

## ABSTRACT

Suite for Antigone

Grace Remmer

Director: Edward Taylor, Ph.D.

This four-movement musical composition for Pierrot ensemble draws inspiration from Sophocles' play *Antigone* and serves to evoke metaphoric associations between the music and the literary drama. Composed in the modernist twelve-tone system—pioneered by such artists as Arnold Schoenberg and Charles Wuorinen—the work attempts to explore the questions and themes of the play, including safety versus freedom; loyalty to family, the gods, and government, through the lens of contemporary art music, offering a modern perspective on Antigone and its relevance to today's society and culture. The accompanying essay explicates the intersection between the composition and its extra-musical source material.

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SUITE FOR ANTIGONE

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Honors Program

By

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## INTRODUCTION

*Suite for Antigone* is intended to represent Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone* in an abstract fashion as an independent piece of art music. Although it is an ancient play, the themes are still relevant today. Is it better to be free or to be safe? How should men and women relate to each other? Can a society maintain both justice and stability? These are questions that society as a whole has not yet answered.

Thus, the decision was made to use a modernist system, the twelve-tone system, in composition. The purpose was to see if an ancient play could be effectively represented by such a recent artistic development. If the material is still relevant, then it should be feasible.

The twelve-tone system conveniently fits the themes of the play. It is a system that appears restrictive and rigid at first. However, it provides its own stability and offers composers a chance to break away from the rules of tonality. There is a sense of personal freedom in that the system can be adapted to a composer's style, but one is not entirely at liberty. There are yet rules to be followed.

The piece is scored for Pierrot ensemble plus percussion: flute, Bb clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion. This choice serves several purposes. First, it pays homage to the limited number of actors in an ancient Greek play at any time: three. There is an appeal in adapting a small number of players to create a variety of sounds and moods. Each instrument must be able to play any number of characters. Second, it is a relatively manageable ensemble and a matter of practicality to write for something so small. Third, it is drawn from the ensemble used in *Pierrot*

*Lunatic*, a work by Arnold Schoenberg, the first pioneer of the twelve-tone system. It seemed appropriate to pay homage to Schoenberg in this way.

The work has four movements: Overture, Burial, The Girl and the King, and Wedding March and Dirge. These were chosen to reflect the most important scenes in the play. The burial of Polyneices is the inciting incident that disturbs the fragile stability in Thebes, while the argument between Antigone and Creon houses most of the play's philosophical elements. Finally, the mourning for Antigone's death by the few characters left standing holds the emotional impact of the tragedy. The overture serves to introduce the piece. It corresponds with the prologue and parodos, or entry song, in function, but it does not represent a specific moment in the narrative.

The suite revolves around the manipulations of one twelve-tone row, shown in Figure 1.

	I <sub>9</sub>	I <sub>2</sub>	I <sub>7</sub>	I <sub>4</sub>	I <sub>0</sub>	I <sub>5</sub>	I <sub>3</sub>	I <sub>11</sub>	I <sub>6</sub>	I <sub>8</sub>	I <sub>10</sub>	I <sub>1</sub>	
<b>P<sub>9</sub></b>	A	D	G	E	C	F	E <sub>b</sub>	B	G <sub>b</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>	D <sub>b</sub>	<b>R<sub>9</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>4</sub></b>	E	A	D	B	G	C	B <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	D <sub>b</sub>	E <sub>b</sub>	F	A <sub>b</sub>	<b>R<sub>4</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>11</sub></b>	B	E	A	G <sub>b</sub>	D	G	F	D <sub>b</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>	C	E <sub>b</sub>	<b>R<sub>11</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>2</sub></b>	D	G	C	A	F	B <sub>b</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	E	B	D <sub>b</sub>	E <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	<b>R<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>6</sub></b>	G <sub>b</sub>	B	E	D <sub>b</sub>	A	D	C	A <sub>b</sub>	E <sub>b</sub>	F	G	B <sub>b</sub>	<b>R<sub>6</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>1</sub></b>	D <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	B	A <sub>b</sub>	E	A	G	E <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>	C	D	F	<b>R<sub>1</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>3</sub></b>	E <sub>b</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	D <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	B	A	F	C	D	E	G	<b>R<sub>3</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>7</sub></b>	G	C	F	D	B <sub>b</sub>	E <sub>b</sub>	D <sub>b</sub>	A	E	G <sub>b</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	B	<b>R<sub>7</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>0</sub></b>	C	F	B <sub>b</sub>	G	E <sub>b</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	D	A	B	D <sub>b</sub>	E	<b>R<sub>0</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>10</sub></b>	B <sub>b</sub>	E <sub>b</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	F	D <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	E	C	G	A	B	D	<b>R<sub>10</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>8</sub></b>	A <sub>b</sub>	D <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	E <sub>b</sub>	B	E	D	B <sub>b</sub>	F	G	A	C	<b>R<sub>8</sub></b>
<b>P<sub>5</sub></b>	F	B <sub>b</sub>	E <sub>b</sub>	C	A <sub>b</sub>	D <sub>b</sub>	B	G	D	E	G <sub>b</sub>	A	<b>R<sub>5</sub></b>
	<b>R<sub>9</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>7</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>4</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>0</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>5</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>3</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>11</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>6</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>8</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>10</sub></b>	<b>R<sub>1</sub></b>	

Figure 1: The Matrix

Notable features of this row include the number of fourths and the possibilities for pentatonic melodies. The main motif of this piece, A-D-G-E, showcases both of these qualities. This piece explores quartal harmonies by focusing on these parts of the row.

# I. Overture

Grace Remmer

Flute

$\text{♩} = 72$

B♭ Clarinet

Violin

Violoncello

Piano

Cymbal

*ff* *mf*

*ff* *mf*

*ff* *mf*

*ff* *ff*



9

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

18

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cym.

25 marcato

Vc.

*mf*

29 *mf*

Fl.

*pp*

B♭ Cl.

*pp*

Vln.

*pp*

Vc.

*pp*

Pno.

*pp*

32

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

34

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

40

Vc.

*f*

Cym.

*mf*

42

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

*ff*

Pno.

Cym.

47 accelerando and crescendo

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cym.

54

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

58

Fl.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

The musical score for measures 58-60 is as follows:

- Measure 58:** Flute (Fl.) and B-flat Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.) play a melodic line of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4). Violin (Vln.) and Viola (Vc.) play a similar melodic line. The Piano (Pno.) part has a whole note chord (G4, B4, D5) in the right hand and a whole note bass note (G3) in the left hand.
- Measure 59:** The woodwinds and strings continue their melodic lines. The Piano (Pno.) part has a whole note chord (G4, B4, D5) in the right hand and a whole note bass note (G3) in the left hand.
- Measure 60:** The woodwinds and strings play sustained chords. The Piano (Pno.) part has a whole note chord (G4, B4, D5) in the right hand and a whole note bass note (G3) in the left hand.

## II. Burial

Grace Remmer

$\text{♩} = 120$

Flute

B $\flat$  Clarinet

Violin

Violoncello

Piano

Concert Snare Drum

Wood Blocks

Triangle

*ff*

*ff*

3

Fl.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

4

Fl.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*



5

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

6

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is written for a chamber ensemble. Measure 5 (labeled '5' at the beginning) features the following: Flute (Fl.) plays a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, a quarter note A4, and a half note G4-A4-B4. B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) plays a quarter note F4, a quarter rest, a quarter note G4, and a half note F4-G4-A4. Violin (Vln.) plays a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter rest. Viola (Vc.) plays a half note G3, a half note A3, and a quarter rest. Piano (Pno.) has a right hand with a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, and a half note G4-A4-B4; the left hand plays a half note G3, a half note A3, and a quarter rest. Concert Snare Drum (Con. Sn.) plays a quarter rest, a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter rest. Measure 6 (labeled '6' at the beginning) features: Flute (Fl.) plays a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, and a half note G4-A4-B4. B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) plays a quarter note F4, a quarter rest, and a half note F4-G4-A4. Violin (Vln.) and Viola (Vc.) both have whole rests. Piano (Pno.) has a right hand with a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, and a half note G4-A4-B4; the left hand plays a half note G3, a half note A3, and a quarter rest. Concert Snare Drum (Con. Sn.) plays a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter rest.

7

Fl.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

8

Fl.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 7 and 8. In measure 7, the Flute (Fl.) plays a continuous eighth-note pattern. The B-flat Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.) plays a similar eighth-note pattern. The Violin (Vln.) and Viola (Vc.) play eighth-note patterns. The Piano (Pno.) plays a complex pattern with many beamed notes. The Concert Snare Drum (Con. Sn.) has a single drumstick symbol. In measure 8, the Flute and B-flat Clarinet continue their patterns. The Violin and Viola continue their patterns. The Piano continues its complex pattern. The Concert Snare Drum has a rest for the first part of the measure, followed by a drumstick symbol and a note.

11 sul ponticello; bow freely

Vln.

Vc. *p*

Pno. *mf*

Con. Sn. *p*

Wd. Bl.

Trgl.

17

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Wd. Bl. *f*

Trgl.

24

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Trgl.

*p*

*pizz.*

36

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Trgl.

*pizz.*

46

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Wd. Bl.

Trgl.

52

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Wd. Bl.

Trgl.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 52 through 59. The key signature is one flat (B♭). The Flute (Fl.) part starts with a whole rest in measure 52, followed by a quarter note B♭, an eighth note A, and a quarter note G in measure 53. The B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) part has a whole rest in measure 52, followed by a quarter note B♭, an eighth note A, and a quarter note G in measure 53. The Violin (Vln.) and Viola (Vc.) parts have a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Piano (Pno.) part has a bass line with some chords. The Wood Bass (Wd. Bl.) and Trigon (Trgl.) parts have a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

60

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Wd. Bl.

Trgl.

69

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Trgl.

*mp*

*con sordino arco*

*mf*

*con sordino arco*

*mf*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is divided into two systems. The first system, starting at measure 60, includes staves for Flute (Fl.), B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), Wood Bass (Wd. Bl.), and Triangle (Trgl.). The Flute part has a melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by rests and eighth notes. The B-flat Clarinet part has a similar melodic line. The Violin and Viola parts have a sustained note. The Piano part has a complex texture with many sixteenth notes. The Wood Bass part has a melodic line. The Triangle part has a rhythmic pattern. The second system, starting at measure 69, includes staves for Flute (Fl.), B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), and Triangle (Trgl.). The Flute part has a melodic line. The B-flat Clarinet part has a melodic line. The Violin part has a melodic line. The Viola part has a melodic line. The Triangle part has a rhythmic pattern. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). Performance instructions include *con sordino arco* (with mutes on the bow).

76

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno. *mf*

Wd. Bl.

Trgl.

82

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

Wd. Bl.

Trgl.



90

Pno.

Con. Sn.

Wd. Bl.

101

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Wd. Bl.

111

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

Wd. Bl.

117

Vln.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

sul ponticello

*f*

127

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

133

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Con. Sn.

Wd. Bl.

142

Vln.

Vc.

Con. Sn.

150

Vc.

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system (measures 142-149) features a Violin (Vln.) staff in treble clef and two Violoncello (Vc.) staves in bass clef. The Conductor's Snare (Con. Sn.) staff is shown with a double bar line and a series of eighth notes. The Vln. and Vc. parts play a melodic line with a descending eighth-note pattern. The dynamics are marked 'ff' (fortissimo) in measures 147-149. The second system (measures 150-150) features two Vc. staves in bass clef. The melodic line continues with a descending eighth-note pattern, ending with a double bar line.

# III. The Girl And The King

Grace Remmer

$\text{♩} = 80$

Flute

B $\flat$  Clarinet

Violin

Violoncello

Piano

Chimes

ad lib.

*f*

*p*

*f*

10

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

*pp*

*p*



30

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

36 Variation I

Fl.

Vln.

Pno.

*mf*

*mp*

3

3

39

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Cme.

*mp*

*p*

*f*

3

5

*mp*

41

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

*mf*

43

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Cme.



$\text{♩} = 90$   
Variation II  
hymn-like

46

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

50

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

56

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

3

61

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Cme.

$\text{♩} = 80$

67

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Cme.

Variation III  
sprightly

*mf*

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

71

Fl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*mp*

74

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

*f*

*mf*

78

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

81

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

*f*

84

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

87

♩ = 90

Variation IV

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

92

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

97

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

*sim.*

*f*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

101

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

102

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Cme.

103

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

104

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

105

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

106

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

Coda

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*



111

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

116

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Cme.

*mp*

*f*

*mp*

*mp*

*f*

*mp*

120

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

123

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Cme.

*p*

*pp*

# IV. Wedding March And Dirge

Grace Remmer

$\text{♩} = 80$

Flute

B $\flat$  Clarinet

Violin

Violoncello

*marcato*

Piano

*mp*

Tambourine

*mp*

3

Vln.

*legato*

Vc.

*f*

*mf*

Tamb.

*mf*

5

Vln.

Vc.

Tamb.

*mp*

7

Vln.

Vc.

9

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Tamb.

*f*

*plaintive*

11

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

12

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

14

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Tamb.

15

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 14 and 15. Measure 14: Flute (Fl.) has a whole note G4, a whole rest, a whole note G4, and a whole note F#4. B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) has a whole note G3, a whole note F#3, a whole note E3, and a whole note D3. Violin (Vln.) has a whole rest, a whole note G3, a whole note F#3, and a whole note E3. Tambourine (Tamb.) has a continuous eighth-note pattern: G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. Measure 15: Flute (Fl.) has a whole rest, a quarter note G4 with an accent (>), a quarter note F#4 with a breath mark (<), a whole rest, a quarter note G4 with an accent (>), a quarter note F#4, and a whole rest. B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) has a whole rest, a quarter note G3 with an accent (>), a quarter note F#3, a whole rest, a quarter note G3 with an accent (>), a quarter note F#3, and a whole rest. Violin (Vln.) has a quarter note G3, a whole rest, a quarter note F#3, a quarter note E3, a whole rest, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F#3, and a quarter note E3. Viola (Vc.) has a quarter note G3, a quarter note F#3, a whole rest, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F#3, a whole rest, a quarter note G3, and a quarter note F#3. Piano (Pno.) has a quarter note G3, a quarter note F#3, a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, a quarter rest, a quarter rest, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F#3, a quarter note E3, and a quarter note D3.

16

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

17

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 16 and 17. The instruments are Flute (Fl.), B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). In measure 16, the Flute and B-flat Clarinet have whole rests. The Violin plays a quarter note B-flat, followed by a quarter rest, then eighth notes G-flat, F, and E. The Viola plays a half note B-flat, followed by a half rest. The Piano plays a quarter note B-flat, followed by a quarter rest, then eighth notes G-flat, F, and E. In measure 17, the Flute has a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note B-flat with an accent, then a quarter note B-flat, and a quarter rest. The B-flat Clarinet has a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note B-flat with an accent, then a quarter note B-flat, and a quarter rest. The Violin has a quarter note B-flat, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note B-flat, and a quarter note B-flat. The Piano has a quarter note B-flat, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note B-flat, and a quarter note B-flat.

18

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

19

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Tamb.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 18 and 19. Measure 18: Flute (Fl.) has a whole rest followed by a quarter note G4, a half note A4, and a quarter rest. B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) has a whole rest followed by a quarter note G3, a half note A3, and a quarter rest. Violin (Vln.) has a half note G3, a half note A3, and a half note Bb3. Piano (Pno.) has a half note G3, a half note A3, and a half note Bb3. Measure 19: Flute (Fl.) has a quarter note G4, a quarter note Ab4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note C5. B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) has a half rest followed by a half note G3, a half note A3, and a half note Bb3. Violin (Vln.) has a half note G3, a half note A3, and a half note Bb3. Piano (Pno.) has a half note G3, a half note A3, and a half note Bb3. Tambourine (Tamb.) has a half note G3, a half note A3, and a half note Bb3. Dynamics: B♭ Cl. has *p* at the start of measure 19. Vln. has *p* at the start of measure 19. Pno. has *f* at the start of measure 19. Tamb. has *mf* at the start of measure 19.



20

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

22

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*p*

*f*

23

Fl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

25

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

26

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

27

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

28

marcato

Fl.

*mp* B♭ Cl.

*mp* Vc.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 26, 27, and 28. Measure 26: Flute (Fl.) plays eighth notes (F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3). B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) has a whole rest. Violin (Vln.) plays dotted half notes (F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2). Piano (Pno.) plays eighth notes (F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2). Measure 27: Flute (Fl.) plays eighth notes (F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3). B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) has a whole rest. Violin (Vln.) plays dotted half notes (F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2). Piano (Pno.) plays eighth notes (F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2). Measure 28: Flute (Fl.) plays eighth notes (F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3). B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) plays eighth notes (F3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2). Violoncello (Vc.) has a whole rest. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *marcato* (marked).

30

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vc.

*f*

*f*

32

Fl.

Vln.

Vc.

*f*

*ff*

*ff*

marcato

33

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

*ff*

marcato

34

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*ff*

*ff*

35

Fl.

Vln.

Pno.

Tamb.

*f*

*f*

36

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Pno.

Tamb.

38

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

40

Vln.

Vc.

Tamb.

*f*

*f*

*niente*

*marcato*

*mp*

*niente*

43

Pno.

keep pedal down after re-articulating

*mf*

Tamb.

*mf*

49

Vln.

no vib

Vc.

*mf*

Pno.

*mf*

no vib

52

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.





58

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

59

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

ff

ff

3

3

60 agony

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Tamb.

*p*

The musical score is written for six instruments: Flute (Fl.), B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), and Tambourine (Tamb.). The score is divided into three measures, numbered 60, 61, and 62. Measure 60 is marked with a 'piano' (p) dynamic and an 'agony' marking. Measure 61 is marked with a 'piano' (p) dynamic. Measure 62 is marked with a 'piano' (p) dynamic. The piano part consists of a right-hand melody and a left-hand accompaniment. The tambourine part consists of a single line of notes.

64

Fl. *mf*

B $\flat$  Cl. *mf*

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

The musical score for measures 64 and 65 is presented for five instruments: Flute (Fl.), B-flat Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). Each staff begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking. The Flute, B-flat Clarinet, and Violin parts feature a melodic line that starts with a quarter note, followed by a half note, and then a quarter note with a slur. The B-flat Clarinet and Violin parts also feature a half note. The Viola and Piano parts feature a half note. The Piano part includes a bass line with a half note. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

## *Analysis*

### *Overture*

The Overture is composed in the manner of later musical theater overtures, in that it introduces a selection of musical themes from the work. In style, it imitates the lavish opera overtures of Wagner, albeit in a far less grandiose fashion due to the nature of the ensemble.

It begins with the motif that represents Antigone herself, A-D-G-E, played in octaves by all of the instruments and accompanied by a cymbal clash. This theme will be heard again in all of the subsequent movements.

The remaining themes are introduced in reverse order from that in which their respective movements appear. The next two themes introduced are drawn from the fourth movement. They transition into a brief quotation from the third, and then one from the second movement. The structure is straightforward, as these themes are presented briefly and without complication. The overture foreshadows things to come and adds unity to the work. The overture ends with a canonic reiteration of the Antigone motif and a sustained E in all of the instruments.

### *Burial*

The second movement, Burial, represents the inciting incident of the play. It is the most clearly programmatic of the four movements. To start, there can not be a burial without a death, so it begins with a representation of the civil war between Antigone's

brothers. The repetitive, punctuating motifs and the snare drum are reminiscent of the “Gun Battle” from Copland’s *Billy The Kid Suite*. The ensemble is split into two, and each smaller division is assigned a hexachord. The sides trade off quick, loud exclamations like volleys, gradually adding more notes of the hexachord. In a frantic moment, the entire aggregate is heard, followed by silence, then two statements from the snare. Neither side has won; both brothers are dead.

At m.12, a ponticello violin and rolled piano chords break the silence, underlying an expansive cello melody. It is the sound of day breaking over the dead. All are buried, except one.

Thus begins the next section. It is similar to the pointillism technique in Webern’s *Six Bagatelles for String Quartet*, in which brief points of sound make up the whole. The combination of pizzicato string, punctuating notes in the woodwinds and piano, and the piercing wood block and triangle creates a sense of apprehension. Antigone is plotting to cover the body of Polyneices, against Creon’s orders and under the eyes of the guards. The soft dynamic of this passage is in contrast to the sharp, militaristic section that came before.

The measures that follow, beginning in measure 73, introduce a series of notes ornamented with mordents. The strings are muted for a change in timbre. There is a great deal of time between notes. This represents the anxiety surrounding the discovery of the body. Starting with the piano, the instruments begin to play more sustained notes that obfuscate the barline, while the snare drum interjects occasionally. The war section at the beginning and the apprehensive section in the middle are combined.

When Antigone is caught, red-handed and unabashed, she is dragged before Creon. Her motif is heard several times, each more tentative than the last, as if in disbelief. The rest of her theme plays out with equal tentativeness. The movement ends very suddenly with a percussive figure in the left hand of the piano and cello, a figure which foreshadows a moment in the fourth movement.

### *The Girl and the King*

The third movement, “The Girl and the King”, is a double theme and variations with a coda, a form which represents the major argument between Antigone and Creon. It simulates a conversation between the two themes representative of the characters. It is concerned less with specific narrative moments than it is with an abstract representation of the characters and their ideals. This movement above all others suggests the major questions of the work.

The first musical theme, representing Antigone, begins with open intervals and slow-moving rhythms. It emphasizes the interval of a fourth - both perfect and augmented - which serves to represent the realm of freedom and possibility. This freedom is underscored by the rhythmically free nature of the piano, marked as *ad lib*. The sustained resonance of the piano, obtained via the *sostenuto* pedal, and the chimes contributes to this open feeling. However, the optimism of the music is quickly tempered as the strings enter in a soft, sinister tremolo. While the violin and the cello form a harmonic fifth, each voice moves in melodic stepwise motion. This conjunct motion, combined with the tremolo, creates a feeling of anxiousness.

The dichotomous nature of Antigone's character can be observed in the theme. With a vision of how the world should be, she longs for something better. She is so very young and apparently full of potential. As Creon's dear niece, the world ought to be ahead of her. However, she is no fool. While Antigone can hope and fight for her vision, she knows that she is damned. Thus, her character has a grim side. She is simultaneously marked by idealism and morbid understanding. She anticipates her own death, but she goes to it weeping. Her theme is intended to reflect both of these qualities.

Creon, on the other hand, stands for all that is stability. It's inherent in his position as a king, particularly in a city so freshly wrenched apart by civil war. He must maintain the rule of law. There is also the matter that Antigone is but a young woman. It would undermine Creon's authority if he were to give in to her pleas, and that is the last thing he needs. His desire for safety quickly becomes obstinacy.

His theme shows these characteristics in several ways. The first is the use of dotted rhythms for his status as a king, just as dotted rhythms were used in the seventeenth century to herald the entrance of nobility. The phrases are constructed with traditional 1:1:2 sentence structure. Voices tend to move together, and the melody is conjunct, emphasizing small intervals, so that motion is somewhat limited from one pitch class to the next. There aren't many big leaps or risks. All is predictable and orderly.

Variation I (a variation on Antigone's theme) is pleasant and soft. At the start, the use of a tetrachord isolated from the end of the row creates a pentatonic-like harmony. The timbres in the winds and the violin, as well as the delicate rhythmic gestures, contribute to a light, feminine quality with no sharp edges. The flute in particular plays in the middle to the lower end of its range, which lends it an earthy, soft timbre. This

variation in particular is meant to highlight Antigone's status as a woman. It's relevant because it limits her role in society (see Ismene's speech about the powerlessness of women). Antigone chooses to deny her role and suffers for it. In response to Antigone's choices, this variation also plays into her unpredictable nature. Each voice moves in entirely different rhythms, with the clarinet moving most independently of all. This creates a complex interplay between the voices that is frequently changing.

Variation II (on Creon's theme) is modelled after the four-voice chorale common in church hymns. One aspect of such is that the rhythms and meter (4/4) are consistent and not complex. The first phrase is based on one hexachord, the notes of which result in an approximation of D major (although it still does not function in a tonal fashion). Each individual line follows the row without deviation, although they each repeat small sections of the row along the way. This sort of obedience is in keeping with Creon's unbending nature. The dissonant harmonies that arise in the second phrase (beginning in measure 57) are a direct result of this choice, as the clarinet and the cello complete the row by playing a line based on the second hexachord. The result is many dissonant minor seconds between the voices, a harmony that sets the hymn in a new context. What seemed pleasant at first quickly becomes ugly. The metatextual implication is that rules can have unpleasant consequences in that what may benefit some will often harm others. Laws are vital to stability, but what happens when they are wielded unjustly?

The variation ends with descending fourths in the violin, the clarinet, and the chimes, reminiscent of church bells, which connects with the faux hymn. The church can represent Creon for both its structured and ritualistic nature alongside the power that the church as an institution has historically held.



Variation III (on Antigone's theme) is written in 9/8 meter. It is playful and dancelike. The melody only ever appears in the treble instruments, which is similar to Variation I, although it differs in that these instruments explore a wider range. For some variety in harmony, this movement employs the technique of rotation. The row is rotated to create two new row forms.

The end of each row form leads into the next one by ascending half step. This helps the modulation sound natural. The texture of this variation is best described as monody, a melody with a simple accompaniment, which transitions into polyphony around measure 84. This is in contrast to the more uniform texture of Variations II and IV. It grows in dynamic intensity throughout until it fades out at the end. This fade makes the next variation all the more striking.

Variation IV (on Creon's theme) is percussive and overbearing. The piano plays heavily accented tone clusters in fortissimo. As the other instruments join in every four chords, the ensemble plays the entire aggregate. This movement also modulates through various rotated row forms. Beginning in m.100, the second half of the variation is a *moto perpetuo* section in which the instruments pass around driving sixteenth note figures. The right hand of the piano reiterates the rhythm first heard at the beginning of Creon's theme. The music is quick and relentless as the harmonic language shifts by one pitch class every measure.

The end of the variation transitions immediately into the coda, which features both musical themes. They trade off at the ends of phrases. This simulates the dramatic technique known as stichomythia, in which actors trade single lines of dialogue. The opening element of Creon's theme is repeated near the end to show his apparent triumph.

Just when it seems that he has had the last word, the ensemble plays P0, the row form that represents Antigone in soft block chords. The chime rings out an A four times – a death knell.

### *Wedding March and Dirge*

This transitions into the fourth movement, Wedding March and Dirge. There is no wedding in this play, but there is a slew of deaths. The title reflects the wedding that Antigone lost when she was sent to die, while the form of a funeral march reflects a sense of mourning for all of the characters that have perished by the play's conclusion.

This movement draws inspiration from several famous funeral marches. The dotted rhythms of the Eroica Symphony are seen at the beginning, as are the hauntingly persistent dactyl rhythms of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony by measure 4. The development of the movement is similar to the third movement of Mahler's First Symphony, with motion from a sparse texture to a denser one. This movement begins with only cello, left hand piano, and tambourine. The violin joins in soon with a countermelody, and the winds begin to interject by m.9. The development of the march, however, eventually takes the form of an arc. The music becomes more active and dense in the middle, then begins to fade by m.37. The other similarity to Mahler's funeral march is the repeated use of one simple motive – in the case of this piece, the opening motive – as the basis of the work. Although there is a variety of melodic fragments that come and go, that dotted motive is the most consistent.

The reasoning for writing the texture in this way was to represent a train of mourners that grows ever larger. At first, just a few people weep, but then it seems that

all are lamenting. Each individual has their own reason to mourn, for there are so many dead.

Some features are less common in the march genre. For example, the meter is 7/4, which gives the march a lopsided feeling. In general, the measures are separated into either a 4+3 or a 3+4 pattern in places where the division is clear. The repetitive nature of the movement serves as one last nod to the stubbornness of both Creon and Antigone. There is one more unyielding entity at play here, and that is Fate itself. Even if either party had compromised earlier, it would be of no use. Antigone is the last generation of a cursed family, and the curse will have its way. On fate goes. It does not wait for you. That said, the meter quickly becomes obfuscated by rhythms that cover the strong beats. Starting in m.19, the violin and cello trade off dotted quarter note figures that unsettle the pulse.

This movement is written around RI0 and RI5, which is significant because RI0 is the retrograde inversion of the row form that represents Antigone, P0. The intended sense is that what is right and good has been turned on its head.

The piano begins with a subset of RI0, while the cello plays the latter. By using a small subset of the row, the opening produces a harmony that sounds like Dorian mode. Once the rest of the row begins to appear, the illusion is lost.

In measures 31-43, the march suddenly falls apart. It is as though nobody has the strength to go on. Instruments drop out from the texture, and there is a great deal of space between notes. The movement appears to be winding down to its conclusion. However, it is but a brief repose before the dirge begins.

This dirge draws on certain aspects of traditional ancient Greek funerals. A modern American funeral is generally a solemn, quiet affair. You may cry, but there are limits. It is not so with the Greeks. Proper mourning, particularly from women, involved rending of clothes and self-injury in the form of scratching one's face, tearing one's hair, and beating of the chest. Restraint is the opposite of the goal. The dirge is intended to reflect this level of emotional abandon.

There are echoes of Barber's Adagio for Strings in this section, at least in the structure, as it progresses from solo piano to the entire ensemble playing in an accented fortissimo. Unlike the Barber, there is no melodic motif present – the dirge relies on rhythm and static harmonies. This harmony is based around P0, the row designated for Antigone. It begins with a single low A in the piano. The instruments add on and build both the texture and the dynamic. It culminates in measure 60 with full chromatic saturation, marked "agony".

Unlike the march section, the dirge is rhythmically erratic. The rhythm was composed in an aleatoric manner by writing almost random rhythms. There are moments where instruments change on the same beat to afford a little ease to the performers, but that is the extent of. The "agony" chords are the only part where all of the instruments play in unison, in harrowing, hammering quarter notes.

The piece ends by reiterating the Antigone motif two final times. It is similar, but not identical, to the opening of the overture, creating a sense of symmetry. The difference is that the theme is augmented at the end to add a sense of finality. Drawing it out draws the movement and the work to a close. With Antigone, the work begins; with Antigone, it shall end.

## Reflection

Writing this piece posed a significant challenge. I had not composed on any serious level before, and the use of the twelve-tone system made it even more difficult. The system at first seemed impossibly restrictive. From my thesis advisor, from Charles Wuorinen's book, and from trial and error, I learned how to use it to achieve the sounds and effects that I desired. It was important that I should acknowledge the traditions of the system. While incorporating the influence of the most acclaimed twelve-tone composers, I feel that I did develop my own way of utilizing the system. For me, it was something of a game, as I tried to sometimes hide the twelve-tone quality of the music.

I was not content with following just the example of the twelve-tone composers. I wanted to incorporate ideas from classical music across time. It was exciting to add elements of several different styles to this piece, ranging from old church music to modernist ideas. I am grateful for all of the music that I get to know; it is part of my soul, and I intended to express that in my composition.

Another part of the challenge was using a single twelve-tone row for the entire piece. It was difficult to avoid redundancy. Twelve-tone music is notoriously brief for this reason. The struggle pushed me to explore just how far I could manipulate a row. Wuorinen's book offered many ideas on this problem, and I gained a taste for dramatic registral changes and strange timbres from it. Another inspiration was the *Rainbow Body* by Christopher Theofanidis. That particular work features very little melodic material, but the composer still writes an engaging and emotional thirteen minutes of music.

Aside from the technical aspects of composition, I learned a great deal about expression. To communicate *Antigone* effectively, I had to be specific about how I interpreted the play. Indeed, I found that my reading changed somewhat over the course of the composition. I thought more deeply about the questions it posed, and I found myself more open-minded to the opposing sides. I have tried to be fair in how I represented both Antigone and Creon.

I became more proficient in expressing myself in a language, so to speak, that was unfamiliar. My inexperience in composition and the twelve-tone system made that difficult at first, but I found ease as I went. I quickly learned that it was unnecessary to write every single programmatic moment down; it was enough to write in the abstract. I also learned to be bolder and to focus on the act of creating art. I worried too much about whether or not what I wrote was correct, and I found that such anxiety only took a toll. It is gladdening to me that I can be more free.

All in all, I am happy that I took this challenge on. I feel that I have said my piece when it comes to *Antigone*. In the future, I will improve these skills, but I know that I have made progress.

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