

O haupt voll Blut und Wunden
by isuckatcomposing

1. Clear and inventive deviation from the shared material between movements, all with an obviously repeated introduction. /20

Suite III was somewhat hard to hear the exact relationship of the shared material, and I cite the change of rhythm and contour for this. It is also not heard in the other voices, despite being mostly contrapuntal to the oboes in that particular instance. It would have interesting to see m. 66 start on a D, as the measure to measure process in the oboe would have resulted in C, D, E with the held very long, as though an extreme augmentation of the normal process. It is almost heard in the violins, but the connection is not obvious. The others are more obviously heard as a process, though I wish there were more large scale processes at play. For example, in Suite II, the three distinct sections could *potentially* be considered large scale articulation dissections of the original theme in terms of length (i.e. short, long), but overall I felt as though the shared material was there to highlight a similarity was to occur, but not *quite* yet, which was a little bit unsatisfying. In other words, connections could be more clear, or the transitions could have been overt and obviously transformational. Something as simple as a crescendo into it or a diminutive iteration of the main theme would have added a lot to create that cohesion. Overall, however, the piece follows nice ebb and flow, with large scale arcs explored by intermediate-level forms, which always helps in a nice suite. +16.5/20

2. A conclusive and satisfying, yet creatively combined final movement. /10

A little more connective tissue between references to sections would have been appreciated, especially with transformational motives. The most jarring jump was to m. 133, and transitions that relied on the sustaining for a half note were unfortunately relatively awkward. The use of inverted contours in some of the movement space was nice to hear, but seemed to focus too much on the individual processes that made up the rest of the piece: more of a recap, than a synthesis. The chordal inversion of beats 3 and 4 of the first theme was an interesting touch to spread out throughout the changed melody line of Suite II's recreation, though it would be nice to highlight recurring features in the other parts. The recreation of the slow portion of Suite II was also interesting but not quite a isographic relationship in terms of the melody, regardless of the two voices. That being said, the subversion of the two halves of the diatonic tetrachord throughout seemed to be indicative of a large-scale process, though it was a little bit hard to hear amidst the voices that could have complimented each other more in terms of articulation. 7/10

3. A good, semi-professional score and audio rendition of the work. /10

Overall, this is nice, but misses a lot of normal score aspects. The lack of bowings and slurs in the strings causes some confusion and while much of it can be interpreted, the chorale sections may lead to some part confusion. Other miscellaneous things include fermatas not being present in all parts when they appear and I believe one or two instances of a too low note in an instrument (i.e. m. 63 in Suite II). One other main issue I found was in Suite II where the transition back to Andante tempo is not very clear; a TEMPO II might have been fixed that issue as opposed to the word Andante. The difference in octave related material was a great little touch, though and not many elements clash with each other, creating good legibility. The sound quality is a little heavy on the up-end of the sound envelope for the strings which creates an issue for the 16th note passages, and the unflattering dynamic treatment of oboe tutti sometimes highlights unfavorable intervals. These are nitpicks on a sufficient recording, however. 7/10

4. Sound and realistic instrumentation and orchestration. /10

As I mentioned before, bowings and slurs in the strings would have been excellent and *scorditura* markings if you wanted them are necessary, but ranges and dynamics nicely match up, with arcs clearly being highlighted through both score marking and instrumentation doubling. The treatment of the shared material in Suite II I found a little bit troubling as many of the 16th notes in the slow section form unsubstantiated parallel fourths in the v. 1 and the viola. Most everything seems to be in range with good highlighting of certain aspects for the most part clear, if not slightly vague. 7.5/10

TOTAL: 38/50