

Jessie's Well – Journal No. 3

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	First entry – 8.42 am	About to go and have coffee with Julie!
---	------------------------------	--

Location and context:

The ideas from yesterday and the musing and the thinking and mulling over have been intense and consistent!

I have thought much about the melody being Jessie herself. I have given it consideration and then dismissed it and then it comes back and seems indisputable now. It is simple and unaffected and speaks openly and without fear. I am not concerned about others reaction to this piece. It stands without question as an open and honest account. It is a musical journal of the journey from antipathy to friendship which is the measure of Jessie's dad and me.

More to muse on after coffee – I just had to write this!

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	2nd entry – 11.04 am	I've done so much email and..... aaaahhhh!!
---	--	--

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	3rd entry – 11.24 am	And more!!!!!! I'll turn the connection off now!
---	--	---

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	4th entry – 1.41 pm	After all the email and phone calls etc.....
---	---------------------------------------	---

It was best to have lunch and get my head out of the calls and problems and to give it a fresh start.

Before getting to the writing it would be prudent to reflect on some comments made to me about such things.

I have just looked at an article about me and my work that has just been published in *Winds* from the UK. Martin Ellerby wrote the article and he and I shared a very long and in depth conversation to provide material for it.

In talking about the compositional process and sketching Ellerby noted:

“Hultgren's compositional process is of interest. Nothing is committed to paper until the work is ready to be realised. Sketches are made mentally and the act of notation, a rapid act, is carried out when the white intensity of the work demands its realisation.”

He then cites me:

“The nine months are up; the baby is to be born. For all the will in the world you can’t stop contractions, and composition is, I assume, the same sort of thing”

Ellerby talks of my spirituality and says:

Perhaps further insight is evidenced by the passionate spirituality Hultgren openly embraces. He does this in an affectionate and non-converting fashion, though his evangelism is intoxicatingly observed:

“It is beholden on us that have a capacity to help change society to be involved in it. Some people do so by working as missionaries overseas or with volunteer aid projects abroad. My belief is that music has such a phenomenal capacity to change lives, and as the gift I have been given it is part of my evangelism. I don’t seek to change the world – I’m not a musical Billy Graham – but I can make a small, continued effect over time. As composers, we lay bare our souls and give them to the performer as an intimate act”

I goes on to discuss me and my relationship to conductors and notes:

Hultgren also has some interesting thoughts on the subject of conductors and composers and their masculine and feminine traits:

“You speak in a much more intimate way as a composer that you do in words, allowing a greater fragility and sensitivity to emerge. With words it is possible to keep one’s distance. We might check the way we speak but when we play music that is not so in real life – men are inclined to be more objective and stand aloof from a situation whereas women tend to be in there getting their hands dirty and being subjective: making emotional decisions. I think the composer gets in and gets his or her hands dirty, while the conductor stands off objectively. Conductors should try to get their hands dirty more often!

If they do a Schenkerian analysis and explain to you what the score is, they think they’ve done the right job – they haven’t even scratched the surface of it. They talk about architecture but not about soul. They’ve got the structure but not the spirit. The will of the conductor is to breathe life back into the score, to return the soul to the work, to put the composers’ flesh and blood and his soul and spirit back, not to just paint by numbers.”

Interesting stuff for me to ‘hear’ that again. It makes for informative reading especially that I say things slightly differently (he has ‘edited’ to some extent in the turn of phrase manner) than I write them.

Well, time has moved on and I need to write music not ramble! 1.13

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	5th entry – 1.23 pm	Scoring bars 42 – 44 f.f.
---	---------------------------------------	----------------------------------

When I write in this part of the process I leap around the page. Let's see if I can remember the sequence of that meandering: 1.24

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	6th entry – 1.55 pm	Gordon Sellar, a colleague from my Air Force Central Band days has just phoned. He has a recording for me of the first film score I did for the ABC. He is sending it up
---	---------------------------------------	---

So, another attempt!

I'm considering the section from 36 – 50 and how I am relating the dots on the sketch to filling out dots on the full score.

I don't go from the top left hand corner to the bottom right hand corner. It seems that what I am doing is writing the principal lines first. That would seem an obvious thing to do but it's not as straight forward as it might seem.

Emma has come home from school for study period and is throwing me off my own computer!! I will get the laptop set up in here so I can continue. 2.00

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	7th entry – 2.32 pm	Set up the laptop.
---	---------------------------------------	---------------------------

I have the computer on my writing desk now and it might be easier or more difficult.

So, considering the matters alluded to above; scoring is not a straight forward process even when it seems there are logical processes that should be followed. For example, I am considering the steps I have taken to write this section from 36 – 50 and in doing so I am aware that this is a consistent process in sections like this particularly. The landscape here is contrapuntal (see sketch example that follows) and the choice of principal lines not notated on the sketch at all.

Bar 36 sees the principal line not doubled in any way and the selection of what plays which simplified by this situation. 1st trumpet, 1st trombone and then lines added separately but not doubled up until the end of bar 39. The choice of what

will play the principal part has been made for me up to this point with the instruction from the sketch, "Brass choir" (Ex. ?).

Handwritten musical score for Brass choir, consisting of ten staves. The score includes various musical notations, dynamics, and performance instructions.

Key annotations and markings include:

- Staff 1:** Circled number 36, "Brass choir".
- Staff 2:** "cresc.", "Basso (20)", "Rall.", "f", "V".
- Staff 3:** "stacc.", "rit.", "mf", "f".
- Staff 4:** "Basso", "mf", "f", "3rd clar.", "V".
- Staff 5:** Circled number 40, "atemp.", "mf", "f", "V".
- Staff 6:** "Basso", "mf", "f", "V".
- Staff 7:** "Basso", "mf", "f", "V".
- Staff 8:** "Basso", "mf", "f", "V".
- Staff 9:** "Basso", "mf", "f", "V".
- Staff 10:** "Basso", "mf", "f", "V".

The score is written in a single system with ten staves. The notation includes notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings. There are several checkmarks at the end of the staves, indicating completed sections.

One can see by the nature of the sketch the counter point, which is in evidence here, and the scant instruction for who or what should play which line. The next portion requires more consideration in scoring because now doublings come into play. My concept of the brass choir begins with the trumpets and trombones (my experience in the Australian Brass Choir in the early 70's?) so the selection of voicing noted above is possibly very self referential. The adding of horns and tuba that occurs at 39 onwards is an expansion of sound and timbre. As the intensity increases toward 44 my mind is taken to two things; one is the need to *lift up* the sound in the bass voice that ascends from the tuba and ends in the 1st trombone at 44 and the second is to selection again of the primary voices and the adding to them that comes with the filling out of the score.

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	8th entry – 3.30 pm	Disappeared for coffee and chat with the kids after school
---	---------------------------------------	---

I continue with my consideration of the section noted above.

I have chosen the third trombone as the principal bass voice at 42. Other voices are *col* this part and thus have followed it in scoring Next are the trombones 1 and 2. That is evident in the *col* found in clarinets. This bolstering of the sound here is considered. It would have been more logical to add weight to the trombones with the saxes but the sound of the trombones is less affected by the addition of the clarinets here and therefore remains more pure 'brass choir' until the tutti of 44 is achieved.

What can also be seen here when comparing the score and the sketch is that the ascending voice that emanates from the third trombone moves through the texture and becomes the lines that lead to the melody in the flute. The judicious selection of instruments here ensures that the lines comes through fully without there being a sense of adding and subtracting instruments.

It is worth noting here that this aural/timbral awareness is not something easily garner from books or class. It is a sensitivity born of immersion in an acoustic environment. I can tell my arranging and compositions students any number of 'rules' that will allow for a full and solid tutti for example but it is in the hearing of such a tutti that awareness is inherited.

The construct at 42 follows from what is considered above, the brass choir, the principal voice is still the first trumpet and weight is added here through the saxes and then they give weight to the line emerging from the 1st trombone. This crossing of lines is further proof of the non principal roles of the saxes here. They are party to projection and support. Their use then moves from the line (42 – 43) leading to the melodic and then harmonic (44).

The divergence of role here is not the 'role' of the saxophone in general but serves to illustrate the point of principal and secondary utilisation in orchestration. I tell me classes that if the brasses are playing in a tutti then they must have all the harmony, if that is the style of that section, because you will hear all their parts. One could not put the three parts of a chorale, soprano, alto and bass, for example, in the brasses and then expect the woodwinds to balance those forces.

I am aware that this seems logical but in this day of digital realisation such vital acoustic realities are lost and at times dismissed.

I will move back to the score now hoping I have addressed this situation solidly.
3.46

No – just one small thing to add; now that I have established who plays what I am comfortable when the tutti of 44 – 46, beat one arrives to start at the top left hand corner. It doesn't last for long because bar 46 beat two is coming and that is a landscape that is an amalgam of the opening statements and 18 – 32.
3.50

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	9th entry – 4.05 pm	Moving on from the tutti
---	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------

I contemplate this next chamber music like section and reflect on what Martin Ellerby said of my music in the article mentioned above.

What impresses me most about Hultgren's music is his will to embrace transparent textures in orchestration and the courage to write as he hears rather than compromise as a result of the often commercial necessities imposed by publishing houses worldwide.

Others can make that judgement more objectively than me but as I gaze on this section (and I have looked at it many times in the last 36 hours) I see the confluence of lines again, the dialogue, the communion and possibly the coming together of Jessie's ideas. Single voices merging and diverging but moving toward a fullness that might tell the story completely. Hhhmm... 4.11

Still no percussion!!!!

Day 2 of scoring – April 6th 2005	10th entry – 4.24 pm	Just writing!
---	--	----------------------

I find here that the section I am moving into is different. Yes, it's obviously tonally different but there is a reason why it is. Is this the migration from incomplete presentation of the theme or something else? It is too easy and passé to say that what is happening is development. It is transition but not in a musical sense. I always thought of transition happening musically when "he couldn't think of

anything else to say” but demonstrably he can here! The music is growing outwards. It is organic and it is ruminating over past observations and musings. I will come back to this because there is another pause for my eldest daughter’s arrival – a cup of tea!!