

Student's guide: Area of study 4 (Western classical tradition since 1910)

Study Piece 1- Copland: “Saturday Night Waltz” and “Hoe-Down” from “Rodeo”

Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990)

Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn to Jewish immigrants.

Works such as “El Salón México” (1936), “Billy the Kid” (1938), “Rodeo” (1942) and “Appalachian Spring” (1944) established him firmly as the creator of a truly recognisable 'American sound'.

El Salón México

El Salón México makes an immediate impression with its rhythmic drive. Copland wrote it as a single symphonic movement, drawing heavily on Mexican folk tunes. It is sub-titled “A Popular Type Dance Hall in Mexico City.” Completed in 1936, the work was given its first performance by The Mexico Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Carlos Chávez, in 1937.

The music is derived from four Mexican melodies but never quotes fully from any of them.

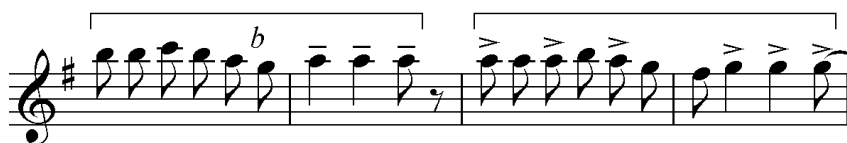
The Introduction is based on “El Palo Verde”, a melody which alternates $\frac{6}{8}$ with $\frac{3}{4}$ rhythms. From within it, Copland uses two motifs, designated (a) and (b) below:



Things to do: *tap out this rhythms and then play it. Remember that, in $\frac{6}{8}$, there are two beats, each consisting of three quavers while, in $\frac{3}{4}$, there are three crotchet beats, each consisting of two quavers.*

These become these two figures, the first heard from bar 3, the second at Fig. 1:





A second Mexican melody - “La Jesusita” is used. This is the start of the original version:



This is transformed into solo phrases, marked “ad lib.” (‘with freedom’), for trumpet, alternating with cadenza-like passages in clarinet. The trumpet begins:



Finally, Copland uses “El Mosco”, another melody which alternates time signatures. This melody begins:

Appassionato



which Copland transforms into this rhythmically-modified version played by bass clarinet and bassoon:



Things to do: *again, tap out the rhythms of each of these tunes and then try to play them. Wherever possible, aim to use the same instrument as Copland does but experiment with other sounds as well.*

Billy the Kid

Two years later, in 1938, “Billy the Kid” was premiered. This was based on the legend of the notorious outlaw and again features many traditional American songs.

The ballet and the suite are divided into six sections, though there is a seventh section where the opening music returns:

1. The Open Prairie
2. Street Scene and Rodeo

3. Moonlight Card Game
4. Gunfight and Billy's Capture
5. Celebration by/Dance of Billy's Captors
6. Lament at Billy's Death

The ballet and the suite which was taken from it open and close with music which portrays the vastness and emptiness of the open prairie. This is very atmospheric music, marked "Slowly and majestically":



In this ballet, the tunes are directly stated. These are, with the scenes in which they are heard:

"Street Scene and Rodeo"

"Great Grandad"



"The Old Chisholm Trail"



a Mexican tune mostly in $\frac{5}{8}$, used to accompany a "jarabe", a traditional dance based on the idea of a man pursuing a girl who continually escapes from him:



and "Goodbye, Old Paint" ("Paint" being a reference to the colouring of a horse):



“Celebration by/Dance of Billy’s Captors”

Ri-ding free. Ri-ding free. There's a price on his head and he's ri-ding free. But the

5

sher - iff with his gun hunts a kil - ler on the run and soon he'll

7

shoot him dead. There's a price on Bil - ly's head and soon they'll shoot him dead.

Appalachian Spring

This ballet was commissioned by the choreographer and dancer Martha Graham and was first performed in 1944. It was originally scored for 13-piece orchestra, but, in 1945, the conductor Artur Rodzinski asked Copland to re-arrange the ballet music as an orchestral suite, preserving most of the music. Both the ballet and the subsequent suite were well received, further enhancing the popularity of Copland’s music. Further versions of the suite followed such that the entire ballet music was used.

The main musical features of the ballet can be found in the opening chord sequence and in Copland’s use of the traditional Shaker hymn tune, “Simple Gifts”, which gives rise to a set of variations and is used for the climax of the work, where it is presented with great grandeur by the entire orchestra.

The opening chords are built up gradually, as in this example:

This composite A major thirteenth chord (A C# E G# B D F#) is played over a sustained A pedal (tonic) on the piano.

This is the melody of “Simple Gifts”:

'Tis the gift to be sim-ple, 'tis the gift to be free, 'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be, And

5 when we find our-selves in the place just right, 'Twill be in the val-ley of lover and de-light.

9 When true sim-ple-ci-ty is gain'd, To bow and to bend we shan't be a-sham'd, To

13 turn, turn will be our de-light, Till by turn-ing, turn-ing we come round right.

However, perhaps one of his best-known pieces, written around this time, is the “Fanfare for the Common Man.” It was written in response to the USA’s entry into World War 2 and was partly inspired by a speech made in 1942 by Henry Wallace, the American vice president, announcing the dawning of the “Century of the Common Man.” Many other fanfares were written to mark the United States’ participation in the war but this is the only one to remain in the concert repertoire.

It is scored for brass and percussion. After an introduction by timpani and bass drum, which emphasise tonic and dominant, the trumpets present the main theme:

Slow
Tpts. *f*

Copland later used this theme within his Third Symphony.

He went on to use more modernist forms of composition, including 12-note techniques and was also a writer on musical topics, including “What to Listen for in Music” and “Music and the Imagination.”

He wrote film music, including “The Quiet City” and an opera, ‘The Tender Land’, but increasingly turned his attention to conducting.

“Saturday Night Waltz” and “Hoe-Down” from “Rodeo”

“Rodeo” was originally entitled “The Courting at Burnt Ranch” and was commissioned by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. They asked choreographer Agnes de Mille and the composer Aaron Copland to collaborate on a Western-style ballet for their 1942 - 1943 season.

However, another source suggests that, while the Ballet Russe certainly commissioned Agnes de Mille, it was left to her which composer to choose. She

had been impressed by Copland's music for "Billy the Kid", his previous ballet, and approached him to write the music for "Rodeo." Apparently, Copland was not too keen at first to do another Western-style ballet but was persuaded that the new ballet would be a real departure from the previous one.

The first production was at the Metropolitan Opera House on October 16, 1942. Scenery was by Oliver Smith and costumes by Kermit Love.

The story outline was devised by the choreographer and is as follows:

"Throughout the American Southwest, the Saturday afternoon rodeo is a tradition. On the remote ranches, as well as in the trading centres and the towns, the "hands" get together to show off their skill in roping, riding, branding and throwing. Often, on the more isolated ranches, the rodeo is done for an audience that consists only for a handful of fellow workers, women-folk and those nearest neighbours who can make the eighty or so mile run-over. The afternoon's exhibition was usually followed by a Saturday night dance at the Ranch House.

The theme of the ballet is basic. It deals with the problems that has confronted all American women from earliest pioneer times, and which has never ceased to occupy them throughout the history of the building of our country: how to get a suitable man."

The music was written by June 1942 and orchestrated by September. An orchestral suite was later extracted by the composer for concert performance under the title "Four Dance Episodes from 'Rodeo'".

The four Episodes are:

1. Buckaroo Holiday
2. Corral Nocturne
3. Saturday Night Waltz
4. Hoe-Down

The entire suite was given its first performance in July, 1943 by the New York Philharmonic Symphony, conducted by Alexander Smallens, at the Stadium Concerts.

The main differences between this Suite and the original music are the removal of the music for the "Ranch House Party" and some minor changes to the ending of the last two movements. In effect, it can be seen as the four movements of a symphony, with an extended opening movement, a slow movement, a third movement in triple time and a lively final movement.

"Buckaroo Holiday" incorporates two American folk songs taken from "Our Singing Country" by John A. and Alan Lomax: these are "If he'd be a buckaroo by his trade" and "Sis Joe."

"Hoe-Down" includes a square dance tune entitled "Bonyparte", taken from Ira Ford's "Traditional Music of America." In other sources, three folk tunes are

named within the last movement, viz. large sections of two folk songs, “Bonaparte’s Retreat” which is heard from the outset, as well as “McLeod’s Reel,” while the traditional Irish tune, “Gilderoy”, is said to appear briefly.

There are problems inherent in identifying traditional folk music in that many tunes co-exist in several or many different forms and some are also given different names, depending upon where found.

Orchestra

The large orchestra consists of

Woodwind

Piccolo

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

Cor Anglais

2 Clarinets in Bb

Bass Clarinet in Bb

2 Bassoons

Brass

4 Horns in F

3 Trumpets in Bb

2 Trombones

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Percussion

Timpani

Percussion: Xylophone, Snare Drum, Wood Block, Bass Drum and Cymbal

Piano

Strings

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

'Cellos

Double Basses

though not all instruments are found in all movements.

Transposing instruments

Some instruments have their music written in a key other than the sounding key. This gives rise to variation between the key signatures for these instruments when compared with the non-transposing instruments.

In this music, the transposing instruments are:

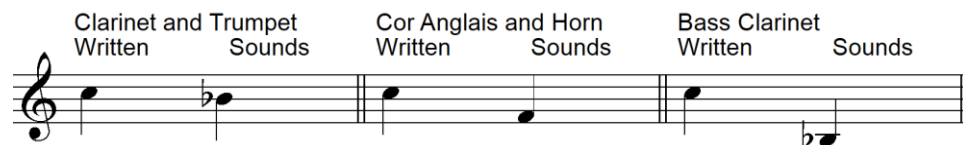
Clarinets and Trumpets in Bb, sounding a whole tone lower than written

Horns in F, sounding a perfect fifth lower than written

Cor Anglais: this double-reed woodwind instrument is also a transposing instrument, although this fact is not shown within its name. It is, in fact, “in F” and, therefore, like the Horns, sounds a perfect fifth lower than written

Bass Clarinet in Bb: this version of the clarinet sounds an octave and a tone lower than written.

In these cases, the note written as C sounds as shown below:



The Timpani are tuned to D and G, the dominant and subdominant. Horns and Timpani are usually written without any key signature. In this music, the same applies to the Trumpet parts.

All musical extracts within this guide are notated at sounding pitch for all instruments.

Saturday Night Waltz

This is the third movement of the Suite which Copland fashioned from his ballet music. For the majority of this movement, the effect is of a chamber orchestra, with the dynamic being subdued virtually throughout. Bass trombone and percussion are not used at all.

The opening is for strings only and is marked Introduction. Copland sets the crotchet beat at 152 and instructs the strings to play *f* and non legato – loudly and not smoothly. The basses emphasise G, alternating arco and pizz and create a pedal effect. The rest of the string family plays double-stopped open strings, moving to some use of triple-stopping in the eighth bar in violins and violas. The whole effect is of the strings tuning up and it was played as the dancers paired

off. The 1st violin line shows this use of the open fifth in both double-stopping and triple-stopping:

Introduction
♩ = 152

Term	Definition
pedal	a sustained or repeated note, usually in the bass or lowest part, above which the harmony changes.
arco or con arco	play with the bow.
pizz or pizzicato	to pluck the strings.
double-stopping	where string instruments play two adjacent strings simultaneously.
triple-stopping	where string instruments play three adjacent strings by sweeping across them, invariably from lowest to highest. Because of the curve of the bridge, three strings cannot be sustained simultaneously.
open strings	playing the strings without placing any finger on them.

Figure 1

After eight bars of this figuration and the basses’ emphasis on G, the key signature is changed to three flats and the G moves abruptly down a semitone to Gb. In addition, the dynamic is increased to ff, the tempo is now eased with the marking Broader, losing the previously strong forward momentum, and the strings are soon joined by woodwind and brass. G flats are joined by other notes – Bb and Db – until the Gb is omitted and, finally, the Db is raised to D natural, thus leaving just Bb and D and thereby forming the dominant of Eb major for

Figure 2 and Figure 3

Instruments “in Bb” have a key signature of F major (they sound a tone lower than written, save for the Bass Clarinet, which sounds an octave and a tone lower), while those “in F”, the horns, typically have no key signature, accidentals being added as required. These sound a perfect fifth lower than written.

The tempo indication is Slow Waltz: solo oboe plays a minim anacrusis into the lazy waltz melody based on “I ride an old paint”, also known as “Houlihan.”

This is a version of the original melody:



I ride an old Paint, I'm lead - in' old Dan, I'm
5 off to Mon - ta - na to throw the hou - li - han.

The melody is played in Copland's scoring in a simple, genteel and innocent manner, a long way from what might be thought of as a "typical" waltz melody and its "oom-pah-pah" accompaniment style, and the sense of relaxation is underlined by the MM marking of crotchet equals 72:



$\text{♩} = 72$ **mf** simply
Harp & Clt. **p**
 $\text{♩} = 72$ Vlc. **p** B. Clt. **p**
Hns. **p**

During this music, the dancers paired off.

Term	Definition
anacrusis	where the melody/music begins part way through a bar or on the "up beat", as opposed to beginning on the first beat of the bar.
MM	this refers to the use of the metronome as

	<p>invented by Maelzel, giving MM = Maelzel's Metronome, though most take it simply as "Metronome Mark"). It refers to the number of beats per minute or "bpm" as is widely used nowadays in Pop music. Thus, MM = 72 means 72 beats per minute and, in this instance, the beat is shown to be the crotchet.</p>
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After these eight bars, with its simple tonic/dominant harmony, the strings continue, with horns playing minims on the second beat of the bar and providing a link to the return of this melody. The key remains securely in E flat major. The link can be summarised as below, the repetitive nature of the melodic figures adding to the relaxed atmosphere created. Notice how the simple rising figure – Bb C D Eb – is alternated between 2nd violins and violas, creating a contrast of tone quality:

1st violins restate the oboe's melody with similarly minimal accompaniment, while the oboe is used to add its colour for much of this repeat. Notice also the little decorative figure in the flute: this will recur but, for now, brings a delicate brightness to the overall timbre.

Figure 4

After an initial reference to the previous link passage by the flute, the viola extends the music in a new way before being joined, in the fifth bar, by the 1st violins:



Figure 5

The mood is continued as the melody is played again, with occasional highlights from the flute recurring but remaining otherwise unchanged until three bars before

Figure 6

These three linking bars seem to be preparing for a Perfect Cadence into E flat major but, in another sudden shift of tonality, the key signature is changed to the brightness of E major, a semitone higher. The Bb chord simply rises a semitone rises here to become B major and the music is marked *Doppio movimento* – double speed. Thus, the new minim beat is worth the same as the preceding crotchet.

The decorative figure first heard in the flute in the two bars before Fig. 3 returns but is now played on the third and root of the chord of B major, rather than, as before, on the fifth and third of the chord of E flat.

However, no sooner has this faster tempo been established than Copland writes *poco rit.* – slow down a little.

Figure 7: *Meno mosso* – a little less (movement)

Over a B (dominant) pedal on muted trombone, Copland introduces a new idea, also marked lazily. It begins on Clarinet 1 with echoes in Flute 1 (though this is also clearly related to the flute's earlier falling third figure which included an *acciaccatura*), but Copland adds a countermelody in the violas. N.B. the viola part is also notated in the Treble Clef in this example for ease of reading. The constant use of tied notes and syncopation further emphasises the lack of a strong pulse and contributes to the relaxed mood, as does the minimal harmonic movement:

Figure 8

These ideas are continued as is the chamber music scoring, with individual instrumental timbres highlighted. The largely off-beat rhythms within the melodic lines emphasise the “laid back” feel of this music: it is all very serene and tranquil, with even harmonic movement kept to a minimum within each section.

The melodic ideas in flute and clarinet oscillate between intervals of the third, the trombone maintaining a dominant pedal, still muted. (con sord.)

Figure 9

As the viola line gradually descends, the flute settles on an upper dominant (B) pedal and the solo clarinet maintains its movement in thirds, gradually falling and rising in lazy waves across the chord of A major with an added major seventh:

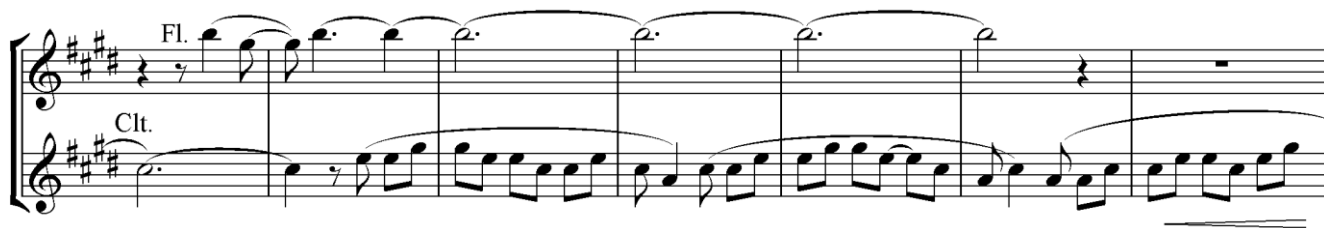


Figure 10

As E flat major is regained, the music is marked Tempo I and a linking passage, over a simple stepwise descending then rising pattern played by the cellos, is heard in 1st violins, clearly based on elements of the main waltz theme and incorporating the falling third figure but now as a more optimistic rising third (2nd violins), obviously derived from the earlier decorative flute figure.

Figure 11

Scored as at Fig. 2, the main waltz theme returns, though maintaining the *f* dynamic introduced at Fig. 10. This gives this passage a more affirmative, confident feel, despite there being little major increase in the instrumentation. The most notable change is the flute decoration, though this is simply as was heard at Fig. 5.

After eight bars, the linking passage used as at four bars before Fig. 3 returns to bring this beautifully gentle movement to a close. Solo flute recalls for the last time its falling third figure from two bars before Fig. 3 but even this third is omitted for the last bar, the movement closing on an open fifth – tonic and dominant of Eb major.

Hoe-Down

The final movement is in D major, another abrupt move of a semitone, a common feature of this music. This new key impacts directly on the transposing instruments:

Those in Bb – clarinets, bass clarinet and trumpets – have their music written in the key of E major, a whole tone higher.

Those in F – cor anglais and horns – have their music written in A major.

No key signature is given in the score for horns, trumpets, and percussion instruments, except for the piano. In such cases, accidentals are added as necessary.

These different transpositions and keys must be taken into account when trying to work out the notes in any particular chord.

The music is marked Allegro – Fast/Lively

It is also marked *ff* – fortissimo – very loud, in direct contrast to the preceding movement.

The most marked features of the beginning of this movement are its use of a syncopated rhythm and its vivid orchestral colour. As far as the rhythm is concerned, its basis can be found across the orchestra, from piccolo to basses:

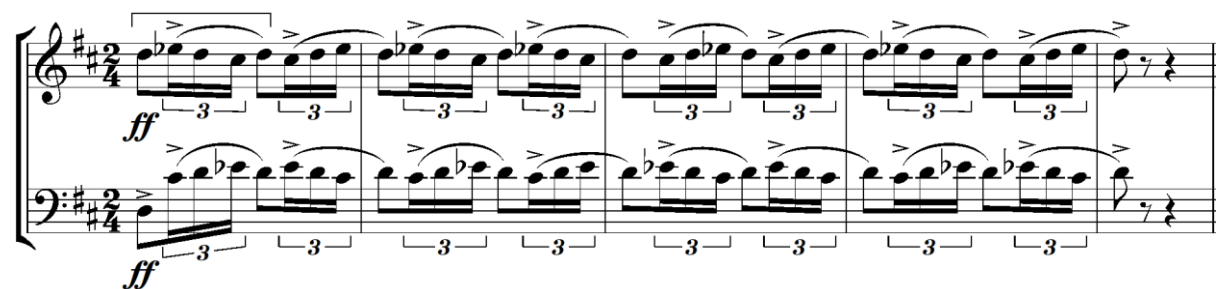
Picc., Clts.



Tbns., Bases

Term	Definition
syncopated	off-beat; rhythms where the normally weak beats of the bar are accented rather than just the strong ones.

This underpins the use of the first bar of William H. Stepp's unique interpretation of the first bar of the folk tune "Bonaparte's Retreat", used as the introduction. The main version is presented over the first three quavers but it is also heard simultaneously in inversion and features flutes, oboes, cor anglais, bass clarinet, bassoons, trumpets, violins, violas and cellos. The excerpt below summarises their use, the main version on the top line, its inversion on the lower one:



A new rhythmic idea follows, passed between trumpets and 1st violins plus oboes and clarinets. It is played over double-stopped fifths marked marcato:

The way in which the open-fifth accompaniment pattern moves from instrument to instrument after ever shorter rests gives the impression of an *accelerando*, a build-up, a rush to a climax. The single bar of 3/4 adds to this momentum with the impression of upsetting the balance, adding in an extra beat in the excitement.

Does the use of these double-stopped open fifths link back to the use of this technique in the Introduction to the preceding movement?

Term	Definition
marcato	marked, i.e. accented
accelerando	to accelerate, increase in speed, get

Figure 2

The opening five bars are repeated but are followed by a new figure, the sort of pattern a pianist might play to accompany a dance tune at a country dance. This idea is reinforced by the introduction of the piano at this point, its crisp percussive sounds added to staccato bassoons and pizzicato strings, plus the distinctive sound of the wood block.

After two further playings of this accompaniment figure, albeit with minor differences each time, the main tune is heard, at Figure 5, played clarinets, violins and violas, with the triplet figure in the first bar again played alongside its inversion. Notice the use of the cymbals in the first and fifth bars on the second quaver to coincide with the semiquaver triplet and played with a hard stick to give a clear percussive sound:



These four bars played twice constitute the first eight bars of the main theme of this movement. The syncopated repeated Ds, so much a feature of the opening bars, return here as the main underpinning of the accompaniment.

Figure 6

The balancing eight-bar phrase again comprises a four-bar phrase played twice, played by violins with doubling in oboes then clarinets in two-bar phrases. Again, the accompaniment is based on a syncopated rhythm, here with the violas playing double-stopped open fifth and doubled by either horns or trumpets. This idea was first heard from the end of bar 5, initially in the cellos.



Figure 5 is repeated without changes at Figure 7.

When the music from Figure 6 returns at Figure 8, there are changes to the orchestration. The most obvious is that the melody is played an octave lower and that there are further changes after four bars. Initially, it is still by the violins, this time doubled by the violas. A tonic pedal is provided by horns I and II as well as cellos and basses. The timpani also play a tremolo D. When these four bars are repeated, the melody, though still at the same lower pitch, is played by flutes, oboes and clarinets, while the D pedal in its varied forms is played by bass clarinet, bassoons, 2nd violins, violas and cellos.

Term	Definition	
tremolo	a rapidly repeated note or a rapid alternation between two different notes. The note or notes to be played	Written Played

	in this way are shown with one or more lines crossways through the stem to indicate the speed of repetition.	
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The pattern thus far is now changed: after alternating between the two sections of the main theme, in an A B A B pattern, Section B returns, orchestrated as a climax and marked *ff* – fortissimo – very loud. The brass section and lower strings provide the parallel fifths though, in spite of the fact that the key of the melody is unchanged, i.e. still in D major, the syncopated fifths concentrate on G with D and A above. This is reinforced by the fact that the timpani and xylophone play just the Gs. Flutes, oboes, clarinets, violins and violas perform the melody line here:



Figure 10

The A section of the main theme returns, orchestrated as at Figures 5 and 7.

Figure 11

At first, it seems as if the A section is to be played again but, after just two bars, the music is altered, reprising that introduced from bar 5, though with very slight differences. This lasts for five bars, an unusual length of phrase given that it follows a lot of music which is strictly in two or four-bar phrases. Four bars before Figure 12, just the opening idea from the main theme returns, used as at the very beginning of this movement. Over three and half bars, the dynamic is reduced from *fff* to *p*, the instrumentation being reduced in line with this.

Term	Definition
<i>fff</i> – fortississimo	very, very loud
<i>p</i> – piano	quiet

Figure 12

The second main theme is introduced, the use of pizzicato cellos and basses and a loud rim shot on the snare drum adding to its character, the latter sounding

almost like a gunshot, being played *f* on the second quaver of the bar, giving an extra accent to the high G. The theme is divided between the trumpet parts but, when combined, is as below:



The bright tone of the trumpets makes a telling contrast against the previously strongly string-based sonority and the percussive additions add to the very different character of this theme.

Term	Definition
rim shot	where the snare drum player places on stick across the rim of the drum, resting on the skin, and then hits this stick with the other stick, thus producing a short, loud sound.

Figure 13

The second section of this theme is played by solo oboe for four bars before the oboe is replaced by solo clarinet and violin. The accompaniment patterns again focus on the use of open fifths:



Figure 14

The first section of this second theme returns, the original trumpets being doubled, an octave higher, by 1st violins. The percussive nature of the accompaniment is retained, with pizzicato 2nd violins emphasising the octave leap in the melody before being joined by violas, both now arco, to double the 1st violins an octave lower.

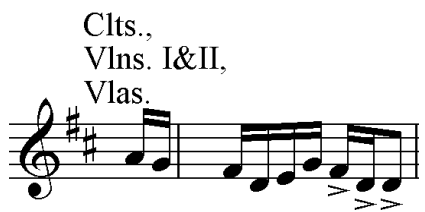
Figure 15

A new pattern emerges which combines two musical ideas already heard:

The first is the syncopated accompaniment pattern, though complete chords are now played, initially of E major, to underline the modulation at this point to the dominant, A major.



The second is a semiquaver figure derived largely from the third and fourth bars of the main theme. Compare the third and fourth bars after Figure 5




with the first two bars at Figure 15:



Figure 16

Firmly in A major, violins embark on an eight-bar passage of swirling semiquavers, full of joy and exuberance, while the accompaniment rhythm provides a foot-tapping drive. Woodwind and brass instruments colour different phrases of the music, which falls into two-bar phrases and ends, five bars before Figure 17, with a clear Perfect Cadence in A major.

Term	Definition	
Perfect Cadence	a sequence of two chords, dominant and tonic, which signals the end of a phrase of music.	

An accented section of four bars follows with syncopated rhythms very much to the fore. Upper woodwind and trumpets play the main idea while the snare drum, cymbal and bass drum feature prominently and horns, trombones and strings double the end of each two-bar phrase:

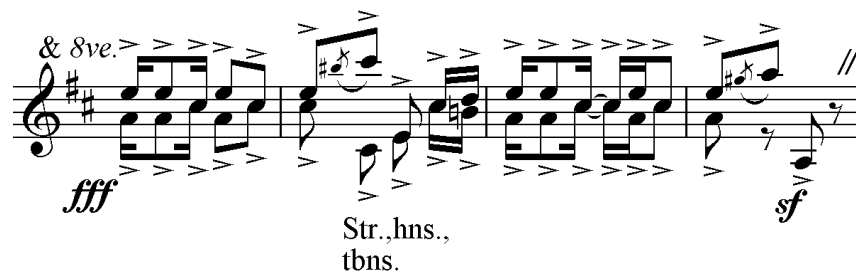


Figure 17

The accompaniment pattern first heard from the bar before Figure 3 returns at this point. However, after two bars on the restored tonic chord of D major, there is a change from the earlier progression: instead of moving to G, the subdominant, the pattern now moves to C major, the flattened leading note, giving the music a sort of modal feel. The difference is emphasised by the use of the distinctive sound of the wood block playing in time with the off-beat semiquavers:



Figure 18

This section is wonderfully pictorial: it seems as if the whole evening and everybody present are gradually relaxing, as if everything is winding down, taking a break, catching their breath and, by the last bars, moving in slow motion. The pitch descends chromatically; the music, from the third bar, is marked *rit. molto* – slow down a lot – and finally settles on a quiet chord of Eb major, the flattened supertonic, in the bar before Figure 19. Staccato or pizzicato playing gives way to sustained notes. The instruments pause on this chord. There is a high, ethereal string sound and the celesta is heard clearly on octave Gs over three octaves: this is the long-awaited first kiss between the Cowgirl and the Head Wrangler, a truly magical moment.

Term	Definition
staccato	play crisply or detached; indicated by dots placed above/below the note.

Figure 19

Without any preamble, the tonic key, D major, is restored. The action of the dance is instantly resumed as the main theme bursts in *f*, scored as on its first appearance at Figure 5.

The B section of this theme returns after eight bars, scored as it was four bars before Figure 9.

Figure 20

This is an exact repeat of Figure 9 and, as there, comprises two four-bar phrases.

Figure 21

The music from Figure 11 returns here but undergoes a change after just five bars.

Figure 26

Still anchored to the syncopated tonic pedal, the pattern from bars 3 – 5 of Figure 21 are extended with a gradual crescendo building to an exciting, rhythmic and energetic climax as the tonic chord is played *fff* by upper woodwind, upper brass, xylophone, piano and all strings except for the basses.

These very deep-pitched instruments, not involved in these five bars, are retained for the final three tonic quavers, spread over four octaves down from the D a tone above Middle C.

Thus, the final three bars can be summarised thus:



Term	Definition
crescendo	to get gradually louder.

Glossary:

Accelerando

To accelerate, increase in speed, get faster.

Acciaccatura

Grace note, sometimes called a “crush” note; this type of note is indicated by its small print size and by having a line through the stem.

Allegro

ast. lively

Anacrusis

Where the melody/music begins part way through a bar or on the “up beat”, as opposed to beginning on the first beat of the bar.

Appassionato

With passion

Arco

Played with a bow

Con sord./con sordino:

With a mute

Crescendo

To get gradually louder

Dominan

The fifth note of the scale; the chord/triad built on the fifth note of the scale.

Doppio movimento

Double time

Espress./espressivo

Expressively, with expression

f – forte:

Loud

ff – fortissimo

Very loud

fff – fortississimo

Very, very loud

Imperfect cadence

A cadence which ends on chord V, the dominant, and usually comes part-way through a phrase. It sounds unfinished, as in the two bars after Figure 6.

Marcato

Marked ie, accented

Meno mosso

A little less (movement)

Moderato

At a moderate speed

Non legato

Not smoothly

Note of decoration

Where a note is added one step lower or higher than two notes of the same pitch, e.g. B – A – B.

p – piano

Quiet

Passing note

Where a note is added between two harmony notes ie, two notes of the same chord, which are a third apart. The passing note means that there is stepwise movement between the three notes, as in B – A – G, where B and G are harmony notes.

Pedal

A sustained or repeated note, usually in the bass or lowest part, above which the harmony changes.

Perfect cadence

A sequence of two chords, dominant and tonic, which signals the end of a phrase of music, as in bars three and four after Figure 6.

Pizz./pizzicato

To pluck the strings

Poco rit.

Slow down a little

Rim shot

Where the snare drum player places on stick across the rim of the drum, resting on the skin, and then hits this stick with the other stick, thus producing a short, loud sound.

Staccato

Play crisply or detached; indicated by dots placed above/below the note.

Rit. Molto

Slow down a lot

Syncopated

Off-beat; rhythms where the normally weak beats of the bar are accented rather than just the strong ones.

Tempo I

Return to the original speed

Tonic

The first note of the scale; the chord/triad built on the first note of the scale.

Tremolo

A rapidly repeated note or a rapid alternation between two different notes. The note or notes to be played in this way are shown with one or more lines crossways through the stem to indicate the speed of repetition.

Activities/further study

Performing

In addition to playing the various musical examples and themes given above, aim to get a small group of players together to rehearse a performance of “Simple Gifts”: in the version below, the chords are limited to just tonic and dominant, although it is possible to use others, such as G - C - G in the final bar.

Whilst the version earlier in the text was in F major, it is given here in G, as this might be more readily accessible for a greater number of instruments.

G

D

5

9

13

'Tis the gift to be sim-ple, 'tis the gift to be free, 'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be, And

when we find our-selves in the place just right, 'Twill be in the val-ley of lover and de-light.

When true sim-ple-ci-ty is gain'd, To bow and to bend we shan't be a-sham'd, To

turn, turn will be our de-light, Till by turn-ing, turn-ing we come round right.

There are also two arrangements based on themes from the two movements of “Rodeo”: “Saturday Night Waltz” and the “Hoe-Down.”

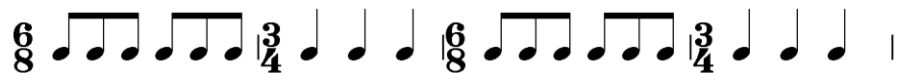
Each of these is available in two versions: the first attempts to produce an arrangement as close to Copland’s original as possible while also allowing for players of non-orchestral instruments to take some part.

The second version is based on just four different lines of music, sometimes adapted to take into account the range of notes available on particular instruments.

Composing

Look back at the melodies used in “Billy the Kid”, especially those where the time signature changes. Try to write your own melody, changing the time signature often, perhaps every bar, but also regularly.

Think also of how Leonard Bernstein later used this technique in his melody “America” from “West Side Story.” This is the rhythm he uses, alternating two time signatures:



Using this rhythm, compose your own balanced melody.

If this is successful, try the same exercise with two other different time signatures before possibly experimenting with $\frac{5}{8}$. Before trying this, look back at the melody and rhythm used in the “Jarabe” in “Billy the Kid.”

Many very memorable melodies are based around triads and use catchy rhythms and repetition – key elements of good melody.

Look again at these two melodies by Copland in “Hoe-Down”, the first based mostly around the triad of D major:



and this one, which uses mostly the chords of G and D7:



and the music of “Simple Gifts”, again based largely around tonic and dominant:

'Tis the gift to be sim-ple, 'tis the gift to be free, 'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be, And

5 when we find our-selves in the place just right, 'Twill be in the val-ley of love and de-light.

9 When true sim-ple-ci-ty is gain'd, To bow and to bend we shan't be a-sham'd, To

13 turn, turn will be our de-light, Till by turn-ing, turn-ing we come round right.

Starting with the opening theme from the “Hoe-Down”: simplifying this shows the extent to which it is based on the triad of D major:

To this simple framework, Copland adds a triplet flourish, with a chromatically altered E flat. The chord is then further decorated by the use of shorter note values, enabling Copland to give his theme a real sense of vitality, a sense of driving movement. The final bar is a good example of this, where the semiquavers give the simple outline a feeling of speed, the accents on the last three notes emphasising the rhythm:

becomes

Setting these two versions alongside each other underlines the basic simplicity of the melody and the ways in which Copland has decorated it to produce his final exciting musical idea:



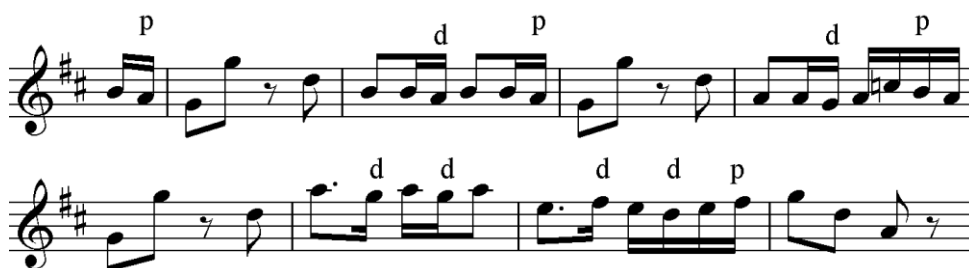
Let's look at this in detail: the decoration consists of a chromatic triplet, moving in semitones above and below the first note, passing notes, such as from F# – E – D and A – G – F# and using an added note, here the note B, as if it is an extra note of the chord and therefore can be followed by a leap, as in A – B – D – B – A. Finally, he uses notes of decoration, where a note is added one step lower or higher than two notes of the same pitch.

The second main theme can be simplified in a similar way, showing that it is based on three chords – tonic, dominant and supertonic:



To this simple framework, passing notes, rhythmic variety and other decoration are added to produce another very individual and energetic melody.

Let's first add in the passing notes (p) and the notes of decoration (d):



Copland decorates the quaver D by writing three semiquavers, rising from the D to E and then on up to G, before dropping a sixth to the melody's starting note. Each subsequent occurrence of this note is treated in exactly the same way.

Three bars from the end, he moves from the final A up to B before dropping a fifth to E and, in the final bar, uses two accented passing notes to the existing harmony notes, thus establishing the final version of the melody:



This demonstrates how easy it is to use just a few chords – perhaps only tonic and dominant – and, starting with a very simple melodic outline, gradually introduce passing notes (as in bar 4) and decoration (as in the second bar where the melody alternates between B and A) as well as making sure that your melody has an interesting rhythm.

Now, it's your turn!

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Saturday Night Waltz/ Hoe Down Written by Aaron Copland

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