth note followed by a dotted-eighth note, but is often played even faster than written. It may have originated from English or Gaelic speech patterns, as Temperley and Temperley (56) point out the increased number of stressed syllables in English compared to Italian and German, and Lamb traces them back to Gaelic Waulking songs (songs sung while making cloth)(81). While the popular Scottish rhythm may have vocal origins, it became the dominant feature of the “Strathspey,” a dance tune played on the fiddle that originated in the eighteenth century (Lamb 68). To play the rhythm, fiddlers used a “snap-bow” technique consisting of a down bow and a quick returning up bow (Anderson, 178). The “up-driven bow” is described by Anderson as a “refinement of the Scots snap” (179) in which the “snap-bow” is followed by two up-bowed notes (fig. 1), a technique often attributed to Niel Gow, Scotland’s most famous fiddler (Alburger, 96). These rhythms and fiddle techniques alone offered a sound very different to classical music, Alburger pointing out that the snap-bow was “a stroke unknown and untaught in the classical tradition” (96). Though the Scotch snap rhythm is most often associated with Scottish music, it is not a feature of all Scottish folk music, but is frequently found in a variety of fiddle, bagpipe, and even vocal tunes.



Fig. 1. The written ‘up-driven bow’ depicting a Scotch Snap followed by two up-bowed notes (Anderson 179).

In addition to the Scotch snap, the bagpipes and their unique design have played a key role in defining the sound of Scottish folk music. Not including the drones, the instrument has a nine pitch range, commonly notated from G4 to A5, with the F and C being raised (although typically not notated this way)(Cannon 28-29). Confinement to this A ‘mixolydian’ set of pitches limits the music that can be produced by the instrument, compared to modern classical instruments which can play chromatic tones (half-steps) between pitches (Johnson 157). McKerrell (150-151) and Johnson (157-159) suggest such a construction of bagpipes (and other wind instruments such as the recorder, stock and horn, and whistle) is a probable cause for the wide presence of double tonics in Scottish folk music. The double tonic is a sequence in which a “strongly triadic phrase” is played, then stated again but transposed down a whole step. The nine pitch range made it easy to create a melody centered around A using the entire octave, and then in the next bar create a melody centered around G utilizing the lowest pitch (G) on the instrument, creating the distinctive double tonic sound (Johnson 157-159). This use of the double tonic provides a phrase which is more consonant, paired with a phrase which is more dissonant against the three “A” pitched drones (Cannon, 38)(fig. 2-3). This very specific way of providing tension and resolution as result of the bagpipe design provides a characteristic sound to many bagpipe tunes, and has also made its way into fiddle and vocal tunes that have been transmitted aurally.



Fig. 2. “Thomson’s Dirk” uses the most popular double tonic moving from a consonant A major in bar 1 to a dissonant G major in bar 2, then back to A major in bar 3 (Cannon 39).

everything else, from marches to dance tunes (Cannon 46). These were originally transmitted aurally (Cannon 47), while pibrochs were written down specifically for pipers in a notation system called *canntaireachd* (Cannon 67-68). Pibroch's are similar to a theme and variations in the Western tradition, with an air or "ground" that is played, followed by variations (Cannon 55). The ground is much slower than march or dance tunes and players use a lot of rubato in their performance. Without going into specific detail, there are standard variations of the ground that employ distinct techniques (with heavy use of grace notes) that are often played in a specific sequence (Cannon 57-59). In the *Ceòl Mór* tradition, the bagpipe playing includes many complex "throws" consisting of many grace notes (fig. 4) that take up considerable time in the music even though it is not notated this way (Cannon 35). In the *Ceòl Beag* tradition, the bagpipes were commonly used for dance accompaniment (Cannon 105) and in the army (Cannon 119). The longer grace note figures ("throws") were not as common in these settings (Cannon 36) understandably because it was important that a steady pulse be maintained for dancing and for marching.



Fig. 4. Grace notes and "throws" played on the bagpipes (Cannon 35).

I based much of the first movement on dance tunes (which could have been performed on bagpipes, fiddle, or possibly other instruments). These "country dances" became popular in the 18th century and are still played today at pub jam sessions and other events. One of the most common dance forms is the "reel" (Cannon 106). The reel is a dance tune in cut time (2/2) that is a series of short four bar phrases with a driving rhythm. They typically consist of steady eighth

time actually remain closer to their roots in Cape Breton compared to Scotland, due to the isolation from the Scottish homeland (University of Washington). The tune “Colonel Robertson” was composed by a pipe major and dedicated to the Colonel of the 48th Battalion (Highlanders) of the Canadian Militia, formed in 1891 (Kuntz). While I am unsure of any personal connection to these Robertsons, the title instantly reminded me of my grandfather Robertson, who was a Colonel in the United States Marine Corps. I’m also really fond of the tune, which is a 6/8 march.

Incorporating Classical and Folk Elements Into the Movement

I ultimately decided to use both of the Robertson tunes in the first theme area of the Sonata form, and compose two of my own tunes for the second theme area. Similar to MacCunn, I wanted to incorporate some programmatic features into the piece, so I began the movement with a slow, rubato section with drawn out tonal harmonies to give a setting for the first theme to originate from. I envisioned a dark and damp highland landscape, with a lone bagpiper beginning to play (the first theme in m. 17) as the sun rises. For the introduction section, I used very long tones, with some drawn out suspensions to help paint this scenic backdrop. In m. 10, I introduce a Scotch snap inspired figure in the trumpet part as more instruments join in. The introduction section ends on prolonged drone notes in the viola and cello, which are meant to simulate the drones on a bagpipe.

The first theme area begins in m. 17, with the clarinet simulating the bagpipe chanter, playing the melody. The tune is a modified version of the Struan Robertson tune (fig. 3), which I present as a mix of *Ceòl Mór* and *Ceòl Beag*. The tune would normally be played in a march setting with pipes and drums or as dance accompaniment on bagpipes or fiddle, which both fall under the category of *Ceòl Beag*. With this presentation of the tune, I adopted some features of *Ceòl Mór*. I used a mix of single grace notes as well as longer four note “throws” (m. 18), notating the longer figures to more accurately represent how much time they take when playing. Notating the “throws”

as well as purposefully adding in some longer duration notes for a rubato sound results in the time signature sometimes changing to 5/4 to accommodate these features. I notate some Scotch snaps as 32nd notes instead of 16th notes, as they are often played faster than they are written by folk musicians. After the clarinet solo, more instruments join in playing fragments of the theme, and the Scotch snap trumpet figure returns in more voices. This figure ends up being repeated a number of times as a transition into the second tune in the first theme area. Throughout the beginning of this movement, I tried to refrain from too much harmony (for a more folksy sound), opting for intervals like fifths and ninths rather than thirds.

The brief transition to the second tune uses the Scotch snap figure, moving upward in pitch and dynamic level. The pitches begin to move back down again as a triplet figure is passed between instruments and the second tune (Colonel Robertson, fig. 6) is introduced by a solo cello in m. 40. With this tune, the melody is lower (in the cello) with drone tones coming in above the melody in the viola and violin, inverting the texture from the previous tune. After the solo cello presentation of the melody (which is slightly altered from the original tune), I overlapped fragments of the melody with some intentional dissonance. While there is resulting harmony from coinciding melody fragments, I intentionally tried to limit the presence of harmonic thirds. Eventually, one melodic fragment prevails and is repeated by most of the voices leading into a reprisal of the first tune. Here, I include triadic harmonies while the Struan Robertson theme is played in more rigid time with marching snare accompaniment (more similar to *Ceòl Beag* marching style). Alongside the folk sounds, there is a Western style harmonic progression with some classical-style string figures. In m. 71, the electric guitar joins in to give the listener a brief taste of classical, folk, and rock styles combined to conclude the first theme area.



Fig. 6. “Colonel Robertson” tune (Cannon 39).

The transition from the first theme to the second theme (starting in m. 75) features a lot of chromatic motion, with the clarinet accompanied by strings. The transition leads to the second theme, which features two original dance tunes composed in the style of the reel and the jig. The reel tune is introduced in m. 90, and replicates what one might hear in a modern folk jam session, with “fiddle” and flute (in place of the pennywhistle) playing the melody in heterophony with guitar strumming chords and lower strings playing a simple bass line. Measure 106 introduces a more classical style presentation of the melody, passing it around to different instruments, before returning to a more folkly style in m. 114. The overall reel tune has an A strain (mm. 90-97) and a B strain (mm. 98-105) which are each 8 bars long and repeat in a simple binary form, which is typical of a Scottish reel (Kemp, *Instrumental Forms* 8).

Often times, Scottish folk tunes are grouped together during performances; that is, you might hear a reel directly followed by a jig followed by another reel. Keeping with that tradition, the second tune in the second theme area comes directly after the reel. The second tune (beginning in m. 123) is another originally composed tune, but is a jig as opposed to a reel. I begin with a traditional 18th century folk style presentation of the tune, with the fiddle (violin) playing the melody and the bass fiddle (cello) playing a drone-like accompaniment. Gradually, I add in more instruments and begin to harmonize the melody, a practice that became common in 18th century Scottish classical music as well (Johnson 150). By m. 158, all of the voices are joined in as the

melody is augmented. The piano, trumpet, and clarinet provide a hemiola and the electric guitar doubles the melody, again adding a rock element to the folk and classical combination.

The development section begins in m. 195, beginning with a descending piano feature. I opted for a shorter development section given the quite long exposition, so melodic variations of sections of each tune are strung together in close succession. The descending bassline repeats, beginning a half step higher the second time. In m. 202, there is a brief departure from this descending chromatic figure in order to introduce a chromaticized version of the double tonic harmonic progression present in the reel tune. The lower instruments drop out for this section, then gradually join in by m. 214, where the descending chromatic bassline returns and is repeated twice, and some instruments repeat the melodic figures in a fashion similar to a round. Eventually, a one measure melodic snippet based on the jig tune is repeated over and over and offset by half a measure in some voices for another round type presentation. This overlapping of a continuously repeating phrase and the accompanying crescendo is meant to heighten the energy leading back into the recapitulation.

The recapitulation begins in m. 254, and follows the same form as the exposition (as is typical in sonata form) but features some harmonic alterations. Instead of only drones under the clarinet solo, I added some more complex harmonies on this go around so that the melody sounds more firmly in the key of B minor. I employed a similar technique with the second tune (m. 278), adding in some harmonic accompaniment instead of just single note drones in the strings and vibraphone. Normally in the sonata recapitulation, the second theme is transposed to be in the key of the first theme. In this case, the original presentation of the first theme has an A drone, so is in kind of an A mixolydian mode, while the second presentation is more firmly in B minor and D major key areas. I opted to keep the first tune of the second theme in A during the recapitulation

since the original first theme was in an A mode, and then transpose the second tune in the second theme (m. 360) from D to A in order to end the movement in A major. This decision prompted some reorchestration in m. 395 in order to effectively spread out the voices in the final measures of the piece. Finally, I end the piece with a coda, which is an extension of the final theme. This section alternates between A and G major chords, providing one last taste of the double tonic, the popular Scottish folk harmonic pattern, in the final bars of the movement.

Second Movement

The Songwriting Process

I sometime struggle with my classifications as a musician, often throwing around terms like “singer-songwriter,” “multi-instrumentalist,” “lyricist,” “one-man-band,” “composer,” “producer,” etc. I have written and recorded five albums of original music which I typically classify as alternative rock, but ranges anywhere from progressive rock to power-pop to acoustic ballads to even jazz. I’ve always felt naturally driven to come up with new songs in these genres since I began writing and recording around age twelve. If I don’t have a new song or two I’m working on at any given time, I’ll end up picking up a guitar to start something new. So, when I was packing to leave for my semester abroad in Scotland, my acoustic guitar was high on my priority list, even if that meant stumbling through airports and train stations to get from Baltimore, MD to St. Andrews, Scotland. Moreover, it seemed only natural that once I got to Scotland I would pull out my guitar and begin writing a brand new song.

My songwriting process typically begins with a series of guitar or piano chords (or riffs), followed by a melody, and then lyrics to fit the melody. The song “Lost in Time” (the basis for the second movement) followed this formula pretty closely. I sometimes intentionally try to write songs that sound similar to songs or artists I like, but other times the chords/riffs just capture a

feeling I am having in the moment. I am not particularly sure what inspired “Lost in Time.” I recall strumming the rhythm on the guitar and envisioning a drumbeat behind it that sounded kind of like Oasis’ Wonderwall (not a Scottish band, but a UK band no doubt). When I came up with the melody soon after the guitar part, it included a prominent falsetto vocal part that reminded me of early Coldplay (another UK band). And by the time I got around to composing a guitar solo, I felt the song had a Pink Floyd (yet another English band) aura to it, and created a David Gilmour-esque guitar solo with a lot of bends and sustained notes. Sometime in the middle of the song writing process on a trip to the Isle of Skye, I found myself in a café with some friends where we heard a song on the radio that sparked our attention. I used the Shazam app on my phone to figure out we were listening to “This is the Life” by Scottish pop artist Amy MacDonald. The song quickly became a favorite of mine. I now hear a resemblance between “Lost in Time” and “This is the Life,” both with acoustic driven minor harmonies.

The mood of “Lost in Time” has a somewhat hazy connection with my experience in Scotland. My time in Scotland was one of the happiest times in my life – I took interesting courses, went out to the pubs every night with a group of very close friends, played and listened to live music occasionally, went on daily bike rides and runs in the Fife countryside, and even had a Scottish girlfriend by the end my stay. But I found myself with this dark sounding, minor heavy, almost depressing song in my head, possibly inspired by the unique geography and climate of Scotland. When I first arrived in Scotland, I was disoriented for about a week as I tried to adjust to a new time zone. As days progressed, I remember sitting in my tiny single dorm room with a very small window, letting in little light. As it got closer to the winter solstice, the days began getting shorter and shorter. I would eventually walk to my 9 a.m. class as the sun was coming up, and it would be pitch-black as I walked to my 4 p.m. class the same afternoon. There was a three-

week gray-out period where the clouds covered the sun the entire time. Sometimes I would wake up late, around noon, knowing the sun would set in three hours and feel like I had already wasted the day. And that doesn't even account for the rain and fog that could further dampen the mood at times (fig. 6). I don't think it's a coincidence that I embraced a sound similar to Pink Floyd, a band from a similar dark and damp climate just a little further south in England, who often incorporated (somewhat gloomy) scenic soundscapes into their music.



Fig. 6. Two pictures from a very foggy and gray day on North Street, St. Andrews, Scotland. Taken at 12:59 p.m. on Nov. 27th, 2019.

Synopsis of “Lost in Time”

I recorded “Lost in Time” in my basement when I returned from Scotland. The original recording featured a standard alternative rock line-up, with acoustic guitar, bass guitar, electric guitars, electric keyboard, and vocals. I recorded all the tracks one by one, sometimes improvising, without notating any of the music. My idea for the second movement was to arrange this song for my thesis ensemble. The original form of the piece was so compelling that I kept it exactly the same in my arrangement, only changing some rhythms, harmonies, and most obviously, the

instrumentation. The central challenge was to transfer the melody between different instruments to keep the piece interesting without the added variety of lyrical content. The process of composing this movement was very interesting and different from the other two movements, because I was essentially arranging a song that I had already composed, but had never notated. I was seeing the components of the song in Western notation for the first time and sometimes struggled to represent my original ideas in this notated form.

The form of the song (and the arrangement) is based on the typical alternating verse and chorus structure of most pop/rock songs, with some modifications (fig. 7). It begins with an introduction, then goes into a verse that is divided harmonically into two smaller subsections. The verse section then repeats (with a slight modification at the end) before entering the chorus section. After the chorus is a short interlude containing new material. Then, the verse repeats again, just once this time, followed by a two choruses, followed by the interlude. After the interlude comes the guitar solo, which is harmonically based on the two part verse. The piece finishes with a final statement of the verse. One of the reasons I found this form so compelling is because the verse section is essentially played five times, whereas the chorus is only played twice, but the two part verse structure keeps the piece interesting throughout. The emphasis on the verse instead of the chorus gives the piece more of a folky feel, and makes it a nice basis for a more subdued second movement.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|------------|---|------------|---|--------|-----------|------------|---|--------|---|-----------|----------------|----|------------------|---|
| Intro | Verse 1 | | Verse 2 | | Chorus | Interlude | Verse 3 | | Chorus | | Interlude | Guitar Solo | | Verse 4/Outro | |
| Intro | A | B | A | B | C | D | A | B | C | C | D | A' | B' | A | B |

Fig. 7. Formal structure of Movement 2 – “Lost in Time.”

One thing that gives this song a unique sound is the harmonies that result from the non-standard guitar tuning. The two E strings (lowest and highest strings) are tuned down a whole step to D, and then a capo is placed on the second fret. The lowest string tuned down a whole step allows the guitarist to play a barred power chord (5 chord) all on the same fret on the lowest two strings, and then add in the 9th of the chord on the next string. With the highest string tuned down (and with capo on the second fret) the top two strings strummed open are C-sharp and E, the 5 and b7 in F-sharp minor. The combination of these upper “drone” tones with the added 9 in many of the chords creates a very rich and complex harmony and a particular sound that can’t easily be achieved with standard guitar tuning. For this reason, I decided to keep this guitar part as the centerpiece of this movement, transcribing the acoustic guitar part I played on the original recording almost exactly for the first half of the piece.

The movement opens with only guitar, with violins entering after (m. 5) to subtly accentuate the upper drones in the guitar. After the introduction, the viola and the cello trade off with the verse vocal melody in the tenor range (mm. 9 – 21). Similar to the original song’s recording, more instruments enter in the second verse (m. 23), providing a “full band” sounding orchestration. This includes drums, piano, flute, clarinet, bass, and the string quartet that was already playing. In this statement of the verse, the flute and clarinet trade off the melody in a much higher register, and the strings double some of the guitar tones and accompanying figures. This statement of the verse features an extra two bar insertion near the end (mm. 35-37), providing contrast to the first verse. Some of the melody is altered slightly as a vocalist would, providing slightly different inflections and ornaments based on the different words in each verse.

Unlike many pop song choruses, the chorus (m. 39) of this piece is less dramatic with more tightly packed extended harmonies compared to the verse, also with a lower melody compared to

the verses. To make the melody stand out over tightly packed, lower-pitched orchestration, I placed the chorus melody in the trumpet and provided longer tone accompaniment in the string parts. Following the chorus is a short interlude (m. 47) where the winds (instruments providing vocal melodies) drop out as the vocals do in the original recording. For the third verse (m. 51), I decided to have the guitar drop out, both to provide a new texture and to give the player time to switch to electric guitar. Here the strings section takes over the harmonic accompaniment, with faster rhythmic figures (especially in the violins) to make up for the loss of the acoustic guitar as the rhythmic driver. Like the second verse, the flute and clarinet play the melody, but this time the flute harmonizes with the (lead) clarinet line acting as a “backing vocal” part, similar to the backing vocal part I recorded in the original alternative rock version. The intervals of fourths and fifths in addition to thirds between the clarinet and flute lines add an extra folk quality to the arrangement. In the B strain of the third verse (m. 59), the electric guitar enters with sustained arpeggios of the chords, adding some rock character to the arrangement as well.

The next chorus section (m. 67) is similar to the first, although it features distorted electric guitar arpeggios in place of acoustic strumming. This chorus repeats (m. 75), but on the second time the melody is slightly altered, reflecting the new lyrical material in the original voice part. The chorus repeat also features a low clarinet line to add extra dark tones under the trumpet melody, as well as a high flute part, offering additional ornamentation above the other instruments. The following instrumental interlude (m. 83) gets suddenly quiet, building in volume towards the guitar solo. For the guitar solo (m. 87), I transcribed the first half of my original improvised solo, adding in some additional ornamentation on the melodic material from the wind instruments and violins. For the second half of the solo (m. 95), I opted for a non-written improvised solo, providing chord symbols instead. In this section, I restated fragments of the written guitar solo in the winds

and violins, highlighting the opening motif in the violins throughout the remainder of the solo. After this climactic moment, all the instruments drop out except for the strings (m. 103). Getting quieter, the strings provide harmonic accompaniment for the 1st violin playing the verse melody for the final time, ending the movement subtly with extended, quiet tones.

Text Content

My thesis composition being entirely instrumental, the lyrics are not included in this arrangement of the piece; however, I chose to include them in the appendix for listeners to read and better understand the mood of the piece and the place it represents for me. I wrote the lyrics for the song toward the end of my stay in Scotland, during the three week revision and exam period. Though my experience had been overwhelmingly positive up to this point, this was the most challenging part of the semester for a number of reasons. The weather was beginning to get colder and the days shorter, the stress of upcoming exams and relentless studying was stressful, and I knew that in a few weeks I would have to leave the new friends I'd made and the place that had been my home for the past few months. These more somber feelings fit well with the mood of the song I had been working on, and as a break from studying, I typed out most of the lyrics to the song on my phone.

The lyrics sound like a love song, written to a particular person. While I was somewhat writing this song about a particular person, I was also writing the song about Scotland as if it were a person, similar to the way Dougie MacLean personifies Scotland in his song "Caledonia." I intentionally chose phrases that could be about Scotland as well as the specific person I became close to while I was there. I included a lot of the themes I discussed previously, especially highlighting the general darkness and gloominess in the later months of my stay. The theme of being "lost in time" speaks to the way the short days can confuse your mental awareness of the

time of day, as well as the fact that I was in a different time zone from my friends and family back home. The line “In the meantime” has a dual meaning, referring to both the remaining time that I had in Scotland as well as the fact that I was in the Greenwich Meantime time zone. I also referenced some of the fun times I had with my new friends, telling “stories” around tables at pubs and making new memories that would form stories we would remember later. While there are certainly elements of my time in Scotland that I didn’t touch on in these lyrics, I was able to incorporate some key details into the lyrics and music of “Lost in Time” that represent my unique experience in Scotland.

Third Movement

Vocal Music Inspiration

Since the first movement was based on solely instrumental tunes, I based the third movement on vocal music. I also wanted a way to introduce the inspiration from some of the Scottish pop and rock songs that I grew to love while abroad. Distinguishing Scottish popular music from other Western popular music is very difficult, since much of British (including Scottish) popular music has been influenced by American popular music. The Scottish accent can sometimes be a distinguishing feature depending on the vocalist (The Proclaimers are a good example), but that is difficult to translate to an instrumental composition. I instead looked for a way to integrate elements of specific Scottish artists and songs into a cohesive movement without focusing on the “Scottishness” of the music, considering the artist being Scottish to be sufficient. Inspired by Sally Beamish’s “Caledonian Road,” (see pp. 3-4) the theme and variations form stuck out as a great way to integrate very different characteristics of popular music into one movement. I chose two well-known folk tunes (“Auld Lang Syne” and “Loch Lomond”) and created variations of each of them inspired by particular Scottish pop and rock songs. This allowed me to present

melodies that are somewhat familiar to a general audience, meld older folk tunes with newer genres, and create a variety of different sounding sections to drive home the idea of genre crossover in the final movement.

Another reason this approach was compelling to me is because it is an abstract representation of what occurs in oral tradition. Many Scottish folk tunes were passed down by oral tradition until they were collected in the 18th century, and even then continued to be passed down orally. This results in the tune changing slightly over time, which is quite similar to a theme and variations, although in a less dramatic and intentional way. Tunes were also significantly altered when they were transferred from voice to fiddle or bagpipes or vice versa, in order to better fit the instrumental/vocal idiom (Johnson 102-104). This passing of tunes from voice to instruments was fairly common, and is one of the reasons there is not always a clear distinction between vocal and instrumental music in Scotland. In fact Johnson states that “interchange between vocal and instrumental idioms seems to be the main means by which a tune can develop” (Johnson 104). For example, the song “O let me in this ae night” is found in the *Scots Musical Museum* (1792), but appears later in a fiddle book circa 1805 in two different versions (figs. 8-9)(Johnson 101-102).



Fig. 8. Excerpt of “O let me in this ae night” as found in the *Scots Musical Museum* in 1792 (Johnson 101).



Fig. 9. Excerpts of two versions of the same song found in Peter Macewan's music book, EPL, circa 1805. The second version was originally a whole step higher and is transposed to facilitate comparison (Johnson 101).

My intention for this movement was to bring the piece into the current musical landscape, where there is intense mixing of different types of music happening constantly, easily transmissible from person to person through modern technology. I envisioned the movement as a physical journey, where the listener is walking around a Scottish town, popping into a pub to hear some live folk music, going next door to a shop and hearing a pop artist on the radio, and so on. The idea of using inspiration from specific songs is akin to the modern musical production technique of sampling. In certain sections I use melodic snippets from pop songs as transitional material, and in some of the variations, I take harmonic progressions or stylistic rhythmic patterns from particular songs and combine these with the two tunes, which is similar to sampling a certain part of a musical recording. Of course, the use of older folk tunes as melodic material is a practice that

predates sampling, but involves a similar technique of reworking existing material into something new.

The Tunes: Auld Lang Syne and Loch Lomond

“Auld Lang Syne” has become a popular song on New Year’s in English-speaking countries. The title, in the Scots language, translate to “Old Long Since” which can be interpreted as “since long ago” or “for old times’ sake,” and the lyrics are about two friends catching up over a drink. The song is attributed to Scotland’s famous national poet, Robert Burns. He first wrote it down in 1788, but it was not published until 1796 (after he died) when it appeared in the fifth volume of James Johnson’s *Scots Musical Museum* (Lewis). As with many folk tunes, the origins of the tune and lyrics are not completely clear, even though the tune is now attributed to Burns. Burns was a song collector and contributed many songs to Johnson’s collection. He claims the words of “Auld Lang Syne” were taken from an old man singing (Lewis). The melody also existed before Burns wrote the words, appearing in the comic opera *Rosina* by English composer William Shield. There appears another version of the same tune in volume 4 of Johnson’s *Scots Musical Museum* compilation published in 1792, but with entirely different words (Lewis). The tune published in Johnson’s collection was also different from the one that later became popular. The tune that is now familiar to most people did not appear with the words of the song until 1799, in George Thomson’s Scottish song compilation (Lewis). The song was reprinted many times in the 19th century and became a part of the Scottish New Year’s Celebration, known as Hogmanay (Lewis). The unclear origin and path of this now popular song is typical of a folk tune, often having no clear composer and evolving over time as it is passed down through oral tradition, and in this case, through different published works.

“Loch Lomond,” also known as “The Bonnie, Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond,” also has an interesting historical context. It emerged from the Jacobite political culture in Scotland as a Jacobite adaptation of an eighteenth-century song where a lover dies for his king and takes the “low road” back to Scotland (Pittock 136). The origins of “Loch Lomond” are even more unclear than “Auld Lang Syne,” as neither the tune nor lyrics were attributed to a specific person. David Johnson presents a narrative of tune adaptation that begins with the song “The Lowlands of Holland” from around the year 1750. This song was rewritten by William Marshall around 1775 as a fiddle dance tune called “Miss Admiral Gordon’s Strathspey,” which included a second strain that doubled the tune’s length. In 1789, Robert Burns wrote words to Marshall’s strathspey, turning it back into a vocal song. Then at some point in the mid-nineteenth century, an anonymous composer simplified Marshall’s tune into a more vocal idiom, resulting in the tune we now associate with “Loch Lomond” (Johnson 103-104). The tune was published in *Vocal Melodies of Scotland* in 1941 (Wiser). This tune is highly representative of the folk tradition in Scotland, changing over time as it is passed from instrumental to vocal idiom, eventually resulting in what is today a very popular tune. The Scottish folk-rock band “Runrig” first recorded a version of the song for their 1979 album *The Highland Connection*. It has since become the band’s signature track performed at the end of their concerts (Wiser). Runrig’s 2007 live version, featuring “The Tartan Army” (Scottish football supporters) was my first introduction to the song and highly influenced my interpretation of the tune in my variations.

The Variations

Each presentation of the melody (and some of the transition material between them) is inspired by elements of particular pop and rock songs by Scottish artists. The opening finger-picked acoustic guitar is meant to be very similar stylistically to Dougie MacLean’s “Caledonia.”

MacLean's song makes heavy use of open strings, beginning with a descending pattern as an instrumental introduction, then using an ascending harmonic progression for the verse. I replicated these elements, beginning high up on the guitar neck and descending downward, before settling into a similar harmonic progression to MacLean's that ascends by major and minor seconds. After the guitar introduction, the flute, clarinet, and violin play different variations of the "Auld Lang Syne" melody in heterophony. The flute and clarinet versions make heavy use of ornaments in different places while the violin plays a very simple version of the melody, all coming together to create a folk-style sound. At the conclusion of the "Auld Lang Syne" statement, the guitar accompaniment continues, taking us into the first statement of "Loch Lomond."

Inspired by some nice choral arrangements of the tune (such as the one by Jonathan Quick) and thoughts about arranging the tune for a brass ensemble, I chose a chorale for the opening statement of "Loch Lomond." The chorale begins in m. 18, with trumpet playing the melody (soprano) line, and clarinet, viola, and cello on the alto, tenor, and bass lines respectively. The particular melodic interpretation and harmonic progression I chose for this chorale were heavily influenced by Runrig's version of the song, particularly the version from their 2016 compilation album *50 Great Songs*, which I discovered after I returned from Scotland. At the end of the chorale, the descending guitar pattern from the introduction comes back underneath the chorale voices (m. 26), transitioning to the second statement of "Auld Lang Syne."

The next variation is heavily based on the harmonic progression and rhythmic style of the 2007 pop song "This is the Life" by Amy MacDonald, which I first heard on the radio inside a café on the Isle of Skye. The opening guitar palm muting in m. 30 and the following chord progression and strumming pattern is a fairly straightforward transposition MacDonald's song. For the violin melody, I reworked the "Auld Lang Syne" melody, keeping the intervals between notes

similar enough to make the melody recognizable, and combining the melody with the rhythmic features of MacDonald's melody. This in a way creates a hybrid melody of "Auld Lang Syne" and "This is the Life." After the violin plays the melody, there is a short musical interlude over the same harmonic progression from mm. 40-43, very similar to the one in the original song. In m. 44, the hybrid melody returns, now in the cello. Towards the end of the section, instead of going back into the interlude, a descending bassline transition leads us out of a more metrically structured section into a free-flowing rubato section beginning in m. 60.

This next section employs a similar use of harmonic material from a Scottish artist underneath the melody of a folk tune. This time, I chose harmonies inspired by Gerry Rafferty's popular hit "Baker Street," but left out the lower strings and lower range of the keyboard to create more ambient sounding harmonies. I also changed the time signature to 6/4, to help augment the "Loch Lomond" melody. The melody is shared between the three wind instruments, weaving harmony between the three instruments with more heterophonic type moments as well. Setting the "Loch Lomond" melody over new harmonies resulted in seemingly transposed sections of melodies to fit the new harmony, which, combined with the lack of bass notes, results in a less grounded feeling tune presentation. The end of the section crescendos into a clarinet nod to the sax motif in Rafferty's song (m. 75), before moving back into a strict 4/4 metric structure.

The transition beginning in m. 76, featuring heavy power chords in the guitar, was heavily inspired by the 2004 indie-rock/post-punk hit "Take Me Out" by Franz Ferdinand. Like my transition, the song begins with quickly strummed power chords and a sixteenth note drum pattern which slows down gradually and evolves into a more funk/dance style groove. In my case, the transition evolves into a more pointillistic presentation of "Auld Lang Syne" in m. 80, inspired by the 2013 song "The Mother We Share" by CHVRCHES. The CHVRCHES song makes use of

modern techniques of stereo separation and panning, with a lot of small snippets of syncopated, staccato figures played on different synths and created from various vocal samples. I tried to recreate a similar aesthetic by composing a syncopated, staccato version of the “Auld Lang Syne” melody, adding an appropriate groove in the drums and synth parts (which also adds an 80’s aesthetic), and passing small snippets of the new melody around between the string and wind instruments. Similar to a chorus coming after a verse, the next variation (m. 91) employs a similar syncopated rhythmic accompaniment and pointillistic structure, but uses a different melody (“Loch Lomond”) divided up amongst the winds and strings. The next transition (m. 99) is a quotation of the 1984 song “Don’t You Forget About Me” by Simple Minds, which leads into another steady eighth note electric guitar/drum pattern.

The next variation, beginning in m. 109 was inspired by the power pop group Teenage Fanclub, specifically their 1995 song “Sparky’s Dream.” While the previous variation brought the two melodies together under one stylistic umbrella, this variation further melds the two melodies by overlapping them. My approach with this section was to put both “Auld Lang Syne” and “Loch Lomond” in retrograde, then interweave eight measure chunks of each these (32 measures total). The melodies were first placed in retrograde, then augmented to be twice as long given the fast tempo, and then some rhythms were altered to create more vocal sounding phrases out of the retrograde melodies. I then further distinguished between the first and second half of this section (again, a verse-chorus type structure) by using a little bit of a slower harmonic rhythm in the second section compared to the first, changing the drum accompaniment between the two halves, and changing the voice playing the melody. The accompaniment throughout is meant to resemble the structure of a power-pop group, with guitar, drums, bass, and keyboard playing their usual roles, winds and upper strings covering vocal parts (melody) and lower strings acting as sort of a second

“lead” guitar. This texture stays fairly static through the end of the section (m. 140), when the tempo begins to slow down and bring us into the final variation.

The final section (m. 143) brings the two folk tunes even closer together, playing them simultaneously. Since this is the final section, I wanted to make it very dramatic and drawn out. Hence, I employed continuous sixteenth notes in the strings and ascending and descending sextuplets in the piano to add driving forward motion, while frequently changing time signatures and having a rather slow and drawn-out statement of the two melodies in the 2nd violin and clarinet (and harmonies in the flute and trumpet). The guitar also generally follows the slower pace of the melodies, with long sustained chords, while the drums complement the faster moving sextuplets and sixteenth notes with a marching snare accompaniment (similar to sections of the 1st movement) combined with more typical rock drum patterns and fills. The statement of both melodies technically ends at m. 161, but here the ensemble transitions to a minor ii chord instead of the tonic to create a deceptive sounding cadence. Measure 163 begins a repeat of the second half of each of the melodies (still played simultaneously), functioning as sort of a tag. Over the next four bars, we hear both melodies beginning from halfway through, but they begin to slow down and reach a fermata at m. 166. From here, the underlying melodies continue on, but an electric guitar cadenza-type solo takes the focus as long tremolos are held out in the string underneath intense electric guitar improvisation. The guitar solo, along with improvised drum fills, continue to the end of the piece to provide an epic rock style finish, similar to the band Wolfstone’s recording entitled “Battle.” The piece concludes with orchestral tutti playing an A major harmony.

Closing Remarks

Overall, I think I effectively structured the piece in a way that showcases many different elements of my interpretation of Scottish music. The use of Scottish dance and march melodies in

the first movement combined with the popular Scottish tunes in the third movement provide nice bookends of “Scottish-sounding” material that a general audience will recognize, while affording me the opportunity to explore less explicitly “Scottish-sounding” material throughout the rest of the piece that was still influenced by Scotland in some way. Also on that note, I really enjoyed working with pre-existing folk material and exploring how I could reshape the tunes in different ways. I am used to coming up with entirely original material, so this was a new technique that I found really compelling, especially in the context of a Scottish-based piece. I was really satisfied with how the contrast between the movements turned out, both in style and in length. This was mostly planned from the beginning, but I feel like the first movement, though quite long, works great as an opening to the piece and that the full recapitulation is important in doing justice to the many ideas presented in the movement. The shorter second movement provides a nice contrast with the longer first movement, offering more repetition and less dramatic stylistic shifts. Toward the end of the movement, the timbral shift and dynamic contrast between the loud guitar solo and the very quiet string quintet at the end keeps the listener engaged after almost 5 minutes of a relatively static instrumental rock song arrangement. The last movement, though offering abrupt changes in style at times, offers a lot of variety that caters well to a diverse audience and keeps all listeners engaged after listening to almost 20 minutes of music. The length of the third movement is right between the first and second movements, giving it enough time to build to a climactic finale, but not overwhelming the listener again with another 13+ minute movement. In addition to the overall pacing, I was very satisfied with the mixing of instrumentation throughout the piece, especially the moments where the distorted electric guitar was combined with a classical sounding orchestra. I am increasingly interested in the timbral palette afforded by mixing orchestral style instrumentation with pop, jazz, and rock instruments, and I hope more composers will consider

adding instruments such as the electric guitar or electric keyboard to works scored for orchestra in the future. I think my piece was successful in combining diverse styles and different Scottish influences using a symphonic framework, giving the audience a greater appreciation for Scottish music and the country of Scotland as a whole.

Appendix

Movement 2 Lyrics: "Lost in Time"

Come here, the sun don't shine today
So near the end of days
It's alright, I'll hold you tight again

So dear, don't you slip away
I'll hear this masquerade
As sunrise taints the sky
Bringing end to all the nights in mind

So farewell for now
Hear my cry
Over stories circling round
We are lost in time

Unclear, as temporary fades
This fear of parting ways
With moonlight shining bright
All our worries fade into the night

So farewell for now
Hear my cry
Over stories circling round
We are lost in time
In the meantime, keep me
In your arms
This love, impermanently, it has
Gone so far

So dear, don't you feel ashamed
Just look to brighter days
When sunrise fills the sky again

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