

## CHAPTER II

### ROSNER'S COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

Rosner writes in an individual and distinctive style, which finds favor with audiences and reviewers alike. *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* states that his music “shows affinities with the music of Hovhaness, Shostakovich, and the Renaissance polyphonists,”<sup>1</sup> while reviews published in recent years invoke such composers as Samuel Barber, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Roy Harris, Paul Hindemith, Ernst Bloch, and Arvo Pärt in describing Rosner’s *milieu*. The most characteristic elements of Rosner’s music are his harmonic syntax (including his use of modal systems, which in turn lend a distinctive flavor to his melodic materials) and his choice of forms.

The danger exists, with composers who are not widely known, of drawing conclusions based on the assumption that a few works are representative, and this has led to descriptions of Rosner’s music which, while applicable in part, fall short of accurately summarizing his style. Walter Simmons refers to Rosner’s style as “primitivist,” and calls the emotional contrast surprising given the “limited context.”<sup>2</sup> Tawa groups Rosner into

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<sup>1</sup> Walter G. Simmons, “Rosner, Arnold,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, 6th ed.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. In a 1997 article (*Fanfare* 20:5 [May/June 1997], 228–30), Simmons defends his use of terms in the dictionary entry as follows:

the category of the “Musical Conservators” within the “Traditional Mainstream,” writing that “Rosner invokes a ceremonial ambiance, as if the music was intended for a formal performance before the royal court....For listeners who relish serenity and understatement, Rosner’s music has much to offer.”<sup>3</sup> While this description may fit Rosner’s *A Gentle Musicke*, op. 44 (which Tawa mentions as a representative work), the serenity-seeker will have a rude awakening when encountering the dark and dramatic side of Rosner as heard in the *Concerto Grosso No. 1*, op. 60. Perhaps a more adequate, and less specific, account is found in *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary*: “His music is couched formally in a neo-Classical idiom, but he freely admits melodic, harmonic, and contrapuntal methods of the modern school of composition.”<sup>4</sup> While this statement avoids making generalizing assumptions about the style, it also says little to give the reader a sense of how the music actually sounds.

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I have been called to task in some quarters for using the word “primitivistic” in describing Rosner’s music, as if I were criticizing his compositional technique as inadequate. But I am sure that, with a doctorate in music theory, Rosner was sufficiently exposed to advanced compositional techniques. What I meant to describe was a deliberate repudiation of much of that technical apparatus...The result is a direct, elemental type of expression, through which a wide range of emotions—including some very extreme states of mind—is presented without the dilution or distillation that often emerges from more complex elaboration. It is probably this directness—as well as the catchy melodies—that makes Rosner’s music so accessible to so many general listeners.

<sup>3</sup> Tawa, *op. cit.*, 189.

<sup>4</sup> Nicolas Slonimsky, ed., *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, 8th ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 1542.

In his 1994 radio interview with Bruce Duffie, Rosner offers a description of his own compositional style, along with his impression of the listeners who find his music perplexing:

My style is in a netherworld between really modern and conservatively predictable. And if you look around the audience when a piece of mine is being played, there are some people there who just don't see what the connections are. They hear certain kinds of vocabulary, [and] therefore assume a certain general tonal syntax, which I avoid assiduously. And those who are looking to be impressed by the newness of something aren't getting off on my pieces, either. Generally, most good music requires more than one hearing, anyway.<sup>5</sup>

### **RHYTHMIC TRAITS**

It is in the realm of rhythm that Rosner is most closely allied with styles from the past. The presence of rhythmic motives as unifying elements, regular periodic phrasing, and a relatively consistent hypermetric structure are all hallmarks of Rosner's style. While sections involving complicated cross-rhythms and compound meters appear with somewhat increasing frequency in his later works (such as *Of Numbers and of Bells*, op. 79, or his Piano Quintet No. 2, op. 103), their context within the familiar surroundings of these more traditional features offers the listener a grounding sense of orientation.

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<sup>5</sup> Arnold Rosner, interview by Bruce Duffie, WNIB-FM, Chicago, 5 November 1995.

Rosner prefers simple, uncomplicated rhythms that are easy to read and comprehend. His thematic materials have a traditional sense of rhythmic balance, invoking associations with Renaissance counterpoint. He favors even, dotted, dactyl, and anapest rhythmic units, with relatively few syncopations. This use of basic metric subdivisions creates at once a certain ease of playing, as well as an additional level of challenge to the performer. As any string quartet player who has been humbled by an early Haydn quartet knows, simplicity in music can be frightfully unforgiving, revealing every least flaw in performance. It is essential for each performer to be constantly scrutinizing the phrase structure, identifying when the music is leading toward a goal, and when it is in repose.

One peculiarity concerns Rosner's metronome markings. In most of his works, metronome markings accompany each new tempo indication, and many of these numbers lie between those of a standard metronome, particularly in his earlier works. For example, the first quartet, op. 10, includes the non-standard markings 97, 114, 150, 38, and 140; the second quartet, op. 19, calls for 64, 156, and 78 beats per minute. When I asked Rosner if he deliberately avoids standard markings, he responded that from his earliest composing days, he has always derived tempo markings in his mind, and that he has never owned a metronome. Furthermore, he explained that all of his tempos are indicated

with the mathematical symbol “ $\approx$ ”, meaning “approximately equal.”<sup>6</sup> Given this flexibility, and the ready availability today of metronomes which offer a full range of tempos (commonly from 35 to 250 beats per minute), these unusual metronomic indications should pose no difficulty for the performers.<sup>7</sup>

### MELODIC STYLE

The truly distinctive hallmarks of a style are found in the rhythmic and harmonic realms, but the aspect of music to which most listeners pay conscious attention to is that of melody. Our mental catalogue of familiar works is generally indexed by melodic material, and musical recall is based upon the ability to recreate in the mind’s ear various melodic lines.

Arnold Rosner writes melodies which are easily digestible, and generally memorable on a small number of hearings. The aspects of his melodic style which undoubtedly contribute most to any assumption that his music is primitive or simplistic are the use of uncomplicated rhythms, which generally lie within the divisions of the bar,

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<sup>6</sup> Telephone conversation with Rosner, 13 March 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Another feature of most new metronomes is a “sound out” jack, which permits an ensemble of any size to amplify the beat through a stereo. Metronomes which have offer a “click” or other non-pitched sound are to be desired over the ones that emit a “beep.” Of course, the discipline of rehearsing quietly to hear an unamplified metronome is also a valuable practice, but that does not negate the benefits of using an amplified one.

and a sense of registral balance that suggests a conception of melodic content based upon vocal range. Furthermore, the four- and eight-bar phrase are frequent staples in Rosner's compositional diet. Metric ambiguity is not an integral aspect of his compositional style. It takes a certain amount of courage for a composer to be willing to communicate with the listener without the need to baffle them.

The intervallic content of Rosner's melodies follows basic rules of counterpoint, with his own avoidance of melodic triads imparting an individual flavor. The opening interval is more likely to be a second or a fourth than a third. Ascending fifths are common; descending fifths are not. Larger opening intervals are less common still. Where they exist, the rule of returning by contrary motion is generally observed. Rosner voluntarily accepts the basic rules of melodic style as the boundary against which he pushes with his harmonic creativity.

## **HARMONIC LANGUAGE**

The overall accessibility that audiences find in Rosner's music is also due in large part to the prevalence of triadic materials and periodic harmonic rhythm. Such use of familiar elements can easily lead the listener to assume that the music is tonal. But understanding the distinction between "triadic" and "tonal" is essential in comprehending Rosner's style. By connecting chords without adhering to the hierarchical relationships

which comprise “functional” tonality, the music manages to preserve a sense of familiarity, without being predictable.

Rosner provides his own words on the distinction: “If you use the word [“tonal”] to mean non-serial, or not overly dissonant, or to suggest that chords have ‘roots,’ then it is applicable, but if you mean it to be an opposite to ‘modal’ or governed by tonic–dominant or related concepts of direction, then it’s not applicable—or at least less applicable....Most authorities seem to think that there is an equivalence there, and that any music that uses rooted harmonies *must* perforce conform to certain progression expectations.”<sup>8</sup> He further states that not only does the “tonal” label not fit his style, but that he does not have a descriptive label that does: “I’ve tried a few, such as neo-tonal, pan-triadic, neomodul, [but] nothing really pleases me yet.”<sup>9</sup>

In order to discourage the automatic imposition of functional tonal schemes onto his music, Rosner greatly favors mediant-relationship movement from chord to chord. In common practice tonality, the motion of a fifth (ascending or descending) and, to a lesser extent, a second, are mainstays of tonal movement. A movement in the root by a third in traditional tonal music most often occurs with either a modality shift (to or from a

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<sup>8</sup> Correspondence, 4 October 1997.

<sup>9</sup> Correspondence, 6 October 1997.

relative major or minor) or between dominant preparation chords, whose similar functions negate much of the feel of directed tonal motion. The increased use of mediant relationships in the Romantic era permitted new harmonic paths and an expanded harmonic palette, and heralded the beginning of the end of the dominant–tonic functional tonality of the Classical period. Rosner exploits this least loaded tonal shift by moving frequently between chords separated by a third, usually maintaining a common pitch between each pair of chords.

Consider the opening chord progression from his String Quartet No. 4, op. 56, of which a simplified version is shown in figure 2.1 (the original rhythm is written in a quadruply[!] overdotted French overture style). In the span of ten measures (2–11) he visits eight different triads, all in root position, and all minor with the exception of that in m. 5, which shifts from major to minor (note that the third of the  $E\flat$ -minor chord, which appears on beat four of m. 5, is spelled as  $f^\sharp$ , placing ease of reading over harmonic spelling).<sup>10</sup> The entire progression contains no cadential V–I motion; only one motion by descending fifth occurs, from  $b\flat$  minor to  $E\flat$  major (mm. 4–5).<sup>11</sup> Rosner achieves a sense

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<sup>10</sup> To avoid any confusion, the so-called Helmholtz notation will be used where specific notes are referenced. When pitch classes are mentioned, the letter name alone will be sufficient. A diagram of the Helmholtz nomenclature appears on page v above.

<sup>11</sup> Even this motion lacks cadential power. Because of the minor quality of the former chord, the progression sounds more like an ascending fourth. This begs the question of whether the composer would have used a low  $B\flat$  in m. 4, were it not below the range of the cello.

FIGURE 2.1. Quartet No. 4 in D minor, op. 56, i, mm. 1–12. Rhythmic simplification and two-staff reduction. All actual pitches are represented.

of continuity throughout this unpredictably wandering passage by connecting most pairs of chords by a common pitch; only the pairs in mm. 1–2, 3–4, and 11–12 lack such a sinewy connection. The return to the original open-fifth D chord in m. 12, which begins the *Allegro tempestuoso e marcato* section, is felt as an inevitable event only after it has actually occurred.

Rosner's youthful fascination with major-minor ambiguity, which predated his earliest piano studies, became a central feature of his mature compositional style. Part of the effect of this ambiguity is to emancipate minor chords from some sort of subservience to major. The accessibility of either raised or lower thirds permits the music to move freely about major, minor, or modal scales, as well as between chords that in functional harmonic hierarchy are considered mutually remote. Frequently, Rosner will involve both raised and lower thirds, without conveying any sense that one is leading to the other, or that either is predominant.

The prevalence of root position chords is another remarkable feature of Rosner's music. He uses great variety in his chord spacings, and will often reorchestrate recurrences of thematically and harmonically identical measures as a variation device, but even in such instances, the bass line will usually contain the root of the current chord. The degree to which this occurs can be seen in the third movement of his third quartet, op. 32; the first non-root note the cello plays (excluding non-accented passing tones) is the *ab* in m. 46. This pitch mirrors that of the viola line from the previous measure, and is an accented dissonance which creates a major/minor clash in the context of an open-fifth F chord.

A happy result of this is considerable ease in harmonic analysis, which will be a great asset to an ensemble's intonation work. When building each chord, the group may look first to the bass for the root, and this will usually be fruitful. Rosner explains his penchant for uninverted chords: "Each chord or harmonic unit should be stated in the clearest way, even if this entails some parallels (to which I have no objection) or compromises in voice-leading. Of course, the idea is to write music where the harmonic strength and the linearity manage to fall happily together, [where] one doesn't sacrifice either one. But sometimes it can't be helped, and [then] I generally prefer harmony."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Correspondence, 16 June 1999. Brackets and punctuation added by author.

Modal harmony plays a significant role in Rosner's music, particularly in the contrapuntally derived works. The Dorian mode appears most frequently, although Lydian and Aeolian modes also appear upon occasion. Another important harmonic device in Rosner's music is his frequent use of the octatonic modes. An octatonic scale is most simply defined as an ordered set of pitches which complements a diminished seventh chord. The result is an alternation of semitones and whole tones. Because none of the four pairs of semitones are a perfect fourth or fifth apart, melodies which are built upon these scales tend to be less susceptible to the automatic tonal associations which the Western ear so readily imposes.

Messiaen refers to this scale as the "Second Mode of Limited Transposition."<sup>13</sup> These modes comprise regular divisions of the twelve-note octave which yield duplicate sets of pitch classes in fewer than twelve chromatic transpositions. As with the diminished seventh chord, there exist only three distinct octatonic sets.<sup>14</sup> While chromatic scales, whole-tone scales, diminished seventh chords, and augmented triads are staples of

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<sup>13</sup> Olivier Messiaen, *Technique de mon langage musical* (Paris: Alphonse LeDuc, 1944), 52. The first mode of limited transposition is the whole-tone scale, of which only two distinct sets exist.

<sup>14</sup> While the theoretically possible spellings of such sets are copious (e.g., a diminished seventh chord including the pitch *A* can be spelled eight different ways without the use of double sharps or double flats), using pitch-class sets makes the limited transposition evident. Of the diminished seventh chords, only [0,3,6,9] and its transpositions, [1,4,7,10] and [2,5,8,11], are unique; the next transposition [3,6,9,0] duplicates the original set. The three octatonic sets are [0,1,3,4,6,7,9,10] (first transposition), [1,2,4,5,7,8,10,11] (second transposition), and [0,2,3,5,6,8,9,11] (third transposition).

the contemporary musical diet, the second through seventh modes defined by Messiaen present a considerable challenge to the tonally oriented musician.

### **STRUCTURE AND FORM**

Musical structure serves as the container which holds the elements of rhythm, melody, and harmony. It encompasses vertical aspects of orchestration, as well as horizontal considerations such as single- and multi-movement form. Rosner's link to the past can be perhaps most clearly viewed in the structural realm. The number of movements in a work varies widely, with no particularly conservative slant, but the forms of the movements themselves are for the most part very traditional. Ternary forms, rondo-based forms, and sonata-form movements are common, as are older forms, such as passacaglia, motet, isorhythmic motet, fugue, variations, and various dances.

In recent years the titles of his works have become more fanciful and evocative, but the performing forces called for remain, for the most part, very traditional (see Appendix B, which lists his complete works). Rosner's catalog does include works for viols and for harpsichord, which are relatively uncommon among twentieth century compositions. Probably the most unusual combination in a modern sense is *La Vie Antériure*, scored for medium-high voice, string quartet, three trombones, and percussion.

No electronic instruments are called for in his works, nor prepared piano, nor other non-traditional methods of playing instruments.

### **PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

From a purely technical standpoint, most of Rosner's music is not unusually difficult to play. Aside from considerable demands on stamina in the bow arm, and the occasionally gnarly modal passages, the majority of his works are what performers would refer to as "kind." But as performers realize, there often exists an inverse relationship between the level of complication in a musical score and the ease of creating a convincing and satisfying performance. While rhythmic precision, expressive nuance, and interpretive insight separate a good performance from a great one, the one factor which acts as a litmus test for any ensemble's quality is intonation.

Because Rosner's music is not generated in accordance with the rules of functional tonality, the challenge to the performer whose background is built upon the common practice literature is to adopt a more strictly vertical approach to intonation. Rosner's choice of enharmonic spelling is often motivated more by the role of the note in its chordal context than by voice-leading considerations. He will also respell a note if the "correct" harmonic or melodic spelling makes the note awkward to play, either because of fingering or string crossings.

Rosner states his own priorities for enharmonic spelling in this manner: “(a) spell so that the melodic intervals look “normal”—e.g., major thirds rather than diminished fourths, etc.; (b) spell so that the harmonic intervals or chords look the way they normally sound; and (c) spell for the greatest possible comfort and ease of the player.”<sup>15</sup> He further explains that his chosen ordering of these factors represents a loose generalization, and that “a small compromise of one is preferred over a big compromise of another.”<sup>16</sup> This flexibility in spelling strongly argues against any type of subjectively altered approach to intonation.

Consequently, performing this music successfully requires not only that the performer develop an acute sense of tempered intonation, but also demands a higher expectation of familiarity with the score. Rosner composes at the keyboard, and the performer would do well to study his works in the same manner. Devices which are often useful in functionally tonal music, such as exaggerating the raised quality of leading tones, can create false suggestions in Rosner’s music, and furthermore, can impart to the music a sense of unsatisfying intonation. Inaccuracies which might be overlooked in

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<sup>15</sup> Correspondence, 28 September 1998

<sup>16</sup> Correspondence, 1 October 1998

music of a familiar style can be quite unsettling in this music, where the progressions are often unpredictable.

This issue of intonational approach is one of the most longstanding and contentious ones in music performance, and somewhat of a Pandora's box which is scantily covered in the standard pedagogical literature.<sup>17</sup> In contemporary practice, the views can be divided into two "camps:" the proponents of "expressive" approach, and those favoring the equal temperament model. Arnold Steinhardt, first violinist with the Guarneri Quartet, describes the expressive approach to vertical intonation in a quartet:

Among the "vertical" considerations there are anchor points: these are octaves, fourths, and fifths. When played simultaneously these intervals should be exact, [i.e., played with pure (or just) rather than equal-tempered intonation]. I make mental notes as to where they occur. I'll know that in bar 9 of a certain movement I play a B above the viola's F-sharp, and this therefore leaves me virtually no leeway for subjectivity in intonation. I say "virtually" because every rule can have an exception: a problem may arise, for instance, if I want my B to lead to a C that follows. Should I play the B high? That's a hard choice to make and shows how the linear and vertical demands sometimes conflict. On the other hand, seconds, thirds, sixths, and sevenths, whether major or minor, are up for

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<sup>17</sup> In *The Art of Violin Playing* (New York: Carl Fischer, Inc., 1939), Carl Flesch offers an excellent description of the process of playing with good intonation, stressing that it is largely a reactionary process, rather a matter of mechanical accuracy. Yet Flesch seems to contradict himself in temperament matters. He advocates equal intonation in his instruction to produce the tones "with the number of vibrations peculiar to them in accordance with the laws of acoustics, that is to say, purely, or in tune" (p. 19), but then later states "As is known, the pitch of a note, in spite of an identical appellation, differs according to its harmonic affiliations" (p. 22).

grabs, as are augmented or diminished fourths and fifths; in all these cases there's considerably more flexibility than with perfect fourths and fifths.<sup>18</sup>

To an extent, these words offer invaluable advice to chamber players of any level and group, particularly by stressing the importance of acquiring familiarity with the entire texture, rather than merely one's own line. But caution must be exercised in applying "expressive" intonation for voice leading purposes in Rosner's music, in order to avoid imposing unintended suggestions of tonal motion upon a progression which is contrapuntally derived.

The application of equal temperament is crucial to successfully performing Rosner's music. Simmons, while justified in complaining about the intonation problems in a recording of Rosner's chamber music, is partly in error when he writes "Rosner's music requires impeccable intonation, his chromatically related triads requiring an attentiveness to enharmonic distinctions, e.g., the difference between C# and D $\flat$ . Approximations that would be tolerated in more conventionally tonal music—and in more dissonant music—can sound noticeably wrong in Rosner's peculiar syntax."<sup>19</sup> This exposes Simmons's presumption that Rosner chooses between available spellings based

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<sup>18</sup> David Blum, *The Art of Quartet Playing: The Guarneri Quartet in Conversation*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 28.

<sup>19</sup> Walter Simmons, *Fanfare* 20:5 (May/June 1997), 230.

upon voice-leading and harmonic direction, which contradicts his actual compositional practice.

Solid advice on intonation approach comes from the composer himself: “[Some think] one has to make a true distinction between C $\sharp$  and D $\flat$ , but in fact, it’s trying for that that creates some of the out-of-tune quality in certain chords. Since I use consonant material in such chromatic connections, an equal-temperament approach works best.”<sup>20</sup>

Myron Kartman’s assertion that “the performer should be more concerned with the sound of the sonority than with the spelling of the intervals which is of secondary importance in the preparation of any performance”<sup>21</sup> is as relevant to Rosner’s music as to Bartók’s.

In order to work toward developing such an approach, an ensemble should undertake slow intonation work on non-tonal material, separate from any repertoire being prepared for performance. An easily derived source is chromatic or whole-tone successions of major or minor chords, as well as combinations of these. More complex exercises involving inversions, seventh chords, and the like will be similarly beneficial, although these will need to be written out. A different, and certainly more enjoyable, approach is to read through volumes of Renaissance polyphonic compositions for viols,

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<sup>20</sup> Correspondence from Arnold Rosner, 20 May 1997.

<sup>21</sup> Myron Kartman, “Analysis and Performance Problems in the Second, Fourth, and Sixth String Quartets by Bela Bartók” (DMA diss., Boston University, 1970), 43.

recorders, or voices.

In actual rehearsal of a work, an effective procedure involves tuning chords individually, holding first all roots of the chord, then all fifths, then thirds, then sevenths (this is the order in which pitches appear in the overtone series). Suspensions should be tuned first with their resolution, then backing up to the suspended tone. This approach has both the benefit of developing an acute sense of triadic intonation and of reinforcing each player's ability to rapidly determine the governing harmony of a chord, and the role of each note within that chord. Both for tonal music and for largely triadic music such as Rosner's, this will be an invaluable and expedient exercise.

### **EXTRAMUSICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Rosner's musical energies are directed inwardly toward the music itself, rather than to exterior innovations of context. All of his works are intended for the concert stage or church setting, with no unusual demands on equipment, placement, costumery, or lighting. While a great deal of post-World War II music seems to rely upon some extramusical elements such as stopwatches, household appliances, automobile parts, or livestock, Rosner is content to allow his notes to rest entirely upon their own merits.

Most of Rosner's music exists in fair copy in the composer's own hand. In the author's experience, very few note mistakes have been encountered, even in works

previously unperformed. The music is carefully notated and generally well spaced, aside from occasional horizontal compression at the end of a system. If necessary, Rosner will sooner extend staff lines into the right margin than divide a measure across two systems (see fig. 2.2). This spatial compression is generally the only instance where legibility is threatened.

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FIGURE 2.2. Reproduction (actual size) of composer's autograph, op. 94, m. 123



It appears that Rosner uses a single pen for all notation. This sometimes results in overly heavy strokes, particularly on accidentals. Flat symbols tend to have squarish curves, which on occasion can appear like a natural sign when placed close to a downward stem. “Hairpin” crescendos and diminuendos are often so narrow as to look like accents; however, his accents are quite small, so the ambiguity is easily rectified.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Franz Schubert is also notorious for diminuendos that look like accents, and his manuscript is much more difficult to decipher overall.

Despite these details, it is clear in most cases what the composer intends. The benefit of a separately penned score can be a great asset, compared to the increasingly popular computer-printed counterparts. Computer generated scores and parts, when well-prepared by an adept user, can be very comfortable to read, but the very notion of extracting the individual parts from the score makes the score no more authoritative than the sum of the parts, and makes checking the score for verification a redundant and futile exercise.

Page turns are typically carefully thought out. On occasion, however, the logistics of page turning are unavoidably complicated. This is the case with *A Duet for Violas*, op. 94, where both players read from score and rests are scarce. Four options are available to the performers: 1) Spread the music across multiple stands (the parts are fanfold); 2) xerographically reduce the size of the pages; 3) engage page turners; 4) memorize the music.

Currently, there are approximately two dozen of Rosner's works published by a handful of publishers, the largest of which are MMB Music in St. Louis, Missouri, and Manhattan Beach Music in Brooklyn, New York. However, none of his string chamber music is commercially available at the present time. Inquiries regarding scores and parts may be directed to:

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In order to examine Rosner's string chamber music style in more specific detail, three works will be examined, and each will be discussed in terms of rhythm, harmony, melody, and overall structure.<sup>23</sup> A certain degree of overlap must be expected among these categories. For example, an examination of a fugal piece is incomplete without addressing all of these elements, although the outstanding features of a given fugue might belong more in one area than another. Similarly, any thorough discussion of a melody necessarily includes aspects which are rhythmic and harmonic in nature. The Structure category includes primarily observations of form, but also addresses elements related to texture and growth. Overall, the aim of the discussion is not to provide a play-by-play

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<sup>23</sup> These categorical divisions are closely based upon Jan LaRue's "SHMRG" model (Sound, Harmony, Melody, Rhythm, and Growth), as put forth in his excellent treatise, *Guidelines for Style Analysis* (Warren, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2<sup>d</sup> ed.). LaRue's first category has been omitted from the present discussion, with textural and timbral considerations absorbed into the other four where appropriate. Furthermore, Rhythm and Harmony have exchanged places in the present ordering of elements, reflecting my own analytic priorities.

analysis of each work, but rather to suggest to the interested performer ways of approaching the music to achieve an informed and intelligently developed rendition.

As Rosner's compositional style has matured, his forms have become more concise, his rhythms more comfortably developed, and his conception of ensemble sound more accurate. Meanwhile, his harmonic and rhythmic syntax have remained fairly consistent, which provides a musical "fingerprint." Rather than focus upon subtle chronological differences, the chosen ordering of the works being explored will investigate the adaptive response of Rosner's style to different ensemble sizes, namely, a duet, a quartet, and a sextet.