



Seven Archetypes

for wind quintet

Part for Oboe

Nigel Morgan

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About The Piece

Sometimes music comes from unexpected starting points. When a commission beckons the vocal / instrumental forces and something of the conditions surrounding the performance are usually known. But the 'idea' that sparks the actual music is often an unknown and can be very elusive.

When I visited the exhibition *Natural Makers* at Rochdale's Touchstones Gallery I did not know I would come away with that 'idea'. In *Tool Museum* by Sharon Adams I found a collection of functionless tools that were part art objects, part remembrances of things and practices of the past. It was unusual and challenging. What caught my attention was that her tools followed seven different archetypal functions or tasks, and it was this classification that I saw might be directed into forming a collection for musical performance. So such a collection would present the classical wind quintet with starting points from which, with my help, they might 'make' music.

As a composer the reason I create music is to set in motion a 'making' of a sound and a musical experience through the industry and play of musicians. I do this through a notated score that organises precise instructions that can be used to make sound happen over a period of time. It is the musicians who present and communicate their experience of this score and giving it their own poetic elements and gestures. These come together in performance or recording, and 'the work' is as much the performers as mine. It is, for me, a very equal division of labour, of 'making'.

In several recent pieces I have taken words, my own and those of others, as the generative material for composition, most usually in forming the parameter of rhythm. This is quite common and some composers like Hans Werner Henze regularly embedded this approach into their practice. In two particular works, my *Quintet* for piano and winds (after Mozart's KV 452) and the string quartet

Into the Green Inverted Dawn I used the very letters of poetic texts to generate pitches. This is more unusual and achieved by mapping alphabetic symbols directly onto a chromatic scale of pitches. A word then can produce not only a fragment of melody, but also a chord, a distinct harmonic object. Conjunctions and connectives provide important moments of repetition that act as a kind of glue between nouns and verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In fact the very grammar of a sentence can be coloured with particular processes a composer can invent - to act upon words.

With *Archetypes* I created a sequence of poems that would illustrate each task and provide the pitches and rhythms to help 'make' the piece. Some of that making required responding to the quality or idea of the task – in matters of tempo or expressive character; whereas *Hit* is marked 'flowing but relentless', *Rake* is 'slow and sustained'. But there is more than applying a kind of function machine that takes in the text and outputs a sonic result, even though simple algorithmic procedures are used to form the musical whole.

For the curious performer the poetry might serve as a clue to the expressive character that might belong to each task. And so the text of each poem is presented below.

In progressing *Seven Archetypes* I'm particularly indebted to Sharon Adams publication *Conversation with Tools* available from

www.sharonadams.co.uk

Instructions for performance.

The music favours a particular approach to collective articulation. As words 'make' the music, a bar of music notation will usually be derived from a single word. Hence the many bars containing small metrical values (2/8, 3/8, 2/4) are set amongst some very long bars (9/8 and 3/2). Unless marked, a *legato* grouping has the last value played slight shorter. Where *legato* slurs are absent each note should be slightly separated from the next, simply detached. Sharps only are used with chromatic notes as words from which they are derived are distinct harmonic objects devoid of key or tonality. Although dynamics, articulation and tempo are marked, they are starting points for performers who must feel free to make whatever changes they deem appropriate.

The Seven Archetypal Tasks

BRUSH

Brush free the carpet
of mud and fluff.

Let's brush off the hurtful comment too,
that snide remark, those graceless words.

We're cleaning yet collecting,
straightening up, taking out the dirt.
Repositioning dust. Always temporary,
never the same, brush, brush,
to and fro, again – again - again.

SCOOP

The ice cream tub has one
to make the portion fair
for that ever-observant,
pernickety child.

When walking the dog,
we scoop the poop.
carrying the plastic bag
to the waiting wanting bin.

Yet the all-important wooden
scoop is made from a block
of a 2 by 3, with chisel, gouge
and a steady hand.

CUT

Hogwimpering drunk
or stoned out of mind.
Seventies slang for
individual incapacitation.

A cut can hurt,
display the inner
through incision
in the outer.

This farmer's friend, this open spoon,
lives in darkness and under the lid
of the deep grain bin,
to feed white chickens.

This cut of meat on the slab?
For you, madam?
I can cut it up
nice and small
for the baby to chew.

RAKE

Lying there in the long summer grass,
it needs standing up, its teeth cleaned.
When autumn comes it redeems itself,
clearing the path, letting the lawn breath.

In the hand of sculptor, ceramicist, modeller
it fashions variously, cuts, pulls away, gouges,
scrapes, a multi-purpose stick with two ends:
of wrapped wire, of ribboned steel.

LOOK

To make sure it's right:
correct and straight,
balanced, in proportion.
The magnifier helps,
the camera too,
getting the angle,
the position, the light
gauged . . . with a little looking.
You have to look,
see?

HIT

Whatever needs placing firmly,
needs fixing permanently,
can do with a hit (or two).
A nail with a hammer,
a door with a foot,
it could be a winner,
and right on target,
strike out the opposition,
disable the enemy.
A killer noun.
I prefer the verb.

Brush

with vigour ♩ = 80

Oboe

mp

6

Ob.

10

Ob.

mp

15

Ob.

20

Ob.

mf

24

Ob.

29

Ob.

mp *mf*

C

33

Ob.

p sub *mf*

37
Ob. *poco stacc.*

41
Ob. *stacc.*

46
Ob. *stacc.* **D** *mp*

50
Ob. **E**

55
Ob. *p* *mp*

60
Ob. **F** *mp*

65
Ob. *ff*

with movement ♩ = 85

Scoop

Oboe

mf

Ob.

7

Ob.

12

G

Ob.

17

det.

Ob.

21

mp

Ob.

26

H

Flute

f *det.* *det.* *p sost.*

Ob.

30

det. *mf*

Ob.

35

poco dim. *mp*

Ob.

41

det. *mf*

precise and with edge ♩ = 85

Poke

Oboe

Flute

f *f*

Ob.

mp

Ob.

mf

Ob.

L

mf *mf*

Ob.

mf *f*

Ob.

M

mf

Ob.

Flute

mf

Ob.

N

mp

41
Ob. *mf*

45
Ob. *mp* *mp* *p*

49
Ob. *ff stridente* *mf* *p* *mp*

54
Ob. *mf* *mp* *mf*

58
Ob. *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

62
Ob. *mp*

Rake

warm and sustained ♩ = 45

Oboe

p *mp* *p* *mp*

6

mf *f* *mf*

11

mp *p* *mf*

15

mp *mf*

18

mp *mf* *f*

22

mp *mf*

light but resonant ♩ = 70

Look

Oboe

mp

4

mf

7

mp

f

10

U

mf

12

f

mf

15

f

18

ff

mf

V

22

f

mp

f

flowing but relentless ♩ = 75

Hit

Oboe

p

4

Ob.

p

7

Ob.

pp

11

Ob.

mf *p* *mp* *p*

Y

17

Ob.

p

22

Ob.

pp

26

Ob.

mf *p* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Z

33

Ob.

mf *p* *mp* *mf* *mf*

40

Ob.

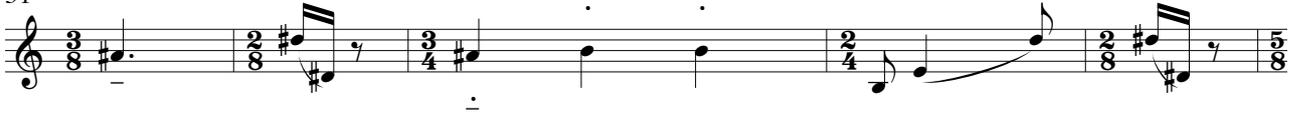
p *mp* *p*

46 AA

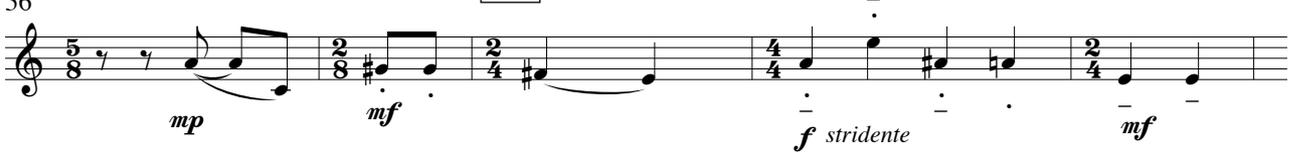
Ob. 

mf stridente

51

Ob. 

56 BB

Ob. 

mp *mf* *f stridente* *mf*

61

Ob. 

f stridente