BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS AND WIND BAND

by

VALENCIO JACKSON, JR

(Under the Direction of Emily Koh)

ABSTRACT

Quelbe ([kwel bā]), formally adopted as the official traditional music of the U.S. Virgin Islands, is a musical synthesis arising from the convergence of European, African (via the slave trade), and indigenous peoples who have inhabited the region since colonial times. Governed by the Dutch, English, French, Spanish, Knights of Malta, and Danes, the U.S. Virgin Islands possess a diverse sociocultural landscape that has fostered a similarly varied musical soundscape.

Quelbe incorporates African cinquillo and tresillo rhythmic patterns, more localized bombolo and cariso rhythmic patterns, bamboula chants, quadrille dance forms, as well as being heavily influenced by European/American military marches. The themes explored by quelbe, its vernacular, its role in various functions, and performance spaces have become intricately intertwined with the sociopolitical aspects of daily life, forming a distinctive Virgin Islands art form that endures in today's musical landscape.

Prior to the United States' acquisition of the territory in the early twentieth century, wind band music had already become a quite common form of musical expression. This suggests that significant exponents of wind band repertoire in the region might demonstrate cultural markers

of the U.S. Virgin Islands. However, research reveals a definitive lack of such examples within the standard repertoire of Virgin Islands wind band music. Alton A. Adams (1889-1987) became one of the most locally prominent classical Virgin Islander composers in the early twentieth century, who composed two works that gained local and national recognition: the *Virgin Islands March* and *The Governor's Own*. While these works are significant, they do not incorporate any culturally distinctive Virgin Islander attributes in the music. This discovery prompted the following inquiry: *How might a wind band piece conceived within a classical concert stage framework sound and look like if it were based on traditional quelbe elements?*

This study, at its core, demonstrates the continuity of this folk musical tradition, linking the present to the past. It culminates in a newly composed work for wind band, broadening the contemporary musical landscape of wind band repertoire in the US Virgin Islands.

INDEX WORDS: Quelbe, Virgin Islands, Folk Music, Scratch band, Fungi band, Wind band, March

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INTRODUCTION

Quelbe has been formally recognized as the official traditional music of the US Virgin Islands (December 2003).[1] It is also referred to as *scratch band* music and *fungi band* music, though the latter term is less prevalent in scholarly discourse. Regardless of the descriptor, quelbe represents a fusion of musical elements sourced from a convergence of European, African, and indigenous influences, spanning from the 15th century to the early 20th century. These influences encompass African cinquillo and tresillo rhythmic patterns, bamboula chants, bombolo, cariso, quadrille, and European/American military marches.

Within the historical context of the US Virgin Islands (USVI), seven flags have flown since the late seventeenth century, including those of the Netherlands, Great Britain, France, Spain, the Knights of Malta, and Denmark. This period of political flux concluded in 1917 when the United States acquired the territory, then known as the Danish West Indies, from Denmark. Preceding the colonial settlement in the fifteenth centuries, the indigenous peoples included the Arawaks, Caribs (Kalinago tribe) and Taino cultures. Predictably, the territory exhibited a rich diversity in architecture, language, and ethnic demographics among the indigenous people, ruling classes, and enslaved or free communities. This multifaceted, sociocultural milieu provided the groundwork for the development of a correspondingly diverse musical landscape.

[1] "The Source" is a locally respected, online-only, newspaper in general circulation in the US Virgin Islands. It has been in continuous operation since January 1999, and reports daily on news within the entire territory. It reported on the official actions of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands in adopting quelbe as the official traditional music of the Virgin Islands on December 3, 2003 (Bill no. 25-0056).

Through a syncretic process, quelbe has emerged as an integral component of the contemporary musical identity of the US Virgin Islands, reflecting the social conditions of life in the region. The themes it explores, the language and lyrics it employs, and the performative spaces it engages with have become intricately intertwined with the sociopolitical activities of daily life. Over time, quelbe continued to expand by the deliberate incorporation of its elements into other musical forms arriving from across the Caribbean, the US mainland, and beyond (such as calypso, reggae, jazz, among others). Musicians, composers, arrangers, and songwriters from the Virgin Islands have consistently demonstrated a tendency to subtly (and eventually, perhaps unconsciously) modify certain foundational elements of these genres and styles to include aspects of quelbe. This process has led to the development of an evolving style, or more aptly, a 'sound', that is distinctly characteristic of the Virgin Islands. For instance, Sonny Rollins, an American jazz tenor saxophonist and composer, aptly demonstrated this intersection between jazz and quelbe in his work, *St. Thomas*. When I searched for other examples of a similar interaction in the classical concert stage arena (art music), I found a scarcity of examples, particularly within the standard repertoire of Virgin Islands wind band music. I was directed to the music of Alton Augustus Adams Sr., more specifically, two key compositions within the Virgin Islands wind band repertoire: the *Virgin Islands March* and *The Governor's Own.* Both works were composed by him during the early twentieth century and swiftly gained recognition, solidifying their positions as staples within the repertoire both locally and within the broader US national wind band music canon. However, there seems to be nothing in the scores of these works that separates them from standard, Sousa-inflected, American band marches.

In his memoirs, Adams corroborates that he was highly influenced by John Phillip Sousa's compositional style and band leadership. His studies in composition and orchestration

were greatly influenced by meticulously transcribing individual parts of Sousa's marches into full scores.

> Assiduously I would put into orchestral scores the immortal "Stars and Stripes Forever," "El Capitan," Forward," "Semper Fidelis," "Manhattan Beach," "King Cotton," and others known throughout the musical world, so as to clearly analyze and study content-harmonic progressions, instrumental arrangements, and those original terns of bass movements so characteristic of their unique style. For many months, night until the wee hours of the morning, that was my musical menu.[2]

Sousa's style often incorporated elements of traditional American or European folk music, particularly Scottish and Irish, within a classical framework. Adams' careful study of Sousa's compositional work indicates his familiarity with this approach, and his ability to compose new band music in a style indistinguishable from Sousa's demonstrates his considerable compositional skill. Intriguingly, Adams chose not to integrate folk elements into his compositions, even though Sousa had successfully done so in works like *Mother Hubbard March, In Pulpit and Pew*, and *Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle*. Ethnomusicologist Mark Clague seems to suggest that Adams' personal taste and the historical context may have influenced this decision, as he did not incorporate popular island music like quelbe or later influences of jazz, calypso, steel pan, rhythm and blues, reggae, or pop.[3] By not incorporating these elements, Adams may have missed an opportunity to showcase the Virgin Islands' cultural identity and musical traditions within an art music framework to a broader audience. This decision could have potentially contributed to the marginalization of Virgin Islands culture within the broader American context.

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[2] Alton A. Adams, *The Memoirs of Alton Augustus Adams, Sr.: First Black Bandmaster of the United States Navy*, ed. Mark Clague [University of California Press, 2008], 84.

[3] Ibid, 61.

Clague's statements in his article, *Instruments of Identity: Alton Augustus Adams Sr., The Navy Band of the Virgin Islands, and the Sounds of Social Change,* presents a counterargument to some local pushback. Clague comments that "Music was the rhetorical tool that Adams used to persuade the navy to enable his cultural work and to reinforce the identity of the local inhabitants as Virgin Islanders."[4] Not only was Adams the bandmaster of the *Juvenile Band,* which became the territory's first naval ensemble following the U.S. acquisition, but he also became the first black US Navy bandmaster stationed in the Virgin Islands, overseeing three large bands throughout the territory of bandleaders trained by him and serving directly under his leadership. These bandsmen were regimented, US Naval sailors, financially stable, loyal, and deeply connected within the community. Consequently, Adams' maintained a high degree of influence in the socio-political governance of the islands; a civic leader determined to help navigate his community forward through a time of cultural and political ambiguity.

Clague further highlights how Adams leverages his influence to publicly "embrace the ideals of the United States without ceding authority over local identity."[5] On Adams' US national band tour in the U.S., Clague maintains, "By featuring the 'music of the masters,' Adams presented the all-black band as a cultured and accomplished musical ensemble."[6] With respect to the reassurance of Adams' military superiors of his bandsmen's patriotism,

> …For mainlanders, the sounds of Sousa's marches, such as the Stars and Stripes Forever," defined patriotic sentiment. Likewise, the *Virgin Islands March* would have reassured Adams' military superiors of his bandsmen's patriotism... It impressed potential tourists with the essential Americanness of the islands' population, establishing a sense of trust and comfort that might overcome the islands' foreign heritage and unfamiliarity. [7]

Within the context of broader discussion, his arguments, while succinctly stated, are quite

[4] Ibid, 24.
[5] Ibid, 36.
[6] Ibid, 41.
[7] Ibid, 31.

compelling, particularly from the perspective of Adams' band having all Black membership, and the territory was transitioning culturally and politically from Danish rule to an American territory.

The context of the twenty-first century is quite different from that of the early twentieth century. In truth, the lens through which Adams understood the relationship between the United States and the Virgin Islands during that earlier period compared to our vantage point today, over a century later in the third decade of the twenty-first century, is very different. This study does not aim to position itself in opposition to Adams' compositional methodology; instead, it seeks to present a contemporary approach that integrates traditional musical elements, offering a sense of cultural distinction in the music.

This study's purpose became to answer the question: What might a wind band piece, conceived within a classical concert framework, sound and look like if it were based on traditional quelbe elements? To explore this question, the accompanying composition, *Revelry!,* serves as a case study. *Revelry!* aims to bridge the gap between two distinct musical traditions: the traditional music of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Sousa-esque mold of American wind band marches that hold cultural significance in the Virgin Islands. Rather than merely embellishing the composition, the musical folk elements are woven into its thematic and structural core, serving a fundamental role in the work's formal design. This approach celebrates the Virgin Islands' musical heritage, demonstrating how traditional elements can be thoughtfully recontextualized within a contemporary framework, and showcasing the potential for cultural synthesis in concert music.

CHAPTER 2

TRADITIONAL FOLK ELEMENTS OF MUSIC OF U.S.VIRGIN ISLANDS – QUELBE

Building on the quelbe vernacular, this chapter will provide a more specific summary of the musical elements of this traditional art form. These elements are formally discussed in formal thematic sections, beginning with rhythmic elements. Analyses of two case studies, and brief references to other music in the quelbe repertory will provide practical applications of these musical characteristics.

Rhythmic Elements:

The rhythmic elements of quelbe are one of the driving forces in creating that characteristic phrasing and 'lilt' underlying much of the Virgin Island popular music. In *The Quelbe Method,* and later published, *The Quelbe Commentary 1672-2012,* historian, author, arranger and musician, Dale Frances provides results of his research into this traditional folk music of the Virgin Islands. Francis presents specific rhythmic transcriptions of quelbe's traditional rhythmic patterns and the folk melodies he collected in his research. Though I have transcribed the melodies from local historians and modern performances, I am basing much of my analysis on Francis' rhythmic transcriptions as a point of departure for this study. From his transcriptions, the rhythmic patterns that are used in this study will include the bamboula, bombolo (likely a variant on the bamboula pattern), cariso (kaiso), and quadrille seven step rhythmic patterns. These patterns are listed below:

Figure 2.1: Bamboula Rhythm

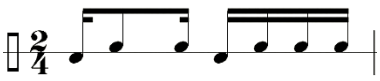


Figure 2.2: Bombolo Rhythm

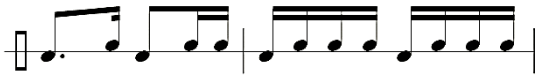


Figure 2.3: Cariso Rhythm

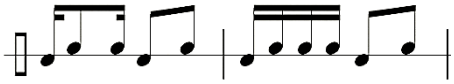
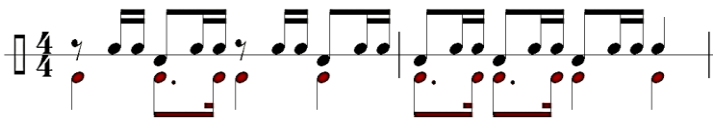


Figure 2.4: Quadrille Seven Step Rhythm



In figure 2.4, the notes above the line represent the individual rhythmic pattern, while the notes below the line or stem down represent a beat pulse or pattern usually played in an accompanying layer. All of these rhythmic patterns are as a matter of course in quelbe, juxtaposed against each other and other rhythmic patterns to create a lively, polyrhythmic texture; a defining feature of the art form. The syncopated rhythm in the melody, sometimes combining two motivic ideas from the patterns above, (see *Caroline* melody in figure 2.6 below) against other rhythmic patterns in the accompanying layer creates an upbeat, lively quality to the music. Above all, quelbe is primarily a dance music form. The tempi generally range from a moderate tempo (ca.84 bpm) to a moderately fast tempo (ca.140 bpm), never moving too fast or too slowly to allow the dance to fall apart. Though this bamboula rhythmic pattern and tempi is part of quelbe, there may be only scant modern dances that resemble the original bamboula harvest dance. Jose Antonio Jarvis, a Virgin Islander historian and educator, asserts that the bamboula dance originally introduced by captive Africans, evolved into a broader term used to describe any lively dance accompanied by drums, or tambours, mainly due to the practice of any native dance utilizing the bamboula drum as the primary accompaniment being referred to as a bamboula dance.[8] In *The*

[8] Dale Francis,

Origin and Development of Ethnic Caribbean Dance and Music, Lisa Lekis discusses the work of Earl Leaf in his photographic essay of dances of the Caribbean (*Isles of Rhythm*, 1948). Lekis summarizes the dance Leaf labels as the bamboula, as more similar to the old Calenda danced all over the West Indies in the early part of the twentieth century.[9] This evolution highlights the bamboula's significance as both a musical and cultural practice, deeply rooted in African traditions, yet adaptable within the broader context of Caribbean dance and music. To the contrary, the couples (and group) dance, quadrille has remained similar in practice and performance to the present day. That may have been due to several reasons, not the least of which was the important social role it played in Virgin Islands aristocratic society prior to the early twentieth century, the dignity of shared experience in the lower classes, and the social 'double entendre' messaging it may have been used for the lower classes. Frances reports from his work, "a quadrille dance at a venue may have been dancers' opportunity to sashay or move their garments in specific ways or position to covertly give time, place, or purpose, information about a secret event or activity."[10]

There are similarities in much of the musical elements of the circum-Caribbean.[11] According to Samuel Floyd Jr in his article *Black Music in the Circum-Caribbean*,

> The cinquillo and tresillo motives, or variations of them, are prominent in the rhythmic constructions of musics all over the Caribbean. They provide the base for multi-rhythmic stews in which the two rhythms blend and contrast with one another and with other rhythms derived from the same and similar sources…. They are sometimes prominently present and at other times sparingly and subtly employed.[12]

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[9] Lisa Lekis, "The Origin and Development of Ethnic Caribbean Dance and Music" (PhD diss., University of Florida, 1956), 239.

[10] Dale Francis, *Quelbe Commentary 1672-2012. 2014* [Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2014], 149.

[11] The term 'Circum-Caribbean' is used by many scholars, including musicologists, historians such as Gerard Béhague, Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., Peter Manuel, Margret Shrimpton, Alejo Carpentier, Emilio Grenet, Irving Rouse, and others in various articles, essays, books and other publications. Ileana Sanz contributes this definition she uses in her article published in the *Caribbean Quarterly* in 2009, *Early Groundings for a Circum-Caribbean Integrationist Thought,* "… a space which includes the insular Caribbean, together with the northern coastal states of South America, Central America, and the Caribbean coast of Mexico."

[12] Samuel Floyd, Jr., "Black Music in the Circum-Caribbean," *American Music 17* [Spring 1999]: 9

Much of the music in quelbe repertoire does indeed demonstrate musical elements of a shared ancestry to other traditions in the circum-Caribbean and surrounding countries. The similarities between the tresillo rhythmic pattern Floyd references in the quote above and the bombolo rhythmic pattern of quelbe aptly demonstrates this (Figure 2.5). The bombolo pattern seems to be used in conjunction with (juxtaposed against) the cariso pattern as part of that 'required' polyrhythmic texture, particularly in vocal quelbe music. In the quelbe song, *Caroline,* for instance, the melody of the chorus is built on the cariso rhythmic pattern (see Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.5: Similarity between the tresillo and the bombolo rhythmic patterns

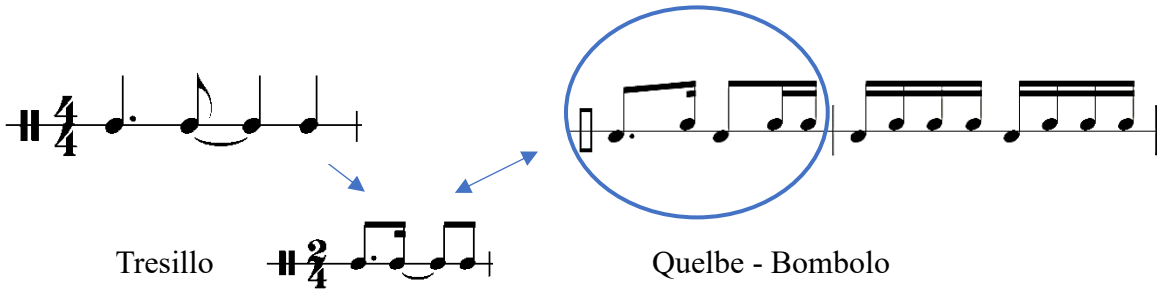
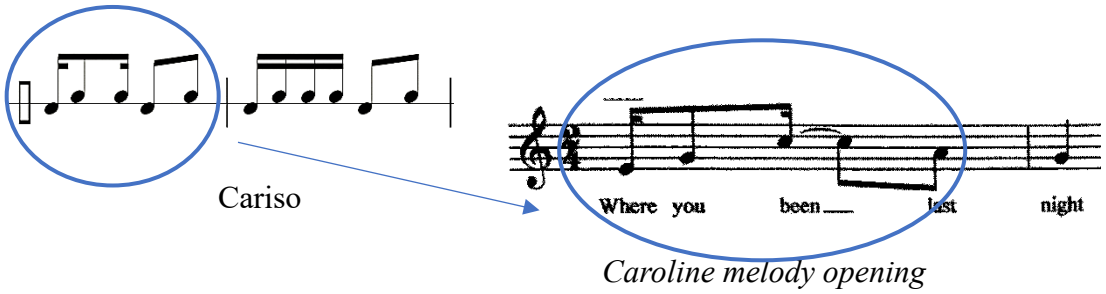


Figure 2.6: Cariso rhythmic pattern in *Caroline*



The combined patterns of quelbe used in creating the melody of *Caroline* matches the Brazilian lundi (Figure 2.7), implying a shared African legacy dating back to eighteenth and nineteenth century colonialism. A further connection can be seen in the African cinquillo (Figure 2.8)

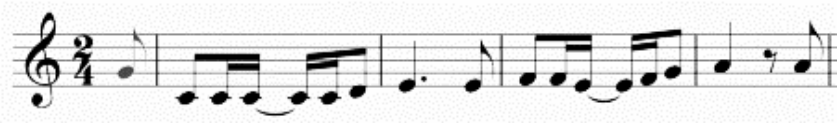
that is prevalent among many countries and territories of the circum-Caribbean.

Figure 2.7: Brazilian lundi

Figure 2.8: Cinquillo rhythmic pattern

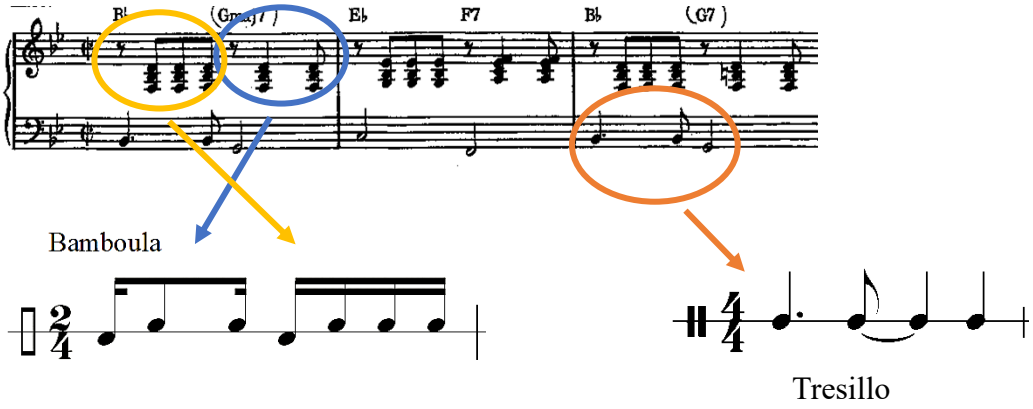
The incorporation of the cinquillo pattern in the verse construction of *Caroline* (Figure 2.9) is clear. Both the verse and chorus are layered against the backdrop of an overarching quadrille seven step pattern in the accompaniment.

Figure 2.9: Melody of verses in *Caroline*



In Bill LaMotte's *Island Girl* (Figure 2.10), the lead in, or introduction can be matched to a reversal (blue and yellow circles) of the bamboula rhythm in the right hand. Also, consider the close similarity of the left hand of the accompaniment to the tresillo rhythmic pattern (orange circle).

Figure 2.10: Bill LaMotta's *Island Girl* as printed from Westindy Music (1965)

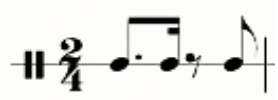


The resulting polyrhythmic texture is one way these shared rhythms have become distinctive of the individual musical styles in the region and surrounding areas. In the case of quelbe in the

Virgin Islands (in *Caroline* and *Island Girl* in particular), incorporation of multiple rhythmic patterns within the same musical layer (melody) as well as a simultaneous layering of multiple rhythmic patterns in performance is a major characteristic feature of this traditional music art form.

I stated earlier that Francis' transcriptions were to be a point of departure for this study. It is also worth noting that musicologists and other scholars have noted the *Bamboula* is quite likely one of the more common umbrella terms encapsulating deconstructed and amalgamated African dance music in a more general sense. Jerry Leake posits that this pattern of 3+3+2 (Figure 2.11) is "the world's most famous rhythm structure" in his article published in *Percussive Notes*. Leake maintains that this pattern is a widely common, ancient pattern "found in nearly every music tradition on the planet."

Figure 2.11: 3+3+2 Rhythmic Pattern



Professor Robert J. Damm comments,

> …the *bamboula* rhythm and dance had left an enduring stamp on New Orleans. The 3+3+2 *bamboula* pattern persist in Mardi Gras Indian music and second-line brass band styles.[13]

In quelbe, that 3+3+2 pattern is more subtly realized in the accompanying layers and seen more as a derivative of the other rhythmic patterns in the polyrhythmic texture. Consider Francis' bamboula rhythm (see figure 2.13). The New Orleans version of the bamboula rhythmic pattern

[13] Robert J. Damm, "Remembering Bamboula." *Pecussive Notes* (July 2015): 21.

referred to by Damm can be seen as a combination of both the surface layer and basic beat (also in figure 2.13) and found in a traditional quelbe music accompaniment (figure 2.14). Indeed, both versions seem to have rooted from the tresillo pattern (figure 2.5).

Figure 2.12: Comparison of Quelbe Bamboula and New Orleans Bamboula.

Quelbe Bamboula New Orleans Bamboula

Figure 2.13: Comparison of New Orleans Bamboula and Quelbe Cariso.

New Orleans Bamboula Cariso

Damm reports in a conversation with Luther Gray at the 2014 Congo Square Rhythms Festival (New Orleans) on the topic of the bamboula rhythm, that Chief Bey (percussionist specializing in jazz and African music) taught the 3+3+2 bamboula rhythm as authentically bamboula. Damm further states in his article that "…many New Orleans drummers and researchers (e.g. Evans and Sublette) believe that this rhythm was central to the African music played in Congo Square." Damm is referring to Freddi Williams Evans in *Congo Square: African Roots in New Orleans,* and Ned Sublette in *The World That made New Orleans: From Spanish Silver to Congo Square.* Evans further stated that this bamboula rhythm entered New Orleans "with enslaved Africans who had been brought to Louisiana directly from Africa and from the Caribbean…" The circum-Caribbean connection is further supported by Evans in his work. Quelbe, as musicians and composers have done in various New Orleans based musical genres and styles, has merged this

rhythmic pattern under its umbrella as well, in effect, creating a distinctive 'sound' in the polyrhythmic and instrumental textures of the art form.

Instrumentation

Quelbe, in both its vocal and instrumental forms is primarily a dance music art form. Quelbe music, not unlike a jazz combo or woodwind quintet, has a characteristic grouping of instruments that contributes to a distinctive aural texture, and supporting a lively tempo and strong percussive beats. The lead instrument (main melody carrier) is a solo part, usually the voice or flute (more recently, the saxophone). The original bamboula drum was eventually replaced by the conga drums and/or standard drum set. The 'steel' element included the triangle (and cowbell more recently), and the 'scratch' element includes a guiro, or cabasa (or additional bean pod/shell percussion instrument). Depending on the event, a small duo of saxophones (alto and/or tenor saxophones) or duo of brass instruments (trumpets and/or trombones) augments the group, though this is a modern and occasional addition to the standard ensemble. Finally, a bass instrument (electric bass replacing a washtub bass in more modern bands), keyboard synthesizer (marimboula in older contexts), and a banjo (sometimes augmented with guitar) rounds out the quelbe ensemble, or scratch band, as it is frequently called locally.

The name "scratch band" preceded the name quelbe, as commented on by Francis in his research and in interviews of foremost quelbe musicians, Stanley Jacobs, and James "Jamesie" Brewster (see links to their interviews in the discography). Francis comments that 'scratch band' may be as a result of the instrumentation, more specifically, the origin and sound of the instruments. Certainly, the high treble of the triangle, the 'scratching' sound of the very prominent squash, and the bright, metallic sound of the banjo strings against a vibrating stretched

membrane belly all combine to create this distinctive aural texture. Francis contributes two other reasons for the name. As tourism grew in the mid-twentieth century in the Virgin Islands, tourists commented on the use of the squash being a prominent instrument of this small ensemble, referring to the band as a scratch band. He also reports that locals differentiated this band from other groups as a scratch band due to the instruments being made 'from scratch' rather than manufactured as in those of the military wind bands. As mentioned earlier, some of the earlier instrumentation for scratch bands included the washtub bass, which as literally a washtub basin flipped over with a pole affixed to the side and a string (or two) drawn tightly from the center of the upturned basin to the height of the pole. Flutes were made with bamboo and other hollowed out softwoods. Makeshift banjos were made with taught nylon or metal strings and a large enough tin can for the body. Whatever the reason(s), the name 'scratch band' has remained in use to the present day interchangeably with quelbe, albeit less so most recently.

Melodic and Harmonic elements:

The melodies in quelbe music are simply constructed in a mostly stepwise (scalar) fashion with small leaps emphasizing the contour of the line, and based on any of the rhythmic elements stated above. These melodies are usually in some binary format, presented first unadorned, then ornamented or embellished in later repetitions, particularly in instrumental music. Francis remarks in *The Quelbe Commentary* that "the melodic embellishments and arpeggios create a lead playing style that produces an instrumental equivalent of vocal characteristics in the interpretations of a melody."[14] This is not unlike the improvisatory nature of vocal jazz. The harmonic content of quelbe tends not to include modulations or lengthy

[14] Dale Francis, *The Quelbe Commentary 1672-2012*. [Bloomington, Indiana: iUniverse, 2012], 208.

tonicizations (beyond circle of fifth progressions) in any section of the music, and only generally follows the harmonic progression of (18th century) Western art music in which the harmonic action typically involves a movement from a point of stability (tonic – T), cycling through a progression of harmonic functions (Predominant – PD, Dominant – D), to eventually return to the tonic space in resolution. Note Figure 2.14 below.

Figure 2.14: Western art music phrase model

T→(PD)→D→T

Indeed, much of the harmonic content of quelbe lies outside of this model, but the intersections do offer some insight. For the sake of comparison of the works of Sousa, Adams, and *Revelry!,* these discussions will focus on those intersections of functional Western tonality, without any intention to diminish quelbe harmonic language. In the example of *Caroline* (Figure 2.9), the melody of each verse was constructed based on stepwise, scalar motion and set rhythmically close to the cinquillo rhythmic pattern, while the accompaniment was also set to a seven-step quadrille pattern. Harmonically, that melody was accompanied by the following:

C → C7 → F6 → C → G7 → C

I → V^7/IV → IV^6 → I → V7 → I

(prolongation of tonic)

T ⟹ D → T

The plagal extension can be more broadly considered a prolongation of tonic. In LaMotta's *Island Girl* (Figure 2.10), the first part of the melodic phrase is a descending, mostly scalar passage beginning on the third scale degree (mi) moving down to the octave below, with the second part of each phrase returning in ascending fashion back to that higher 'D' at an imperfect authentic cadence. The next statement of the verse closes in a perfect authentic cadence with the

melody ending on ‘do’. In B^b major, LaMotta’s harmonic progression similarly repeats with each verse:

$B^b \rightarrow$ Gmaj7 $\rightarrow E^b \rightarrow$ F7 $\rightarrow B^b$
(I $\rightarrow$? $\rightarrow$ IV $\rightarrow V^7 \rightarrow$ I)

As the Gmaj7 chord repeats throughout the song, it seems to suggest a more functional role in the harmonic progression. However, this is an example of how quelbe music does not always fit within this model, as the Gmaj7 chord lies outside of the ‘Classical’ vocabulary for B^b major. The relationship between the quelbe and the phrase model does demonstrate a more general movement from a stable tonic space to the dominant before resolving back to the tonic.

As case studies, I will now briefly discuss two other quelbe songs that are both very commonly performed within the genre. Both songs are performed as often instrumentally (sans vocals) as they are performed with the lyrics, and since the vocal lines are accurately incorporated in instrumental arrangements, I will be using the instrumental versions of these songs in the analyses. A brief note about these songs for historical context. They are both examples of protest folk songs[15] that were effective in unifying the Virgin Islands commonfolk against lingering social unjust and oppressive labor practices. The melodies are frequently used as referential, melodic motives, frequently inserted as part of an improvised embellishment within the main body of another song or performed as they were musically set originally. By performing these songs, individuals can immerse themselves in the experiences of historical figures and events, effectively embodying them in their performances. This process helps to

[15] Protest songs of this community were not unlike the spirituals used by the slaves in The United States. While some of these songs carried important news and messages of inspiration and hope, some were also messages in code, providing a way to spread secret messages and news quickly among the enslaved community, and their abolitionist supporters. These songs continue to be sung as referential motives in the present-day political climate, locally and nationally.

preserve and transmit historical narratives, contributing to a collective memory that enables Virgin Islanders to connect with and reference their past.

Moreover, the notion of historical recovery through collective memory suggests a deliberate effort to reclaim and preserve aspects or events in history that may have been overlooked or marginalized. By incorporating these musical narratives into their modern-day practices and performances, Virgin Islanders engage in a form of musical historical preservation that not only fosters a deeper understanding of their heritage but also helps to shape their collective consciousness.

This collective consciousness, in turn, plays a crucial role in the formation of national identity. By sharing common experiences, narratives, and cultural practices, individuals within a community or nation develop a sense of belonging and shared history. Folk songs, as carriers of collective memory, thus contribute to the construction and reinforcement of national identity in the Virgin Islands.

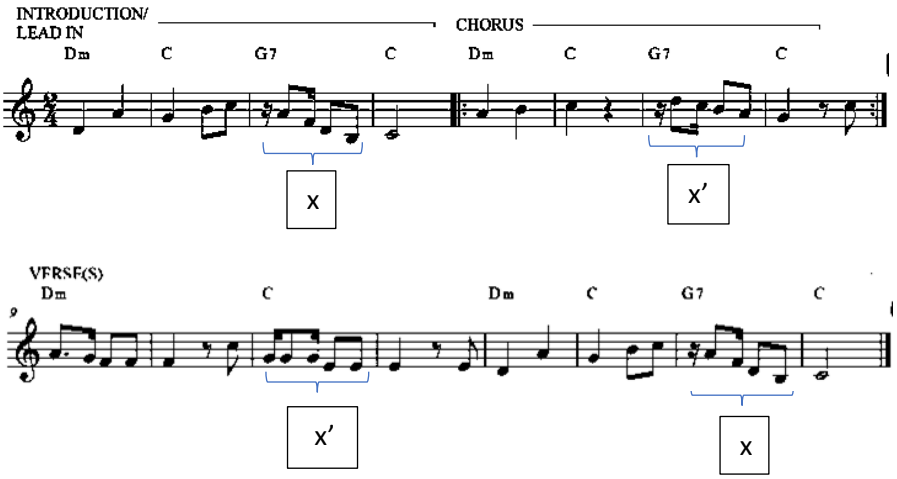
Case Study 1: *Queen Mary*[16]

In *Queen Mary*, a quintessential quelbe piece (figure 2.16), the lead player opens with a lead-in passage, often characterized by a brief melodic exposition. The melody for *Queen Mary* primarily employs small leaps, usually chordal skips and arpeggiations implying a simple harmonic progression. This introductory passage shares identical melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic material with the latter part of the verse, a characteristic shared by many of the lead-ins of quelbe songs.

[16] The lead sheet scores for the quelbe songs are compiled in Appendix B of this document.

Structurally, *Queen Mary* is well-balanced. Consider the lead sheet transcription of the piece in figure 2.15. The lead-in and the chorus sections each spans four measures, evenly subdivided into 2-measure phrases. In a similar fashion, the verse section spans eight measures, evenly subdivided into two, 4-measure phrases.

Figure 2.15: *Queen Mary*, lead sheet



In figure 2.15, motive x demonstrates its structural significance as part of the cadential schema of each section, and this structural pillar highlights the cariso element in this piece.

Following the lead players' initial musical statement, the ensemble joins in, establishing a collective harmonic framework for the work. Prior to transitioning into the chorus or verse sections, the lead player retains the option to embellish and ornament the initial thematic material, a practice akin to the improvisation common in jazz performances. This improvisatory aspect, well-established within quelbe performance, underscores its affinity with jazz music. Notably, many quelbe musicians refer to this introductory segment as the 'head,' borrowing from the lexicon of jazz terminology, due to its function within the performance context when the lead player engages in embellishments and variations. However, unlike the democratic improvisational ethos pervasive in jazz, in which multiple musicians pass the baton around the

ensemble in spontaneous musical expressions, only the lead player is allowed this embellishment opportunity in quelbe. Concurrently, the accompanying musicians remain in a supportive role, maintaining a repetitive harmonic and rhythmic framework supporting the soloist's nuanced variations.

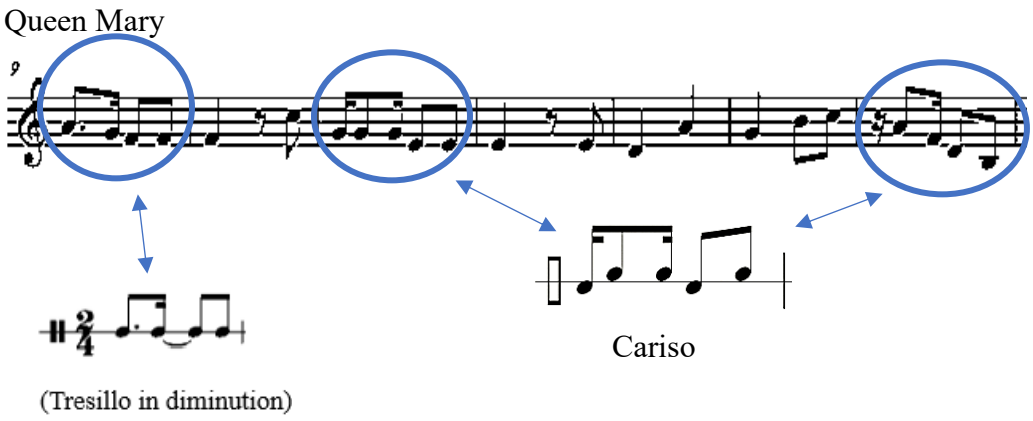
The progression of *Queen Mary* is repetitive, creating a looping harmonic framework. There is a repeated alternation of two chords (D minor & C major), with Dm in the stronger rhythmic position, and Cmaj seeming to embellish or prolong the Dm chord. This demonstrates another interesting example of how the harmonic syntax of quelbe can be at odds with the formal 'Classical' model, particularly if the G7 chord 'colors' the Dm-Cmaj oscillation rather than anchoring Cmaj as a dominant 7th chord:

Lead-in & Chorus: Dm → Cmaj → G7 → Cmaj
Verse: Dm → Cmaj → Dm → G7 → Cmaj

Nevertheless, the effect is similar to that created in many other quelbe songs, an impression that the listener is joining a conversation already in motion.

Rhythmically, the construction of the melody in the verse section is very distinctive of quelbe. The first measure of the verse (m.9) demonstrates use of the African tresillo pattern, a pattern that is found in the cariso rhythm of quelbe (figure 2.16).

Figure 2.16: Comparing the rhythmic construction of m.9 to tresillo rhythm.



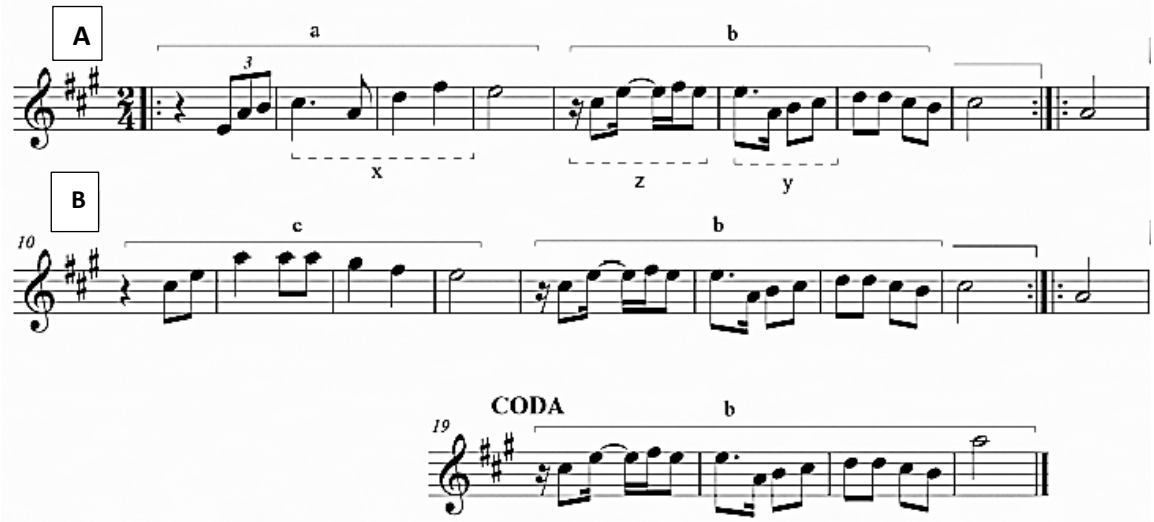
In m.11 and m.15 of the verse, the rhythmic motive demonstrates a close relation to the cariso rhythmic pattern including the underlying pulse that always accompanies that pattern. It also closely resembles the Brazilian lundi pattern shown in figure 2.7 The cariso rhythmic pattern being the governing the motivic patterning of the verse melody, particularly as it appears in the cadential schema of each section, set in polyrhythmic stew of the quadrille seven step pattern in the accompanying layers, confirms the quelbe genre of this piece.

Case Study 2: *La Bega Carousel*

In this vibrant dance piece, the melody adopts a higher tessitura compared to compositions mentioned, *Caroline, Island Girl,* and *Queen Mary*. As in these three pieces, neither the melody nor the underlying harmonic progression of *La Bega Carousel* modulates. Again, this static harmonic framework is part of the characteristic features of quelbe music.

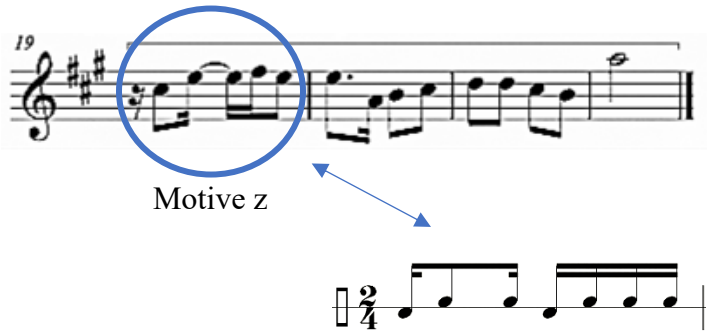
Structurally, it follows a binary form, with each section being repeated, culminating in a concluding coda (refer to figure 2.17). The initial section, labeled A, spans eight measures and comprises two distinct four-measure phrases, denoted as 'a' and 'b' respectively. The subsequent section, denoted as B, mirrors this binary structure, commencing with a contrasting four-measure statement ('c') before concluding with the same 'b' motive as found in the preceding A section. This symmetrical arrangement is further highlighted by the inclusion of a four-measure coda, seamlessly integrating the closing 'b' motive from both the A and B sections.

Figure 2.17: Quelbe Folksong, *La Bega Carousel.*



Within this well-balanced framework, I've discerned other interrelationships that contribute to reinforcing the motivic cohesion of what may initially appear as a simple song. Motive 'x' finds its roots in the African tresillo rhythm, a motive discussed within the context of Queen Mary. Meanwhile, motive 'y' mirrors the contour of motive 'x,' rhythmically related through diminution. Motive 'z' serves as the prominent motive in the 'b' part of each section, appearing as a variant of the bamboula pattern. Just as the downbeat carries greater emphasis than internal beats, the placement of motive 'z' holds greater structural significance within this format compared to motive 'y'. Upon closer examination of motive 'z', its sixteenth note pattern emerges as distinctive. This draws attention to the rhythmic pattern associated with the bamboula tradition, which assumes precedence in this composition over the implied cariso tradition suggested by the subsequent gesture of motive 'y' (refer to figure 2.18).

Figure 2.18: *La Bega Carousel,* Drawing relationship to bamboula rhythmic pattern.



Bamboula pattern

Harmonically, *La Bega Carousel* retains a simple tonal schema: Tonic → Dominant → Tonic.

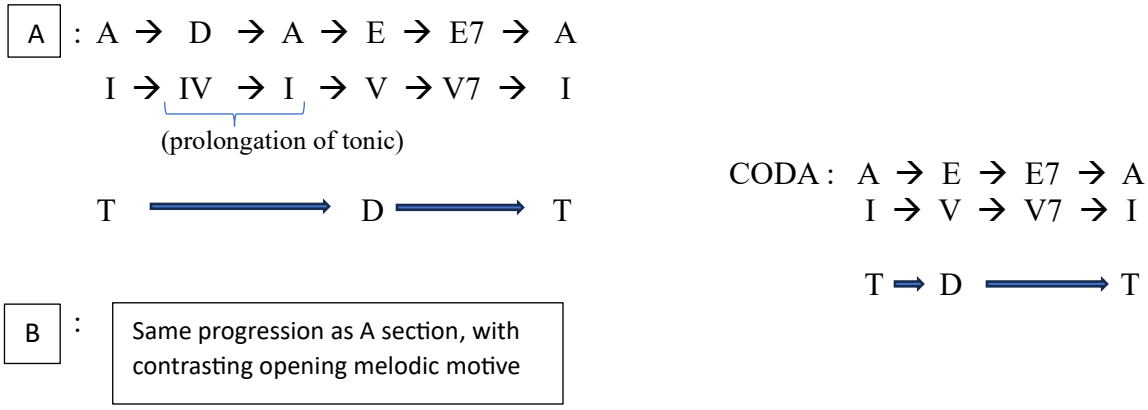
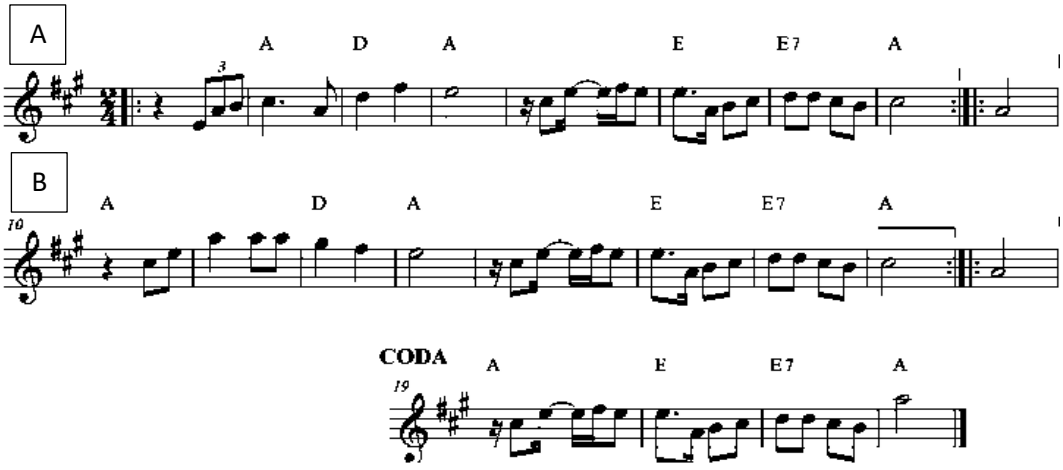


Figure 2.19 shows the lead sheet with the chord symbols written. As in the other quelbe pieces referenced earlier in this document, the lead-in, the chorus section (B), and the CODA all share the same harmonic progression. In popular American song, predominant song forms include structures such as AABA, ABA, and other episodic forms, among numerous formal types. Quelbe songs tend to be short works that retain small scale binary structures, and these quelbe songs described fit that mold.

Figure 2.19: *La Bega Carousel,* Harmonic progression.



In summary, quelbe as a traditional art form incorporates multiple rhythmic patterns (cariso, bamboula, cinquillo, quadrille, et al.) of diverse backgrounds realized in a polyrhythmic stew (in both the melodic structure and construction of the accompaniment layer), performed at a lively tempo supporting the dance music form. The rhythmic patterns employed in quelbe music play a crucial role in conveying the intended mood and purpose of the composition. When it comes to programmatic works, which are based on specific narratives or themes, the choice of rhythmic patterns often aligns with the narrative being portrayed. For instance, the tresillo and cariso patterns, with their intricate rhythms and cultural significance, are frequently utilized in programmatic quelbe pieces, particularly the vocal works. These patterns help to accentuate the storytelling aspect of the music, enhancing the listener's connection to the narrative being conveyed. On the other hand, in thematic compositions that may not be tied to a particular narrative, the emphasis shifts towards inspiring movement and dance. In such instances, rhythmic patterns like the bamboula or bombolo take center stage. These patterns are characterized by their lively and infectious rhythms, which encourage listeners to move and groove to the beat. Overall, while all quelbe music is designed to inspire movement and dance,

the choice of rhythmic patterns may vary depending on whether the piece is programmatic or thematic.

Certainly, quelbe music is characterized by a similarly straightforward approach to tonality, structure, and performance with a notable aspect of quelbe music being its brevity. Quelbe songs are typically short, lasting between three to five minutes in performance. This concise format allows for a focused expression of the music's themes and rhythms, keeping the listener engaged throughout the duration of the piece. Unlike some other musical traditions that employ elaborate melodic or harmonic tonicizations and modulations, quelbe music typically follows a more straightforward tonal scheme. This scheme is often based on progressions firmly rooted in the Western art music phrase model, which contributes to the music's distinctive sound. Due to their simpler harmonic structures and closely related rhythmic patterns, quelbe compositions lend themselves well to improvisation and variation (by the lead player only) during performance. The lead player may incorporate improvised melodic embellishments or variations on the established themes, adding a dynamic element to the music and allowing for extended performances. Additionally, the inherent rhythmic structures of quelbe music make it conducive to looping, where sections of the music can be repeated seamlessly to extend the performance or enhance its rhythmic drive. This flexibility in performance style contributes to the vitality and spontaneity of quelbe music, allowing it to adapt to different contexts and audience preferences while retaining its distinctive character.

Virgin Islanders label quelbe as “folk” music, and cite sources like musicians Stanley Jacobs and James Brewster, and the work of Dale Francis (among others) as sources verifying its modern realizations as authentic. Due to music in any folk idiom being mainly of oral transmission over periods of time, inherently performative, consistency in modern definition and

practice has been a typical challenge in folk classification and categorization. According to Philip Bohlman:

> When group or community is seen as the source of social organization, folk music originates internally and is shaped by the needs and practices of the group; when a concept of place predominates, folk music responds to such external developments, as the intensification of nationalism and the influence of musical genres not specific to the group…. Because folk music is inevitably a performed genre, it is essential to consider its social basis.[17]

Essentially, while composers and performers aim to capture the essence of folk music, their interpretations are inevitably filtered through their own cultural biases, artistic sensibilities, and aesthetic preferences, as implied by Bohlman's words above. Further, the act of transcribing or arranging folk melodies inherently involves a degree of transformation and reinterpretation. How do we know that Jacobs' or Brewster's definitions and descriptions of quelbe performance, composition, or social significance are accurate? Whose perspective should we qualify as being 'more authentic', or 'more accurate'? Remarkably, these interviews were quite consistent with each other and consistent with surviving, recorded music from the Virgin Islands in the early twentieth century. These interviews also supported the conclusions of Dale Francis' research. Further, in considering its social basis, any modern approach to classify, categorize, or verify authenticity of these folk elements should be confirmed through various pathways. At its conference in Sao Paulo in 1954, the International Folk Music Council formulated the following definition:

> Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are: (i) continuity which links the present with the past; (ii) variation which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group; and (iii) selection by the community, which determines the form or forms in which the music survives.[18]

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[17] Philip Bohlman, *The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988], under "The Social Basis of Folk Music: A Sense of Community, a Sense of Place," https://publish.iupress.indiana.edu/read/the-study-of-folk-music-in-the-modern-world/section/c5afbd1a-3da4-4967-a284-cf971658925c#ch4 [accessed December 8, 2023].

[18] Maud Karpeles, "The International Folk Music Council." *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, Vol. 2, no.3 (December 1965): 312.

The term can be applied to music that has been evolved from rudimentary beginnings by a community uninfluenced by popular and art music as it can likewise be applied to music which has originated with an individual composer and has subsequently been absorbed into the unwritten living tradition of a community. Quelbe, previously scratch band music, historically did not originate with any specific composer, but it does include variations based on the creative impulse of individuals (collectively), links the present with the past, and has certainly been absorbed into the unwritten, now recorded, living tradition of the Virgin Islands community.

The focus on authenticity and the broader idea of musical realism within the context of the Virgin Islands opens avenues for a broader discussion beyond the scope of this study. Composers, musicians, and local historians in the Virgin Islands draw directly from the diverse and rich musical traditions of the populace. Their endeavors reflect a deep connection to history, values, and ways of life inherent in the community's cultural identity. By faithfully representing these musical traditions, they serve as cultural bearers, playing a crucial role in preserving, celebrating, and promoting the cultural heritage of the Virgin Islands. Their dedication to these traditions not only honors the past but also ensures their continuity for future generations. Similarly, I hope the interdisciplinary approach of this inquiry, underscoring the interconnectedness of research and artistic creation, will positively contribute to fostering cultural vitality and resilience. Truly, the completion of this dissertation and the creation of a newly composed wind band composition to accompany it (*Revelry!)* hold personal significance, reflecting a shared investment in this community.

CHAPTER 3
THE MARCHES OF ALTON ADAMS SR.

I begin this chapter with a historical overview of Alton Augustus Adams Sr., shedding light on his life, influences, and contributions to music both within and beyond the Virgin Islands. Adams, a prolific musician and composer, played a pivotal role in shaping the musical identity of the region and left a lasting legacy through his compositions and leadership. This study further investigates the significant contributions of two key compositions within the Virgin Islands wind band repertoire: *The Governor's Own* and the *Virgin Islands March.* Both works were composed by Adams during the early twentieth century and swiftly gained recognition, solidifying their positions as staples within the repertoire both locally and within the broader US national wind band music canon.

Alton Augustus Adams was a native Virgin Islander, born in 1889 and raised on St. Thomas, near the territory's capital of Charlotte Amalie. He eventually received his Bachelor of Music degree through correspondence courses from the University of Pennsylvania, studying with De. Hugh A. Clark, and courses from the University Extension Conservatory of Music in Chicago. Adams continued his education with additional extension courses from the School of Musical Theory of Carnegie Hall in New York and The Royal Academy of Music in London. He started his own local wind band with other local musicians in the Virgin Islands (the Juevnile Band), later committing to the United States Navy (along with a majority of his band at the time) when the United States formally took possession of the islands (then known as the Danish West Indies) from Denmark in 1917. Adams was subsequently stationed in the Virgin Islands and was

appointed the first Black bandmaster of the US Navy. His commitment to high standards musically from his band individually and collectively resulted in regular concertizing, and successful tours across the US, which brought him to the attention of and in close contact to other US wind band composers and conductors of note, and other actors on the national stage. John Phillip Sousa, W.E.B. Dubois, W.C. Handy, and William Dawson were among those nationally well-known folk to whom he developed lasting professional friendships beyond his years leading and touring with the band.

Adams quickly became an important figure within the sociopolitical fabric of Virgin Islands. Maneuvered into position by his military superiors, Adams became a key player in United States and Virgin Islands relations, which later resulted in Adams becoming a locally powerful, political figure in the governance of the islands. He became engaged in community leadership, choosing to be on the board of the local Red Cross Chapter, being an active member in the founding of the first public library in the territory on St. Thomas, and arguably more importantly he actively engaged in the development of a Virgin Islands music education system which would be part of the larger educational and social transformation of the community towards inclusion under the United States authority.

In his memoirs, Adams comments that he has always been an avid reader and writer (evidenced by his journalistic activities). From his military posting in the Virgin Islands, he became the band columnist for the *Jacobs' Band Monthly*, a music magazine in Boston Massachusetts, linked to the *Jacobs Orchestra Monthly* also in circulation at that time nationally. He also worked as reporter for the Associated Press, the Associated Negro Press, and became a frequent contributer to the *Pittsburgh Courier.* In the Virgin Islands, Adams also became the

editor of *The Herald,* one of the primary newspapers on St. Croix, the largest island of the USVIRGIN ISLANDS.

As an accomplished and connected musician (as bandleader, soloist, music educator, and social activist), writer, and Naval officer rising to local and national prominence, Adams' experience, expertise, and influence provided him with a high level of administrative skill and access, local community support and respect, as well as financial security. From a sociomusicological perspective, those factors elevated the aesthetic value of his work, both his literary publications and his musical compositions.

Both works, *The Governor's Own* and the *Virgin Islands March,* are both marches in the style of John Philip Sousa, often referred to as "The March King." He was renowned for his contributions to American music, particularly in the realm of marches and wind band compositions. Adams was highly influenced by John Phillip Sousa's compositional style and band leadership. In his memoirs, Adams recounts his clandestine moments listening to Sousa's band perform, imagining himself conducting while secretly listening to phonograph records outside a neighbor's home. He believed that Sousa's music aptly captured the "spirit of militant vigor and courage," which he sought to embody in the march. Adams' studies in composition and orchestration were greatly influenced by meticulously transcribing individual parts of Sousa's marches into full scores.

> … After each of these musical experiences, stretched on my bed, I would then imaginatively conduct Sousa's band in one of my own compositions... Later, however, these dreams and aspirations had left their winged ethereal and had developed into definite action. Assiduously I would put into orchestral scores the immortal "Stars and Stripes Forever," "El Capitan," Forward," "Semper Fidelis," "Manhattan Beach," "King Cotton," and others known throughout the musical world, so as to clearly analyze and study content-harmonic progressions, instrumental arrangements, and those original terns of bass movements so characteristic of their unique style. For many months, night until the wee hours of the morning, that was my musical menu. This was imperatively

> necessary because of my never having experienced the benefits formal musical tutorship and guidance.[19]

Following the 1924 Virgin Islands naval bands' national tour, during which he met Sousa, the two composers forged a lasting professional friendship. Sousa's influence extended far and wide, and his friendship with Adams would have undoubtedly been beneficial for both parties. The exchange of ideas, musical collaboration, and mutual respect between Adams and Sousa likely enriched both of their musical careers, more so for Adams. It is fascinating to consider the potential impact of their friendship on the development of wind band music and the broader cultural landscape of American music during that era.

March model as developed by Sousa

The model for American wind band developed out the English brass band. The American wind band model, as shaped under Sousa's direction, evolved from the bands, compositions, scoring, and arrangements of Thomas Dodworth, Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, and others. Unlike its English counterpart, Sousa's approach emphasized avoiding extremes in the ranges of individual wind instruments, idiomatic writing, and a shift away from the melodic brass dominating the scoring with the number of small brass parts being further reduced. It seems his focus was on balancing the ensemble differently than his predecessors:

> The scoring found in the arrangements for the Sousa library and in Sousa's works is like an oasis in the period; although the influence of foreign scores cannot be denied Sousa seems to have progressed quite directly and with certitude toward his own concept of band tone…Sousa was apparently seeking a well-balanced ensemble of two broadly contrasted colors (both dependent upon brass foundation) with distinctive solo colors; he achieved greater clarity of color and part-writing by eliminating some of the varied alto, tenor, and baritone instruments which cluttered up the brass section of many foreign scores.[20]

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[19] Alton A. Adams, *The Memoirs of Alton Augustus Adams, Sr.: First Black Bandmaster of the United States Navy*, ed. Mark Clague [University of California Press, 2008], 84.

[20] Francis N Mayer, "John Philip Sousa - His Instrumentation and Scoring." *Music Educators Journal* [January 1960]: 57.

Among other innovative changes to the standard march from its pre-Civil War quickstep origins, one significant development was the incorporation of saxophones into the ensemble. Initially, saxophones were sparingly used in earlier works, reflecting their relatively new introduction to the wind band. However, over time, they became increasingly integrated into the woodwind family in more mature compositions. Despite this growing presence, the saxophones did not yet form an independent section in the scoring, often playing supporting roles rather than taking on a fully autonomous voice within the ensemble. This gradual evolution reflected broader shifts in instrumentation and texture within the wind band tradition.

Sousa's scoring style, particularly in his marches, featured dense textures, partly influenced by the historical context of outdoor performances. Maintaining a steady pulse rhythmically was crucial in his marches, with precise articulations as specified in the score. Maintaining balance in dynamics was paramount in his compositions; Sousa emphasized that percussionists should never overshadow the band, except for the bass drummer, who had a unique role. Sousa stated in 1923:

> I sometimes think that no band can be any greater than its bass drummer… Marches are written to be marched to. One does not march to the trumpets, trombones, or clarinets. One marches to the bass drum![21]

In Sousa's marches, the term "strain" is commonly used instead of "thematic areas" to denote different sections. The “head” consists of the first and second strains. The "break strain" serves as a contrasting section following the initial melody of the trio in a musical composition. Its purpose is to "break up" the flow between the trio and the final strain, offering a distinct contrast without introducing a new melody. By refraining from introducing new melodies, this section maintains a sense of continuity and cohesion with the preceding material, while providing a

[21] Samuel Harris, “Sousa As I Knew Him.” *The Instrumentalist*, [March-April 1951]: 12.

dramatic element at a point about two-thirds of the way through the march. It may focus on variations or developments of existing thematic material from the trio section, or it may explore different harmonic progressions or rhythmic motives. This formal development codified the extended trio form into the standard march, where the trio section is expanded and elaborated upon with additional contrasting material, typically before returning to the final strain or conclusion of the piece. This terminology reflects the march's origin as dance music, designed with flexibility to adapt to various settings such as parade routes or ballrooms. Jonathan Elkus discusses Sousa's 'short trio form', his 'long trio form', and his 'extended trio form' in his essay, *Defining the Sousa March: Its Formal and Stylistic Constants.* According to Elkus, Sousa employed all three of these trio forms throughout his composing career.

> To be sure, Sousa's elasticity within these three plans is frequently evident through his interpolation and occasional layering of military drum and bugle strains or other ceremonial or referential material.[22]

Overall, Sousa's approach to composition and orchestration in American wind band music prioritized clarity, balance, and adaptability, resulting in enduring contributions to the genre.

The Governor's Own

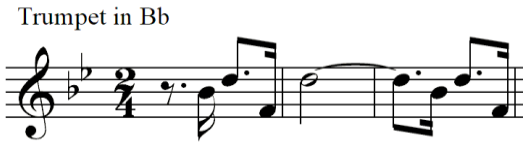
Composed in 1921 by Alton Adams, *The Governor's Own,* was originally dedicated to Admiral Joseph Wallace Oman, who served as naval governor of the Virgin Islands from 1919 to 1921. Adams believed that Sousa's style of writing aptly captured the "spirit of militant vigor and courage" (according to Clague), and Adams sought to embody this in the march. Like the *Virgin Islands March*, this work gained prominence in a relatively short period of time. Certainly, the clarity of writing, the bands' numerous excellent performances during its 1924 national tour

[22] Elkus, Jonathan. "Defining the Sousa March: Its Formal and Stylistic Constants." *American Music Research Center Journal* 15 [2005]: 44.

throughout the US, and Adams' connections to Sousa and other music notables ensured its success. According to Clague, it was among the top four best-selling marches for publishing house, Carl Fisher in 1924, and for a period of time became the official commencement march of Howard University.

The bugle call to attention opening an 8-measure introduction in *The Governor's Own*, signals the beginning of the composition (Figure 3-1). This bugle call, often associated with military or ceremonial contexts, sets the tone for the piece and captures the listener's attention, much like the announcement of a significant arrival. The introduction moves from A^b major

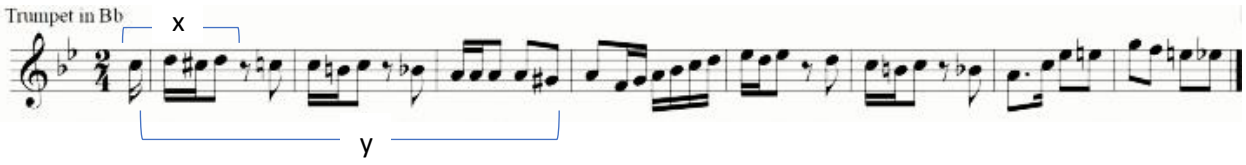
Figure 3.1: *The Governor's Own,* Opening bugle call in trumpets.



to a half cadence on E^b, before beginning the first strain in the head's home key (A^b). Marches tend to be in balanced form, and the expectation Sousa set for the first strain is to be a multiple of that, which is exactly how Adams structured this section.

Commencing the first strain following the introduction, the trumpets present the opening four-note motive (figure 3.2) as the main melodic motive (x). This sprightly motive, characterized by its crisp and rhythmic articulation, serves as a musical announcement, signaling the imminent arrival or procession of an important figure. In this case, the figure being heralded

Figure 3.2: *The Governor's Own,* Melody of first strain



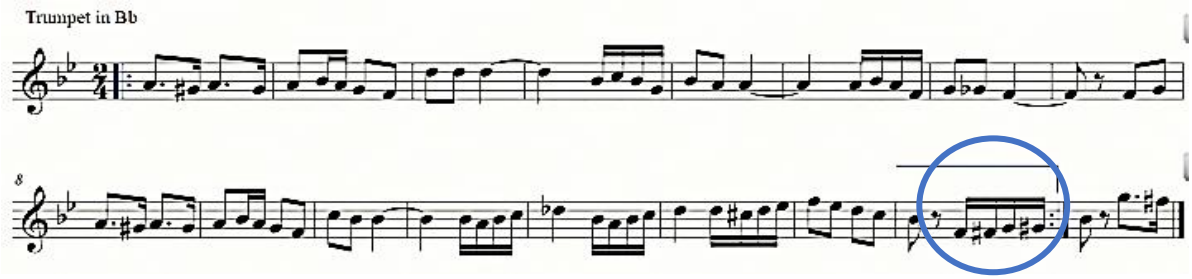
is the Governor of the Virgin Islands, adding a ceremonial and regal air to the composition. Through the combination of the bugle call and the trumpets' opening motive, *The Governor's Own* effectively establishes a sense of anticipation and importance, drawing listeners into the unfolding musical narrative. In essence, these musical elements serve not only as artistic devices but also as symbolic representations of authority, ceremony, and new tradition within the context of the Virgin Islands. Again, incorporating these musical narratives into their practices and performances, Virgin Islanders engage in a form of musical historical preservation that not only fosters a deeper understanding of their heritage but also helps to shape their collective consciousness.

The first strain consists of a 16-measure double period that repeats exactly, concluding with a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in E^b major, which is the dominant key of the original key (presumably B^b major). One notable feature is the descending chromatic line in this jaunty melody, spanning from D5 to F#4, covering a minor 6th interval. Additionally, there is a contrasting, ascending chromatic movement from F4 to A4 at the end of the first strain, covering a major third. This inversely related chromatic motion serves as a cohesive element, providing symmetry and balance to the structure, akin to bookends for the first strain. It also acts as a smooth transition into the second strain after the repeat of the first strain. The attention to detail Adams invests in such balanced thematic elements within each strain is reminiscent of Sousa's innovation in the American march form. This meticulous crafting of musical narrative arcs contributes to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the head of this march.

The second strain (figure 3.3) opens in Eb major with a bold marshal-like dotted figure at a ***ff*** dynamic, carrying a more commanding presence compared to the melody of the first strain.

Like the first strain, the second strain also follows a balanced binary structure with 8 measures per section, totaling 16 measures that are repeated. However, in this case, the second strain modulates back to the home key, confirming Ab major with a perfect authentic cadence (PAC).

Figure 3.3: *The Governor's Own,* Melody of the second strain.



This modulation back to the home key as established in the introduction of the work, references a point of interpretation by Jonathan Elkus on Sousa's marches having dance-like melodies at the heads, functioning harmonically like standing on the dominant[23]. This interpretation compels a shift in perspective as it denotes a modulation from the dominant (V) to the tonic (I) rather than a progression from I to IV to end the work. This modulation pattern paired with the ascending chromatic gesture in the cadential schema of this strain closely matching the gesture at the close of the first strain, add depth and complexity to the harmonic structure of this march. Additionally, this approach of Adams, coupled with the dynamically heightened and rhythmically charged head of the work, prepares for a powerful release in the tonic 'resolution' of the subsequent chorale-like Trio, providing a more convincing conclusion of the head of the march.

The TRIO section, beginning in measure 43, references the opening bugle call in the introduction with a chromatically inflected, more sustained martial figure. According to Matthew Smith in a 2012 study[24], Sousa rarely harmonized the melody in thirds or sixths, preferring to

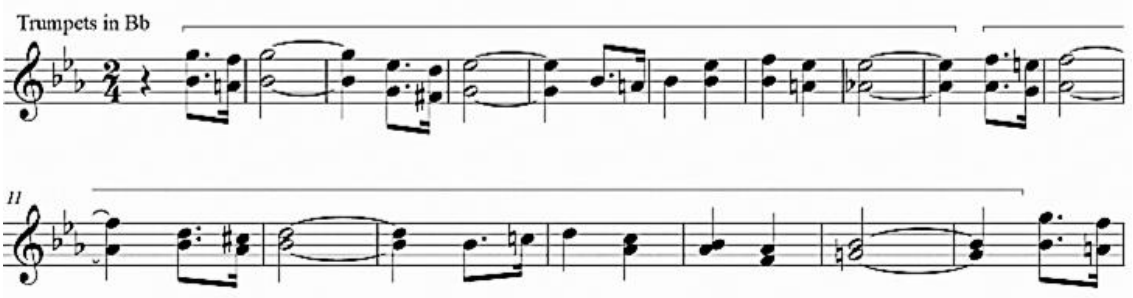
[23] Ibid, 44.

[24] Smith, Matthew. "The Picador march and Nymphalin of John Philip Sousa: Transcriptions and Editions for Historically-Informed Performance" [DMA diss., University of Connecticut, 2012], 57.

double at the octave. Mirroring this stylistic trait, both the first and second strain melodies are afforded this treatment in *The Governor's Own*. However, Adams breaks from this mold in the Trio section, in which first part of the trio melody is harmonized in thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and at the octave (figure 3.4). He returns to the Sousa model, doubling the melody only at the octave in the repeat of this sixteen-measure section, for a slightly different feel.

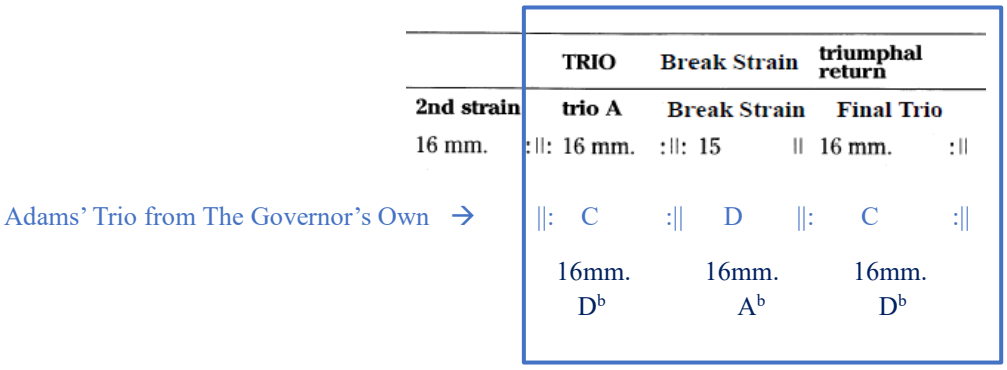
Like Sousa, Adams does not introduce a new melody in the break strain in *The Governor's Own*, but rather explores melodic and harmonic variation on the thematic elements from the main melody of the trio. It also showcases a slight variation on Sousa's 'long' form of

Figure 3.4: *The Governor's Own,* Trio opening melody.



the trio: ||: C :||: D + C' :|| with its repeated, sixteen-measure ||: C :|| section flowing into the twelve-measure 'dogfight' and the reprise of the main melody of the trio in C section. The difference in *The Governor's Own* lies in the repetition of the break strain. Adams does not repeat this break strain, but rather, returns to and closes the work with a reprise the first thirty-two measures of the trio || C ||. This structure is much closer to Sousa's 'long' form than his 'short' form, as the latter does not include the contrasting material of the break strain. A summary of this work is compared against Sousa's model on figure 3.5 below.

Figure 3.5: *The Gladiator*, John Philip Sousa's formal design of long trio form.[25]



The *Virgin Islands March*

Composed in 1919 by Alton Adams, the *Virgin Islands March* holds a rich history intertwined with both musical and cultural significance. Dedicated to Captain William Russell White and his wife, who played pivotal roles in the formation of Adams's navy band, the march carries deep personal connections. Adams revealed in a 1985 interview that the melody of the trio section was inspired by an act of charity by Mrs. White towards an older woman in the Virgin Islands, which left a lasting impression on him. First published in *Jacobs' Band Monthly* in October 1919, the march quickly gained popularity, becoming the signature work of Adams's band. Performed at most concerts on the band's 1924 national tour, its energetic, colorful, and traditional Sousa-inspired sound served as a vibrant advertisement for the Virgin Islands, promoting the islands as a lively tourist destination and a patriotic addition to U.S. territory. Performances in various locations along the eastern seaboard during this tour (including Central Park in New York City) and later shorter trips, further solidified its status in the national wind band canon.

Today, the march is frequently played on concert programs nationally, and locally in the Virgin Islands, it is performed at political and social events such as school graduations (both

[25] Elkus, Jonathan. "Defining the Sousa March: Its Formal and Stylistic Constants." *American Music Research Center Journal* 15 [2005]: 43.

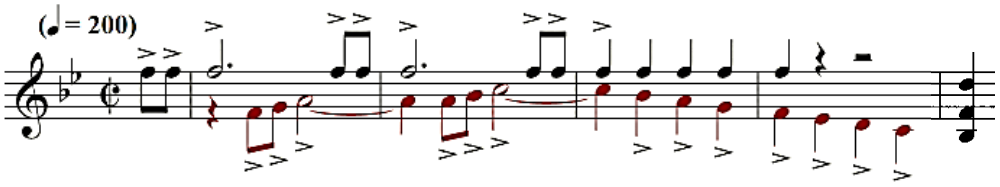
upper and lower schools), legislative and judicial events (speeches, installation ceremonies of a new governor, judges, or senators, other official executive ceremonies, et al.), and at community events (opening of carnival or holiday celebrations, territory agricultural fairs, et al.). As a result, it has been embedded into the cultural fabric of the islands. In 1963, Adams rededicated the piece to the people of the Virgin Islands, and it was officially accepted by the Virgin Islands Legislature. The following year, Adams led a committee to write lyrics for the trio strain, inviting contributions from local Virgin Islanders to reflect themes of universal brotherhood and interracial charity. Dozens of entries were submitted, and the resulting work became the unofficial, territory (national) anthem for almost two decades before being officially adopted. Finally, on June 2, 1982, exactly sixty-five years after Adams became a navy bandmaster (and five years before his death), the *Virgin Islands March,* specifically the music of the trio set with the approved lyrics, was declared the official national anthem[26] of the United States Virgin Islands, cementing its enduring legacy.[27]

At a very lively tempo, Adams introduces the *Virgin Islands March* with a call-and-response style gesture doubled at the octave (figure 3.6). As it did in *The Governor's Own*, this heavily accented opening creates a palpable sense of anticipation captivating listeners. The four-measure introduction (with a characteristic anacrusis), centers on 'F', and in referencing the Sousa antiphonal approach of the sustained 'F' in the treble against the responding accented, downward model, it can be interpreted as a V/V (predominant function). More dramatically, the

[26] A transcribed lead sheet copy of the Trio with the lyrics is attached in Appendix A of this document. The score is available for purchase through J.W. Pepper, catalog number 10642609.

[27] This general historical contextualization is briefly summarized and based on the program notes by Mark Clague published in the front matter of the score of the *Virgin Islands March.*

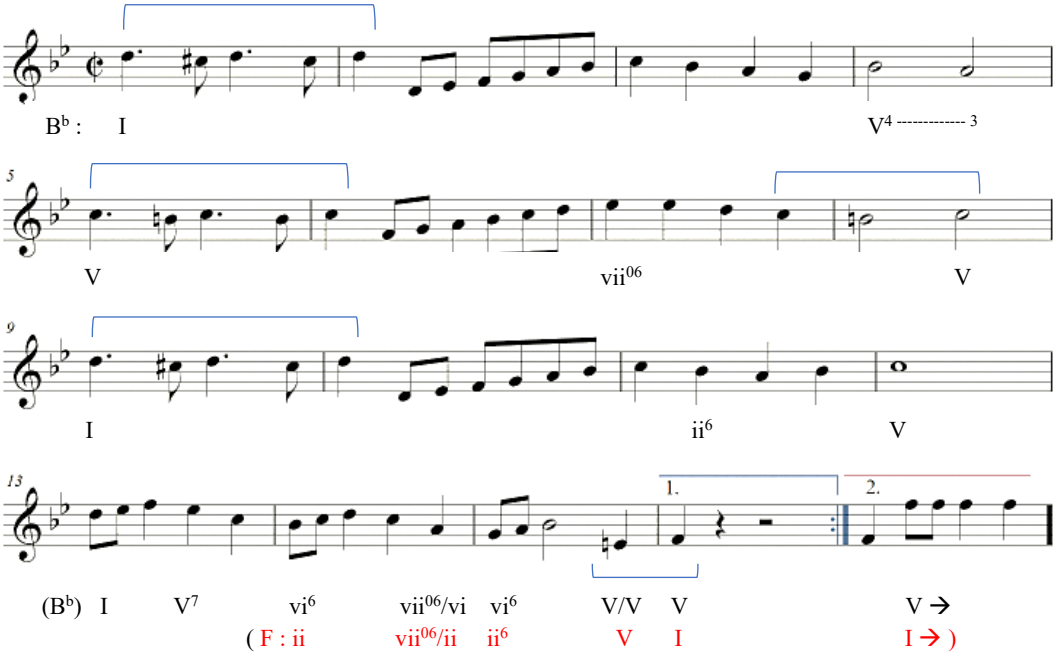
Figure 3.6: The *Virgin Islands March,* Introduction.



motion in the lower voices harmonically resolving to B^{b}, effectively draws the listeners into the subsequent musical narrative with a sense of grandeur.

Adams launches into the first strain with that same energetic, rhythmic drive initiated in the introductory passage. According to Elkus, Sousa's "trademark melodic chromatic ornament is the lower neighbor tone – both accented and unaccented,"[28] and Adams incorporates this Sousa-esque neighboring tone embellishment in the melody of the first strain. This embellishment has the effect of 'softening' the martial-like figure, but the lively tempo

Figure 3.7: The *Virgin Island March*, Main melody of the first strain

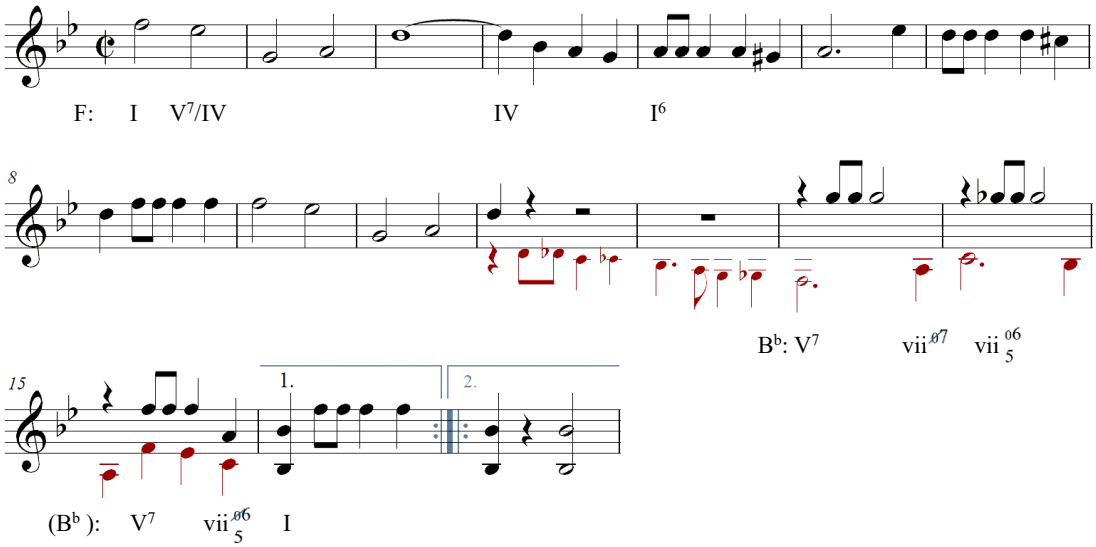


[28] Elkus, Jonathan. "Defining the Sousa March: Its Formal and Stylistic Constants." *American Music Research Center Journal* 15 [2005]: 44. Adams also integrated this type of chromatic embellishment in main melodies of both the first and second strains of *The Governor's Own* (see figures 3.2, 3.3).

provides for a seamless continuity in this enthusiastic musical landscape. As in *The Governor's Own,* the first strain is a 16-measure double period that repeats as expected. Beginning in B^{b} major, the dominant of the culminating key of the work (E^{b} major), the second part of the melody seems to re-establish an F centric space (see the red analysis in bottom system of figure 3.7). This alternation, considering the repeat of this strain in performance, cadences this first strain in F, and reinforces the idea of the predominant space being prolonged moving into the second strain. In effect, Adams skillfully maintains the buildup of an underlying harmonic tension that initiates in the introduction and persists into the second strain of the piece. This tension builds anticipation, creating a sense of expectation among listeners, as they await the eventual satisfying resolution to the dominant chord (B^{b}).

In the second strain, Adams transitions away from the bugle-like call featured in earlier sections, opting instead for a seemingly more prolonged, lyrical exposition centered around a new melodic content. However, the insistent fast tempo, the forceful dynamic marking (***ff***), and the punctuated offbeat notes of the accompanying layer ensure that the texture of this strain retains a martial feel similar to the preceding music. Again, Adams continues to build that

Figure 3.8: The *Virgin Islands March*, Main melody of the second strain.



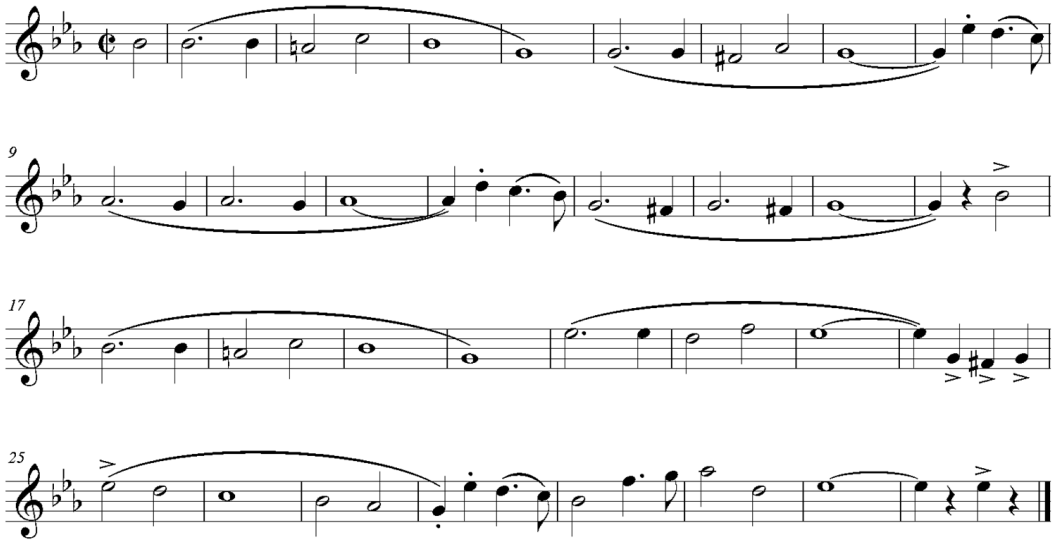
underlying tension by maintaining an 'F' centric harmonic space that confirms B^b major in the last four measures of this strain via the general progression: V → vii^{06} → I (see figure 3.8). In this extended dominant space, Adams references the first cadential process in the head of the march, between the introduction and the first strain. Here, it is more triumphant as the pulsing bugle-like call and the repeated high 'F' against the accented, mostly stepwise, downward motion in the lower voices is also harmonically supported in the inner voices (rather than simply doubling at the octave) in resolving to B^b. This provides a balanced and convincing conclusion to the head of this march.

As mentioned previously this march was eventually adopted as the official Virgin Islands national anthem, yet it is the music of the Trio that is primarily (and quite frequently) performed as the Virgin Islands anthem in lieu of the complete march. Following the long search, the lyrics that were finally adopted were attached to the main melody of the trio and nowhere else in the march. This anthem with the lyrics is sung regularly at school functions, cultural and political events occurring regularly throughout the year. The lead sheet score with the lyrics are published in the appendices of this document.

The transition from the second strain to the Trio section is executed seamlessly, with the sustained B^b common tone serving as a bridge into the softer, more lyrical main theme. While the score may indicate an immediate modulation to the subdominant with the introduction of an E^b chord on the downbeat coupled with an arpeggiated E^b (tonic) chord in the tuba/bass part, Adams 'softens' this harmonic shift through skillful crafting of the melody. Despite the apparent harmonic modulation from B^b to E^b, it is more apt to interpret this as a shift from the dominant key to the tonic key, B^b to E^b (home key).The dynamic level notably decreases down two levels to ***mp*** for the initial presentation of the melody in the Trio section. Connecting the ending of the

second strain melody (figure 3.8) to the main melody of the trio section transcribed in figure 3.9 is the 'B^{b}' note, now the fifth in the new key of E^{b} and functioning as it should in this common tone modulation. This main theme assumes a more sustained lyricism throughout than noted in the second strain. The listener will hear this key of E^{b} being confirmed in the harmonic progression of the lyrical main melody of the trio, a more forceful, tension building moment standing on the dominant space (B^{b}) of the subsequent break strain, and a powerful release of that tension in the arrival of home key of E^{b} in the reprise of that main melody at a ***ff*** dynamic (contrasting the ***mp*** opening) that eventually cadences in a PAC (in E^{b}) to end the work.

Figure 3.9: The *Virgin Islands March,* Main melody of the Trio section.



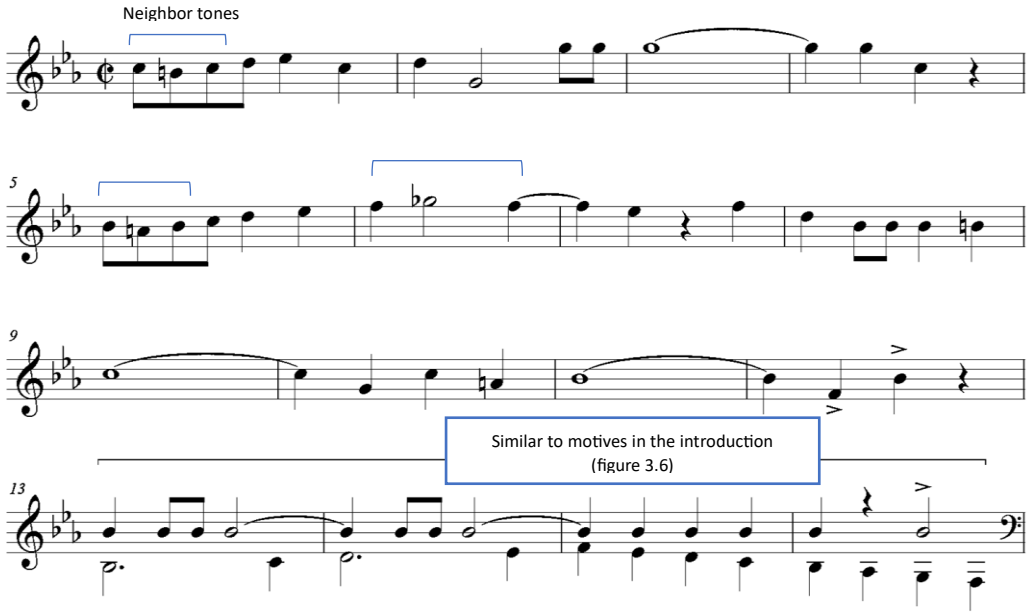
In that sense, an appropriate reading of the harmonic motion of this piece can be seen as adhering to the overall structure of the Western music phrase model: Predominant (F: V/V) → Dominant (B^{b}:V) → Tonic (E^{b}: I).

Structurally, Adams continues to incorporate Sousa inspired elements. The main melody opens at a lower dynamic level than the head of the march. It is balanced in its thirty-two-measure exposition, as set in a double period construct (sixteen measures to each section).

Further, Adams presents this melody doubled at the octave rather than in harmony. The lowered neighbor embellishment is employed throughout the main melody, and the wider melodic leaps of a minor sixth and a perfect fifth do signal the approach to a cadence; both elements as discussed by Elkus in his essay.

Moving into the break strain, or 'dogfight', the rhythmic energy ramps up in this sixteen-measure section as the tempo is often increased slightly and pulled back with a grand rallentando at the end. It may be more accurate view this dogfight as a twelve-measure unit (cadencing on B^b: $\frac{V^6}{V} \rightarrow$ V) with a four-measure codetta confirming the half cadence on B^b (figure 3.10)

Figure 3.10: The *Virgin Islands March*, Break strain.



Regardless of its harmonic reading, its formal structure showcases a version of Sousa's "long trio" form[29] ||: C :|| D ||: C :|| with its repeated, sixteen-measure ||: C :|| section, flowing into a sixteen-measure break strain || D || and a full reprise of the main melody of the trio ||: C :||. Using

[29] Ibid, 41.

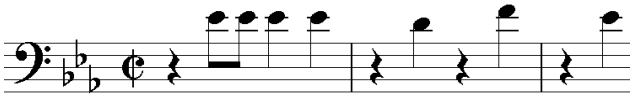
Sousa's, *The Gladiator* as an example, Elkus provides an outline of this form in figure 3.11 below, to which I add Adams' trio and break strain details below.

Figure 3.11: *The Gladiator*, John Philip Sousa's formal design of 'long trio' form.[30]

		TRIO	Break Strain	triumphal return
	2nd strain	trio A	Break Strain	Final Trio
	16 mm.	:‖: 16 mm.	:‖: 15	‖ 16 mm. :‖
Adams' Trio from The *Virgin Islands March* →	‖:	C 16mm. E♭	:‖ D 16mm. B♭	‖: C 16mm. E♭ :‖

Like Sousa, Adams does not introduce a new melody in this section but does explore melodic and harmonic variation on the thematic elements from the main melody of the trio. Adams employs the lower and upper neighbor embellishments, and the accented rhythmic motive in the background layer of the opening trio as foreground material in the break strain (figure 3.12). This

Figure 3.12: The *Virgin Islands March*, Rhythmic motive used in Trio and Break strain.



rhythmic motive is used throughout the work, first heard in the introduction as the main rhythmic motive, and then again in the foreground of the second strain. As he did in *The Governor's Own,* and unlike Sousa's long form of the trio, Adams does not repeat this break strain, but rather, reprises the trio (Trio A according to the table in figure 3.11) in the home key of E♭ to end the work.

[30] Ibid., 42

Figure 3.13: Table comparing formal designs of Sousa's long trio form, Adams' *The Governor's Own* and the *Virgin Islands March.*

	HEAD			TRIO	Break Strain	TRIO'	Break Strain	TRIO'
	Introduction	**First Strain**	**Second Strain**					
Sousa long form	4mm or 8mm *Mediant or dominant key*	‖: **A** :‖ 16mm *Mediant or dominant key*	‖: **B** :‖ 16mm *Dominant key*	‖: **C + C'** :‖ 8mm + 8mm *Home key*	‖ **D** ‖ 15mm or 16mm *Usually dominant or relative minor*	‖ **C'** ‖ 16mm *Home key*	‖ **D** ‖ 15mm or 16mm *Usually dominant or relative minor*	‖ **C'** ‖ 16mm *Home key*
The Governor's Own	8mm $A^b – E^b$	‖: **A** :‖ 16mm $A^b – E^b$ → V/V	‖: **B** :‖ 16mm $E^b – A^b$ → V	‖: **C + C'** :‖ 8mm + 8mm D^b I	‖ **D** ‖ 16mm A^b V	‖ **C** ‖ 16mm D^b I		‖ **C '** ‖ 16mm D^b I
The Virgin Islands March	8mm F	‖: **A** :‖ 16mm $B^b – F$ → V/V	‖: **B** :‖ 16mm B^b V	‖: **C + C'** :‖ 8mm + 8mm E^b I	‖ **D** ‖ 16mm B^b V	‖ **C** ‖ 16mm E^b I		‖ **C'** ‖ 16mm E^b I

The table above in figure 3.13 allows a snapshot of the formal designs of Sousa's long trio form against Adams' works discussed above. In reference to the *Virgin Islands March* and *The Governors Own*, there seems to be nothing significant in the musical argument of these works that separates the works from standard, Sousa-inflected works of American band music, particularly those marches following his long trio form. In this form of Sousa march, it is common to reprise the break strain material and introduce variations in the trio section, often through the addition or variation of countermelodies. This approach allows for musical elaboration and development, maintaining interest while adhering to the established march form. Adams' intentional exclusion of any culturally distinctive features in these important works is noteworthy, especially considering the significance of music, particularly band music in the early and mid-twentieth century, in Virgin Islands culture across various aspects of society.
This absence of these characteristic elements in Adams' compositions raises questions and prompts discussions about his artistic choices and their implications. Mark Clague's commentary in the *Black Music Research Journal* in 1988 suggests that Adams' interests and compositional decisions may have been influenced by personal taste and the historical context of the time, possibly to reassure his military superiors of his bandsmen's patriotism.[31]

In truth, Adams' compositions not only entertained audiences but also fulfilled the role of promoting American patriotism, representing the ideals of the naval band. The fact that Adams' compositions were well-received and became signature works for his band speaks volumes about his deservedness of the naval bandmaster position. His ability to create engaging and memorable music, even without incorporating culturally distinctive elements specific to the Virgin Islands

[31] Mark Clague, "Instruments of Identity: Alton Augustus Adams Sr., The Navy Band of the Virgin Islands, and the Sounds of Social Change." *Center for Black Music Research Journal* 18 [1988]:.31. He states in the paper "…for mainlanders, the sounds of Sousa's marches, such as the Stars and Stripes Forever," defined patriotic sentiment. Likewise, the *Virgin Islands March* would have reassured Adams' military superiors of his bandsmen's patriotism."

evidenced his mastery of the march form and his understanding of the military band tradition. Though his music lacks tangible evidence of cultural influence, these works were undoubtedly tailored to suit the strengths and abilities of his band members.

As important as that may have been in historical context, however, this deliberate omission also reflects a missed opportunity to incorporate and celebrate the rich musical heritage of the Virgin Islands within Adams' compositions. It underscores the complexity of cultural representation and artistic expression within the context of military band music, which during the early to mid-twentieth century was equivalent to band music in general context of military band performances and again, the expectations of his superiors.

Discussions surrounding Adams' intentional exclusion of these traditional elements would likely elicit diverse perspectives, including arguments for and against his reasoning. Clague's insights offer valuable context for understanding Adams' compositional choices within the broader socio-cultural landscape of the Virgin Islands and the military music tradition. He presents this justification within the context of broader discussion in his publication, *Instruments of Identity: Alton Augustus Adams Sr., The Navy Band of the Virgin Islands, and the Sounds of Social Change.* His arguments, within the context of broader discussion, are succinctly stated and quite compelling, particularly from the perspective of Adams' band having all Black membership, and in historical context, the territory was transitioning culturally and politically from Danish rule to American sovereignty. A sociological dilemma to be sure, this dialogue presents thought-provoking conversation that unfortunately broadens, rather than narrows the focus of this study. As such, it lies outside the intended scope of this study.

What is pertinent to this study is the observation of the absence of traditional folk elements in these compositions, which nonetheless retain their historical and enduring

significance within the repertoire of the US Virgin Islands. Given the band's importance to the community since its inception, both preceding and following Danish rule[32], this represents a significant historical marker and served as further motivation for me to undertake this examination.

[32] Ibid., p.27. In the Virgin Islands, band music played an integral role in the fabric of public life, closely tied to governmental, religious, and social events. Much like journalism, bands served as a unifying cultural force, providing the soundtrack to community life. Bands were essential to both celebrations and solemn occasions, enhancing concerts, dances, and ceremonies with music that bridged sacred and secular realms. This deep-rooted musical tradition underscored the significance of band music as a cultural cornerstone, shaping identity and communal experiences across the islands.

CHAPTER 4

Revelry! AN ANALYSIS

Creating a wind band piece that combines the musical elements of Western art music with the vibrant musical heritage of the US Virgin Islands (USVI) involves an integration of both musical traditions while respecting the unique characteristics of each. It also involves convergences and divergences from some of those individual characteristics to create a work that bridges the gap between both these traditions. In this chapter I discuss my usage of the musical cues adapted from the Sousa-Adams model of march composition for the wind band, the traditional folk elements drawn from quelbe, as well as other creative choices made in my composition, *Revelry!*. More specifically, it discusses the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements, the instrumentation, scoring, and other compositional aspects in *Revelry!*. Further, it brings to the foreground a dynamic musical narrative through an exploration of textural elements (including timbre and density) and discussion of formal design of the work from a micro and macro perspective. Subsequently, this analysis supports *Revelry!'s* inherent contribution to a broader cultural dialogue.

Revelry! is inspired by the USVI Carnival, capturing a snapshot of a parade day filled with vibrant colors and diverse sub-themes, each representing individual participating organizations. These troupes, each often paired with a live band or steel pan orchestra mounted on multi-level metal constructs drawn by decorated vehicles, create a dynamic and festive atmosphere.

As the groups make their way to the parade grounds, which mark the end of the parade route just past the dignitaries' bandstand, their music fades in deference to the live music on

stage. The brief moments when the music of different bands overlaps, with the softer echo of another band approaching the dignitaries' bandstand, evokes a sense reminiscent of Charles Ives' "1776 Overture and March." Ives' piece recalls his boyhood experiences of hearing multiple marching bands in the town square playing different tunes simultaneously, creating a musically blurred, surround sound effect. In *Revelry!,* this momentary collision of sounds captures the essence of the parade's culmination, where the blend of various musical elements from different troupes mirrors the joyous chaos and vibrant energy of the carnival. The overlapping and fading music of the bands symbolize the convergence of diverse cultural expressions and musical traditions. This homage to Ives' technique aids in situating *Revelry!* within a broader tradition of programmatic music that seeks to evoke specific times and places through sound. The composition thus becomes a bridge between historical and contemporary celebrations, blending traditional folk elements with the lively, spontaneous atmosphere of carnival.

Instrumentation and Scoring

As discussed in chapter two, quelbe music features a unique ensemble of instruments that contribute to its distinctive aural texture, characterized by a lively tempo and strong percussive, syncopated beats. The traditional instrumentation includes a lead instrument (such as the voice, flute, or saxophone), the "steel" (traditionally a triangle, and more recently cowbells), the "scratch" (often a squash, guiro, or other bean pod/shell percussion instrument), a banjo, a bass instrument, and a keyboard.

Revelry! incorporates elements of this traditional quelbe instrumentation while adapting them for a concert wind band setting. The keyboard role is filled by the piano, marimba, and xylophone, maintaining the harmonic and rhythmic energy typical of quelbe music. The guiro

and the maracas share the role for the ‘scratch’ element. For the "steel" elements, the triangle, cowbells, agogo bells, suspended cymbals, and crotales provide a characteristic, metallic, percussive texture. Additionally, the tambourine functions as a bridge between the steel element and the drums, which include the timpani, toms, and the bass drum. The ever-present bass drum is a direct reference to Adams’ use (after the style of Sousa) of the bass drum in his works. As mentioned in chapter two, Sousa emphasized that percussionists should never overshadow the band, except for the bass drummer, who had a unique role. Sousa stated in 1923:

> I sometimes think that no band can be any greater than its bass drummer… Marches are written to be marched to. One does not march to the trumpets, trombones, or clarinets. One marches to the bass drum![33]

Further, the percussion section plays a vital role in traditional Sousa-style marches. Cymbals, bells, and drums are the essential components, dramatizing climactic passages and highlighting big moments in the foreground. During less intense sections, the percussion maintains a consistent beat in the background layer, often sparsely scored, ensuring rhythmic stability without overwhelming the overall texture. This approach provides a rhythmic foundation that supports the larger musical structure, allowing for dramatic contrasts and dynamic climaxes.

Contrastingly, in quelbe music, the rhythm section is a continuous, insistent motoric element throughout the entire piece, moving between middle-ground, foreground, and background layers. Though it does not overshadow the band, the rhythm section remains a central driving force, essential to the music's character and energy. It is always present in the texture, driving the music forward with its steady, propulsive, polyrhythmic pulsing. The percussion writing in *Revelry!* adopts this approach, maintaining a continuous, insistent presence that contributes to the piece's energy and momentum. As illustrated in figure 4.1a and 4.1b, this

[33] Samuel Harris, “Sousa As I Knew Him.” *The Instrumentalist* [March-April 1951]: 12.

motoric consistency ensures that the rhythmic pulse remains a constant element, propelling the music forward.

Figure 4.1a: *Revelry!*, Percussion scoring, mm.13-17.

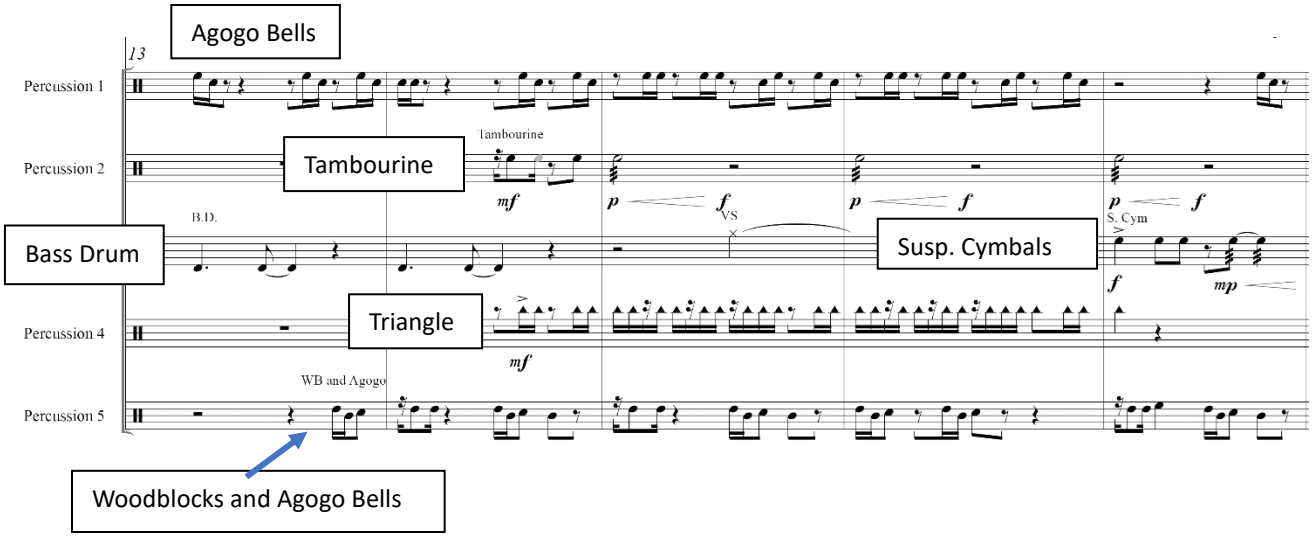
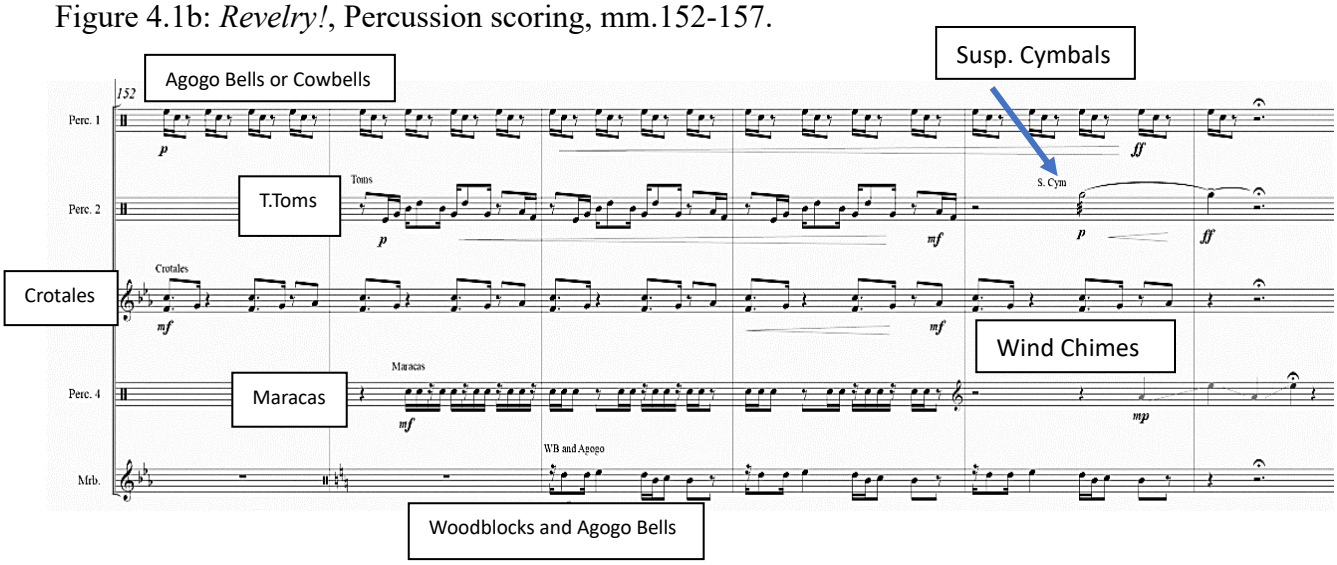


Figure 4.1b: *Revelry!*, Percussion scoring, mm.152-157.



The percussion writing in *Revelry!* also incorporates elements from the Adams/Sousa model. The cymbals, bells, and drums are very much a part of the standard American wind band march and are used effectively in *Revelry!*. They add to the richness of the sound and dramatize key moments. Additionally, the bass drum remains ever-present in the texture. It provides a

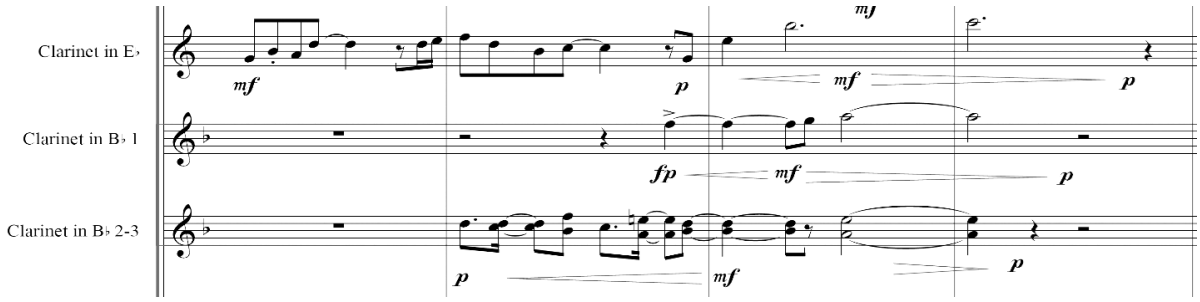
foundational beat that reinforces the rhythmic structure, bridging the traditions by blending the vibrant rhythms of quelbe with the dramatic percussive highlights of the Sousa-Adams style.

However, the diversity of instrumentation in *Revelry!* shared among five percussionists and a timpani player is more consistent with modern wind band composition beyond the march genre. The combination of percussion instruments comes from a standard orchestral percussion instrumentation with auxiliaries rather than specific traditional quelbe instruments and is meant to evoke those timbres of quelbe's traditional rhythm-section through a Western art music lens. This blending of traditions results in a rhythmic foundation that is both steady and dynamic, supporting the harmonic and melodic content of the piece.

The lead instruments in *Revelry!* include flutes and saxophones, as well as trumpet, trombone, and E^b clarinet. According to Matthew J. Smith, Sousa – like Adams – employed the E^b clarinet to color the high woodwinds and extend the range of the B^b clarinet.[34] Sousa employed this in his *Camera Studies Suite* (1920). This use of the E^b clarinet added a bright, piercing quality to the upper register of the woodwind section, enhancing the overall brightness of the ensemble sound. *Revelry!* employs the E^b clarinet for similar effect in the second strain of this work (figure 4.2). The first half of the folksong melody of this second strain is first announced in clear bell tones of a solo trumpet, followed by a solo trombone responding with the second half. In the return of this melody, the E^b clarinet is employed with a slight variant on the second part of that melody in (figure 4.2). It adds brilliance to the texture, allowing the melodic line to be clearly heard through the denser texture of the larger ensemble. With respect to timbre, it creates a dialogue-like and expressive musical interaction, that provides some interest in the

[34] Matthew Joseph Smith, "The Picador March and Nymphalin of John Philip Sousa: Transcriptions and Editions for Historically-Informed Performance." DMA diss., University of Connecticut, 2012), 27.

Figure 4.2: *Revelry!,* E^{b} clarinet with the main melody in second strain, mm.49-52.



contrast between each part of the folksong. This diverse array of lead instruments allows for a dynamic interplay in creating a lively and engaging sound.

In *Revelry!,* the 'scratch' element is employed very specifically through the use of the guiro and maracas. While this textural component is not prominent throughout most of the work, it plays a significant role during key moments, particularly in the second strain. In this section, the guiro part (in the percussion 4 part), juxtaposed against the folksong melody above, provides an important accompanying layer built on the cariso rhythmic pattern, which drives the folksong melody forward. This use of the guiro serves as a referential component, and the integration of this texture not only supports the melodic line but also reinforces the cultural roots embedded in the composition.

The rest of the instrumentation is very similar to Adams' instrumentation of *The Governor's Own.* This model includes a full complement of woodwinds, brass, and percussion, ensuring a robust and balanced ensemble sound that has characterized the Sousa-esque style for decades. The similarities and differences in instrumentation are highlighted in figure 4.3, comparing a standard 1919 Sousa band instrumentation[35], the 1929 revised instrumentation by the Music Supervisors National Conference (of which Sousa headed with three other committee members), Adams' *The Governor's Own*, and *Revelry!.* The major differences in instrumentation

[35]Patrick Warfield, ed. *John Philip Sousa: Six Marches* [Middleton,WE: A-R Editions, Inc., 2010], xxxv

are highlighted in red, as some instruments have since fallen out of the standard wind band instrumentation to become part of the auxiliary. Patrick Warfield stated, "Sousa viewed the clarinet, rather than the cornet as the band equivalent of the orchestra violin, and he employed clarinet players in large numbers."[36] In fact, Warfield reports Sousa's band included as much as twenty-seven (27) B^b clarinet players by the 1925-26 season, before contracting down to the mid-teens after 1930. Smith supports Warfield's findings, "In nearly all of Sousa's writing, the clarinet is the most important instrument and served as the focal point for all of his scoring."[37]

Figure 4.3: Comparison of Instrumentation (number of players)[38]

	Sousa Band Instrumentation: *1919*	**1928 Music Supervisors National Conference**	**Adams' Instrumentation: *The Virgin Islands March & The Governor's Own***	**Jackson's *Revelry!* Instrumentation**
Woodwinds:	Piccolo 2 Flutes 2 Oboes 2 Bassoons E^b Clarinet ***16 B^b Clarinets*** ***Alto Clarinet*** Bass Clarinet 5 Saxophones	4 Piccolos OR 2 Flutes 2 Oboes English Horn 2 Bassoons 2 E^b Clarinet ***24 B^b Clarinets*** ***Alto Clarinet*** Bass Clarinet 5 Saxophones	Piccolo 2 Flutes Oboe Bassoon E^b Clarinet 3 B^b Clarinets Bass Clarinet 4 Saxophones	Piccolo 2 Flutes 2 Oboes 2 Bassoons E^b Clarinet 3 B^b Clarinets Bass Clarinet 4 Saxophones
Brass:	***4 Cornets in B^b*** 4 B^b Trumpets 4 F Horns 4 Trombones 2 Euphoniums 4 Tubas	***2 B^b Cornets*** 2 B^b Trumpets 4 F Horns 3 Trombones 2 Baritones Bass Trombone 4 Tubas	3 B^b Trumpets 4 F Horns 3 Trombones 2 Euphoniums 2Tubas	4 B^b Trumpets 4 F Horns 2 Trombones Bass Trombone Tuba
Percussion:	3 Percussionists	Timpani Drums	3 Percussionists	***1Timpani player*** ***5 Percussionists***
Additional forces:	***Harp***			Piano

[36] Ibid, xxxv

[37] Matthew Smith, The Picador March and Nymphalin of John Philip Sousa: Transcriptions and Editions for Historically-Informed Performance." [DMA diss., University of Connecticut, 2012], 42.

[38] Patrick Warfield, ed. *John Philip Sousa: Six Marches* [Middleton,WE: A-R Editions, Inc., 2010], xxxv

Smith comments in his published study that Sousa approached scoring his concert band compositions as "multiplicity of quartets." He comments, "Sousa's quartets could refer to four voices with multiple instruments on each part, woodwind quartet, brass quartet, or combinations of the previous."[39] This is particularly relevant to Adams' march compositions discussed in Chapter 3. Adams did not include such a large clarinet contingent in his band, but an E^{b} clarinet with three B^{b} clarinet parts is quite in keeping with the spirit of Sousa's quartet-style approach particularly for the clarinets. Similarly, *Revelry!* incorporates the "multiplicity of quartets" approach in many ways. Saxophone quartets, clarinet quartets, and brass quartets are important structural elements within the work (figures 4.4a, 4.4b, 4.4c, 4.4d, and 4.5).

Figure 4.4a: *Revelry!*, Saxophone quartet opening the work, mm.1-3.

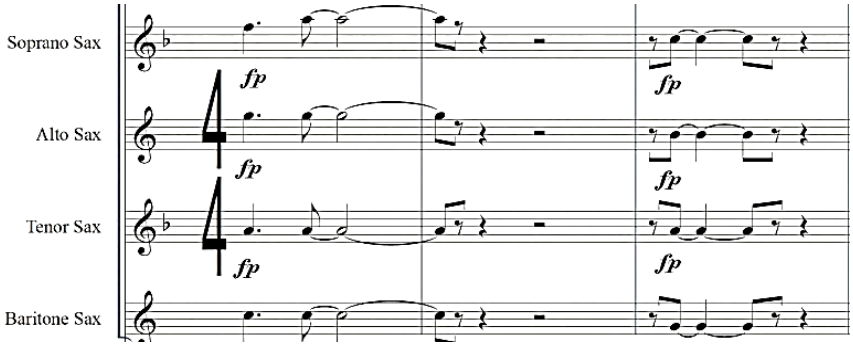
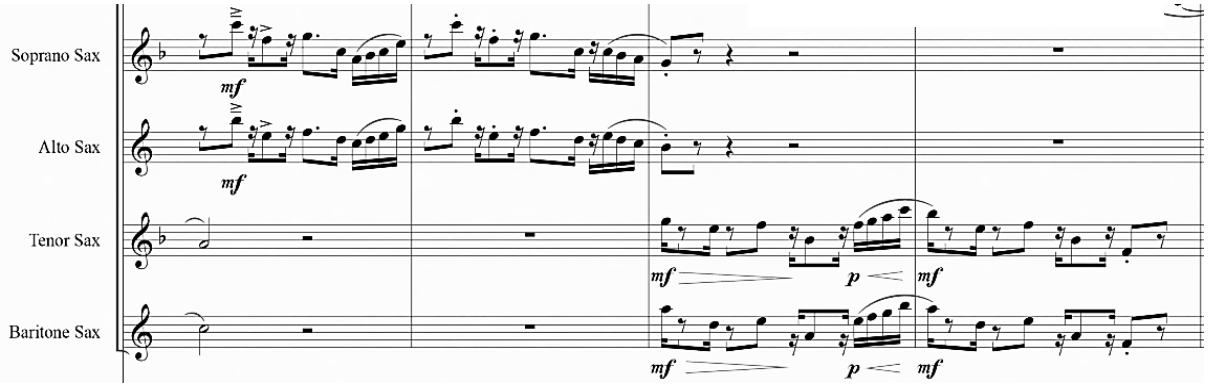
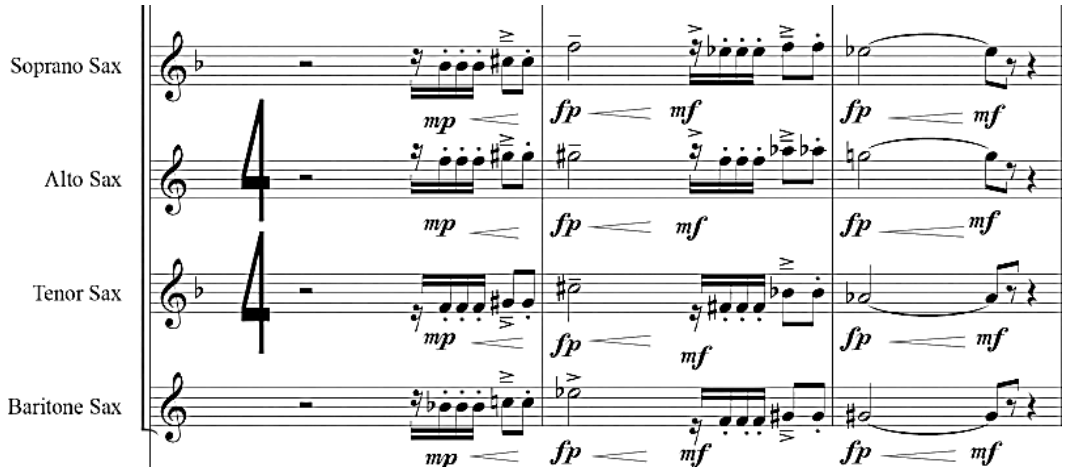


Figure 4.4b: *Revelry!,* Saxophones open with melody in first strain, mm.13-16



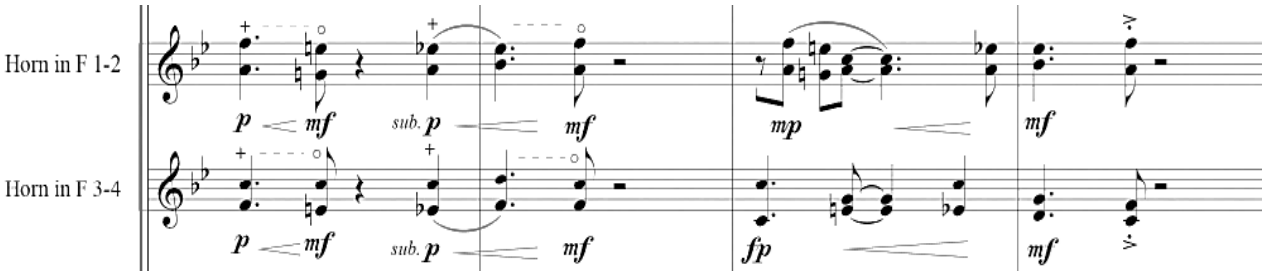
[39] Matthew Smith, The Picador March and Nymphalin of John Philip Sousa: Transcriptions and Editions for Historically-Informed Performance." [DMA diss., University of Connecticut, 2012], 39.

Figure 4.4c: *Revelry!*, Saxophone quartet in Trio, mm.87-89.



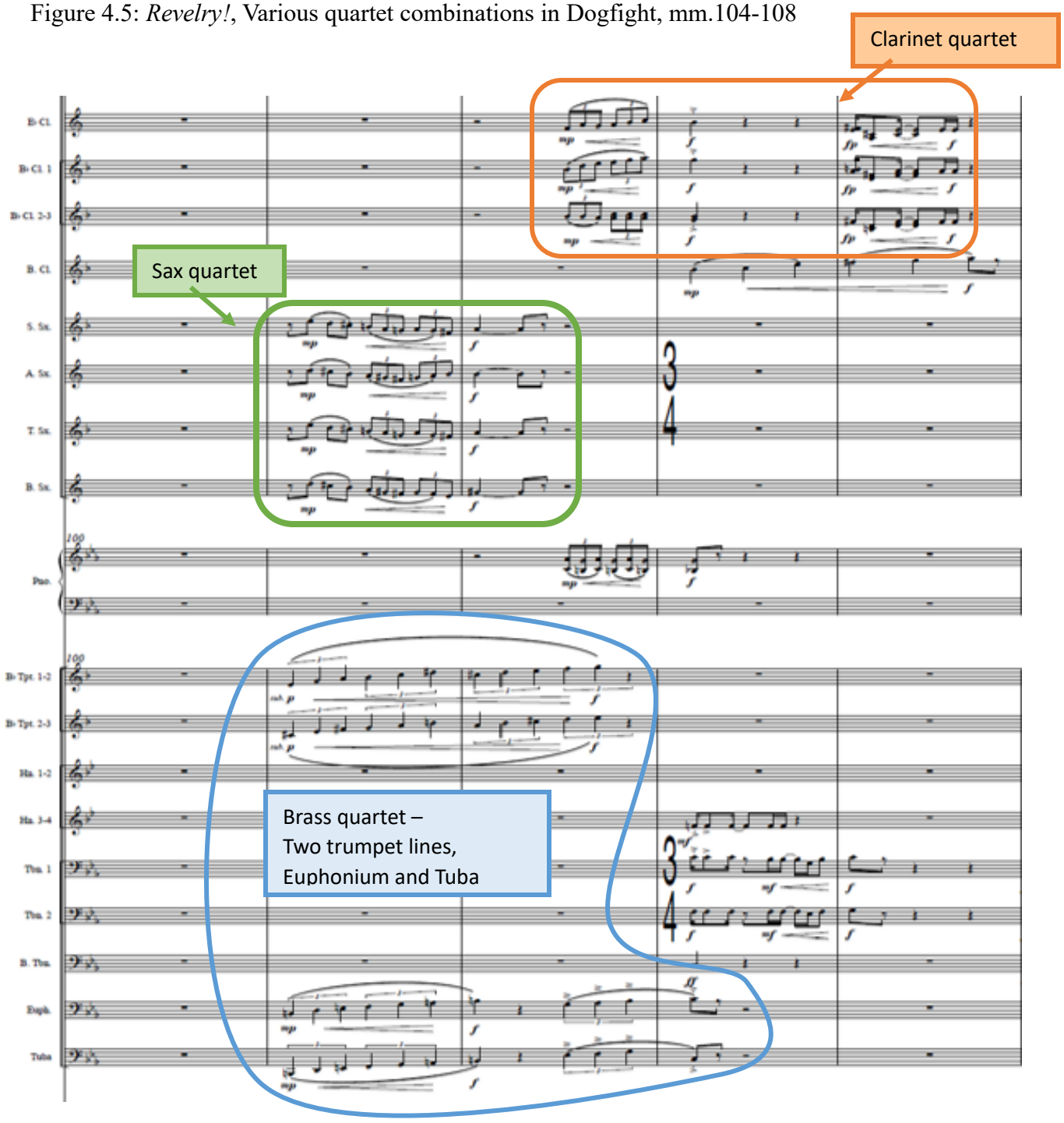
At the start of the second strain, the horn quartet provides a counterpoint to the repeated eighth-note pattern in the woodwinds, while providing harmonic support to the solo trumpet line above (figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4d: *Revelry!,* Horn quartet at opening of second strain, mm.37-40.



Adams did not include such a large woodwind contingent in his band as Sousa, nor did he employ cornets in *The Governor's Own* or in the *Virgin Islands March,* though these B^{b} horns were and continue to be used in many modern-day ensembles, particularly British bands. These differences may have been due to a lack of available clarinets and cornets, or due to Adams' personal preferences.

Figure 4.5: *Revelry!*, Various quartet combinations in Dogfight, mm.104-108



Saxophones were not used in Sousa's early scores but do appear as a standard part of the band in his later scores. In his 'improved' and 'standardized' concert band post-1920s, Sousa allowed saxophones to have more independence rather than simply serving as a doubling option

for clarinets or other woodwinds yet did not engage them in any extensive independent or lead role with any frequency in his works (as he has done with the brass and the upper woodwinds). In truth, the saxophones were the "newest section addition" to the wind band ensemble. Not only was Adams very familiar with this instrumentation and scoring (as seen in Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever* and the *Camera Studies Suite*), but Adams also mirrored this practice in his band scores as demonstrated in *The Governor's Own* and the *Virgin Islands March.* The shift of the saxophones' role can be observed more prominently in the works of composers like Percy Grainger, who explored and expanded the capabilities of the saxophone section within the wind band context. Grainger makes the case for the saxophones in wind band composition in general in his following statements:

> … Is the wind band - with its varied assortments of reeds (so much richer than the reeds of the symphony orchestra), its complete saxophone family that is found nowhere else (to my ears the saxophone is the most expressive of all wind instruments - the one closest to the human voice. And surely all musical instruments should be rated according to their tonal closeness to man's own voice!), its army of brass (both wide-bore and narrow-bore) - not the equal of any medium ever conceived? As a vehicle of deeply emotional expression, it seems to me unrivalled.[40]

Revelry! takes a bolder step and demonstrates the saxophone section functioning in both a supportive harmonic role within the woodwind family, as well as a lead role supported by the whole ensemble. This notable departure from the Sousa-Adams models, is very much a part of the quelbe tradition. Saxophones have become lead instruments in performances of this traditional folk music expression. Specifically, in the opening strain in E^b major (see figure 4.4b), the saxophones take a central position, marking that divergence from the conventional treatment of saxophones as in mid-twentieth century wind band compositions. The section again takes on a

[40] Percy Aldridge Grainger, *Lincolnshire Posy*, Frederick Fennell, ed. [Grafton, OH: Ludwig Music Publishing Company, 1987].

lead role in presenting a lyrical exposition of the main melody of the Trio section (starting in m.61), and the ensemble supports the section with a response, the consequent of this period structure by the first flute, clarinet and trombones.

Rhythmic Elements

Revelry! is heavily based on the rhythmic elements and other motivic themes inspired by quelbe. Understanding the context in which these rhythmic elements are employed is crucial for addressing concerns of appropriation and authenticity. The distinction between musical appropriation and the creation of new music based on folk material hinges on the intent and context of using the source material.

Creating new music based on folk material involves respectful engagement with traditional music and culture, aiming to preserve, celebrate, and possibly innovate upon existing traditions. This approach prioritizes authenticity, cultural sensitivity, and ethical engagement with the source material. As such, intention and context become underlying objectives throughout *Revelry!*. This involves not only incorporating its rhythmic motives but also understanding their cultural context and significance. The rhythmic elements in *Revelry!* are not merely borrowed for their aesthetic appeal but are integrated in a way that respects and celebrates their origins. This approach aligns with the principles of authenticity and cultural sensitivity, ensuring that the composition serves as a homage to the rich musical traditions of the Virgin Islands rather than an appropriation.

The rhythmic drive and continuous presence of the rhythm section in *Revelry!* (demonstrated in figures 4.1a and 4.1b) echo the insistent, motoric elements of quelbe. This provides a foundation that is both propulsive and culturally resonant. That presence exists in all

three layers – foreground, middleground, and background – interchangeably throughout the work. The polyrhythmic stew of those rhythmic patterns, that is a primary characteristic feature of this traditional folk art, is exhibited in many ways throughout the work both within the rhythm section itself and in convergences of that rhythm section with other parts of the ensemble. The resultant interplay of rhythms and motoric drive play a crucial role in conveying the intended mood and purpose of the composition. When it comes to such programmatic pieces, the choice of rhythmic patterns often aligns with the narrative being portrayed.

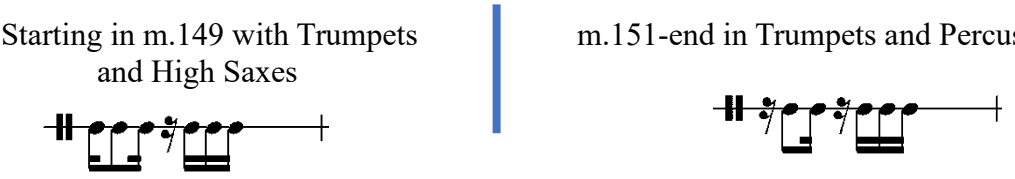
As in any effective overture, the thematic motives initially presented in *Revelry!* introduce ideas that return later in the work, effectively preparing the audience for what is to come. One such motive is the bamboula rhythm, which plays a significant role in the composition. According to ethnomusicologist and performer-scholar of African music Anicet Mundundu, bamboula references 'remembrance'. In his article, *Remembering Bamboula,* R.J. Damm shares a personal correspondence with Mundundu:

> The term “bamboula” or “bamula” is in Kikongo language, meaning to remember, or remembering… [Slaves] resorted to singing remembrance songs and dances from their culture, in order to build their moral and sanity. Although this cannot be compared to displaced communities inside Africa, there are similarities when people from one ethnic group or area meet in urban areas; they organize in socio-cultural associations where they can sing remembrance songs of their culture of origin.”[41]

In the Virgin Islands, cultural bearers, particularly dance troupes, often use a *bamboula* rhythmic pattern in their accompanying music to open or celebrate historical cultural events. In *Revelry!*, these bamboula patterns and other variants are strategically employed to introduce and close formal sections within the work, as well as to mark the conclusion of the piece (figure 4.6).

[41] Robert J. Damm, “Remembering Bamboula.” *Pecussive Notes* (July 2015): 23.

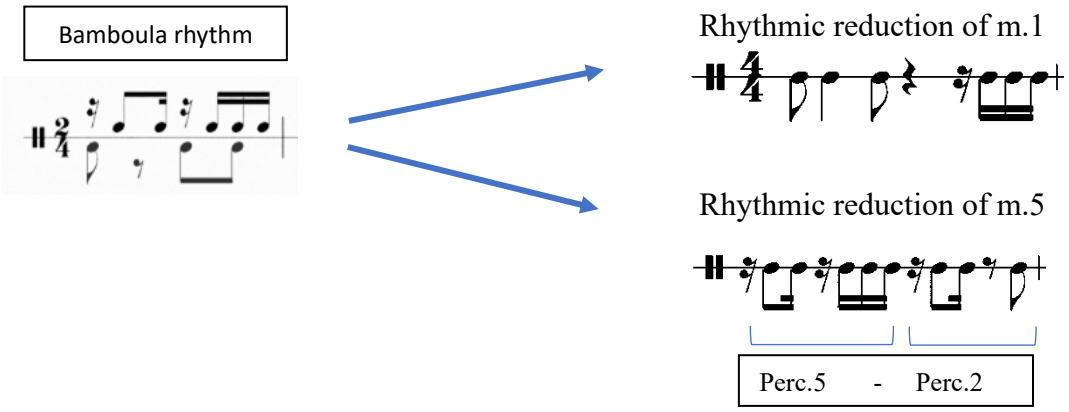
Figure 4.6: *Revelry!*, Bamboula pattern referencing 'remembrance' at closing of work.



These patterns are not merely rhythmic motifs but are imbued with cultural significance, reinforcing the theme of remembrance and celebration. By integrating the bamboula rhythm, the composition pays homage to the traditional practices of the Virgin Islands, while also utilizing this rhythm to create cohesion and structure within the piece.

In thematic compositions that are not tied to a particular narrative (or sections that may not serve to advance a particular narrative), the rhythmic focus shifts more towards movement and dance. In such instances, rhythmic patterns like the quadrille, bamboula or bombolo take center stage. At the opening of the work, for example, a rhythmic reduction of measure one (including the saxophone, low brass and percussion 2 parts) yields a variation on the bamboula rhythm, as does a similar pattern in the percussion parts in measure five (figure 4.7). At this

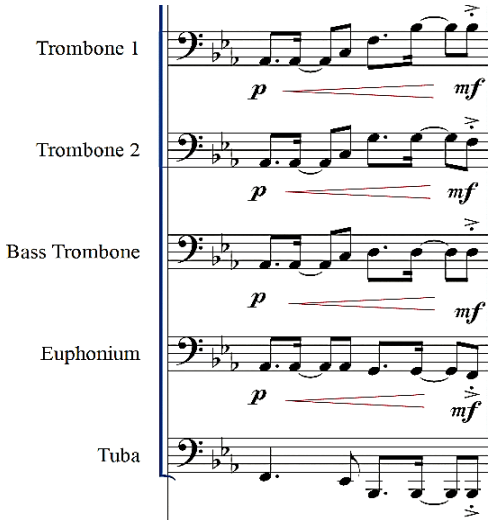
Figure 4.7: *Revelry!*, Rhythmic reduction of parts, m.1



point, the scene is being set. The troupes are organized at the top of the parade route and about to begin. The bamboula rhythmic pattern is part of the introductory schema as a programmatic

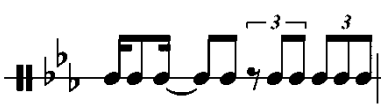
reference emphasizing movement and dance, rather than any musical narrative. These rhythms are surrounded by fragmented triplet gestures in the woodwinds, and deep tresillo pattern in the low brass (figure 4.8) announce the start of the event though a polyrhythmic framework.

Figure 4.8: *Revelry!,* Tresillo rhythmic pattern in low brass, m.4



The tresillo and cariso patterns, with their intricate rhythms and cultural significance, are frequently utilized in the storytelling aspect of quelbe music, enhancing the listener's connection to the narrative being conveyed. These rhythmic patterns are deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of the music, providing a rhythmic foundation that supports and enriches the melodic and harmonic elements. In *Revelry!,* the tresillo pattern is utilized in the low brass, as seen in figure 4.8 and repeated in measure ten. This pattern, combined with the rhythmic activity in the trumpets and percussion in measure ten, yields a variant of the cariso pattern (figure 4.9), and serves to herald the first strain of the piece.

Figure 4.9: *Revelry!,* Resultant Cariso pattern variant combining low brass and percussion, m.10



Including the downbeat and replacing sixteenth notes with triplet eighth notes

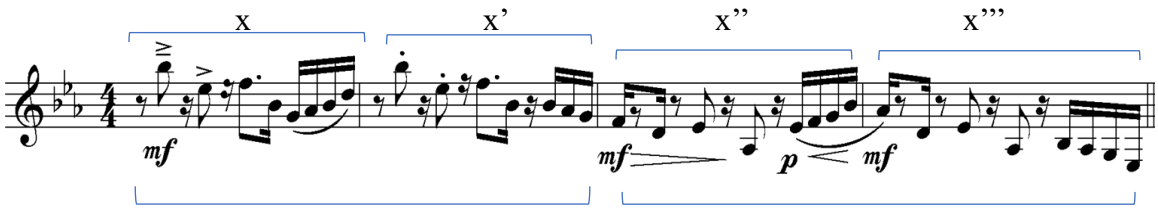
Melodic Elements

Melody is one of the primary purveyors of musical narrative in Western art music, and the first strain is the first melody-based section within a march (and within *Revelry!*). This section introduces the primary melodic material, setting the stage for the narrative development throughout the work. The intention and integration of these rhythmic patterns at this juncture adds a layer of rhythmic complexity and cultural resonance.

As demonstrated by quelbe songs, *La Bega Carousel* and *Queen Mary,* the melodies in quelbe music are short, constructed in a mostly stepwise (scalar) fashion with small leaps emphasizing the contour of the line, usually in a binary format. Repetitions of the main melodic ideas are usually reprised with some variation or ornamentation, much like improvisation in jazz.

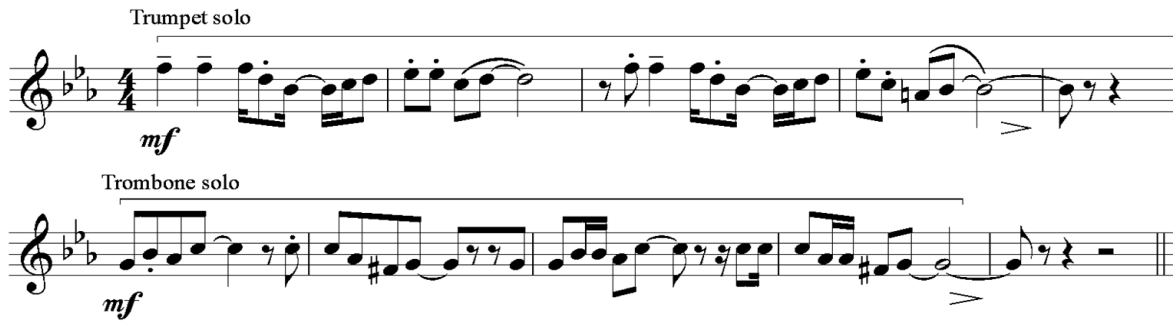
Revelry! retains that methodology in its melodic approach. The melody of the first strain is presented by the saxophones (figure 4.10). It is short and constructed on a basic idea (x) that is repeated in variation. The rhythmic content remains very similar, while there are a few motivic transpositions and contour changes as the melody plays out in a pseudo call and response format.

Figure 4.10: *Revelry!*, Melody of first strain.



In the second strain, *Revelry!* incorporates a folk song that is widely known throughout the USVI, *Mama Bake de Johnny Cake* (figure 4.11). This folk melody, with its origins arguably traced to the Bahamas but embraced and preserved in the USVI generationally, holds significant cultural and historical value, remaining indispensable to the Virgin Islanders musical story.

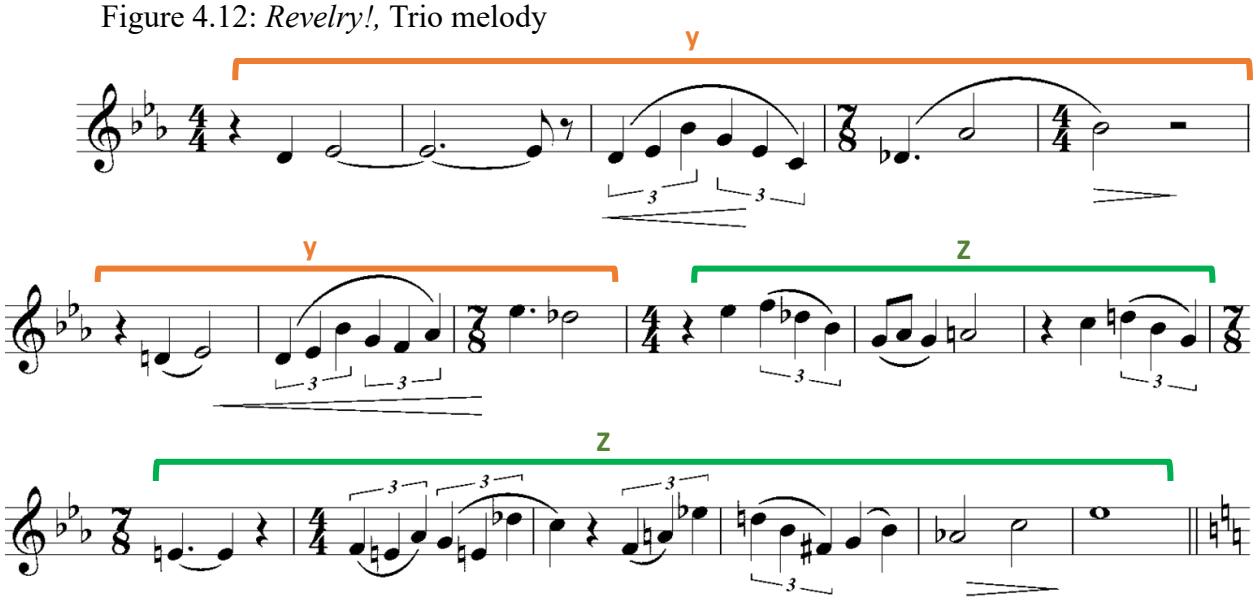
Figure 4.11: *Revelry!, Mama Bake de Johnny Cake* folksong, mm.37-44.



The incorporation of this circum-Caribbean folk song in this work adds a deep cultural layer to the composition, tying it directly to the musical heritage of the Virgin Islanders. Its association with holiday and carnival seasons further strengthens its thematic relevance within *Revelry!* as a piece that actively engages with USVI folk elements and the essence of USVI carnival celebrations. By incorporating such popular and culturally resonant elements like this *Mama Bake de Johnny Cake*, it provides USVI musicians and audiences a tangible connection point, inviting them to engage with the music on a more personal level. It also invites musicians audiences who are not familiar with the cultural significance of this particular folksong, to engage with *Revelry!* as a brief, immersive opportunity into a cultural experience.

The Trio section of a standard American, Sousa-esque march tends to be a more sustained lyrical and subdued section compared to melodies and texture of the head of the march. This section features the main melody (y) with a melodic variant appended to it (z) to create a longer, lyrical exposition (figure 4.12). The appended melodic passage is couched within a lightly scored texture creating a contrast that moves the melodic narrative forward. This departure allowed for artistic exploration, adding some variety to the composition. Also, the presentation of the second section in a lightly scored texture creates a contrast in this trio that draws the listener's attention.

Figure 4.12: *Revelry!,* Trio melody



Following the trio section, *Revelry!* moves directly into the expected "break strain." Generally in Sousa marches, the break strain serves as a contrasting section following the initial melody of the trio. As mentioned previously, its purpose is to "break up" the flow between the trio and the final strain, offering a distinct contrast without necessarily introducing a new melody. In keeping with this model, *Revelry!* refrains from introducing new melodies in this section and maintains a sense of continuity and cohesion with the preceding material with some development of existing thematic material from the trio section (figures 4.13a, 4.13b, 4.13c, and 4.13d). In context of the whole work, this break strain provides a dramatic element at about two-thirds of the way through the march.

Figure 4.13a: *Revelry!*, Percussion development of introductory theme, m.98.

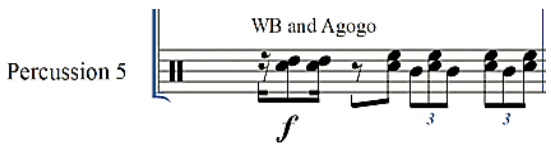


Figure 4.13b: *Revelry!*, Trombones variation of folksong rhythm, mm.105-106.

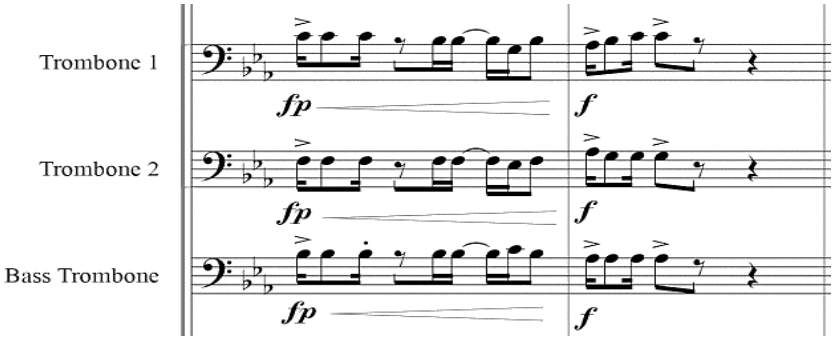


Figure 4.13c: *Revelry!*, Low brass variation of Trio melody, mm.101-102.

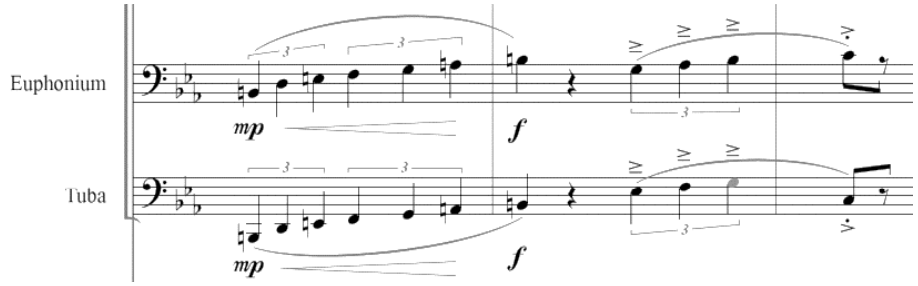
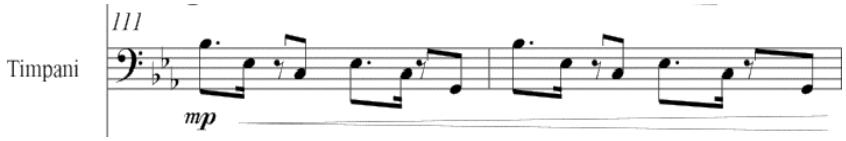


Figure 4.13d: *Revelry!*, Timpani variation of opening low brass theme, mm.111-112.



Form and Harmonic Elements

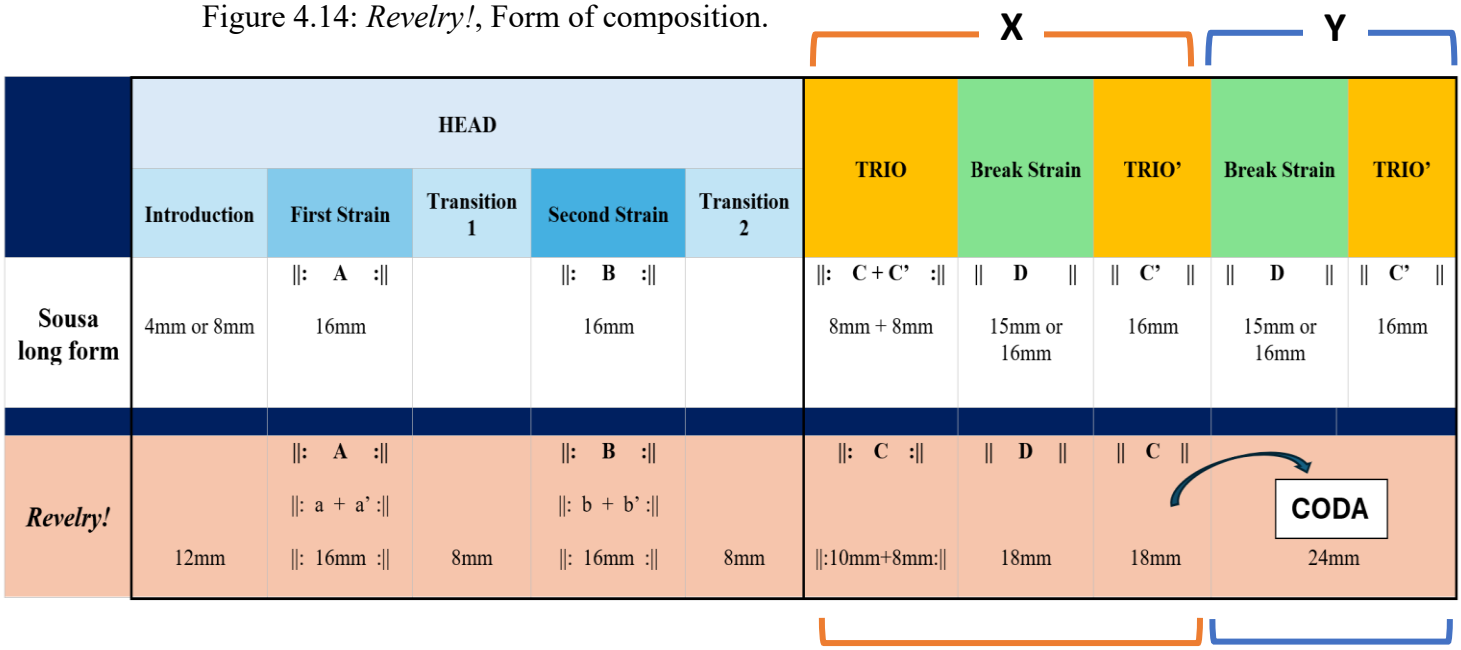
On the broadest level, the form of *Revelry!* can be viewed as a variation of the standard, Sousa-esque American march. From figure 4.14, the overall formal design is most closely aligned with Sousa's long form of the march. Each section's length in *Revelry!* corresponds to factors or multiples of other sections, similar to Sousa's structure, where sections are evenly divisible by two. In Sousa's long form, the closing section is double (or quadruple) the length of the introduction. The first, second, and break strains, as well as the trio, are of equal length, each effectively double (or quadruple) the length of the introduction. The first and second strains are immediately repeated, the break strain does not repeat directly, and there is no repeat of the introduction.

Most of these proportional relationships are maintained within *Revelry!.* The introduction's length compared to the lengths of the strains and the trio maintains a common even factor, though these lengths are not strictly multiples or factors of each other—the overall proportion of larger versus smaller sections is maintained. The first and second strains are of equal length and immediately repeated, while neither the break strain nor the introduction is repeated.

The transition sections, both brief, modulatory and of equal length (exactly half the length of the either strains in the head of the work) are divergences from the Sousa-Adams musical traditions. They are part of a larger classical developmental approach used to further shape the composition, as is the idea of a coda or postlude. Examining a ternary section of Sousa's long form, segment X in figure 4.14, the structure of the second half of Sousa's long form suggests a rounded binary structure, with segment Y possibly functioning as a coda or postlude. Through this lens, *Revelry!* mirrors this structure by carefully maintaining the

proportions and repetitions that characterize Sousa's (and Adams') march compositions for wind band.

Figure 4.14: *Revelry!*, Form of composition.

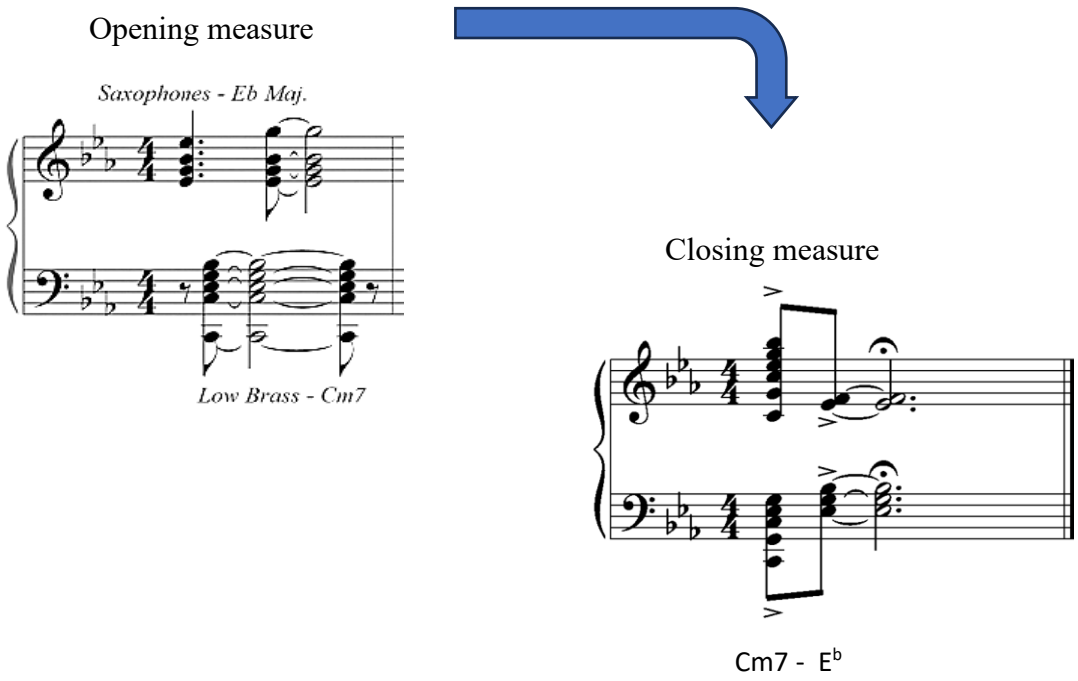


This alignment with Sousa's long form underscores the meticulous attention to formal design in *Revelry!,* while integrating the rhythmic and thematic elements inspired by quelbe. The balance between adherence to traditional forms and the incorporation of cultural motifs highlights an objective of *Revelry!* in bridging these musical worlds, creating a piece that is both structurally sound, classically relevant, and culturally resonant.

The twelve-measure introduction opens the work with a burst of sound that immediately dissipates–a ***fp*** dynamic on the Eb major chord (tonic) downbeat in the saxophones, closely followed by an offbeat ***fp*** hit on a Cm7 chord in the low brass section (see figure 4.1). These accented opening chords programmatically function as musical gunshots signaling the imminent start of the event. Rather than functioning as a single Cm7 sonority, the contrast of register and timbre (mid-high saxophones versus low brass), in addition to the rhythmic offset and dynamic effect (***fp***), allow this gesture to function and sound as two separate sonorities. At the very end of

the work, the penultimate Cm7 chord is a brief embellishment in the cadential process that otherwise resolves the work in a perfect authentic cadence in E^b major. Echoing the introduction, this imparts a sense of symmetry within the composition, providing a "tidy bookend" effect that reinforces the overall structure and coherence of the work (figure 4.15).

Figure 4.15: *Revelry!*, Piano reduction of opening chords (m.1) and closing chords (m.157)



Revelry! explores the idea of musical poles[42] in this opening section as the low brass sonority (in measures 1-4) moving towards B^b along a circle of fifths progression: Cm7 → F → B^b, and the saxes (along with the woodwinds) traverse a different path *simultaneously* on their way to B^b: E^b → B^b → Gmin → B^b. Gravitating towards B^b as a grounding element allows for a subtle build of the tension through the introduction of this work and through first and second

[42] Musical poles loosely reference Daniel Karcher's work, *Hearing Space in Music Composition: Analytical Descriptors for Sonic Spatialization,* which used as a point of departure, Steve Larson's conception of *gravity* as it pertains to music discussed in Larsen's book, *Musical Forces* (p.83).

thematic areas (strains) to result in a more definitive resolution from the dominant (B^b) to the tonic (E^b Major) at rehearsal F (m.61). Programmatically, this symbolizes the gathering and organizing of troupes to move forward along the parade route as they will eventually converge on the parade grounds past the bandstand of dignitaries at the end of the parade route. The fragmented musical gestures in the woodwinds and percussion closely following these accented opening chords reference the listener moving through alternate ways and byways to find 'just the right spot' to enjoy the experience of the various musical engines supporting extravagant and vibrantly colored troupes. They are also reminiscent of the different elements at play during carnival.

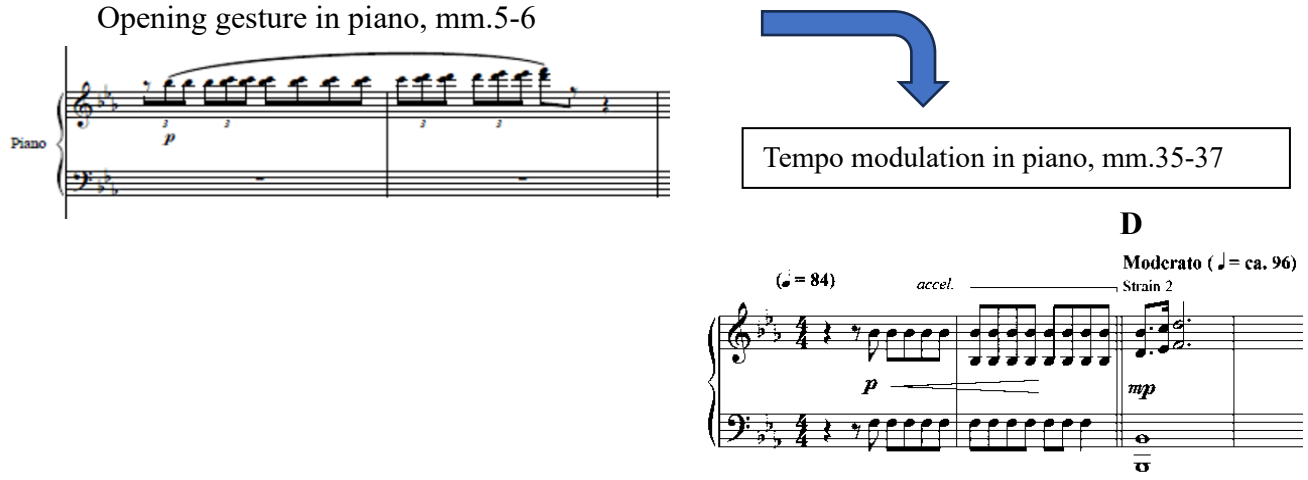
Structurally, this first strain of the work, **A** employs a binary construct, comprising two, four-measure phrases that are subsequently repeated (|| a + a' ||), reinforcing the thematic material and structure (mm.13- 28). It concludes on Cm7 chord, evading an authentic cadence, transitioning to an eight-measure passage opening on an Fm7 sonority (rehearsal mark C, mm.29-36), and demonstrating that movement towards Bb along a circle of fifths progression.

As mentioned previously, the incorporation of transition sections in the head of *Revelry!* is part of the creative choices made to shape the composition. However, these transitions also have a relationship to the quelbe tradition, particularly those quelbe-based works that are text or narrative driven. In these songs, there is an alternation between verse and chorus, with each verse and chorus typically having a repetitive structure, often a parallel period. In *Revelry!,* these transitions adopt elements of this alternating and internally repetitive structure. The alternation and repetition within the verse and chorus of quelbe songs are reflected in the transition sections, which function to bridge the different thematic and formal sections within the head of this work. This approach helps to maintain a balance between tradition and creativity, by incorporating

another element of quelbe's cultural and structural nuances within the framework of a Sousa-esque march.

Further, the first transition section (rehearsal D, mm.37-44) plays a crucial role in modulating the tonality of the march. It begins on the F minor, indicating a shift in harmonic focus. This modulation serves a similar function to that found in sonata allegro form compositions, where a transition passage (usually short and modulating) leads to a new key area, typically the dominant in classical music. In *Revelry!* this eight-measure transition passage does indeed modulate, leading the composition towards its dominant key, B^b Major, and closes with a gesture first introduced in measure five of the introduction (see figure 4.16). Functioning more than a gesture found in the closing schema of this first transition, it also has the practical role of accelerating the tempo to usher in the faster, second strain of the work. There is another connection here to the introduction in which B^b served as a grounding element towards which the low brass gravitated in their harmonic progression. In the introduction following the E^b major chord downbeat of the saxophones, the low brass progressed from Cm7 → Fm7 → B^b, which matches the harmonic progression of this first strain and transition: E^b → Cm7 → Fm7 → B^b, to begin the second strain in B^b major.

Figure 4.16: *Revelry!,* Rhythmic motive used as basis for tempo modulation leading into Strain 2.

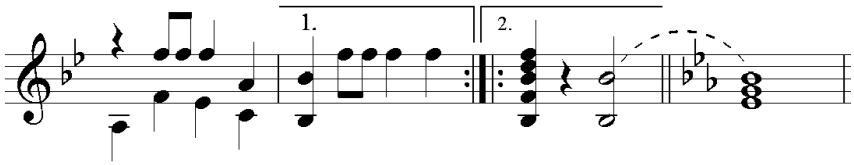


Using this thematic element in the opening and closing gestures of this strain, originating from a gesture in the introduction of *Revelry!*, hearkens back to the idea of incorporating the idea of remembrance – it was intentional that each time this pattern returns, it is set rhythmically against a variant of the bamboula pattern.

The second strain of this work is structurally similar to the first strain in that the binary structure is comprised of two, four-measure phrases, with that eight-measure section subsequently repeated, and comprising the **B** section, (|| b + b' ||). The harmonic progression within this strain and subsequent transition section showcases a strategic modulation, transitioning from a C7 chord to an F7 sonority and then resolving to B^b. In the first strain and transition, the harmony shifts from E^b (at beginning of strain) → Cm7 → Fm7 → B^b. Here, in the second strain and following transition, the minor 7^{th} chords are transformed into the more expected dominant 7^{th} chords: C7 → F7 → B^b. This progression culminates in a convincing perfect authentic cadence on B^b in measure 57.

The cadential extension from measures 57-60 at the end of this second transition section illustrates a nuanced transformation of the tonic chord's function, evolving from B^b (I) to B^b7 (V7 in E^b). This tonicization serves to create a sense of tension and anticipation, leading to a resolution in the home key of E^b, marking the beginning of the trio section – a variant on Adams' approach at the close of the second strain moving into the trio section in the *Virgin Islands March*. In that context, a sustained B^b common tone acted as a bridge between sections, a simple transformation at the boundary of formal sections, maintaining a sense of continuity and fluidity in the transition (figure 4.17).

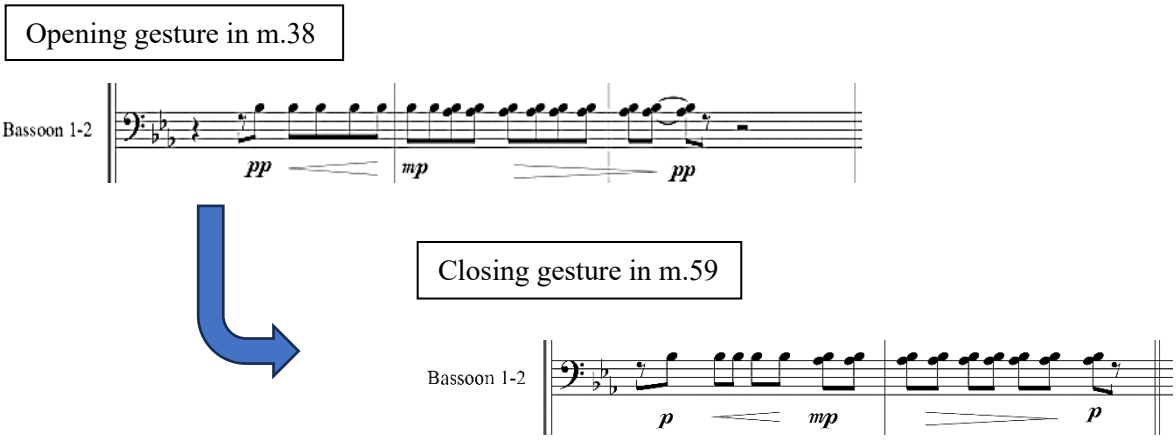
Figure 4.17: *The Virgin Islands March,* Using B^{b} in tonic resolution of second strain, as common tone transformation into Trio section, mm.67-69.



However, in *Revelry!* the cadential extension introduces more dissonance and instability with the B^{b}7 chord, compelling a resolution to E^{b}. This slight departure from a straightforward common tone approach adds dynamic tension and musical interest. Meanwhile, the broader view of the harmonic progression: (E^{b}) C7 → F7 → B^{b} → E^{b} commencing at the start of the first strain thru the downbeat of the trio, demonstrates a common, descending circle of fifths pattern. More importantly, this progression contributes to the overall structural coherence of *Revelry! by* creating a sense of harmonic motion and development, guiding the listener through key changes and shifting tonal landscapes.

Further, this section is bookended by a variation of the repeated eighth-note pattern that introduced the second strain (figure 4.18). It effectively signaled the close of the first transition, and effectively ushered in the second strain.

Figure 4.18: *Revelry!*, Rhythmic motives bookending the second strain and transition.



Here, it is used again as a closing gesture of the second transition, and heralds in the trio section of the work without interruption. Using this motive in this fashion was neither based on an Adams/Sousa model nor quelbe – it was a creative choice made to help shape the composition, particularly as the transition sections were not part of either musical tradition. This serves as a significant point in the composition, marking a cohesive and satisfying conclusion to the head of *Revelry!* (figure 4.19), while setting the stage for further developments within the piece.

Figure 4.19: *Revelry!*, Head section of the work, mm.1-60.

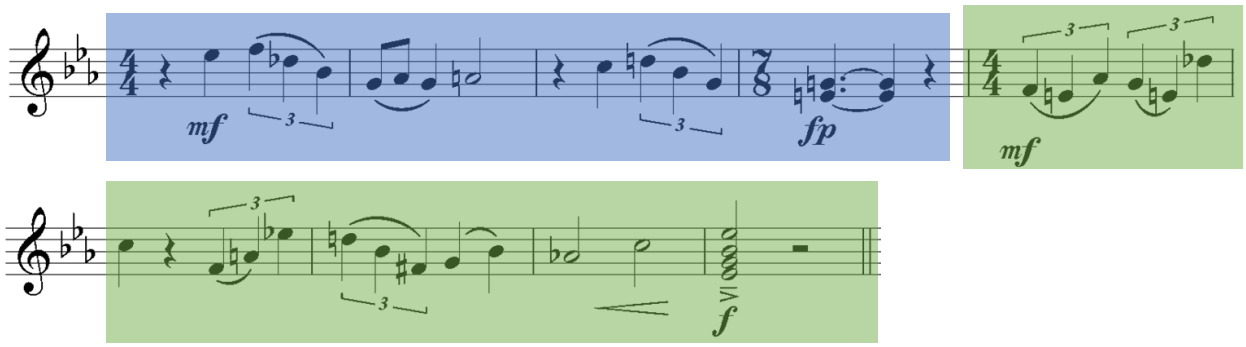
HEAD				
Introduction	**First Strain**	**Transition 1**	**Second Strain**	**Transition 2**
	‖: **A** :‖		‖: **B** :‖	
	‖: a + a' :‖		‖: b + b' :‖	
	mm. 13- 28	mm. 29-36	mm.37-52	mm.53-60
12mm	16mm	8mm	16mm	8mm
E^b	E^b	→ B^b	Bb	→ E^b

The trio section of a standard American, Sousa-esque march tends to be a more sustained lyrical and subdued section compared to melodies and texture of the head of the march. March composers also tend to add a flat (or conversely and less frequently, take away a sharp) in the key signature of the trio. This harmonic shift implies a modulatory movement from tonic (I) to subdominant (IV) but can also be viewed from an alternate perspective. Recall Elkus' references on this point of interpretation on Sousa's marches in chapter two of this document. His (Sousa) marches can have dance-like melodies at the heads, functioning harmonically like standing on

the dominant[43]. In keeping with this Sousa-esque tendency, this interpretation suggests a shift in perspective as it denotes a modulation from dominant to tonic, of an arrival to a home tonic key.

As mentioned in chapter 3, Adams continued this Sousa-esque modulatory tradition in his march compositions, and *Revelry!* demonstrates a continuation of this convention in the trio. With a modulation to the home key (E^b), the saxophones again take the lead role and present a lyrical exposition of the antecedent of this main melody (starting in measure 61). The first flute, clarinet and trombone answer with the consequent of this period structure, modulating to C^b (bVI). A second period structure unfolds starting at measure 71 supporting a variation of the original melody of the trio (identified in figure 4.6). A variation is employed here rather than introducing a new, contrasting melody within the trio. It is presented by the trumpets and adds some variety to the treatment of melody in the piece thus far (figure 4.20). The woodwinds' response not only complements the trumpets but also facilitates a smooth modulation back to the home key, contributing to a seamless closure of the period structure. This exposition of the trio section now spans an eighteen-measure passage before being reprised. This repetition adds cohesion and reinforces the thematic material. Rather than employing a cadential schema

Figure 4.20: *Revelry!,* Extension of trio melody, beginning at m.71 (rehearsal G).

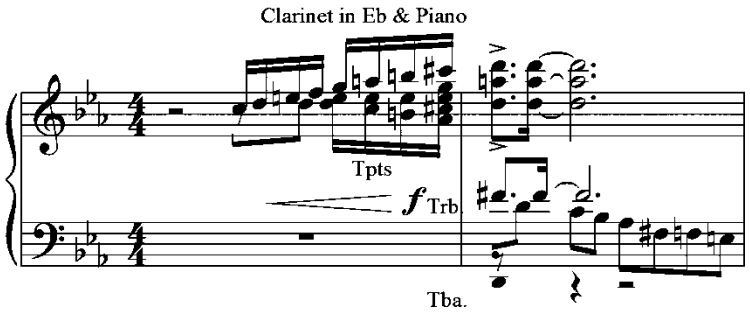


[43] Elkus, Jonathan. "Defining the Sousa March: Its Formal and Stylistic Constants." *American Music Research Center Journal,* Volume 15, [2005]: 44.

like the approach used earlier in the composition, an evaded cadence is employed here, leading to an abrupt shift to the foreign key of D major via direct modulation. This unexpected modulation serves as a dramatic pivot into the break strain at measure 97.

The break strain is also called 'breakup strain', 'interlude', 'battle', 'the fight', as well as the 'dogfight' depending on the source consulted. At rehearsal J, this dogfight erupts out of the trio section with a sweeping ascending gesture to a strong downbeat in the foreign key, D; foreign as compared to the preceding key of E^b (figure 4.21).The choice in key shift also reflects one of the features of Sousa and Adams' melodic writing: their incorporation of the neighbor tone embellishment in their melodies. According to Elkus, Sousa's "trademark melodic chromatic ornament is the lower neighbor tone – both accented and unaccented,"[44] and Adams incorporates this Sousa-esque neighboring tone embellishment in his melodies and harmonic language frequently. The modulation from E^b major to D major at the start of the break strain, and then back to E^b major for the following trio reprise is an interesting macro perspective on this

Figure 4.21: *Revelry!* – Modulatory passage leading into dogfight, mm. 96-97.



[44] Elkus, Jonathan. "Defining the Sousa March: Its Formal and Stylistic Constants." *American Music Research Center Journal,* Volume 15, 2005, 44. Adams also integrated this type of chromatic embellishment in main melodies of both the first and second strains of *The Governor's Own* (see figures 3.2, 3.3).

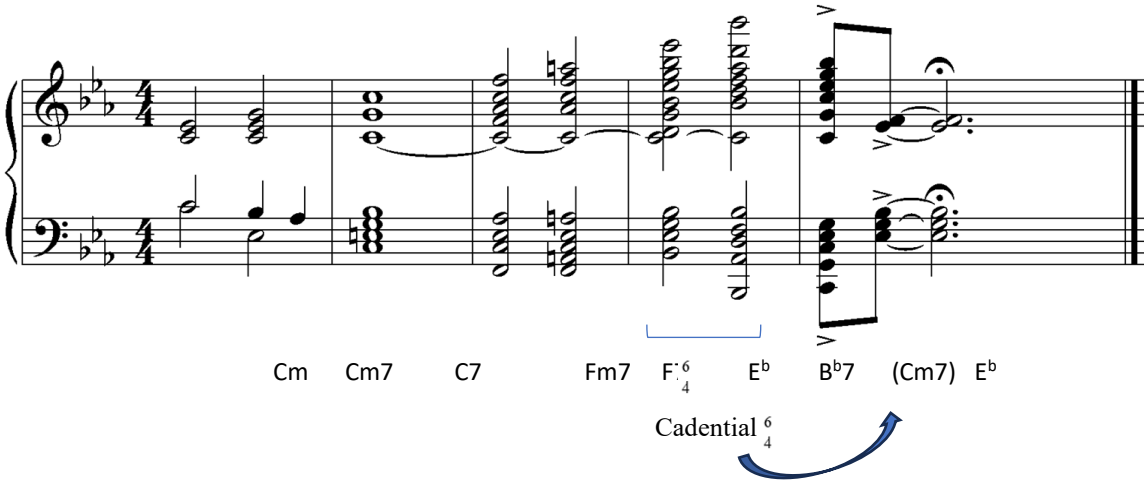
neighbor tone embellishment in the melodic development. Further, in addition to not introducing new melodies, this eighteen-measure section (starting in measure 97) also does not repeat material as the other sections in a march traditionally do. This modulatory passage sets its own groove, breaking away from the lilt and character of the trio. The opening measures feature a call and response section, *Revelry's* version of a lower-level musical dogfight, between the percussion and the other members of the ensemble. As it weaves away from D major, it is somewhat episodic, developing melodic and rhythmic ideas from all earlier sections of the piece in a more aggressive and rhythmically-charged manner. The last half of the dogfight uses a now familiar harmonic pattern (descending fifths) in its return to the home key: Cm7 → F → B^b → E^b.

The harmonic arrival back to the home key in measure 115 with a perfect authentic cadence signifies a structural resolution and elides with the onset of the reprise of the trio. Similar to the first exposition of the trio, the saxophones take the lead role in reintroducing the main melody. This section comprises another eighteen-measure section, during which the flutes and horns respond to the saxophones, while the saxophones continue partway through the response with a brief countermelody. Incorporating a countermelody is consistent with Sousa's penchant for adding countermelodies in the reprise of his trios – a practice Adams continued in his marches as well. The trumpets then present the second theme of the trio once again, followed by a lightly scored woodwind response that closes with a PAC in E^b in measure 133.

Rather than a straightforward reprise of the trio as noted in Sousa's models and Adams' works, *Revelry!* structurally diverges into a coda at measure 133 to close the work. The passage starts in E^b major and harmonically shifts to the submediant in measure 134, foreshadowing the eventual modulation to C minor. This modulation to C minor (confirmed by measure 142)

initiates the beginning of a familiar harmonic schema recurring throughout the work (most recently in the last half of the dogfight: Cm7 → F → B^b → E^b) to create a more cohesive and engaging musical narrative. The final five measures of the piece more clearly tie these harmonic connections together (see figure 4.22), and the closing harmonic schema adds a final layer of resolution to the composition. The penultimate Cm7 chord is a brief embellishment in the cadential process (echoing the opening chords of *Revelry!*) that otherwise resolves the work in a perfect authentic cadence.

Figure 4.22: *Revelry!* – Piano reduction of final five measures of CODA highlighting closing harmonic schema



This creates a brief sense of anticipation and contrast before resolving to the final E^b chord, and that dramatic harmonic gesture mirrors the opening gesture of the introduction. It imparts a sense of symmetry and unity within the composition, providing a "tidy bookend" effect that reinforces the overall structure and coherence of the work.

Figure 4.23 (similar to figure 4.14) presents the overall form of this work, drawing some comparison to the other case studies discussed in this document, and including the harmonic implications as discussed. Again, *Revelry!* presents as an expanded march form with a balanced and symmetrical structure akin to works by Sousa and other march composers.

Figure 4.23: Form comparison of Sousa model, Adams works and *Revelry!*

	HEAD					TRIO	Break Strain	TRIO'	Break Strain	TRIO'
	Introduction	**First Strain**	**Transition 1**	**Second Strain**	**Transition 2**					
Sousa long form	4mm or 8mm ***Usually dominant key*** *(or mediant key)*	‖: **A** :‖ 16mm ***Mediant or dominant key***		‖: **B** :‖ 16mm ***Dominant key***		‖: **C + C'** :‖ 8mm + 8mm ***Home key***	‖ **D** ‖ 15mm or 16mm ***Usually dominant*** *(or relative minor)*	‖ **C'** ‖ 16mm ***Home key***	‖ **D** ‖ 15mm or 16mm ***Usually dominant*** *(or relative minor)*	‖ **C'** ‖ 16mm ***Home key***
The Governor's Own **(D♭)**	8mm A♭ – E♭ I - V V – V/V	‖: **A** :‖ ‖: 16mm :‖ A♭ – E♭ I - V V – V/V		‖: **B** :‖ ‖: 16mm :‖ E♭ – A♭ V - I V/V - V		‖: **C + C'** :‖ ‖: 8mm+8mm :‖ D♭ I/IV I	‖ **D** ‖ ‖ 16mm ‖ A♭ V/IV V	‖ **C** ‖ ‖ 16mm ‖ D♭ I/IV I		‖ **C '** ‖ ‖ 16mm ‖ D♭ I/IV I
The Virgin Islands March **(E♭)**	8mm F V V/V	‖: **A** :‖ ‖: 16mm :‖ B♭ – F I – V V – V/V		‖: **B** :‖ ‖: 16mm :‖ B♭ I V		‖: **C + C'** :‖ ‖: 8mm+8mm :‖ E♭ I/IV I	‖ **D** ‖ ‖ 16mm ‖ B♭ V/IV V	‖ **C** ‖ ‖ 16mm ‖ E♭ I/IV I		‖ **C'** ‖ ‖ 16mm ‖ E♭ I/IV I
Revelry! **(E♭)**	12mm E♭ → C min I - vi	‖: **A** :‖ ‖: a + a' :‖ ‖: 16mm :‖ E♭ I	8mm F → B♭ V/V - V	‖: **B** :‖ ‖: b + b' :‖ ‖: 16mm :‖ B♭ V	8mm → E♭ I	‖: **C** :‖ ‖:10mm+8mm:‖ E♭ I	‖ **D** ‖ (Dawgfight) 18mm D →E♭ VII - I	‖ **C** ‖ 18mm E♭ → C min I - vi	**CODA** 24mm C min → E♭ vi - I	

The length of individual sections contributes to this balance. This symmetrical arrangement creates a sense of cohesion and formal completeness within the composition. Additionally, *Revelry!* follows a progressive key relationship throughout the piece, expanding on a harmonic schema that is recurring on a macro and micro level throughout (E^b – C – F – B^b – E^b) – notable feature is the common standard circle of fifths progressions arriving back at the home key (E^b) by the end of the work. This harmonic progression adds depth and development to the musical narrative, leading listeners through different tonalities before arriving at a harmonically satisfying resolution.

The larger scale harmonic progression of the work is shown in two ways in figure 4.23. On one level (orange roman numeral analysis) the harmonic relationships reflect the interpretation of the head of the work modulating to the subdominant key for the trio and ending the work in that key – a closely related key, one flat away. The perspective of the head of the work establishing and confirming a dominant tonal space before modulating down a fifth to the tonic (home) key in the trio is presented in the blue roman numeral analysis. *Revelry!* is based on this latter perspective, viewing the work based on the closing key as tonic. The second transition passage to aids in confirming the dominant-tonic relationship via pivot chord modulation

These structural elements contribute to the overall impact and effectiveness of *Revelry!* as a march composition. Divergent elements contribute to a sense of drama and deepen the musical narrative of the work. These include the modulatory transition sections in *Revelry!* after both strains in the head of the work, the introduction of second melody in the trio that is not functioning as the expected countermelody during the reprise, as well as the arrival of the coda where a reprise of the trio section would have been expected. The balance, symmetry, and harmonic progression work together with these departures from standard practice to create a cohesive and engaging musical experience.

By weaving these thematic elements (instrumentation, scoring, rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic elements) and formal design into the fabric of the composition, *Revelry!* not only celebrates the musical heritage of the Virgin Islands but also demonstrates how traditional elements can be recontextualized within a contemporary framework. This synthesis allows the work to resonate with authenticity and cultural sensitivity, enriches the concert repertoire, and provides a new avenue for audiences and performers to engage with the rich musical heritage of the Virgin Islands.

CHAPTER 5

BRIDGING THE GAP

Revelry! achieves the objective of a composition that creates a cohesive and immersive musical experience honoring both Western "art music" traditions and the vibrant cultural heritage of the Virgin Islands through the lens of quelbe music. It further demonstrates a continuity of this folk musical tradition that may provide a bridge connecting the past to our present. The manner in which *Revelry!* 'bridges this gap' easily lead to important, explorative deep dives such as folk music versus art music in a modern context, musical realism and authenticity, and even the gray space inhabited by the crossing over of folk, popular, and classical musics. Though these deep dives extend beyond the scope of this study and are worth addressing as part of a separate study, the mere possibility of the intersection of these pathways with this work establishes a bridge of sorts. Maud Karpeles reported in a 1965 editorial published in the *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* in 1949:

> Folk music is disappearing as a traditional art…steps must therefore be taken to preserve our remaining heritage not only for our own use, but for that of posterity. We must consider methods of recording and notation, so as to give as faithful a reproduction as possible of the art as presented to us in its natural state…the living organism of folk music is not to be found in the stereotyped notation or even in the mechanical recording, but only in the fleeting creation of the singer, dancer or instrumentalist. Our work in the laboratory will therefore be of little use unless we can relate it to the study of folk music as a live social and artistic manifestation.[1]

These words of the 1949 Council members resonates with this study, particularly in the context of *Revelry!* and its exploration of folk musical traditions within the framework of wind band (march) composition. The document and this work together highlight the continuity and

[1] Maud Karpeles, "The International Folk Music Council." *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, Vol. 2, no.3 [December 1965]: 312.

evolution of this musical tradition, acting not simply as a ‘bridge of sorts’, rather, as a tangible bridge that sustains a historical continuum. This study is a physical representation of “folk music as a live social and artistic manifestation.” The comparison between Sousa's modeling, Adams's works, and *Revelry!* spanning more than a century underscores the diversity and potentiality within wind band, march composition, showcasing distinct approaches to instrumentation, formal structure, and the roles of individual sections within the ensemble. This diversity not only reflects the evolution of musical styles over time but also demonstrates the adaptability and innovation within the genre.

Revelry! exemplifies a deliberate engagement with cultural roots and musical traditions while incorporating Western art music structural elements. From Western art music composition, the work employs a standard Sousa inspired wind band instrumentation with standard forces in each instrumental family avoiding extreme ranges or extended techniques. A clear focus on classical symmetry and inclusion of structural elements (melodic and harmonic) of a Sousa-esque/Adams march form was an underlying objective. It follows the Western art music phrase model particularly in reference to cadential schemas and standard progressions such as common descending circle of fifths harmonic progressions, as well as incorporates modulatory passages (transitions and coda) reminiscent of sonata form of which the latter are not part of established norms in march band composition, nor traditional quelbe harmonic framework.

From quelbe, *Revelry!* adapts the standard, traditional rhythm section to a large wind band context, maintaining a syncopated, polyrhythmic texture true to quelbe performance as an underlying rhythmic current driving the work forward. It employs traditional folk rhythmic patterns (quadrille, bombolo, cariso, tresillo, bamboula, and cinquillo) in the foreground, middle ground, and background layers as the basis for a larger-scale polyrhythmic texture throughout the

ensemble, and incorporates a popular folk song with strong associations to the Virgin Islands carnival season as the main melody in the second strain.

Revelry! serves as a tangible example of how blending Western art music conventions with cultural folk elements contributes to creating an evocative musical narrative that guides both listeners and performers through shifting tonal landscapes while acknowledging historical influences. Based on Christine Gangelhoff and Cathleen LeGrand's definitions of art music[2], *Revelry!* can certainly be considered a part of the 'art music' tradition while also offering unique qualities beyond traditional Western classical music. It is firmly rooted in a Western classical tradition with a well-defined musical structure that is fully composed and requires 'specialized skill and knowledge' in its composition and performance, meeting their criteria of art music. However, its incorporation of traditional folk elements from a vibrant musical heritage adds layers of depth and richness to the musical experience. The focus shifts from solely listening to engaging physically with movement and thoughts inspired by the musical argument. By incorporating popular and culturally resonant elements such as the folksong of the second strain, *Revelry!* creates additional connection points for both listeners and performers. In printed scores and live performances, it becomes a "live social and artistic manifestation" that invites deeper engagement with the music and the underlying narratives. By emphasizing the respectful engagement with and innovation upon traditional music, *Revelry!* seeks to contribute to the preservation and celebration of the US Virgin Islands' musical heritage. This intention is reflected in the careful consideration of melodic, harmonic, rhythmic motives and other thematic elements, ensuring that the work is both an authentic representation of quelbe influences and a dynamic, original composition in its own right. Further, this intention and engagement contribute

[2] Christine Gangelhoff and Cathleen LeGrand. "Art Music by Caribbean Composers: US Virgin Islands." *The International Journal of Bahamian Studies* 19, no.2. [2013]: 2.

to a broader cultural dialogue, bridging the gap between different musical traditions and inviting participants to explore and appreciate diverse musical and cultural perspectives.

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APPENDIX A

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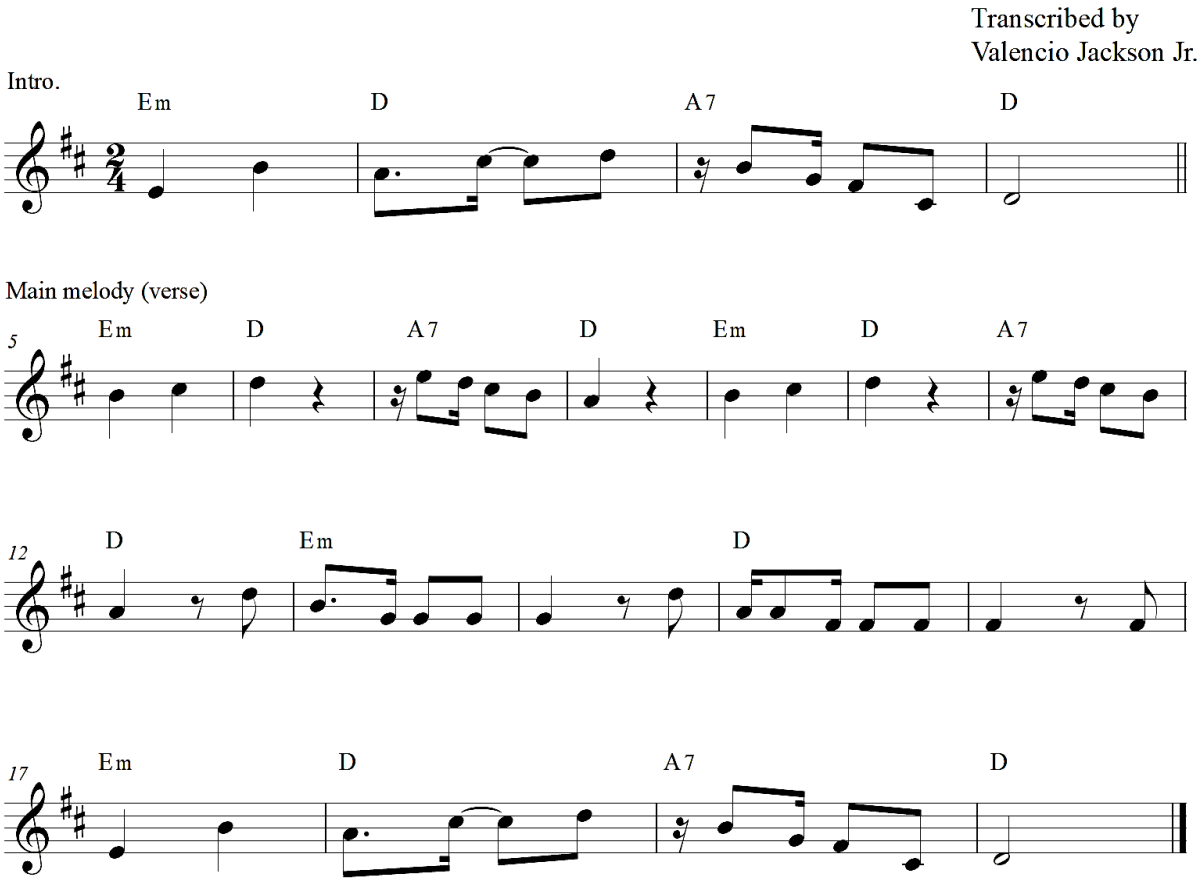
APPENDIX B

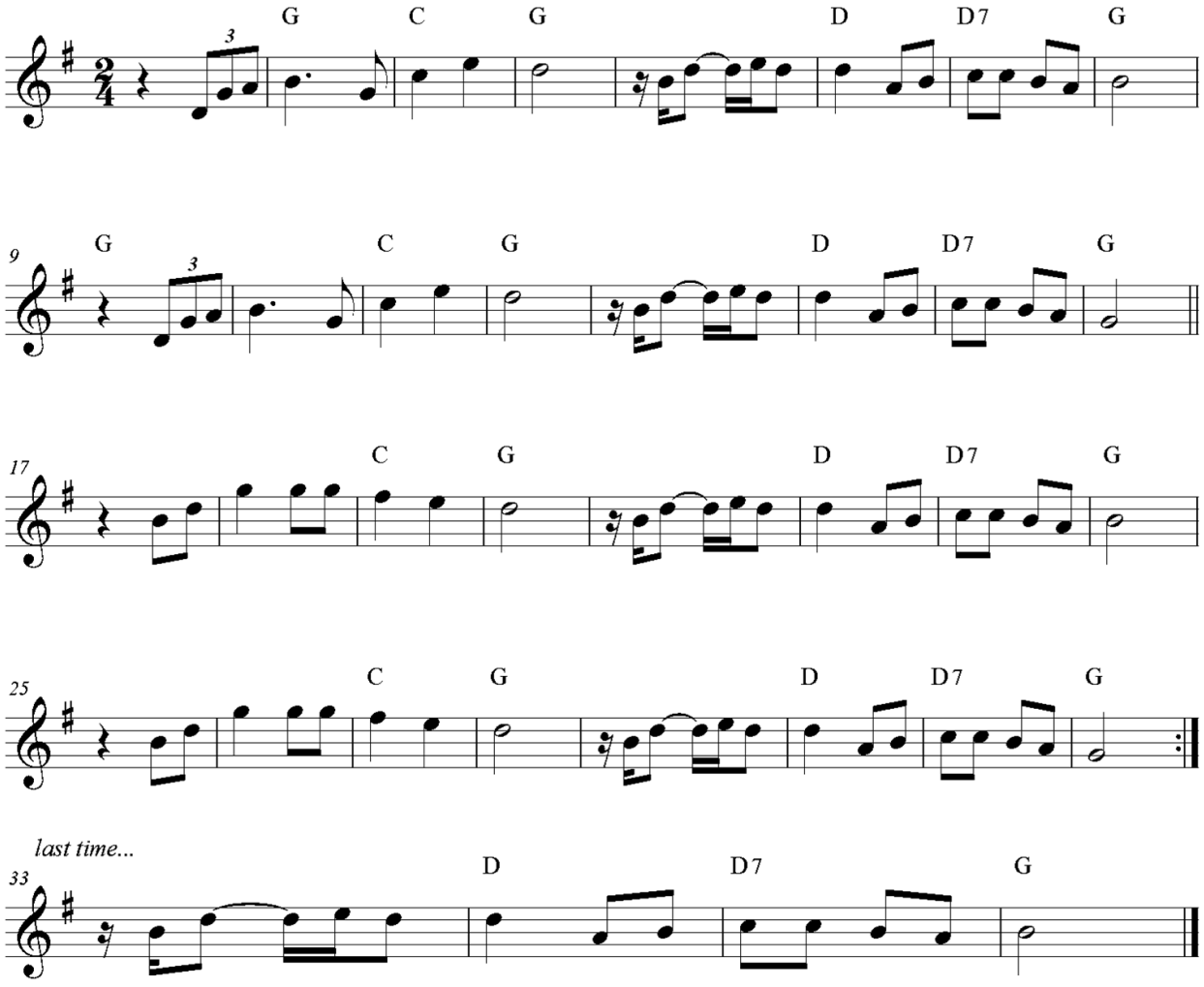
LEAD SHEETS FOR QUELBE SONGS

1. QUEEN MARY



2. LA BEGA CAROUSEL

Transcribed by
Valencio Jackson Jr.



APPENDIX C

REVELRY!

Audio file for *Revelry!* can be found here:

Revelry! Audio mp3 file (midi version)

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/7usy0vuly63ojgrbzimec/Revelry-VJackson-Dissertation-score-audio.mp3?rlkey=8qyone68xklax942pnmfyemv2&st=uawcg961&dl=0

Score can be accessed with this link:

Revelry! Full Score

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/npjgycj8n5uvfez497d6w/Revelry-VJacksonJr-Dissertation-Full-score.pdf?rlkey=fxptuc5fgrpy3yupa8dog73y8&st=6ezqhu6i&dl=0